

## **Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden**

*Some aspects of the development  
of joint degrees as a means of  
achieving the objectives set  
in the Bologna declaration.*

*The Stockholm Conclusions  
and a compilation of answers  
to a questionnaire*

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## Foreword

The seminar on the development of joint degrees took place on 30-31 May in Stockholm, Sweden. The seminar was announced in the Prague communiqué and in the work programme of the Bologna follow-up process. The purpose of the seminar was to explore the possibilities of the development of joint degrees as a means of achieving the objectives set in the Bologna Declaration, in particular from a national and legal point of view.

The seminar resulted in a common understanding on the nature of joint degrees and a common ground for further action. The conclusions and recommendations from the seminar - The Stockholm Conclusions - are presented in this booklet. The conclusions are meant to serve both as an introduction and as a basis for the discussion on the development of joint degrees.

In preparation for the meeting, a survey on the development of joint degrees was carried out. The contact persons of the Bologna group were asked to answer a questionnaire and the answers have been compiled in this booklet. The questionnaire included the following questions:

- How can the development of joint degrees be a helpful instrument to support the principles of the Bologna Process and the Prague Communiqué?
- What elements would a joint degree have to comprise in order to be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna Process?
- How would you envisage the legal framework of a joint degree in your national context?
- Are there any fields/study areas in which a joint degree is particularly useful or easy or particularly difficult to realize?
- What issues related to the award of joint degrees are the most important to address?

A draft version of the booklet was produced for the meeting in Stockholm. Since then, the text has been revised to include comments, corrections or additional information received after the meeting. For each question the answers from the countries are presented in the order they have signed the Bologna Declaration. The Ministry is solely responsible for any misinterpretations or inaccuracies in the presentations.

The Swedish Ministry of Education and Science would like to take this opportunity to express its thanks to all the valuable contributions to this booklet.

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## The Stockholm Conclusions - Conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar on Joint Degrees within the framework of the Bologna Process

### **The Bologna objectives**

Joint degrees are important instruments for implementing the objectives set out in the Bologna Declaration and the Prague Communiqué: promoting student and teacher mobility, employability, quality, the European dimension and the attractiveness and competitiveness of 'the European Higher Education Area (EHEA): Joint study programmes could provide an instrument for giving students the chance to gain academic and cultural experience abroad and institutions of higher education an opportunity to co-operate. Such co-operation could exploit wider competences and resources than those available at any single institution.

These conclusions concern joint degrees in a system of higher education essentially based on two main cycles.

### **Framework**

The basis for joint degrees in the EHEA is established in the Bologna Declaration and the Prague Communiqué, which stress the importance of transparency and compatibility. A common framework for joint degrees must be flexible in order to allow for and reflect national differences, but it must also include a definition of a joint degree, which will serve as a basis for a legal framework at the national level. The national, legal base must be clear on the conditions for awarding a joint degree and must not limit co-operation between institutions.

The national authorities should also be reminded of the contents of the Lisbon Convention. In most countries a jointly awarded degree would require amendments to the national higher education legislation. In various countries higher education institutions are increasingly developing bilateral or multilateral degrees (Dutch- Flemish Hogeschool, French-German University, Italian-French University, Danish- Swedish Öresund University, for example). There is, however, reluctance towards and no legal foundation for establishing joint degrees at the supranational level.

### **General and professional degrees**

Most countries consider joint degrees possible in both general and professional degree fields but expect difficulties in establishing joint degrees in regulated professions. Attempts should, however, be made and the density of regulations should be reduced.

### **Quality assurance**

Documented quality assurance is necessary to guarantee the international acceptance and competitiveness of joint degrees on the world education and employment markets. On the basis of mutual trust and general acceptance of national assurance systems, principles and general standards for quality assurance and accreditation should be developed. Joint study programmes which adhere to these

principles and standards could use an EHEA label, which could be established within the framework of the Bologna Process and supervised by the national authorities. It is essential that the national quality assurance agencies co-operate within the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA), in accordance with the Prague Communiqué.

## **Structure**

It should be possible to award joint degrees in each cycle, including doctoral studies.

## **Criteria**

The following criteria could be useful common denominators for European joint degrees:

- Two or more participating institutions in two or more countries.
- The duration of study outside the home institution should be substantial and continuous, e.g. 1 year at bachelor level.
- Joint degrees should require a joint study programme settled on by co-operation, confirmed in a written agreement, between institutions.
- Joint degrees should be based on bilateral or multilateral agreements on jointly arranged and approved programmes, with no restrictions concerning study fields or subjects.
- Full use should be made of the Diploma Supplement and the ECTS in order to ensure comparability of qualifications.
- A joint degree should preferably be documented in a single document issued by the participating institutions in accordance with national regulations.
- Joint degrees and study programmes should require student and staff/teacher mobility.
- Linguistic diversity in a European perspective should be ensured.
- Joint study programmes should have a European dimension, whether physical mobility or intercultural competence in the curriculum.

## **Students**

Students have a role as one of the main actors in higher education institutions and will use their power to choose courses of their own preference.

The social dimension should be taken into account by the member states and the students' social conditions should be guaranteed. Foreign students should have the same benefits as regular, national students.

## **Funding**

Additional funding is needed to develop joint study programmes. Member states are encouraged to ensure that students following a joint study programme in a foreign country can transfer their national study allowances abroad.

The ERASMUS programme should be drawn upon.

## **Labour market**

Education is an important factor for mobility on the labour market. Consultation with the social partners could be considered when establishing joint degrees.

Monitoring of the system of joint degrees should be included in the course of the Bologna-Prague-Berlin process up to 2003.

In order to facilitate an exchange of information and experience on the development of joint degrees the member states are kindly invited to report to the Bologna Follow-up Group at regular intervals on the joint degrees their higher education institutions are taking part in.

## Compilation of answers to the questionnaire

How can the development of joint degrees be a helpful instrument to support the principles of the Bologna Process and the Prague Communiqué?

### **Austria**

The co-operation in the construction of common study programmes will step by step lead to an assimilation of contents and structures of study, in order to be comparable to other partner institutions. In medium terms, it will not make sense to keep outside the Bologna system of studies.

The other thing is that the partner institutions, before preparing a common study programme, have to get to know the system and quality of studies in the respective other partner institution. By this, the principle of mutual trust and confidence will be brought alive.

### **Belgium - French Community**

The Bologna process will, at medium and long term, have the effect that most of the degrees offered by the countries signatories of the B.D. will have more or less the same structure. It does not mean that the level will necessarily be the same. A lot of fears are already shown by the institutions: in that sense the development of joint degrees will increase the institutional co-operation and will give to the institutions the opportunity to choose their partners according to same criteria among which the level and the quality. I hope that the extension of joint degrees will have a positive effect on the convergence of the level and the quality what the sole "harmonisation" of structures might not have. Side effects can also be the improving of mobility and of the attractiveness of European education for foreign students: with one "joint degree" they will be able to have a broader experience with a European dimension.

### **Belgium - Flemish Community**

- Positive impact on the development of - international - quality systems, benchmarking and accreditation. Institutions will not develop joint degrees if the quality of the programmes is not comparable.
- The mobility of students will increase. The fully and automatically recognition of periods of study and exams at partner institutions, the added value for student, the assurance of quality education, all these elements will have a positive impact on the mobility of students.
- The mobility of teachers and researchers will increase. Professors of the participating institutions should have the possibility to teach at the partner institutions, programmes and curricula must worked out jointly, jointly commissions for examinations are needed.
- It will also have a positive impact on the further development of ECTS.
- Improvement of quality of learning and efficiency of teaching, by putting together the strengths of different institutions.

## **France**

Elaborating joint degrees between two - or even more - European institutions will necessarily embrace the first six objectives of the Bologna declaration. It will obviously insist on the bilingual diploma supplement; it will - and can only - be based on a two structure-system common to all countries concerned; the ECTS will be the simplest way to help elaborating a joint degree; mobility will be facilitated for the students and recognition guaranteed through a bi- or trilateral agreement; the quality assurance problem must be resolved between the partners but also between the ministries or other authorities concerned. France suggests a common examination of the jointly elaborated curricula by the two/three authorities (ministries, if such is the case) which could then agree on a "habilitation" or accreditation of the joint degree to be awarded by the institutions requesting such authorisation; and last but not least the European dimension is being thought of because the "habilitation/control" will make it one of its criteria. It could also work with LLL projects, as well as OLD learning.

## **Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany**

Joint degree programmes would certainly help to advance the most important objectives of the Bologna Declaration, i.e. mobility, comparability, employability, the "European dimension" of higher education etc, because of their "inbuilt" European mobility component. They would be, so to speak, the exemplification of the Bologna idea. They would play a crucial especially with regard to mobility as it is to be expected that the type of study abroad period we had in Germany (as well as in other countries with - traditionally - a one-tier structure) in the ERASMUS and SOCRATES programme will have to change with the introduction of a two-tier system: Until now German students in one of our 5-year programmes went abroad in their third or fourth year of study, for a semester or two, coming back in time for the last year of their programme with the final examinations. In a Bachelor/ Master structure this will change: Only a 4-year Bachelor will allow study abroad for a semester or two (sandwich model) in the traditional, loosely structured ERASMUS style. A 3-year Bachelor and a 1- to 2-year Master will largely exclude this possibility, time being too short. The type of mobility will therefore change: Either the student will be mobile by leaving his or home country altogether after the Bachelor to do the complete Master programme abroad or he or she will go for a joint study programme at Bachelor or Master level, with a clearly defined joint curriculum that allows the student to include a study abroad period even in a programme of 2 or 3 years without prolonging the overall study duration. I expect the number of joint degree programmes to increase vastly with the further development of the Bologna process for this very reason. Finally, joint degree programmes would facilitate the development of a reference framework of European qualifications because any joint degree programme requires the previous agreement of the participating institutions/countries on the learning outcomes, competences etc. to be achieved.

## **Hungary**

The development of joint degrees will constitute an important contribution towards the objective of establishing the European Higher Education Area. It will definitely enhance



student mobility if participation in joint degree programmes offered by two or more institutions requires from students to spend a specified period of time in each participating country. It may also foster graduate mobility as the recognized joint degrees can guarantee the direct access to the labour market in the countries issuing the joint degrees. It will necessarily enhance inter-institutional co-operation as joint curricula should be developed and consequently a common framework of qualifications can be evolved. Furthermore, joint degree programmes may also enhance the attractiveness of European higher education to students not only from Europe but from other parts of the world. In Hungary one of the articulated objectives of the new Government Programme is to introduce the bachelor/master degree structure in the case of most of the degree programmes. Concerning the implementation of credit system in Hungary, Government Decree 200/2000 (XI. 29.) prescribes the introduction of the ECTS-compatible credit system in all higher education institutions by 1 September, 2002. These changes will encourage Hungarian higher education institutions to develop joint degree programmes with other higher education institutions.

### **Greece**

Actually, the experiment of common programmes leading to joint degrees at both levels touches almost all the objectives or characteristics of the Bologna/Prague process. It is directly related to the issues of comparability and readability, as well as to the issues of mobility. At the same time, it is also related, although indirectly, with the issue of quality, since it may serve as an incentive for the quality improvement for all the partners involved. Furthermore, common programmes, i.e. common efforts, strengthen the cohesion and the dynamics of the European Higher Education Area, while, at the same time, the joint degrees may offer a significant added value to the Europe's international attractiveness and competitiveness.

### **Italy**

Joint degrees imply the mobility of students and the integration of curricula. Students have to spend a period of time abroad and experience a different dimension of living and learning. The first consequence of this exercise is therefore the implementation of European citizenship among youth. The second consequence is the promotion of the identity and specificity of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), through study programmes based on joint curricular work and soaked in European culture. These characterizing elements are going to improve employability and competitiveness, thanks to qualifications largely recognized. This will enhance the attractiveness of the EHEA for teachers, students and employers: The orientation of students will be modified in the direction of a much broader dimension of the labour market.

### **Malta**

Breaking up barriers between the delineated borders of the national degree systems through the development of joint degrees (and in the same instance of building shared and complementary curricula) would be the major efforts towards enhancing the principles of the Bologna Process.

## **The Netherlands**

The development of joint degrees could contribute in achieving the objectives set in the Bologna declaration. Joint degrees could make a contribution to the transparency of degrees, especially to employers in different countries. Transparency of degrees also stimulates mobility in European higher education and on the European labour market. In addition joint degrees stimulate collaboration between institutions. The activities which have to be undertaken in the process leading to "joint degrees", can be extremely helpful to achieve the objectives set in the Bologna declaration. Especially the activities on comparison of study programmes, mutual recognition and mutual accreditation. They help in setting international standards for programmes in that particular field and they can lead to mobility programmes which allow students to move from one institution to another after completion of the bachelor to take a master's degree at another institution. At the moment there are several leagues in which Dutch universities are participating, like Europeum, IDEA-league and EURO-league. However joint degrees should not become the dominant kind of degree in Europe, as we should also foster diversity in programmes.

## **Norway**

Joint degrees will speed up the process of exchange of students and academics between higher education institutions in different countries because 1) an international element will be built into the degree; 2) the formalities connected with exchange will have been dealt with in advance on a systematic level, making the process easy for the persons involved. Number 2) applies for organized exchange programmes as well, whereas No. 1 does not. For academics the development of joint degrees will mean systematic co-operation with institutions in other countries. Whereas such co-operation is well developed in the area of research, it is less so in teaching, and both types of co-operation will benefit from an increase in jointly developed and delivered study programmes. Joint degrees will in their nature often take an international or comparative approach to the field of study in question. This will in itself enhance the students' interest in the other participating countries and increase the probability of their seeking employment there later. Joint degrees will be recognized by all countries involved, which may have a positive effect on the development of mutual recognition processes in general, in addition to facilitating free flow of labour. They will also increase the knowledge and awareness in participating countries of other countries' degree systems and higher education systems in general.

## **Poland**

General remark - the answer to this issue is a complex matter because it has not been the subject of discussion, research or consultations with higher education institutions. The conduct of analyses, starting of co-operation with higher education institutions and their foreign partners - may bring about very positive results that can be used in the works on-implementation of the objectives specified by the Bologna Declaration. It is also difficult to formulate an unanimous answer to the questions asked because within the system in general there is a possibility of acquiring - maybe not entirely "joint" professional titles (not degrees) - but "parallel" titles: Polish and foreign. It is possible on the basis of the agreements - international on the inter-governmental level as well as separate agreements

concluded by the institutions of higher education which offer the programs that envisage the possibility of obtaining some part of the training abroad. This means that the graduate may obtain two independent titles - a Polish title and a title in foreign language. The students of the Polish institutions of higher education (but also the other way round - foreign students) realise some part of the training process abroad which may entitle them to two documents certifying the completion of their studies - according to the agreements cited above. Sometimes the students obtain one diploma (Polish) and a "certificate" of a particular form as the foreign document. Joint actions undertaken by the schools in this area are considered a profitable and desirable solution. However, there is a practical problem - what kind of title would appear on the "joint" diploma - Polish or foreign? Or maybe a joint diploma and a Polish professional title?

## Romania

First of all joint degrees are an imperative necessity to respond to a Europe where mobility is the key word for development. Developing Bachelor and especially joint Bachelor degrees means short time and less money for a complete short time training in higher education to enter directly the Labor Market (not only the internal Labor Market for each country, but also the Labor Market everywhere in Europe) taking into account the increasing mobility promoted by the Bologna Declaration.

Generalization of compulsory *Master* degree for post-academic education (Ph.D. especially) is also an imperative necessity given the quality assurance requirements. Mobility, student exchange and labor market hiring have to be based on the same coordinates, not to give place to discrimination of any kind. A common conception in organizing higher education leads to a common possibility of offering the same opportunities for every one. (see some countries, Romania including where Master degree was not compulsory for being accepted to a Ph.D. program of study, graduates access to Ph.D. being allowed either with *Licenta* degree or the *Master* degree).

From both points of view, Romania has developed a new conception in higher education:

a) - *Bachelor* programs of study have been increased;

- initiatives have been accomplished to move health programs of study from the post-secondary level to higher education level (there are already some colleges - three years short time higher education to train nurses);
- there are debates now to have the nurses training (including dentistry technicians) only at the short time higher education, and to finish with post-secondary sanitary schools for this purpose in Romania;

b) - *Master* degree becomes almost generally compulsory in all Romanian universities to be accepted to Ph.D. studies.

## Slovenia

The development of Joint Degrees will have a very positive impact in many directions in a creation of the European Higher Education Area:

- promotion of mobility
- promotion of European dimension in HE

- promotion of EHEA outside of Europe - its identity and attractiveness
- improvement of employability and competitiveness
- much stronger international co-operation among HE institutions, what is extremely important especially for Slovenian HE

## **Sweden**

The introduction and development of Joint Degrees could be a step towards the fulfilment of several of the objectives of the Bologna declaration. Joint Degrees would stimulate the mobility of students and teachers, promote the European dimension in higher education, make the European Higher Education Area more attractive and competitive, improve employability in Europe, and work as an incentive for quality improvement and mutual recognition of quality assurance. Furthermore it would strengthen the collaboration (in higher education and research) between higher institutions in Europe.

## **Switzerland**

The development of "joint degree"-programs has at this time of the Bologna implementation process for us not a high priority. From our point of view there are more important and more urgent questions which should be clarified on European level first (e.g. Ba/Ma-structural model, ECTS-definitions, admission to Master programs, denomination of diplomas etc.).

How to support joint degree programs? A European project group could e.g. work out a guide/handbook (containing model contracts, checklists, examples of good practice, suggestions for quality assurance instruments etc.) for the planning and implementation of such programs. But finally we have to be aware, that such programs will always have to be developed between specific institutions and those have to give consideration to institutional and national regulations.

## **Cyprus**

The development of joint degrees on Bachelor and/or Master level we believe is going to bring together the higher education systems of the various countries involved in joint degree projects and thus decisively contribute to the convergence of the higher education throughout Europe. Undoubtedly this will have significant impact on the employability and more importantly to the mobility of citizens, as the education systems of more than one country will be reflected in the syllabus of a joint degree. The need to bring together two or more educational systems will require the use of commonly understood levels of qualification and furthermore common credit systems, contributing towards the ECTS compatible credit system. Measures and practices of quality control and accreditation need also to be compatible, thus requesting convergence on the recognition of qualifications of other countries. Cultural elements from the countries collaborating in a joint degree will be enriching such courses and the actual presence of a student in a number of countries will promote cross cultivation and understanding of other cultures and civilisations. Attraction of foreign students from outside Europe is also enhanced through joint degrees due to the specific links each European country has developed historically with various parts of the

world. Life long learning is most likely to be a principal approach in joint degrees to give opportunities to every citizen of Europe to achieve education in a multiphase environment.

## **European Commission**

The development of joint degrees will enhance the quality and attractiveness of European higher education by pooling teaching and learning resources across the continent. More specifically:

- Action line 6: "Promotion of the European dimension in higher education": the joint degree are a direct answer to the request of the ministers for "integrated programmes of study" (Bologna Declaration) and "modules, courses and curricula at all levels with European content orientation or organisation" (Prague Communiqué)"

also, the joint degrees address the concerns of several other Bologna Action lines:

- Action line 4: "Promotion of mobility": notably during first and second cycle studies as mobility is likely to be an obligatory part of joint degrees.
- Action line 5: "Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance": Joint degrees will need to be subject to quality assurance, most likely cross border or "European". Discussion on this aspect is needed.
- Action 7: "Lifelong Learning": joint degrees, notably at masters level, will be attractive for non-traditional learners. Universities should consider a user friendly mode of delivery to accommodate these audiences.
- Action line 9 "Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area": joint degrees will indeed make European higher education more visible and attractive for its own citizens and for students from other continents.

What elements would a joint degree have to comprise in order to be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna Process?

## **Austria**

From the point of view of governmental administration, we can only refer to formal items of the question. The questions referring to contents of study have to be addressed to the higher education institutions.

You will have to find two or more partners with similar fields of study and a similar study architecture, but with different specialities or specialisations.

The most important item is that the partners define very clearly their role and function in the common programme, as far as their contribution (in personal, financial and organisational respects) to certain parts of it, is concerned. Moreover it must be clear which academic degree(s) or qualifications have to be awarded and which effects do they have with regard to the respective national systems, especially as far as professional fights are concerned.

In this context, the various parts of study completed at the single partner institutions should be subject to automatic recognition, regulated generally in advance, and must not be left to a case-by-case decision.

## **Belgium - French Community**

To be a useful instrument in the context of the Bologna process a joint degree should:

- be organized by a minimum of institutions from foreign countries ( min 3),
- be effectively organized by the 3 institutions: the students should really spend a study period in each of the 3 institutions. As such, 3 should also be in a way the maximum number of institutions involved as far as the level of bachelor is concerned.
- at the level of master, the joint degree might involve more institutions without to require necessarily the organization of the courses in each of the involved institutions: those joint degrees might be organized in one of the partners with - the input of all the others.

### **Belgium - Flemish Community**

- number of study countries: 2 or 3
- comparable qualifications descriptors
- organisation of studies: the use of a system of credits (ECTS)
- the student must spend a period of study at both universities (period of study at the partner institution must be at least 1/3 of the total study period)
- jointly organisation/ development approval of programmes - joint degrees must be based on a bilateral agreement

### **France**

European dimension is not only the content of studies, but also a geographic reality. Therefore, although difficult at the beginning, all countries eligible under the Bologna Process should participate. Attention should be given as well curricula developing help to some countries which have a tendency abandoning or denigrating their own diplomas and are only interested in the "western" diploma. All subject areas should be concerned and the content could be informative and accumulative of other European countries' realities, could be comparative of methods and thus be innovating and creative, particularly when a European label, for instance, is at stake.

### **Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany**

The minimal number of countries is obviously two but it should not be more than three either to give the student time to get to know the host countries' higher education systems, culture etc. If the joint degree is offered at Bachelor's level it should preferably be a 4-year programme (like the British sandwich-model). Joint degree programmes at the Master's level might, however, make more sense because the student already has a good foundation of basic study skills, knowledge of foreign languages etc. and can concentrate properly on the study contents. In any case the programmes should be modularised and use credit systems.

## **Hungary**

Programmes should include 2 but preferably more study countries, and students should spend a specified period of time in each participating country. Before developing joint curricula preferably in a credit system, the partner institutions should take into account the national legal regulations. Special attention should be paid for the correspondence of the academic level of the joint degree. An officially issued joint degree should not be subject to case by case recognition process.

## **Greece**

The key point is the choice of the partner institutions and countries for every subject. The partnership should be constructed in such way that it produces maximum results, taken the objectives described in answer 1 for granted. This means that every separate case of co-operation should have its own characteristics as regards on the one hand the choice of the partner institutions and on the other hand the content and organisation of the courses. However, the strategy should be common in any case and should aim at the achievement of the objectives described in answer 1.

## **Italy**

- Students and teachers mobility
- Integrated curricula pre-determined

## **Malta**

I strongly believe that a higher education qualification, which has an academic weighing between 180-240 credits, will be a key feature in the lifelong learning strategy that needs to develop over European Higher Education. At the same time programme leading to this qualification should indeed have different orientations and plants to the issues related to later life and professional development.

## **The Netherlands**

A joint degree should mean that the programme is jointly offered by institutions in more than one country, and maybe even jointly developed. All participating institutions should be (equally) involved. That is offering a joint degree should be clearly different from mutual recognition/accreditation of a degree.

## **Norway**

Both bi-national and multi-national degrees will be useful; the more and the greater variety the better. Any study programme developed and offered jointly by institutions in more than

one country will contribute positively to the internationalization of European higher education. However, the effect is obviously stronger where students are required to spend a specified period of time in another country as part of the programme. The description of modules in terms of credits will make the programmes more flexible and should be encouraged.

## **Poland**

In order to answer the questions in their substance it would be purposeful and desirable to conduct a discussion (analysis, consultations) on joint professional titles. The ministry should undertake appropriate actions to assist and support autonomous activities undertaken by the institutions of higher education.

## **Romania**

Social and economic specificity imposes the main or the number of subjects in the higher education curricula of a country, as well as special trends in training and higher education organization in general. The major subjects are commended and recommended by social and economic progress. But it is also clear that a 3-4 major's curriculum can not be comparable with 7-8 majors one, even taking into account of different culture environment. A closed society, without permanent contacts with other societies and cultures could not survive for long time, diminishing day by day its internal potential of development. That was the case of communist countries, unable to progress as they have persisted themselves in remaining closed cultures. Not accepting external influences or other ways of training, not having technical and special literature support in every field of training meant suffocate the own system of education.

Mobility from a country to another is not possible without, on one side,

- transparent academic tools (scholar documents); from this point of view Diploma Supplement opened a proper way in academic and professional recognition. All the coordinates specified in a Diploma Supplement have to be present in a joint degree document (e.g. number and name of study countries, with a very brief but suggestive presentation of the national higher education system, details or explanations on the content of subjects studied, presentation of the organization of studies in programs or modules etc) and

- on the other side, comparable and readable curricula or programs of study, based on efficiency and quality. They have to respond to the immediate or future (of short or long perspective) needs of the society, as they have to respond to local special needs, but also to general and international needs. The importance and necessity of using ECTS - compatible, providing both assurance and accumulation functions made our universities to introduce credits for academic assessment. The pilot program applied since 1997 is now generalized in Romania.

For the internal needs some University Consortiums have been created by joining several main universities in Romania (e.g. for medicine and engineering field of training). It is a good example to be extended for extension purposes by including some European universities eager to join the given association of interests.



## Slovenia

- at least 2-3 institutions from different countries (4 or even more could be difficult at least in the early age)
- mutual agreement between the institution concerned (admission, defining the possible joint development of programmes, curricula, minimum period of study spent at the partner institution; staff exchange/mobility,)
- the use of system of credits (ECTS).
- basically, this is the issue which must be defined by the institutions themselves, since they have to respect their internal legislation regarding the accreditation and degrees

## Sweden

The countries in Europe should provide a national legal framework for the higher education institutions. The institutions should within the legal framework of their autonomy decide how to co-operate.

The development of Joint Degrees should be determined from below, not from above. The institutions must be free to choose the partner institution(s), the organisation and the content of the courses. Each co-operation should have its own characteristics, the more variety in this field the better. One can identify a few basic elements of Joint Degrees:

- Joint Degrees should require a minimum of two higher education institutions from at least two European countries. Institutions from countries outside Europe should in the long run have the possibility to participate.
- Joint Degrees should require at least one third of the study time should take place in another European country. The Study period should take place during either the first cycle or the second cycle.
- Joint Degrees should require staff mobility, i.e. professors of each participating institution should teach at the other institutions, work out the curriculum and form joint commissions for admissions and examinations.
- Joint Degrees should require a degree of curricular integration. The study programmes and courses should be jointly developed by the institutions.
- Joint Degrees should not be limited to certain subjects or study programmes. The studies leading to a Joint Degree could range from well-structured programs to course units assembled by the student him-/herself as a free-mover.

After completion of the programme the student should either *obtain the national degrees of each participating institution* or *a degree jointly awarded by them*. If the degree is jointly awarded it has to be accepted by all the countries concerned. With the two alternatives outlined above, a joint degree could be more than a mutual recognition or accreditation of a degree.

## Switzerland

- include 2-4 institutions in different countries
- be directed to undergraduate or postgraduate level

- offer real joint diplomas
- offer courses in English and local languages
- include training in cultural awareness

## **Cyprus**

In our opinion a joint degree may involve more than two countries depending on the programme of study although we expect this to be limited to two countries due to the difficulties in managing such programmes i.e. difficulties in setting up and co-ordinating the syllabuses, financial burdens on the participants for relocation, problems of accreditation and recognition of degrees etc.

A joint degree must be organised on the same quality standards of the collaborating institutions and means to ensure this quality levels need to be examined in detail so that recognition and moreover professional legislation is satisfied at least in the countries involved in such an activity. The contents of the subjects to be studied may be slightly modified to suit the specific need, or conditions of the collaborating countries but at the same time maintaining the quality standards.

A joint degree must have a balanced participation of the collaborating countries and must not be used simply as a top up course to give an existing programme in our country ratification from another country. In such case we envisage serious deficiencies in the quality levels and possible financial exploitation of the accreditation methods in certain countries.

## **European Commission**

From the point of view of the Commission, the answer to this question can only be a preliminary one. A list of elements will result from this survey and from the survey carried out by the EVA, supported by the Commission (Socrates programme). The results of the EVA survey will be presented at a conference in Brussels on 20 September 2002. Ten different models will be observed during a pilot scheme in the course of 2002-2003. Nevertheless some possible basic elements could already be identified:

- a minimum of three higher education institutions from three different European countries;
- jointly agreed comparable conditions for admission
- a degree of curricular integration (not just student and staff mobility)
- student and staff mobility
- recognition of periods of study undertaken in partner institutions in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System ECTS;
- the award of a degree (joint, double or multiple) recognised (and if possible accredited) in all the countries concerned
- appropriate students language preparation and assistance.

How would you envisage the legal framework of a joint degree in your national context?

### **Austria**

Some items have to be regulated at general level, e.g. by law. Such items are:

- scope of application, i.e. how should "joint degree programmes" or "double degree programmes" be defined;
- category of studies (should it be a regular study programme within the national systems of the partners involved, or should there exist a specific category for the purpose of common programmes?);
- academic, financial and social status of students involved;
- definition of the parts of study at the partner institutions (minimal and maximal duration) and automatic recognition in the course of the whole programme;
- procedure of common supervision of theses and of common examination boards;
- status of teachers involved in the programme at the respective other partner institution in case of virtual or physical mobility;
- award of academic degree(s) (which ones, in which way, with which effect in the national systems);
- system of a common quality assurance.

Many of these items will have to be made concrete by internal autonomous regulations of the partners concerned.

### **Belgium - French Community**

One of the obstacles in the French Community of Belgium is that to be able to deliver a diploma to a student, that student needs to be enrolled, at least for the last year, in the awarding institution. In that sense, the organization of joint degrees might be difficult unless we would adapt the regulation. A possible solution might be the adoption in all the partner institutions of a structure in credits and not in academic years: each of the partner institutions could organize same credits and the final diploma would be accredited (signed) by all the partners.

### **Belgium - Flemish Community**

At this moment, the Transnational Universiteit Limburg (tUL) can already offer recognised joint degrees. The tUL is a co-operation between the Dutch 'Universiteit Maastricht' and the Flemish 'Limburgs Universitair Centrum'. The tUL can deliver joint degrees on bachelor, master and doctoral level. The tUL is established (2001) by an international agreement between the Governments of the Netherlands and the Flemish Community of Belgium.

In the new legislation - planned for the end of 2002 -, introducing the bachelor- master structure in Flanders as well as accreditation, we foresee also a regulation for joint degrees. This legislation describes the conditions under which joint degrees will be possible. These conditions refers to:

- the necessity of a bilateral agreement
- the necessity of similarity/ comparability of objectives and content of programmes
- the minimum stay of the students at the partner institutions
- the enrolment of students
- the diploma

## France

In France, one might say, the quality assurance procedures have always existed and are almost perfect: any new degrees a HE institution would like to create, as well as requests for renewals (every four years) must be submitted to the national authority (an expert commission, frequently renewed, within the Directorate of Higher Education) which delivers the authorisation (habilitation) to award a degree requested. It is the national procedure which guarantees quality, national coherence and transparency and the French are very much attached to the system. Hence, as it was mentioned in question n° 1, this ministry is actually contacting (and is being contacted) by other countries which have similar HE systems to examine the possibility of delivering a "joint habilitation" or joint accreditation for one single diploma to be jointly awarded by two European countries and institutions. So far, no examples can be given. The French institutions, knowing the legal difficulties for one diploma to be conjointly awarded, have opted for joint degrees, i.e. two diplomas, both recognised by the partners. Here, some interesting examples exist.

## Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany

The legal situation in Germany with regard to joint degrees is defined by two decisions of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture (KMK) of 21 November 1991 (on joint degrees) and of 6 September 1996 (on jointly supervised doctoral theses). Minimal requirements for joint degrees are therefore as follows:

- the programme is offered jointly by a German and at least one foreign higher education institution (normally within a formal co-operation agreement)
- the participating institutions agree on a defined programme and a jointly defined examination procedure
- each participating institution offers a substantial part of the joint programme
- the programme has to lead to a level of education that corresponds to the German degree to be awarded

As for the doctoral level, the Cotutelle-de-thèse model is applied:

ONE degree is awarded on ONE common doctoral certificate with the seal of both participating institutions. The certificate entitles the holder to bear the *Doktor* degree

in Germany and the corresponding degree of the country in which the other institution is situated.

## **Hungary**

In the case of more than two partner institutions the compliance with the national legal regulations of each participating country might be an obstacle.

A recommendation by the signatories of the Bologna Declaration should be worked out containing the clear definition of the term 'joint degree', terminology and principles of developing joint degrees, serving as a code of good practice for the institutions and authorities.

## **Greece**

In Greece, the legal framework for common study programmes leading to joint degrees at the postgraduate level is already in its way to pass from the Parliament in the coming months. On the other hand, the analogous legal framework concerning the undergraduate level is under construction. The idea is that it will be based on the results of the discussions between the Greek and French Universities and Ministries of Education concerning the establishment of such joint degrees. My immediate and spontaneous reaction to this question should be, therefore, that the legal framework in Greece has to be extremely flexible and open to any alternative approach that may appear.

## **Italy**

(This answer is a contribution of Dr Carlo Finocchietti and Ms Silvia Capucci, respectively Director and Deputy Director of NARIC/Italy).

The award of joint degrees is foreseen in the recent reform of Italian University education system (Ministerial Decree 509/99). Art.3 allows Italian Universities, on the legal basis of specific agreements, to award degrees jointly with foreign Universities. In conformity to art. II, the modalities for the awarding of the joint/double degrees are decided upon by individual Institutions in the framework of their autonomy. The provisions for the awarding of such degrees are contemplated in their individual Teaching Regulations ("Regolamento didattico di Ateneo").

The only possible legal obstacles are that the Universities have to comply with the general conditions for the legal validity of degrees. This is a successful example of the award of joint degrees that we have in our country. It is promoted by the allocation of funds of this Ministry, in the framework of the programme for the internationalisation of the University system.

In the case of joint degrees of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level (Bachelor and Master) a double degree is usually awarded (that is two separate degrees). Universities may also issue just one document bearing names, logos and signatures of the two awarding Institutions.

Another successful example is represented by a form of "co-tutelle de thèse". It is due to an agreement between Italy and France which dates back to 1984 and leads to a joint degree (Doctorate).

## **Malta**

The issuing of a joint degree would not be a problem for a small state like Malta. We already have this kind of academic relationships. Perhaps the opening up of new areas to joint degrees could be an affirmative positive asset.

## **The Netherlands**

No special legal framework would be required. A degree is a degree, whether joint or not. In the Netherlands this means that the programme leading to the joint degree shall be subject to regular quality assurance and in future (legislation in preparation) have to be accredited by the Dutch accreditation body, just like regular degrees.

However, the consequences for funding should be taken into account. The main reason is that joint degrees can interfere with the national funding systems.

## **Norway**

Joint degrees are already offered in Norway on the same legal basis as other degrees. The participating Norwegian institution must be accredited to offer degrees at the level and in the field of study in question; if not, it must apply specially to the Ministry of Education and Research to be allowed to award the degree. The procedures and regulations will be the same as for ordinary degrees. The study programme, admission requirements etc. for the joint degree must be in accordance with the general regulations for the appropriate degree level in Norway. As long as the joint degree is *awarded* by a Norwegian institution, it will be recognized in Norway in the same way as other degrees from the institution. The institutions have full responsibility for the quality of their study programmes. For joint degrees this means that the participating Norwegian institution puts its quality stamp on the whole programme, including modules offered by others. The new national quality assurance agency will have the power to review all programmes leading to a degree awarded by a Norwegian institution. As a result of a proposed amendment to the Act relating to universities and colleges, all higher education institutions will be required by law to have fully developed quality assurance systems, which will be subject to audits by the quality assurance agency. These quality assurance systems at institutional level will have to contain provisions relating to the quality assurance of modules delivered by partner institutions or sub-contractors in Norway or abroad.

The amended act will introduce a credit system based on ECTS, which will apply to all study programmes from the autumn of 2003. A full year of study will correspond to 60 "studiepoeng" (credits).

## **Poland**

The legal solutions should enable the following possibilities: joint education (which in the present system is already implemented as the students may obtain part of his/her training abroad or the other way round - foreign students may obtain their training in Poland), issuing joint diplomas - this requires the acceptance of such regulations by the legal system. At present the diploma may be issued only by one institution of higher education - even within the framework of co-operation between national institutions of higher education, therefore such solutions may appear as very useful and in demand.

## Romania

We have already the example of joint curricula or study programs in foreign languages (see Tempus Program) for polytechnic engineering, civil engineering, and economics in co-operation with universities in France and Germany. We have also the experience of SOCRATES programs, but only for periods of study, and here some obstacles have occurred (when back, our students have to pass all the examinations specified in the national curriculum, and there were not precise regulations to accept the foreign experience but only for individual training and development).

Another help and good practice is also the example of *Licenta* degree or Ph.D. in double tutorial "*cotutela*" with scientific tutor from the two involved countries. But all these diplomas awarded abroad have to be submitted to the national local rules of equivalence. Ways of sparing time and assure the required quality of the future employees to be immediately hired have to be found. In this respect, a legal framework at the national level for automatic mutual recognition is to be envisaged for the near future.

## Slovenia

In Slovenia we do not have yet any Joint Degree programmes. We would not need any new special legislation on this issue, since any programme and degree offered by our HE institutions must be accredited by the National Council for Higher Education in accordance with Higher Education Act.

Universities/faculties can apply to the ministry for co-financing the postgraduate/master programmes. One of the important conditions to apply and receive money from the ministry is also established international co-operation of the faculties (common study programmes; networks, credits, visiting professors, how many foreign students apply for the programme, and minimum requirement for students to spent at least 10 % of their study outside home institution.)

The member countries of the CEEPUS programme (A, BG, CZ, H, HR, PL, RO, SK and SI) are preparing new Agreement, where one of the most important issues is going to be the development of the Joint Degrees programmes. This has been already

approved at the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Joint Committee of CEEPUS ministers in Bratislava, March 1, 2002.

### **Sweden**

If the Higher education institution is recognized or approved by the government or the national Agency for Higher Education there is no legal obstacle. There are great opportunities for the Universities to develop and design joint degrees as long as they follow the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. If the institutions cooperate to jointly award a new degree (e.g. European Master, International Master or other), this will require amendments in the Higher Education Ordinance.

### **Switzerland**

The legal framework has to be based on inter-university agreements (see answer 1). The guide should contain as well model contracts for such agreements.

### **Cyprus**

The existing legislation in Cyprus does not allow joint degrees to be offered by tertiary education institutions. This legal restriction is under consideration and is likely to change by the time Cyprus joins the EU.

The usual practice for a number of Cypriots and foreigners studying in public or private tertiary education institutions in Cyprus is to seek enrolment in UK universities as transfer students, a process which is mainly achieved through individual applications rather than established collaboration among the institutions. Furthermore the Cyprus Council for Recognition of Academic Qualifications (KYSATS) requires a significant part (more than 50%) of a degree to be performed at the institution, which awards the degree.

### **European Commission**

Question not applicable to the European Commission.



Are there any fields/study areas in which a joint degree is

- a) particularly useful?
- b) particularly easy or particularly difficult to realize?

## **Austria**

No principal difference as far as certain fields of studies are concerned can be recognized, even not in cases where there exist traditionally national differences like in law programmes. The most important fact is the willingness of two or more institutions to co-operate closely and to trust each other's quality of education.

## **Belgium - French Community**

1. fields of studies where a joint degree would be particularly useful: history, political science human and social science pedagogy
2. fields of studies in which it would be particularly difficult to realize joint degrees: pedagogy, law, due to important differences in the legislation
3. fields of studies in which it would be particularly easy to realize joint degrees: natural sciences, including mathematics, foreign languages, medical and paramedical studies; business education

## **Belgium - Flemish Community**

Useful and easy:

- engineering / architect
- business
- life science

Difficult:

- programmes leading to registered professions
- political and social science
- educational science

## **France**

All subject areas should be tried out. Ministries or other authorities giving out "accreditation" for the award of diplomas could assure the coherence, incite the institutions for pilot projects and assume the quality assurance. A joint degree in regulated professions might be particularly difficult to realise - but nothing a joint commission of experts could not resolve.

## **Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany**

A joint degree seems particularly useful in those fields that are by definition transnational: most of the humanities (history, art history, political science, comparative literature, philologies, philosophy etc.) but also in the social sciences: international and European law, economics and business administration. Joint degree programmes could also be useful in architecture, civil engineering and other engineering sciences.

In Germany joint degree programmes would be probably most difficult to establish in all the disciplines that normally lead to a "Staatsexamen", i.e. the regulated degrees: medicine and related fields, law, school teachers' qualifications.

## **Hungary**

A joint degree can be particularly useful and easy to realize in fields with definite international aspects e.g. economics, international law, computer sciences, and in the field of languages.

It might be difficult to realize a joint degree if a profession requires a different academic level in one country than in the other, and also in the case of programmes leading to a qualification which is a regulated profession in the countries concerned.

## **Greece**

I do not believe that it is possible to define specific fields of study which appear to be particularly useful (but for whom?) or for which joint degrees may be particularly easy or particularly difficult to realise. I strongly believe that such kinds of choices depend largely on the relative strengths of each partner and on the resulting dynamics of the partnership. This means that it is not easy to make exclusions in advance as regards the study fields in which the realisation of joint degrees should be favoured.

## **Italy**

From the point of view of what we have experienced so far, the study areas in which joint degrees are particularly widespread are Economics and Engineering. However, according to what expressed in answer I, we think that joint degrees, are useful in all study areas. Of course, legal obstacles can arise due to the differences existing between academic and professional degrees, between regulated and non-regulated professions and between differences in learning structures of the individual countries.

## Malta

- a) Educational studies, health care, arts, science, humanities, communications would be particularly useful.
- b) I perceive difficulties might arise in degrees pertaining to regulated professions: laws, banking and finance, architecture, pharmacy, etc..

## The Netherlands

- a) A joint degree could be particularly useful in fields of study with a specific international focus (e.g. international law) or with a strong international labour market perspective or in language studies.
- b) Whether or not a joint degree is easy to realise is a question to be answered by the universities themselves. The government in the Netherlands has given them a large autonomy that includes the content of the education and the terms set to the exams. Of course the quality of both research and education is closely monitored. There are however a few exceptions following European guidelines restricting the autonomy. In these cases the university is obliged to take care that their students are offered the opportunity within their curriculum to meet the demands of a specific profession as stated in these guidelines.

## Norway

- a) Joint degrees may be particularly useful where the field of study is of an international or comparative nature, cf. question 1.
- b) In Norway there is no formal difference in statute or regulations between general and professional degrees. For certain regulated professions, authorization depends on the fulfilment of specific conditions. However, with a participating Norwegian institution this should pose few problems. For joint degrees without Norwegian involvement, recognition of *professional* qualifications may be more complicated than in the case of other degrees from foreign universities. For certain professions, e.g. nurses, teachers, and engineers, study programmes must comply with national general plans. Knowledge of Norwegian is a requirement in some cases, e.g. for teachers.

## Poland

The issue of particular usefulness of joint professional titles should be confirmed first of all by the institutions of higher education - from the point of view of the ministry this means opening for the contacts with other countries, enabling the exchange of academic and didactic experiences of the institution, exchange of achievements and work of the academic personnel and students, enriching the experience both in the area of didactics as well as in academic activities, enabling the recognition of diplomas obtained abroad - without the necessity of nostrification (which requires some changes in Polish legislation), enhancing the quality of education and in effect - the quality of education of the graduates of the Polish institutions of higher education.

## Romania

- a) joint degrees in the economic field, for instance, are particularly useful for general development of each country and Europe in its unity
- b) particularly easy for philology (foreign languages and literatures studies)
- c) particularly difficult for lawyers, doctors

### **Slovenia**

- all subjects should have the possibility

### **Sweden**

Joint Degrees are useful in all fields/study areas. It is difficult to point out specific areas where joint degrees are particularly useful, or to exclude certain study fields. The higher education institutions should decide which areas are best for the development of joint degrees.

Possibly, it might be easier to start with Joint Degrees within the general degrees that constitute a large part of the degrees taken in Sweden. Professional degrees could be more difficult to realize since the higher education institutions have less freedom to decide on the curriculum concerning these in Sweden (in Sweden, the professional degrees are more regulated than the general degrees). On the other hand, the collaboration between higher institutions in Europe is more developed in some professional degrees, e.g. economics and engineering, and the demand from the labour market is bigger.

### **Switzerland**

- a) In all fields of studies, especially in small disciplines in disciplines with high research impact in interdisciplinary fields
- b) It is very difficult to realise such programs for regulated academic professions.

### **Cyprus**

Joint degrees may be proved to be useful in studies like Archaeology, Byzantine and Greek studies. Joint degrees will be particularly useful and most welcomed by the Private Tertiary Education Institutions of Cyprus which will exploit further their relationships already established with a number of UK and USA Universities. This will help them to attract more students from countries such as China, Bangladesh, India and the Middle East countries.

A joint degree as long as is provided by a recognised institution or accredited programme, we envisage that there will be no difficulty in the satisfaction of the requirements for practising any regulated profession.

### **European Commission**

Particularly useful: The European Commission publishes annually a General Call for Proposals in the framework of the Socrates Programme, notably for curriculum development projects. Topics come from the political agenda inspired by societal needs. They link in with the priorities of the Commission research programmes. Recurrent themes are the intercultural dialogue, integration of ethics in subject areas, environmental issues, interdisciplinarity, ICT and biotechnology. At this macro level, the Socrates-Erasmus Thematic Networks could play an important role identifying future needs in consultation with the world of enterprise. At micro level, universities might want to pool resources in order to offer a more complete and attractive programme to their students

Particularly easy or particularly difficult to realise: Question hard to answer for the Commission. Joint degrees are probably more difficult in areas where the university has less freedom to decide on the organisation of the curriculum and the examination. Differs from country to country and from discipline to discipline

What issues related to the award of joint degrees are the most important to address?

### **Austria**

- award of academic degree(s) and their effects;
- full automatic academic recognition of all parts of the programme between the partner institutions;
- a good system of supporting students.

### **Belgium - French Community**

Most important issues to address:

- recognition issues,
- quality assurance issues,
- national legal framework
- further fights: academic and professional in each countries

### **Belgium - Flemish Community**

- quality assurance:

Accreditation based on comparable descriptors and criteria should facilitate the award of joint degrees. From this point of view, the development of an - international - accreditation mechanism will be an important instrument.

- The position of the student: enrolment, grants, social security
- The added value of joint degrees for students and employers.

### **France**

- convincing society of the interest of joint European degrees including students;
- incite the institutions to present common pilot projects;
- recognition issues;
- quality assurance problems
- fear of losing time

### **Association of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions in Germany**

Quality assurance is certainly the crucial issue from which recognition and the rest will follow: In order to promote the creation of European joint degrees on a larger scale, mechanisms of quality assurance and accreditation at the European level have to be set up. This will allow a joint degree programme to obtain accreditation only in one country, with the other participating country (or countries) recognising automatically the accreditation decision.

## **Hungary**

- Definition of the term 'joint degree'
- Quality assurance

## **Greece**

I believe that this question has to be answered in two different points: The first point has to do with the characteristics of the partnerships. Concerning this point, the first priority should be how to draw the strategy of the partnership, i.e. how to set the specific objectives and how to take advantage of the strengths of each partner in order to improve the dynamics of the partnership as a whole. The second point has to do with the European environment. Issues concerning recognition, quality and mobility should be primarily addressed. At the same time, however, and specifically for countries like Greece, the problem of the language of instruction should be put also at the top of the agenda.

## **Italy**

- removing the obstacles to mobility for students and teachers. If academic mobility increases, the need for mutual recognition of periods of study and mutual agreements on joint degrees will increase. This process will be able to prepare the ground for recognition/accreditation.
- the use of ECTS
- the use of the Diploma Supplement
- the harmonisation of good practices

In other words, we think that the awarding of joint degrees, if successfully widespread and practised by Universities all over Europe, can spark off a propulsive "chain reaction" leading to possible solutions, agreed at general level, about the delicate issues of Quality Assurance and recognition/accreditation.

## **Malta**

I would put them in this order:

- Labour market relevance
- Degree structures within national boundaries
- Transparency and comparability of core skills

## **The Netherlands**

See my answer to question 3. We should address:

- Mutual accreditation/recognition is an important development, which should be supported as much as possible.
- International agreements about funding of joint degrees.

### **Norway**

The first priority should perhaps be to establish a common understanding of what is meant by joint degrees and make generally known their position and legal status in the higher education systems of different countries. The ongoing initiatives for mutual recognition of national quality assurance systems are very important in this context. As long as the foreign partner is a recognized or accredited institution in its own country, recognition should pose few problems, at least in a Norwegian context. It should be understood, however, that an institution offering a joint degree takes responsibility for the quality of the entire study programme, and that national quality assurance authorities in the country where the degree is awarded must have the power to review all parts of the programme.

### **Poland**

We should consider the following issues: recognition of education, of course the issue of quality guarantees of the achieved education or last but not least the work on the indispensable changes in the legislation. The list of necessary actions should be completed - after consultations of the issue within the academic environment.

### **Romania**

If quality requirements are accomplished, recognition process is easier and it could even become automatically done with the time, when confidence and trust in the given external training is reached. Therefore, quality assurance has to have priority in any case. Recognition issues have also to be improved for sparing time and gaining professional confidence.

### **Slovenia**

- recognition issues
- use of the ECTS and Diploma Supplement
- quality assurance
- agreements/contracts between the institutions concerned
- possible definition of the term Joint Degrees

### **Sweden**

Some important issues to address:



- To establish a common view/definition of Joint Degrees.
- The development of mutual agreements based on the recognition of quality assurance systems. This is important if Joint Degrees are one degree jointly awarded by the higher education institutions.
- The development of mutual recognition or accreditation of a degree. This is important if Joint Degrees are two (separate) national degrees of each participating institution.
- Increasing mobility for students and teachers. If mobility increases the demand for joint degrees will increase.

### **Switzerland**

Important issues:

- develop model contracts (to reduce administrative burden)
- facilitation of recognition
- courses in 2-3 languages
- suggest instruments for quality assurance

### **Cyprus**

In our opinion the issues to address for joint degrees in order of priority are the following:

- Quality assurance issues . The recognition issues
- The legal issues
- The balanced participation of each collaborating institution

### **European Commission**

- typology
- degree of course integration
- modes of delivery
- full programme by each of the partners
- full programme delivered by one partner (other partners contribute with students and teachers
- mixed delivery (basic programme by each of the partners, teaching and student mobility, joint summer courses)
- recognition issues degree: joint, double or multiple degrees recognised (and if possible accredited) in all the countries concerned for academic and professional purposes
- quality assurance: at task of the national quality assurance systems or a need for cross-border /European quality assurance?