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FINAL REPORT

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Contractor:
 **PPMI**
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The conclusions, recommendations and opinions in this report are those of the authors and they do not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission

TABLES AND FIGURES.....	2
ACRONYMS.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	5
1. CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAMME	6
1.1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK	6
1.2. INTERNATIONALISATION OF EU HIGHER EDUCATION.....	6
1.3. HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF EU EXTERNAL AID	8
1.4. INCORPORATION OF THE EU INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES	9
2. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME.....	10
2.1. GENERAL ASPECTS	10
2.2. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND BUDGET	10
2.2.1. Action 1	11
2.2.2. Action 2	11
2.2.3. Action 3	12
2.3. ERASMUS MUNDUS II NOVELTIES.....	12
2.4. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF ERASMUS MUNDUS II	13
3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	15
3.1. INTERVENTION LOGIC	15
3.2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION	16
3.3. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATION.....	17
4. EVALUATION RESULTS.....	18
4.1. RELEVANCE.....	18
4.2. EFFECTIVENESS	29
4.3. SUSTAINABILITY	75
4.4. EFFICIENCY	88
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	111
RELEVANCE	111
EFFECTIVENESS.....	113
SUSTAINABILITY	119
EFFICIENCY	121
ANNEXES (PROVIDED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT).....	130
ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE INTERIM EVALUATION	130
ANNEX 2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	130
ANNEX 3. ANALYSIS OF THE MONITORING DATA.....	130
ANNEX 4. THE EU-LEVEL AND NATIONAL LEVEL CASE STUDIES.....	130
ANNEX 5. LIST OF INTERVIEWS	130
ANNEX 6. THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESULTS	130

Tables:

Table 1. Comparison of Erasmus Mundus phase I and phase II actions	13
Table 2. Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of EM II and the LLP, Youth in Action, TEMPUS, Alfa, Edulink and “People” specific programme	23
Table 3. Assessment of the formal links between the objectives of “Youth on the Move” and EM II	33
Table 4. Double, joint and multiple degrees.....	36
Table 5. Legislative and administrative changes – survey results (% responses)	36
Table 6. A comparison of scholarship schemes and their benefits	92
Table 7. Success rates of applications for Erasmus Mundus projects during the 2009-2011 period	97
Table 8. Assessment of the aspects of the project preparation and implementation (How would you evaluate the following aspects of the preparation and implementation of the project?)	98
Table 9. Necessary changes to improve the promotion of the successor programme (percentage of respondents who strongly agree or rather agree)	104
Table 10. Main instruments employed during the programme promotion and the provision of advice to applicants and beneficiaries of the Erasmus Mundus programme?	106
Table 11. Main conclusions and recommendations	124

Figures:

Figure 1. Analytical model of internationalisation of higher education	7
Figure 2. Breakdown of Erasmus Mundus budget among its actions	11
Figure 3. Management structure of the Erasmus Mundus programme.....	14
Figure 4. Hierarchy of objectives for the Erasmus Mundus II programme	16
Figure 5. Evaluation design.....	17
Figure 6. Relevance of EM II objectives: the views of participating students, scholars and academic staff	19
Figure 7. Relevance of Action 1 specific objectives: the view of institutional beneficiaries	20
Figure 8. Opinions of institutional beneficiaries regarding potential conflict between the two objectives of EM II ..	21
Figure 9. The extent to which the structure of the programme is transparent to the institutional beneficiaries	26
Figure 10. The views of Action 1 institutional beneficiaries on the benefits of studying in more than one country and in joint programmes	28
Figure 11. Prevalence of obstacles relating to joint degrees.....	43
Figure 12. Opinions of institutional beneficiaries regarding awareness and perception of the Erasmus Mundus brand	46
Figure 13. Action 1: influence on students' skills.....	51
Figure 14. Action 2: influence on students' skills.....	52
Figure 15. Employment status of Action 2 beneficiaries	53
Figure 16. Share of women in mobility flows, Action 1	59
Figure 17. Gender balance among Action 2 beneficiaries	61
Figure 18. Regional focus in Actions 2 and 3	64
Figure 19. Subject area coverage.....	65
Figure 20. Difficulties in attracting outstanding students	68
Figure 21. Comparison of Erasmus Mundus, Fulbright and DAAD outputs.....	89
Figure 22. Opinion of individual Action 2 beneficiaries regarding the competitiveness of an Erasmus Mundus scholarship in relation to other scholarship schemes	92
Figure 23: Opinion of institutional beneficiaries regarding likelihood of their projects/ activities taking place without funding from the Erasmus Mundus programme	94
Figure 24. Opinion of institutional Action 1 and Action 2 beneficiaries regarding category B scholarship attractiveness to European students.....	94
Figure 25. Significance of EM in total outgoing mobility flows (%)	95
Figure 26. Erasmus Mundus selection process.....	98

Figure 27. Assessment of joint project governance for Action 1 and Action 2 (Percentage of respondents who strongly agree or rather agree)	101
Figure 28. Assessment of the support and guidance from EACEA by the institutional beneficiaries (Percentage of the respondents who are very positive and rather positive)	106

ARWU	Academic Ranking of World Universities
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
DCI	Development Co-operation Instrument
DG	Directorate General
DG DEVCO	DG Development and Cooperation
DG EAC	DG Education and Culture
DG ENLARG	DG Enlargement
EACEA	The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ECW	External Cooperation Window
EDF	European Development Fund
EEAS	European External Action Service
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EM	Erasmus Mundus
EMA	Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association
EMJD	Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate
EMMC	Erasmus Mundus Masters Course
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ERC	European Research Council
ET2020	Education and Training 2020
EU12	Member States which joined the EU in 2004 or later: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia
EU15	Member States which joined the EU prior to 2004
EUA	European University Association
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher education institution
ICI	Industrialised Countries Instrument
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
ToR	Terms of Reference

The 2009-2013 EM programme was established by the Decision (No 1298/2008/EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 with the aim to enhance the quality of European higher education and to promote dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures through cooperation with third countries as well as to promote external policy objectives and the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education.

The interim evaluation of the EM programme was launched by the European Commission following the requirements of the EM Decision. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency of the programme, paying particular attention to the novelties introduced in phase II of the programme. This evaluation covered all three actions (Action 1, Action 2 and Action 3) over the implementation period of 2009-2011.

This Final Report was prepared under the Specific Contract No. EAC-2011-0255 “Interim evaluation of Erasmus Mundus II (2009-2013)”. The evaluation was carried out by the Public Policy and Management Institute (Lithuania) and steered by the Steering Group involving the Directorate-Generals of the European Commission (Education and Culture; Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid; Enlargement and the European External Action Service) and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. The Final Report is based on the data collected and analysed during the evaluation project.

The Final Report is divided into the following parts:

- Introduction;
- Part 1: Context of the programme;
- Part 2: Design and implementation of the programme;
- Part 3: Evaluation framework;
- Part 4: Evaluation results according to each evaluation criterion and question;
- Conclusions and recommendations;
- Annexes to the Final Report.

In addition, a number of annexes are attached to this evaluation report presenting technical details of the evaluation and additional information. Annex 1 contains the Terms of Reference of the EM interim evaluation. Annex 2 presents the overall methodology of this evaluation. Analysis of the EM monitoring data is laid out in Annex 3. The case studies of Action 1, Action 2 and Action 3 projects and the horizontal case study are outlined in Annex 4. A list of EU-level and national-level interviews is presented in Annex 5. The survey questionnaires and results are provided in Annex 6.

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAMME

1.1. Development of the legal framework

Opening up European education to third countries has been emphasised as a priority since the late 1990s, as part of the EU's strategy to become a leading knowledge-driven economy and compete for the most talented students and scholars on a global scale.

The following key developments constitute the political context of Erasmus Mundus:

- The European Ministers of Education, meeting in Bologna (1999), emphasised that "Europe's higher education sector should acquire a degree of attractiveness in the wider world equal to Europe's major cultural and scientific achievements". **The Bologna declaration** laid down six objectives: adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees; adoption of a system based on two cycles: undergraduate and graduate; Establishment of a system of credits (ECTS system, diploma supplement); Mobility of students and teachers; promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance; promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education. All but the last of these objectives, though having been developed with time, still stand as the core objectives of the Bologna process. Despite its status of intergovernmental cooperation, the Bologna process was explicitly linked with the EU strategic documents in the area of HE;
- In its conclusions of March 2000 the Lisbon European Council adopted **the Lisbon strategy**, which underlined the need to reach a knowledge-driven economy for the EU. This strategy recognised the importance of extending transnational co-operation and mobility in the field of HE beyond the EU (and Europe's immediate neighbours) to third countries;
- The Stockholm European Council in 2001 laid down three strategic objectives for education and training policies that included the objective of opening up education and training systems to the wider world. These strategic objectives were operationalised in the **Education and Training 2010 work programme** that was adopted in 2002. The Open Method of Coordination was applied in implementing this programme through the instruments of indicators and benchmarks, and exchange of good practice and peer review.

Beyond the strategic scope of 2010, the framework of the **Europe 2020 Strategy** should be mentioned. The renewed strategy focuses on knowledge innovation for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth in order to achieve more and better jobs. In addition, an updated strategic framework for cooperation in education and training policies was adopted in 2009 (with four strategic objectives) as a follow-up to the Education and Training 2010 programme. The new strategic framework includes the so-called flagship initiatives with "Youth on the Move" being a key initiative. Within this context, Erasmus Mundus provides a platform for exchange with third countries, while the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), also contributing to the development of European HE, focuses on exchanges among the EU Member States and candidate countries, as well as EEA.

1.2. Internationalisation of EU higher education

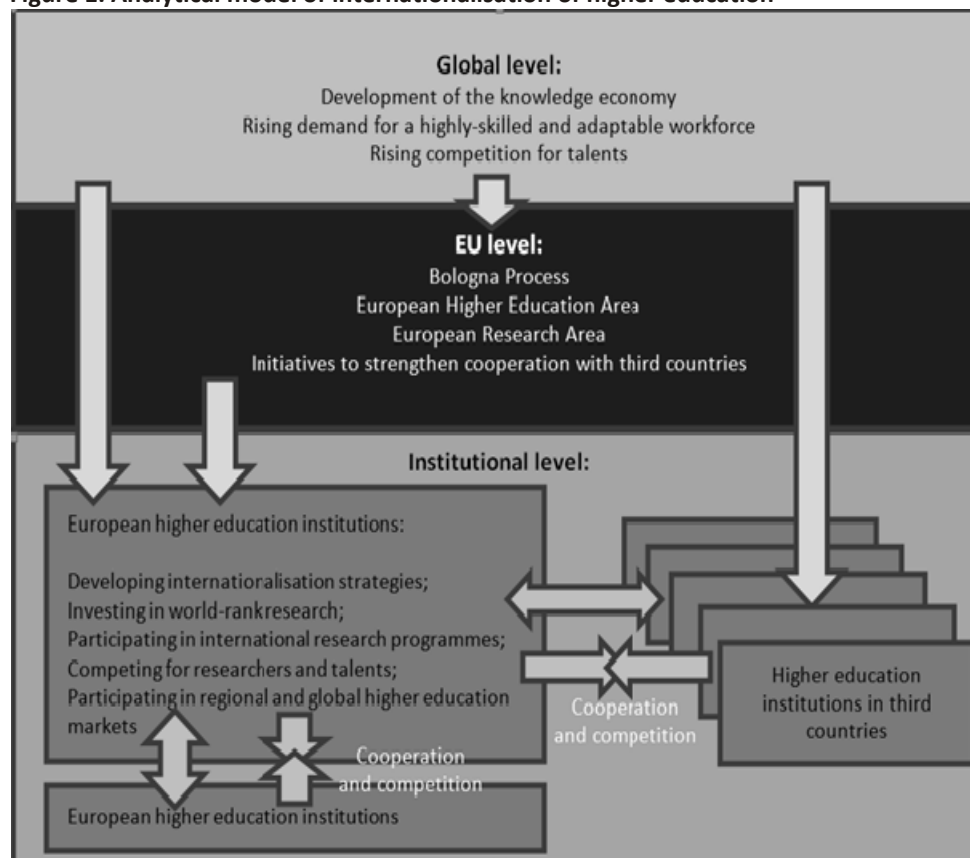
European HEIs and HEIs from the third countries are influenced by the same global factors, which determine their internationalisation activities. Rising competition in the global knowledge economy, and subsequent increased demand for a highly skilled and adaptable workforce are issues, which significantly affect the role of universities in contemporary societies. These issues are widely addressed in the Lisbon strategy and accordingly reflected in EU policy documents on higher education. The same issues also shape the policies of other regions around the world.

The Commission has published various relevant policy documents emphasising the need to strengthen European higher education. A Communication in 2005, **Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy**,¹ stressed the need to continue the reform process already underway in higher education as critical from the Lisbon perspective. Another Commission Communication on **Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: education, research and innovation**² sets out key issues in relation to the on-going modernisation of HEIs within Europe and examines the inter-relationship between education, research and innovation and the critical role this will play in helping to achieve the wider Lisbon objectives.

The importance of internationalising higher education was recognised by the Council. First, in 2007 the Council adopted the resolution on **Modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy**.³ More recently, the Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on **Internationalisation of higher education** gave political support to the objective of internationalisation and confirmed a strong external dimension of higher education within the EU.

The analytical model illustrating both general and specific factors encouraging the process of higher education internationalisation are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Analytical model of internationalisation of higher education



Source: Own compilation.

The objective of internationalisation of higher education is recognised by the EU strategic documents and integrated in the Erasmus Mundus programme, which provides opportunities for cooperation between European and non-European HEIs. The generally very positive assessments of EM provided by its interim evaluation and ex-post evaluation indicate that the programme has made a strong contribution to enhancing the

¹ Communication from the Commission – Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy. Brussels, 20.4.2005 (COM/2005/0152)

² Communication of 10 May 2006 from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament – Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation (COM(2006) 208 final)

³ Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy (16096/1/07)

attractiveness of European HE, strengthening its European dimension – and attracting students of high quality to courses organised on a co-operative European basis.

1.3. Higher education in the context of EU external aid

The EU's development aid programmes are managed by DEVCO – EuropeAid, which is a new Directorate-General responsible for designing EU development policies and delivering aid through programmes and projects across the world. This DG implements the external aid instruments of the European Commission. These instruments are thematic and geographic. The geographical instruments contributing to the EM II funding include:

- **European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)**, which includes Mediterranean and Caucasus countries, as well as Moldova, Russia and Ukraine;
- **European Development Fund (EDF)**, which includes African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the overseas territories of EU Member States;
- **Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI)** regional actions, which encompass Latin America, Asia and Central Asia, and the Gulf region and South Africa;
- **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)**, which provides assistance to both potential candidates and candidate countries (the Western Balkan countries, Turkey and Iceland);
- **Financing Instrument for Industrialised Countries (ICI)**, which provides assistance to industrialised and other high-income countries.

In addition to Erasmus Mundus, several other programmes in the field of education are being/have been implemented to foster academic cooperation:

- **European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grants** allow young researchers from around the world to make the transition from working under a supervisor to becoming an independent research leader at an early stage in their research career. ERC Advanced Grants encourage and support innovative research projects initiated and carried out by leading investigators from around the world;
- **The Tempus programme** places strong emphasis on institution-based university cooperation, with the participation of EU Member States and countries in the Western Balkans, Central European and Central Asian countries, Mediterranean Partners and Russia. It emphasises quality and collaborative partnerships, as well as student mobility, sharing of best practice and awareness of available EU funding.⁴
- Cooperation in education and science is prioritised and allocated EUR 44 million in the Commission's **Regional Programming for Asia Strategy Paper (2007-2013)**.⁵ It encompasses Erasmus Mundus Partnerships and research activities.
- The **EUforAsia Programme** is a network of research institutes co-funded by the European Commission to promote better understanding within Europe of the Asian region.
- The **Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN)** provides large capacity Internet connection to universities, research centres and academic institutions.
- The **Asia Link** was set up by the European Commission in 2002 to promote sustainable regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions (HEI) in Europe and developing countries in Asia.
- The **Central Asia Research and Education Network (CAREN)**, launched in January 2009, provides high speed internet for researchers, educators and students in education and research institutions in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- **ALFA** is a programme of cooperation between Higher Education Institutions of the European Union and Latin America. It includes networks and student mobility at masters and doctorate level and professional training.
- In 2002 the European Commission adopted the **Alfa Programme**, "high level scholarships" specifically addressed to Latin American citizens, with duration until 2010. This was a uni-directional programme, allowing individual students to do some of their studies at European HEIs.

⁴ Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services.

⁵ European Commission. 2007. Regional Programming for Asia. Strategy document 2007-2013. Available online at: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/asia/rsp/07_13_en.pdf.

- **Cooperation with neighbouring Mediterranean countries** prioritises the spheres of justice, security and migration; sustainable economic development; and socio-cultural exchanges. The Euro-Mediterranean Regional Cooperation aims to strengthen academic cooperation among HEIs, through supporting modernisation in higher education and providing mobility grants, and enhance understanding between cultures.⁶
- **EduLink**, operating in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries aims to foster capacity building and regional integration in the field of higher education through institutional networking, and to support a higher education system of quality, which is efficient and relevant to the needs of the labour market, and consistent with ACP socio-economic development priorities.⁷

1.4. Incorporation of the EU international programmes

Despite increasing policy dialogues with EU neighbours and the main strategic partners under the impetus of international higher education programmes, the potential of EU higher education institutions to fulfil their role in society and to contribute to Europe's prosperity in an increasingly international context is still underexploited.⁸ As a result, the European Commission was asked by the Member States to make proposals for the **EU internationalisation strategy** in higher education.

As a result, in June 2011 the future single programme in the area of education, training, youth and sport was proposed in a Communication of the European Commission on a **Budget for Europe 2020**. The proposed new programme should incorporate existing international programmes such as Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa and EduLink and cooperation programmes with industrialised countries under the same instrument. Acknowledging that the high level of investments in the education and training sector do not always correlate with the problems to be solved and that the EU cannot intervene with the same level of intensity or the same tools in each identified problem, the programme will give priority to the most effective combination of tools and to the clearly defined targets for investment.⁹

Incorporation of the current programmes along with a simplification of funding rules and procedures should put an end to the current fragmentation of EU instruments supporting international cooperation in higher education.

⁶ EuropeAid Cooperation Office. 2008. Regional Cooperation. An overview of programmes and projects Available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/documents/infonotes_enpisouth_regional_cooperation_en.pdf

⁷ About EduLink: <http://www.acp-edulink.eu/node/23>

⁸ Council conclusions of May 11 2010 on the internationalisation of higher education. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 12-14.

⁹ European Commission, *Impact Assessment on International Cooperation in Higher Education*. Commission Staff Working Paper. Brussels, 23 November 2011, p. 10



2. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

2.1. General aspects

Erasmus Mundus is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education for:

- The enhancement of quality in European higher education;
- The promotion of the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning around the world;
- The promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries as well as for the development of third countries in the field of higher education.

The decision establishing Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 16 December 2008 (Decision No 1298/2008/EC).¹⁰ The programme has an overall budget of EUR 470 million for Actions 1 and 3 and an indicative budget of EUR 460 million for Action 2. It continues and extends the scope of activities already launched during the first phase of the programme (2004-2008) and includes the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window scheme (ECW), which was launched in 2006 as a complement to the original programme.

Since the introduction of Erasmus Mundus some 25,000 students (three quarters of whom are from non-EU countries) have benefited from the programme by receiving a scholarship to study abroad and some 3,000 academics have had the opportunity to teach or conduct research activities in the framework of joint courses or partnerships of Erasmus Mundus. In addition, around 5,000 students and alumni are now members of the Erasmus Mundus Alumni Association (EMA) that plays an increasingly crucial role in the promotion of the programme worldwide and has brought about the constitution of a strategic network.

2.2. Programme structure and budget

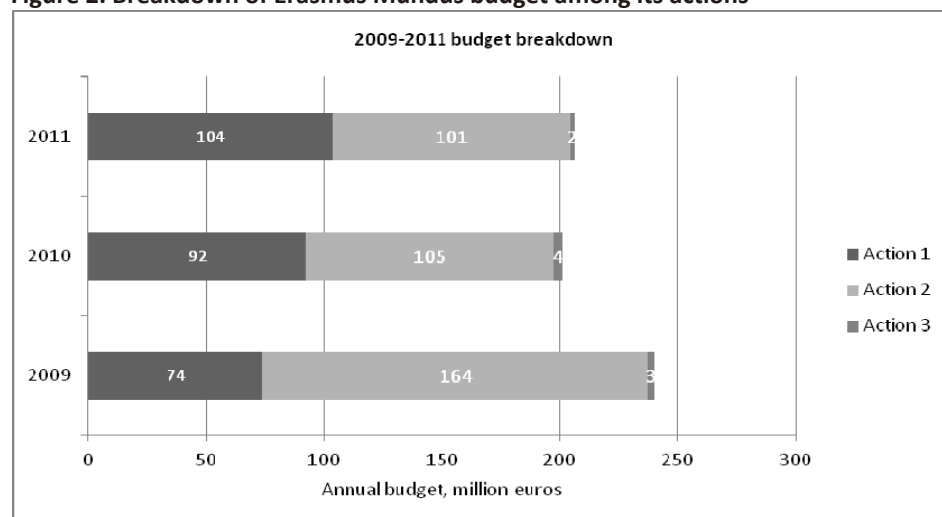
Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 is implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 1:** Erasmus Mundus joint programmes of outstanding quality at masters and doctoral levels including scholarships/fellowships to participate in these programmes;
- **Action 2:** Erasmus Mundus Partnerships between European and third country higher education institutions including scholarships and fellowships for mobility at all academic levels;
- **Action 3:** Promotion of European higher education through projects to enhance the attractiveness of Europe as an educational destination and a centre of excellence at world level.

Erasmus Mundus has a budget of over EUR 950 million, with EUR 493.69 million allocated to Actions 1 and 3 from the EU's education budget and EUR 460 million allotted to Action 2 from a number of different funding instruments (e.g. DCI, ENPI, and IPA). An indicative breakdown of the programme's yearly budget among its actions in the 2009-2011 period is presented in Figure 2. After the integration of phase I "External Cooperation Window" into the programme as Action 2, the 2010 EM budget in comparison to the previous year decreased from EUR 241 million to EUR 201 million. The 2011 programme budget remained at a similar level compared to the previous year.

¹⁰ Decision No 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries. OJ 340, 19.12.2008, p. 83.

Figure 2. Breakdown of Erasmus Mundus budget among its actions



Source: Terms of Reference.

2.2.1. Action 1

Action 1 provides:

- Support for high-quality joint masters courses (Action 1 A) and doctoral programmes (Action 1 B) offered by a consortium of European and possibly third-country HEIs. Other types of organisations concerned by the content and outcomes of the joint programme can participate in the consortium;
- Scholarships/fellowships for the third-country and European students/doctoral candidates respectively to follow these Erasmus Mundus joint masters courses and doctoral programmes;
- Short-term scholarships for third-country and European academics to carry out research or teaching assignments as part of the joint masters programmes.

This Action fosters cooperation between HEIs and academic staff in Europe and third countries with a view to creating poles of excellence and providing highly trained human resources. Joint programmes under this Action must involve mobility between institutions included in the consortium and lead to the award of recognised joint, double or multiple degrees to successful students/doctoral candidates.

2.2.2. Action 2

Erasmus Mundus Partnerships aim at promoting institutional cooperation and mobility activities between Europe and third-country HEIs. This Action is built on the previous EU programme External Cooperation Window (2006-2008) with a wider geographical coverage, a larger scope and differentiated objectives.

Action 2 is divided into two strands:

- EMA2 STRAND1: Partnerships with countries covered by the ENPI, DCI, EDF and IPA instruments (former External Cooperation Window);
- EMA2 STRAND2: Partnerships with countries and territories covered by the Industrialised Countries Instrument (ICI).

Action 2 provides:

- Support for the establishment of cooperation partnerships between European HEIs and HEIs from targeted third countries/territories with the objective of organising and implementing structured individual mobility arrangements between the European and the third-country/territories partners;
- Scholarships of various lengths depending on the priorities defined for the third countries/territories concerned, the level of studies or the particular arrangements agreed within the partnership for European and third-country/territory individuals (students and staff (academic and administrative)).

Like Action 1, the two strands of Action 2 pursue objectives of excellence. In addition, EMA2-STRAND1 aims specifically at development objectives.

Contrary to Actions 1 and 3, which are funded from the budget of the European Union allocated to education activities, Action 2 activities are funded by different financial instruments available in the context of the external relations activities of the Union (i.e. ENPI, IPA, DCI, EDF, ICI). Because of the diversity in the policy objectives covered by these financial instruments, but also due to the different needs and priorities of the third countries concerned, Action 2 implementation rules may vary considerably from one year to another and from one partner country to another.

2.2.3. Action 3

Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, and curriculum development and mobility.

Action 3 activities may include the promotion of the Erasmus Mundus Programme and its outputs, and can be implemented by mixed networks of European and third-country organisations active in the field of higher education. This may take various forms (conferences, seminars, workshops, studies, analyses, pilot projects, prizes, international networks, production of material for publication, development of information, communication and technology tools) and take place anywhere in the world.

Action 3 activities shall seek to establish links between HE and research and HE and the private sector in European and third countries, and exploit potential synergies whenever possible.

2.3. Erasmus Mundus II novelties

While phase II of the Erasmus Mundus programme (2009 – 2013) ensures continuity to EM phase I (2004-2008), a number of programme modifications and extensions should be noted. Although phase II continues to support world-class integrated masters programmes in Europe and scholarships for the best international students and academics, phase II has widened the programme scope by incorporating the following key new dimensions:

- Extending joint programmes to the doctoral level;
 - Offering scholarships for European students;
 - Integrating the “External Cooperation Window” scheme into the EM programme as Action 2 “Erasmus Mundus partnerships”, with a wider scope including all levels of HE – bachelor, doctoral and post-doctoral – and other forms of cooperation with third countries;
- Allowing third-country HEIs to participate in the EM joint programmes.

Table 1 below indicates the main differences between phase I and II of the Erasmus Mundus programme across its actions. According to the Terms of Reference of this interim evaluation, emphasis should be placed on the novelties introduced under phase II of the programme during this assessment.

Table 1. Comparison of Erasmus Mundus phase I and phase II actions

Erasmus Mundus 2004-2008	Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013
<p>Action 1: supported the development of joint masters courses (EMMCs), involving HEIs from at least three EU Member States.</p> <p>Action 2: provided scholarships to highly-qualified graduate students from “third countries” (countries outside the EU, EEA and candidate countries) to attend Erasmus Mundus courses, and to third-country “scholars” (academics) to spend short mobility periods at HEIs which hosted Erasmus Mundus courses</p>	<p>Action 1: Erasmus Mundus joint masters (Action 1A) and Erasmus Mundus joint doctoral (Action 1B) programmes, including scholarships and fellowships schemes, are key components of the Erasmus Mundus Programme. These two sub-actions are designed as high-quality integrated courses at masters or doctoral level organised and offered by a supporting Consortium composed of at least three universities/HEIs from at least three different European countries (The Consortia supporting the Erasmus Mundus masters and doctoral programmes have been, in the new EM phase II (2009 – 2013) opened to third-country institutions, which are invited to participate in the programme on the same footing as the European HEIs).</p> <p>Within Erasmus Mundus 2009 – 2013, in contrast to the previous generation of the programme, European students are also offered scholarships in order to participate in the EM masters or doctoral courses as grantees</p>
<p>Action 3: supported structural cooperation between Erasmus Mundus consortia and HEIs in third countries and, within this framework, funded scholarships for EU students and scholars to spend mobility periods at the third-country partner institutions</p>	<p>Action 2: Erasmus Mundus Partnerships supports the creation of large Partnerships between European universities and universities from targeted non-European countries or regions as a basis for structured cooperation and the implementation of sustainable mobility flows from and, if applicable, to the target non-European countries/regions at all HE levels (from bachelor to post-doctorate, including academic and administrative university staff). Action 2 supports the interuniversity cooperation activities implemented by the partnership and provides a scholarship scheme covering the mobility costs of students and staff</p>
<p>Action 4: financed more general, project-based supporting measures and studies that sought to promote awareness of, and access to EU HE worldwide</p>	<p>Action 3: Activities under Action 3 aim to improve the visibility and the accessibility of European HE, to support better co-ordination and networking activities of the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (acting as EM National Structures, see 2.4.2), and to support other issues related with the internationalisation of HE</p>

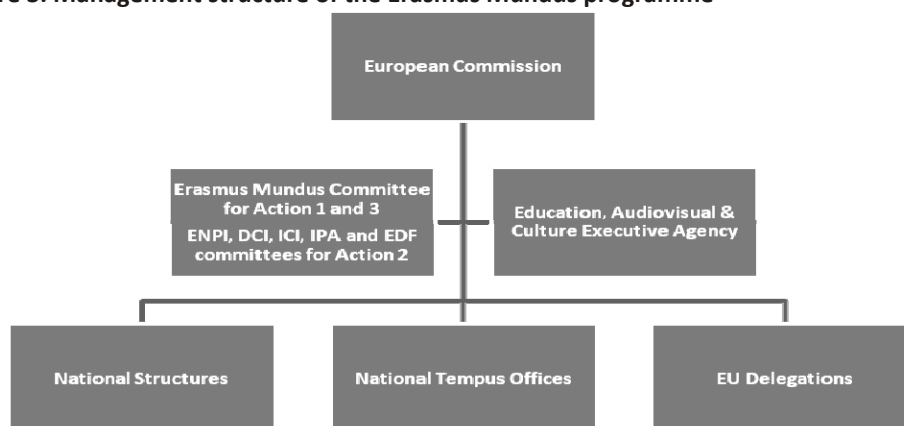
2.4. Management structure of Erasmus Mundus II

The programme is run by the European Commission. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the programme. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up and evaluation of Erasmus Mundus at European level. The Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency (hereinafter “the Agency” or “EACEA”) is responsible for the implementation of the programme. The Executive Agency is responsible for drawing up Calls for Proposals, selecting projects and signing project agreements, financial management, monitoring of projects (assessment of intermediate and final reports), communication with beneficiaries and on-the-spot controls – under the supervision of DG EAC as regards Actions 1 and 3, under the supervision of DG DEVCO as regards EMA2-STRAND1, and under the supervision of the European External Action Service (EEAS) as regards EMA2-STRAND2. The EM programme is implemented through the instrument of annual Calls for Proposals based on the Programme guide. In addition, the Agency is responsible for the implementation of more than 15 other EU funded programmes and actions in the fields of education and training, active citizenship, youth, audiovisual and culture.¹¹

¹¹ European Commission. 2010. ERASMUS MUNDUS 2009-2013 Programme Guide for the attention and information of future applicants and beneficiaries. Available online at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/documents/2011/em_programmeguide_1612_en.pdf

The European Commission is assisted by the Erasmus Mundus Committee (for Actions 1 and 3) and other Committees dealing with the respective financial instruments (ENPI, DCI, ICI, IPA and EDF Committees for Action 2). Finally, the National Structures designated by the EU Member States provide general information, advice and consultation during programme implementation at the national level, while the EU Delegations support the programme implementation in third countries.

Figure 3. Management structure of the Erasmus Mundus programme



Source: Own compilation.

3.1. Intervention Logic

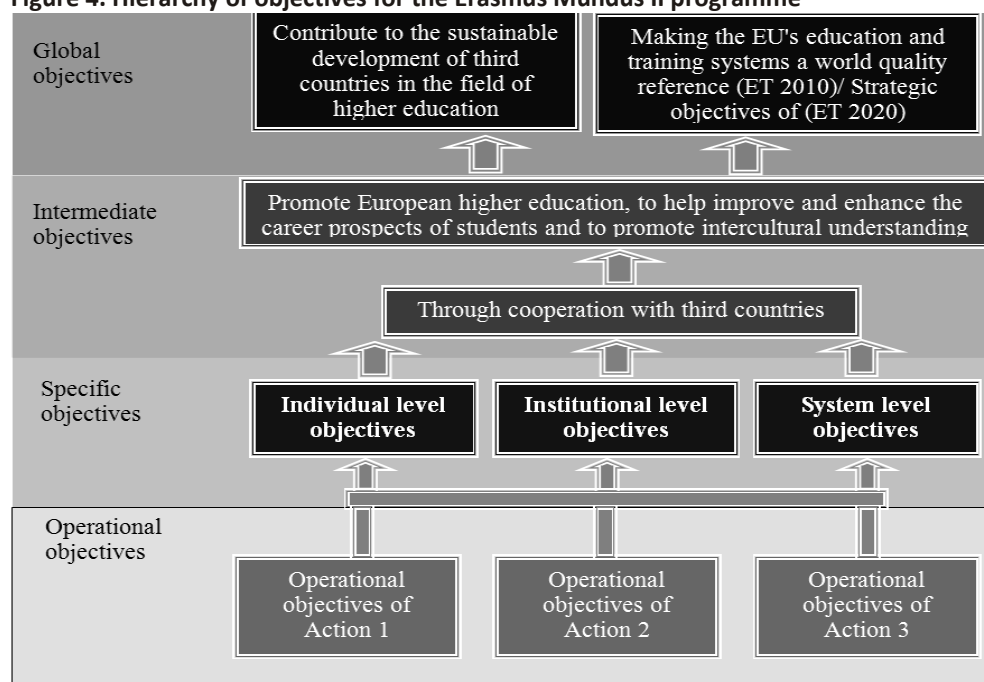
The hierarchy of objectives of the EM programme is presented in Figure 4 below. At the level of global objectives, it is important to mention the objective of making the EU's education and training systems a world quality reference under Education and Training 2010. It is also one of the objectives of Education and Training 2020 (making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training) that provides a follow-up to the Education and Training 2010 work programme. Also, in accordance with EU external policy objectives the programme aims to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education, which is part of the development aid package. The two global objectives of EM II reflect its dual nature: a) promotion of the quality of EU higher education and b) support to sustainable development of higher education in third countries.

At the level of intermediate objectives, the programme aims to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries. These objectives should be achieved through the following specific objectives:

- To promote structured cooperation between HEIs and offer enhanced quality in higher education with a distinct European added value, attractive both within the European Union and beyond its borders, with a view to creating centres of excellence;
- To contribute to the mutual enrichment of societies by developing the qualifications of women/men so that they possess appropriate skills, particularly as regards the labour market, and are open-minded and internationally experienced. This will be achieved through promoting mobility for the most talented students and academics from third countries so that they obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and for the most talented European students and academics to travel to third countries;
- To contribute towards the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of HEIs in third countries through increased mobility streams between the European Union and third countries;
- To improve accessibility and enhance the profile and visibility of European higher education in the world as well as its attractiveness for third-country nationals and citizens of the European Union.

In analytical terms, all specific objectives of the programme could be grouped into three broad sets of specific objectives, according to the level at which the results are likely to occur: **individual, institutional (or inter-institutional), system levels** (see Figure 4 below). The main advantage of grouping these specific objectives is that this facilitates the identification of different types of programme results.

Figure 4. Hierarchy of objectives for the Erasmus Mundus II programme



Source: Own compilation.

Finally, each action of the Erasmus Mundus programme has a number of specific objectives which are treated as operational objectives in our hierarchy of objectives (thus contributing to the specific objectives). More information on individual Actions of the programme was provided in section 2.2. of this Final Report.

3.2. Objectives and scope of the evaluation

In accordance with Article 13 of the Erasmus Mundus Decision, the European Commission launched the interim evaluation of Erasmus Mundus II (2009-2013).

An interim evaluation examines an ongoing activity whether this is a programme of limited duration or a policy, which will continue for an indefinite period. An interim evaluation also has an important role to play in producing direct feedback into the implementation process and thus helps to improve the quality of ongoing interventions. Moreover, since new initiatives are often prepared long in advance, interim evaluation is also a very important source of information for the design purposes for the next generation of a programme, new policy orientations, etc.¹²

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the results achieved and the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the programme implementation, providing the input for the Commission's Interim Evaluation Report. The scope of this interim evaluation included all actions and geographical areas of the programme.

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, this interim evaluation covered the programme implementation for the 2009–2011 period. The interim evaluation emphasised the novelties introduced in phase II of the programme, assessing the extent to which these novelties were used by beneficiaries and their performance in terms of the programme's relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency. Although the prospective analysis was less important for this evaluation (compared to the retrospective analysis), it was used to inform

¹² European Commission, Evaluating EU Activities: A Practical Guide for the Commission Services. July 2004, p. 15.

the formulation of evaluation recommendations that concern further implementation of the programme.

3.3. Design and implementation of evaluation

First, in the Terms of Reference the European Commission identified 25 sets of questions according to four main evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance** (covering continued relevance, complementarity and synergies, European added value);
- **Effectiveness** (including contribution to the EU strategies, the achievement of vertical and horizontal objectives, awareness of the Programme, internationalisation, contribution to the labour market and the risk of “brain drain”, attracting the institutional and individual participants);
- **Sustainability** (including likely continuity of the programme, the development of sustainable cooperation models and mechanisms, the involvement of non-educational organisations, dissemination of the project results);
- **Efficiency** (including the sufficiency of the size of the budget, the adequacy of monitoring and implementation arrangements, success of the programme novelties).

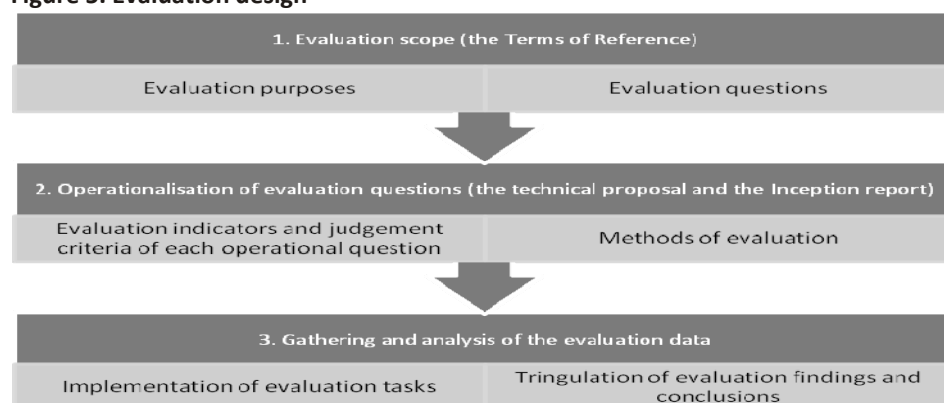
Second, some sets of questions contain sub-questions. Since these sub-questions do not exclude other possible aspects, the evaluator proposed several additional sub-questions under some questions. The total number of sub-questions/operational questions is 45.

Third, to answer these questions and sub-questions, the evaluator defined explicit indicators and judgement criteria against which the programme relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency was measured.

Fourth, to answer each (operational evaluation) question, the evaluator defined possible methods of evaluation. Desk research (literature review and analysis of the monitoring data), interviews, case studies, surveys and other methods of evaluation were used to collect and analyse evaluation information. All evaluation methods are described in Annex 2 to the Final Report.

The main steps of the evaluation design are summarised in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Evaluation design



Source: Own compilation.

4. EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1. Relevance

Set of evaluation questions No. 1 in the ToR: Bearing in mind the related findings of the EM I ex-post evaluation, to what extent are the Erasmus Mundus programme's general and specific objectives relevant to the needs of European and non-European higher education? Has the need's analysis of the programme proved to be correct? To what extent has the Erasmus Mundus programme proved relevant to the development needs of third countries with regard to higher education?

Operational question No 1.1. To what extent do the objectives of EM II remain relevant to the overall needs of HE systems and key stakeholders?

Operational question No 1.2. How relevant is the EM II for the specific needs of HE of third countries (including candidate and potential candidate countries)?

The *first* operational question was based on the comparison of the findings of the two open public consultations on the programme. This data was used to test the hypothesis that the programme remains relevant, if the results of both consultations point to the pertinence of the same issues and problems that the EM II sought to assess. The results were triangulated with the data from the surveys of institutional and individual beneficiaries as well as case studies. The *second* operational question rests on the logic of intervention of EM II. The logic suggests that cooperation and mobility should be beneficial for both: the European and non-European HE systems and institutions. However, in principle the two objectives could be in conflict. Promotion of quality in the EU HE system could imply attracting and maintaining the best researchers, which could lead to "brain drain" from the third countries and eventually would undermine the objective of sustainable development of third countries in the field of HE. Hence, the evaluation sought to test the hypothesis that promotion of excellence of European HE could be in conflict with the objective of sustainable development of HE in the third countries.

Overall, the analysis revealed that the objectives of EM II remain relevant to the key stakeholders and target groups of the programme. This finding is supported by the results of public consultations, the surveys of institutional and individual beneficiaries as well as the National Structures and EU Delegations and the case studies. Concerning the second question, the surveys, interviews and case studies did not provide conclusive evidence to support the hypothesis that promotion of excellence of European HE could be in conflict with the objective of sustainable development of HE in the third countries.

Relevance of the EM II objectives to the overall needs of HE systems and key stakeholders

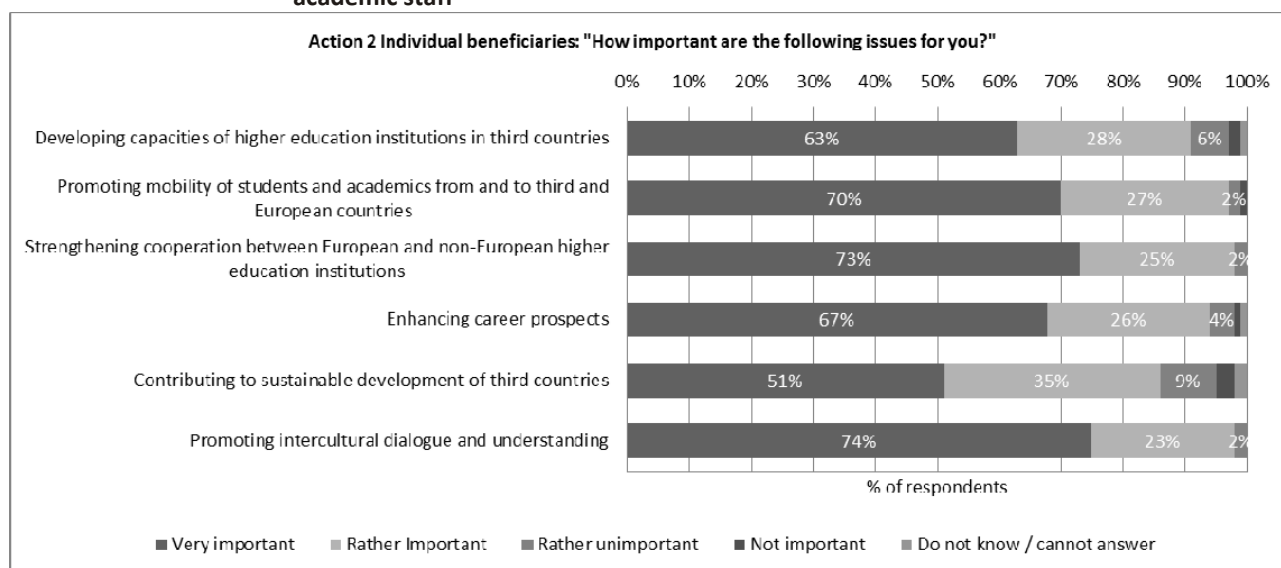
The open public consultation¹³ on the future of EM, among other things, sought to assess the relevance of EM II global and specific objectives. The results of the consultation clearly show that the objectives of the programme remain highly relevant in the opinion of the potential target groups and stakeholders. In fact, the proportion of stakeholders that

¹³ DG EAC, *Programme for international cooperation in higher education and human capital development post-2013 (Erasmus Mundus+): Overview of the public online consultation results*, 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/consult/higher/report_en.pdf.

consider the EM II objectives as highly relevant has not changed significantly when compared to the results of the open consultation in 2007.¹⁴

These results are strongly supported by the surveys. More than 75% of surveyed institutional beneficiaries argued that there is a very strong match between the priorities of their EM II project and the strategic objectives of their institution. Similarly 53% of the surveyed National Structures and EU Delegations argue that all of the objectives of EM II are highly relevant. The survey of individual beneficiaries also suggests that the global and specific objectives are very important to the participating students, scholars and other academic staff (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Relevance of EM II objectives: the views of participating students, scholars and academic staff

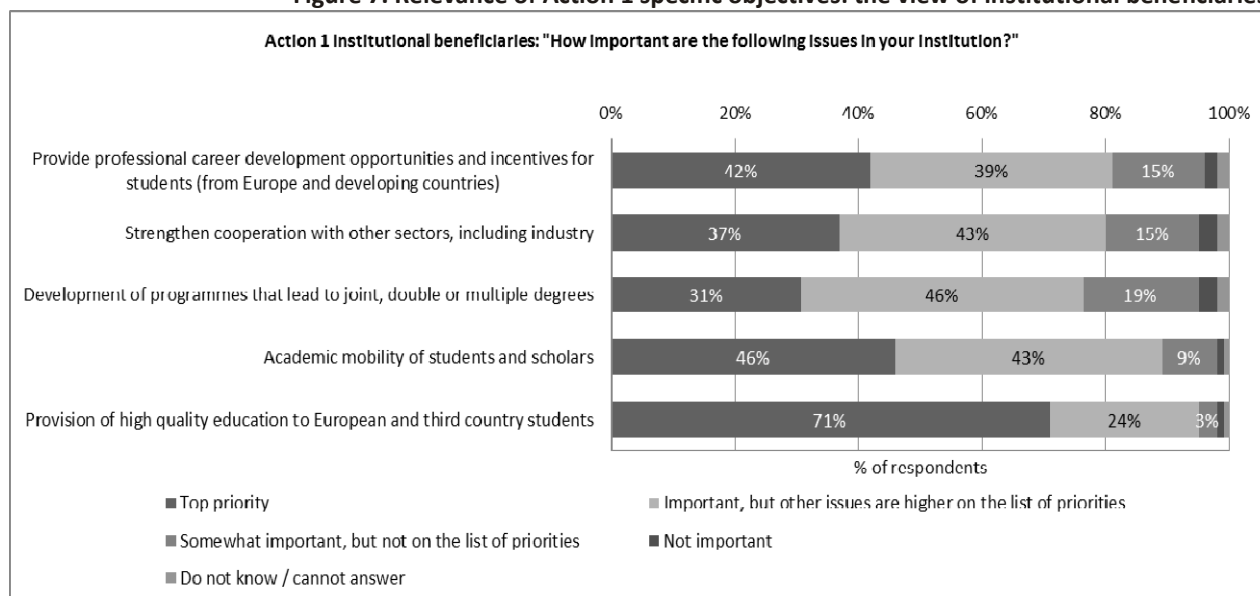


Source: Survey of the EM II individual beneficiaries.

The case studies provide a qualitative interpretation of the results of the surveys. On the one hand, institutional beneficiaries funded by *Action 1* tend to argue that excellence of their institutions in teaching and research is the ultimate objective of their projects (see Figure 7). Mobilities, partnerships, capacity development and cooperation with other HE institutions and other sectors (e.g. industry) are merely instruments to achieve excellence. Better career opportunities for students, development of capacities in third countries and increased visibility of European HE are the intended long-term effects of these projects, but these EM II objectives did not provide the motivation for implementation of the projects. Hence, these institutional beneficiaries suggested that EM II should put stronger emphasis on excellence of education and research, while the other objectives could be treated as instruments to achieve excellence or the long-term impacts of excellence. This also explains why "provision of high quality education" was identified as highly relevant by the largest proportion of surveyed respondents representing Action 1 institutional beneficiaries.

¹⁴ DG EAC, *Online Consultation on the Future of the Erasmus Mundus Programme: Summary of Results*, 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/doc/consultresult_en.pdf.

Figure 7. Relevance of Action 1 specific objectives: the view of institutional beneficiaries



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

The views of the representatives of institutional beneficiaries funded by *Action 2* are mixed. On the one hand, beneficiaries of Strand 1 tended not to single out excellence in education, but argued that all specific objectives could be equally important. For example, the case studies reveal that cooperation with Maghreb countries and promotion of intercultural dialogue are regarded as objectives *per se* in Project Averroès (funded by Action 2), while implementation of Bologna instruments and capacity building in EU and Asian countries constitute the focus of the Eurasia II project (also funded by Action 2). The results of the survey also revealed that most of the Action 2 beneficiaries (the majority of them representing Strand 1 of Action 2) prioritised cooperation, mobility, transparency and recognition of qualifications. On the other hand, interviewed HEI staff involved in Strand 2 of Action 2 suggested that excellence was central to their projects. These differences could be explained by the different focus of the two strands of Action 2: Strand 1 is targeted towards cooperation and partnerships, while Strand 2 provides scholarships for mobility of students, researchers, scholars and professionals.

Relevance of the EM II for the specific needs of HE of third countries

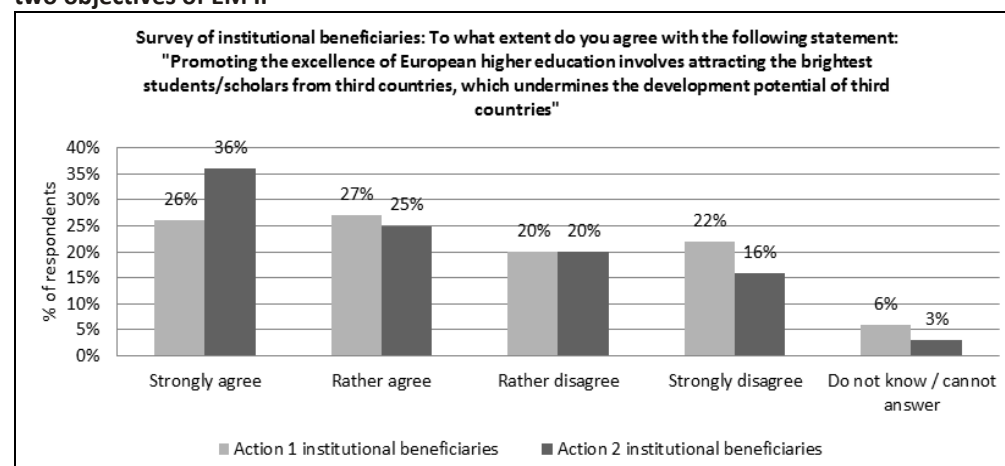
Interviews with the EU-level policy-makers revealed that potential conflict between the promotion of excellence of European HE and the sustainable development of third countries was explicitly addressed when designing the programme. In fact, policy-makers demonstrated a strong commitment to preventing “brain drain” to the EU from the third countries. Therefore, the programme beneficiaries from the third countries are expected to return to their home countries where they can share their knowledge and support the development of HE in the third countries. This should lead to complementarities rather than conflict between the two said objectives.

Interviews with institutional and individual beneficiaries as well as case studies also suggest that the promotion of excellence of European HE complements rather than conflicts with the objective of development of HE in third countries. Interviewed academics, project managers and students argued that the EM II programme promotes “brain circulation” rather than “brain drain”. Most of the graduates of EM II tend to return to their home countries for work or further studies. Some interviewees pointed out that the decision to return also depends on the academic career prospects in home countries. Other interviewees emphasised that in some cases the “choice of talented students is not as much between Europe vs. their home countries as it is between Europe vs. the US, as science is already global”. Hence, the above evidence suggests that the objectives of EM II are equally relevant to the needs of the institutional and individual beneficiaries from Europe and the third countries.

The results of surveys of institutional beneficiaries are mixed. On the one hand, slightly more than half of respondents agree, while slightly less than half disagree with the statement that “promotion of excellence of European higher education involves attracting the brightest students/scholars from third countries, which undermines the development potential of third countries” (see Figure 8). This statement was supported by a larger proportion of Action 2 institutional beneficiaries in comparison to Action 1 beneficiaries. These differences could be explained by the fact that there is a considerably higher share of institutions from third countries among Action 2 beneficiaries in comparison to Action 1. Similarly, beneficiaries from the third countries¹⁵ more often (in comparison to respondents from EU/EE) express the view that EM II should ensure more balanced and reciprocal relationships between European and third-country HE institutions. On the other hand, more than 90% of respondents also argue that cooperation with European institutions does help third-country institutions build their capacities.

To sum-up, EM II was designed so as to prevent a “brain drain”. Evidence suggests that both objectives (excellence of European HE and development of HE in third countries) were complementary rather than contradictory. Beneficiaries from third countries appreciate the large positive impact of cooperation on the capacities of HE institutions in their countries. On the other hand, the stakeholders from third countries remain cautious regarding the risk of “brain drain” and emphasise the need for more reciprocal relationships between HE institutions from EU and third countries.

Figure 8. Opinions of institutional beneficiaries regarding potential conflict between the two objectives of EM II



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

Set of evaluation questions No. 2 in the ToR: To what extent is the programme complementary to other European Union initiatives in the field of higher education and research? To what extent is the programme design based on 3 Actions appropriate to attain its specific objectives? To what extent can expected links and synergies between the different actions be developed and to what extent have these links and synergies already been implemented?

Operational question No. 2.1: To what extent is the programme linked with and reinforces other similar EU initiatives?

Operational question No. 2.2: Are there preconditions for complementarities between the three actions of EM II?

¹⁵ An in depth analysis of the responses of beneficiaries from third countries revealed that the answers of respondents representing different regions (ENPI, DCI, ICI, IPA and EDF) do not differ significantly.

Operational question No. 2.3: Were there any synergies or duplication between sub-programmes?

Evaluation of *external complementarity* was carried out at the level of objectives and was based on the secondary sources, interviews and case studies. There are a number of similar EU-wide initiatives that seek to foster closer cooperation between the EU and third countries in the area of HE. Principally, the links and possible overlaps between EM II and the following programmes were assessed: the LLP, Youth in Action, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and “People” specific programmes (within the FP7). The evaluation of *internal complementarity* sought to test the following hypothesis: the complementarities between the three Actions of EM II could materialise, if the Actions seek the same higher level objectives with different instruments or by targeting different groups, the design of the programme is clear to the target groups and there are coordination mechanisms at the EU level and the national level to ensure that implementation of Actions is coherent. The evidence for answering these evaluation questions came mainly from the survey of institutional beneficiaries, interviews, cases studies and secondary sources of information.

Overall, as regards *external complementarity*, the findings suggest that EM II is linked and complements the aforementioned programmes. However, there is also a risk of possible duplications and overlaps (e.g. in LLP, Tempus, “People”). The evaluation of *internal complementarity* revealed that the preconditions for complementarities between the Actions have largely materialised, but coordination of different Actions of the programme could be strengthened. Analysis of synergies and duplications revealed that there are considerable synergies between *Action 3*, on the one hand, and *Actions 1 and 2* on the other hand. However, the findings suggest that synergies between Actions 1 and 2 are quite limited (it could be closely related to weaknesses in the strategic coordination of the programme and different focuses of these actions). Lastly, the results do not suggest that the three Actions duplicate each other.

External complementarity of the EM II

The aims of EM II are multifaceted: to promote European HE, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of HE. Table 2 below provides a qualitative analysis of the links at the level of specific objectives between the EM II and the LLP, Youth in Action, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and “People” specific programmes (within the FP7).

EM II and the LLP are complementary since they both seek similar objectives (e.g. to promote cooperation between HEIs, improve educational quality, learning accessibility and visibility etc.) by focusing on different geographical scopes and target groups. There are also possible overlaps since the LLP (Erasmus) supports curriculum development, as does EM II. Moreover, both programmes offer scholarships for European students. As a result, the need for clear coordination modalities was addressed by setting clear rules as to how the two programmes could be distinguished in order to avoid potential double funding.

EM II and Youth in Action do not strongly intersect at the level of specific objectives, and potential overlaps do not exist due to focus on different target groups. EM II is focused on formal HE, while Youth in Action deals with informal and non-formal education.

Regarding the links between EM II and Tempus, Alfa as well as Edulink, the programmes complement each other rather than overlap. Potential duplications are limited due to the fact that Tempus, Alfa and Edulink support capacity building and cooperation of HEIs in different non-EU regions. Moreover, these programmes do not have major mobility components (the existing ones are rather instrumental; they are devoted to the implementation of joint projects). In addition, there are also important synergies between EM II and Tempus at the administrative level. For instance, Tempus National Programme Offices (NTOs) also have a mandate that covers the EM programmes, when it comes to joint responsibilities/activities in beneficiaries. Moreover, they are also, in many cases, managed by the same agency in the target countries. A representative from NTO in Algeria also

pointed out that all networking and promotional activities take place very much in parallel with the Tempus Programme and thus all HEIs in Algeria have access to information and support.

However, one of the EU-level interviewees pointed out that sometimes geographical regions overlap (Tempus is still in operation in some of the countries that are also involved in EM II). There is also some evidence about factual overlaps, when very similar projects are funded by the EM and Tempus. Hence, more effort should be made to produce more comprehensive lists of the existing projects and provide a user-friendly web-based search tool, in which one could find all EU-funded projects on a topic, regardless of the instrument they are being funded from.

There are also potential overlaps between EM II and the Marie Curie “People” specific programme. Both programmes seek to attract researchers to Europe from third countries by providing fellowships to doctoral students. Moreover, potential overlaps also exist due to an element of exchange of staff with third countries (MC IRSES - Marie Curie's International Research Staff Exchange Scheme). In principle, at least, the same applicant could be eligible for funding from both programmes.

Table 2. Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of EM II and the LLP, Youth in Action, TEMPUS, Alfa, Edulink and “People” specific programme

Specific objectives of the programme	Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of EM II and the programme
LLP	
To contribute to the development of quality lifelong learning, and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field	EM II does not focus on lifelong learning at the level of specific objectives. The main link between programmes is concentration on the promotion of the European dimension. This creates an area for potential overlaps because both programmes promote more intensive cooperation between providers of education, foster mobility etc. However, concentration on different geographical scopes minimise the possibilities of potential overlaps.
To support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning	European area for lifelong learning is closely linked with quality assurance, recognition and transparency of qualifications and mobility. In EM II, the realisation of a European area is not explicitly pointed out at the level of specific objectives, but overall it is fostered by cooperation between HEIs, mobility initiatives and promotion of European higher education under A3.
To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States	Both programmes have complementary objectives that are directed at different geographical areas: while LLP focuses on Member States, EM II focuses on the opportunities within the European Union and third countries. Moreover, programmes focus on different target groups: in LLP, the most disadvantaged pupils, low-skilled adults and the elderly are of high importance, while EM II focuses on the most talented students and academics.
To reinforce the contribution of lifelong learning to social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment	At the level of specific objectives, EM II explicitly focuses on mutual enrichment of societies, open-mindedness and international experience; gender equality is promoted through development of the qualifications of women/men. Moreover, the programme also contributes to the horizontal policies of the EU by enhancing social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment. Although there is potential for overlaps between the programmes, this risk is minimised by controlling projects that are likely to be implemented (defining eligible activities in Programme's Guide).
To help promote creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit	At the level of specific objectives, EM II promotes development of the skills that are relevant in the labour market. In terms of employability, it is directly pointed out only in EM joint doctorates.
To contribute to increased participation in lifelong learning by people of all ages, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background	In EM II, the main target group is the most talented students and academics either from the third countries or the EU. Moreover, the programme is in the line with horizontal policies of the EU by making provisions for students with special needs (their integration into mainstream HE).
To promote language learning and linguistic diversity	Although such objective is not explicitly pointed out at the level of specific objectives in EM II, the programme supports linguistic diversity because it is in the line with the horizontal EU policies.
To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning	This objective is not pointed out in EM II.
To reinforce the role of lifelong learning in creating a sense of European citizenship based on an understanding and respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II. However, the programme is in the line with the horizontal EU policies (promotes tolerance and fosters a need to combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination).
To promote cooperation in quality assurance in	EM II aims to enhance the quality of HEIs through international cooperation and to promote

Specific objectives of the programme	Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of EM II and the programme
all sectors of education and training in Europe	Europe as a centre of excellence in learning.
To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes and to exchange good practice in the fields covered by the LLP, in order to improve the quality of education and training	EM II seeks to disseminate information about the main results and overall higher education under A3; however, exchange of best practices between HEIs in EU and third countries still remains a challenge. ¹⁶
Youth in Action	
Giving young people and the organisations that represent them the opportunity to take part in the development of society and of the EU	EM II explicitly points out mutual enrichment of societies but focuses more on formal higher education. Therefore, programmes do not overlap.
Developing a sense of belonging to the EU	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
Encouraging the participation of young people in the democratic life of Europe	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
Fostering young people's mobility in Europe	EM II fosters mobility of the most talented students and academics within the EU and the third countries. Although regions can overlap, the programmes complement each other due to different learning methods (in EM II, basically the focus is on formal learning in HEIs).
Developing intercultural learning	EM II explicitly focuses on mutual enrichment of societies, open-mindedness and international experience. However, programmes do not overlap due to different learning methods (in EM II, basically the focus is on formal learning in HEIs).
Promoting the fundamental values of the EU	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
Encouraging initiative, enterprise and creativity	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
Facilitating participation in the programme by young people with fewer opportunities, including young people with disabilities	In EM II, the main target group is the most talented students and academics either from the third countries or the EU.
Ensuring that the principle of equality between men and women is respected in selecting the participants for the programme and that gender equality is fostered in the actions	Gender equality is promoted through development of the qualifications of women/men so that they possess appropriate skills (especially in the labour market).
Providing non-formal and informal learning opportunities with a European dimension and opening up innovative opportunities in connection with active citizenship	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II (the programme focuses basically on formal learning in HEIs).
Tempus	
To promote the reform and modernisation of higher education in the Partner Countries	In Tempus, joint projects are implemented at institutional level and are based on multilateral partnerships between HEIs in the EU and Partner Countries. They include curriculum development, enhancing university governance etc. In EM II, curriculum development is aimed more at the excellence and attractiveness of European HEIs. Moreover, EM II has a wide element of mobility, while Tempus does not (only for the academic staff in order to implement projects more successfully).
To enhance the quality and relevance of higher education to the world of work and society in the Partner Countries	Both programmes seek to promote the quality and relevance of higher education to the world of work (in EM II, special attention is paid to the employability aspect in EMJDs).
To increase the capacity of higher education institutions in the Partner Countries and the EU, in particular their capacity to cooperate internationally and to continually modernise	There are direct links between the objects of the programmes, as EM II also seeks to promote the international cooperation capacity of HEIs in third countries. However, EM II points out increased mobility streams as the main instrument, while Tempus focuses on the establishment of consortia.
To overcome inter-country fragmentation in the area of higher education and inter-institutional fragmentation in the countries themselves; enhance inter-disciplinary thinking and working within and between faculties and universities and trans-disciplinarity between university faculties; enhance the employability of university graduates; make the European Higher Education Area more visible and attractive to the world	Such objectives are not explicitly pointed out in EM II except for the promotion of cooperation between the HEIs, employability (especially in EMJDs), visibility and attractiveness of the European HE.
To foster the reciprocal development of human resources	EM II has an explicit objective to foster the development of human resources. However, the main instrument of implementation is increased mobility streams, while in Tempus, it is focused on the establishment of consortia.
To enhance mutual understanding between the peoples and cultures of the EU and the Partner Countries	EM II explicitly focuses on mutual enrichment of societies, open-mindedness and international experience.
Alfa	
To improve the quality, relevance and accessibility of Higher Education in Latin America	In Alfa, these objectives are promoted through joint projects (exchange of experience, knowledge transfer at the institutional level), structural projects (mechanisms to promote modernisation, reform and harmonisation of HE) and accompanying measures (coordination and dissemination of the results). In EM II, similar objectives are attained through joint masters and doctoral programmes (curricula), mobility activities etc. However, potential overlaps are avoided because EM II concentrates more on the excellence of the European HEIs.
To contribute to the process of regional integration in Latin America, fostering progress	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II. However, it can be promoted under A1 (joint programmes) and A2 (partnerships).

¹⁶ DG EAC, *Programme for international cooperation in higher education and human capital development post-2013 (Erasmus Mundus+): Overview of the public online consultation results*, 13.

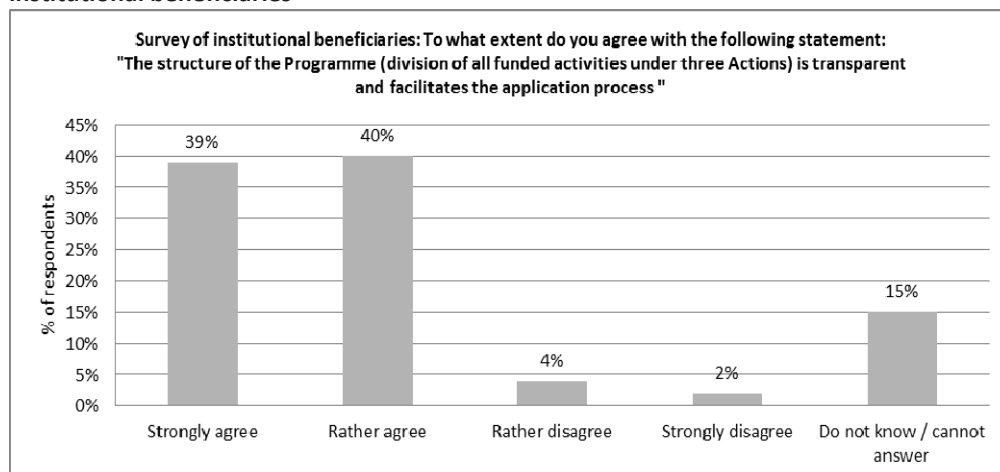
Specific objectives of the programme	Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of EM II and the programme
towards the creation of a joint Higher Education area in the region and exploiting its synergies with the European Union	
EduLink	
To promote regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions	Potential overlaps between the programmes basically do not exist because EduLink is broader in its objectives and scope of activities. Moreover, the partnership of the EU HEIs is not even mandatory. EduLink only supports networks of higher education institutions; it does not provide grants or scholarships to individuals.
To foster capacity building	
To support a higher education system which is consistent with the socio-economic development priorities in the ACP countries	
“People” specific programme within the FP7	
To encourage people to embark on a career in research	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
To encourage European researchers to stay in Europe	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.
To attract researchers to Europe from throughout the world	Potential overlaps exist between EMJDs and such funding schemes as the Marie Curie fellowship scheme and in particular the Initial Training Networks.
To share knowledge between countries, sectors, organisations and disciplines	
To foster the participation of women in research and technological development	This objective is not explicitly pointed out in EM II.

Preconditions for complementarities between the three actions of EM II

First, the findings reveal that the combination of the different measures funded under the three Actions is instrumental to achieving the overall objectives of the programme. For instance, joint masters and doctoral programmes funded under *Action 1*, while focused on enhancing excellence of HE, also contribute to cooperation with and development of HE in third countries. Similarly, interviewees suggested that EM Partnerships funded under *Action 2*, while focused on enhancing cooperation with and development of HE in third countries, also have large potential to enhance excellence of European HEIs. On the other hand, several interviewees suggested that attempts to involve HEIs from these countries could pose a risk to the academic excellence of partnerships funded under *Action 2*. For example, the case studies revealed that Project Averroès and Project EM2-STEM sought to recruit students and scholars for mobilities to the third countries on the basis of academic merit. However, universities based in the UK and France faced low demand for such mobilities and the majority of potential candidates were originally from the receiving countries.

Second, the design of the programme is clear to the target groups and facilitates the application process. Since the three Actions fund different types of measures, the potential applicants and immediate target groups do not face difficulties in identifying relevant funding opportunities. Nearly 80% of the surveyed institutional beneficiaries also claimed that the structure of the programme is transparent (see Figure 9). However, several stakeholders claim that the differences in measures supported by *Action 1* and *Action 2* reduce the overall integrity of the EM brand. As one EU level interviewee commented, “Action 2 students, who take part in a huge variety of short or long term mobility schemes go through a different selection process, and programmes are completely different from Action 1, but they are put under one name. This causes immense confusion for participants. Graduates from EMMCs or EMJDs have a very strong sense of identity – different universities, subjects, but the same process of highly competitive selection in order to get scholarships, they all studied at 2 universities at least during their studies, and they received a joint or double degree. While Action 2 students can come to Europe for only for one semester. <...> there is enough confusion with Erasmus.”

Figure 9. The extent to which the structure of the programme is transparent to the institutional beneficiaries



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

Third, the findings revealed that coordination of EM II at strategic level remains problematic. DG EAC is responsible for *Actions 1 and 3*, while *Action 2* remains under the responsibility of DG DEVCO. Managerial decisions (such as the adoption of the annual work programme, annual budget, breakdown of funds, selection criteria) regarding the management of *Actions 1 and 3* are taken by the Erasmus Mundus Committee, while DG DEVCO is assisted by ENPI, DCI, ICI, IPA and EDF Committees in the management of *Action 2*.

The division of responsibilities between DG EAC and DG DEVCO as well as the absence of a single committee or working group in charge of the whole programme does not contribute to the development of synergies between the Actions of EM II. As interviews with the EU-level policy-makers revealed, the managerial structure of the programme has hindered effective coordination on several occasions. However, these problems are not insoluble. One of the EU-level policy-makers suggested that "the management of EM through different Directorates General (in *Action 2*) is an internal EU organisational problem, but it is one which we can solve. This is linked to the way we have to implement the programme." Indeed, it may be that the management of *Action 2* between different Directorate Generals "may lead to very constructive thought and action within the programme." The developmental issues being addressed are after all complex and go well beyond the educational field into broader issues of economic and political development.

Weaknesses in strategic coordination are to some extent offset by good coordination at the operational level. The administration of all actions at the EU level is under the responsibility of a single unit within EACEA. In this respect, common procedures and documentation are used for the administration of all Actions. At the national level implementation of the programme is also managed by a single organisation (National Structure or EU Delegation), which contributes to the integrity of the programme.

Analysis of synergies and duplications between the sub-programmes

The findings suggest that there are considerable synergies between *Action 3*, on the one hand, and *Actions 1 and 2* on the other hand. The interviews and case studies suggest that projects funded by *Action 3* successfully promote visibility of European HE, which has had positive spillover effects on participation in *Actions 1 and 2*. Several interviewees suggested that *Action 3* has particularly strengthened participation of previously under-represented third countries in *Action 2*. The results of the surveys also suggest that in the view of institutional beneficiaries there are at least some synergies: 62% of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement "there are synergies between different actions of the programme". These survey results should, however, be treated with caution, since nearly 30% of surveyed institutional beneficiaries chose not to answer this question.

A number of interviewees argued that synergies between *Actions 1 and 2* are very limited. Some stakeholders strongly suggested that the two Actions should be further integrated. Limited scope for synergies could be closely related to the weaknesses in strategic

coordination of the programme as discussed under operational question no. 2.2. Moreover, it could be related to the fact that the two actions have somewhat different focuses. One of the representatives of National Structures argued that there is a sense that *Action 1* (and Strand 2 of Action 2) is strongly focused on excellence, while *Action 2 (at least in Strand 1)* – emphasises cooperation, cultural dialogue and mobility.

Set of evaluation questions No. 3 in the ToR: what is the European Union added value to the programme? Please, specify the added value in relation to the joint/multiple degrees provided by the joint masters or doctoral programmes when students are looking for work or further study/research activities?

European added value can be defined as the “value” resulting from an EU intervention that is additional to the “value” that would have resulted from an intervention at national or regional level by public authorities and/or the private sector.¹⁷ The evaluation focused on the added value of having studied in more than one country and in several HE institutions when looking for work or further study/research activities. The findings are based on the EM Graduate Impact Surveys, survey of institutional beneficiaries (Action 1), and case studies.

Overall, the joint masters and doctoral programmes had considerable added value by facilitating the success of graduates when looking for work and/or further research positions. International experiences and intercultural competence can be regarded as the most important assets that distinguish EM students from other graduates.

Operational question No. 3.1: What is the European added value for the graduates of joint masters and doctoral programmes when looking for work and/or study/research activities?

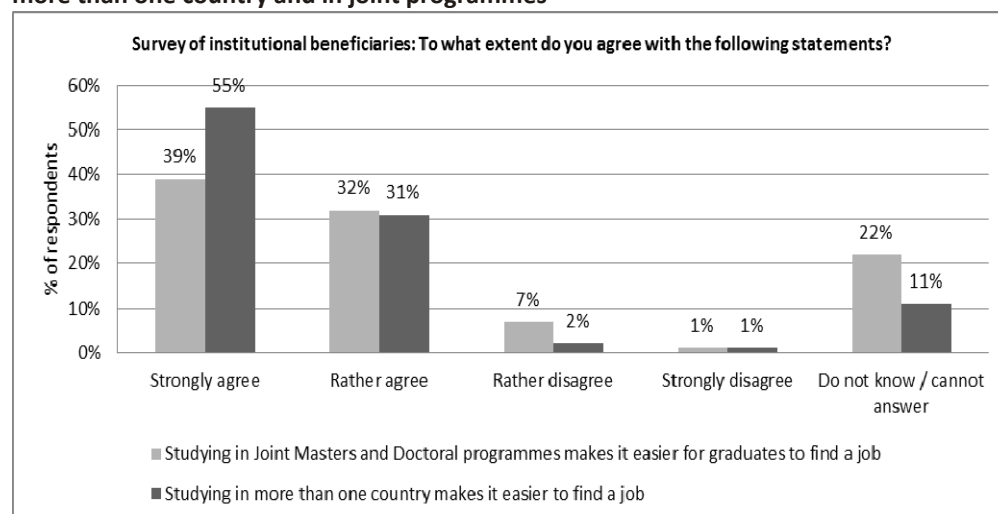
Previously conducted EM Graduate Impact Surveys reveal that participation in the programme had considerable value added for graduates when looking for work and/or study/research activities. An in depth analysis concluded: “The Erasmus Mundus programmes enable their students to achieve rewarding and highly satisfying employment positions. <...> The impact of Erasmus Mundus on careers and the job search is positively assessed by students and graduates. Compared to fellow students who graduate at home, their job search takes less time. <...> international experiences and intercultural competence can be regarded as the most important assets that distinguish EM students from other graduates.”¹⁸

The views expressed by the Action 1 institutional beneficiaries also corroborate the above findings (see Figure 10). More than 70% of respondents agree that studies in joint programmes make it easier for graduates to find a job. More than 85% of the respondents also agree that studies in more than one country facilitate integration into the labour market.

¹⁷ European Commission, Ex-ante evaluation, A Practical Guide for Preparing Proposals for Expenditure Programmes, 2001.

¹⁸ MKW Wirtschaftsforschungs GmbH, Erasmus Mundus: Clustering Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses and Attractiveness Projects. LOT 2: Employability, München, 2011.

Figure 10. The views of Action 1 institutional beneficiaries on the benefits of studying in more than one country and in joint programmes



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

The case studies of Action 1 also clearly indicate a considerable EAV of joint programmes. For instance, interviewed students from the GEMMA project pointed out that the masters programme provides a European perspective that is especially important for a future career in the business sector (where there exists a need to collaborate with Europe). Another participant confirmed that participation in EMMC helped when applying for PhD programmes. In addition, participants of the Eurasia 1 project claimed that international experience gives new ideas for their future career (e.g. one student, who is going back to her home university to research and lecture after her studies in the Czech Republic, would like to work with international cooperation projects in the future).

For more comprehensive findings on career benefits for the EM II participants, please see evaluation question No. 8.

4.2. Effectiveness

Set of evaluation questions No. 4 in the ToR: To what extent do the EM programme's objectives (and specific objectives by Action) and activities implemented contribute to the overall EU strategies such as the "Lisbon strategy"? To what extent are these objectives and the resulting activities still in line with the new "Europe 2020 Strategy"?

Operational question No. 4.1: To what extent does the programme continue to contribute to strengthening the implementation of the Bologna principles at the national level (e.g. convergence of HE systems in the participating countries, encourage and support mobility, implementation of joint recognition mechanisms through ECTS, joint degrees, joint diploma supplement, etc.)?

All effectiveness questions and sub-questions dealing with the programme contribution to the implementation of the Bologna principles and the internationalisation of higher education can be divided into four main sets:

- Contribution of EM II to overcoming the main obstacles to the internationalisation of higher education in Europe (addressed under operational question No. 4.1.);
- Changes in national legislation on issues relevant for higher education international cooperation such as joint degrees, recognition of study periods and degree recognition (addressed under operational question No. 5.2.);
- Impact of EM II on removing the obstacles linked to the diversity of the national education systems (including varied tuition fees) (addressed under operational question No. 5.4.);
- Influence of EM II on further development of internationalisation strategies and active implementation of the Bologna principles in European HEIs (e.g. convergence of HE systems in the participating countries, support to mobility, implementation of joint recognition mechanisms through ECTS, joint degrees, use of joint diploma supplement, etc.) (addressed under operational question No. 7.1.).

EM II contributed to overcoming the main obstacles to the internationalisation of higher education in Europe in three ways. First, the programme increased the *attractiveness of Europe as a study destination* by offering high quality higher education programmes, directly improving the image of Europe as a study destination through EM II Action 3 and balancing the tuition fees charged by universities participating in EM II. Second, the programme addressed *country specific legal and administrative barriers* to academic mobility in several different aspects: by facilitating the process for obtaining visas to study and work, addressing the issue of legislative frameworks regulating the legal status of doctoral candidates, strengthening cooperation in higher education with third countries and addressing the language barrier to academic mobility. Third, EM II facilitated the internationalisation of higher education in Europe by addressing obstacles to academic mobility related to *programme specific rules*.

The European Ministers of Education, meeting in Bologna (1999), emphasised that "Europe's higher education sector should acquire a degree of attractiveness in the wider world equal to Europe's major cultural and scientific achievements". The Bologna declaration laid down six objectives: adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees; adoption of a system based on two cycles: undergraduate and graduate; establishment of a system of credits (ECTS system, diploma supplement); mobility of students and teachers; promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance; promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education. More recently, the

ministers of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) agreed to double the proportion of students completing a study or training period abroad to 20% by 2020.¹⁹

The importance of internationalising higher education was also recognised by the Council. First, in 2007 the Council adopted the resolution on *Modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy*.²⁰ More recently, the Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on *Internationalisation of higher education* gave political support to the objective of internationalisation and confirmed a strong external dimension of higher education within the EU. To implement the Council's conclusions, a new higher education reform strategy²¹ was recently presented by the European Commission. The modernisation agenda for higher education emphasises the need to attract the best and the brightest from around the world to the EHEA (see the following operational sub-question below).

The objective of internationalisation of higher education is integrated in the EM programme, which provides opportunities for cooperation between European and non-European HEIs. The positive assessments of EM I provided by its interim evaluation and ex-post evaluation indicate that the programme has made a strong contribution to enhancing the attractiveness of European HE, strengthening its European dimension – and attracting students of high quality to courses organised on a co-operative European basis. In the online consultation on the future Erasmus Mundus programme the stakeholders indicated that the core focus of the programme should be on the promotion of the EHEA (supporting a substantial increase in high-quality student and staff mobility, on strengthening academic cooperation with non-EU countries and promoting high-quality courses at masters and doctoral level).²²

Under this operational question, analysis of the EM II contribution is based on the following challenges to the internationalisation of higher education:

- Insufficient and uneven attractiveness of Europe as a study destination;
- Country-specific legal and administrative barriers to mobility, as well as the language barrier;
- Programme-specific or institutional barriers to mobility.

First, to enhance *the attractiveness of Europe as a study destination*, a number of concerns should be addressed, including increasing cost and uneven quality of higher education.²³ Another important factor is the range and depth of studies offered by European HEIs. The high competition for EM II projects and the selection of projects based on the principle of excellence (while ensuring a balanced geographical representation at the programme level) allows the selection of consortia involving the best European HEIs and offering high quality joint programmes and partnerships (see the following evaluation questions, including No. 22). Our case studies also show the positive subjective assessment of partner excellence in EM II consortia, within all three Actions. Overall, EM II would seem to be a programme directly contributing to improving the attractiveness of Europe as a study destination. Promoting Europe as a study destination is the main objective of Action 3, whose projects are also enhancing the attractiveness of Europe (see the Action 3 case study in Annex 4). Some distinction needs to be drawn, however, between levels of success in attracting more students at the various levels from (a) less advantaged countries on the periphery of the EU; (b) attracting more students from other more prosperous and highly developed countries and (c) retaining more students from the EU, whilst offering them the benefits of an international experience within higher education.

More specifically, tuition fees remain one of the problematic aspects of internationalisation. For instance, it is difficult to select UK universities as EM partners due to the relatively high

¹⁹ However, despite this ministerial agreement, few countries have so far adopted this goal as a part of a national higher education strategy according to Eurydice.

²⁰ "Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy (16096/1/07)".

²¹ European Commission., "Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems. Brussels, 20.9.2011 COM(2011) 567 final."

²² ECORYS, *Overview of the public online consultation results*, 2011, 4.

²³ European Commission, "Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems. Brussels, 20.9.2011 COM(2011) 567 final", 7.

fees charged by UK universities, which, along with other factors such as university priorities, explains their underrepresentation in the EM programme. Although the EU follows a neutral approach by not imposing any requirements on the size of fees, the EM programme requires the uniformity of fees in EM consortia and sets a threshold for the EU contribution. There is evidence that the fees of European universities, which participate in the EM programme, are being adapted to those of their partners as a result of these EM requirements.

Second, while global demand for the best and the brightest is increasing, there are still *country-specific legal and administrative barriers to mobility*. It is recognised that the recognition of academic qualifications gained abroad is still too difficult, while the portability of grants and loans is restricted.²⁴ Problems in obtaining visas to study and work permits hinder the free movement of students and academic staff within the EU. The evaluation evidence collected under this evaluation project points to the importance of this barrier for non-EU students in some EU Member States. Difficulties in arranging visas and residence permits for mobile students was found to be one of the main obstacles in the implementation of EM II in European higher education institutions under the survey of the institutional beneficiaries (72% of the respondents from EU/EEA and candidate countries fully or to some extent agree with this obstacle compared to 63% of all respondents, including third-country beneficiaries). Out of 54 EU Delegations, 14 pointed out issues with visas (compared to 8 of 27 National Structures), 21 believed they were an obstacle to some extent (vs. 10 National Structures), and 10 believed they were not an issue (vs. 4 National Structures). These concerns are echoed in the views of the beneficiaries in Action 1 and Action 2. The adoption and transposition of specific directives concerning the mobility of students and researchers from third countries has already raised awareness for the need to facilitate the mobility of students; the European Commission is reviewing their implementation. It is expected that the implementation of the Council Recommendation on promoting learning mobility²⁵ and the application of European quality assurance tools (such as the European Quality Assurance Register) would further facilitate mobility.²⁶

In doctoral education, legislative frameworks regulating employment vs. studentship of doctoral candidates remain an issue. Some universities introduced ad hoc employment, but they prefer remaining with the student status. In the case of employment, taxes reduce the disposable income of the doctoral candidates and it is more difficult to obtain a residence permit in another country (student visas are easier to obtain than employment visas). On the other hand, EU-level interviewees defend the employment requirement, as it allows ensuring social security during a long programme.

In addition, to make Europe more attractive and accessible, there is a need to continue and strengthen cooperation in higher education with third countries. The policy dialogue is pursued in the framework of bilateral discussions (with such countries as the US, Brazil or China; this often results in joint agreements and specific work programmes), as well as in the context of the Bologna Policy Forum, which is part of the Bologna process (covering 47 countries). The interview with EEAS showed that EM has been promoted as an instrument to support dialogue with third countries, and fast-track procedures have been requested to facilitate mobility in some countries. Only Action 2 allows for this sort of flexible development.²⁷ Some countries introduced certain actions in order to remove obstacles to mobility (e.g. a Croatian action plan to promote the mobility of academics and students).

Moreover, *the language barrier* (especially knowledge of less widely used languages) could be an important factor affecting the mobility of students. This factor was found to be a common problem for the implementation of all LLP actions (especially under the Erasmus

²⁴ European Commission, "Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems. Brussels, 20.9.2011 COM(2011) 567 final", 7.

²⁵ Council Recommendation on promoting the learning mobility of young people, 28 June 2011.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ The EEAS view was that: "Within the process of negotiation with individual countries on the basis of their national allocation, it is currently possible to offer HE support and development within the EM context. This clearly requires a balanced approach, where mobilities take place in each direction and development is on a mutual basis."

decentralised actions).²⁸ The survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries indicated that while the language barrier is not the most important barrier during the implementation of EM II projects (40% of the institutional beneficiaries fully agree or to some extent agree that they have faced this obstacle), this obstacle is quite frequently faced by third-country partners involved in the EM programme (60% of the institutional respondents from third countries fully or to some extent agree with this statement).

Third, *programme-specific rules* can affect the mobility of students, teachers and staff under EM II. For instance, in Action 1, it is difficult for third-country students to continue their studies inside the EU because of the 12-month rule under which non-EU citizens, who have carried out their main activity (studies, training or work) for more than a total of 12 months over the last five years in one European country, cannot be awarded a category A scholarship,²⁹ even if tuition fees are calculated by nationality or a two-year continuous residence rule applies.

Operational question No. 4.2: To what extent should the programme be adjusted in order to improve its links with the new “Europe 2020 Strategy” and “Youth on the Move”?

Does EM II remain relevant and contribute to the new higher-level EU strategies and programmes? The priorities of EM II are compared with priorities of the EU 2020 Strategy, strategic framework ET 2020, a recently presented higher education reform strategy, and “Youth on the Move” flagship initiative in order to conclude whether the latter documents imply any changes to EM II. Analysis is based on desk research (especially the results of open public consultation), case studies as well as information provided during interviews with EU-level officials.

The evaluation findings suggest that the objectives of EM II are strongly in line with the new EU policy initiatives and political priorities. However, the future generation of EM could provide a more solid contribution to them by making improvements in such fields as openness to international mobility and cooperation activities in the field of vocational education and training, emphasising cooperation between education/training organisations and representatives from the labour market, and introducing an element dedicated to the exchange of best practices between the EU and non EU partner countries on themes of common interest.

Links between EM II and new higher-level EU strategies and programmes

EM II is closely linked with the *EU 2020 Strategy* as it contributes to the objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth in the EU.³⁰ Quality education and training, strong research capacities, successful integration into the labour market and more mobility opportunities are the key elements for achieving these EU 2020 priorities.

EM II is also linked with an updated *strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)*,³¹ where the following strategic objectives were adopted: 1) making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; 2) improving the quality and efficiency of education and training (gaining key competencies and enhancing attractiveness of education and training); 3) promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship (including skills and competencies needed for employability); 4) enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training (promotion of partnerships between enterprises and educational institutions as well as other key stakeholders).

²⁸ The European Commission, *Interim Evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013). Final Report*, 2011.

²⁹ EACEA, “Frequently asked questions: Action 1: students/ doctoral candidates: scholars”, http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/tools/documents/action1faq_studentacad_feb2011.pdf.

³⁰ “Europe 2020: A Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, COM(2010) 2020”, 3.

³¹ “Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’), (2009/C 119/02).”

Although the EU 2020 Strategy has seven different flagship initiatives to catalyse progress,³² the initiative “Youth on the Move”³³ is directly associated with the policy of education and, as a result, with EM II. The aim of this flagship initiative is to enhance the performance and international attractiveness of Europe’s HEIs and to raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining both excellence and equity, by promoting student mobility and trainee mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people. “Youth on the Move” sets out actions affecting young people in three main areas: education and training systems, mobility (both for learning and jobs), and a new framework for youth employment. An assessment of the formal links between the objectives of “Youth on the Move” and EM II is provided below (see Table 3).

The European Commission launched its proposals for the next multiannual EU budget (2014-2020) that include substantial increases for education, training and youth (+73%). Moreover, a possible architecture of the future programme was sketched out in the multi-annual financial framework communication. It will be a single framework programme, encompassing all current programmes (LLP, Youth in Action and EM) and based on three main elements: mobility, cooperation and policy dialogue support.

Table 3. Assessment of the formal links between the objectives of “Youth on the Move” and EM II

Specific objectives of “Youth on the Move”	Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of “Youth on the Move” and EM II
Promote the performance and attractiveness of Europe's higher education , in particular, by harnessing and enhancing the EU's mobility programmes, such as, Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and Marie Curie in order to further develop the knowledge economy. A key target is to raise the share of the young adult population, in the 30-34-age cohort, who hold a university degree – to 40% , by 2020. The aim is to make university studies more relevant, more attractive and more open towards the rest of the world, including by fostering their internationalisation and student/staff mobility .	Under Action 3, EM II provides support to transnational initiatives, studies, projects, events and other activities aimed at enhancing the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of, and accessibility to, European higher education in the world. Activities may take various forms (conferences, seminars, workshops, studies, analyses, pilot projects, prizes, international networks, production of material for publication, development of information, communication and technology tools) and may take place anywhere in the world.
Contribute to building a strong basis for modern lifelong learning systems that supports the development of high quality and increased participation in higher education . This includes investing in high quality schools, high performing vocational training systems and flexible access for adults to training and up-skilling opportunities including by supporting more learning mobility opportunities.	Although the objectives are not strongly interconnected, the development of high quality higher education is foreseen in Action 1 (EM II) where joint programmes are expected to foster creating poles of excellence and providing highly trained human resources. However, the recent focus is on academia and students from the HEIs.
Encourage the transnational mobility of young people for learning, employability, social and personal development . The aim is that by 2020 all young people in Europe should have the possibility to spend a part of their educational pathway in another Member State.	Under Action 1 (EM II), joint programmes must involve mobility between the institutions of the consortium and lead to the award of recognised joint, double or multiple degrees to successful students/doctoral candidates. Under Action 2 (EM II), support is foreseen for the establishment of cooperation partnerships between European HEIs and HEIs from targeted third countries/territories with the objective of organising and implementing structured individual mobility arrangements between the European and the third-country/territories partners. However, the focus on employability is not so much reflected among the objectives and actions of EM II.
Extend and broaden learning opportunities to young people as a whole, stimulate their engagement in society, and improve their employment situation , inter alia, by launching a Youth employment	The focus on employability is not so much reflected among the objectives and actions of EM II. However, by implementing activities under Action 3 in EM II, it is expected to improve employability through the establishment of links between higher

³² *Smart growth*: Digital agenda for Europe, Innovation Union, Youth on the move; *Sustainable growth*: Resource efficient Europe, An industrial policy for the globalisation era; *Inclusive growth*: An agenda for new skills and jobs, European platform against poverty.

³³ “Youth on the Move: An initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union, COM(2010) 477/3”.

Specific objectives of “Youth on the Move”	Assessment of the links between the specific objectives of “Youth on the Move” and EM II
framework outlining policies aimed at reducing youth unemployment rates.	education and research and higher education and the private sector in European and third countries. Promotion of employability is also prioritised under Action 2 (in EMJDs).

As part of this strategic framework, recently a new higher education reform strategy³⁴ was presented pointing out priority areas in which further reforms are needed:

- Increasing the number of graduates, attracting a broader cross-section of society into higher education, and reducing the numbers who drop out without completing their courses;
- Improving the quality and relevance of higher education, so curricula meet the needs of individuals, the labour market and the careers of the future, as well as stimulating and rewarding excellence in teaching and research;
- Providing more opportunities for students to gain additional skills through study or training abroad, and to encourage cross-border cooperation to boost higher education performance;
- Training more researchers to prepare the ground for the industries of tomorrow;
- Strengthening the links between education, research and business to promote excellence and innovation;
- Ensuring that funding is efficient – freeing up higher education governance and investing in quality education to match labour market needs.

It is clearly evident that the new EU strategies and programmes are responding to the needs of the current labour market situation and exceptionally emphasise the importance of the *quality of skills development within all educational stages*. Moreover, they point out the necessity to enhance the employability of young people. Therefore, in the future generation EM programme, the following issues should be reconsidered:

- Programme’s openness to international mobility and cooperation activities in the field of vocational education and training (VET). This insight is strengthened by the results of open public consultation (2011)³⁵ where about 68% of respondents proposed that the future programme should be wholly opened (about 28%) or partially opened (about 40%) to vocational education and training. In particular, the future generation EM programme could provide funding to VET that is provided by HE institutions, partnerships between HE and VET institutions, as well as facilitate the design of masters programmes with strong emphasis on internships and/or practical training in industry.
- The programme should emphasise the importance of cooperation between education/training organisations and representatives from the labour market (e.g. enterprises, trade unions, associations). This could be attained through internships, placements, seminars, promotion of business enterprises as associated partners under Action 1 (joint degrees). This position is supported by the results of open public consultation (2011)³⁶ and EU-level officials interviewed under this evaluation project. About 76.5% of respondents agreed with this statement during public consultation, while the interviewed officials recognised the need to put more emphasis on the involvement of business partners when defining curriculum content at masters and doctorate levels. It is important to point out that a survey of institutional beneficiaries revealed a comparatively successful governance of joint projects: approx. 55% of respondents claimed³⁷ that associated partners representing enterprises/business are involved in implementing institutional beneficiaries’ projects.

Project Averroès (Action 2) provides examples of good practice in strengthening the links between educational and labour market institutions. Namely, the consortium is working with 30 French companies involved in the Mahgreb (some of which are Associate Partners

³⁴ European Commission., “Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe’s higher education systems. Brussels, 20.9.2011 COM(2011) 567 final.”

³⁵ DG EAC, *Programme for international cooperation in higher education and human capital development post-2013 (Erasmus Mundus+): Overview of the public online consultation results*, 9–10.

³⁶ Ibid., 11–12.

³⁷ 24.7% strongly agreed and 30.4% rather agreed.

in the project), helping them to recruit appropriately qualified workers. For instance, ATOM is involved in constructing tramways in Algiers, Oran and Constantine. In return for this help, ATOM offers official recognition to the project and work placements with the company for outstanding students. An objective over two to three years is that the company would pay for an engineering fellowship related to the tramway construction project. Links between HE and business are also promoted through University Enterprise Fairs (with support from HE ministries).

In order to strengthen cooperation between HEIs and to improve the quality and attractiveness of education within all educational stages, the future programme could include an element dedicated for the exchange of best practices between the EU and non-EU partner countries on themes of common interest. During a public consultation (2011),³⁸ about half of the respondents evaluated such a possibility as highly important. Moreover, a survey of institutional beneficiaries also revealed that 60% of them consider the dissemination of the results and good practices of Erasmus Mundus as a top priority. This was also corroborated by policy-makers that the most common added value of EM II is the possibility of sharing and putting together the best EU practices in the field of HE under the framework of a single programme (see the horizontal case study of Action 1 in Annex 4).

Set of evaluation questions No. 5 in the ToR: To what extent is the programme actually attaining its general, specific objectives?

*Operational question No. 5.1: to what extent are the programme outputs foreseen in the Programme Guide being achieved?*³⁹

Based on the results of the interview programme, desk research and analysis of the monitoring data presented in Annex 3, it can be concluded that the Programme was implemented fairly effectively and in most cases the expected outputs are likely to be achieved by the end of 2013. However, in several areas the progress was insufficient and it is very likely that without additional efforts some outputs will be poorer than expected.

In *Action 1* the number of EMJD courses selected under Action 1 had exceeded the level anticipated, as had the number of scholarships awarded to incoming students at undergraduate and masters levels. However, less positive trends were evident in other areas of Action 1. As a result, some of the planned outputs are not likely to be achieved. Risks are highest in the area of scholarships awarded to European scholars – and of fellowships awarded to doctoral candidates from third countries. Although it was foreseen that by the end of 2013 no less than 440 individuals from the third countries would benefit from awarded fellowships, at the time of evaluation it seemed that the target would be difficult to achieve due to higher than anticipated implementation expenses – about 71% of the planned budget had already been used in this area. In the case of scholar scholarships, the number of outputs produced each year in the period 2010-2011 was also too small as only 10% of the expected outputs were achieved to date.

In the case of *Action 2*, the number of partnerships to be selected was already achieved and, in fact, exceeded the foreseen level. Whereas if funds allocated to finance *Action 3* projects are not to be fully contracted, it is very likely that less than 50 projects (which was the expected output) will be supported by the end of 2013.

In general, with the exception of delays and deviations in the aforementioned areas, interim results of the Programme are positive: all other expected outputs are likely to be produced and, in some cases, even exceeded.

³⁸ Ibid., 13–14.

³⁹ A new operational question was added to the set of the evaluation questions No. 5. Therefore, the following operational questions were re-numbered.

Operational question No. 5.2: To what extent does the programme contribute to influencing national legislation (both in the European and non-European partner countries) on issues relevant for higher education international cooperation such as joint degrees, recognition of study periods or degree recognition?

According to EU-level interviews, there is consensus among EU-level stakeholders that EM has had a powerful effect not only on the governance of participating HEIs, but also on national legislative frameworks within which they operate. The pressure of HEIs on their national ministries or other responsible departments to change the legislation governing the award of joint degrees was the main mechanism through which EM contributed to legislative changes at the national level.⁴⁰ Empirical data collected for this evaluation confirm this finding, particularly in the effects on joint and double degree recognition and the third countries. A major argument developed in the horizontal case study indicates that the influence of the programme on the overall convergence of the higher education systems in Europe and on the Bologna process is moderate because many of the important legislations in European countries (especially these concerning quality assurance, credit and mobility recognitions) were adopted under the pressure of other previous programmes (like Erasmus).

The table below shows that joint degrees were already in place for most EMJDs and EMMCs, but double degrees were nearly just as common.

Table 4. Double, joint and multiple degrees

Action	Year	Double	Joint	Multiple
EMJD	2010	6	9	1
	2011	9	9	5
EMJD Total		15	18	6
EMMC	2009	23	27	9
	2010	16	19	12
	2011	12	13	12
EMMC Total		51	59	33

Source: analysis of the monitoring data.

Note: Double degree programme means a programme at the end of which a student graduates with two academic degrees from different higher education institutions, while a multiple degree programme means that a student graduates with more than two academic degrees at the end of the study period.

The survey data shows that participation in EM led to legislative changes in some countries (see Table 5).

Table 5. Legislative and administrative changes – survey results (% responses)

Contribution to national legislation	Action 1	Action 2
Development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education within the EU has been advanced	49	58
Development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education between the EU and third countries have been advanced	49	
Joint recognition mechanisms (through ECTS, joint degrees, joint diploma supplement or alternative mechanisms) have been adopted in your country	69	59
Legislative or administrative changes have been introduced to facilitate mobility between EU countries and employment of students and academic staff participating in the Erasmus Mundus programme	48	54
Legislative or administrative changes have been introduced to facilitate mobility between the EU and the third countries and employment of students and academic staff participating in the Erasmus Mundus programme	40	55

⁴⁰ A. Batory and N. Lindstrom, "The Power of the Purse: Supranational Entrepreneurship, Financial Incentives, and European Higher Education Policy". *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, Vol. 24, No. 2, April 2011, 311–329.

Contribution to national legislation	Action 1	Action 2
Legislative or administrative changes have been introduced or initiated to facilitate the adoption of a three-cycle higher education system (bachelor-master-doctorate)	38	52

Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

The survey results of the programme beneficiaries clearly support the conclusion that the influence of EM II on the overall convergence of the European higher education systems and development of the Bologna process was rather moderate, because of the influence of numerous other initiatives which had contributed to the adoption of necessary standards in Europe before the onset of EM II. The development of internationalisation strategies was statistically much more significant in the third countries (72% of survey respondents from third countries and only 36% in EU/EEA/candidate countries, both Action 2 beneficiaries, reported at least some influence on them). In particular, joint degree and credit recognition mechanisms have been developed – more in third countries than in EU/EEA/candidates, although the difference is not statistically significant. It is important to note that within the group of the third countries the influence was the strongest among the ENPI countries. According to the data provided by the survey, 89% of the Action 2 beneficiaries reported that EM II had at least some influence on the development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education, compared to only 50% of the respondents from the EU27 countries. Similarly, 94% of the respondents from the ENPI countries reported that the programme had strong or at least partial influence on the development of joint recognition mechanisms (through ECTS, joint degrees, joint diploma supplement or alternative mechanisms) in their countries, while this number for the EU27 countries was equal to 62%. As is argued in the horizontal case study, the exceptional influence of the programme on the ENPI countries can be attributed to the success of the ENPI in creating a common area of shared values and cooperation between the EU and its Partner countries. Similar findings would have been useful about IPA countries, which receive support also from DG ENLARG, and for which EM II is essential in their preparation to fully integrate into the European higher education market. Yet it is not possible to make robust conclusions from the survey of institutional beneficiaries due to the low response rate from these countries. One of three respondent institutions claimed that EM II influenced the development of regional mobility schemes, two out of three indicated there was influence on the development of a three-cycle education, and two out of four indicated there was influence on joint recognition mechanisms. Yet with these low response rates qualitative information is a more valuable source of information on those countries. One of the interviewees at the National Structures in candidate countries said that there was “clear value added in that the cooperation is structured through this instrument and not left to individual institutions; the composition of the consortia ensures EU added-value and truly promotes European higher education, not higher education of individual countries or institutions”.

The case studies confirm that the programme, although often having no tangible influence on the European HEIs, fostered the adoption of European credit and mobility recognition standards in the third countries participating in the projects. The case studies of both Averroès and EuroSPIN demonstrated that capacity-building strategies in the third country HEIs helped them to implement credit and mobility recognitions as well as quality assurance mechanisms, common between these institutions and their European partners. The EM II programme, therefore, provides a unique framework for sharing and disseminating higher education standards, values and practices between European and third-country participants. The Eurasia 2 consortium even adopted the Europass CV format for the purpose of applications (see the case study). The increasing use of ECTS (or comparable systems, such as ACTS in Asian countries) in third countries has occurred in relation to reference to credit transfer, but not to grade transfer. The Pacific Rim countries, for instance, use UCTS – which is essentially the same as ECTS.

Overall, according to the results of the survey, only 23% of the respondents strongly agreed that legislative or administrative changes have been introduced or initiated to facilitate the adoption of a three-cycle higher education system (bachelor-master-doctorate) as a consequence of the programme, with 23% stating that it had only partial influence and the majority of respondents (37%) stating it had no influence at all. The influence of the programme on the adoption of other Bologna measures (Diploma Supplement; ECTS) was

also moderate: only 23% of the respondents (both Action 1 and Action 2 beneficiaries) strongly agreed that joint recognition mechanisms (through ECTS, joint degrees, joint diploma supplement or alternative mechanisms) have been adopted in their countries as a consequence of the programme, with another 32% stating it had only partial influence and 32% indicating it had no influence at all in this field. In addition, only 15% of the institutional beneficiaries, who participated in the survey, strongly agreed that legislative or administrative changes have been introduced to facilitate the mobility between EU countries and employment of students and academic staff participating in the Erasmus Mundus programme, with 35% stating it had only partial influence and 32% stating it had no influence at all in this area. Only 8% of the Action 1 beneficiaries strongly agreed that legislative or administrative changes have been introduced to facilitate mobility between the EU and the third countries and employment of students and academic staff participating in the Erasmus Mundus programme.

A similar conclusion could be drawn from the results of the survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations, involved in implementation of the EM II programme. The analysis of these results indicates that the sole area where EMII had a significant influence on legislative developments related to the internationalisation of higher education is its influence on legislative developments concerning recognition of joint degrees and the legislative developments in the third countries. While overall 14 out of 27 National Structure respondents indicated that EM II had at least some influence on the development of credit recognition systems, with another 10 indicating it had no influence at all in this field, an overwhelming majority of 19 out of 27 respondents reported, that the programme had influence on the recognition of joint degrees and curricular integration at masters level in their countries (with a mere five respondents saying it had no influence at all in this area). The contrast with the influence in other Bologna process-related areas is even more evident: only 8 out of 27 National Structure respondents indicated that the programme had at least some influence on legislative or administrative changes to facilitate the adoption of a three-cycle higher education system (with 14 respondents reporting no influence at all in this area); and 6 out of 23 respondents indicating some influence on legislative or administrative changes to facilitate mobility between EU countries/EU-third country students (with the majority of eight respondents indicating no influence at all).

According to the representative of DG ENLARG, the contribution of EM II on the new legislations in the field of internationalisation of higher education both across the EU and in enlargement countries was rather indirect: the programme fostered a change of attitudes regarding the Bologna process, as well as the mindsets, leading to greater openness, rather than the national legislations. According to a representative of the National Tempus Office in an ENPI country, EM II had hardly any significant influence on the development of the Bologna process in the country: instead the programme's primary result was increasing openness and exchange of ideas, fostered by the increasing academic mobility between that country's and European HEIs. In addition, according to the results of the survey, 18 out of 27 respondents indicate that the programme had at least some impact on the development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education between the EU and third countries. The review of the answers to the open questions provide further evidence on the power of the programme to internationalise the HE education systems of the participant states by helping the third countries to adapt the European experience and standards.

The influence of EM II is however clearer in particular areas where the programme represents substantial novelties: namely in fostering necessary legislation for the recognition of joint degrees and in promoting the adoption of European and international standards (quality assurance, credit and mobility recognition) among *the third countries*, where it was not present before. According to the results of the horizontal case study, EM II created a unique impetus for participating HEIs to seek changes in legal regulations of joint degree recognition by laying down formal requirements for potential recipients of funding. The most striking example of the programme influencing national legislation in the area of recognition of joint degrees is provided by Spain, where several Royal decrees were adopted in the course of the programme. In addition case studies of Eurasia, EuroSPIN and Averroès projects provide further evidence about the programme's influence on the development of European and international quality assurance, credit and mobility

recognition mechanisms in third countries, where it did not exist before joining the programme.

In addition, the case studies carried out for this project also indicate that parties involved in EM II foresee sustainable development of most of the cooperation mechanisms developed in the course of the programme. The information provided by one representative of National Structures, for instance, demonstrates that while Diploma Supplement, joint curricula and credit recognition are most frequently used in the country, focus has recently been put on improvement of credit recognition, updating of Diploma Supplement and development of support services, the measure which in the future will attract even more attention from the national authorities. The interview with the representative of the Averroès project showed that many support services for mobile students and staff are already in place only because of additional funding from regional authorities.

The case study evidence shows that numerous obstacles still remain. Solutions seem to be found on an ad hoc basis, granting exceptions to consortia. Within the *Action 1* case study (EuroSPIN), partners in Germany and the UK already have experience in granting joint degrees, while in Sweden no legislation has been adopted. The consortium expects that legislation will be in place by the time the first cohort graduates. In Spain, EM degrees receive automatic accreditation, but this is not the case across the participating countries. In *Action 2*, the EM2-STEM case study showed that, due to strict qualification requirements in engineering, it is difficult for students to attend fully matching courses abroad. Within *Action 3*, the CODOC study found that universities in Southern Africa press governments for the recognition of joint degrees, but there have been no achievements so far. Such degrees are formally acceptable, but they do not enjoy the same recognition. Recognition of study periods abroad can also vary thematically. The monitoring data received for this evaluation show to what extent joint degrees have been adopted. Less than a half of all degrees are joint (see Table 4).

Overall, as a practical instrument EM has contributed to achieving the objectives of the Bologna recommendations, prompting the participating countries to adopt or at least consider necessary legislative changes. Despite some legislative progress, it is recognised that additional efforts should be taken both within the EU and in third countries to facilitate international cooperation in higher education through instruments such as joint degrees, recognition of study periods or degree recognition.

Operational question No. 5.3: Is the programme assisting in the emergence of a distinctly European offer in higher education?

As our case studies showed, participation in EM enhanced the visibility of European education beyond the reputation of the most popular study destinations, but it contributed to convergence in the EU to a limited extent. The survey of National Structures complements the evidence showing that for most National Structures increasing the appeal and attractiveness of European higher education is important, but not on the list of priorities. Overall, there is a strong contribution of EM towards increasing the visibility and awareness of European education in participating third countries. As Eurasia 2 case study showed, EM funding filled the gap between the demand for European education and its financial costs for less privileged students and scholars. With its cross-European design, EM balances mobility in Europe, attracting students to various EU countries and regions – institutional beneficiaries surveyed almost unanimously agreed that the cross-European design enhances the visibility of courses and institutions. Yet the centrality of the European dimension was not even, and EM's contribution to European competitiveness is still an opportunity rather than an observable trend.

Erasmus Mundus is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education intended to promote the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning around the world. It aims to enhance the visibility and attractiveness of European higher education in third countries; therefore contributing to the emergence of a distinctly European offer in higher education is one of the goals of the programme. Yet emergence of a distinctly European offer was difficult to measure and to convey to interviewees and survey respondents. The underlying hypothesis was that cooperation among HEIs should

contribute to the emergence of European HE, which could be characterised (objectively and subjectively) by similar standards, values and practices. For the sake of simplicity, this question was sub-divided into questions relating to: (1) development of similar standards; (2) built-in mobility; and (3) European competitive advantage (subjective and objective outcome of integration). For the greater part, case study information and to some extent survey data were used to empirically support the conclusions relating to this question.

Coordinators and professors interviewed, who are working for both Action 1 and 2 consortia, agreed that similar practices were difficult to achieve. Within EM2-STEM, a partner university of an EU12 country was comfortable with the European approach – whereas a British university had reservations in terms of the promotion of a “European” degree, when it felt it had an attractive product already. The offer of a British qualification attracts 40% of international students to the university. As a British university, the coordinating institution wanted to enhance, first and foremost, its own visibility and sustain the features of the national system. Despite the general commitment, some subject areas (such as engineering) had very strict qualification requirements, and it was difficult to coordinate multi-national programmes. An Action 3 project DOCET/EQF-CDIO focused on this issue and aimed to improve the transparency and recognition of engineering qualifications.

In addition, similar practices and standards had not emerged in doctoral education: employment or studentship, taught or research-oriented doctorates were concerns that institutions find difficulties in overcoming. In addition, they did not seem to be willing to give up the traits of their national systems (e.g. charging tuition fees where there were none, as in Sweden, or introducing employment for doctoral candidates where it was not common, as in Germany).

It appears that the willingness to promote shared practices was more profound in candidate countries. From the point of a partner university in a candidate country, participation in both Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus has acted as engines of change within the university. Change became imperative – for instance in implementing adaptation of courses to accommodate incoming students from abroad, in the delivery of certain courses in English and in effectively forcing faculties which normally operate very much independently to work together. Yet increasing the appeal and attractiveness of European education was a top priority for only one third of the National Structures – for nearly a half it was important, but not on the list of priorities. No institution, however, claimed that it was not important at all.

Built-in mobility appeared to attract students and staff, who were interested in comparing various countries both academically, culturally and socially. The motivation to learn about the culture and lifestyle of other countries, practice a foreign language and immerse oneself in a European education system was by far the dominant answer to an open question on motivation in the survey of Action 2 individual beneficiaries. The cross-European design was one of the main factors that raised the low application rates of European students. For European students, who were already used to programmes like Erasmus, mobility had an added value that can help them choose between courses of similar excellence, based on the case study evidence.

According to EU Delegations in third countries, many third country students were interested in studying in Europe and curious to find out about possibilities beyond the most popular countries. Earlier research showed that almost two-thirds of foreign students studying in Europe chose the UK, Germany or France. EU10 countries (as of 2005) attracted only 4% of the foreign students studying in Europe, and Southern European countries attracted only 10%. The share of foreigners among masters and doctoral students was observed to be much lower than among undergraduates, with only 16%.⁴¹ A later source indicated that the dominance of the UK, Germany and France slightly decreased – in 2006 they attracted 60% of foreign students studying in Europe.⁴² The Delegations had been

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² World Education Services, *International student mobility: patterns and trends*. From World Education News and Reviews, October 2007. <<http://www.wes.org/educators/pdf/StudentMobility.pdf>>.

promoting less popular countries as study destinations, thus contributing to a positive perception of European, rather than only British, French or German education. TEMA students from third countries were interested in learning about the diversity of urbanism and regionalism traditions in Europe and developed an interest in comparative research. They were highly satisfied with their studies in Hungary (see the case study). In the case of Action 2 partnership Eurasia 2, students chose their mobility destinations by subject area, although some were worried whether they would be able to live in a country where their academic language would be different from the national language. However, as the EM2-STEM case study showed, many third-country students were still most interested in education in specific countries with a high reputation, rather than European education in general.

For institutions, mutual learning and consolidation of Member State initiatives, according to one DG EAC representative, were also strengths of EM II. The cross-European design enhanced the visibility and awareness of shared European approaches and methods in higher education in third countries. Of the beneficiaries surveyed, 89% of Action 1 and 93% of Action 2 institutional beneficiaries believed this to be the case. The evidence showed that partnerships had firmly established mobility and internationalisation as a design feature of European education.

Finally, EM contributed to *European competitive advantage*. As shown in the case studies, many talented students in “developing” countries choose between the US and Europe rather than between their home countries and Europe. The data from 2004 show that although over a million students in 32 European countries were from another country than that in which they were studying, and this figure was nearly two times higher than the absolute number of foreign students in the US, almost half of those mobile students (42%) were from other European countries. In addition, studies were not the aim of mobility for a substantial share of foreign students studying in Europe. Thus, all European countries combined were on par with the US in terms of attracting foreign students. The EU’s aim to become a leading knowledge economy in the world and the first choice of third-country students pursuing their degrees abroad thus seems to be obstructed by regional imbalances, linguistic barriers and insufficient knowledge of education opportunities in the EU.⁴³ Earlier research showed that English-speaking countries remained primary targets of student migration – the UK attracted more than half of the number of foreign enrolments of the US, followed by Australia. Germany and France ranked behind Australia.⁴⁴ Research also showed tough competition between European countries, the US and Australia in terms of attracting Asian students, while the proportion of African students was much higher in Europe than in its competitors.⁴⁵ It is interesting to compare that in the US, East Asian students stood out in obtaining US scholarships and grants, whereas Southeast Asians mostly relied on family resources, and 37% of Middle Eastern and North African students arrived with home country grants.⁴⁶

Higher visibility of European higher education contributes to attracting third-country students to Europe and making it, according to a DG EAC representative, a privileged partner in their future activities. With *Action 3* projects like CODOC, the strengths and weaknesses of the European research-oriented model were outlined vis-à-vis the taught doctorate model. According to EU Delegations in third countries and the European University Association (EUA), other regions closely follow developments in Europe and try to adapt European mobility and recognition mechanisms to their needs. Partnerships with third-country institutions and capacity building can orient them towards the European practices. Another Action 3 project, DocLinks, was dedicated towards exploring possibilities and promoting cooperation in doctoral education between the EU and Africa. With Action 3, a French-led consortium established the Siberian Centre of European Education specifically to promote cooperation and European education in the Siberian part of the

⁴³ Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), *Perceptions of European Higher Education in Third Countries. Project 2004 – 3924 / 001 – 001 MUN-MUNA31 Final Report*, 2005.

⁴⁴ World Education Services, *International student mobility: patterns and trends*. From World Education News and Reviews, October 2007. <<http://www.wes.org/educators/pdf/StudentMobility.pdf>>.

⁴⁵ Daniel Obst and Joanne Forster, *Perceptions of European higher education country report: USA*. Institute of International Education. <<http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/doc/us.pdf>>.

Russian Federation, whereas the PromoDoc project aimed at promoting European doctoral education in third countries. It is clear that the substantial focus of Action 3 on doctoral education closely followed the introduction of the third university cycle to Erasmus Mundus. The results achieved in the Action 3 clusters should be thus made more visible to institutions developing doctoral courses and also institutions beyond the programme.

According to one interviewed EU-level stakeholder, the promotion of European standards in higher education should receive more attention in the future if the EU wants to promote European values in education through EM. International cooperation contributes to promoting European models of teaching and research in third countries, as well as to consolidation of these models within the EU through joint curriculum development and student supervision. In addition, such cooperation contributes to a positive image of Europe worldwide and strengthens European external cooperation. As exemplified by Eurasia 2, mobile students and scholars learned new methods and developed a comparative approach in their research which contributed to the global exposure (through publications, quotations, etc.) of European research. The Action 2 survey shows that comparative research and learning new methods, as well as exposure to European education, were dominant motivators to apply. Visiting scholars often used their mobility to draft joint publications, thus becoming more exposed to European academic literature and publication opportunities. Awareness of and cooperation with European scholars raises their quotation indices and provides them with more visibility worldwide – this was the experience of a Spanish professor interviewed, whose visibility greatly increased after starting to teach in English for EM courses.

Operational question No. 5.4: To what extent do EM, joint programmes and partnerships manage to overcome the obstacles linked to the diversity of the European and non-European national systems involved?

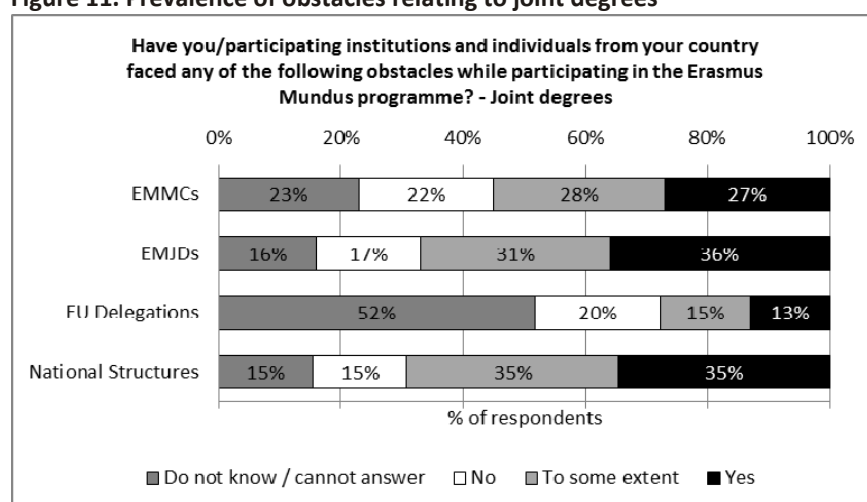
Cooperation between European and non-European HEIs could be hindered by the diversity of national HE systems in terms of regulation, governance, resources and specific features relating to various subject areas. Hence, the evaluation aimed to assess the extent to which EM, joint programmes and partnerships managed to overcome the obstacles linked to the diversity of the European and non-European national systems involved. Obstacles were found in administrative issues (selection, residence permits and visas, etc.), consortium coordination, award of joint diplomas, unifying costs of education across the consortium in Action 1, co-financing, etc. The challenges were overcome on an ad-hoc basis, but more systemic measures to address them will be needed in the future. The surveys provided quantitative evidence for answering this question, whereas the case studies informed about how exactly the obstacles and solutions to them affect the work of the participants. The findings were well triangulated and strongly supported by multiple sources.

Regarding *Action 1*, the obstacles faced by the consortia and ways of addressing them are also presented under operational question No. 14.2. The main obstacles arising and solutions relating specifically to the diversity of national HE systems were:

1. Lacking legislation regarding joint degrees – consortia issued double degrees instead.
2. Tuition fees – students were given multiple choices regarding their home and host institution.
3. Strict qualification requirements – universities developed mutual recognition systems.
4. Research-based vs. taught doctorates – students fulfilled the requirements of their home university, whichever model it implements.
5. Employment vs. student status of doctoral candidates – consortia complied with EM rules, but this was an extra burden.
6. Doctoral studies were typically longer than EM funding – participating institutions raised their own funding or developed support and counselling methods to help doctoral graduates to finish their research on time.

The question of joint degree legislation was already addressed under operational questions No. 4.1. and 5.2. The figure below shows the prevalence of issues with joint degrees as observed by participating institutions, 26 National Structures and 54 EU Delegations.

Figure 11. Prevalence of obstacles relating to joint degrees



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries and survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations.

Regarding tuition fees, 59% Action 1 consortia agreed or rather agreed that their differences were a burden and 21% disagreed or rather disagreed. For example, the issue of tuition fees was particularly highlighted by the EuroSPIN and GEMMA consortia. In the former case, the differences hindered some mobility tracks. In the latter case, based on the recommendation from EACEA, tuition fees were unified, but the consortium was worried that this would limit the attractiveness of GEMMA in some universities, where comparable national programmes would then become cheaper. But the situation changed with the introduction of EM scholarships for European students, thus balancing the numbers of European students who could have been discouraged by the unified tuition fees.

Solutions to the difference in employment practice were still lacking. In addition, as shown in evaluation question No. 5.3., some institutions were unwilling to change their standards and practices for the sake of compliance with EM rules (e.g. they preferred to have scholarships rather than employment contracts for doctoral candidates). When they complied with the rules, it was doubtful whether the change in practices would be sustained in the future. An interesting observation was that the differences among European HEIs appear to be as large as, or even larger than between European and non-European systems.

Several *methods for overcoming the obstacles* were identified during the case studies. Firstly, there were launch discussions within the consortia, with the participation of EACEA, to identify obstacles and divide responsibilities for overcoming them. Secondly, the coordinating institution typically took a leading role and contributed its own resources for this purpose. The case studies showed that most of the administration costs were borne by the coordinating institutions. Therefore, partner institutions were not obliged to introduce costly management systems in order to participate in EM. It appears that participating institutions, particularly coordinators, were already highly internationalised, though the level of human resources available for contract management varies widely. Of the National Structures 20 out of 27 and 24 out of 54 EU Delegations agreed or rather agreed that participating institutions were highly internationalised before their participation in EM II.

It was almost universally accepted that the EM grant was not sufficient to cover all the administrative costs, though in many cases coordinating institutions were willing to contribute financially. Among the National Structures, 17 out of 27 agreed or rather agreed that only institutions with a sound financial base could participate in EM II. Of the EU Delegations 20 out of 54 shared this opinion, while 25 disagreed or rather disagreed. The difference suggests that the financial burden on the coordinating institution, which is always an EU institution, is much heavier. Thirdly, institutions made ad hoc arrangements in order not to have students “stuck” between national systems. For example, in the EuroSPIN project, students first and foremost followed the rules of their home institution.

In *Action 2*, the main obstacles relating to the diversity of education systems were specific regulations regarding certain subject areas (e.g. engineering) and limited transferability of qualifications. In the experience of case study partnership coordinators, some mobile students had to repeat a year upon return. In the experience of Eurasia 2, degree mobility was thus more popular in some participating countries than Erasmus-type mobility. Although students were interested in European education, they found this type of mobility not rewarding enough.

A horizontal issue affecting *both Actions* is the difference in emphasis on various skills and grading. First, there are profound cross-country differences in the emphasis on public speaking, motivation letter writing and self-presentation. In addition, in the words of a professor teaching at GEMMA, some students expected that a literature review was enough for a masters thesis, whereas others aimed at writing a publishable paper. Finally, students were accustomed to different approaches to grading. For example, lecturers in Eurasia 2 highlighted that in Southeast Asia students were used to being considered excellent and were highly disappointed with the lower grades they receive during mobility. This was a result of a difference in the approach: in some systems top grades are given for excellence, while in others students duly fulfilling all requirements can expect a top grade. Regional differences were also observed in student proneness to challenge authority over grades.

In *Action 3*, the main difficulty was ensuring that all partners understood each other and were committed to investing in the partnership. It is very important, as survey respondents and the consortium selected for the case study pointed out, that there was an active interest in the partnership, as co-financing was often required. Mapping and managing the diversity of national systems was in fact the object of Action 3 projects, such as DocLinks, JOQUAR or TRANS-DOC.

Challenges resulting from the diversity of national education systems affected mobility at all academic levels, from undergraduates to doctoral candidates. At the undergraduate level, there were typically rather strictly defined sets of courses to attend and skills to acquire, leading to limitations in recognition of mobility. For graduate students, who are between professional and research orientations, differences in research requirements are a relevant issue, along with tuition fees. In the case of postgraduates, their status at the university, the academic process of acquiring a PhD, and the length of their studies were significant cross-country differences.

Set of evaluation questions No. 6 in the ToR: Can an identifiable “Erasmus Mundus brand” be said to have emerged from the first phase of the programme and with what qualities is it associated (for national authorities, higher education institutions, academics, students and employers)?

High awareness of the brand is both a result of effective programme activities and an important asset, which can be used for successful implementation of the programme in the future. Evidence gathered during this evaluation shows that the EM brand is rather well known among target audiences. The decision to build the EM brand on the basis of the Erasmus brand, which has been functioning for already 20 years in Europe, has proved to be efficient. However, there is evidence that not all the stakeholders, target groups and future beneficiaries can clearly differentiate the EM brand from Erasmus. This is an important obstacle to communication of the added value of the EM as a brand of excellence. Both institutional beneficiaries and individuals participating in Action 2 projects strongly agree that participating in the EM programme contributes to the visibility and prestige of their institution. Prestigious institutions participating in the programme shape perception of the brand. This makes participation in the programme beneficial to less acknowledged partners in terms of strengthening their image. Beyond the use by institutional beneficiaries, the EM brand can also be used to represent European higher education. At this stage of development, the EM brand has substantial awareness to compete with such national brands as Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) or Fulbright.

High awareness of the Erasmus Mundus brand is shown by evidence gathered at institutional level:

- 84% of respondents of the survey of institutional beneficiaries agree with the statement that staff of higher education institutions in their countries is aware of the Erasmus Mundus;
- 68% of respondents agree that students in their country are aware of the programme.

Institutional beneficiaries of Action 2 and beneficiaries from third countries find the Erasmus Mundus brand stronger. 20% more institutional beneficiaries from third countries compared to those from EU member states strongly agree that students in their country are aware of the Erasmus Mundus. Evidence gathered at the individual level further support these differences:

- 46% of Action 2 beneficiaries from third countries tend to agree that Erasmus Mundus is known among students;
- 55% tend to agree that the programme is known among academic staff;
- Only around 30% of students and graduates surveyed in the Graduate impact survey (which also covers students and graduates from EU) agree that Erasmus Mundus is known in their countries.⁴⁷

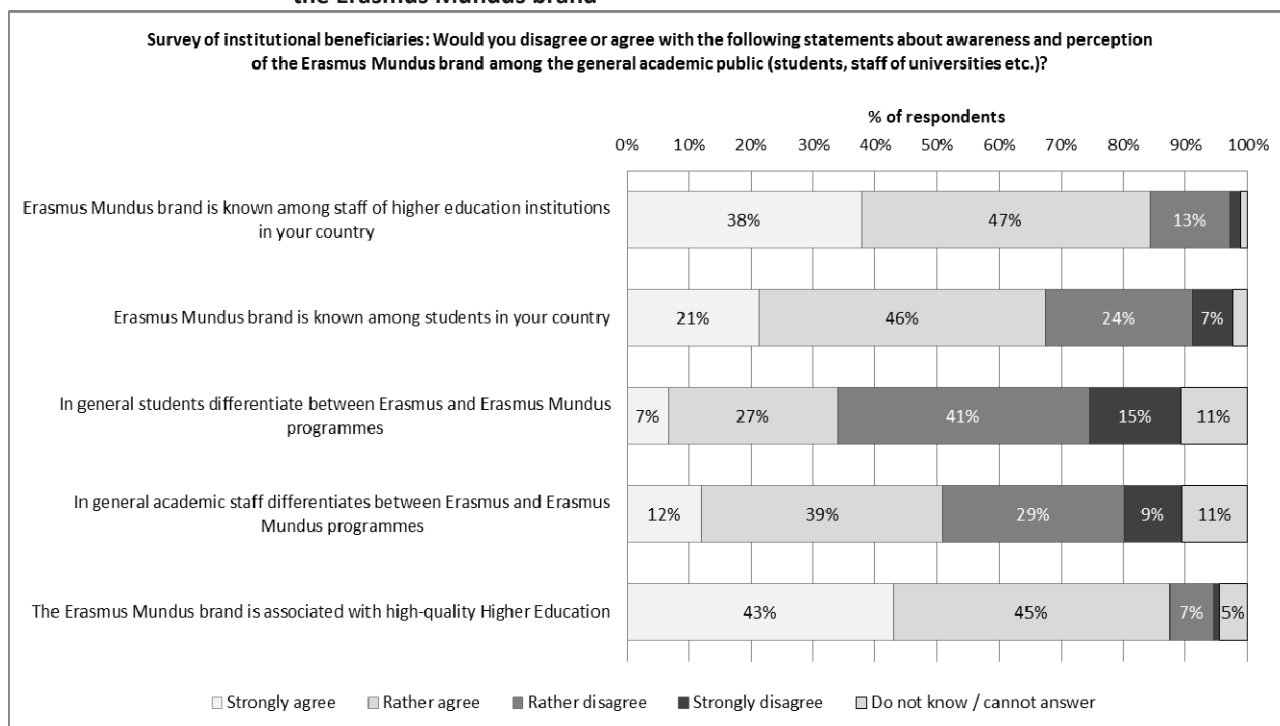
This evidence shows that awareness of Erasmus Mundus among third-country students is strong. Furthermore data gathered at institutional level (see paragraph above) shows that it is stronger among third-country students than among students in the EU. Of individual Action 2 beneficiaries from third countries 57% stated that they were aware of the programme one year before participation. Such awareness could be compared to awareness of the Leonardo programme among individual beneficiaries in EU member states.⁴⁸ Individuals from third countries also strongly agree that the Erasmus Mundus brand is strong and visible compared to other national and international programmes.

In order to understand differences in the current level of awareness of the Erasmus Mundus programme one must analyse awareness in relation to the Erasmus brand. Interviews show a consensus that relation with the Erasmus brand has boosted visibility of the EM programme. Yet at the same time relation to the Erasmus brand is creating confusion among target groups of the programme, as they do not always clearly differentiate between the programmes. Interviewees stated that EM target groups (even students already participating in the programme) quite often perceive Erasmus Mundus as a part of the Erasmus programme. A low level of differentiation of these programmes is pictured in the survey results. Of the institutional beneficiaries, 55% disagree with the statement that students differentiate between Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus programmes. Differentiation among academic staff is believed to be stronger. Data suggests that even though target groups become more aware of the Erasmus Mundus programme, they are not yet well acquainted with the distinctive qualities of the programme.

⁴⁷ Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey. Research Report 2009-2010. ICUnet.AG, 2010.

⁴⁸ 57.9% of individual beneficiaries of the Leonardo programme gave the same answer to the identical question in the survey carried out during interim evaluation of the Life-long learning programme: Source: Mid-term evaluation of Life-long learning programme. PPMI, 2011.

Figure 12. Opinions of institutional beneficiaries regarding awareness and perception of the Erasmus Mundus brand



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

A successful brand can be defined as one that is not only known among the target groups, but also represents some important values and qualities of the programme. Lack of differentiation between Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus brands is one of the obstacles in managing perception of the Erasmus Mundus brand. Furthermore there are big differences among Erasmus Mundus actions, which create different experiences of participation in the programme. All these experiences, however, are branded under the same name. Interviews show a valid concern that this might jeopardise the integrity of the Erasmus Mundus brand as a brand of excellence. For example, students of Action 1 and Action 2 take part in different mobility schemes, they are subject to different selection procedures and as a result they have a different experience. As already pointed out under operational question No. 2.2, graduates of EMMCs and EMJDs go through competitive selection processes and study in at least two HE institutions. Therefore, they identify strongly with the EM brand and form a brand community which contributes to awareness of the brand. At the same time the experience of Action 2 students in terms of length and complexity of mobility was more similar to that of LLP Erasmus Student Mobility. As a result, not all the stakeholders, target groups and future beneficiaries can clearly differentiate and understand the added value of Erasmus Mundus as a brand of excellence.

Despite current risks for the integrity of the brand, data show that the Erasmus Mundus brand is perceived as a brand of excellence. The survey of institutional beneficiaries of the Erasmus Mundus programme shows that 88% of respondents agree that the Erasmus Mundus brand is associated with a high quality of higher education. This is one of the most supported statements of the survey in the group of questions concerning the Erasmus Mundus brand. Institutions from third countries somewhat stronger agree with this statement, but in general it is supported by institutions from all respondent groups participating in all actions of the programme. This statement is supported even stronger among individual beneficiaries of Action 2, especially those from third countries.

Under these circumstances the Erasmus Mundus brand becomes an asset which can be used for raising the prestige and image of participating institutions. One of the possible uses of the brand, piloted at the evaluation, is giving the Erasmus Mundus brand for high quality joint programmes, which have been funded for five years, but whose new applications did not receive funding. Of the institutional respondents of the survey 79% agree with the statement that the Erasmus Mundus brand fosters involvement of potential beneficiaries in the programme. Similarly, 80% of Action 2 individual beneficiaries surveyed

(especially those from third countries) agreed that the Erasmus Mundus brand fostered their involvement in the programme. It supports the current idea that use of the Erasmus Mundus brand for joint programmes after termination of the Erasmus Mundus project can contribute to the international visibility and sustainability of these programmes. Such use is a good example of benefiting from brand awareness outside the programme.

Set of evaluation questions No. 7 in the ToR: Has the programme contributed to making policy, administration and teaching in European higher education institutions more internationally oriented, helping them to overcome the “Internationalisation Process” (international higher education cooperation beyond the European countries) challenges?

Operational question No. 7.1: To what extent has the programme contributed to strengthening the international orientation of institutions with regard to curriculum structure and content, pedagogical approach, services offered, linguistic diversity, transnational quality assurance mechanisms and attitudes of teachers and students?

Analysis of higher education internationalisation at the level of HEIs focuses on the following issues of HE cooperation indicated in the Terms of Reference: international cooperation, curriculum structure and content, pedagogical approach, services offered, linguistic diversity, transnational quality assurance mechanisms, attitudes of teachers and students, any support to improve equity in access to HE and international mobility schemes. Surveys and case studies informed the answer to this question. Overall, the programme is contributing significantly to strengthening the international orientation of participating institutions, but this process should be seen in the context of a wider international collaboration and take into account different situations within HEIs.

International cooperation

The EM I ex-post evaluation concluded that the integrated, transnational nature of EMMCs required participating institutions to engage directly with the detail of applying aspects of the Bologna process, most notably the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). It has also increased mutual awareness among the academic community of the characteristics and functioning of higher education systems in other Member States.⁴⁹ In EM II, institutional beneficiaries were enthusiastic about the impact the programme had in strengthening the international ties between European and third-country institutions. Finally, 86% of the respondent institutional beneficiaries agreed that Erasmus Mundus has helped to structure, enhance and formalise research and mobility networks between European and third-country institutions that informally existed in the past.

Most of the National Structure respondents did not report significant influence of the programme on the development of national legislation related to the implementation of the Bologna process (with the exception of the legislative developments related to the recognition of joint/double degrees). While denying this “hard power” of the programme to foster significant reforms in national legislations of the participant countries, the respondents, nevertheless, reported a positive influence of the programme on the internationalisation of higher education: an overwhelming majority of 24 out of 27 National Structure respondents gave a positive answer to the question whether “Erasmus Mundus contributed to the convergence of higher education systems in Europe”, while 20 out of 27 respondents indicated that the programme had at least some influence on the development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education within the EU. Thus, as these examples clearly demonstrate, the capacity of EM II to internationalise the HE systems of the participant countries was understood rather as a “soft power” to change attitudes, views and dispositions of policy-makers and stakeholders, as well as to build networks and

⁴⁹ ECOTEC, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture* (Brussels, 2009).

ties between the participating HEIs: 17 out of 27 National Structure survey respondents agreed that most of the participating institutions had extensive research networks, which they institutionalised with the help of the Erasmus Mundus programme

With regard to the role of EM in stimulating international cooperation, it could be argued that there are four separate groups of HEIs:

- HEIs in the EU15, which already had longstanding commitments to international cooperation, but were seeking to diversify that commitment and follow up new opportunities for linking with universities in different regions;
- HEIs in the EU12, which to varying degrees may also have developed in recent years a diverse range of international contacts, but for whom EM represented a significant further opportunity;
- HEIs in those third countries which may have had very limited opportunities for international work thus far – and for whom EM, together with other EU-funded programmes, represented a very important opportunity not only to link to other institutions abroad, but to help in the implementation of important changes in their own practice;
- HEIs in developed countries outside the EU involved in Action 2 Strand 2 partnerships – which may well have considerable international opportunities, but may not have significant existing links with EU HEIs.

Curriculum structure and content, pedagogical approach

According to the results of our survey of institutional beneficiaries, 20% of the respondents (Action 1 beneficiaries) acknowledged that the programme had a strong influence on the curricular structure and content, pedagogical approaches in their institution, while another 60% acknowledged it had some influence. Statistically significant differences across the action strands were observed: Action 2 beneficiaries reported introducing changes in this respect to a lesser extent than Action 1 beneficiaries. Only 15% of EMMCs reported not introducing this – the figures for other strands are at least two times higher.

Case study evidence allowed looking into curricular changes in-depth. In *Action 1*, new joint courses had to be developed and university specialisations aligned. According to the coordinators of GEMMA, this allowed each institution to focus on its strengths. Unsurprisingly, curricular changes were more notable in this Action (20% of survey respondents indicated strong influence). For example, in Spain EM joint programmes are allowed to work with smaller student cohorts than national programmes, and this facilitates a more student-centred approach in teaching.

In Erasmus-type mobility of *Action 2*, changes were not so profound. As exemplified by the reflection of a representative of one National Structure in the EU12, many participating institutions start their internationalisation with Erasmus and join EM when “they want something more”. The changes were often made in the first phases of internationalisation.

In *both actions*, the need to incorporate visiting scholars pushed for more flexibility in curricular organisation. Scholar visits were typically short and do not allow teaching a course for an entire semester. Therefore, universities needed to develop credit assignment mechanisms for shorter intensive courses or incorporate visiting scholars into the existing curriculum.

Services offered

The influence of participation in EM II on the scope and quality of support services for mobile students and academic staff was particularly strong in Action 2. Of the consortia surveyed, 40% reported strong influence and a further 49% – some influence. In Action 1, 24% claimed the influence was strong and 55% that there was some influence. Yet more than a third of all consortia faced difficulties in offering services for mobile students – 43% EMMCs, 39% EMJDs, 33% Action 2 Strand 1 and 29% Strand 2 beneficiaries.

The consortia selected for the case study analysis offered fairly standard services for international students: orientation week, help with administrative matters, language

courses. Yet some innovative practices also existed: the TEMA consortium offers direct payment for the first rent instalment, scholarship disbursement in cash before students open their bank account, whereas the GEMMA consortium introduced the first payment in a cheque. Innovative services for students with disabilities were also developed – systematically at TEMA and on an ad hoc basis at GEMMA.

There were no significant differences between the *Actions* in terms of services offered. They depended on individual universities and their traditions: some had student buddy systems, special events and assistance in finding accommodation, others did not, regardless of the level of their internationalisation. There was an unmet demand for accommodation assistance in some universities.

Linguistic diversity

About a third of Action 1 beneficiaries and over one-fifth of Action 2 beneficiaries indicated strong influence of EM II on linguistic diversity in teaching or research. Of the Action 1 beneficiaries 39% indicated some influence and this figure was 49% for Action 2, whereas about every fourth respondent in both actions found no influence. The high incidence of no influence can be explained by the fact that, as our case studies confirmed, EM II participants were typically highly internationalised before their participation in the programme. More than 90% of the individual beneficiaries of the programme acknowledged that participation in EM II improved their language skills.

However, Action 2 consortia often faced difficulties in offering courses in foreign languages. There were statistically significant differences across the strands of the two actions. Of those who did not face any difficulties, 62% were EMMCs and 56% were EMJDs, but this was the case for only 28% of Action 2 Strand 1 and 29% of Strand 2 beneficiaries.

It can be expected in both Actions that institutions which already use English as the language of teaching (not only those in English-speaking countries, but also international universities like CEU in Hungary, participating in GEMMA), did not have to introduce any changes. Many institutions were already offering courses in English. In institutions using other popular languages, such as French, German or Spanish, some English-language courses were added, but profound changes were not necessary. Changes were more substantial in smaller countries.

Transnational quality assurance mechanisms

Of Action 1 beneficiaries who participated in the survey, 19% claimed that EM II had a strong influence on the adoption of transnational quality assurance mechanisms, and a further 50% said it had some influence, but this figure was lower for EMJDs (about a third said EM II did not have such an influence). Evidence from the Action 1 consortia showed that quality assurance mechanisms tended to result from double checks (i.e. mechanisms from more than one university apply).

Attitudes of teachers and students

An overwhelming majority across both actions suggested that there was a strong influence of EM II on the attitudes of students and staff regarding international cooperation and mobility: the influence was the strongest on Action 2 students (73% strong influence and 23% some influence), followed by Action 2 scholars (67% strong influence and 28% some influence), Action 1 students (61% strong influence and 32% some influence), and finally, Action 1 scholars (51% strong influence and 40% some influence). Among individual beneficiaries of Action 2, 52% of students and 46% of scholars reported strong influence on their attitudes towards international cooperation or mobility, and a further 34% of students and 30% of scholars reported some influence. Clearly, the self-perception of students and scholars on the influence of EM II was more moderate than the perception of the institutions. Perhaps this can be explained by the multiplier effects observed by the institutions: for example, local coordinators of Eurasia 2 noticed more interest in learning English and looking for matching research profiles when the opportunity to benefit from mobility became available.

The case study evidence supports the conclusions of the previous evaluations. Participation in EM has certainly increased emphasis on international cooperation, awareness of opportunities available within participating HEIs, actual international cooperation capacity and changes in curriculum and pedagogy at the level of HEIs. For instance, the Project Averroès case study found that participation in EM was a significant factor in the process of internationalisation for the University of Montpellier 2, which has become a multinational university with a diverse student population (and the slogan of “A University open to the world”). Moreover, as the evidence provided in the horizontal and other case studies confirmed, while the influence of the programme on the legislative developments related to the Bologna process was rather moderate, its influence on the mutual exchange and spread of ideas, as well as on changing attitudes towards the internationalisation of higher education among the participant members was significantly more evident. The interviews with the representatives of both DG ENLARG and a National Tempus Office in an ENPI country reveals that while acknowledging the moderate influence of EM II on the development of national legislations in the participating countries, the respondents indicate that mobility activities, fostered by the programme, contribute to “changing mindsets, leading to greater openness and different mentality.”

Set of evaluation questions No. 8 in the ToR: Is there evidence to show that EM joint programmes and EM partnerships are helping to meet the requirements of the European and third-country labour markets in terms of providing graduates with relevant skills, competences and knowledge?

Operational question No. 8.1: What are the career benefits for the programme participants?
Operational question No. 8.2: How are the EM partnerships helping to meet the labour market requirements in the cases of the candidates and potential candidate countries and their graduates?

Overall, the levels of employment were satisfactory. Some graduates returned to their pre-EM jobs, and many tended to choose academic careers. Relevant intercultural skills and methodological competences translated into career benefits. An alarmingly high number of graduates remained unemployed in the context of the current economic downturn – but there were no data to see how their unemployment rate compares to that of other persons with similar qualifications. On the other hand, the impact on academic staff careers, although not quantifiable, was very substantial, as networking and collaboration are of key importance in contemporary academic careers.

As shown under operational question No. 4.2., career benefits and employability were a high-level aim of EM II. The impact-level analysis of the graduate career (based on desk research, the survey of the individual beneficiaries and consortium-level case studies) was supported by the result-level analysis about the programme’s contribution to the acquisition of various competences. At the impact level, employment and unemployment rates, and subjective perceptions were analysed. At the results level, the relevance of skills to the expected or actual career was assessed. Moreover, the evaluation looked at whether participation in EM has given tangible career benefits to staff (particularly academic, but also administrative). The evidence for answering this evaluation question came mainly from the Graduate Impact Surveys, the survey of individual beneficiaries of Action 2, the survey of institutional beneficiaries of all actions, and seven vertical case studies.

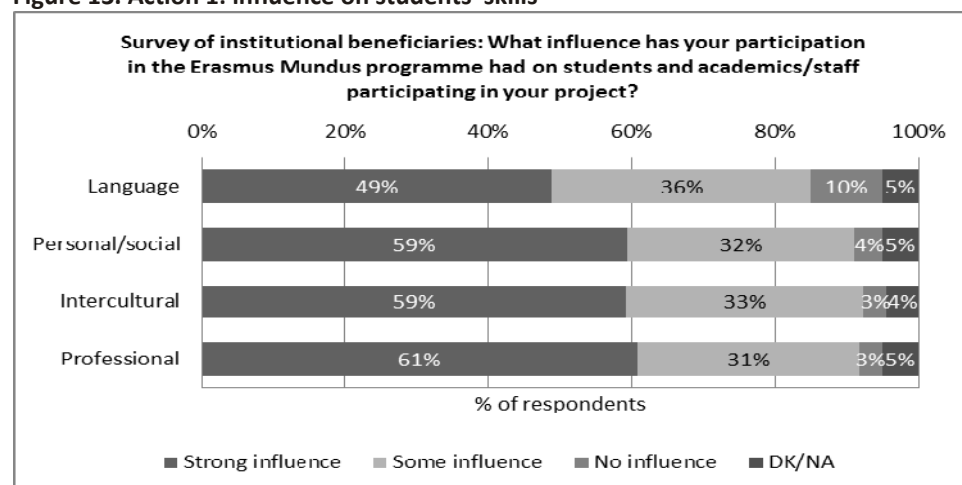
Skills development for students

Studying abroad is generally perceived as valuable in itself due to the provision of transferable “soft skills”. For example, a survey of university graduates who finished their studies in the mid-1990s found that graduates mostly mentioned the field of study and personality as decisive aspects for their employers to recruit them. One of three graduates mentioned practical experience, computer skills and recommendations as important. A less important role was attributed to study grades, the reputation of their HEI, foreign language

proficiency and experience abroad. Of the 12 participating countries (11 European countries and Japan), the experience of study abroad was the most valued in the Czech Republic, and, with regard to study field, among humanities graduates. Graduates who finished their studies about four years ago indicated that problem-solving ability, working independently and oral communication skills were the most important for work. The strongest deficiencies were felt in negotiating, planning, coordinating and organising skills. It is rather alarming that 1 in 5 graduates surveyed found little use for their skills at work (21%), or appeared to be over-qualified for their jobs (20%).⁵⁰ In this context, EM II students had a competitive advantage in those careers where such “soft” skills are valuable.

For *Action 1*, the 2007 interim evaluation found, based on the survey of students, that they mostly valued contact with other cultures (62%) and skills development (58%). However, slightly less than half (49%) of the respondents indicated a substantial impact on future career prospects. Institutions surveyed for this evaluation believed that their participation had a strong influence on student skills (Figure 13). In the Graduate Impact Survey, two thirds of the respondents indicated that EM skills were relevant in their jobs. As the ex-post evaluation of the first phase found, 75% of graduates believed they would not have gained the same skills and experience through more conventional courses, since EM offered them experience with multiple universities and intercultural experience.⁵¹

Figure 13. Action 1: influence on students' skills



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

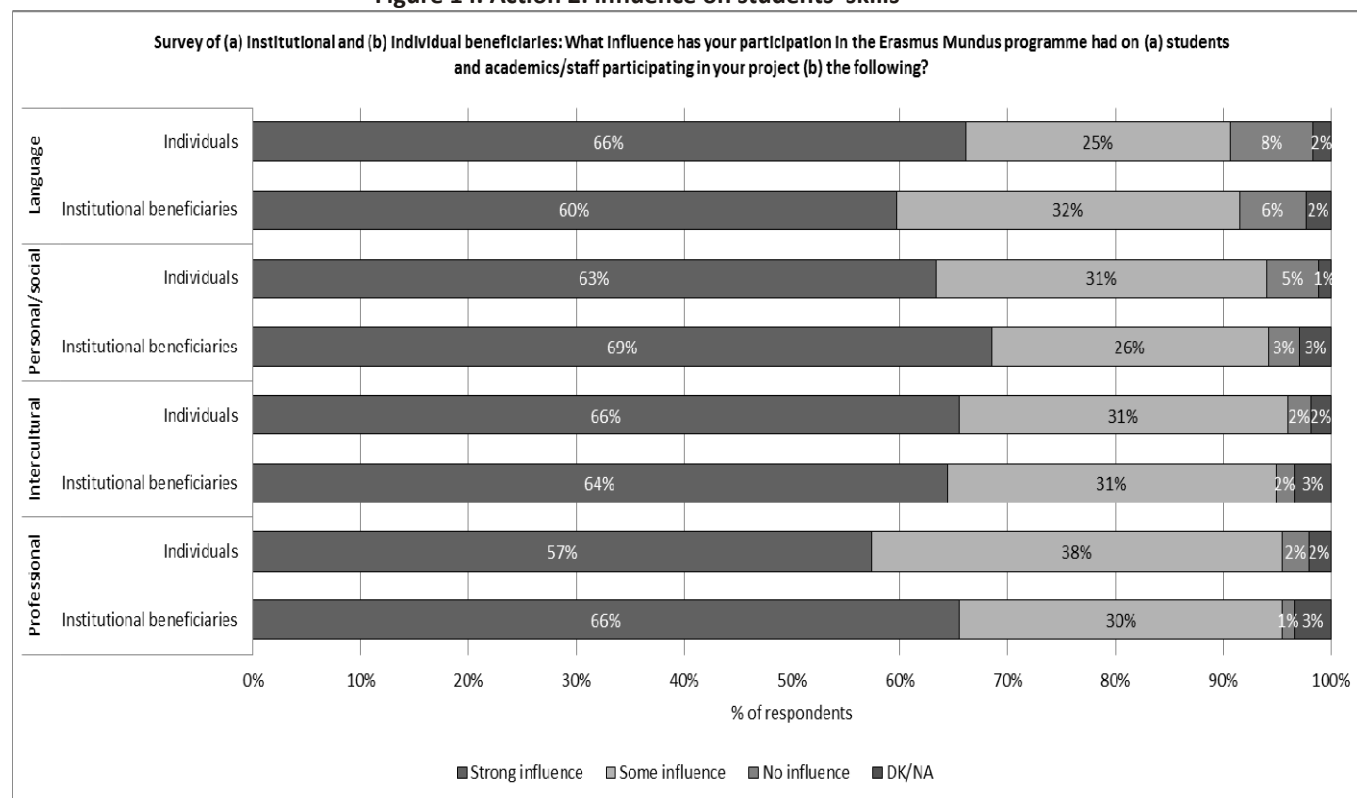
Students interviewed for the case studies appreciated the opportunity to develop their language skills and learn new languages. Research methodology skills and critical thinking were also emphasised by students in social sciences and humanities.

In *Action 2*, the impact on various skills was even more positively evaluated by the participating institutions. Moreover, as many as 89% of students surveyed believed that skills, knowledge and competences acquired in EM are relevant on the labour market. As Figure 14 shows, the assessments of institutions and participating individuals did not differ to a large extent.

⁵⁰ Harald Schomburg and Ulrich Teichler, *Higher education and graduate employment in Europe. Result from graduate surveys from twelve countries* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006).

⁵¹ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey 2007-2009* (Passau, Germany, 2009).

Figure 14. Action 2: influence on students' skills



Source: Surveys of the EM II institutional and individual beneficiaries.

Subjective and objective career impact for students

Transnational mobility has been recognised not only as an appropriate means of fostering intercultural understanding, but also as an essential prerequisite for creating job opportunities and education and training possibilities. The transnational aspects and linkages between the worlds of education and work have become fundamental requirements for European research.⁵² Career benefits of academic programmes are uneven and depend heavily on returns to higher education in various countries. A study on the Erasmus exchange programme found that only 21% of employers thought that formerly mobile graduates could expect a higher salary during the first five years of their career.⁵³ The evaluation evidence shows that in the case of Erasmus Mundus, financial benefits were difficult to measure, but impact in the field of employability and job satisfaction was stronger.

In *Action 1*, a survey of the previous EM phase found that 80% of graduates who were employed found jobs within six months of graduating, and those were jobs with high social security. The Graduate Impact Survey of the first phase students found that 43% perceived that EM had an impact on their career. The effect of EM experience on employers was particularly expected in Africa (by 94% graduates).⁵⁴ Practical experience and foreign language skills were perceived as important to employers, while EM reputation played a lesser role: none of EU graduates chose this option in the graduate survey.⁵⁵ Of the institutions surveyed for this evaluation, 44% believed their participation in EM had a strong influence on the careers of their students, and 36% suggested there was some influence.

In total, 16% of students worked in engineering, 14% in R&D/Science, and 8% in training.⁵⁶ Of the EM II graduates 40% reported working for an academic institution and 20% in the

⁵² "Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on the 'Proposal for a European Parliament and Council decision establishing a programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries' (Erasmus World) (2004-2008) (2003/C 244/04)"

⁵³ Ibid., 103.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture* (Brussels, 2009).

private sector. The figure for the private sector was higher for graduates in law, business and economics (43%), informatics and mathematics (32%), and geography and environmental studies (26%). The predominance of academia was felt in science and engineering, as well as in social sciences and humanities. Governments employed relatively more geography and environmental studies graduates, while the non-profit sector attracted considerably more graduates in medical and health sciences, social sciences and humanities. The academic sector is traditionally more open to foreigners, which may explain the choices of non-EU graduates who decided not to return.⁵⁷

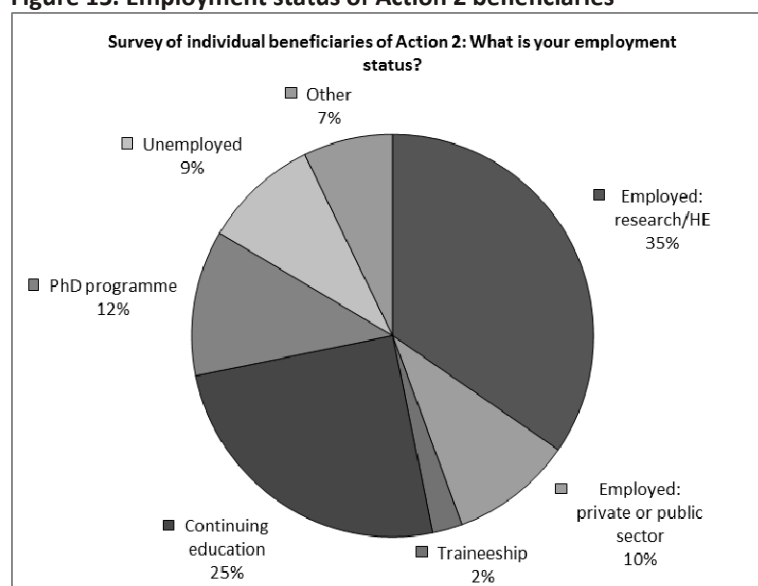
EM I graduates tended not to report more responsibility or higher position, as they were already well qualified before starting EM. However, job satisfaction improved for 73%, and their income slightly improved also.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, 91% of scholars returned to their original employer. Their career improved due to better opportunities to engage in collaborative research, intercultural teaching experience, and development of professional networks.⁵⁹

More disturbing perhaps was the fact that two years after graduation, 41% of EM I graduates were not permanently employed, with over a half of them searching for a job and a third undertaking further studies; this could be a result of the academic orientation of these graduates. Most unemployed graduates were from Africa (71%), non-EU European countries (63%) and Asia (58%).⁶⁰

With the beginning of the new EM phase, 18% of EM graduates were found to be unemployed a year after graduation, and only 4% three years after. A year after graduation, 8% were in traineeships. Social sciences and humanities had the highest share of unemployed graduates (14%), followed by law, business and economics (13%). The economic crisis was the most frequently mentioned reason for unemployment. For non-EU graduates staying in the EU, bureaucratic reasons were an obstacle to employment. Some graduates said that networking and other career-related services offered by the EM programme were below their expectations.⁶¹

For *Action 2*, 46% of institutions and 52% of individuals observed a strong influence on student careers, and 40% of institutions and 31% of individuals observed some influence. The employment status of 349 respondents of the survey is presented in the figure below. 79% of Action 2 students surveyed believed that it is easier to find a job after having studied in more than one country.

Figure 15. Employment status of Action 2 beneficiaries



Source: Survey of the EM II individual beneficiaries.

⁵⁷ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey. Research Report 2009-2010* (Passau, Germany, 2010), 28.

⁵⁸ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey 2007-2009*, 3.

⁵⁹ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*.

⁶⁰ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey 2007-2009* (Passau, Germany, 2009), 4.

⁶¹ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey. Research Report 2009-2010*, 26.

No statistically significant differences were found in terms of career outcomes of Action 2 beneficiaries by broad regional categories. Employment in private or public sectors or enrolment in PhD programmes was less common among respondents from non-EU European countries, and these beneficiaries tended to be unemployed more than EU or third-country beneficiaries (21% vs. 10% and 7% respectively).

For the case studies carried out, most students had not yet completed their EM course. However, there was some evidence of career benefits from the case studies: Averroès enjoyed a positive career impact in terms of highly competitive teaching assistantships, teaching positions and other academic posts. In the case of Eurasia 2, many Southeast Asian students expected to return home as researchers and lecturers. Earlier cohorts of a similar project found employment mostly in HEIs. Spillovers contributed to the process of creating, rather than finding work places. Five EM students were involved in creating the first centre for the treatment of autism in Algeria – this is an important spillover with career implications (see the Action 2 project Averroès case study). On the “Personal Testimony” page of the Averroès project, a Moroccan doctoral student recorded his ambition to develop renewable energy programmes in Morocco, following the completion of his joint French/Moroccan masters degree. He noted that this offers strong prospects for French companies. Following his research work, his supervisor planned to create training programmes on renewable energy in Tangier.

The findings of this evaluation are comparable to what was observed from the survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP. Many of them reported obtaining relevant skills for their career, yet they did not always translate into tangible benefits on the labour market.⁶²

Scholars' career

From the case study evidence, the job-related gains to staff were very significant, because research is increasingly globalised (results include joint publications, new courses, more international visibility, such as citations and references). Scholars appreciated new teaching experiences, opportunities for carrying out joint research projects, opportunities to make use of high quality equipment and laboratory facilities, links made with enterprises in a research context, familiarisation with employment opportunities.

In *Action 1*, scholars surveyed for earlier evaluations observed career enhancement to a larger extent.⁶³ Of the institutions surveyed for this evaluation 12% observed a strong influence on the career of scholars, 44% observed some influence, and 35% – no influence. The case studies found that scholars were very satisfied with their participation, as it boosted their international visibility (as in the case of a Spanish professor who started teaching in English due to the university's internationalisation). A Hungarian professor, who visited Argentina with EM I lectured, established new contacts, developed a new course curriculum and worked on a publication during mobility.

In *Action 2*, the impact on the career of scholars was valued more positively than in Action 1: 30% of institutions believed there was a strong influence, 42% – some influence, and 18% – no influence. As many as 68% of mobile scholars surveyed received more responsibility, better research opportunities or a promotion.

According to the Action 2 EM2-STEM case study, staff mobility was seen by two of the participating EU universities as generally more beneficial than student mobility, in terms of building international relationships for future joint projects – and (especially) research. Also, useful links had been built between administrative staff on issues such as Safety and Security in an Engineering context. For universities, “Research is the key” – so doctoral and post-doctoral programmes were the most important. It was the strong view of partner HEI representatives interviewed, that doctoral education was the key to the development of higher education in Europe, in that the quality of both academic teaching and research depended upon it. Currently, in some EU12 countries as well as in Action 2 Strand 1 target

⁶² European Commission, *Interim Evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013). Final Report*, 2011.

⁶³ Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, *Interim Evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. Final Report*, 2007.

countries outside the EU, many academics are teaching without a doctorate, which is not conducive to high quality teaching. Doctoral and post-doctoral students are crucial, in that they are the early career researchers likely to produce the required positive effects on national societies and economies. This was seen as the key to developing higher education in the Western Balkans – and elsewhere. One issue is that there was of course more money in industry and – in many fields – research could be carried out there.

In Eurasia 2, coordinators, prospective academic staff (currently PhD candidates) and the visiting professor interviewed found that participation in EM II was very enriching in terms of academic career benefits. The participants learned new methodologies, developed comparative research skills and networks. Local coordinators regretted that European mobility could not be financed under this lot – in the past it was very beneficial for European scholars to undertake mobility as well. For instance, one former European beneficiary later joined the administrative staff of the project.

The explanation for the difference between career benefits to students and scholars in Action 1 and Action 2 may lie in the already existing extent of internationalisation and the target groups of the two actions. While students in EMMCs and EMJDs tended to be academically oriented and hence vulnerable in the current situation of academic jobs, Action 2 encompassed students from undergraduates to post-doctoral fellows, who looked for various kinds of jobs. In addition, Action 2 included less privileged institutions, thus making a substantial impact on individuals who otherwise would not have had comparable opportunities. Operational question No. 12.1. discusses some of the tensions between excellence and access. The same was true for scholars, with an additional factor that qualitative career development was more important for them than employability, as they were already employed before EM II.

Set of evaluation questions No. 9 in the ToR: Is there evidence to show that participation of non-European Universities in joint programmes and partnerships has contributed to boosting their capacity in key developing economic sectors and/or increasing the exposure of their national higher education systems to European and worldwide standards of excellence, teaching and research quality?

Operational question No. 9.1: Is there evidence to show that participation of non-European Universities in joint programmes and partnerships has contributed to boosting their capacity in key developing economic sectors and/or increasing the exposure of their national higher education systems to European and worldwide standards of excellence, teaching and research quality?

At the institutional level the EM intervention seeks to promote structured cooperation between HEIs, the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of HEIs. Clearly, European and non-European HEIs operate in both cooperation (mostly in research) and competition (for talent and for funding). Moreover, there are vast gaps among HEIs in various third countries depending on their academic systems. Capacity building has occurred in the partnerships that specifically focused on this, but to some extent all participating institutions benefited from such skills as managing an international partnership. Nearly two thirds of EU Delegations surveyed observed that awareness of global or European standards of excellence, teaching and research quality has increased in the countries they work in. For already excellent institutions in third countries, partnerships allowed developing managerial capacities to welcome foreign students.

This evaluation question was addressed by identifying: (1) institutional capacity building for the HE sector (based on surveys and case study data); (2) the relevance of these capacities to the key economic sectors (based predominantly on the case studies, as it was not feasible to identify the key economic sectors in every participating country), and (3) exposure of non-European universities to European and worldwide standards of academic excellence (based on the survey of institutional beneficiaries, EU-level interviews and case studies).

Higher education is included among the EU's regional cooperation priorities with Asian countries, but not Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, nor overseas territories, etc.⁶⁴ As our analysis showed, there were multiple capacity building instruments as parts of development aid. Due to insufficient cooperation among EU DGs responsible for the EM programme, not all of them have been sufficiently streamlined. According to an EU policy-maker interviewed, the general Policy Coordination for Development approach should be strengthened in Erasmus Mundus: development policies should not contradict one another. Meanwhile, without a system perspective, strengthening capacities of academics and individual institutions could even weaken the HE system by unbalancing it.

Capacities in the higher education sector

Capacity building was the most relevant in Action 2. In *Action 1*, partner institutions were already chosen on the basis of excellence, mutual learning (rather than one-way learning) took place between them. Therefore their exposure to European and global standards of excellence had already been high. Cooperation and joint supervision of students allowed institutions to specialise and promote the strengths of the participating institutions. Curriculum structure, equipment and services have also been considerably developed prior to participation in EM. Of the Action 1 beneficiaries 88% believe that participation in EM II helped third-country institutions to build their capacities, but the case studies show the complexity of the concept of capacities. For example, in GEMMA, the challenge was to accommodate grading and credit transfer systems between European and US partners. On the other hand, the development of online learning modules with Latin American partners was clearly capacity building.

In *Action 2*, developing capacities linked to the political, economic and social reforms of partners was a top priority for 44% of HEIs, and a further 37% considered it important. Of the Action 2 institutional beneficiaries surveyed 78% considered cooperation with other HEIs their top priority. The emphasis on capacity building has been a particular feature of Averroès projects – in ways which were closely linked to the political, economic and social reforms and modernisation efforts of partners, thus building political, cultural, educational and economic links between the EU and third countries. Examples of development of similar standards, values and practices included the joint development of the Quality Charter, quality assurance practices, agreed procedures for the selection of students, agreed procedures for welcoming students, implementation of the tracking of student progress, both during and after their participation in EM mobilities. There was also a clearly stated Human Resource development agenda in EM2-STEM. Workshops on the development of the knowledge transfer triangle were held in the Western Balkans. The intention was to establish International Offices in each of the Western Balkan HEIs. In this way the integrated Action 2 furthered the commitments of the previous Western Balkans – Turkey windows – to facilitate entity-level higher education funds, quality assurance mechanisms and, where applicable, a link with national development plans.⁶⁵

All EM2-STEM partner institutions interviewed expressed a strong belief that EM projects contributed very significantly to capacity building, via a process of mutual learning and shared development. This process was best seen in the context of wider international cooperation, rather than within EM alone. It was of course too early to make a judgement in relation to the impact of this project on university capacity, given its early stage of development.

Capacities in the key economic sectors

Commercialisation of the results of the partnerships was seen in the Averroès partnership – an applied research centre was set up by some graduates. The EuroSPIN consortium also received interest and support from the private sector, but it was too early to talk about the

⁶⁴ EuropeAid, "Education and training", http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/education/index_en.htm.

⁶⁵ European Commission, DG Enlargement, 2008. Standard Summary Project Fiche – IPA centralised programmes Erasmus Mundus – Western Balkan – Turkey Window. <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/ipa/2008/pf_erasmus_mundus_wbw_final_en.pdf>.

commercialisation of the programme results. Meanwhile, the results of the Eurasia partnerships contributed to Czech development aid and were directly used in improving the livelihood of local communities in Southeast Asia. Plant protection, food, sustainability science and other focus areas of Eurasia 2 students were of particular importance in the region.

Exposure to standards of academic excellence

In total, 83% of Action 1 and 77% of Action 2 beneficiaries surveyed believed that awareness of global or European standards of excellence, teaching and research quality had increased. Interviews at the EU level showed that although EM II had made important steps to link academic partnerships, mobility and capacity building in third-country institutions, there was a need to further align these priorities in the future. It was expected that mobility would be more integrated with capacity-building actions under the integrated successor programme. According to the results of the National Structures survey, 18 out of 27 respondents indicate that the programme had at least some impact on the development or implementation of national strategies, programmes and action plans promoting the internationalisation of higher education between the EU and third countries.

The review of the answers to the open questions provide further evidence on the power of the programme to internationalise the HE education systems of the participant states by helping the third countries to adapt the European experience and standards.

These are just a few illustrations of this kind of influence:

- “The Ministry of Education and Science has plans to put in place starting from 2012 a student-mobility programme similar to Erasmus Mundus Action 1, called Global Education 10,000, meaning 10,000 students from Russia every year and for the next ten years will benefit from state funds to study abroad. Erasmus Mundus has been clearly taken as an example.”
- “Although Brazil does not recognize publicly that Erasmus Mundus had an influence on the Brazilian programme Science without borders, it is clear that the programme design was inspired by some of the elements of Erasmus Mundus [...]”

As already mentioned under operational question No. 7.1., the horizontal case study has also demonstrated that dissemination of international and European standards practices and values among the third-country HEIs was one of the principal achievements of EM II. The cases of Eurasia 2 and EuroSPIN projects showed that the programme had the potential to promote European mobility and credit recognition standards among the third countries, while the Averroès project demonstrated how EM II could foster the development of international cooperation mechanisms. Thus, while the extent of the impact of the programme on the strengthening of the Bologna principles in Europe was vague due to the influence of the previous programmes and initiatives in the European context, its role in the process of dissemination of the same Bologna principles beyond Europe was much more obvious. Erasmus Mundus II with the new and stronger orientation towards the academic mobility between Europe and the third countries, which was one of the principal accents of the second phase of the programme, can be considered as one of the principal instruments for the promotion of European and international higher education standards in the third countries. This conclusion was further supported by the results of survey conducted for this project, as well as by the interviews with EU policy-makers and a National Structure in an ENPI country, where the interviewee indicated that the most significant effect of the programme was increasing openness and exchange of ideas between the European and third countries participating in the programme. As has already been noted, the programme’s influence among the ENPI countries was by far the strongest and the most evident (for more details see operational question No. 5.2).

In Action 3, the case study showed that exposure has benefited participating university networks and boosted their abilities to build partnerships in the future. However, this project did not focus on teaching or research.

Overall, the focus on excellence under EM requires *already high* academic and institutional capacities from third-country institutions. As a rule, institutions with high standards of

excellence and internationalisation (offering courses in English, services for mobile students, etc.) got to join the consortia, particularly in Action 1. Action 2 had a more embedded capacity development component. According to the EU Delegation representative, the Delegation attempted to promote historically disadvantaged universities into partnerships, as they would benefit greatly from capacity building. However, this was challenging, as coordinating institutions tended to prefer to focus on excellence. Interestingly, the Coordinator of the Action 2 Strand 2 TEE partnership referred to the centrality of excellence, but also to capacity building, in the context of a partnership linking highly prestigious universities in the USA and Canada and the EU.

Set of evaluation questions No. 10 in the ToR: Does the participation in the programme appear satisfactory in terms of gender balance? Is there particular evidence within Erasmus Mundus Partnerships of measures taken by consortia to maximise and ensure equitable access to Action 2 by female students and vulnerable groups?

Operational question No. 10.1: Are there any particular lessons of inclusion of underrepresented/disadvantaged groups to be learned a) worldwide; b) with regard to specific geographical regions or sub-regions?

It is in the goals of EM II that the internationalisation of HE should not be limited to promoting academic excellence, but should also involve fostering equity in access to HE and mobility schemes. Also, it is important to identify any explicit equal opportunity policies, support services and innovative forms of cooperation in the participating consortia. The results of the evaluation show that the student flows are balanced at the programme level, whereas the imbalance among Action 1 scholars has remained a concern since EM I. Identifying vulnerable groups was a challenge. Innovative policies to accommodate students with special needs were developed, but still needed mainstreaming and often lacked funding. It appeared that Action 1 was more sensitive to special needs, whereas Action 2 fared better in terms of gender equality and assistance to refugees and ethnic minorities.

The survey of Action 1 and 2 institutional beneficiaries shows that they were split in half according to the question whether there was tension between academic excellence and regional/social/gender balance. A total of 46% Action 1 and 41% Action 2 beneficiaries agreed and 44% of both Action 1 and Action 2 beneficiaries disagreed this was the case.

Gender equity

The evaluations of gender balance rely on the following indicators:

- Proportion between male and female applicants on the one hand and the proportion between male and female participants, on the other hand;
- Comparison of gender balance among EM participants with the EU averages;
- Evidence of adoption of specific instruments to promote gender mainstreaming (including (policy statements, guidelines, checklists, disclaimers, dissemination initiatives, consultation and partnership, etc.).

Monitoring data, surveys and case studies were used to answer this question. At the programme level, student cohorts were rather balanced, particularly in Action 2. In Action 1, the numbers of European students were perfectly balanced. This could not be said, however, about Action 1 scholars.

EuropeAid has pointed out the existence of large gender gaps in education and suggested that EU support focuses on the identification, development, collection and transfer of know-how and best practice across regions, combined with policy development and policy

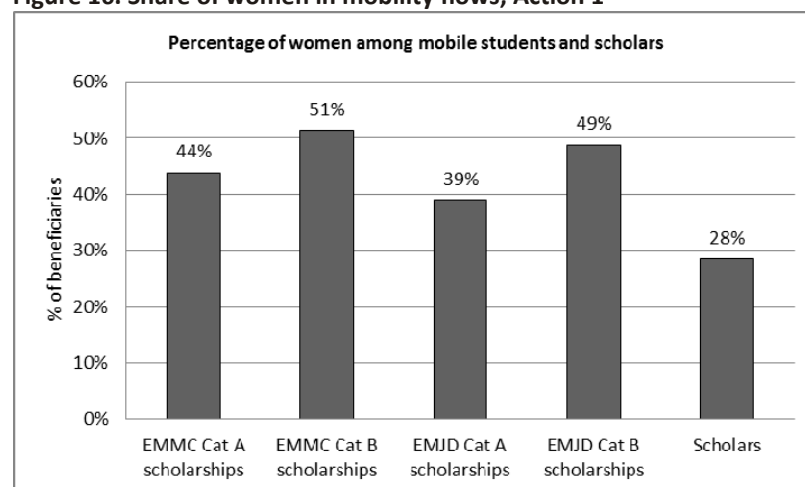
advocacy.⁶⁶ A survey in 11 European countries found significant gender gaps in the career paths of graduates as well. Women's job search and career start experiences appeared unfavourable in comparison to those of men in the first two years after graduation, and the gap widened with age.⁶⁷

In EM I, female student participation in Erasmus Mundus was higher in some third countries (such as Brazil, the USA, Russia, China and Malaysia) than in others (e.g. Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Pakistan). The gender gap was found to be wider among benefiting scholars (e.g. in 2008-2009 75% of scholars were male and 25% female, and in the earlier years the share of female scholars was only 23%) than students (the share of female students was 44-45% in 2006-2009).⁶⁸ This trend remains in EM II. The figure below shows that Category B scholarships were the most gender-balanced both in EMMCs and EMJDs. The scholar cohort remains the most unbalanced, with only 28% of Action 1 mobile scholars being women.

Monitoring data showed that imbalance was observed only among Action 1 scholars (as in EM I, an overwhelming majority of staff involved was male). Female students were a majority in Action 2 student mobility (apart from doctoral). On the other hand, while in numeric terms gender equality in the student population appeared to be relatively easy to achieve, some structural issues in EM design have clear gendered outcomes. Combining multiple responsibilities, which typically burdens women disproportionately, was a particularly important issue in doctoral education, as doctoral programmes are long and students are older. Of Action 2 beneficiaries surveyed, 35% of students and scholars indicated that family responsibilities and special needs influenced their mobility decision, while 57% of students and scholars indicated this was not the case (no data on applicants who withdrew their applications or cancelled their participation due to such reasons are available). The consortia were often unable, and lacked funds to provide adequate accommodation and other infrastructure for young families, but some good practices have been identified, e.g. in TEMA.

At the programme level, no explicit mentions of gender balance were included in the calls for proposals under EM II. In *Action 1*, 31% of consortia indicated in the survey as having used specific instruments to promote gender mainstreaming to select students, and 41% used them to select academics. As a result, 40% reported being successful at reaching gender balance (around 40-60%) among students and a further 28% reported being somewhat successful. In reaching a balance among academics, 25% were successful and a further 25% somewhat successful. Yet this success could not be attributed to EM alone: 75% applied equal opportunity policies before participation in EM, and only 10% did not apply such policies.

Figure 16. Share of women in mobility flows, Action 1



Source: analysis of the monitoring data.

⁶⁶ EuropeAid, "Investing in People. Strategy Paper for the Thematic Programme 2007–2013", 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/how_we_do_strategy_paper_en.pdf.

⁶⁷ Schomburg and Teichler, *Higher education and graduate employment in Europe. Result from graduate surveys from twelve countries*.

⁶⁸ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*.

According to Eurostat data of 2009, 13% of female students at ISCED levels 5-6 were enrolled in the fields of science, mathematics and computing, engineering, manufacturing, and construction, evidencing strong gender segregation (although less than in the US and Japan). As of 2006, women constituted 66% of students in the humanities and social sciences, 57% in social sciences, business and law, 38% in science, mathematics and computing, 61% in life sciences, 24% in engineering, manufacturing and construction. Against this background, EM II courses and mobilities were somewhat more balanced, but still sensitive to the gender biases typical in the respective subject areas.

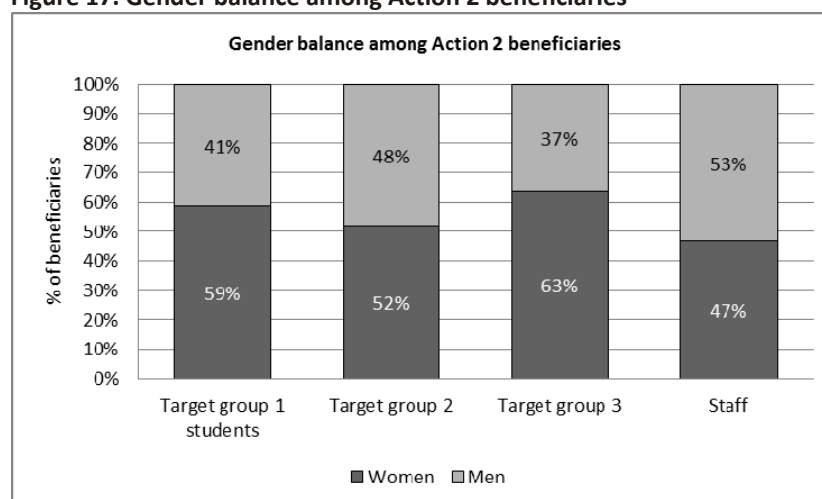
According to the Action 1 EMJD consortium manager, gender equality happened effortlessly, as there were enough excellent candidates. In fact, lower levels of gender segregation in this natural science-engineering discipline were observed in third countries compared to Europe. In the TEMA consortium, the cohort was rather biased towards women, as they tend to choose social sciences more than men, but, according to the coordinator, the first cohort was more balanced than comparable national programmes. In GEMMA, men were a rather small minority due to the biases in society against men studying gender studies. However, as a Spanish professor interviewed indicated, men became more exposed to gender issues as they studied related disciplines, such as anthropology, and some became interested in the subject. According to the local coordinator in Budapest, the consortium did not aim to artificially balance the student and scholar intakes: she believed that it was inspiring to see women getting this excellent qualification and being empowered in their further careers. It will take profound changes in society to attract more men to gender studies.

The EuroSPIN consortium also identified a problem with the transferability of EM grants after parental leave (see the case study). Perception of cultural differences relating to gender equality often discouraged European students from going to third countries. However, no innovative mechanisms of how consortia could ensure that mobile female students received adequate guidance and were placed in a safe and gender-equal environment during their mobility have been identified so far.

In *Action 2*, the provisions of the Programme Guide Action 2 Strand 1 include the promotion of gender equality and elimination of discrimination as areas that the implementation of the action should contribute to. Consortia were requested to provide gender-disaggregated data on participating students and staff. The guide also required clear inclusive provisions for disadvantaged groups in mobility partnerships and had a specific target group to promote the inclusion of applicants with particularly vulnerable situations, including due to gender. As the figure below shows, 63% of target group beneficiaries were women (operational question No. 23.1. discusses this in more detail).

Of Action 2 beneficiaries, 41% reported experiencing tensions between academic excellence and regional/social/gender balance, while 44% indicated there were no such tensions. To promote gender mainstreaming, 68% used specific instruments in selecting students and 62% – in selecting scholars, whereas 19% did not use such instruments for selecting students and 25% in selecting scholars. A majority of partnerships (75%) were successful in reaching gender balance among students and 68% – among scholars. A total of 12% were not successful in balancing their student cohort and 17% reported imbalanced mobility of academics. A total of 86% applied an equal opportunity policy before their participation in EM, and only 4% did not apply any. Of the Action 2 participants surveyed, 66% were female and 33% were male. In Action 2, women were actually over-represented in each of the student target groups and almost equally represented even amongst staff participants.

Figure 17. Gender balance among Action 2 beneficiaries



Source: analysis of the monitoring data.

Neither of the Action 2 case study projects reported any difficulty in relation to gender balance of incoming students. The Averroès consortium included gender balance among the selection criteria, but it always had more female participants than male from Maghreb countries. Female students tended to have higher academic results and to be more motivated. The consortium gave priority to female candidates in cases where they were as equally qualified as a male candidate. There was no need to implement additional measures to achieve gender balance, as enough excellent candidates were available. In EM2-STEM and Averroès consortia, there was a rule to opt for a candidate of the underrepresented gender in cases where two candidates were equal. No systematic and/or innovative mechanisms for addressing gender equality have been identified so far.

In Project EM2-STEM, most current outgoing students were in fact male, but numbers were too small for this to be statistically significant. This project had a physical science and engineering focus, so it was to be expected that there would be more male students than female involved.

In Eurasia 2, the cohort was balanced without any extra efforts. The coordinator believed that this had to do with the subject area (sustainability, agricultural and life sciences), which did not have gender stereotypes attached to it. The consortium monitored the gender of the applicants and selected students and scholars.

According to the survey of individual beneficiaries, the outcomes of participation were also rather satisfactory in terms of gender balance. No statistically significant differences were found among the participants by gender. Slightly more men were employed in research or HE institutions and the private sector, and somewhat more women were continuing education. One exception was the fact that more women than men were unemployed (11% vs. 6%). The five respondents who did not categorise themselves as male or female were employed in HE or research, continuing education or unemployed.

Our interviewees both at the EU level and the institutional level suggested that it was very difficult for a programme like EM to change the gender balance in education and research. Many inequalities are produced in secondary or even primary education. Cooperation with public authorities and alignment of priorities can mitigate this issue, as in the example of South Africa.

Representation of minority groups

More information on the inclusion of minority groups is provided under operational question No. 23.1. Action 1 consortia typically did not monitor the representation of minority students. In Action 2, there was a special target group (Target Group 3) to facilitate the access of students in vulnerable situations. There was a major difficulty, however, in identifying Target Group 3 students. All the Target Group 3 students from EU countries were Belarusian nationals residing in Lithuania (nine students).

Within the EM2STEM Partnership, for instance, it was very difficult to decide which students come from “ethnic minorities” in the ethnically mixed societies of the Western Balkans. People in general were very reluctant to be identified as belonging to a minority group. Homosexuality is in fact illegal in several of the countries. There was often a problem in securing assistance from the Western Balkan partner HEIs in this matter, especially when it came to the Roma, the biggest identifiable minority group. As to economic and social disadvantage, this was very difficult to define, when general income levels are so low, by EU standards.

There were many Target Group 3 scholarships available within EM2-STEM – 35. It would arguably have been better to have offered perhaps ten, which appeared to be around the norm for Action 2 projects. Most of those placed within Target Group 3 actually applied within TG1 or TG2. An instance of the virtual impossibility of applying the criteria was that the official percentage of “displaced persons” is around 50% in both Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

A professor from a partner university, who is an anthropologist, has been involved in a research project, in which he tried to encourage members of vulnerable groups to apply for EM scholarships, but was unsuccessful in raising levels of application. The university had a deliberate policy of looking more sympathetically at applications from members of vulnerable groups, but not all partner universities did this. The consortium was planning to seek to help Western Balkan university partners establish similar procedures. So far the representative of a university in a candidate country felt that identifying “vulnerable groups”, in relation to ensuring the participation of such students was actually one of the biggest problems in the project.

Within Project Averroès, the consortium found that it may be that attempts to define “vulnerable groups” in relation to a Western European understanding of the concept were less relevant than an understanding of the very considerable and urgent needs of certain third countries. For instance, in Algeria, all expenses for students are paid for by the state, so in one sense no one is disadvantaged.

The two case studies found that, in the views of the coordinators, issues of nepotism and corruption in the Western Balkans and in the Maghreb countries remained as an obstacle to good practice in terms of application procedures. This of course ran counter to equal opportunities.

In Eurasia 2, the problem with finding students for Target Group 3 was also profound. Yet the consortium received two applications and allocated the place to a refugee student from Myanmar. The partner institution coordinator in China highlighted that the financial situation of the students applying for Target Group 3 was not assessed, and the criterion of financial situation was not included in defining vulnerability.

Special needs

Policies for accommodating students with special needs depended on individual universities. Some universities were prepared to introduce ad hoc measures, but they did not carry out advance preparation in case they receive applications from students with special needs. A total of 43% Action 1 institutional beneficiaries indicated strong agreement with the statement that they were prepared to accommodate students with special needs, and a further 32% rather agreed. Only 4% indicated they were not prepared for it, but more than one in five could not answer this question, signalling perhaps not always limited awareness, but also unpredictability in the face of the diversity of complex needs that may arise.

In GEMMA, one student with a visual impairment was given special tests. Professors were prepared to develop different testing methods for other disabilities and special needs (e.g. dyslexia) as well. The TEMA consortium developed a policy for accommodating special needs and extensively described special services on their website (see the case study).

Of Action 2 consortia, the preparedness to accommodate students with special needs was lower: 36% strongly agreed that they implement measures for this purpose, 33% rather agreed, and 6% disagreed. One-fourth of the respondents could not answer this question. One university responding to the survey indicated providing special psychological support services for refugees, which was a very successful policy. According to EM2-STEM coordinators, disability also often carried a stigma, so people were reluctant to identify themselves as disabled. Many students with disabilities and special needs faced structural disadvantages, not allowing them to participate in academic excellence programmes.

In Action 3, a special project AHEAD-EU was dedicated to special needs. It targeted both European and third-country individuals and aimed to create sustainable mechanisms for their integration. The results were to be disseminated to students with disabilities, university administration and faculty, and other stakeholders.

Set of evaluation questions No. 11 in the ToR: Bearing in mind the findings of the EM I ex-post evaluation, does the participation in the programme change in terms of:

- geographic coverage from the institutional and individual scholarship holder point of view?
- subject area coverage?

Operational question No.11.1. What is the geographical coverage of participating institutions and individuals?

The ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus I argued that there was a rather unequal geographical distribution of participating institutions (the underrepresentation of HEIs from the EU-12 countries). Based on the evidence available so far, geographical coverage remained very similar in EM II. The difference in activity and success rate depended on the previous contacts between European and third-country institutions. The participation is compared with the findings of an earlier evaluation and is based on monitoring data and survey results.

The 2007 interim evaluation found that regional imbalances persisted. France, Spain, the UK, Germany and Italy collectively accounted for 55% of all HEIs involved in Action 1 EM masters consortia.⁶⁹ The ex-post evaluation found that almost two thirds of Erasmus Mundus consortium partners (coordinating institutions and partners together) came from five countries: France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the UK. French institutions coordinated the largest number of Erasmus Mundus courses. Belgian institutions also had an above average propensity to coordinate Erasmus Mundus courses, given the relative size of the Belgian population, coordinating a total of 11 courses. No Bulgarian or Romanian institutions participated in EM I at the time of the ex-post evaluation.⁷⁰

Of the data on Action 1 consortia in the database provided by the client, 9 of 79 consortia were coordinated from Belgium, 8 from Spain, and as many as 20 from France. Hungary was the only EU12 country coordinating an EMMC consortium. Of 24 EMJDs on which data were available, 6 were coordinated from Italy and France each. No EU12 country coordinated an EMJD consortium at the time of the evaluation.

Among third-country *individual beneficiaries* of EM I, China, Brazil, Russia and Indonesia accounted for the highest proportion of scholarships (29%). The core funding was mainly allocated to students from Brazil, Russia, Ukraine or the USA. About 20 of the third countries have been represented in the former Action 3, with the highest participation from HEIs in Brazil, the USA, Australia, China and South Africa. Concerns that African students would be underrepresented on EM masters courses have proved to be unfounded.⁷¹ As in

⁶⁹ Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, *Interim Evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. Final Report.*

⁷⁰ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture.*

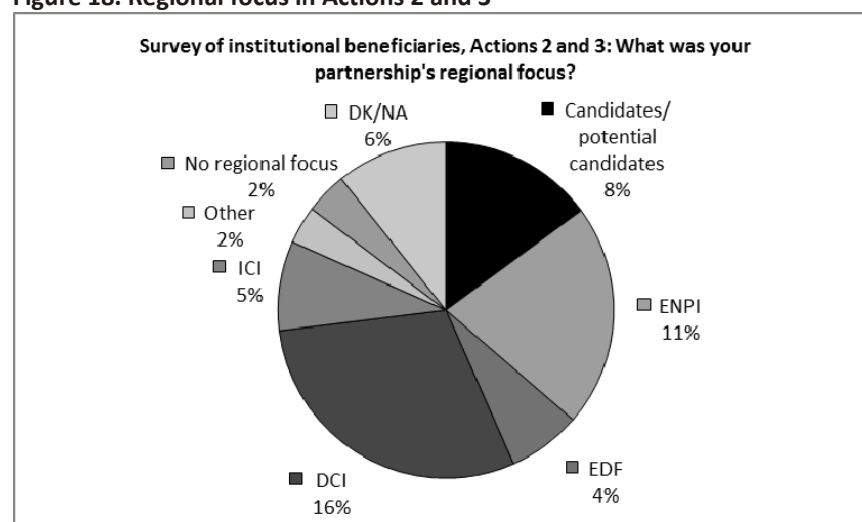
⁷¹ Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, *Interim Evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. Final Report.*

the first stage, the most *Action 1* Category A students came from Asia (nearly a half), although its share decreased slightly in 2011. A quarter of Category A grantees came from the Americas and around 1/8 from Europe.

In *Action 1*, according to the monitoring data of 2009-2011, 16 students and 1 scholar residing in EU/EEA countries undertook mobility to EU15 countries only, and one scholar included EU12 countries. Of residents from candidate and potential candidate countries, including those undertaking mobility in the period of study still under the Western Balkans and Turkey window, 121 students and 2 scholars went to EU15 only, whereas 2 students also included EU12 in their mobility pathway. Of third-country residents, 1,235 students and 355 scholars went to EU15 only, while 83 students and 168 scholars also visited EU12.

Of 36 applicants for *Action 2* Strand 1, 5 applications were approved from Belgium, France and Spain each. Five consortia benefited from *Action 2* Strand 2, of which two were from France and none from EU12. In total, Institutions from 100 countries participated in *Action 2* partnerships in 2010. The most active were German, Italian and French universities. In Asia, Russia, China and Kazakhstan were the most active. South Africa and Egypt dominated among African institutions, and in Latin America only Argentina was active. Among applicants, France, Spain and Belgium were the most active. The figure below shows the distribution of regional focus of the partnerships. DCI countries were clearly the most commonly focused upon, followed by ENPI countries.

Figure 18. Regional focus in Actions 2 and 3



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

Attracting European students to *Action 2* mobility was a challenge, as evidenced by two *Action 2* case studies. Of the individual beneficiaries surveyed, 23 were European students who participated in *Action 2* mobilities. All of them were motivated by a wish to experience mobility to a third country, and all but two were motivated by the scholarship. Academic reputation of the third-country universities was considerably less important. About a third of them had earlier taken part in European mobility schemes, such as Erasmus, confirming the claim by one of the National Structures that both European institutions and individuals develop an interest in partnerships with third countries when they “want something more” in addition to intra-European mobility.

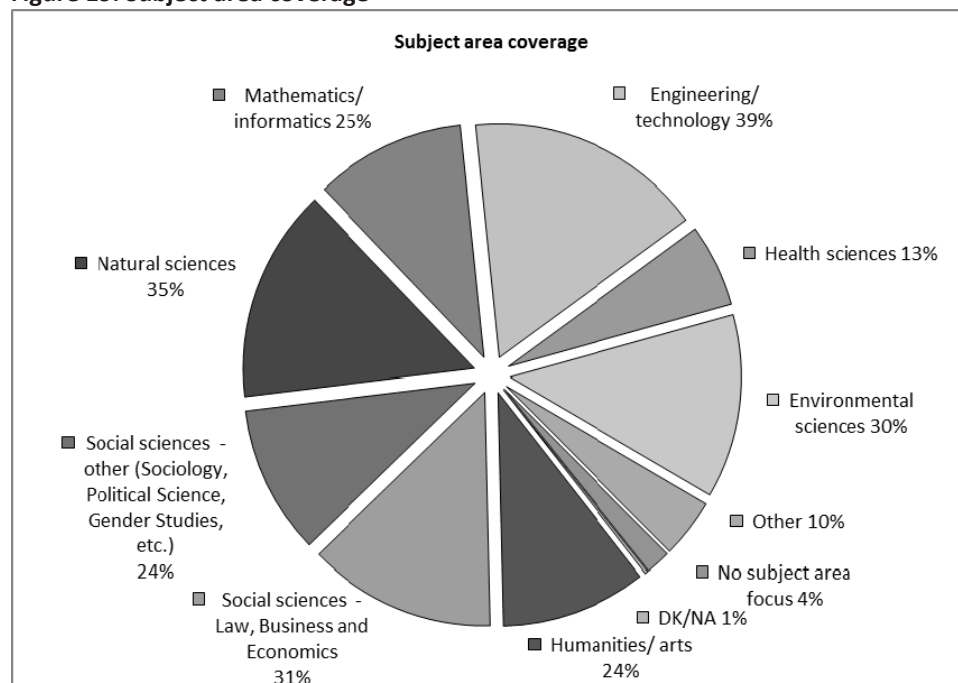
According to some EU-level interviewees, there was a risk that mobility to industrialised countries would improve the participation of European students, but unbalance the mobility flows to third countries. However, representatives of partner institutions in *Action 2* Strand 2 consortia interviewed strongly believed that mobility to and from industrialised third countries should remain in future EM programmes, because it supported excellence and offered great opportunities to build relationships with HEIs in major economies across the world – including emerging markets. The programme attracted, according to one interviewee, “a number of brilliant students, who really stand out” in terms of the quality of their research and academic thinking. It also offers many opportunities to develop other links. A previous EM partnership at Cambridge University had, for instance, provided links with ten Brazilian universities – a unique opportunity.

Overall, the same trends remained as identified in the ex-post report: Asian students were the most active in both actions, and EM seemed to be still taking root in Africa and Latin America. EU12 countries were still underrepresented among consortium coordinators. This issue was addressed through the EMAP (EM Active Participation) project under Action 3, which seeks to improve participation for the EU12 countries.⁷²

Operational question No.11.2. What is the coverage of subject areas in the programme?

The question is answered using survey and monitoring data. A representative survey carried out for this research found the following distribution of subject areas (see the figure below).

Figure 19. Subject area coverage



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

In *Action 1* EMMCs are more balanced than EMJDs, possibly due to the higher internationalisation of natural and health sciences and the ability of participating institutions to demonstrate specific outputs (e.g. patents) to prove their excellence. The data provided by EACEA indicate that among the EMMCs of 2011, humanities and social sciences accounted for 23% each, science/mathematics and engineering – 20% each. Among EMJDs, science and mathematics clearly dominated with 40%. A further 20% of the courses were in health sciences and the same share in social sciences. No data on the subject area coverage are available from the ex-post report of EM I.

Action 2 projects were encouraged in the Programme Guide to implement activities covering as many subject areas as possible. Of the selected consortia, eight had an explicit subject area focus: technology, biodiversity, neuroscience, social sciences, etc.

⁷² For more information see <http://emap-project.webnode.cz/>

Set of evaluation questions No. 12 in the ToR: Does the programme manage to attract the best European higher education institutions, as well as the best students from European and third countries?

Operational question No. 12.1: Does the programme manage to attract the best European HEIs?

Academic excellence is difficult to measure. While global academic rankings are available, our interviewee at DG EAC suggested that the EC was working on a different ranking system (a feasibility study has been completed this year for this purpose). As the case studies showed, the quality of research in a specific participating department was more valued than official rankings by mobile students and scholars. Therefore this question is answered using not only official rankings of the case study coordinators, but also the perception of the partners. It appeared that the participating institutions were outstanding in the field of research in which they developed the programme, but the most globally prestigious European institutions were already internationalised and not as interested in participating in EM II – particularly at the undergraduate and graduate levels. On the other hand, the competitiveness of scholarships and recognition of courses beyond EM II were also useful indicators of excellence, and in this respect the scholarships appeared competitive and highly regarded. Interviews, case studies and surveys were used to elaborate the answer to this question.

Global rankings

No aggregated data were available on the ARWU (Academic Ranking of World Universities – a global university ranking system) rankings of the EM universities. Since it was not feasible to check the ranking of each university, only those selected for case studies and all universities coordinating EJMDs were checked. As for the case studies, the University of Granada (EMMC) was ranked 401-500, Eötvös Loránd University (EMMC) – 301-400, KTH (EMDJ), coordinating also another EMJD, is ranked 201-300. In Action 2, University of Montpellier 2 was in position 201-300, whereas City University London and Česká Zemedelská Univerzita v Praze were not included in the global rankings.

Of six EJMD participants from France three were ranked by ARWU: 102-150, 301-400 and 401-500 respectively. Of six Italian EMJD coordinators, two were ranked: 201-300 and 301-400. Of two Belgian EMJD coordinators, both were ranked: 89 and 151-200. The University of Copenhagen, which coordinates two EMJDs, is ranked 43th. Both Dutch EMJD coordinators were ranked 102-150. Other coordinating universities were not included in the global rankings. All in all, EM managed to attract outstanding Scandinavian and Benelux universities. However, outstanding British, German and French universities largely opted out. One exception could be Action 2 Strand 2 – according to an interviewee at the University of Cambridge, the leading British university was very interested in excellence-oriented cooperation with industrialised third countries.

According to a representative of DG DEVCO, global rankings did not do justice to national specificities, e.g. where research was more separated from teaching, as in French universities. However, with the absence of any “objective” criteria of excellence, only perception remained and this was not a sufficient criterion. But, both currently available global rankings and perception were taken into account in this evaluation. As our case studies show, subjective assessment of partner excellence was very positive. Meanwhile, representatives of DG DEVCO and EUA suggested that EM should strive for a different kind of excellence, or quality maximisation, – improving the quality of education as broadly as possible. Mass programmes like Erasmus have greatly benefited European education. The same methods could be replicated in EM. The most prestigious institutions already have high quality standards and are internationalised, and there is little added value in channelling more funding to them, according to the interviewees. As already shown under evaluation question No. 8, this approach enhanced employability of graduates more than a sole focus on excellence. Analysis of the monitoring data (including the success rates of

applications) showed that EM remains a highly competitive programme, attracting the best European universities (see evaluation question No. 22).

Peer perception

As regards Action 2, nearly all individual beneficiaries surveyed were motivated by the academic reputation of the universities involved. As many as 85% of students believed they had benefited from teaching and research of outstanding quality. As many as 70% of scholars strongly agreed that the reputation of the institution they visited was strong. The impact was very strong where fewer alternatives exist: 41% of Action 2 Strand 1, 37% of EMMCs, 19% of EMJDs and 14% of Action 2 Strand 2 beneficiaries reported that their project led to increasing awareness of global or European standards of excellence, teaching and research quality; 71% of Action 2 Strand 2, 61% of EMJDs, 47% of EMMCs, and 36% of Action 2 Strand 1 beneficiaries believed this had happened to some extent; 12% of Action 2 Strand 1 beneficiaries, 11% of EMJDs, 8% of EMMCs and no Action 2 Strand 2 beneficiaries surveyed found no influence.

In our case studies, the institutions interviewed rated their partners' academic excellence very positively. For example, in the EuroSPIN Action 1 project, the participating institutions were known in the field of neuroscience, and the consortium was formed on the basis of excellence. In GEMMA, the participating European institutions were leaders in the field of gender studies. The newly added American partner also had a long history of excellence in this field (see the case study). In Project Averroès, it has been the experience of the consortium that the top management of some of the Maghreb universities were of excellent quality. In Eurasia 2, the institutions were known in their research networks in the relevant area. Their active participation in other EU programmes, such as the Framework Programme, testified to their excellence. Asian students were aware of the research focus of the participating institutions and choose accordingly. According to the survey beneficiaries, partnerships led to innovation, more visibility and recognition, and multipliers in research.

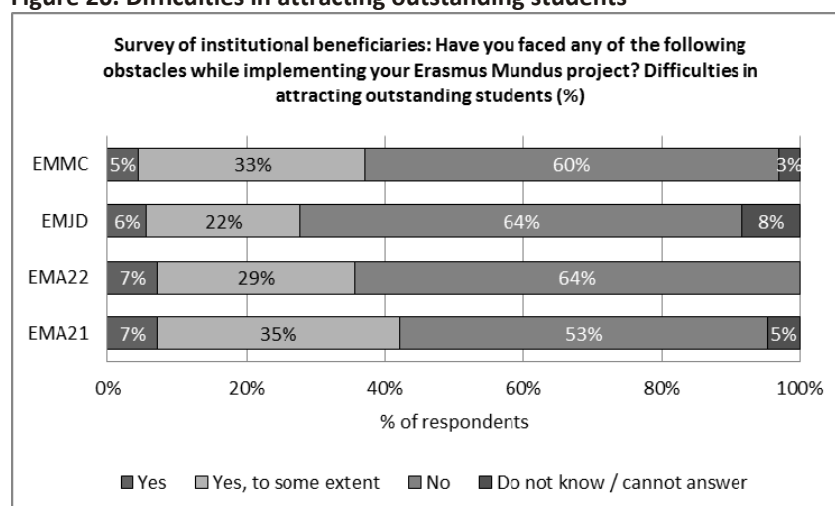
On the other hand, the survey showed that 45% of Action 1 and 57% of Action 2 consortia found the capacities of partner institutions uneven. The uneven quality of teaching was underlined by GEMMA students, particularly those whose first host institution was more prepared to accommodate mobile students than the second. One European student expressed strong disappointment with the lack of thematic focus in one of the partner institutions, as well as the services offered there. On the other hand, such issues are balanced out by the experience in the other partner institutions, and the overall assessment was positive. TEMA students were still waiting to undertake mobility to their second destination at the time of the evaluation.

Operational question No. 12.2: Does the programme manage to attract the best students from European and third countries?

Academic excellence of students is difficult to compare, let alone quantify. Different criteria apply across subject areas and among academic levels. Two criteria can be used for this evaluation: competitiveness of scholarships (according to the monitoring data) and subjective perception of students by participating institutions (measured by the survey and in the case studies). Our case studies showed that EM scholarships in third countries were highly competitive, thus incoming students tended to be highly motivated and talented. The consortia were overall satisfied with the excellence of their students and observed an improvement as their programmes gained visibility. However, excellence varied across regions, and was difficult to test using formal selection criteria.

The figure below shows that the consortia did face some difficulties in attracting outstanding students, particularly in Action 2 Strand 1 and EMMCs.

Figure 20. Difficulties in attracting outstanding students



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

As monitoring data showed, the success rate of *Action 1* EMMC Category A applications was only 8% in 2009, 6% in 2010 and 4% in 2011. The success rate of Category B scholarships was 23% in 2010 and 24% in 2011. Only 5-6% of doctoral candidates received Category A scholarships, and 9% Category B scholarships. The data show that EM scholarships were highly competitive, especially among third-country students. Our case studies and EU-level interviews suggested that *Action 2* support for mobility was less competitive.

As many as 91% of the *Action 1* consortia surveyed were satisfied with the academic excellence of their students, with 47% indicating strong satisfaction. Attracting excellent students was one of the main motivations for *Action 1* beneficiaries to participate in EM II, according to the survey. The EMJD consortium studied in-depth claimed to have received many excellent applications and being able to match them with the institutions' research interests. In the past, however, formal selection criteria were not always enough to test applicants, some of whom proved to be unprepared for their studies. The coordinating university regretted having one place in its small doctoral programme based on a geographical criterion – as excellent students from other regions had to be turned down. Both EMMC consortia also indicated high satisfaction with student academic excellence. Most students were ambitious and academically oriented, prompting the consortia to consider developing EMJD courses in the future.

In *Action 2*, 94% of institutional beneficiaries were satisfied with the excellence of their students, of whom 38% consortia were highly satisfied. The coordinating institution in *Action 2* Averroès project was particularly satisfied with the academic level of the incoming students. Two students were even offered highly competitive teaching assistantships. The quality of students and staff involved in incoming mobilities convinced professors of the validity of the project. In the view of the Averroès coordinator, the academic excellence of outgoing students was of course a criterion, though it cannot in reality be the main one. Quite a large number of French students opting to study in the Maghreb were in fact bi-nationals with origins in the region.

Within the EM2-STEM case study, City University and Warsaw University both valued very highly the academic level and also the high level of language skills of the incoming students. It is true to say, however, that there were concerns sometimes about the fairness of selection procedures in some partner institutions which could result in less suitable students being approved. Every attempt was made to insist on objective and transparent procedures – but these were not always strictly implemented by some partner HEIs. Incoming students from non-EU countries exceeded the academic excellence of outgoing European students, as typically EU citizens were not very interested in participating in mobility to candidate and third countries. Only the Polish and Romanian partner HEIs have sent undergraduate or masters students there. The sum of EUR 1,000 per month was not adequate for students living in the UK, particularly in London, and hence not enough to compete for excellent students. Most of this had to be spent on accommodation costs

alone. Similarly, EUR 2,550 per month is inadequate for staff undertaking mobility in the UK.

In Eurasia 2, the participating institutions were highly satisfied with the academic excellence of the incoming students, but regretted not being able to send European students to Asia anymore. The level of incoming students had improved since the implementation of the Eurasia 1 project. Some students were current or prospective lecturers and researchers, willing to obtain a degree in Europe.

Overall, nearly all the consortia were satisfied with the academic excellence of their students (in Action 2 slightly more than in Action 1, but the level of strong satisfaction is higher in Action 1). Importantly, the consortia, which have carried out EM projects in the past, report that academic excellence of incoming students was improving as their projects gained more visibility.

Set of evaluation questions No. 13 in the ToR: Is there evidence to show that the programme contributes to fight against or to mitigate the risk of “brain drain” from third countries towards the European Union? Can relevant models of good practice be identified for further dissemination?

In this regard, is there evidence to show that “brain drain” contributes to the development of European higher education and the European Union’s labour market to the detriment of third countries?

Operational question No. 13.1: To what extent does the programme contribute to or prevents “brain drain” from third countries towards the European Union? Can relevant models of good practice be identified for further dissemination?

Our interviews and case studies have shown that the perception of EM’s contribution to brain drain is uneven. There are two dimensions in this: first, the assessment to what extent brain drain actually happens, and second, whether it is evaluated positively or negatively (measured by the survey, earlier evaluations, case studies and interviews). Overall, brain drain from some countries was perceived as inevitable due to a lack of opportunities for highly qualified graduates. On the other hand, it was generally perceived that most graduates were willing to return to their home countries or contribute to their development in other ways – through joint activities.

In the survey, 53% of Action 1 and 61% of Action 2 institutional beneficiaries agreed or rather agreed, and 42% of Action 1 and 35% of Action 2 institutional beneficiaries disagreed or rather disagreed that promoting excellence of European HE and attracting talent to Europe undermines the development potential of third countries. The issue of brain drain has not been addressed in the first Graduate Impact Survey of EM II, therefore quantitative data on the attitudes of individual beneficiaries were not available.

National Structures tended to hold moderate views regarding brain drain from third countries – few disagreed strongly that it happened, and none strongly agreed. Only 7 of 25 institutions believed that EM II and similar programmes contributed to brain drain, and 9 disagreed. Similarly, of 54 EU Delegations 18 rather agreed and 23 rather disagreed, while strong opinions were few and mainly on the disagreement side. Even fewer National Structures agreed that EM contributes to brain drain from EU12 to EU15: 4 of 27 rather agreed, 8 rather disagreed and 4 strongly disagreed. Interviewed stakeholders tended to believe that employment location is an individual choice, which cannot be restricted for the sake of brain drain prevention. In addition, one of the interviewees saw a contradiction between the EM goal of career development and the aim to return third-country graduates to their home countries. According to her, if the EU is interested in the career development of outstanding graduates, it should also offer them possibilities to facilitate their employment in Europe should they so choose. Otherwise the goal of EM should be formulated as “to educate outstanding third-country students so that they could contribute

to the sustainable development of their home countries” rather than to contribute to their careers.

None of our interviewees claimed that mobility under EM harms third countries. Even if brain drain was acknowledged, it was suggested that joint activities and promotion of high quality higher education, along with capacity building, benefits them even if some graduates do not return. The complexity of the situation in relation to potential brain drain is illustrated by the views of various staff interviewed within the *Action 1* GEMMA case study. A Spanish professor claimed that brain drain could be a risk as long as conditions in other countries remain unfavourable. Yet the local coordinator in Hungary believed that graduates in Gender Studies had more prospects in third countries than in Europe, and a professor at the same institution added that the academic labour market in Europe was very closed, except for the UK. The European diploma gave graduates a certain power, legitimised their knowledge and allowed them to access the labour market in fields directly relating to their expertise. Graduates with an activist background mostly returned to their home countries, highly motivated to promote gender equality policies.

Of the *Action 1* consortia surveyed, 45% reported having measures to prevent brain drain and encourage brain circulation. According to the consortium coordinator of GEMMA, as well as the local coordinator in Budapest, professionally-oriented graduates were aware that labour markets in Europe were more competitive and rather closed to third-country nationals. They often started successful careers in their home countries (some successful examples are human rights lawyers in Latin America). Yet many EMMC graduates in social sciences were academically oriented and willing to benefit from more European education after they completed their studies. Two current students in the EMJD studied in-depth told that the choice of their country of employment would depend on the opportunities available to their families more than on determination to look for employment in one country or another.

In *Action 2* 75% of consortia reported having mechanisms to prevent brain drain and encourage brain circulation. This is confirmed by the case studies. Students typically did not receive a double degree, but benefited from joint supervision. The network of partners, including associated partners, was providing them with employment opportunities in their home countries, including in international enterprises. Alumni networks provided additional employment possibilities. In *Eurasia 2*, some students received a full degree, but they were typically academic members of staff who were improving their qualification. Most students, even in *Target 2*, seemed to be aware that they would face more competition in Europe than in their home countries. They tended to land very successful careers in both HEIs and the private sector in their home countries.

The survey of individual beneficiaries showed that 44% were planning to seek a career in their home country, whereas 26% would seek a career in an EU country. For third-country students staying in the EU, the EU environment (29%), financial and social benefits (28%) and better job opportunities (24%) were the main motivators. Those who were staying in their home countries were motivated by family reasons (24%), desire to live in home country (17%) and EU work permit/visa issues (16%). By comparison, a survey of foreign students in the US found that 39% thought they had good chances of living and working in the US after their studies, particularly students from South Asia, East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Improvement of chances for an international career was an important motivation for 78% of the students to study abroad, particularly at the masters level and especially among Africans, Southeast Asians, East Asians and Europeans (over 75%).⁷³

In the CODOC project (*Action 3*), brain drain was discussed from the beginning. The aim of the study the project was undertaking includes looking into employment opportunities for PhD graduates. For example, there is a shortage of these in Africa, whereas Europe is overproducing PhDs. According to the Southern African university network, there was a tension between the goal of EM in promoting European higher education and their strategic aim to promote African higher education. However, they were accommodated in the global perspective of the project, which aimed to map trends in doctoral education in multiple

⁷³ Obst and Forster, p. 23, 17-18.

regions. In South Africa, according to our interviewees, academia was willing to absorb all the PhD graduates, and some opportunities were available for them in industry. Research cooperation with Europe was already taking place to a large extent. Another Action 3 project, EHEW-SISMBG, was specifically dedicated to brain gain. It aimed, however, not at addressing possible cases of brain drain, but at changing the image of Erasmus Mundus and showing that the programme can effectively contribute to brain circulation and the development of third countries.

Set of evaluation questions No. 14 in the ToR: For each of the three Programme Actions, what is the experience of Consortium coordinators in terms of application procedure on the one hand and subsequent implementation phase on the other?

Operational question No. 14.1: To what extent do the mechanisms applied by EM joint programmes and partnerships for selecting their students and scholars guarantee their academic excellence?

The dimensions included in the assessment of academic excellence were competitive selection, formal mechanisms and subjective perception, based on the survey and case studies. The surveys showed that extensive, multi-criteria evaluation systems were developed almost universally, and standard academic criteria were used for selection. It was clear from the case studies that selection criteria were highly dependent on the study field, level and approach (e.g. focus on teaching or research). Therefore, selection practices were hardly transferable. Nonetheless, there were interesting lessons to be learned from the consortia studied. The selection mechanisms often included several subjective criteria, such as motivation which risk having culturally contingent biases. On the other hand, grading systems also differ across countries. Close cooperation among consortium partners, good practice sharing and competition were often the main methods for ensuring a smooth selection process.

In *Action 1*, nearly all the consortia surveyed reported having developed a multi-criteria selection procedure. 91% developed a scoring system/checklist, and 77% include “subjective” measurements (motivation, references, statements of purpose, etc.). The selection process applied by the selected Action 1 EMJD consortium (see the case study) was based on the research interests of supervisors and ensures embedment of students in the institutions’ research activities. This is very important in doctoral research. Students were expected to have a strong background in one of the relevant academic disciplines (not necessarily neuroscience) and a strong motivation. Their qualification was tested by online application and a telephone interview. The consortium believed that face-to-face interviews would be much more effective. The two EMMC consortia have developed checklists and collaborative procedures to select their students. Grades, motivation, research interests and language knowledge were assessed. The bilingual TEMA consortium accepted some students who were not fluent in French, but willing to learn it. Both EMMC consortia underline that a coordinators’ meeting to finalise the selection was crucially important.

Ensuring the academic excellence of scholars was possible from previous cooperation and the teaching and research record of scholars. Many institutions had cooperated in the past and formalised their partnerships under EM, thus they knew each other’s scholars in the relevant fields. Yet EM grants for scholars were not as competitive as those for students. The ex-post evaluation of the first phase found that many scholars were unwilling to participate, and the consortia also indicated that grants for scholars were insufficient. Unwillingness to undertake mobility at the current level of funding contributed to low competitiveness of grants for scholars, which was also confirmed by the monitoring data (see Annex 3): only 58% of the planned grants for third-country scholars were awarded at the time of the evaluation, and the figure for European scholars was only 10%. However,

the consortia were satisfied with working with the selected scholars.⁷⁴ Yearly progress reports and workshops helped ensure the academic excellence of students, and student assessments provided feedback on scholars.

The prevalence of a multi-criteria selection procedure was not as high in *Action 2*. Still, 55% of consortia strongly agreed that such a procedure is in place and 36% rather agreed. A scoring system/checklist was developed by 88% and 78% included “subjective” criteria. In our case studies, the Averroès consortium established a procedure for selection of candidates based on the following criteria: academic results, motivation, gender balance and social vulnerability, and research interest match between the candidate and the institution. Priority was given to candidates who had not yet received a mobility grant. The local screening committees were invited to meet these criteria, screening procedures were formalised and the lists of candidates in order of merit, signed by members of the selection committee were communicated to the coordinator.

The Eurasia 2 consortium used the presence of its associated partner in the region to interview pre-selected candidates. The pre-selection was carried out by Asian partner universities, whereas the final selection was carried out by the host universities. Multiple criteria and particularly interviews helped identify the motivation and capacities of the students: the interviewers were experienced with the local cultures and could identify the capacities of candidates who were generally shy to present themselves. Language skills, research interests and career plans were very important in the selection.

Despite the general satisfaction, 35% of Action 1 and 45% of Action 2 beneficiaries indicated facing some difficulties in attracting outstanding academic staff. In addition, 35% of Action 1 and 45% of Action 2 beneficiaries experienced some difficulties in attracting outstanding students.

Operational question No. 14.2: Can any common difficulties be identified and, if so, how might these difficulties be overcome?

Based on the surveys, EU-level interviews and case studies, the evaluation found that most beneficiaries interviewed for the case studies reported not facing any difficulties related to selection, but encountered numerous implementation difficulties, resulting from the rigidity of regulation, or changes thereof after project implementation had already started. At the current stage, the evaluation identified three sets of obstacles: (1) obstacles relating to the diversity of national HE systems (discussed under operational question No. 5.4); (2) obstacles relating to the design of EM II; and (3) obstacles relating to the administrative burden and co-financing.

Some of the obstacles, relating specifically to *national HE systems*, have already been discussed under operational question No. 5.4. The main obstacles identified in EMJDs related to the requirement of employing PhD candidates, lacking legislation for joint degrees, and different tuition fees. Of the Action 1 consortia, 57% experienced difficulties with joint degrees – as mentioned under No. 5.4., National Structures and EU Delegations also identified this problem. Regarding obstacles relating to the programme design, direct transposition of some rules from EMMCs to doctoral education was observed by the beneficiaries. Doctoral programmes tend to have small student intakes and are highly research-oriented. Studying in more than two countries, with more than two supervisors was burdensome and distracting, but required under the new regulations if one of the partner institutions was in a third country.

Some obstacles were *specific to study areas*. Engineering degrees are inflexible in nature – there are few or no electives. There were also tensions in relation to national professional structures. Often, academics thought that there would be a problem getting accreditation from professional bodies (for instance in engineering). Of the individual Action 2 beneficiaries surveyed 21% reported experiencing difficulties with the recognition of their qualification, and 76% did not experience such difficulties.

⁷⁴ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*.

Regarding administrative issues and co-financing, visa issues remained an obstacle, and consortia often felt left alone to deal with administrative issues: 67% of Action 1 and 60% of Action 2 consortia experienced issues with visas and residence permits. In Action 2 36% of individual beneficiaries faced such problems and, as mentioned earlier, National Structures and EU Delegations also confirmed the prevalence of this problem. Visa issues resulted in long delays with student arrivals in Eurasia 2 (see the case study). Most difficulties were overcome through close contact with EACEA and the experience of coordinators in managing complex partnerships.

In addition, addressing equal opportunities was often an issue. The consortia lacked funds to address the needs of disabled students, for example, to provide sign language interpretation. The citizenship criterion did not allow including non-citizen students, as indicated in the survey response by an Azerbaijani institution where some Georgian students study.

Coordinating a consortium required extensive human and financial resources. Project implementation proceeded smoothly in consortia where institutional capacities of the coordinators were strong. A majority of National Structures believed that only institutions with a sound financial basis could participate in EM II, but less than half of the EU Delegations have observed this trend in the countries they work in. Difficult requirements were also likely to prevent smaller institutions from coordinating consortia, including those in EU12. On the other hand, capacities can be built by first joining EM consortia as partners.

Operational question No. 14.3: Can any practical conclusions be offered to stakeholder universities on how to attract and retain best students?

Retention of students depends on selection mechanisms and the services offered to them. The survey of beneficiaries identified services available to students, whereas the case studies were used for the identification of good practices. The findings suggested that the definition of “best” should be “those with the most matching research profile, interest and motivation to undertake this research”, as elaborated under operational question No. 12.2., since cross-cultural objective criteria for student selection are absent. Retaining best students (selected applicants and enrolled students) depends on the match between their research profiles and the participating faculty’s research areas, services offered, and availability of alternatives. Services are crucial in retaining students who experience difficulties relating to different teaching and research cultures, family situations, etc.

All the consortia were highly satisfied with incoming students. Yet definitions of excellence and selection methods depend highly on the type of programme offered and the nature of cooperation among the partners. Most institutions understood that they could not rely solely on grades due to different grading cultures. However, subjective criteria were also not a universal solution. For example, the Swedish-led Action 1 consortium observed obvious differences in the extent to which many African students were prepared to write convincing motivation letters compared to North American students. Therefore, a mixture of criteria was to be used. Selection of candidates for advanced studies (doctoral or post-doctoral) appeared to be easier, since the candidates already had research profiles and a strong thematic focus. On the other hand, it was more difficult to test recent holders of an undergraduate degree.

Attracting the best students depended on communication channels. Most students interviewed for the case studies said they had learned about the programme either informally or through academic networks. Relevance of the courses, mobility and scholarships were the main motivators. Offering some non-standard pathways, EM courses were able to attract students who would otherwise not undertake mobility: for example, one Spanish student and one graduate of GEMMA who said they would have not been able to study in English, but could study abroad in Italian.

Retaining the selected students depends, first and foremost, on other offers they receive. For a comparison, a survey of students deciding to study in the US rather than the EU found that almost one fourth of the students favoured the US as a country, whereas as many as

37% chose it due to lack of scholarships, particularly South Asians, Africans and East Asians. For South Asians tuition and living costs were too high.⁷⁵ Receiving an EM offer with a scholarship could help these students decide. As a local coordinator in Thailand, participating in an Action 2 partnership, mentioned, for many disadvantaged students EM is the only opportunity to study abroad.

Drop-outs could still be an issue for some consortia, forcing them to quickly look for a replacement. Retaining the best students was likely to improve once the courses matured and received more visibility. Many students were attracted by the mobility and networking opportunities, but still turned down the offers if an alternative appeared from a prestigious university. One solution for retaining the loyalty of accepted students was a smooth and early selection process. The experience of a European doctoral candidate interviewed showed that he did not apply to other institutions because he knew early on that he was accepted to the selected EMJD.

Services, such as language instruction, housing and other types of support, were also important in making students feel at home and to proceed smoothly with their studies. Policies among various institutions varied greatly. This may have contributed to disappointment if the reception of students depended on their mobility pathway. Of the Action 2 individual beneficiaries surveyed, 17% complained about the insufficient support of the local coordinator of the host institution. On the other hand, only 12% did not receive help with visas, 19% – help with accommodation, 16% – help with travel and 29% did not receive any language support. Therefore, it could be useful to coordinate housing, insurance and other policies at the consortium level.

An important issue identified by the EMJD consortium was the impossibility of interrupting EM studies in the case of pregnancy and parental leave. This issue has clear gendered outcomes and risks burdening or deterring excellent students with family responsibilities. It will have to be solved by including family-friendly rules in the EM guides and other documents.

Partners with experience of working together can find the methods for selecting the most suitable candidates easier than those who started cooperating only under EM. It seemed that many institutions used EM as a tool to formalise and strengthen their already existing networks. Experience sharing was an opportunity provided by EM to develop better quality assessment, selection and student retention practices.

⁷⁵ Obst and Forster, p. 27.

4.3. Sustainability

Set of evaluation questions No. 15 in the ToR: What efforts are made by EM joint programmes, partnerships and Action 3 projects to diversify sources of funding through sponsorships, links with business, attracting fee-paying students, etc.? Which of the current actions would be likely to continue in the future if the European Union support was withdrawn or decreased?

Operational question No. 15.1: How strong is the support given by the participating higher education institutions to the EM activities: was the investment level in human resources dedicated to EM joint programmes and partnerships sufficient to ensure viability of the inter-University cooperation model and its mobility scheme on a long term basis?

Sustainability of the joint programmes, partnerships and projects depends largely on the extent to which international partnerships had been taking place before EM funding was received. Most institutions coordinating EM consortia were experienced and well staffed to ensure sustainability. This can be a positive finding for the continuation of the activities started, but may also signal prohibitively high entry costs for inexperienced institutions. Additional resources typically covered the participation of European institutions in most international programmes. Only 9% of the HEIs surveyed did not take part in any other EU-funded programmes.

In addition to the diversification of funding sources, sufficient human resources (both in quality and quantity) are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the inter-university cooperation model and its mobility scheme. Therefore, the evaluation specifically analysed the support given by the participating HEIs to the EM activities, especially in terms of investment of its own human resources dedicated to EM joint programmes and partnerships and the nature of engagement required for sustainable development at the institutional and national level. The survey and the case studies informed the answer to this question.

Governance of financial resources

The survey data showed that financial and human resources, even with the EM grant, were considered insufficient. A total of 51% *Action 1* consortia reported a lack of financial resources to manage the consortium, whereas 40% did not experience such a lack, while 46% reported a lack of human resources to manage the consortium, but this was not the case for 48%. Only 7% indicated that the infrastructure and staff costs for running the consortium were fully covered by the EM grant, and 24% covered a larger part of such costs. For 48%, only a smaller part of the costs were covered by the EM grant, suggesting substantial investment from other sources. The GEMMA staff reported being overloaded with work and looking for new mechanisms to reduce the workload, e.g. by introducing peer help for students and applicants.

Of Action 1 beneficiaries, 73% had a joint body or specialised staff for managing all international partnerships, and 23% did not have such a body. Of the EMMCs 44% reported experiencing a lack or some lack of human resources. This figure was 53% for EMJDs, 37% in Action 2 Strand 1, and 43% in Action 2 Strand 2. Across all action strands, around half of the consortia surveyed reported facing no such shortage, except the EMJDs, of which only 39% did not experience the shortage. The institution coordinating TEMA established a new unit for EM – the university was hoping to be awarded more EM funding in the future. Various synergies were sought not only among different EM projects of the same institution, but also across international programmes. More information is provided under operational question No. 21.1.

Administration was typically centralised, with the coordinating institution taking up most of the responsibility for managing the consortium and assisting students with scholarships and information. Therefore, investment and human resources dedicated for the partnership were uneven across the consortium and may not be sufficient to carry out less centralised cooperation when EU funding finishes. On the other hand, according to a survey respondent, universities were more prepared to continue EM partnerships than to launch them – EU funding was essential in starting the consortium activities.

In Action 2, according to the survey, the EM grant covered the full costs of partnership management for 32% of beneficiaries, most of the costs for 34% of beneficiaries, and a smaller part of the costs for 26% of beneficiaries. Infrastructure and staff hiring costs for teaching were covered fully for 25% of beneficiaries, largely to 28% and to a small extent for 29%.

A joint body or specialised staff for managing all international partnerships was available at 88% partnerships, and 9% did not have such a body. In the case of one Eurasia 2 partner institution, which participated in several EMMCs, Action 2 partnerships and other European programmes, only one staff member was paid from the EM budget, whereas others could be paid from other programmes. Meanwhile, at one institution in Thailand, no administrative staff was employed, and academic staff were responsible for the participation.

Sustainability of activities after reduction of funding

There were two separate parts of running Action 1 courses where funding was needed: running costs of the courses and scholarships for students. The sustainability of the two was often assessed separately. Most beneficiaries suggested that they would continue cooperating in research, but mobility would not continue to the same extent in the absence of EM funding. Some solutions considered were “upgrading” Action 2 partnerships to EMMCs, EMMCs to EMJDs, and developing cooperation schemes without physical mobility.

According to the survey, 78% of Action 1 and 92% of Action 2 beneficiaries expected that the cooperation between EU and third-country institutions in their projects would be sustainable. Only 10% of institutions in Action 1 and 5% in Action 2 feared that the cooperation would not continue. Overall, the evidence from the ex-post evaluation, our surveys and case studies suggested that funding for partnership and research was much more likely to be secured than funding for scholarships. Internationalisation of research was high on the agenda of most institutions, and they were likely to look for ways to fund cooperation with foreign partners if their experience with them was positive in EM II. National funds, the Framework Programme and ad hoc funding can be available for joint research activities.

Action 1 consortia were looking into ways to secure funding for the continuation of their courses, but the results were very uneven. Only 37% of Action 1 beneficiaries expected to continue the joint activities with a similar intensity, 41% – with a lower intensity, and 7% did not expect to continue the activities. Only 9% believed they were capable of sustaining the activities with own funds. Participating in other EU partnership or mobility instruments (38%), applying for national/regional funding (34%) and sustaining the partnership with own funds, but with a lower intensity (33%) were seen as the main measures for ensuring continuation.

The ex-post evaluation of the previous EM phase found that the sustainability of natural science courses enjoyed relatively strong industry support (MSc EF). Therefore a course may be sustained, but without funding, it would not be so attractive to third-country students and scholars (also EMCL, EMMAPA).⁷⁶ In some cases the institutions were able to secure their own funding for planned continuation (MEEES), but only for national students (MONABIPHOT⁷⁷) or continue with bilateral partnerships (AGRIS MUNDUS).⁷⁸ In some cases

⁷⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 134.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 30.

some universities were in a better position to maintain EM courses than others (SpaceMaster).⁷⁹ Yet other courses would probably be discontinued (EMM-Nano).⁸⁰

The Action 1 GEMMA consortium, (see case study analysis) has been particularly successful in diversifying funding for the programme. The course was supported by Spanish public institutions, EU, national and regional scholarships for mobility, regional grants, and fee-paying students.⁸¹ This extra funding enhanced not only the sustainability, but also the visibility of the programme. However, it was not certain whether the new government in Spain would sustain this funding amidst the economic downturn. In the future, cooperation may continue in a smaller consortium. The EuroSPIN consortium partners said that cooperation was likely to continue in research, but without such a strong student-centred approach and mobility, as enabled by EM funding. The TEMA consortium developed a sustainability plan which includes working on the programme's visibility and attracting external funding. The institutions already had experience in finding private donors for their activities. Strong involvement of non-educational institutions would also support the programme in the future.

Innovative mechanisms were being developed to sustain the cooperation differently. For example, the GEMMA consortium was using the opportunity to develop online learning modules. They would continue in the future and save the costs of physical mobility, with multiple administrative burdens.

It was likely that European students would continue benefiting from other mobility programmes (such as Erasmus) among the participating institutions, but this would not lead to joint or double degrees. Meanwhile, third-country students would be more difficult to attract without funding. If their mobility is solely on a fee-paying basis, this will impede equal opportunities, as many students, according to one consortium, come from poor societies.⁸² It is possible to look at national funding schemes, but they are mostly awarded on an individual basis (like DAAD) and only for certain mobility pathways.

In *Action 2*, cooperation was likely to continue without EU funding, but to a lesser extent. Of the institutional beneficiaries surveyed 30% expected to preserve a similar intensity, 52% would reduce the intensity, and 11% would not continue the cooperation, suggesting that sustainability will be somewhat lower than in *Action 1*. EU funding will be crucial in sustaining the partnerships: 60% indicated it as a source for the continuation of the project activities. A good illustration is the Eurasia 2 consortium: after the network of the participating institutions is strengthened, the same partners would apply for EM funding across all actions: the coordinating institution would continue with *Action 2*, one partner would coordinate and EMMC, and another – an *Action 3* project. A total of 53% of respondents would sustain the partnership on a bilateral basis or with fewer partners, while 37% would apply for national/regional funding.

The survey of individual beneficiaries of *Action 2* shows that, despite the availability of alternatives, students were most likely to be affected by withdrawing EU funding from the partnerships. Of these, 48% (vs. 46% scholars and 26% other staff) would not have participated in project activities without EM funding, and 34% would have used other sources of funding (vs. 31% of scholars and 42% of other staff). As regards using own funds to participate in project activities, 5% of students, 7% of scholars and 21% of other staff replied that they would have done so. More scholars than students have already benefited from other mobility instruments: 9% had received grants for qualification development, 7% undertook teaching assistantships abroad, and 18% undertook internships/traineeships abroad. These data confirmed that the mobility of researchers was easier to sustain from other sources, whereas individual mobility of students was a clear added value of EM *Action 2*.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 64.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 90.

⁸¹ Ibid., 174.

⁸² Ibid., 154.

Sustainability of the partnerships will depend on the financial constraints faced by universities. Whilst the Action 2 partnership case studies revealed a strong emphasis on building sustainability, coordinators took the view that European funding was necessary to sustain future developments, at least in the short to medium term. Only limited public and business sector funding was available in the Maghreb and in the Western Balkans. This was not the case for Eurasia 2, where there were strong development aid commitments from the governments of the participating countries.

Actions to promote sustainability of cooperation and development activities were, however, very much built into the work programmes of the Averroès and the EM2-STEM Action 2 projects. Within Averroès, an important aspect of this was developing effective “South to South” cooperation amongst the Maghreb partner HEIs. Similarly, within EM2-STEM, one important result was the development of closer links between universities within the Western Balkans, which were not extensive due to political conflicts in the past. It should be borne in mind that EM2-STEM was a new partnership, just beginning to receive students and scholars in 2011, so working relationships between HEIs and with other key actors in the Western Balkan countries were at the initial stages at the time of the evaluation.

The Averroès consortium was working with 30 French companies involved in the Maghreb (some of which were Associate Partners in the project), helping them to recruit appropriately qualified workers. For instance, ATOM would pay for an engineering fellowship related to the tramway construction project. Another development concerned the establishment of telecentre capacities in each of the Maghreb partner countries.

The EM2-STEM consortia studied for this evaluation were more pessimistic: cooperation without EU funding would likely be “minimal”. This would be in part due to financial constraints in the UK, but mainly owing to lack of suitable development funding within Western Balkan economies.

Action 3 partnerships tended to have very specific outputs, but networking activities tend to go beyond the project. After the project objectives are achieved, the partners may cooperate regarding other types of outputs or networking activities and look for funding on an ad hoc basis. The project coordinator from the CODOC project was taking the lead in allocating financial resources and staff for project implementation, thus easing the administrative burden for the partners. EUA has extensive experience in international cooperation, has received funding for collaborative projects in the past and is likely to receive it in the future. Therefore, partnerships are likely to continue in other frameworks. The partners in the CODOC project were sure that their cooperation would be sustainable. It seemed that collaboration was already taking place, but EM funding helped formalise it, share responsibilities and produce specific outputs. Resources needed to enhance cooperation in the future will depend on the types of outputs expected from the cooperation.

Set of evaluation questions No. 16 in the ToR: In accordance with the new EM operating rules, which allow European students to benefit from EM scholarships, how successful have the EM courses been in attracting European students and what are the main factors influencing their participation in the programme?

Operational question 16.1: How successful has the participation of European students been in the mobility scheme? Is there any evidence of the impact of European mobility in the institutions/countries concerned?

Introducing grants to European students can arguably be considered the least successful of the programme’s novelties – absolute numbers strongly increased, but the competitiveness of scholarships significantly lagged behind scholarships for third-country students and grants were insufficient to cover living expenses.

Compared to EM I, participation of European students increased more than threefold (see operational question No. 21.4.), but grants were not competitive to attract the best students (see operational question No. 21.3), and insufficiently developed administrative processes for double degrees were perceived as a burden, exceeding the added value of a joint degree. However, scholarships for European students were a new measure (starting from 2010), thus their take-up will increase in the future, with more visibility and awareness of EM II. Moreover, introducing these scholarships already affected the countries with lower levels of academic mobility (see under operational question No. 21.4.).

Participation of European students

One of the programme's novelties is the offer of scholarships to European students in order to participate in the EM masters or doctoral courses as grantees. Therefore, it is important to analyse the extent to which this novelty has been successful in attracting this target group. Also, it is necessary to determine the main factors influencing their participation in the programme (e.g. quality of courses or mobility built into these courses leading to the acquisition of social and communicative competences or better intercultural understanding). This analysis was carried out for Action 1 and 2. Monitoring data, surveys and case studies were used to answer this question.

Background information on the comparative attractiveness and visibility of European education suggest that adequate information is crucial to attract European students. Considerable problems in studying abroad were perceived in the area of degree and credit recognition: such problems were particularly expected by Slovaks (42%), Romanians (41%) and Czechs (40%); the lowest concerns were recorded in Denmark (10%), Austria and Sweden (12%). Interestingly, 39% of Romanian and 34% of Spanish students claimed they did not have sufficient information for studying abroad.⁸³ For nearly a quarter of European students studying in the US, who participated in a survey when EM II was introduced, lack of information about tuition costs and EU scholarship programmes was what prompted them to choose the US rather than the EU.⁸⁴

The evidence collected for this evaluation suggested that many EMMC consortia were only moderately successful in attracting European students, and their numbers were below expectations (see under operational question No. 21.4.). In attracting European students, 70% of EMMC consortia experienced at least some difficulties and 26% did not experience any such difficulties (whereas only 15% experienced at least some difficulties in attracting third-country students). While scholarships, mobility and intercultural learning attracted European students, insufficient visibility, uncertain sustainability and opportunities elsewhere raised doubts among the target groups.

According to the monitoring data, 816 EMMC Category B scholarships were provided to European students in 2010 and 809 in 2011. As shown under operational question 11.1., most European students went to EU15 countries only. In total, 3,400 scholarships in this category were planned for 2009-2013 and, as a result, the achievement rate was 48%, considerably lower than that of Category A (72%). As the monitoring data showed, only 50% of the funds for EMMC Category B scholarships were used as of 2011. Out of 3,365 applications submitted in 2010, only 23% were accepted. Application rates did not increase in 2011.

The EuroSPIN project was successful in attracting similar numbers of European and third-country students, since the doctoral programme and participating institutions are known for their excellence and promoted in various networks in the field of neuroscience. From the interview of a EuroSPIN student from Germany, it was clear that the main advantages of EM for Europeans were:

- Possibility of studying at more than one university;
- Access to teaching and research in third-country institutions, known for their academic excellence;

⁸³ EuroStudent.eu, *Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. synopsis of indicators: eurostudent IV 2008–2011*, 2011.

⁸⁴ Obst and Forster, p. 28.

- Clear and easy application process and relatively easy access to funding.

In the EMMCs, mobility, quality of the courses and the reputation of the institutions were important motivators for European students. The Graduate Impact Survey found that scholarship was the main motivator to participate in EMMC. Multiple degrees were particularly attractive to European students.⁸⁵ In the consortia studied for the ex-post evaluation of EM I, European students valued intercultural diversity.⁸⁶ Students interviewed for the case studies evaluated the academic quality of the programmes positively. They said they would recommend their programmes to others – some of them with reservations.

While the GEMMA consortium was effective in attracting European students and sending them to third countries, it was expected that with more promotion more students would be mobile in the future. On the other hand, while in the past the Erasmus grant offered an opportunity to ease the financial burden on students who did not receive a scholarship (all the European partners have Erasmus agreements to consider the built-in mobility an Erasmus mobility – Erasmus studies are free of charge), European students increasingly used their possibility to benefit from Erasmus during their undergraduate studies and thus were ineligible to benefit from Erasmus during their masters studies.

European students at GEMMA received a number of EU, national or regional scholarships and benefited from Erasmus grants. The consortium had both fee-paying students and Category B grantees. Students reported having financial difficulties in the countries where living costs are higher, such as the Netherlands or the UK. In general, European students in both EMMCs regarded their receiving only half the grant available for third-country nationals as “discriminatory” and “unfair”. They said they had the same needs as third-country students and were sometimes coming from less privileged families. Some of them had to work while studying. On the other hand, fee-paying students in GEMMA were still attracted by the excellence of the programme and were willing to find their own resources.

The attractiveness of EMMC courses to European students will depend on visibility and information. Since European students started receiving scholarships only from 2010 (apart from consortia which raised their own funds to provide scholarships for European students under EM I), very high levels of participation cannot be expected. Confusion between brands remains a bigger issue in Europe, where most students perceive EM as a scholarship scheme for third-country students.

Impact of European mobility on participating institutions

The participating institutions believed that attracting European students was crucial for the diversity in their institutions. They suggested that third-country students would be disappointed with studying in Europe but with barely any Europeans. Yet only the GEMMA consortium could compare the situation under EM I and EM II. In the past, European students were only self-funding. Under EM II, their access to the programme was more equal, and the concerns that the unification of tuition fees would reduce the number of European students (see the case study) were countered.

⁸⁵ ICUnet.AG, *Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey 2007-2009*, 48.

⁸⁶ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*, 121.

Set of evaluation questions No. 17 in the ToR: To what extent does the programme contribute to the development of sustainable cooperation models and mechanisms between:

- European HEIs
- European and non-European HEIs
- Non-European HEIs from the same country/region (e.g. development of credit recognition systems, development and implementation of joint curricula, award of double, multiple or joint degrees, delivery of Diploma Supplement, etc.)

Operational question 17.1: How much has the programme contributed to the sustainable development of the following cooperation mechanisms:

- *development of credit recognition systems;*
- *development and implementation of joint curricula;*
- *award of double, multiple or joint degrees;*
- *delivery of Diploma Supplement, as well as*
- *development of educational techniques and support services for mobile students and academic staff?*

There is clear evidence, which allows assuming that the cooperation mechanisms, which were developed in the course of the programme, will sustain even after EM II funding phases out. Operational question No. 15 already showed how cooperation will continue – mostly with reduced intensity – and that other EU funding instruments were considered the most prominent source of funding for the continuation of joint activities. This question concerns specific cooperation instruments relating to administration and recognition of skills and qualifications provided in the framework of this cooperation. The survey showed that participation in EM II contributed to the development of new recognition mechanisms and promoted them in third countries. Yet it was difficult to disentangle this internationalisation effort from the larger web of instruments and cooperation activities that the institutions took part in.

The contribution of EM II to overcoming the main obstacles to the internationalisation of higher education in Europe, changes in the national legislation governing international cooperation and internationalisation at the level of HEIs were assessed in the effectiveness part of the Final Report (operational questions No. 4.1., 5.2. and 7.1.). In the survey, 79% of Action 1 and 88% of Action 2 beneficiaries claimed that the scope and quality of support services for mobile students and scholars increased due to their participation in EM II, and half of the Action 1 consortia introduced new recognition mechanisms (ECTS, diploma supplement). Yet at the system level, most National Structures and EU Delegations surveyed could not trace the development of credit recognition systems to EM II impact.

The Effectiveness Section found that participation in EM II increased emphasis on international cooperation at the level of HEIs both within the EU and outside it (both at the masters and doctorate levels). Nearly all Action 1 institutional beneficiaries who responded to the survey indicated that participation in EM II introduced partnerships with countries with which there were no joint activities in the past, but the case studies showed that the core countries were long-term partners. With only a few exceptions, all respondents indicated that their participation in EM II had enhanced networking with partner institutions. However, it was difficult to disentangle the impact of EM on the internationalisation of HEIs because of a wider international collaboration, including participation in other European programmes. Due to rather high entry costs for participation in EM, the programme tended to serve the institutionalisation of existing academic networks more than it established entirely new networks and supported institutions that had not benefited from other instruments. Many partnerships were a continuation of Tempus networks or research cooperation under the Framework Programme (unsurprisingly, 26% of institutional beneficiaries surveyed take part in the latter). In the survey 32% of institutional beneficiaries surveyed already continued their partnerships from EM I; 78% of beneficiaries took part in other actions of EM II or EU academic cooperation instruments. A total of 82% of Action 1 and 91% of Action 2

beneficiaries indicated that EM helped to structure, enhance and formalise existing networks that existed informally in the past.

Due to high competition for Action 1 grants and excellence criteria, applicant institutions were to a large extent already highly internationalised. Many of them used EM to formalise and enhance their existing networks. Therefore, the EM II programme and its post-2013 successor should include measures to expand the scope of academic cooperation in order to not restrict the benefits of participation to the selected few (this conclusion has been supported by interviews at DG DEVCO, EEAS and the EU Delegation in South Africa). On the other hand, funding should not become fragmented, as excellence-oriented courses need time and resources to achieve the desired results and gain visibility.

The development of sustainable cooperation models and mechanisms depends on the sustainability of joint programmes and partnerships supported by EM II. EM had a positive cumulative effect in the area of international cooperation and working in partnerships, and coordinators agreed that without EM the extent and pace of cooperation development would have been slower. The evaluation results indicated that they were likely to be quite sustainable, but exchange and mobility were likely to be of much lower scope (or even “minimal” under some Action 2 partnerships) in the absence of financial support and will depend on continued EU funding or other financial incentives. Therefore, the funding is crucial to full cooperation in higher education, especially in countries where the financial constraints are very severe. In the experience of 20 out of 27 National Structures surveyed, most institutions re-apply for EM funding (14 institutions strongly agreed), whereas 41 out of 54 EU Delegations found this to be true.

In the absence of EM support to international consortia of universities offering joint, double or multiple degrees, the pressure of participating HEIs on their national authorities, which is the main mechanism for changing national legislation governing international cooperation in higher education (and for convergence between different higher education systems in Europe and third countries), would be much lower (see operational question No. 5.2.).

Therefore, the content and implementation of the successor programme will be crucial for the sustainable development of international cooperation models and mechanisms. A new element of the future integrated programme called “policy dialogue support” could be particularly instrumental in facilitating further development of cooperation instruments within the EU or vis-à-vis third countries (the so-called policy dialogue with individual third countries or in the framework of the Bologna Policy Forum involving 47 countries).

Operational question 17.2: Action 2 Strand 2: Is there evidence that the programme increased the third-country partner institutions capacity to create their own national and/or regional scholarship programmes?

Only one Action 2 Strand 2 beneficiary surveyed reported that a new regional scholarship scheme was introduced. Five others said that EM had some influence on their development. In fact, the influence of EM II on the development of national or regional mobility support schemes was more profound in Strand 1 (24% reported this was the case and 27% – to some extent, whereas 33% indicated this did not happen). It might be argued that Action 2 Strand 2 partnerships could, however, have a significant impact on developing external scholarship funding, given their function of building links between HEIs in EU Member States and those in highly developed countries across the world – including those with rapidly growing economies, such as India, Brazil and Argentina.

Strand 2 project websites gave no details of specific scholarship schemes as such, except the Transatlantic Partnership for Excellence in Engineering – TEE (USA/Canada/EU). It offered 68 scholarships, which covered travel expenses, academic fees (if applicable) and health insurance, plus a monthly allowance. The scheme covered doctoral, post-doctoral and staff mobility between Europe and the USA and Canada. The scheme only included science and technology studies and offers competitive allowances of EUR 1,500-2,500 per month.

The comment from the TEE partnership, in relation to the role of Associate Partners, was that the partnership was in the process of negotiating with them at the time of the evaluation, in order to secure scholarship funding, in relation to research projects directly relevant to these partners. In some cases, it might be possible for Associate Partners to extend periods of study in a partner institution, where a student was already in receipt of an EM scholarship. Areas of cooperation included technology transfer to the business world and collaboration in dissemination activities.

Set of evaluation questions No. 18 in the ToR: To what extent do non-educational organisations, in the European and/or non-European partner countries, involved in the implementation of Action 1, 2 and 3 projects, contribute to the efficient implementation of the cooperation activities and the corresponding mobility scheme?

While most of the Erasmus Mundus activities are targeted towards HEIs and individuals associated with them, the programme is open to enterprises and other public or private bodies active in the field of HE (public administration bodies, NGOs, social partners, professional organisations, chambers of commerce or industry, etc.). Therefore, it is important to analyse their involvement in the programme implementation (Action 1, 2 and 3 projects) and their contribution to the efficient implementation of the cooperation activities and the mobility scheme. First, the evaluator analysed the extent to which the programme's opportunities for non-educational organisations are exploited. Second, the evaluator analysed how other partners contributed to the promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities and/or sustainable development of various projects. The survey of institutional beneficiaries and case studies were used to answer this question. The evaluation found that the consortia actively attempted to involve non-educational institutions present in the region. The involvement of non-educational institutions did not depend on subject areas – social sciences and humanities, contrary to dominant perception, and were able to facilitate active involvement of enterprises, public and civic institutions as well. The involvement of non-educational organisations typically took the form of providing placements for students. Good practice examples of allowing students and staff to use those institutions' resources were also found.

Operational question No. 18.1: To what extent are the programme opportunities exploited by non-educational organisations in the implementation of Action 1, 2 and 3 projects?

No systematic monitoring data were available to count the non-educational institutions participating in the partnerships and projects. There were 30% of institutions reported as having a non-educational institution in the partnership, and 51% indicated that there was no such institution. Importantly, there were no differences across the subject areas, except engineering/technology, with 42% of respondents indicating there was a non-educational organisation involved in the partnerships, whereas in others it ranged from 30% in humanities/arts and social sciences (sociology, political science, gender studies, etc.) to 37% in law, business and economics, with natural, health and environmental sciences in the middle. The involvement of non-educational institutions was more widespread in Action 2 – 33% reported having such partners (vs. 26% in Action 1) and 42% did not have any (vs. 60% in Action 1). Networking and cooperation with non-educational institutions were indicated by some survey beneficiaries as one of the key strengths of their participation in EM II.

Various non-educational institutions were involved in the implementation of the TEMA EMMC (their contribution is outlined under operational question No. 18.2 below). The *Action 1* GEMMA consortium cooperated with equality institutions, documentation centres and professional associations, libraries and publishing houses, and with other cultural institutions – mostly in Spain, but also in other countries. Extra scholarships were offered by public authorities. Two associated non-educational partners from the business sector participated in EuroSPIN.

The *Action 2* Averroès consortium was working with 30 French companies with a demand for qualified workers, as already shown under operational question No. 15.1. A research institute in Romania participated in an EM2-STEM project. In Eurasia 2, networks present in the region were strongly involved in the selection of candidates and research (see the case study).

As it appeared, non-educational institutions were mostly providers of funding and placements for students and staff. Exploitation could also be traced indirectly, particularly in doctoral education, where knowledge transfer contributed to the development of new products and competitiveness of the enterprises involved. There was little evidence of non-educational institutions exploiting the results of the partnerships apart from benefiting from the skills of the graduates they employed or offered placements to. In Action 3, the results of the CODOC project would be available for regional, national and EU authorities to exploit, and many policy-makers can benefit from conferences and workshops organised within the project's framework.

Operational question No. 18.2: How much does the involvement of non-educational organisations contribute to the cooperation activities and the mobility scheme?

There were several examples of involvement of non-educational institutions, from both Action 1 and Action 2, which usually provided resources (funds or equipment, as in EuroSPIN), placement opportunities or infrastructure for the students (TEMA). As the ex-post evaluation found, there was a high level of interest from industry in some of the courses. Certain consortia hoped to sustain the courses and provide scholarships from the funds contributed by non-educational organisations.⁸⁷ In social sciences, public authorities provided an important contribution in the form of placements (TEMA) and scholarships (GEMMA). In Eurasia 2, non-educational institutions contributed to the selection of candidates by interviewing them face-to-face in their home countries, and participated in monitoring the implementation of the project. Overall, the contribution of non-educational organisations provided practical experience for students across all subject areas, but the evaluation did not find evidence that these placements contribute to more mobility within the partnerships.

Set of evaluation questions No. 19 in the ToR: How do existing Action 1 consortia, selected under the first phase of the programme, respond to the progressive reduction in the number of scholarships awarded by the programme?

Operational question 19.1: What actions are adopted by the existing consortia of Action 1 to respond to the progressive reduction in the number of scholarships?

The ex-post evaluation found that many consortia were considering progressive reduction of funding and preparing for it in advance. This evaluation used a survey of institutional beneficiaries and case studies to collect the data to answer this question. The survey showed that changing student intakes was the main method for compensating for reduced funds, and only then followed other sources of funding. Many consortia admitted that they would not be able to offer similar mobility pathways and joint degrees with reduced funding.

According to the data available on the consortia which re-applied with the same name under EM I and EM II, 11 EMMC consortia had their number of scholarships reduced from 14 to 8, and 8 consortia had the number of their scholarships reduced from 16 to 9 in 2010. 6 consortia, which were extended in 2011, were identified. The number of scholarships provided for their students were reduced from 18 to 15 in four consortia, from 16 to 13 in one, and from 15 to 12 in another. Although the reductions are considerable given the

⁸⁷ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*.

small number of scholarships in the beginning, it was still less than a third of all scholarships.

The survey showed that consortia whose courses were renewed mainly compensated for the loss of revenues by accepting more fee-paying students (12%). Others reduced the class size (10%), offered EM courses to non-EM students (9%) or raised other funds (9%).

Many of the ways in which EM I consortia prepared for the reduction of scholarships were presented under operational question No. 15.1. They mainly entailed securing own funding for scholarships (as MEEES), benefiting from national and regional sources (GEMMA), or turning to industries (MSc EF). Of our case studies, the GEMMA consortium secured funding from public authorities. The new TEMA consortium worked to increase its visibility in order to attract other sources of funding. Yet anecdotal evidence showed that upgrading the partnerships to benefit from other funding instruments was a prevalent strategy – EMMCs were expected to transform into EMJDs, and EMJDs to research partnerships.

Set of evaluation questions No. 20 in the ToR: Bearing in mind the findings of the EM I ex-post evaluation, to what extent, during the two first years of the EM II programme, are the project results properly disseminated to relevant stakeholders (e.g. public authorities at national, regional or local level, European and non-European HEIs and the HE sector in general, potential individual beneficiaries, actors from the relevant socio-economics sectors, etc.)?

Operational question No. 20.1: To what extent are the recipients of EM scholarships and fellowships being encouraged to promote the EM programme and the benefits of Europe as a study destination in their home institutions and countries?

Promoting the programme after graduation was an implicit assumption the consortia tended to have. Students seemed to be really motivated to promote EM. The EMA was particularly active in promoting the programme and developing the EM graduate identity, as well as spillovers. The dissemination activities mostly took the form of programme promotion rather than promoting Europe as a study destination. Evidence for this was collected from the case studies, surveys and interviews.

In *Action 1*, a strong identification with the EM brand was fostered and graduates were encouraged to become ambassadors of EM, as already discussed under evaluation question No. 6. Most EMMC students interviewed said they were providing information to other students or professors from earlier studies about the EMMC programme, but they do not unanimously encourage others to apply – applications should depend on the match between research interests and courses offered. A third-country student interviewed said she also promoted international education and foreign language learning in her network. Students and teachers mostly used their networks to promote EM: mailing lists, conferences and personal contacts. Contacts with former supervisors and colleagues were mentioned as ways of promoting EM by the students interviewed for the case studies.

According to the EMA representative interviewed, most EM Action 1 graduates strongly identified with the EM brand and felt strongly connected to one another. Some networking spin-offs have resulted. Alumni chapters actively promote the programme in their home countries. However, some problems arising were:

- Uncertain sustainability and continuity of EM courses. According to the EMA representative, it was difficult for students to promote their course if it had not been renewed – this raises doubts whether EM courses were really excellent.
- Perceived tensions between Action 1 and Action 2. While the DG EAC representative interviewed suggested that EMA did not include Action 2 beneficiaries because it did not receive funding from DG DEVCO for its activities, the EMA representative believed that Action 2 did not live up to the excellence standard in terms of student selection procedures and type of education the students received. The real or perceived gap between the different actions

hindered the promotion of EM as a whole, with all the possible opportunities available.

Only 3% of *Action 2* beneficiaries surveyed did not promote EM. The main methods of promotion were personal contacts (85%), social networks (59%) and institutional communication (26%). The experience of the Averroès project (see the case study) showed that former beneficiaries had been actively networking and building joint initiatives in their home countries.

The *Action 3* project studied explicitly stated the promotion of EM II as its objective and aimed to promote European education in general. Yet *Action 3* did not provide individual scholarships. In the future, alignment of *Action 3* and individual initiatives would help streamline and strengthen the programme promotion.

Operational question No. 20.2: To what extent are project results exploited (mainstreamed and multiplied) by different stakeholders?

Our case studies, interviews and desk research showed that the results were exploited in the form of lessons learned. Firstly, national authorities drew conclusions from EM for legislation (see relevant questions above). Secondly, EM contributed to sharing experiences among regions – ASEAN countries closely followed the developments of European credit transfer, mobility and qualification recognition systems and adapted them to their needs (see the CODOC and Eurasia 2 case studies). Thirdly, research results were used by industry, as shown in the Averroès case study. Finally, as the CODOC study shows, EM projects could be used to achieve strategic objectives of the participating institutions and create an infrastructure for further cooperation and research. In the case of CODOC, the mapping exercise will be used for further analysis of doctoral education, and the results will be shared with policy-makers.

In the survey, 49% of EMMCs, 42% of EMJDs and 55% of *Action 2* beneficiaries indicated that innovative approaches and instruments, resulting from their partnerships, had been disseminated to a larger or smaller extent to *other HEIs* and research centres in their country. In contrast 24-27% of beneficiaries across all strands indicated that such dissemination did not take place. Moreover, 45% of EMMCs, 41% of EMJDs and 52% of *Action 2* beneficiaries claim that these approaches and results were also exploited or exploited to some extent, whereas 25% of EMMCs, 31% of EMJDs and 24% of *Action 2* beneficiaries admitted that this was not the case. There were spin-offs in the participating universities: EMJDs particularly tended to lead to joint research activities (32% reported strong influence and 49% some influence, followed by *Action 2* and then by EMMCs).

On the other hand, not all opportunities for mainstreaming and multiplying project results have been used. For example, it appeared that many initiatives under EM run separately. EU Delegations in third countries actively promoted EM, but there was no detailed plan, for example, as to how they could use the results of CODOC and other *Action 3* projects. According to the coordinating institution for CODOC, sharing of experience and using one another's results was possible only as long as there are few *Action 3* projects and the implementing agency was able to network their implementers together.

In *Action 3*, four of five beneficiaries who responded to the survey rather agreed that access to policy-makers for the sake of their project was easy, and three of five strongly agreed or rather agreed that policy-makers would be provided with project results. All five *Action 3* respondents indicated there was some influence on the promotion of new and innovative forms of transnational cooperation between higher education institutions and social partners.

Austerity measures and an increasing emphasis on competition among HEIs on a global scale may hinder successful exploitation of project results. Universities, which want to secure funding, are not likely to be interested in sharing their results and allowing other, competitor institutions to benefit from them. As the example of the EM2-STEM project showed (see the case study), established and prestigious institutions may be unwilling to develop capacities of other institutions and share excellent students due to competition.

Many institutions were likely to prefer to secure renewal of EM funding rather than allow its expansion to non-participating institutions. While the EU cannot make project exploitation and access to project results for all compulsory, it would be valuable to discuss the possibilities of including provisions for sharing the most important project results.

4.4. Efficiency

Set of evaluation questions No. 21: Bearing in mind the ambitious general and specific objectives of the programme, is the size of the budget allocation sufficient to achieve the programme's objectives?

Operational question No. 21.1: Could the same results be achieved with less funding?

In order to assess whether the programme could become more efficient and achieve the same results with less funding, we gathered and compared the most recent publicly available data on budgets and outputs of the EM, DAAD and Fulbright schemes. The comparative analysis of several schemes seeking similar goals allowed making more general conclusions about the overall cost-effectiveness of the programme. To deepen our analysis we supported these findings with action-specific and beneficiary-specific findings regarding the sufficiency of funding to achieve the results of supported activities.

The evidence for answering this evaluation question mainly came from the analysis of EM monitoring data and statistics provided in annual reports of the Fulbright and DAAD schemes, interviews with various stakeholders and the results of our survey of individual beneficiaries of Action 2 and survey of institutional beneficiaries of Action 1 and Action 2.

Overall, our analysis suggests that achieving the same results *with less funding* was hardly possible because the programme was implemented efficiently: in terms of budget and outputs produced it was relatively at the same level as other scholarship schemes pursuing similar goals. In addition, our findings suggest that raising funding levels should be considered because institutional beneficiaries of EM II faced financial difficulties when they had to cover partnership/consortia management and other relevant costs resulting from their participation in the programme. The main reason behind such difficulties was the insufficient size of a lump sum or flat rate, which according to the survey participants covered only a limited part of their expenses. National Structures and the EU Delegations also implied that the implementation structure of the programme could also use additional funding.

Budgets and outputs of EM, DAAD and Fulbright scholarship schemes

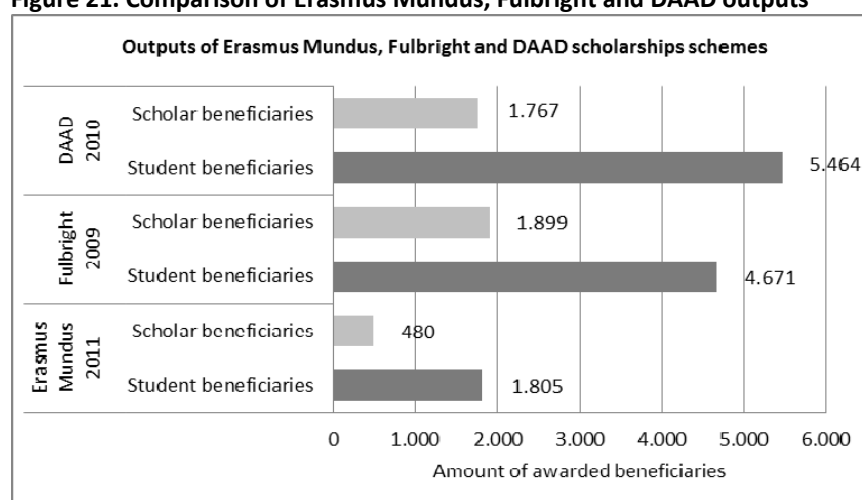
Based on the results of desk research activities and analysis of EM monitoring data it can be concluded that EM had a significantly smaller budget than DAAD and Fulbright. With its EUR 94 million budget in 2010 EM was approximately four times smaller than DAAD (EUR 384 million budget) and three times smaller than Fulbright (EUR 282 million budget). In terms of outputs,⁸⁸ Erasmus Mundus also succumbed to the aforementioned schemes. It awarded approximately three times fewer grants to students and four times fewer grants to scholars than Fulbright and DAAD. As a result, it can be concluded that the programme was closely comparable to similar scholarship schemes as its unit costs were very alike. Thus, there is no need to increase the cost-effectiveness of the programme in the future. On the contrary, funding levels should be increased as only a minor number of applications and proposals in

⁸⁸ Clarifications on data used to calculate the outputs:

- Individuals receiving general one-year student scholarship (selected by the DAAD) were treated as DAAD student beneficiaries; individuals participating in long-term lectureships, visiting lectureships and professorships, post-doctoral programmes, research and study visits, follow-up visits were treated as DAAD scholar beneficiaries;
- Individuals participating in the Fulbright Student Program were treated as Fulbright student beneficiaries; individuals participating in Fulbright Scholar Program were treated as Fulbright scholar beneficiaries;
- Individuals granted category A and category B student scholarships in Action 1 were calculated as EM student beneficiaries; individuals granted category A and category B scholar scholarships in Action 1 were calculated as EM scholar beneficiaries.

Action 1 and Action 2 submitted each year were accepted during the analysed period (for more details see Annex 3).

Figure 21. Comparison of Erasmus Mundus, Fulbright and DAAD outputs



Sources: DAAD Annual Report 2010; J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board Annual Report 2009-2010; Erasmus Mundus monitoring data provided by the Executive Agency.

Insufficiency of funding

Previously presented findings of desk research and monitoring data analysis activities were also supported by our interviewees and respondents to the survey of institutional and individual beneficiaries of the programme. They suggested that participation in EM caused a financial burden.

The problem of insufficient funding seemed to be more relevant in *Action 1*. Approximately 51% of Action 1 institutional beneficiaries who took part in our survey suggested they were lacking financial resources to manage their consortia. Furthermore, almost 48% of respondents indicated that with current funding levels they were able to cover only a smaller part of the running costs of EMMC or EMJD.

In the case of *Action 2*, institutional beneficiaries were somewhat more optimistic about available funding levels. Nevertheless, approximately 39% of institutional beneficiary survey respondents representing Action 2 reported a lack of financial resources to manage their partnerships. In addition, 29% of respondents suggested that with available funding they covered only a smaller part of the costs for provision of education/training or teaching/training services to foreign students and staff participating in the mobility.

Despite the fact that some institutional beneficiaries found it difficult to manage their partnerships or consortia under the current level of funding, the latter was high enough to prevent the programme from turning into a “closed club” of universities with a better financial standing. Participants of our survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations divided into two similar size camps with 37 out of 81 respondents strongly or rather agreeing and 30 out of 81 strongly or rather disagreeing with the statement that only richer universities had the means to participate in the programme. However, a substantial share of respondents suggested that participating universities rarely received funding from other sources for participation in EM. As a result, the lack of own funds might have prevented some universities from participating in the programme (especially in Action 1).

The problem of insufficient funding did not seem to be relevant at the individual beneficiary level. Only 3% of participants in our survey of individual Action 2 beneficiaries firmly asserted that participation in the programme has caused them financial burden. Although less confidently, another 15% of respondents suggested that participation was at least to some extent a financial burden. All other individual beneficiaries (approx. 79%, as the other 3% of respondents had no opinion on this issue) did not face such difficulties and expressed confidence about the competitiveness of EM scholarships and their sufficiency to cover their living expenses while studying.

In the meantime a great majority of the National Structures and the EU Delegations expressed their concern regarding funding allocations to fund their activities. More than half of our survey participants (48 out of 81 respondents) strongly agreed with the statement that additional funding or human resources should have been allocated to the National Structures/EU Delegations. Another 24 respondents rather agreed with this statement.

Operational question No. 21.2: Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms provide better cost-effectiveness?

In order to assess whether policy instruments and mechanisms of the programme could be replaced by some other more cost-effective alternatives, the evaluator asked its EU and national level interviewees if substitutes for the programme and its instruments exist. The evidence for answering this evaluation question mainly came from the desk research activities and interviews with various stakeholders.

Overall, the programme and its instruments are cost-effective. Previous evaluations and data gathered for this evaluation prove that expenses other than those meant to finance the production of outputs are minimal, and further reductions would only hamper the programme's competitiveness.

As the impact assessment on international cooperation in higher education puts it, "<...> no alternative actions were identified <...> that could deliver equal results at a lower cost."⁸⁹ Results of this evaluation also suggest that no other currently used policy instrument could provide better cost-effectiveness. As one interviewed EU policy-maker argued, "<...> alternative mechanisms would not achieve the goals of EM II, which is a distinctive and effective programme in its own right." Some other interviewees even suggested that Erasmus Mundus was to some extent more efficient than the Marie Curie programme. According to interviewees, even with a small Erasmus Mundus grant they felt they could do more than in other programmes.

In addition, Erasmus Mundus was largely built on what had already been achieved by programmes like Tempus or Alfa in terms of reduction of administrative costs: costs incurred were calculated on the basis of lump-sum amounts, specific requirements on the size of a partnership/consortium were established, only one annual call for submission of applications in all Actions was organised, a single programme guide for all Actions was used. Furthermore, interviewed stakeholders also suggested that instruments of the programme and their balance was also optimal as it did not result in a heavy workload which could have led to inefficiencies: individuals were reached using invitations to apply, partnerships and consortia – through calls for proposals, meanwhile studies, services to EM students and EMA were procured using calls for tenders.

Operational question No. 21.3: To what extent is the scholarship/fellowship amount paid to third-country students, doctoral candidates and scholars appropriated compared with other scholarships/fellowships schemes pursuing similar goals (e.g. Fulbright, Chevening, Rotary, Marwill scholarship schemes, DAAD, etc)?

Following our operationalisation of this evaluation question in the Inception Report, the competitiveness of the programme and scholarships awarded under its Action 1 was evaluated in several ways. *First*, the demand for such scholarships was assessed and compared with the number of awarded grants. *Second*, analysis of scholarship/fellowship availability due to increasing/decreasing funding allocations and unit-cost changes was carried out. *Third*, changes in the number of scholarships awarded each year were calculated in order to find out if quantitatively better outputs are being produced each year. *Fourth*, the extent to which there has been an increase of European students participating in Action 1 since the introduction of a new scheme was defined. *Finally*, a direct comparison of scholarship amounts in other scholarship schemes pursuing similar

⁸⁹ The European Commission. *Impact Assessment on International Cooperation in Higher Education*. Commission Staff Working Paper. Brussels, 23 November 2011, p. 47.

goals was carried out and individual beneficiaries of Erasmus Mundus were asked to evaluate if the scholarship is competitive.

The evidence for answering this evaluation question mainly comes from the analysis of EM monitoring data and statistics provided in annual reports of the Fulbright and DAAD schemes, interviews with various stakeholders and the results of our survey of individual beneficiaries of Action 2 and survey of institutional beneficiaries of Action 1 and Action 2.

Overall, our analysis suggests that during the analysed period the demand for EM scholarships (particularly for scholarships granted to non-European individuals) was much higher than the supply. In addition, due to increasing annual funding and steady unit costs the programme became better accessible to non-European doctoral candidates. However, the opposite trend occurred in the area of non-European students (unlike the doctoral candidates, the annual funding allocations for these activities were reduced and respectively the number of grants awarded each year has decreased). On the basis of these findings it can be concluded that in terms of budget size or outputs produced the programme was smaller than Fulbright or DAAD. However, findings supported by the results of the survey of individual beneficiaries of the programme also suggest that applicants of the EM saw it as a competitive alternative to other scholarship schemes. According to the respondents, the size of the scholarship they received was fully comparable with other national and international scholarship schemes. As a result, the programme has all the means to grow larger were its budget to be increased.

In addition, based on our analysis we can conclude that the introduction of a new scheme for the European students proved to be successful in terms of their increased participation. However, the success was limited as the evaluation evidence also suggests that category B scholarships were smaller than in other schemes and, as a result, less competitive. Whereas the size of category A scholarships was largely on par with other scholarships schemes, such as the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship or the Fulbright Postgraduate Student Award.

Based on the analysis of the monitoring data presented in Annex 3 we can conclude that applicants for EM scholarships had relatively low chances of getting an award. There were particularly low success rates due to high demand under *Action 1*, where only 3.5% of all applicants were included in the main list to receive a category A scholarship. With such intense competition it is obvious that interest in the programme was great and it was a serious competitor to other scholarship schemes. However, due to the intense competition there was a risk that the low likelihood of getting the scholarship could deter potential applicants or lead to frustration for those who failed to get on the main list. In the long run it could decrease the programme's competitiveness.

As suggested by the results of the monitoring data analysis, the intense competition for scholarships was accompanied by an increased availability of the programme in one area and decreased availability in another. In particular, the availability of doctoral fellowships under Action 1 was increasing, whereas the availability of student scholarships was decreasing in the 2009-2011 period. Based on the monitoring data, in 2011 there were 71% more category A doctoral fellowships awarded than in 2010. Meanwhile the number of category A students awarded a scholarship decreased by 13% if compared with the 2010 data.⁹⁰ Considering the fact that during the period analysed the average size of a category A scholarship or fellowship under Action 1 increased only slightly (see Annex 3 for more details), the main reason behind poorer outputs in the area of awarded category A scholarships was the gradual decrease of funds allocated for category A scholarships. As a consequence of such developments, in terms of quantity of awarded doctoral candidates the programme became more comparable with other schemes and it was less favourable in the area of students.

In terms of quantitative results the programme was also successful in its effort to increase its attractiveness to European students. However, this success was limited (for more details see operational question No. 21.4.).

⁹⁰ In comparison with the 2009 data, the number of category A student scholarships awarded decreased by 40%.

Direct comparison of EM scholarships and scholarships available under other schemes suggests that the programme was very competitive in attracting students and scholars from the third countries and much less competitive when it came to the European beneficiaries. To begin with, the size of a category A scholarship was largely on par with the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship and Fulbright Postgraduate Student Award. Although the size of a grant in EM for an academic year in some cases might have been smaller than in other schemes, the EM scholarship was a better option for individuals who chose longer duration studies in a university with high entrance fees. Furthermore, EM scholarships were more attractive than other scholarships in a sense that they were linked with a possibility to finish a joint programme and receive a joint degree. Category B scholarships, on the other hand, were much less competitive. Unless a personal contribution was made, the scholarship was smaller than in other schemes.

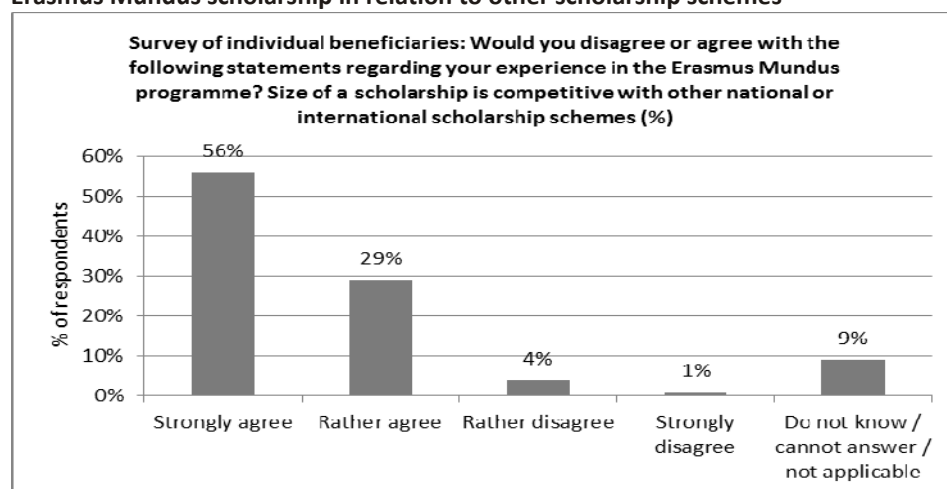
Table 6. A comparison of scholarship schemes and their benefits

Scholarship scheme		Duration	Award
Rotary Ambassadorial scholarship		1 academic year	A flat grant amount of USD 26,000 (approx. EUR 19,000)
DAAD Graduate study scholarship		10 months	Monthly stipends and a subsidy for travel costs in aggregate amounting to EUR 8,350-8,800
Chevening scholarship		1 academic year	Tuition fees not exceeding GBP 10,000 per year (approx. EUR 11,500) + travel costs, a monthly stipend and allowances
Fulbright Postgraduate Student Awards		1 academic year	Periodic instalments in aggregate amounting to GBP 20,000 (approx. EUR 23,000)
Erasmus Mundus	Category A scholarship	10-24 months	Depending on the contribution size and length of studies the scholarship amount might range from EUR 10,000 to EUR 48,000
Erasmus Mundus	Category B scholarship	10-24 months	Depending on the contribution size and length of studies the scholarship amount might range from EUR 5,000 to EUR 23,000

Source: analysis of the monitoring data.

Findings of the monitoring data analysis were supported by the results of the individual beneficiary surveys. To begin with, almost 90% of respondents to our survey stated that the level of funding was an important factor when they made their decision to participate in the Erasmus Mundus programme. In addition, almost 86% of respondents viewed the size of the scholarship as competitive in comparison to other national and international scholarship schemes (see figure below). Furthermore, 93% of individual beneficiaries felt that their scholarships were wholly or at least somewhat sufficient to cover their living expenses.

Figure 22. Opinion of individual Action 2 beneficiaries regarding the competitiveness of an Erasmus Mundus scholarship in relation to other scholarship schemes



Source: Survey of the EM II individual beneficiaries.

Meanwhile, institutional beneficiaries of Action 1 and Action 2 supported our findings suggesting that category B scholarships awarded to the European beneficiaries were not competitive. Around 71% of institutional beneficiaries in Action 1 and 46% of institutional beneficiaries in Action 2 agreed that the difference in grant size for European and third-

country students should be reduced. However, if the size of a category B scholarship is to be increased in the future, proper attention should be paid to the fact that in most cases European students pay smaller tuition fees (see Annex 3 for more details).

Operational question No. 21.4: How has the specific funding scheme for European students included in Action 1 affected their participation in the programme?

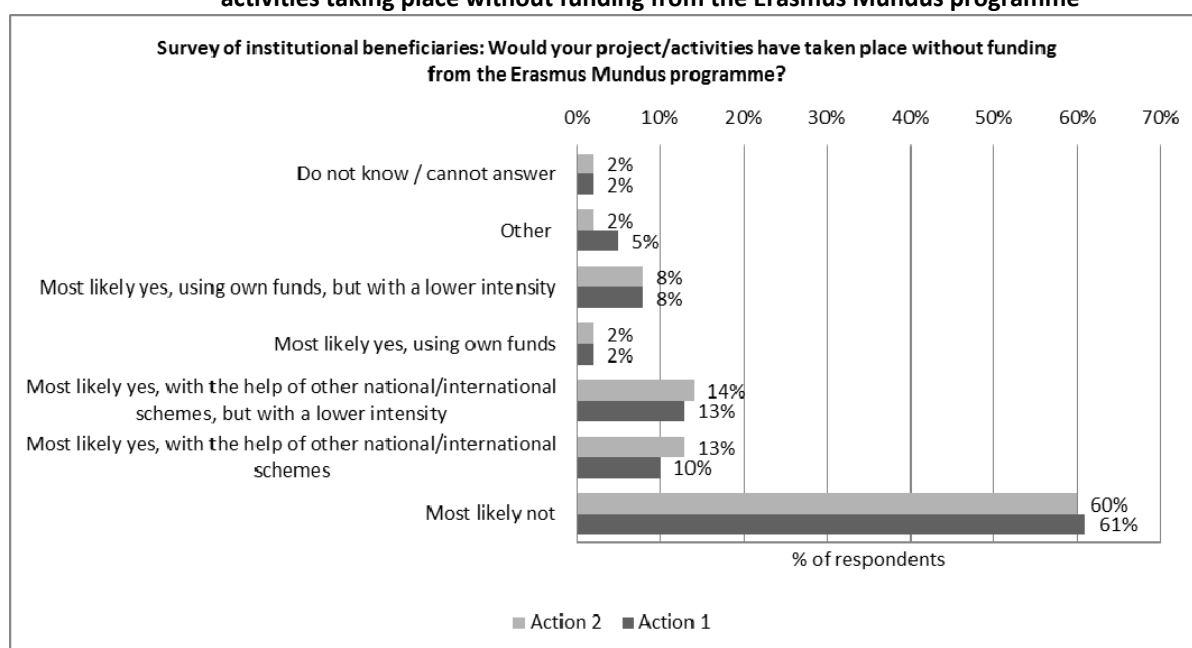
The success of a new scheme is best illustrated by data, showing how intense the competition for grants became after their introduction. For this purpose the monitoring data on submitted applications and European students benefiting from this scheme was analysed. Results of this analysis were supplemented by findings of case studies, interviews and the survey of institutional beneficiaries.

Since the number of European students awarded scholarships increased, the efforts to increase their participation in EM can be characterised as successful. However, the introduction of the new scheme did not result in a significantly increased interest of European students in the programme and the level of submitted applications remained the same. Contrary to the above trend, the extension of joint programmes allowing European doctoral candidates to apply for fellowships proved to be very successful – the demand was great and kept increasing.

It is also clear that EM was an attractive option to address the unmet demand for mobility in countries which have not been very active in international mobility in general, and where student opportunities to participate in international mobility for education were highly dependent on own funding and hence family background. Therefore, it can be expected that, with more visibility, more participation of EU12 students and Southern Europeans can be expected.

Results of the survey of institutional beneficiaries demonstrated (see Figure 23) that without funding from the Erasmus Mundus programme a number of projects and activities (similar to those currently implemented) would have taken place anyway. Approximately 32-36% (depending on Action) of respondents expressed a belief that their projects would have taken place with or without the Erasmus Mundus funding. However, their implementation would have depended on the availability of funding from other national/international schemes and own institutional funds. Furthermore, in most cases this would have lowered the intensity of projects and implemented activities. Implicitly, such findings suggest that only a few opportunities for the European students to obtain a scholarship while participating in a joint masters or doctoral programme would have been available without the introduction of a specific funding scheme for European students in Action 1.

Figure 23: Opinion of institutional beneficiaries regarding likelihood of their projects/ activities taking place without funding from the Erasmus Mundus programme

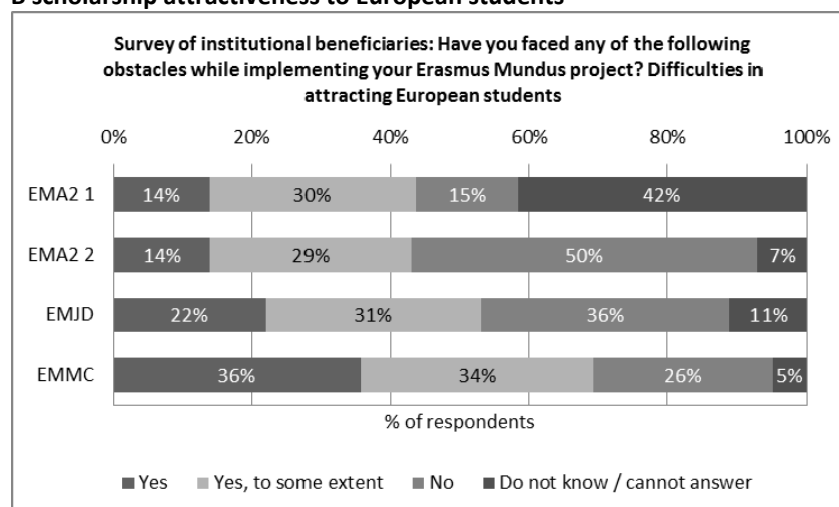


Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

The participation of European students has already been addressed under operational question No. 16.1. In 2008-2009, 554 European students took part in EMMCs.⁹¹ Meanwhile in 2010-2011 there were 1,625 Action 1 beneficiaries receiving category B scholarships (for more details see Annex 3). In other words, the participation of European students more than tripled since the introduction of scholarships for the European students in Action 1. Furthermore, some European students may have participated in courses although they did not get an Erasmus Mundus scholarship, therefore, their numbers might have increased more than three times.

Despite these positive developments, it is essential to note that since the introduction of scholarships for European students in 2009, the demand for category B scholarships remained limited and did not increase (for more details see Annex 3). Furthermore, surveys of institutional Action 1 and Action 2 beneficiaries also suggest that a substantial number of universities faced difficulties in attracting European students (see Figure 24). As such, this novel funding scheme was successful, but its future does not look very promising.

Figure 24. Opinion of institutional Action 1 and Action 2 beneficiaries regarding category B scholarship attractiveness to European students



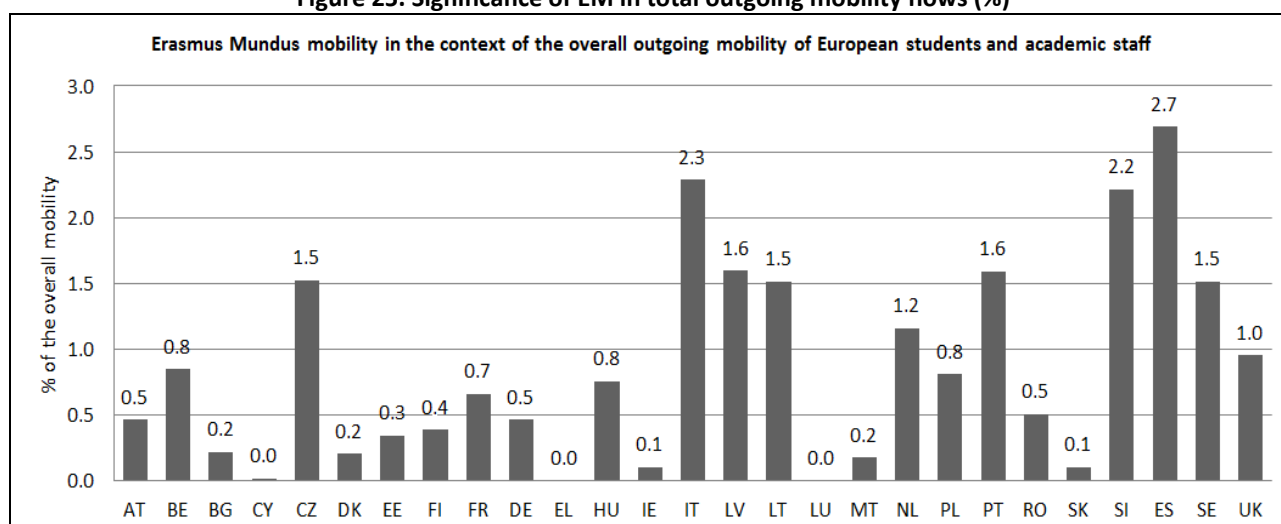
Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

⁹¹ Ecotec, *Ex-post evaluation of Erasmus Mundus. A final report to DG Education and Culture*, 62.

A much greater impact was made by the introduction of doctoral studies and fellowships to the programme. Since their introduction (in a single year) the number of applications for category B EMJD scholarships doubled from 428 to 848 (for more details see Annex 3). Furthermore, as an interviewee at the EACEA pointed out, the addition of doctoral studies to the programme was so successful and received so much attention from its target groups that it became necessary to redistribute funding between EMMCs and EMJDs. A possible explanation for such success was provided by interviewees of the EM2-STEM case study. According to them, universities see staff mobility as generally more beneficial than student mobility (at least below doctoral level). Staff mobility is seen as extremely valuable in terms of building international relationships for future joint projects – and (especially) research. For universities, “*Research is the key*” – so, involvement in doctoral and post-doctoral mobility programmes were of the utmost importance.

Trends and potential for more participation of European students should be seen in a broader context of mobility funding. However, the exact impact of EM on the mobility of European students cannot be measured without harmonised data on European student flows by year and by country. At the time of evaluation only the sum of all student and staff mobilities for both stages of EM implementation was available by country. However, even with this imperfect indicator, interesting comparative results can be seen. As staff mobility was much lower than that of students, we consider that most of the participants were students and on that basis we assess the significance of EM in total mobility flows (its main shortcoming is that EM data are for 2004-2011, while total mobility data from Eurostat are from 2009).

Figure 25. Significance of EM in total outgoing mobility flows (%)



Source: Own calculations based on Eurostat and *Facts & Figures about EU mobility programmes in Education, Training, Research and Youth* (Updated June 2011).

Although imperfect, this ratio shows that EM mobility was particularly important in Southern European countries (Italy, Spain and Portugal), as well as in some of the EU10 Member States (Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia). Interestingly, in the Southern European Member States between a third and a half of total student income came from family sources. Expected financial burden was perceived as a big obstacle for studying abroad in Ireland, Malta, Poland and Estonia (74%). It is not seen as a big obstacle in Romania (24%) and Latvia (41%). The Eurostudent study found large gaps between plans to enrol in studies abroad between students with high and low parental educational background in Portugal and Czech Republic. The lowest gaps were recorded in Lithuania, Sweden and France. In Italy, France, Poland and Estonia there was a large gap in perceived financial insecurities between socio-economic backgrounds.⁹²

⁹² EuroStudent.eu, *Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. synopsis of indicators: eurostudent IV 2008–2011*.

EM grants, although not very competitive at the EU level (see operational question No. 21.3), can provide a substantial incentive for mobility in such countries where mobility financing from public sources is lacking. For example, as many as 62% of Portuguese and 63% of Italian students studying abroad relied on family for funding. Meanwhile, only 3% of Finnish and 10% of Estonians had to rely on family, as they received substantial public support (78% and 70% respectively). Lithuania had the highest level of EU grant utilisation for funding studies abroad – 83%. This figure was only 17% for Portugal and 22% for Spain.⁹³

Set of evaluation questions No. 22: To what extent do the mechanisms applied by the Executive Agency (EACEA) for selecting and monitoring EM joint programmes, Action 2 partnerships and Action 3 projects ensure the expected academic and management excellence of selected EM projects?

Operational question No. 22.1.: Is there evidence to show management programme progress in terms of calls for proposals, selection procedure and monitoring?

The assessment of the mechanisms applied by the Commission and the Executive Agency for selecting and monitoring EM joint programmes, Action 2 partnerships and Action 3 projects was based on two main propositions. First, a combination of high competition for projects and adequate selection procedures should ensure the selection of projects of high academic excellence. Second, management excellence of the selected projects should depend on a combination of internal and external factors: the project beneficiaries should employ adequate managerial processes, while their performance should be adequately controlled and monitored (concerning the compliance with administrative and financial regulations as well as project content) by the responsible institutions.

Overall, mechanisms for project selection and monitoring are efficient. A good balance was ensured between excellence and geographical representation at the programme level. The rules and criteria of application were found to be clear and transparent, but limited success rates reduced the trust of target groups in project selection. EM beneficiaries positively assessed all aspects of project preparation and implementation, except for the extensive administrative workload. Although the monitoring and evaluation of ongoing EM projects was primarily quantitative, the continued implementation of the Erasmus Mundus Quality Assessment Project could enable a qualitative assessment of projects with the possible involvement of field experts.

Competition for projects

In order to assess competition for EM projects, the evaluator analysed the success rates of applications for different Actions of the programme. Analysis of the monitoring data indicated that EM remained a highly competitive programme during the 2009-2011 period (see Table 7 below). *Action 1* was the most competitive action: the success rate of applications ranged from 7% (EMJD in 2010) to 28% (EMMC in 2009). *Action 2*, whose success rate was in the range of 26-40%, was less competitive. The success rate of *Action 3* applications dropped from 67% in 2009 to 24% in 2011. Overall, the EM programme was more competitive compared to other higher education programmes co-ordinated by DG EAC and managed by EACEA. For instance, the success rates of applications to the centralised actions of the Erasmus programme (multilateral projects and multilateral networks) were found to be 30-67% for 2007-2009 under the LLP interim evaluation.⁹⁴

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ European Commission, *Interim Evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013). Final Report.*

Table 7. Success rates of applications for Erasmus Mundus projects during the 2009-2011 period

	2009			2010			2011		
	Received	Accepted	Success rate	Received	Accepted	Success rate	Received	Accepted	Success rate
Action 1 Masters courses (EMMC)	184	51	28%	181	29	16%	177	31	18%
Action 1 Doctoral courses (EMJD)	136	13	10%	148	11	7%	140	11	8%
Action 2 Partnership applications (ECW)	111	43	39%						
Action 2 Partnership applications (strand 1)				98	36	37%	91	36	40%
Action 2 Partnership applications (strand 2)				19	5	26%	12	4	33%
Action 3 Project applications	3	2	67%	44	11	25%	37	9	24%

Source: analysis of the monitoring data.

The high competition for projects allowed selecting consortia, which involved the outstanding European HEIs (see the evaluation question No. 12). Also, the number of HEIs participating in the EM programme gradually increased during the 2004-2010 period. According to the European Commission, the number of HEIs participating in EM joint programmes under *Action 1* was 951 for 2004-2010, while that in EM partnerships under *Action 2* was found to be 867 for 2007-2010.⁹⁵

Particular mechanisms used during the project selection process by the Executive Agency

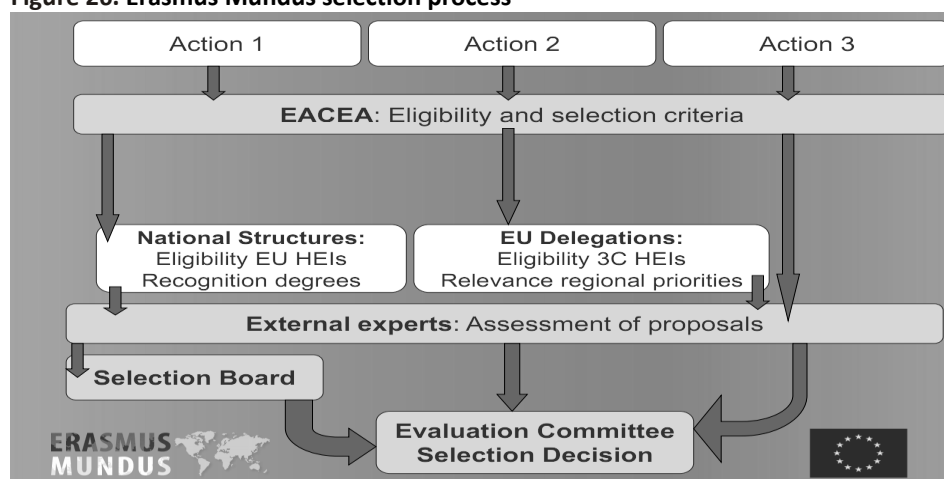
The highest academic quality was the main principle behind project selection under the EM programme. However, according to decision No. 1298/2008/EC of 16 December 2008 establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme, the need for a geographical representation should be taken into account during the selection process. The application of these principles varied across the programme Actions. The selection of *Action 1* projects was based on the principle of excellence, while *Action 2* was geographically targeted according to corresponding lots. A mix of these principles ensured a good balance between the excellence and geographical representation at the programme level.

According to the Programme Guide, the selection process involved a number of steps.⁹⁶ It is important to note some differences in the selection mechanisms across the programme's Actions. For *Action 1*, the Evaluation Committee was assisted by a Selection Board composed of leading personalities from European academia proposed by the Member States and appointed by the European Commission (see Figure 26 below). Also, *Action 1* students were selected through more competitive processes compared to *Action 2* students (see evaluation question No. 12).

⁹⁵ The concept of "participations" does not coincide with HEIs because one institution can participate more than once. See The European Commission. *Facts & Figures about EU mobility programmes in Education, Training, Research and Youth*. (Updated June 2011) <http://ec.europa.eu/education/focus/doc/mobilityfigures.pdf>

⁹⁶ The selection steps are as follows: (1) registration and acknowledgement of receipt by the Agency; (2) check of eligibility and selection criteria carried out by the Agency; (3) assessment carried out by international academic experts; (4) meeting of the Evaluation Committee to recommend proposals for selection; (5) In parallel to steps 3 and 4 and if applicable, consultation of National Structures and/or EU Delegations for eligibility matters relating to HEIs; (6) preparation of a draft grant award decision by the Agency taking into account the opinions issued during steps 3, 4 and 5 above; (7) adoption of the grant award decision by the Agency; (8) eligible applicants are informed by the Agency about the grant award decision.

Figure 26. Erasmus Mundus selection process



Source: EACEA.

The survey of the EM institutional beneficiaries indicated that the rules and criteria of application were clear and transparent (with 89% of the respondents selecting the answer of “strongly agree” and “rather agree”). Also, 85% of all respondents supported the statement that the selection and award of funding for successful applications was timely. 66% of the *Action 2* respondents agreed that application timing was well co-ordinated with the relevant educational processes compared to 83% of the *Action 1* respondents (see Table 8 below). These findings are broadly supported by the online public consultation, which found that overall clarity of EM supporting documents (programme guide, calls for proposals, etc.) was quite clear.⁹⁷

However, low success rates for some Actions and strands negatively affected the target groups’ trust and created the perception of limited transparency in project selection. Although EACEA provides feedback to unsuccessful project applicants and informs the National Structures and the EU Delegations, during the interview and survey programmes the need to receive more information from the executive agency about the results of project selection was expressed. For instance, 91% of the respondents to the survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations agreed that feedback from EACEA to the National Structures on unsuccessful applications could be increased (see Table 9).

The application of control and monitoring procedures at the project level

EACEA was responsible for the management of the programme, which included financial management, project monitoring (assessment of intermediate and final reports, as well as project visits) and on-the-spot controls. Overall, the survey results pointed to very positive assessment of the selected aspects of the project preparation and implementation. The only exception was the extensive administrative workload that occurred during the preparation and implementation of EM projects (82% of all beneficiaries strongly agree and rather agree with this statement) (see Table 8 below).

Table 8. Assessment of the aspects of the project preparation and implementation (How would you evaluate the following aspects of the preparation and implementation of the project?)

Share of the respondents (%) who strongly agree and rather agree	Action 1	Action 2	Total
The rules and criteria of application were clear and transparent	89.9	87.6	88.8
Rules for participation of third-country partners were clear and consistent	85.1	87.4	86.3
Information and guidance from the National Structures, the national TEMPUS offices or the EU Delegations was helpful during application and initial stages of implementation	63.3	65.6	64.5
Application timing was well coordinated with the relevant educational processes (start dates of academic years, realistic time frames for employment of academic and non-academic staff, etc.)	82.3	65.7	74.0

⁹⁷ ECORYS, *Overview of the public online consultation results*.

Share of the respondents (%) who strongly agree and rather agree	Action 1	Action 2	Total
Selection and award of funding for successful applications was timely	85.2	84.6	84.9
Expenditure eligibility requirements were clear	80.4	83.3	81.8
Procedures pertaining to financial management of the project (payment arrangements, requirements for accounting and justification of expenditure, etc.) were clear	74.4	81.7	78.0
Procedures pertaining to project reports were clear	75.4	83.3	79.4
Duration of the project and timing of reporting were well coordinated with the relevant education processes (e.g. duration and timing of study programmes)	73.6	75.0	74.3
Preparation of your Erasmus Mundus project created extensive administrative workload	82.7	81.0	81.8
Implementation of your Erasmus Mundus project has created extensive administrative workload	80.9	82.1	81.5
Administration of Erasmus Mundus projects has been considerably simplified by the Executive Agency (EACEA)	41.6	52.6	47.2

Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

The EM beneficiaries prepared activity reports containing a technical part of a written report, individual mobility records of all students and staff enrolled in the project and the beneficiary declaration. According to the survey of EM institutional beneficiaries, procedures pertaining to project reports were clear (with 79% of the respondents selecting the answer of “strongly agree and “rather agree”). These reports were assessed by EACEA. Since project evaluation was primarily quantitative (e.g. the number of mobilities), a more balanced approach involving the assessment of qualitative progress (excellence in goal attainment) was advocated by project beneficiaries during the interview programme. For instance, project evaluation could be focused on ways of attaining the main objectives of the programme. The impact assessment on future international cooperation recognised that both quantitative and qualitative indicators should be used during project evaluation.⁹⁸

The results of public online consultation showed that the current monitoring and evaluation procedures are administratively very burdensome.⁹⁹ Evidence from case studies and interviews also indicated that implementation problems were caused by the heavy demands of project reporting and the need to re-apply for funding annually – and also that the inflexibility of rules such as the requirement for all mobilities to have commenced before 31 December (see in particular the Averroès case study).

To reduce administrative burden, it was decided to simplify project reporting by reducing the number of activity reports from 15 (in phase I of EM) to 7 (in phase II of EM) in the six-year period. However, the need for annual re-application for funding remained not only burdensome, but also (combined with the demanding schedule of application, mobility management, reporting and re-application) left little time for consortium consultation and development.¹⁰⁰ As all EM projects were renewed during their implementation, there is a need to reconsider the re-application approach in the next implementation period. For instance, this administrative burden could be reduced by managing re-application on a multi-annual basis with the involvement of field experts in project monitoring. Also, *Action 2* projects could be managed based on the principles of the Erasmus programme (in the form of bilateral exchanges between European and non-European universities).

Also, all selected EM projects were subject to a monitoring visit, whose objective was to discuss progress with coordinators, their partners and students. There was consensus among the EU-level stakeholders that project-monitoring procedures could be improved. According to the EU-level interviews, field experts could also participate in the monitoring visits in order to assess project excellence during their implementation. In addition, there were audit mechanisms. Each year a number of projects were selected on a random or risk basis for a financial audit that was carried out by an external body.

⁹⁸ The European Commission. *Impact Assessment on International Cooperation in Higher Education*. Commission Staff Working Paper. Brussels, 23 November 2011, p. 47.

⁹⁹ ECORYS, *Overview of the public online consultation results*. Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ It was perceived that the stability of funding within the 7 Framework Programme offers much better opportunities for real project progression. See the study of Averroès Action 2 project in Annex 4.

Finally, at the end of 2007 the European Commission started the Erasmus Mundus Quality Assessment Project (EMQA Project) aimed at an in-depth study of the quality of Erasmus Mundus joint programmes. This project involved 21 peer reviews of existing EM masters courses based on a self-assessment and *in situ* visits to the grant beneficiaries and their partner institutions (including interviews and meetings). The project resulted in the drafting of a Handbook of Erasmus Mundus Global Practices (an inventory of good practices) and a Self-Assessment Tool, allowing for (voluntary) benchmarking against identified good practice at the level of higher education institutions.

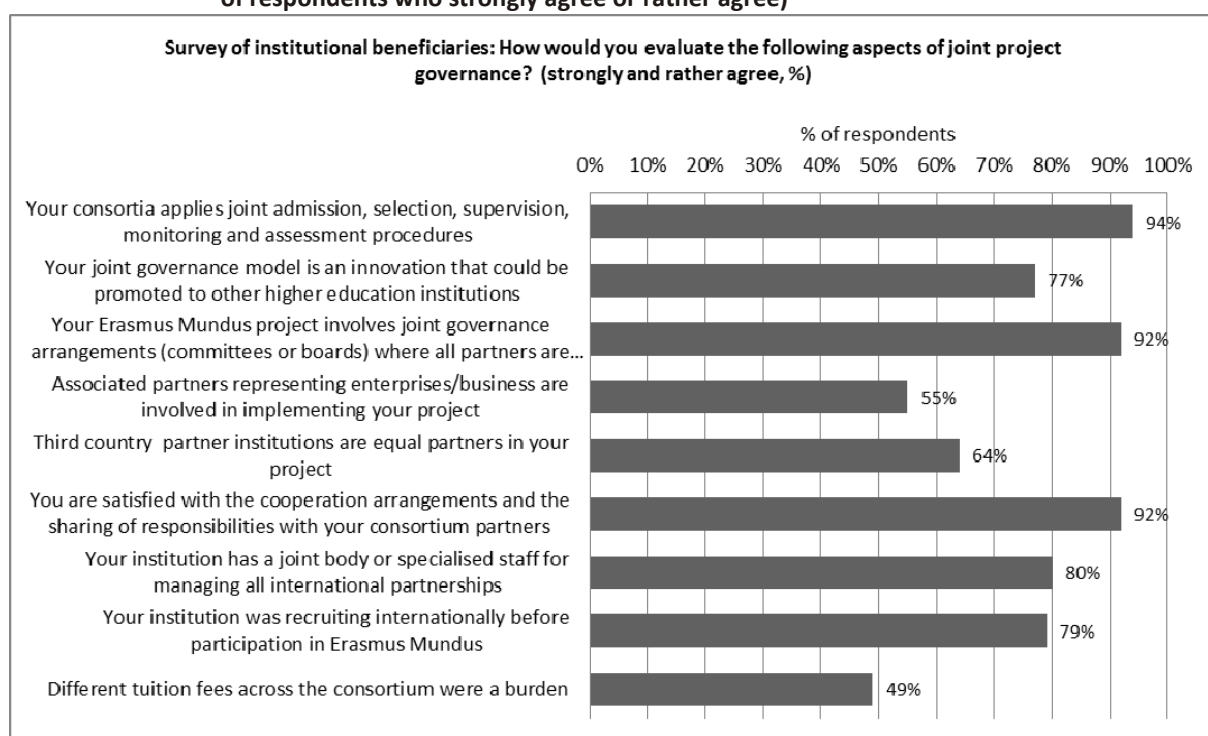
The EU-level interviews indicated that while this instrument has been very useful, its potential has not yet been fully exploited. For instance, an improved instrument of quality assessment could also be used for the purpose of project monitoring. Also, in the application of this instrument it is possible to involve field experts, who could provide objective, structured and in-depth advice on the quality of the joint programmes supported by EM. Therefore, the implementation of the EMQA project should be continued by DG EAC in cooperation with the Executive Agency.

Governance at the project level

EM consortia offer joint, double or multiple degrees to graduates of the EM joint programmes. The Programme Guide requires EMJDs to “have a joint governance structure with joint admission, selection, supervision, monitoring and assessment procedures”, and HEIs “are expected to contribute to the promotion of innovative models for the modernisation of doctoral studies, focusing on institutional cooperation and the development of joint governance models (i.e. recruitment, supervision, assessment, awarding of degrees and fee policy)”. Therefore, governance of the EM joint programmes should be based on shared responsibilities among all participating partners and may involve such governance instruments as executive committees or boards dealing with academic, administrative and financial issues, mechanisms ensuring student representation or quality assurance mechanisms.

The survey programme analysed which governance structures and procedures had been developed by EM beneficiaries, as well as their innovativeness and performance. Analysis of the survey data (see figure below) indicates that the majority of Action 1 and Action 2 projects applied joint admission, selection, supervision, monitoring and assessment procedures (94% of the respondents strongly or rather agree) and involved joint governance arrangements (committees or boards) where all partners were represented (92% of the respondents agree). According to 77% of the respondents, the governance model represented an innovation that could be promoted to other higher education institutions. A total of 92% of the respondents were satisfied with the cooperation arrangements and the sharing of responsibilities with consortium partners.

Figure 27. Assessment of joint project governance for Action 1 and Action 2 (Percentage of respondents who strongly agree or rather agree)



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

There were some differences between *Action 1* and *Action 2* of the programme. For instance, while 75% of the Action 1 respondents strongly agreed that joint procedures are applied, this statement was strongly supported by only 59% of the Action 2 respondents. Also, 78% of the Action 1 respondents strongly supported the statement that joint governance arrangements were applied compared to 49% of the Action 2 respondents. However, while 60% of the Action 2 beneficiaries strongly agreed that third-country partner institutions are equal partners in the project, this statement was strongly supported by only 22% of the Action 1 beneficiaries. Also, non-educational institutions were more actively involved in Action 2 (one in three partnerships) than in Action 1 (one in four) (see operational question No. 18.1. concerning this issue). Therefore, joint governance arrangements were more developed under Action 1 projects (the joint programmes), while third-country partner institutions were more equally represented and non-educational institutions were more actively involved under Action 2 projects.

For *Action 1*, the study of the TEMA project (see Annex 4) indicated that this consortium set up an elaborate governance structure (involving the Management Committee, the Pedagogic Council and scientific managers in each partner institution) and joint procedures for application, selection and admission of students based on their previous cooperation experience and consortium development in the first year of project implementation. However, despite the offer of joint, double or multiple degree programmes, the uniformity of approaches and procedures in the management of the joint programmes differed across EM consortia. For instance, all partners follow their own quality assessment rules in the EuroSPIN consortium supported under Action 1 (see Annex 4). For *Action 2*, the study of the EuroSPIN project (see Annex 4) showed that the consortium, which included four full partners, formed a steering board, where all partner institutions were represented. Also, this project had an advisory board consisting of associated partners (from a total of 75 associate partners involved in the project, 45 were universities, while many of the others were commercial companies) and two external advisors.

Based on the experience of EM consortia, one can disseminate good practices of joint project governance among the European and non-European higher education institutions. Such activities could be supported under the post-2013 programme “Erasmus for all” (more specifically, under the proposed action to support dialogue in higher education).

Set of evaluation questions No. 23: To what extent do the mechanisms applied by EM Action 2 Partnerships for selecting students under Action 2 prove to be equitable and fair in terms of a) access for women and b) access for vulnerable groups?

Operational question No. 23.1.: Is there evidence to show that the mechanisms for the selection of students under Action 2 contribute to better access for women and other vulnerable groups compared to the previous programme?

As mentioned under operational question 10.1., the Programme Guide set requirements to include gender balance and elimination of discrimination, targeted measures (Target Group 3 to support the access of vulnerable groups to Action 2 mobility) and gender-disaggregated data for Action 1. The main difficulties for achieving equitable outcomes resulted in the unclear definition of vulnerable situations and the unwillingness of targeted groups to identify themselves as such. While an overwhelming majority reported having a gender equality policy before their participation in EM II, 33% of institutional beneficiaries surveyed reported the strong influence of EM II in improving equity in access to mobility in higher education, 47% believed there was some influence, and 14% did not observe any influence. The answer to operational question No. 10.1. shows that at the programme level mobility flows of students and staff were gender-equal at the programme level and tended to be more equal than European education in general at the course level.

The experience of two Action 2 consortia shows that it proved to be very difficult to define vulnerable groups except for gender. While securing a quantitative gender balance (which may still put certain gender-defined groups at a disadvantage, e.g. women with family responsibilities) did not seem to be an issue, problems with receiving more students from vulnerable groups started with their definition. In addition, it was expected that gender balance and inclusion of vulnerable groups varied according to the subject area and geographical region. In the survey, one respondent wrote in an answer to an open question that the university even tries to involve students' parents in encouraging underrepresented students to apply for mobility. Still, two of three Action 2 consortia selected for case study analysis claimed that gender balance was achieved effortlessly.

The Averroès project included the level of vulnerability and socio-economic status of the applicant as selection criteria at the stage of local screening. Priority was given to candidates who had not yet benefited from mobility grants. Socio-economic vulnerability proved to be more difficult to define (see the case study). It may be that attempts to define "vulnerable groups" in relation to a Western European understanding of the concept, were less relevant than an understanding of the very considerable and urgent needs of certain third countries.

Similarly, the EM2-STEM case study shows that the consortium found it very difficult to define vulnerable groups and to develop effective mechanisms to encourage them to apply. In ethnically mixed societies in the Western Balkan region defining ethnic minorities proved to be difficult. There was a *social stigma* associated with an LGBT identity and disability, and students were unwilling to report it. The generally low standard of income, compared to the EU, did not allow effective singling out of socio-economically disadvantaged students. Despite offering 35 scholarships to Target Group 3 students and looking into ways on how to encourage them to apply, the consortium did not receive enough applications. One positive outcome of the application of this targeted measure was that it raised awareness in the Balkan partners, who were encouraged to introduce similar measures for vulnerable groups. Yet the local coordinator in one of the Balkan countries found this measure problematic and did not seem to be impressed by the achievements of the measure.

The Eurasia 2 consortium did not attempt to balance mobility flows by gender, but it monitored the numbers of men and women and found the gender balance satisfactory. As mentioned under operational question No. 10.1., this was probably due to the focus area of the partnership. As for vulnerable groups, a representative of a partner institution in

Thailand believed that access to mobility greatly improved for financially disadvantaged students. Mobility opportunities were available under bilateral cooperation frameworks, but the EM scholarship actually empowered poorer students to undertake mobility. On the other hand, Target Group 3 students were difficult to find. Two applications were received, and one refugee was awarded a place.

In total, 40 Target Group 3 scholarships were awarded to students of 13 nationalities, according to the monitoring data. Women accounted for 63% of the beneficiaries. Although it is generally considered that the access of vulnerable groups to the highest academic levels is very limited, the consortia found six qualifying doctoral candidates and two post-doctoral candidates. All of them were women from Russia, Georgia or Belarus. Nine of the beneficiaries did not reside in their country of origin, and all but one of them were Belarusian nationals.

Important results in this respect were achieved in Action 1. As the interviewed stakeholder mentioned, there was a bottom-up initiative by Action 1 alumni, the Erasmus Mundus LGBT network, which aimed at raising awareness and providing networking opportunities for alumni with LGBT identities or committed to LGBT causes. However, due to limited integration between Action 1 and Action 2, there is a need for incentives to exploit the results achieved by beneficiaries and alumni networks. For instance, the EM Alumni Association is only concerned with Action 1 participants.

Although there was no evidence regarding gender segregation by subject areas, our case studies showed that student intakes were more balanced than in higher education in the EU in general. Action 2 was also more focused on the inclusion of ethnic minorities and socio-economically disadvantaged students, who may not take advantage of Action 1 if they did not have access to excellent education to compete for scholarships. On the other hand, although the evidence was not sufficient, Action 1 beneficiary institutions tended to be more aware and equipped to address the needs of students with disabilities and special needs, and LGBT identities. The access of persons in more nuanced vulnerability situations, e.g. single mothers, remained a challenge.

Set of evaluation questions No. 24: How did the efficiency of the Erasmus Mundus Structures in the European countries, the National TEMPUS Offices in the relevant non-European countries and the EU Delegations in the rest of the world contribute to the promotion of the programme and to supporting and assisting applicants and beneficiaries?

Operational questions No. 24.1. and 24.2.: How efficient is the promotion of the programme? How efficient is support and assistance to applicants and beneficiaries of the programme?

The evaluator analysed how efficiently the Executive Agency, the National Structures, the National TEMPUS Offices and the EU Delegations contribute to the promotion of the programme and to supporting and assisting applicants and beneficiaries. The main proposition of the evaluation was that the efficient implementation of these functions depends on the clear division of tasks among these institutional bodies and their cooperation, as well as the adequacy of their capacities to implement certain promotion activities. In addition, the evaluator assessed the extent to which applicants and beneficiaries of the programme were satisfied with the support and assistance to applicants and beneficiaries provided by these bodies.

Overall, the general division of tasks among the responsible bodies involved in the programme promotion and the provision of services to applicants and beneficiaries among these institutions was quite clear, but the promotion of different Actions could be streamlined within the single programme.

The beneficiaries were satisfied with the services of EACEA, while information and guidance from the National Structures, the national TEMPUS offices or the EU Delegations was helpful for the beneficiaries during project preparation and implementation. Taking into consideration the mixed performance of the National Structures and the EU Delegations in the programme promotion and the provision of support services to applicants and beneficiaries, it is possible to improve the capacities of these institutions through various capacity-building actions or the exchange of good practices.

Programme promotion and the provision of support services

The implementation of the EM programme was entrusted to EACEA. In order to provide general information about the programme and advice during the application and selection process, the Member States designated appropriate structures for the programme implementation.¹⁰¹ The national Tempus offices in the relevant non-European countries and the EU Delegations in the rest of the world participate in promotion of the programme and the implementation of other functions.

Desk research and the interview programme indicated that the general allocation of tasks for the programme promotion and the provision of support services were quite clear. Each responsible body pursued different objectives in this process: EACEA was responsible for overall programme management, the National Structures promoted the programme in their own countries (intra-EU mobility), while the EU Delegations and the national Tempus offices promoted the programme outside the EU in respective third countries. Also, the Erasmus Mundus Alumni and Students Association (EMA) provided some information to potential, selected and graduated students (only under Action 1).

Desk research, the survey and interview programmes indicated that the programme promotion could be improved within the current institutional framework. First, the specific tasks of promotion could be defined more clearly in relation to different Actions of the programme. The case study results that Action 1 and Action 2 were usually promoted on a separate basis (e.g. see the study of Action 2 project Eurasia II in Annex 4) were supported by the survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations, whose respondents agreed with the definition of specific promotion tasks among the responsible bodies (94% of all respondents who strongly or rather agreed, see Table 9 below). It is important to ensure that the future programme is promoted on the basis of a coherent strategy for EHEA in the world (with 90% of the respondents selecting the answer of “strongly agree” and “rather agree”), whose development was also indicated in the impact assessment of international cooperation in higher education for the following financial perspective.¹⁰²

Table 9. Necessary changes to improve the promotion of the successor programme (percentage of respondents who strongly agree or rather agree)

	Total		National Structures		EU Delegations	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Defining specific promotion tasks between the EACEA, the National Structures and the EU Delegations more clearly	76	93.9%	26	96.3%	50	92.6%
Increasing the feedback from EACEA to the National Structures on unsuccessful applications	74	91.3%	26	96.3%	48	88.9%
Preparing a coherent strategy to promote European Higher Education Area in the world	73	90.1%	26	96.3%	47	87.1%
Increasing the responsibilities of the National Structures/	73	90.1%	25	92.6%	48	88.9%

¹⁰¹ The National Structures are responsible for providing general information on the EM programme and general assistance and advice to potential applicants, assistance in finding transnational partners, assistance and advice in obtaining the recognition or accreditation of programmes, assistance and advice concerning visa and residence permits, clarification of eligibility requirements during the selection process, maintaining contacts and providing assistance to institutions involved in the project implementation, participation in the project monitoring and follow-up, providing feedback to the European Commission, the EACEA and other institutions about the project implementation, cooperation with other National Structures and other active organisations, participating in joint projects and other networking activities, dissemination and exchange of project results among higher education institutions and students.

¹⁰² European Commission, *Impact Assessment on International Cooperation in Higher Education*. Commission Staff Working Paper. Brussels, 23 November 2011.

	Total		National Structures		EU Delegations	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
the EU Delegations in the programme promotion and the provision of advisory services						
Allocating additional financial or human resources to the National Structures/the EU Delegations	72	88.9%	25	92.6%	47	87.1%
Strengthening promotional activities, targeted at employers, of joint programmes and diplomas	71	87.6%	24	88.9%	47	87.1%
Implementing more joint projects to promote European higher education and programme opportunities	68	86.1%	25	92.6%	43	82.7%
Strengthening the role of the EACEA in the programme promotion	59	72.9%	21	77.8%	38	70.4%
Centralising exploitation of Action 3 (promotion of European higher education) project results	45	56.3%	20	74.1%	25	47.2%

Source: Survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations.

The case studies and interviews indicated that performance of the National Structures and the EU Delegations in the programme promotion was mixed. Although the majority of the National Structures were involved primarily during the application and selection process, several National Agencies were actively engaged in the project monitoring and follow-up. Also, some EU Delegations were more active than others in the programme promotion. Therefore, there is a need to improve the capacities of the National Structures and the EU Delegations to play a more active role in the programme promotion. The public online consultation also indicated that the National Structures could play a more visible role in the programme's promotion (with better access to information, a better use of newsletters and contacts with students' unions) and could carry out an advisory role (e.g. advising on legal issues).¹⁰³ The allocation of additional financial and human resources to the responsible bodies was supported by the survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations (90% of all respondents who strongly and rather agreed, see Table 9 above). It is also possible to exchange good practices in the programme promotion among the National Structures and the EU Delegations and implementing training and other capacity building actions aimed at less actively involved bodies. One example was the EMAP (EM Active Participation) project under Action 3, which successfully sought to improve participation for the EU-12 countries.¹⁰⁴

Finally, there is a need to select adequate instruments of promotion and advice during the implementation of the current and future programmes. A wide range of instruments were employed during the EM promotion and the provision of advice to applicants and beneficiaries, especially websites and other Internet tools; phone calls and emails; conferences, meetings, seminars, launch and other events. While the National Structures more frequently used the instruments of various events and face-to-face meetings, the EU Delegations more often participated in higher education fairs. However, the existing academic, student and alumni networks were rarely exploited for reaching the target groups of the programme (see Table 10 below). These survey findings were supported by the interview programme. Since the programme was promoted primarily through public events in some countries, some interviewees suggested the possibility of reaching out to the target groups and multiplying information about the programme through various academic networks. Furthermore, desk research and the survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations point to the need to strengthen promotional activities targeted at employers (with 88% of all respondents who strongly or rather agreed with this statement, see Table 9 above).

¹⁰³ ECORYS, *Overview of the public online consultation results*. Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ EMAP/Erasmus Mundus Active Participation is a common project of Erasmus Mundus National Structures, which aims to enhance the participation of higher education institutions from countries which so far have been less well represented in the Erasmus Mundus Action 1. It was perceived that the implementation of this project has resulted in an increase in the participation rate and a slight increase in the success rate for these countries. For more information see <http://emap-project.webnode.cz/>

Table 10. Main instruments employed during the programme promotion and the provision of advice to applicants and beneficiaries of the Erasmus Mundus programme?

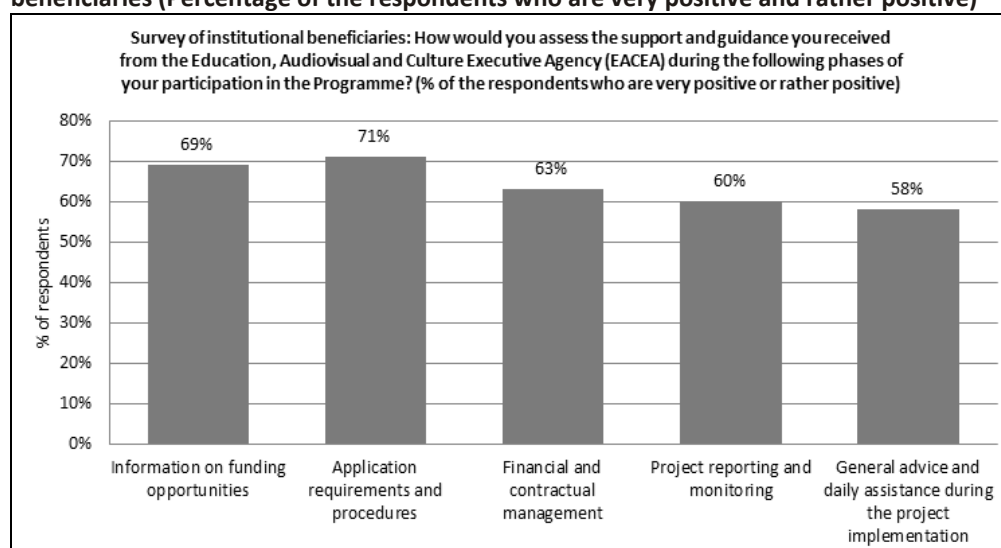
	Total		National Structures		EU Delegations	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Websites and other Internet tools	60	74.1%	22	81.5%	38	70.4%
Phone calls and emails	56	69.1%	19	70.4%	37	68.5%
Conferences, meetings, seminars, launch and other events	53	65.4%	24	88.9%	29	53.7%
Face-to-face meetings with students, academics, teachers and staff of higher education institutions	44	54.3%	18	66.7%	26	48.1%
Organisation of, or participation in, higher education fairs	39	48.1%	7	25.9%	32	59.3%
Newsletters, leaflets, other reading materials	29	35.8%	9	33.3%	20	37.0%
Reaching the target groups through the existing academic, student or alumni networks	21	25.9%	8	29.6%	13	24.1%
Joint meetings and events for the promotion of other EU-funded programmes (e.g. Erasmus)	13	16.0%	13	48.1%		
TV, radio or other media communication	4	4.9%	1	3.7%	3	5.6%

Source: Survey of the National Structures and the EU Delegations.

Satisfaction of beneficiaries

The survey of the EM institutional beneficiaries indicated that the programme's beneficiaries are satisfied with the services of EACEA. The services were positively assessed by 69-70% of the respondents during the application phase, while 58-63% of the respondents positively assessed its services during the implementation phase (see Figure 28 below). Only 1-5% of the respondents negatively assessed the services of EACEA (with 5% negatively assessing financial and contractual management). There were no important differences across the programme's actions. However, EACEA's support and guidance was more positively assessed by the project coordinators compared to the project partners (that tend to have less information about EACEA's performance). Also, the third-country respondents had a more positive perception of the agency performance compared to those from EU/EEA or candidate countries.

Figure 28. Assessment of the support and guidance from EACEA by the institutional beneficiaries (Percentage of the respondents who are very positive and rather positive)



Source: Survey of the EM II institutional beneficiaries.

Evidence from the case studies indicates that the support offered by EACEA is generally good and their overall approach is responsive to the needs of project beneficiaries and user-friendly. However, EACEA's EM team is very busy and it would benefit from more staff with a strong background in and experience of higher education, which could enable them to better understand the problems faced by consortia and individual institutions (see the case studies in Annex 4).

The survey of the EM institutional beneficiaries indicated that information and guidance from the National Structures, the national TEMPUS offices or the EU Delegations was helpful during the application and initial stages of implementation (with 65% of the respondents who strongly and rather agree and 15% of the respondents who strongly or rather disagree). The respondents from third countries were more satisfied with information and guidance (74% strongly and rather agree) than those from EU/EEA and candidate countries (59%). The public online consultation found that the overall ease with which information on the EM programme could be found was quite good (with 44% of the respondents selecting the answer of “very easy” or “easy” compared to 17% of the respondents who selected the answer of “difficult” and “very difficult”).¹⁰⁵ This consultation also indicated the need to devote more attention to the information and dissemination activities of the programme.

Evaluation question No. 25: To what extent do the new elements introduced under EM Action 1 within this second phase of the programme contribute to the Programme’s global and specific objectives?

Operational question No. 25.1.: How successful has the implementation of new activities introduced under phase II of the EM programme been?

The EM II novelties are:

- Extending joint programmes which now include the doctoral level;
- Offering scholarships for European students;
- Integrating the “External Cooperation Window” scheme into the EM programme as Action 2 “Erasmus Mundus partnerships”, with a wider scope including all levels of HE – bachelor, doctoral and post-doctoral and other forms of cooperation with third countries;
- Allowing third-country HEIs to participate in the EM joint programmes.

Of those novelties, adding doctoral education was considered the most successful, as it provided the much-needed funds for research excellence and allowed enough time for the courses to gain visibility. Offering scholarships to European students addressed the unmet demand for funding, but scholarships were not yet very competitive, and institutions faced difficulties in attracting European students. Action 2 integration and equalisation of the status of EU and third-country institutions were considered incomplete and in need of streamlining.

It was nearly universally accepted (by DG EAC, EACEA and the selected consortium) that *EMJDs* were a very successful activity under EM II. According to the interviewee at EACEA, they immediately gained visibility and popularity to such an extent that their budget was increased at the expense of *EMMCs*. Their success was confirmed by the fact that both Action 1 *EMMC* consortia selected for case study analysis were planning to develop *EMJD* courses and consider it “a logical step” after enough capacities are built during participation in Strand 1. Budget allocations for third-country doctoral candidates were absorbed to the largest extent of all the parts of Action 1: 71% of the budget had already been contracted. 49% of the funds had been contracted for European doctoral candidates. All the planned courses for 2009-2013 had already been selected – only *EMJDs* have an achievement rate of 100%. One of the indications of success was that *EMJD* scholarships were extremely competitive – only 5-6% third country and 8-12% European applicants were awarded scholarships. Perhaps the success rate was too low, which, according to one EACEA interviewee, produced many disappointed consortia and candidates who tended to reapply.

It was difficult to say to what extent the doctoral programmes were producing “cutting edge” research without expert assessment. However, as shown by the case study of an *EMJD* programme, the doctorate was competitive, highly valued by target groups, and

¹⁰⁵ ECORYS, *Overview of the public online consultation results*.

involved excellent researchers, who were able to bridge the worlds of research and education. On the other hand, overlaps with Marie Curie Actions must be explored in the future. Given the high regard expressed for joint doctoral programmes and for mobilities at the doctoral and post-doctoral levels, there is a danger, however, that removal of doctoral and post-doctoral co-operation from any future higher education programme would significantly reduce its value in the regard of HEIs.

Case study interviewees noted that the regulations for EMJDs were sometimes too directly copied from EMMCs without consideration of the specificities of doctoral education. In some countries, employment of doctoral candidates was very burdensome and created inequality depending on the mobility pathway. In addition, it was difficult for an employee of one EU Member State to apply for a residence permit in another Member State. According to the coordinator of the EMJD consortium selected for case study analysis, National Structures were unable to help with these issues.

According to the selected consortium representatives, the EMJD undoubtedly had a high added value and helped develop a student-centred cooperation among participating institutions. They were already cooperating in research, but joint supervision was a new activity, which helped bring scholars together. The consortium outlined some spillovers resulting from this partnership: universities exchanged visits and were discussing future networking and partnerships, including mobility of students.

As discussed above (operational question No. 21.4.), introducing *scholarships to European students* raised their participation threefold. On the other hand, the DG EAC representative believed that progress has been unsatisfactory. Monitoring data showed that scholarships for European students had been considerably less competitive and many students were not yet aware of the benefits of going to the third countries. The promotion of EM is not likely to be successful if mobility and joint degrees are perceived as an extra burden with little added value. The case studies showed that it is difficult to receive recognition of a fundamentally different study programme abroad, that legislation was not yet in place in many countries, and that students in joint programmes often had to comply with the requirements of two institutions. In addition, the burden of three mobility destinations where a third country was selected in EMJD was highlighted as an important disincentive for European students. Most of the time ad hoc solutions were found to address these issues, but in this respect consortia had very uneven standing in their capacities to find such solutions.

Integration of Action 2 was perceived as incomplete. Almost half of Action 1 and over a third of Action 2 beneficiaries did not know how to answer the question whether Actions 1 and 2 were very different in their excellence standards; 34% of Action 1 and 40% of Action 2 beneficiaries believed this was the case, whereas 17% of Action 1 and 23% of Action 2 beneficiaries disagreed. The results showed that 72% of Action 1 beneficiaries and 55% of Action 2 beneficiaries were positive about the academic excellence of Action 1 (only a few beneficiaries were negative), whereas 53% Action 1 beneficiaries and as many as 82% Action 2 beneficiaries were positive about the excellence of Action 2 (4% of Action 1 and 6% of Action 2 beneficiaries were negative). Cooperation among the DGs involved had not been taking place to a sufficient extent due to different expectations (interviews with DG EAC, EEAS) and limited coordination (see under operational question No. 2.2.). Action 2 was important since it provided incentives to develop partnerships with less popular regions, e.g. some ENP countries. Yet, interviewed stakeholders saw a potential conflict of excellence and development objectives here.

While two of the Action 2 consortia, which were the subject of case studies, were particularly successful at attracting excellent candidates for Action 2 mobility, this can be partly due to strong regional links and a history of cooperation between the institutions. Reapplication every year was perceived as a burden, which will be subsequently removed, at least in some countries (interview with an EU policy-maker).

According to EU-level interviewees, it would be very important not to lose the development component of Action 2 (a DG DEVCO representative feared this was going to happen in the future) and better align capacity building with mobility. The EEAS point of view was that

“There is a clear intervention logic in relation to the EU encouraging and supporting societal development via higher education cooperation, through Erasmus Mundus”. The programme provides a strong incentive for this work, through the funding provided, and also through the imprimatur of the Commission in relation to this work. In the view of the representative interviewed, development activity in higher education was an area in which cooperation is relatively easy to arrange and brings identifiable results.

Participation of third-country institutions in partnerships was considered a very positive contribution to academic excellence and capacity building. Third-country institutions developed their administrative capacities to accommodate the needs of mobile students and learned important lessons for regional mobility. In addition, European institutions and students became more exposed to the research results achieved in third countries. The results showed that 70% of Action 1 and 89% of Action 2 beneficiaries believed that the EM programme should ensure more balanced and reciprocal relationships between European and third-country HEIs, and only 23% Action 1 and 9% Action 2 beneficiaries disagreed with this.

In total, 85% of Action 1 and 87% of Action 2 beneficiaries believed that the rules for participation of third-country partners were clear and consistent, whereas 7% of Action 1 and 8% of Action 2 beneficiaries thought this was not the case. However, it is noted by one interviewed stakeholder and the selected EMJD consortium that third-country institutions had not been made entirely equal in Action 1 partnerships. Namely, if students chose mobility within the EU, they could move between two institutions, whereas if they chose a third-country partner, they had to spend time in three. Capacity-building components were perceived as insufficient, but a third-country partner institution representative interviewed reported that the capacity-building benefits were very notable. The survey showed that 34% of Action 1 beneficiaries agreed or rather agreed with this, whereas 45% claimed that third-country partner institutions were equal partners in their projects.

Operational question No. 25.2.: What additional benefits (outputs and results) are being produced by the programme novelties?

The main outputs and results of the novelties were expanded mobility opportunities for European and third-country students, balanced representation, and contribution to development needs of the participating countries. The novelties also resulted in enhanced partnerships and better bridging of research, education and innovation. The findings are strongly supported by quantitative and qualitative data.

During the public consultation of 2007, over three quarters of the respondents suggested providing scholarships for European students and for doctoral studies (83% and 77% respectively). Funding doctoral studies under the EM programme was expected to enhance competitiveness. In fact, many respondents suggested that grants for European students should be equivalent to those received by third-country students, even if the increase were to happen at the expense of grants for third-country students.¹⁰⁶ While the suggestion of equal grants did not materialise, the other suggestions were taken into account: doctoral studies and grants for European students were integrated into the design of EM II.

Joint doctorates were not able to meet the demand and contributed to attracting high quality applicants. Action 1 funds doctoral studies of 197 third-country (of 440 planned) and 124 European (of 330 planned) candidates. In the selected EMJD consortium, the development of a doctoral programme resulted in capacity building, developing a student-centred approach to doctoral research, and enhancement of the institutions’ academic network. The cooperation was likely to be sustainable.

The expansion of the European student population was already discussed under operational question No. 21.4. Scholarships to European students contributed to the visibility of EM and allowed students with more limited mobility opportunities to participate (unsurprisingly, EM is more significant in Southern Europe and EU12).

¹⁰⁶ DG EAC, *Online Consultation on the Future of the Erasmus Mundus Programme: Summary of Results*.

The integrated Action 2 resulted in 72 partnerships in Strand 1 and 9 partnerships in Strand 2, coupled with 43 former EWC partnerships. This expansion resulted in overachievement of planned outputs for 2009-2013 (see the monitoring data). The success rate remained largely unchanged. It was only slightly lower for Strand 2. Action 2 involved a large number of Asian institutions (245 from 42 countries), while the number of American and African institutions was much less. Most applicants were from countries with highly established and internationalised education systems: France, Spain, Germany and Belgium. EU12 countries were more active in coordinating Action 2 partnerships than those in Action 1: one partnership is coordinated by a Polish and two partnerships by Czech institutions.

Action 2 partnerships resulted not only in strengthened academic connections, but also in networking among students and institutions, as well as joint enterprises and further bridging between research and business, as shown in the Averroès case study. Overall, Action 2 appeared to have developed in two different ways: firstly, formalising and structuring existing academic cooperation (as exemplified by Averroès and Eurasia 2) and secondly, providing incentives for partnerships that would not otherwise happen (as in EM2-STEM). It was too early to expect spillovers and impressive research results from the second type of partnerships, but the selected consortium's experience proves the statement of one of the EC policy-makers, who claimed that it was essential to have a programme providing incentives for partnerships that would not otherwise be developed. Such support resulted in capacity building and exposure to high-level EU education to more institutions and is particularly important in candidate and potential candidate countries.

Allowing third-country institutions to be full partners in EM partnerships resulted in new mobility pathways, more integration of curriculum and improved joint administration. Third-country institutions became targets of mobility for students of various origins, thus potentially creating incentives for future inter-regional (including South-South) cooperation. On the other hand, the flat-rate scholarships may not have equitable outcomes in the new mobility pathways. The GEMMA consortium raised concerns that, after the US partner was included, Category B scholarship would not be sufficient to allow European students to undertake mobility. In addition, while a credit recognition system had been worked out among the European partners, the process had to start from scratch upon the inclusion of the US partner.

With this novelty, students were more exposed to research taking place in third-country institutions. The experience of the EuroSPIN consortium was contrary to the fears of EU-level interviewees, namely, that students would flock to known institutions in the US but be unwilling to undertake mobility to the so-called developing countries. One third of EuroSPIN students included India in their mobility pathway. To participate in EM Action 1, third-country institutions meet excellence requirements, and are likely to be known to the applicant institutions for their research work. It can be expected that many of the participating third-country institutions are already internationalised and active in partnerships, as suggested by the EU Delegation in South Africa, whose representative outlined research cooperation between the country's institutions with the EU.

On the other hand, the success of EuroSPIN can be partly explained by the specificity of doctoral education. As doctoral students tend to be more, in the words of the local coordinator in India, "science-driven", they were more likely to be aware of the research taking place in third-country institutions and realise the career benefit resulting from taking part in mobility in third-country institutions with a track record of academic excellence.

As mentioned earlier, third-country institutions were not full partners in every aspect. Namely, spending a study period in them, coupled with one more institution, was not considered sufficient, and students who choose a third-country institution also had to study at two European institutions. This change in regulations, which has affected the cohorts starting from 2011, was likely to reduce the role of third-country institutions in the consortia.

Relevance

Relevance of EM II to the overall needs of higher education systems, key stakeholders and the specific needs of higher education of third countries

Overall, the analysis revealed that the objectives of EM II remain relevant to the key stakeholders and target groups of the programme. Comparing the results of two public consultations in 2007 and 2011, the proportion of stakeholders that consider the EM II objectives as highly relevant has not significantly changed over time. In addition, more than 75% of the surveyed institutional beneficiaries argued that there is a very strong match between the priorities of their EM II project and the strategic objectives of their institution. The individual beneficiaries also claimed that the global and specific objectives are very important to the participating students, scholars and other academic staff. These findings are strongly supported by the results of the surveys, interviews and case studies.

The evaluation did not provide conclusive evidence to support the hypothesis that promotion of excellence of European higher education could be in conflict with the objective of sustainable development of higher education in the third countries. The programme has high potential (which is in fact realised) to contribute to the capacity building of HEIs in third countries. EM II was also designed so as to promote “brain circulation” rather than “brain drain” from the third countries although the risk of “brain drain” remains and has materialised in a limited number of cases. The stakeholders suggested that the developmental element of the programme could be further strengthened by ensuring more reciprocal relationships between participants from the EU and third countries. These findings are strongly supported by the results of the surveys, interviews and case studies.

While the needs of the candidate and potential candidate countries were not separately analysed, the overall findings suggest that EM II was relevant at least in several respects. At policy level, EM II provided both impetus and instruments for implementation of the Bologna principles. At organisational and individual levels, the programme provided opportunities for capacity building and cooperation with counterparts in the EU. These opportunities should contribute to closer integration of the European Higher Education Area.

Action 1

The Action 1 institutional beneficiaries argued that excellence of their institutions in teaching and research was the ultimate objective of their projects. Mobilities, partnerships, capacity development and cooperation with other higher education institutions and other sectors (e.g. industry) were seen as instruments to achieve excellence. However, developmental objectives such as better career opportunities for students, development of capacities in third countries and increased visibility of European higher education are also the intended long-term effects of these projects.

Action 2

The target groups of Action 2 argued that the objectives of EM II are highly relevant. However, the beneficiaries of Strand 1 and Strand 2 tended to emphasise different aspects of the programme. The beneficiaries of Strand 1 emphasised cooperation, mobility, implementation of Bologna instruments (in some cases) and capacity building. The target groups of Strand 2 suggested that academic excellence is the central motivation of involved individuals and institutions. There is of course no contradiction between “excellence” and “development” – merely a difference of emphasis.

External and internal complementarities of the EM II programme

Overall, the findings suggest that EM II was linked and complemented the following programmes: the LLP, Youth in Action, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and “People” specific programme (within the FP7). However, there was also a risk of possible duplications and overlaps (with LLP, Tempus, “People”). EM II and the LLP were complementary since both programmes sought similar objectives (e.g. to promote cooperation between HEIs, improve educational quality, learning accessibility and visibility etc.) by focusing on different geographical scopes and target groups. There were also possible overlaps since the LLP supported curriculum development, as did EM II. Moreover, both programmes offered scholarships for European students. As a result, the need for clear coordination modalities was addressed by setting clear rules as to how the two programmes could be distinguished in order to avoid potential double funding. Sometimes geographical regions between Tempus and EM II overlapped (Tempus was still in operation in some of the countries that were also involved in EM II). There were also potential overlaps between EM II and the Marie Curie Actions. Both programmes sought to attract researchers to Europe from third countries by providing fellowships to doctoral students and exchange of staff with third countries (MC IRSES). In principle, at least, the same applicant could be eligible for funding from both programmes. These findings are moderately supported by the results of desk research, interviews and case studies.

The evaluation of internal complementarity revealed that the different measures funded under the three Actions are instrumental to achieving the overall objectives of the programme. For instance, joint masters and doctoral programmes funded under *Action 1*, while focused on enhancing excellence of HE, also contributed to cooperation with and development of HE in third countries etc. Similarly, EM Partnerships funded under *Action 2*, while focused on enhancing cooperation with and development of HE in third countries, also had large potential to enhance excellence of European HEIs. Furthermore, the design of the programme was clear to the target groups and facilitates application process. Since the three Actions supported different types of measures, potential applicants and immediate target groups did not face difficulties in identifying relevant funding opportunities. However, several stakeholders claimed that the differences in measures supported by *Action 1 and Action 2* reduce the overall integrity of the EM brand.

In addition, analysis revealed that the preconditions for complementarities between the Actions have largely materialised, but the coordination of different Actions of the programme could be strengthened. Analysis of synergies and duplications revealed that there were considerable synergies between *Action 3*, on the one hand, and *Actions 1 and 2* on the other hand. However, the findings suggest that synergies between Actions 1 and 2 were quite limited. It could be closely related to:

- a) weaknesses in strategic coordination of the programme. The division of responsibilities between DG EAC and DG DEVCO as well as the absence of a single committee or working group in charge of the whole programme does not contribute to the development of synergies between the Actions of EM II. As interviews with the EU-level policy-makers revealed, the managerial structure of the programme has hindered effective coordination on several occasions;
- b) different focuses of these actions. *Action 1* emphasised academic excellence, while *Action 2* (Strand 1) focused on cooperation and mobility. However, this distinction could be more apparent than real – and certainly does not apply to Action 2 Strand 2.

European added value for the graduates of joint masters and doctoral programmes when looking for work and/or study/research activities

The previous EM Graduate Impact Surveys revealed that participation in the programme had a considerable value added for graduates when looking for work and/or study/research activities. International experiences and intercultural competence can be regarded as the most important assets that distinguished EM students from other graduates. The views expressed by the Action 1 institutional beneficiaries also corroborate the above findings. More than 70% of respondents agreed that studies in joint programmes made it easier for

graduates to find a job. More than 85% of the respondents also agreed that studies in more than one country facilitated integration into the labour market. Moreover, the results obtained from the case studies also revealed a considerable EAV of joint programmes. For instance, interviewees pointed out that: the masters programme provided a European perspective that is especially important for future careers and facilitated application for PhD programmes; fostered plans of research careers in the future and expanded social capital. These findings are moderately supported by desk research, surveys and case studies.

Effectiveness

Links between EM II and the new “Europe 2020 Strategy”, “Youth on the Move”, strategic framework ET 2020 and higher education reform strategy

The evaluation findings suggest that the objectives of EM II were strongly in line with the new EU policy initiatives and political priorities. It is clearly evident that the new EU strategies and programmes were responding to the needs of the current labour market situation and exceptionally emphasised the importance of quality skills development within all educational stages. Moreover, they pointed out the necessity to enhance the employability situation among young people. Therefore, the following issues should be reconsidered in the future EM programme:

- The programme should be open and provide support to international mobility and cooperation activities that focus on the development of vocational employment related skills in a higher education context;
- The programme should emphasise the importance of cooperation between education/training organisations and representatives from the labour market (e.g. enterprises, trade unions, NGOs and associations). This could be attained through internships, placements, seminars, the involvement of business partners when defining curriculum content at the masters and doctorate levels, promotion of business enterprises as associated partners under Action 1 (joint degrees).

These findings are moderately supported by desk research (especially the results of open public consultation), case studies as well as information provided during interviews with the EU-level officials.

Convergence of higher education systems

Several case studies and the results of the survey demonstrate that the influence of EM II on the overall legislative developments related to the Bologna process was moderate. Although it is difficult to distinguish the effects of EM II from the influence of previous programmes of this type (Erasmus, Tempus), the available data show that the most significant contribution of the programme in this area was its “soft power” to change the attitudes and dispositions of the participants towards the Bologna process. There was also enough evidence to support a conclusion that the programme had significant influence in two specific areas connected to the Bologna process. First, it had a positive effect on the adoption of legislation necessary for the recognition of joint degrees in the participant countries. This positive influence was attributable to Action 1, which supported the development of joint, multiple and double degrees. Second, another major positive effect of the programme on the development of the Bologna process was its influence on the legislative developments in the participant third countries, which were previously less affected by similar European programmes. As the available evidence shows, EM II contributed significantly to the adoption of European and international credit and mobility recognition systems and of international quality assurance mechanisms in third countries. In addition, the survey data provided further evidence that the influence of the programme on the legislative developments in the area of the Bologna process was strongest among the ENPI countries. The findings of this evaluation also support the strengthening of the external cooperation dimension in EM II – the decision in late 2011 to provide extra scholarships to students from North Africa and the Middle East reflects how EM II can be used as a tool to contribute to EU policies through education.

The beneficiary survey respondents almost universally agreed that the programme improved the exposure of their institutions to European and global standards of excellence.

On the other hand, being exposed to them, being part of academic networks and having high standards is a prerequisite of third-country institutions for benefiting from EM II funding, therefore the system-level impact may be limited.

The cross-European design of the programme was highly valued by target groups in Europe and beyond. Despite multiple administrative burdens, third-country students appreciated the opportunity to study in more than one country in the case of Action 1 and to benefit from mobility to Europe, even if not to one of the most popular study destinations, under Action 2. Action 3 projects were used to identify the main obstacles to inter-regional cooperation, to map the results of higher education and to allow more informed policy-making in promoting European competitive advantage.

Activity and success rates of applicant institutions remained similar to the previous phase: institutions from well-established academic systems clearly dominated. EU12 countries were underrepresented. As the case studies and interviews explain, universities without prior experience of a comparable scale were likely to lack resources for application and management of the consortium. If the goal is to contribute to the Bologna process and achieve comparable results to those of Erasmus, it is important to retain activities comparable to Action 2 and a broad coverage of universities in Europe and beyond in order to broaden the participation base of the programme.

Action 1

Action 1 directly contributed to the convergence of European higher education systems by promoting joint courses, degrees and research activities. Adding the doctoral level (one of the programme's novelties compared to Erasmus Mundus I) was considered to be very successful by various stakeholders and beneficiaries. With mobility of students and scholars embedded in the courses, there was a growing awareness of education and research practices across Europe and beyond its borders.

On the other hand, consortia developing and offering joint courses faced numerous obstacles in relation to convergence, particularly in the case of doctoral education, as identified in case studies and surveys. Legislation regarding joint degrees was lacking in some countries, and this did not allow making full use of the progress in other countries. For example, Erasmus Mundus courses and their joint degrees enjoyed automatic recognition in Spain, but joint degrees could not be issued if one of the consortium partners was in a country where such legislation did not exist.

According to the case study evidence and survey results, differences in tuition fees remained one of the most problematic aspects, unbalancing mobility flows and imposing a financial burden on participating universities. The required unification of tuition fees reduced the competitiveness of Erasmus Mundus courses vis-à-vis comparable national courses in universities with lower tuition fees or publicly funded education. In the future programme, calls for organising joint summer or winter schools with credit recognition mechanisms could be considered, as such shorter-term mobility would ease the financial pressures resulting from different tuition fees and increase the number of mobilities without reducing their quality.

Based on the survey and especially the case studies, there were still various differences among countries in delivering courses: some doctoral studies were nearly entirely research-based, whereas in others PhD candidates needed to attend courses and take exams. In some countries PhD candidates were considered university staff (in line with the European Charter for Researchers), whereas in others they were given a student status (which implies easier visa requirements). Developing joint courses was thus a challenge to universities. Solutions were found on an ad hoc basis, and this fact was likely to affect the sustainability of the partnerships (see below).

Action 1 beneficiaries were typically already internationalised institutions with a track record of excellence, as can be seen from monitoring data, surveys and particularly case studies. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents indicated that Erasmus Mundus has helped them structure, enhance and formalise research and mobility networks between European and third-country institutions that informally existed in the past. The wish to

reapply and obtain at least one extension, however, prompted them to search how to expand and improve consortia.

Action 2

As a result of participation in Action 2, HEIs reported having strengthened their networks, developed credit and course recognition systems, internationalised their teaching, and improved their institutional capacities. This Action was well suited for networks which were not strong enough (both as participating institutions and, even more importantly, as networks) to develop joint degrees, although there was a clear preference to have them in many cases. In fact, some networks were planning to develop Action 1 courses in the future or already run Action 1 courses. Action 2 also expanded the scope of the programme and allowed less privileged institutions to develop their capacities and achieve a higher level of excellence. Whilst it was difficult to measure the participation of “minority groups” as such, the participation of HEIs from developing countries in Strand 1 – including those from less advantaged areas in those countries – would argue some impact in this respect. Action 2 had also achieved at least an equal representation of women participants. Action 2 was starting to have a similar effect on inter-regional cooperation as Erasmus had on European higher education, resulting in spin-offs (in research, partnership with businesses and graduate networks), mutual recognition systems and “normalisation” of mobility experience for students and staff. This in turn motivated them to learn foreign languages and skills useful for an international academic career, and enabled them to make vital personal and professional contacts.

While this type of mobility was highly appreciated by students, scholars and other staff, as seen from surveys and case studies, the balance between the burden and the rewards was not always considered satisfactory. Students and scholars often considered their mobility too short, and some experience visa-related delays, further reducing their mobility experience. The emphasis on “mass” mobility and cost-efficiency implied shorter stays, which were not always considered sufficient to carry out the research that was expected from them.

Action 3

The conclusions regarding Action 3 are moderately supported by the evaluation evidence – due to the small number of projects, quantitative conclusions could not be drawn and case study evidence is the main source of data. The outputs of this action often directly dealt with identifying the trends and effects of the convergence of higher education systems. The partnerships have significantly contributed to strengthening the existing networks. Exploitation of the results achieved was easier as there were rather few Action 3 projects and the Agency, as well as National Structures were aware of their focus. However, it will become a challenge in the future, when more projects are implemented.

Employability and brain drain

Employability of graduates reflected regional and sectoral trends. Brain drain appeared to be a far more complex issue than relocation for the sake of career by outstanding graduates. There were several outcomes of their mobility: staying in/returning to Europe, returning to home countries and starting a career in the local market, starting an international career, starting a career in Europe oriented towards the development of the home country, or starting a career in the home countries oriented towards cooperation with Europe. Brain drain was a macro phenomenon consisting of individual decisions, which may be motivated by a variety of factors: family, social reasons, employment opportunities, etc.

Action 1

Employment levels appeared satisfactory, and many graduates reported that EM was significant in their career, particularly in Africa. Practical experience and foreign language skills were valued by employers. Desk research revealed that more than one in three worked in academic institutions, particularly graduates in science and engineering, as well as social sciences and humanities.

Unemployment remained rather high during the current economic downturn. Yet the latest Graduate Impact Survey found that most unemployed graduates were from Africa, non-EU European countries and Asia. The two trends, the predominance of academic orientation and unemployment, were likely to be related: the crisis implied severe cuts in academic jobs. More evidence is needed to see whether this link explains a large part of graduate unemployment. The regional differences in unemployment levels signalled a lack of opportunities for highly qualified graduates, relating to the issue of brain drain.

No evidence of special measures in Action 1 to minimise brain drain was found, but many graduates nonetheless returned, as their opportunities were often broader in third countries. A European degree enhanced their competitiveness, which is much lower in Europe, and this was coupled with visa issues.

Action 2

Shortly after graduation, unemployment levels of Action 2 beneficiaries were somewhat lower than those of Action 1 beneficiaries, based on the surveys. There appeared to be a significant effect on the employability of third-country students, but unemployment levels of non-EU European country beneficiaries were rather alarming. Coupled with the findings of the graduate impact survey on Action 1 graduates, this indicator signalled a lack of opportunities in those countries. While the labour markets absorbed more highly qualified graduates in the EU in general, third-country students enjoyed lower unemployment levels because of the competitive advantage of their international experience. Meanwhile, students from non-EU European countries might be sandwiched in-between: they faced high competition and lower absorptive capacity of the local market. However, more evidence is needed to support this link between international experience and local labour markets.

Action 3

Action 3 projects addressed employability and brain drain as research objects. For example, the ADDE SALEM project researched employability and brain drain among Latin American graduates, whereas EHEW-SISMBG aimed at highlighting brain gain for third countries. The CODOC project also addressed brain drain as a possible outcome of doctoral education. This took the form of seminars, discussions, studies, etc. The results were discussed with policy-makers, but there was no evidence that Action 3 results were used in partnerships under other actions. The conclusions are moderately supported and mainly based on the case study, project compendia and interviews.

Academic excellence and capacity building

The institutions participating in Erasmus Mundus II were active in research and regarded as excellent by their peers. While all strived for academic excellence, reservations were voiced about the possible gaps among them.

Action 1

Action 1 courses were developed by those faculties or departments of the participating institutions that have a track record for outstanding research. Therefore, the institutions themselves may not necessarily be known worldwide beyond specific subject areas. Yet it was generally agreed that the selected institutions were outstanding in their field and capable of developing excellent courses. Uneven capacities remained a problem though – outstanding and innovative research did not always imply good services for students and best-quality multilingual teaching.

The survey showed that Action 1 beneficiaries have developed multi-criteria selection procedures and invested considerable effort to select candidates for their capacities rather than out of a cultural bias. Over a third of beneficiary institutions found difficulties in attracting outstanding students and staff. Some students were discouraged by difficulties they faced in certain mobility tracks (e.g. if they choose a third-country institution, they had to study in two additional institutions to meet the requirements). Limited visibility of third-country institutions also contributed to the fact that the programme remained mainly focused on South-to-North mobility. In particular, attracting excellent European students was an issue in many consortia. This trend was likely to change as scholarships for European

students gained more visibility – their participation has already increased threefold since the introduction of the scholarships. Yet Category B scholarships remained far less competitive, judging from the monitoring data and confirmed by the case studies, and, being unified across the programme (unlike Erasmus grants), penalised some mobility choices and deterred students who were unable to bring their own funds. Given the administrative complications of grant differentiation, it was advisable to increase all Category B grants.

Action 2

As regards Action 2, nearly all individual beneficiaries surveyed were motivated by the academic reputation of the universities involved and found that the education and research was of outstanding quality. In institutions, which had fewer opportunities available, participation in Erasmus Mundus was a ground-breaking experience in research and education. From the point of view of Action 2 stakeholders, it appears that capacity building results in excellence, whereas focusing on excellence only does not necessarily contribute to the capacity building and development of third countries.

Some EU-level interviewees and National Structures expressed the opinion that there is a gap in excellence between Action 1 and Action 2. The assessments of this observation varied: some said that Action 2 should be a separate programme, whereas others believed that the achievements of Action 2 are what the EU should strive for – accessibility, contribution to regional development and capacity building. The view of the EEAS, however, was that there was a clear intervention logic in relation to the EU encouraging and supporting societal development via higher education cooperation, through Erasmus Mundus. One such example was the decision to expand the number of scholarships for students from countries affected by the so-called Arab Spring, but it was too early to address the EU policy outcomes of this initiative in this evaluation.

Regarding the selection, the prevalence of a multi-criteria selection procedure was not as high as in Action 1, but the majority included various criteria and, as the case studies showed, developed interviewing methods in order to highlight students' capacities beyond cultural biases. The development of such methods depended, among other things, on the partners' experience of working together. EM II provided an opportunity to share experience on how to develop better quality assessment and selection practices.

Action 2 was more specifically focused on institutional capacity building. The partnerships were encouraged to cover as many subject areas as possible, and as the case studies show, the areas of focus were in line with the development needs of third countries and their key economic sectors. The views of the stakeholders and experience of students suggested that there was a need for further integration of Action 2 into a more cohesive Erasmus Mundus programme: with a gradual move towards joint degrees (where appropriate) and full recognition of study periods abroad (so that students do not have to repeat a year), but retaining the regional lots and equal access policies in order to ensure balance and commitment to shared HE development with a wide range of third countries.

“Erasmus Mundus brand”, visibility and exploitation

Evidence showed that the Erasmus Mundus brand was already accumulating a distinct awareness among specific target groups and was becoming known among them. Changing the name of the programme under such circumstances would create major inconveniences for institutions running EMMC and EMJD programmes. It would also be harmful for programme awareness.

Erasmus Mundus had a strong image among beneficiaries of the programme, especially in third countries. This was reached through the specific design of the programme creating a distinct offer in European higher education, as well as participation of prestigious higher education institutions. Evidence on the positive perception of Erasmus Mundus was mostly available from beneficiaries of the programme. However, this cannot be automatically applied to potential beneficiaries. Due to the lack of differentiation from the Erasmus programme not all of the target groups, which are aware of the programme, were also aware of the distinctive qualities of the Erasmus Mundus programme.

The evaluation did not find a contradiction between excellence and capacity building or development. Too narrow a definition of “excellence” runs the risk of providing EU funding to a very small elite, of failing to build excellence in developing countries – and to building essential relationships with HEIs in industrialised countries around the globe.

The evaluation found evidence of links between academia and businesses, NGOs and/or policy-makers. The survey shows that for some beneficiaries networking with businesses and NGOs was in fact one of the main benefits of participation in Erasmus Mundus, but only less than a third of survey respondents indicated that such an institution participated in their partnership. Interestingly, there were no major differences among the subject areas in this regard. Non-educational institutions participated in Action 2 more actively.

The case studies show that the results of all the joint degrees, partnerships and projects are disseminated and receive interest from relevant sectors (public, private or non-governmental, depending on the subject area). On the other hand, an excellence programme, which seeks to attract the most prestigious institutions, must always monitor and avoid possible crowding out of research funding from the private sector where there is already interest in research results or educating prospective employees. The selected consortia have developed plans to tap other funds into their partnerships. The use of the Erasmus Mundus label after funding phases out is a good practice that should be further promoted.

Main barriers to the implementation of partnerships and projects

In *Action 1* and *Action 2* visas and work permits (for PhD candidates) hindered the free movement of third-country nationals. This conclusion was strongly supported by all the data sources. In some countries students were unable to start their programme on time (or at all) due to visa delays. This problem was particularly pressing in Action 2, where student intakes could be organised only at agreed times, and the partnerships were funded for shorter periods of time.

Action 1

Non-EU citizens who have carried out their main activity (studies, training or work) for more than a total of 12 months over the last five years in a European country could not be awarded a Category A scholarship, even if tuition fees were calculated by nationality or a two-year continuous residence rule applies. The differences will affect the accessibility and sustainability of the courses when EU funding phases out and more fee-paying students will have to be accepted.

It is nearly universally accepted that the grants to institutions were not sufficient to cover all the administrative costs, though in many cases coordinating institutions were willing to contribute financially. Yet, during the economic downturn, one cannot expect that fee-paying students and private funding will sustain the partnerships (most survey respondents claim they will reduce the scope of their activities, and the case studies show that individual mobility is likely to be lost, while research cooperation will continue).

Action 2

Reapplication each year was considered very burdensome and hindering both the visibility and effective selection of candidates. Namely, as soon as the consortium was selected, it had to launch the selection procedure for students.

There was a demand for more flexibility in mobility periods, in terms of start date and length of stay. For some beneficiaries interviewed for the case studies, scholar mobility was too short to achieve ambitious research aims. Yet some survey respondents indicated that a semester for post-doctoral candidates was too long, as many already had family obligations. On the other hand, there was a need for standardised mobility periods for cost efficiency purposes. Good practices of incorporating short-term courses and visits should be disseminated and mainstreamed.

Accessibility and equity

The survey of Action 1 and 2 institutional beneficiaries shows that they were split in half according to the question of whether there was tension between academic excellence and regional/social/gender balance. While Action 2 beneficiaries were required to strive for inclusive mobility, there was no such requirement in the other actions, but good practices were nonetheless developed.

One of the goals of Erasmus Mundus II is that the internationalisation of higher education should not be limited to promoting academic excellence, but should also involve fostering equity in access to higher education and mobility schemes. The results of the evaluation show that the student flows are balanced by gender at the programme level, whereas the imbalance among Action 1 scholars has remained a concern since Erasmus Mundus I.

The equal opportunity policies identified are giving preference to underrepresented groups when candidates are equal, promotional activities and monitoring. In most areas the courses are already more gender-balanced than European higher education in general. Meanwhile, identifying and including vulnerable groups, defined by ethnic/religious minority, refugee status, LGBT identity or disability proved to be difficult. In the cases where such inclusion needed special services (e.g. psychological counselling for refugees, interpretation or infrastructural adaptation services), funding was lacking. The future programme should consider organising special calls for creating infrastructure and exchanging good practice to address such needs. In addition, vulnerable groups could be defined in closer cooperation with the National Structures or EU Delegations in respective countries in order to address the most pressing limitations of access to higher education. The programme still leaves accessibility of individuals with complex needs or in less-standard vulnerability situations (such as single parents, non-citizens, etc.) to the initiative of individual universities.

Sustainability

Investment by participating institutions

The participating institutions were often already internationalised and hence had staff members responsible for international project management. Only 9% of the survey respondents did not take part in any other EU-funded programmes, suggesting that funding for administration was often streamlined and coordinated. Joint orientation weeks for all international students and summer schools also benefited from cross-programme financing, but the effects of centralisation were particularly felt in employing staff. An absolute majority had a joint body or specialised staff for managing all international partnerships, but nearly half of the beneficiaries reported lacking human resources. In the case of institutions where Erasmus Mundus is the only or one of the few mobility or partnership programmes, administrative staff sometimes took the responsibility for the implementation of the partnership. The quantitative and qualitative sources strongly support the conclusion that cooperation mechanisms will be sustainable, but only to a limited extent (lower intensity or dropping the individual mobility component and focusing on research).

The evidence from the ex-post evaluation and the case studies suggested that funding for partnership and research was much more likely to be secured than funding for scholarships. Sustainability is also likely to depend on the previous history of international partnerships. Most institutions coordinating EM consortia were experienced and well staffed to ensure sustainability. They also had funds to contribute to the implementation. Most European institutions were found to participate in other EU-funded instruments and streamlined their management. These institutions are likely to sustain their activities, but the need for co-financing and experience may signal prohibitively high entry costs for inexperienced institutions.

Action 1

The administration of the partnerships was typically centralised in the applicant institution to ease the burden for partner institutions. On the other hand, it is essential that partner

institutions have the necessary capacities to continue with the partnership once EU funding phases out. Based on the survey results, desk research and case studies, after this happens, partnerships were likely to continue at a lower intensity, most likely with a reduced consortium. This implies that partners, which already had or developed capacities to manage the partnership on their own, will remain. Therefore, more exchange among participating institutions regarding good practices in administration should be encouraged.

Fee-paying students, reducing class size, offering Erasmus Mundus courses to regular students and raising other funds were the main responses to the reduction of scholarships in renewed courses. To a large extent the consortia, judging from the survey and the case studies, developed sustainability plans, but they would like their partnerships to be extended at least once. This is particularly important in social sciences and humanities in order to gain visibility (in terms of publications, conferences and successful graduates). One prevailing concern was that funding from other sources (public and private) was decreasing due to austerity measures, and sustainability plans developed before the crisis may not be as effective as expected. Therefore, the reduction of funding should take a “phasing out” approach rather than stopping at a certain point. Allowing the consortia to keep the Erasmus Mundus label if funding is not renewed is a good practice for accessing other sources of funding.

Action 2

Having to reapply each year posed a significant threat to the sustainability of Action 2 partnerships, but there were indications from the interviews that it will be subsequently removed. On the other hand, the unsustainability of funding often prompted them to look for other forms of partnership, where funding was more sustainable. Some institutions were expecting to develop joint courses, bilateral partnerships and research projects. Cooperation in research was particularly likely to be sustainable.

Action 3

The outputs proposed by Action 3 beneficiaries were typically produced by networks with a history of cooperation (although due to the small number of beneficiaries and respondents quantitative data were not reliable and mostly the case study informed the answers to the evaluation questions regarding Action 3). The networks were likely to look for new forms of cooperation in the future, but due to very specific outputs, the partnerships will not necessarily be sustained in the same structure, based mainly on the case study evidence and to some extent from the surveys.

Involvement of non-educational institutions

Inclusion of non-educational institutions was, according to the survey, more widespread in Action 2 (one in three partnerships) than in Action 1 (one in four). In Action 1, they offered internship placements, scholarships, support in monitoring, curriculum development and service provision (e.g. language courses or special equipment). In Action 2, the case studies found an active interest of non-educational institutions in cooperating in research, exploiting its results and employing graduates. This was likely to be a result of the responsiveness of Action 2 to development needs of the participating countries. In the case of Action 1, it was found that most graduates stay in academia, as they find employment at higher education and research institutions. As already mentioned in the “Relevance” section, partnerships were considered means to achieve excellence. Sustainability of public funding in Europe therefore determined the potential employers (often public institutions and NGOs) of these outstanding students.

Dissemination and exploitation

The evaluation found evidence of successful exploitation through personal and academic networks. Students were highly motivated to promote their programme – this observation is strongly supported by survey and case study evidence, as well as by interviews with stakeholders. Former individual beneficiaries of both Action 1 and Action 2 were actively networking and creating spin-offs. As expected, dissemination was slightly more widespread than exploitation, but about half of the beneficiaries across two actions reported disseminating and exploiting their results. Based on the case study and survey evidence, the exploitation of Action 3 results should be improved – new mechanisms are

needed for the time when the number of Action 3 projects will be too large for all agencies involved to know each of them.

Efficiency

Cost-effectiveness of the programme

Analysis of the monitoring data, the survey and interview programmes strongly support the conclusion that instruments of the programme are cost-effective and there is little area for further improvement. To begin with, most of the planned outputs of the programme were likely to be achieved with lower costs than planned (with the most evident exception of planned fellowships for doctoral candidates). Relevant instruments ensuring low administrative costs were in place. In addition, despite being smaller in terms of a total budget and produced outputs, the programme was largely on par with other significant players in the field, namely, Fulbright and DAAD. Even more importantly, there was a huge demand and therefore high competition for EM grants, at both, individual and institutional, levels.

Collected evidence also suggests that the programme was successful in its attempt to increase the involvement of European students in the programme. However, this success was limited, because during the analysed period the competition for category B scholarships remained at a comparatively low level. Results of desk research activities and the survey programme strongly suggest that category B scholarships were not competitive enough and therefore the difference between scholarships for European and third-country beneficiaries should be reduced by increasing the size of the EU grant (higher monthly allowance for living costs and larger fixed contribution to travel, installation and other types of costs for category B students).

Programme management and implementation

Key evaluation issues identified in the Terms of Reference in relation to programme management and implementation included the mechanisms for project and student selection and project monitoring, the mechanisms for selecting students, the programme promotion and support to applicants and beneficiaries.

Analysis of the monitoring information, the survey and interview programmes strongly support the conclusion that the mechanisms for project selection are efficient. The selection of projects of high academic excellence was ensured by a combination of high competition for projects and adequate selection procedures. The programme beneficiaries agreed that the rules and criteria of the application were clear and transparent. However, low success rates for some Actions and strands reduced the target groups' trust in project selection. Therefore, the financial balance among various Actions and their strands should be reconsidered and the cooperation between EACEA and the National Structures/EU Delegations could be improved.

The monitoring of student selection was carried out to some extent (the universities collect information about applicants, drop-outs and beneficiaries), but it could be improved and more aligned with graduate tracking. For example, it is important to collect information (without undermining the privacy of beneficiaries) on the basis of which Target Group 3 scholarships were given. In addition, information on mobility tracks should be collected.

Desk research and the interview programme moderately support the conclusion that project monitoring and evaluation, which was based on the assessment of activity reports and monitoring visits, should be improved. Project evaluation was primarily quantitative, while project monitoring lacked the involvement of field experts. Therefore, project monitoring and evaluation could be improved by better balancing quantitative and qualitative assessment and by involving field experts in the monitoring visits and project evaluation. The continued implementation of the EMQA project could enable a qualitative assessment of ongoing projects with the possible involvement of field experts. The programme beneficiaries positively assessed the preparation and implementation of EM projects, except for the extensive administrative workload. Although the number of activity

reports was reduced during the programme implementation, further simplifications are possible, including streamlining of the annual reapplication approach.

Action 1

There were some differences in the programme and project mechanisms across the programme actions. The selection of *Action 1* projects was highly competitive and based on the principle of excellence. Also, joint governance arrangements were more developed under Action 1 projects.

Action 2

In contrast, *Action 2* was geographically targeted and less competitive and was characterised by a more equal representation of third-country partner institutions. Also, the involvement of non-educational institutions was more widespread under Action 2 projects compared to Action 1 projects.

Desk research and the interview programme found that the general division of tasks among the responsible bodies involved in the programme promotion and the provision of services to applicants and beneficiaries among these institutions was quite clear. The promotion of different Actions could be streamlined within a single programme in the future. Also, it is important to promote the future programme on the basis of a coherent strategy for EHEA.

According to the survey and interview programmes, the beneficiaries were satisfied with the services of EACEA, while information and guidance from the National Structures, the national TEMPUS offices or the EU Delegations was helpful for the beneficiaries during the project preparation and implementation stages. Since performance of the National Structures and the EU Delegations in the programme promotion and the provision of services remained mixed, it is possible to improve their capacities through various actions. Although a variety of instruments were used by the National Structures and the EU Delegations in the programme promotion and the provision of support services, it is possible to better exploit the existing academic and student networks and strengthen promotional activities targeted at employers.

Contribution of the programme novelties to the programme objectives

Action 1

The inclusion of doctoral education in the EM programme was considered the most successful of the programme's novelties. It contributed very strongly to the joint European research area and promotion of excellence in higher education. Yet synergies and duplications with Marie Curie Actions should be assessed in the future and funding should be better aligned in order to improve both excellence and access.

The introduction of scholarships for European students was very successful in increasing their participation in the programme and hence diversifying student intakes. On the other hand, Category B scholarships remained less competitive (partly due to the fact that they became available only recently and have not gained visibility) and are insufficient to cover living expenses in some countries. Diversification of Category B scholarships, following the example of Erasmus, should be considered in the future programme.

Allowing third-country institutions to become full partners in joint courses was successful, but incomplete. Mobility of third-country nationals to other third countries needs administrative improvements and agreements in the field of visas and residence permits, whereas Category B scholarships for European students were insufficient to cover living expenses in some countries. In addition, the requirement that students undertake their studies in two EU countries put third-country institutions at a disadvantage.

Action 2

The integration of Action 2 was rather successful and considered important, but most stakeholders agree that it was incomplete. Action 2 was not promoted in the same way as the other actions, and its graduates did not join Erasmus Mundus alumni networks. The possible ways for developing Action 2 in the future are discussed under *Academic excellence and capacity building*.

Action 3

EM II introduced larger promotional project clusters and National Structures' projects. Although the evaluation questions did not specifically concern these projects, it could be observed from the project information and some of the interviews with the National Structures that they contributed to better exchange of information among the National Structures and addressed the most pressing issues in EM II (such as brain drain).

Table 11. Main conclusions and recommendations

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
Relevance				
1.	Overall, the analysis revealed that the objectives of EM II remain relevant to the key stakeholders and target groups of the programme. The target groups and stakeholders particularly emphasise academic excellence and international cooperation.	Mobility, partnerships and policy dialogue should be further promoted by the next generation of the programme. The future generation of the programme should further aim at balancing academic excellence, development of capacity in higher education institutions and geographical distribution of funded activities and beneficiaries.	Since the inclusion of doctoral education within Erasmus Mundus II was one of the most successful innovations, it is important to retain doctoral and post-doctoral cooperation within the post-2013 programmes in the area of higher education and research.	
2.	Overall, the findings suggest that EM II was linked to and complemented the following programmes: the LLP, Youth in Action, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and "People" specific programme (within the FP7). However, there was also a risk of possible duplications and overlaps (with LLP, Tempus, "People").	Strengthen the links between external EU programmes and between external and internal EU programmes in the field of higher education. Integration of Erasmus Mundus, Lifelong Learning Programme, Tempus, Alfa and Edulink into a single programme should create critical mass and reduce the overlaps between the current programmes.	Overlaps in funding doctoral training and mobilities of academic staff should be reconsidered when designing the new programmes of Erasmus for All and Horizon 2020.	
3.	The findings suggest that coordination of EM II at the strategic level remains problematic. The division of responsibilities between DG EAC and DG DEVCO as well as the absence of a single committee or working group in charge of the whole programme does not contribute to the development of synergies between the Actions of EM II. This also hinders synergies between the programmes.	There is a need to appoint a single committee (including representatives from various Directorates-General and Services of the European Commission, especially Education and Culture; Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid; Enlargement and European External Action Service) for steering the post-2013 programme. There is a need to strengthen the links and develop synergies between Actions 1 and 2. Practical steps in this respect could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of incentives for the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association to embrace Action 2 individual beneficiaries; • provision of support for platforms aimed at dissemination and mainstreaming of good practices developed by Action 1 and 2 projects; • organisation of joint information and dissemination events. 		
Effectiveness				
4.	The new EU strategies and programmes are responding to the needs of the current labour market situation and exceptionally emphasise the	In the light of employability-related goals of the programme, its activities could be more open to international mobility and cooperation in the field of		

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
	importance of the quality of skills development within all educational stages. They also point out a necessity to enhance the employability of young people. The present focus of EM II on academia and higher education does not fully serve the needs of the EU. Moreover, the results reveal that 40% of EM II graduates work for an academic institution and only 20% - in the private sector (Action 1).	vocational education and training provided by higher education institutions to highly qualified professionals. As employability of skilled graduates remains a concern, cooperation between the relevant actors in education/training and the labour market (e.g. enterprises, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and associations) should be strengthened, including through allowing apprenticeships to be among eligible activities of the projects at all levels of higher education. Representatives of the labour market should also be encouraged to be more actively involved in the curriculum development of the joint programmes.		
5.	While it is difficult to trace the contribution of Erasmus Mundus to the Bologna principles in the EU countries, an impact in changing attitudes and introducing Bologna mechanisms was strongly felt in some third countries. Institutions from well-established academic systems clearly dominate, and EU12 countries are underrepresented. Mobility, although becoming more proportionate across regions, is not yet balanced. The programme continues supporting already strong networks and internationalised institutions.	Retain and strengthen the balance between excellence, development of capacity and geographical representation. Incentives should be provided to include a wider range of institutions from candidate and potential candidate countries and strengthen their capacities, in order to ensure balanced mobility. Further promoting outreach activities and widening the participation base of the programme is crucial.	Disseminate good practices in liaising with relevant authorities regarding degree recognition. Involve relevant stakeholders and authorities in transferring good practices, including with the help of Action 3, strengthening the Bologna process.	Disseminate good practices and ensure institutional support for beneficiaries in liaising with relevant authorities regarding qualification and degree recognition.
6.	Barriers resulting from differences in tuition fees and qualification requirements hinder the coherence of Action 1 courses. EMJDs still face numerous obstacles regarding the structure of the programme and employment of PhD candidates.		Good practices should be mapped, catalogued and mainstreamed including short-term mobility recognition (e.g. credits for intensive courses, summer and winter schools).	
7.	Action 2 has contributed, in a similar way as Erasmus, to mutual recognition of credits and qualifications, exchange of practices and research cooperation. Yet successful implementation of the action is hindered by administrative barriers, and non-degree mobility is not always considered rewarding. There is a need to strengthen Action 2 and make it an integral part of a more cohesive EM programme.			Promote the transfer of good practice to Action 2 beneficiaries – among other ways, by exploiting Action 3 results and encouraging exchange of information between the National Structures and Action 2 beneficiaries. A gradual move towards joint degrees (where appropriate) and

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
				full recognition of study periods abroad (so that students do not have to repeat a year) should be encouraged, while retaining the regional lots and equal access policies in order to ensure balance and commitment to shared higher education development with a wide range of third countries.
8.	Important results are achieved in Action 3, but they are not always mainstreamed and presented in an attractive form to other beneficiaries.		It is important to collect and generalise the results of Action 3 projects, provide them in a user-friendly database and streamline their dissemination and exploitation to authorities and institutional beneficiaries of other actions.	
9.	The impact of the programme on graduate careers is very strong. A large share of Action 1 graduates is inclined towards academic jobs, which are vulnerable in the context of the economic downturn. There are regional differences in unemployment rates of former individual beneficiaries, with non-EU European students being particularly disadvantaged. Therefore there is a need for more attention to candidate and potential candidate countries and recognition of alternative ways in which graduates could contribute to their development, not necessarily by returning to unreceptive labour markets.	Good practices for involving employers should be mainstreamed, and outreach activities in candidate and potential candidate countries are needed. In countries where labour markets are unable to absorb highly-skilled graduates it is recommended to reconsider the brain drain mitigation strategy and promote ways in which graduates could contribute to the development of their countries - not necessarily by returning to their labour market, which may be unable to absorb their skills.	There is a need for practical experience to be more embedded. Student placements under the programme should be strengthened and good practices mainstreamed. There is a need for more research on the regional imbalances in graduate employability.	
10.	There is a gap between the 12-months residence for qualifying for Category A scholarships on the one hand and calculation of tuition fees by nationality/a two-year residence rule on the other hand. Visa issues were seen as widespread obstacles.	It is important that the Commission continues facilitating the visa process for the beneficiaries of European mobility programmes – possibly in the form of Directives. In the current programme, contacts between the beneficiaries, the National Structures and relevant authorities should be facilitated – some beneficiaries found the National Structures not well aware of what to do in difficult situations.	Two types of action could be taken: either the consortia should reconsider their tuition fee policies, make exceptions for Erasmus Mundus students, or different rules, more in line with tuition fee trends in Europe, should apply at the programme level.	
11.	Student cohorts are gender-balanced at the	Good practices should be better mapped and		

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
	programme level, and in many subject areas student intakes are more balanced than higher education in Europe in general. On the other hand, Action 1 scholars are still predominantly male, and other underrepresented groups are difficult to identify in all the actions. There appears to be more sensitivity to disability and LGBT identity in Action 1, and to gender equality among scholars, ethnic minority and refugee status under Action 2. The needs of persons in complex vulnerability situations need more attention.	mainstreamed to applicants and beneficiaries. There is a need for more cooperation with the National Structures and EU Delegations in order to identify nationally or regionally specific vulnerable groups in order to address the most pressing issues in access to higher education. Special calls for infrastructural adaptation and innovative projects for the inclusion of persons with disabilities should be considered in the future programme.		
Sustainability				
12.	Participating institutions streamline funding for different EU programmes and instruments. Human resources are typically centralised – the applicant institution invests in them. Institutions managing extended courses tend to respond to the reduction of scholarships by integrating EM courses better into the regular programmes, and most beneficiaries look to EU funding instruments rather than the private sector for further funding.	EU funding to higher education institutions should be streamlined. While there is a risk of dependence on EU funding, it is also true that application for funding from other instruments requires deepening and expanding academic networks and thus helps excellent courses and partnerships to mature.	During the economic downturn, which strongly affected academic institutions and their potential donors, it is important to sustain the EU commitment to support excellent research and education. On the other hand, sustainability plans should be more strongly emphasised and take not only the form of tapping other resources, but also optimising costs and developing innovative cost-saving solutions (such as online modules).	Capacity building should be further promoted and improved in the partnerships in order to enable partner institutions to gain capacities to apply for funding and implement partnerships when Erasmus Mundus funding phases out. Beneficiaries could receive assistance in optimising the costs of running their courses and partnerships after EU funding phases out, if it is not possible to retain the same intensity of the course/partnership with other sources of funding.
13.	Individual beneficiaries promote the programme through personal contacts and networks. Dissemination and exploitation is taking place in about half of the partnerships, in Action 2 slightly more than in Action 1, as the cooperation is often more ground breaking in this action. There is a need for better exploitation of Action 3 results – including by beneficiaries of the other actions. The involvement of non-educational institutions (public and private) is crucial in the exploitation efforts and is taking place rather successfully regardless of the subject area.		Compiling catalogues of the best practices and most important Action 3 results would help other beneficiaries to save resources spent on developing brain drain mitigation, special needs education and other strategies.	Action 2 students and scholars should be given access to the Erasmus Mundus Association, in order to give them proper status as Erasmus Mundus participants and open up greatly enhanced networking possibilities for both Action 1 and Action 2 participants.

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
14.	Cooperation models and recognition mechanisms are likely to be sustainable after EM funding phases out, but courses are likely to be modified and individual mobility will be reduced.	It is important to share good practices to help partners strengthen their recognition mechanisms and save resources spent on their development. Streamlining of EU funding instruments and further integration of the programme would contribute to aligning mobility, capacity building and research.	Action 3 results should be more directly linked to the issues faced by the beneficiaries of other actions, and findings of Action 3 surveys and consultations, including tools and handbooks, should be already disseminated at the application stage.	Removing the need to reapply annually would enhance the sustainability of Action 2, allowing European mobility in all regional lots and further integration of the programme.
Efficiency				
15.	Low success rates for some Actions and strands reduced the target groups' trust in project selection. The size of category B scholarship is not competitive and does not encourage active participation of European students in the scheme.	Reconsider the balance among various actions and their strands in the post-2013 programme in order to increase success rates.	The size of the EU grant should be increased. In particular, the increment should result in a higher monthly allowance for living costs and larger fixed contribution to travel, installation and other types of costs when Erasmus Mundus masters courses include a mobility to a third-country partner/associated member (to encourage more balanced mobility).	
16.	Desk research and the interview programme moderately support the conclusion that project monitoring and evaluation, which was based on the assessment of activity reports and monitoring visits, should be improved. Project evaluation was primarily quantitative, while project monitoring lacked the involvement of field experts. The programme beneficiaries assessed the preparation and implementation of EM projects positively, except for the extensive administrative workload. Although the number of activity reports was reduced during the programme implementation, further simplifications are possible.	Improve the monitoring and evaluation of future projects by better balancing quantitative and qualitative assessment and involving field experts in the monitoring visits and project evaluation. Continue the Erasmus Mundus Quality Assessment Project and better link it to project monitoring. In order to simplify the programme implementation, modify the annual re-application approach in the next implementation period by managing re-application for the joint programmes and partnerships on a multi-annual basis (with the involvement of field experts in project monitoring) or by applying the principles of the Erasmus programme for the management of mobility flows (bilateral exchanges between European and non-European universities).		
17.	Desk research and the interview programme found that the general division of tasks among the responsible bodies involved in the programme promotion and the provision of services to applicants	Streamline programme promotion across different Actions under the post-2013 programme, while maintaining the current institutional framework that involves the Executive Agency, the National Structures		

No.	Main conclusions	General recommendations	Recommendations concerning Actions 1 and 3	Recommendations concerning Action 2
	<p>and beneficiaries among these institutions was quite clear. The promotion of different Actions could be streamlined within a single programme in the future. Also, it is important to promote the future programme on the basis of a coherent strategy for the European Higher Education Area.</p> <p>According to the survey and interview programmes, the beneficiaries were satisfied with the services of EACEA, while information and guidance from the National Structures, the national TEMPUS offices or the EU Delegations was helpful for the beneficiaries during the project preparation and implementation stages. Since performance of the National Structures and the EU Delegations in the programme promotion and the provision of services remained mixed, it is possible to improve their capacities through various actions.</p>	<p>and the EU Delegations.</p> <p>Strengthen the capacities of the National Structures and the EU Delegations to promote the programme and support applicants and beneficiaries through the allocation of additional resources, the provision of training and other capacity building actions and the exchange of good practices. Also, the cooperation between the Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency and the National Structures could be improved through the exchange of information about the results of project selection.</p> <p>Better exploit the existing academic, student and alumni networks in the programme promotion and strengthen promotional activities targeted at employers.</p>		
18.	<p>Surveys, case studies, interviews and, where relevant, monitoring data confirm that introducing doctoral education to Erasmus Mundus was the most successful programme novelty. Scholarships for European students were much needed, but remain insufficient to cover students' living expenses. The integration of Action 2 into the programme and of third-country institutions as equal partners in Action 1 remained incomplete.</p>		<p>Funding could be redistributed between Erasmus Mundus masters courses and Erasmus Mundus joint doctorates. The gap between Category A and Category B grants should be narrowed down to increase the participation of European students.</p>	<p>Action 2 should be further integrated into the programme as a vital element for promoting excellence, developmental capacity and joint research activity with higher education institutions outside the EU.</p>

ANNEXES (*PROVIDED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT*)

Annex 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE INTERIM EVALUATION

Annex 2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Annex 3. ANALYSIS OF THE MONITORING DATA

Annex 4. THE EU-LEVEL AND NATIONAL LEVEL CASE STUDIES

Annex 5. LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Annex 6. THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESULTS