



# L'Observatoire Erasmus +

{notes}

## How Erasmus Mundus impacts the internationalization of French higher education establishments

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### { Editorial }

The Erasmus Mundus Programme of Excellence, initiated in 2004 as a European response to the American Fulbright scholarship scheme, has been incorporated into the international reach of the Erasmus + Programme as a centralized mobility action, referred to as the Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD), since 2014. Erasmus Mundus Doctoral Programmes are henceforth part of the EU's Horizon 2020 Programme for Research and Innovation under the Marie Skłodowska - Curie Actions (mobility fellowships).

The purpose of this Erasmus + initiative is to foster excellence, quality, innovation and the internationalization of higher education establishments, to enhance the quality and attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), to support the EU's external action for higher education by offering well-endowed fellowships to the best students from around the world and, lastly, to improve the level of graduates' skills and aptitudes, in particular their relevance as regards the labour market and to involve employers to a greater extent in higher education.

These integrated study programmes are implemented by a consortium of higher education establishments from at least three countries participating in the Erasmus + Programme, which also offers the opportunity for partner countries to become engaged. They cover all disciplines. The coordinator is a European higher education establishment. Students who successfully complete their Joint Master course graduate with a double, multiple or joint degree.

French higher education establishments (EFES) have played a key role in the Erasmus Mundus Programme from the onset. Between 2009 and 2016, 70 different

French higher education establishments (EFES) were involved, as coordinators or partners; they were actively engaged in 122 projects selected out of a total of 234. A third of the French endeavour related to the field of engineering - the manufacturing industry - construction, 22% sciences - mathematics - information technology, 17% agriculture - veterinary medicine. They hosted some 3,900 students from around the world (China, Mexico, Brazil, Spain, etc.) out of a total of 26,317 Erasmus Mundus students.

The internationalization of higher education establishments can be defined as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of (postsecondary) education"<sup>1</sup>. Two components can be distinguished: internationalization "abroad" and internationalization "at home". Internationalization "abroad" "is understood as all forms of education across borders: mobility of people, projects, programmes and providers"<sup>2</sup>. Internationalization "at home" is "more curriculum-orientated and focuses on activities that develop international or global understanding and intercultural skills"<sup>3</sup>. These two components of internationalization are becoming increasingly intertwined.

The Erasmus + France / Education & Training Agency promotes and supports (information, advice) establishments which answer the Erasmus Mundus annual call for proposals issued by the European Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) based in Brussels. The Agency wished to gain a broader understanding of the impacts that the development of the Erasmus Mundus Programme (2009-2013) and the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) had on the internationalization of French higher education establishments, for the 2009-2016 period: ● ● ●

<sup>1</sup> Knight Jane (2003), « Updating the definition of internationalization », *International Higher Education*, n°33, The Boston College Center for International Higher Education, p.2

<sup>2</sup> H. de Wit, F. Hunter, L. Howard, E. Egron-Plok (2015), *Internationalisation of Higher Education*, European Parliament, p.49

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

impacts on international strategies, on the quality of courses and on the courses offered, and on receiving students. Following a public contract tender, the study was entrusted to Technopolis France, which conducted said study from September 2016 to March 2017.

**The study reveals differentiated impacts which are dependent on establishments' international strategies. Erasmus Mundus appears to form part of the international strategy of French higher education establishments, yet does not impact it directly, except for establishments which combine a clear international strategy with poor international visibility.** Establishments use this programme primarily for internationalization "abroad" purposes. In this case, the aim is to strengthen already-existing partnerships and collaborations and/or to attract high calibre students and to improve the establishment's international standing.

However, this internationalization "abroad" has a significant impact on the implementation of internationalization "at home". **As a tool for attracting research and training, Erasmus Mundus has helped improve courses by incorporating increasingly intercultural and international approaches and practices. The other students also benefit from this thanks to the dissemination**

**of the quality approach and to innovations in education promoted by these European integrated study programmes.**

Also worth noting is that companies become involved in these courses of excellence and, occasionally, effective networks of alumni are established around specialized curriculums.

**The major challenge facing French higher education establishments is the sustainability of these courses.** Whenever European funding ceases, it is difficult to deliver them with the same level of quality and excellence. Moreover, the concomitant loss of the Erasmus Mundus label impacts the degree's appeal. It is, as such, appropriate to reflect, at an earlier stage and perhaps at national level, on various solutions which would encourage the continuity of these courses without European funding.

A variety of solutions have been advocated in the European Commission's recent study "Sustainability of Erasmus Mundus Master Courses – Best practice guide based on survey results and analysis"<sup>4</sup>

**Laure Coudret-Laut**

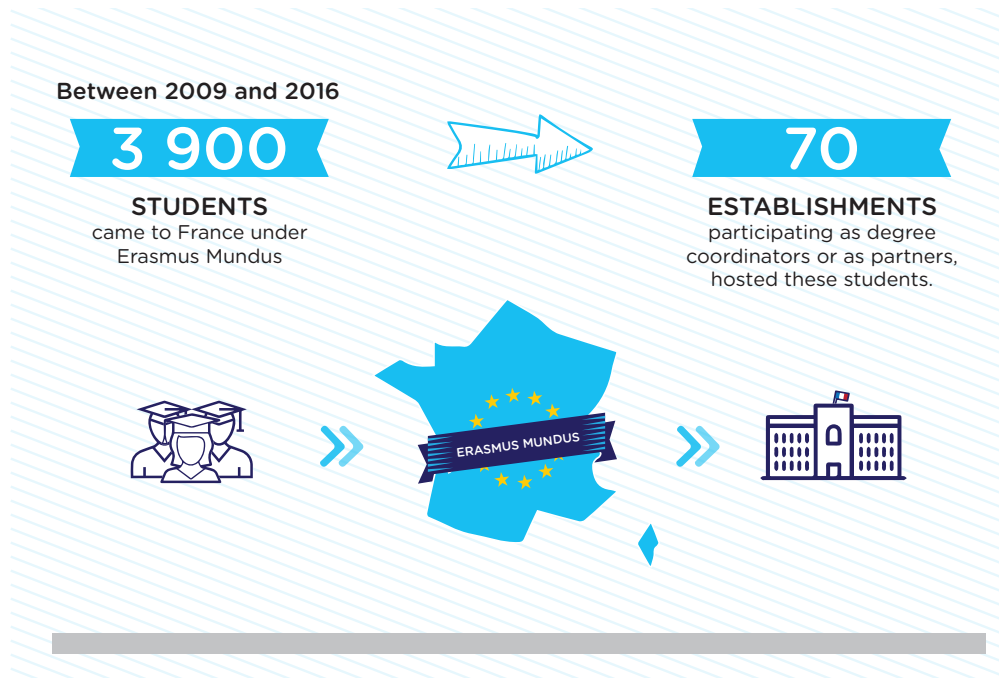
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<sup>4</sup> [https://bildung.erasmusplus.at/fileadmin/Dokumente/bildung.erasmusplus.at/Hochschulbildung/Erasmus\\_Mundus\\_Joint\\_Master/sustainabilitysurvey2017.pdf](https://bildung.erasmusplus.at/fileadmin/Dokumente/bildung.erasmusplus.at/Hochschulbildung/Erasmus_Mundus_Joint_Master/sustainabilitysurvey2017.pdf)

\* Erasmus Mundus is a resource for discussing the Erasmus Mundus Programme (2009 - 2013) as well as the Erasmus + Programme's Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (2014 - 2016)



Points to remember

Around **3,900 students** came to France under Erasmus Mundus between 2009 and 2016. **70 establishments**, participating as degree coordinators or as partners, hosted these students. France is the number one participating country in the programme. 52% of Erasmus Mundus courses over this period comprised at least one French coordinating or partnering establishment.

**The Erasmus Mundus Programme appears to come under the international strategy of establishments, yet does not impact it directly, except for establishments which combine a clear international strategy but with poor international visibility.**

For the latter, Erasmus Mundus courses play a key and pivotal role in strategy implementation.

For the majority of the other establishments, the Erasmus Mundus Programme is either considered as a tool amongst others or it constitutes a partnership comprising teacher-researchers and has no impact on the establishment's policy.

Nonetheless, Erasmus Mundus courses are a means **for promoting already-existing research partnerships and for structuring or consolidating research networks.** These courses also strengthen establishments' international standing by improving their

attractiveness for high calibre foreign students and by developing research cooperation.

**The most significant impacts touch on the courses themselves and on the courses which establishments offer.** The need to implement a **challenging quality approach** under the Erasmus Mundus Programme is an opportunity for establishments to benefit from quality procedures which are frequently more developed than those at national level. This quality approach **has spread across the establishments.** At the same time, the joint creation of these degrees requires **innovations in education** which are **reused by and for students who are not enrolled for these degrees.**

Last but not least, **Erasmus Mundus** students are provided with a highly-personalized set of reception services and benefit from **particularly well-developed support.** Several establishments have stated that Erasmus Mundus courses have **led them to develop similar reception arrangements for all foreign students and all international degree courses.**

Notwithstanding, the sustainability of these courses seems problematical without financial support from the European Commission and without enjoying the usufruct of the "Erasmus Mundus" label.

## { Methodology }

The note hereof was drawn up based on the study conducted by Technopolis France, commissioned by the Erasmus + France / Education & Training Agency. This study was carried out between September 2016 and March 2017.

The purpose of this study was to assess how creating and developing Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees and Doctoral Programmes, for the period between 2009 and 2016, impacted the internationalization of French higher education establishments participating in this programme, be they project partners or coordinators. More specifically, this study focused on:

**appraising the programme's impact on the international strategies of French higher education establishments participating in the programme,**

**evaluating the programme's impact on the quality of courses and on the courses offered by establishments participating in this programme.**

To measure the impacts, the study was based on two distinct components:

**a qualitative survey** among the French higher education establishments using semi-structured interviews,

**data mining European databases** for information on students and establishments participating in the programme.

### Qualitative study methodology

Technopolis France conducted 75 interviews with various stakeholders.

35 interviews with University Presidents, School

Principals and Vice Presidents in charge of international relations for the French establishments participating in the Erasmus Mundus Programme. These were the "test" establishments.

10 interviews with the same stakeholders of "control" establishments, namely establishments not participating in the Erasmus Mundus Programme.

10 interviews with heads of foreign partner establishments.

20 interviews with coordinators of Erasmus Mundus courses in French establishments

These interviews comprised 47 different establishments: 37 involved in at least one Erasmus Mundus project out of a total of 70 French establishments which offered an Erasmus Mundus course between 2009 and 2016 and 10 establishments which were not involved.

The analysis of the impacts of the Erasmus Mundus Programme was based on 4 criteria:

establishment type: university or school,

establishment size, measured in terms of number of students,

standing and visibility measured by the presence and position of the establishment in Shanghai Ranking or in the Times Higher Education Rankings,

whether an explicit international strategy exists or not, i.e. one which builds on specific strategic focuses and related activities. This indicator is measured through tangible evidence such as the production of an international strategy paper detailing precise objectives based on clear-cut strategic focuses, targeted geographical areas and operational actions to be implemented.

#### ■ Example of the explicit existence of a strategy:

« Our strategy revolves around 4 points:

- All our students must receive international training. At least for 1 semester (2/3 for engineers: 2-year double degree).
- The establishment is an international campus, with 1/3 of international students on-site (including some who pay admission fees).
- The development of an offshore campus: some with other schools (École Centrale de Pékin), others via contributions to the École Centrale Paris project (India, Morocco) and one in Mauritius (targeting Africa's English-speaking community).
- Recruitment of international professors (at least 20%)".

#### ■ Example of non-explicit strategy:

"Priority in terms of cooperation: so that they may be structuring and long-lasting, to resist the temptation to disperse. This involves individuals, as well as teams. And if possible with synergy between training and research (student and teacher-researcher mobility)".

## Methodology for data mining the European Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency's data

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree endeavour is a project managed by the "European Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency" (EACEA) based in Brussels.

The European Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency provided two databases for this study:

- an "establishments" database, comprising all the projects where a French establishment or organization is involved (regardless of whether the project was retained or not). The database contains the following data: establishment name, nationality, project name and the scientific discipline(s) of the degree.

- a "students" database, detailing every mobility for every student in every country. The database contains the following data: student nationality, gender, date of birth, name of initial higher education establishment, name of host establishment, host establishment country and degree title.

Using the "establishments" database, Technopolis France analysed the networks which made it possible to identify partnership communities and, as such, to study the role of each French establishment in each community.

The "students" database offered the opportunity to establish incoming flows and develop mapping of student origin.

## { 1 }

### Erasmus Mundus, tool dedicated to the international strategy of French establishments

From the 1960s to the 1990s, establishments' international policy focused mainly on the French-speaking world. The launch of European research and training programmes in higher education in the 80s and 90s shifted this policy's focus to the European Area: intra-European student mobility under the Erasmus Programme and application of the Bologna Process. It was only in 2003 (Shanghai Ranking) that a real internationalization policy was initiated in French establishments. These advancements were accompanied by the Acts of 2007 and 2013 which reinforced establishments'

autonomy, which in turn led to forging international strategies developed to varying extents depending on the establishments.

France embraced the Erasmus Mundus Programme back in 2004 and became the most active Programme country. Between 2009 and 2016, French establishments were involved in over 50% of projects. Notwithstanding, higher education establishments have not always supported an explicit international strategy through this extensive implementation of the Programme.

## { 1.1 }

### France, number one user of the Erasmus Mundus Programme

Erasmus Mundus, henceforth part of the Erasmus + Programme<sup>5</sup>, intends to boost the attractiveness of European higher education and students' employability by supporting courses of excellence at Master level and by proposing scholarships to the world's best students.

These courses are integrated study programmes initiated by a consortium comprising at least three establishments from at least three countries participating in the Erasmus + Programme. The coordinator must be a European higher education establishment. Partner-country higher education establishments may be included in the consortium. Affiliated partners (businesses, public bodies,

research bodies, etc.) may also be involved in implementing Master Degrees and in specific activities to provide particular expertise. These courses cover all disciplines and award scholarships for a maximum of two years, where a majority of the scholarships are granted to non-European students. The study programme must be undertaken in at least two countries participating in the Programme, with the option of a mobility experience in a partner country, depending on the composition of the consortium. Successful completion of the Joint Master Programme leads to graduation with a double, multiple or joint degree.

<sup>5</sup> Erasmus Mundus Doctoral Programmes are not dependent on the Erasmus + Programme but on the Horizon 2020 Programme for Research and Innovation.



France, Spain, Italy and Germany together represented 41% of participations

Between 2009 and 2016, 70 different French higher education establishments participated in this Programme, as degree coordinators or as partners. They were actively engaged in 122 projects selected out of a total of 234 projects retained, i.e. 52% of projects.

As establishments could participate in several projects, France totalled 172 participations in the Erasmus Mundus projects selected, i.e. 13% of all participations (1,368 participations for 234 Erasmus Mundus course projects over the 2009 to 2016 period). France, Spain, Italy and Germany together represented 41% of participations, and only 27 Erasmus Mundus projects (i.e. less than 12% of projects) did not involve French, Spanish, Italian or German establishments.

● **Table 1: Number of projects per country from 2009 to 2016**

(Source: Erasmus Mundus data provided by the EACEA, data mining by Technopolis France)

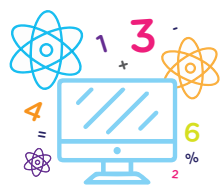
COUNTRY	NUMBER OF PROJECTS PER COUNTRY WHERE THERE WAS AT LEAST ONE PARTICIPANT IN THE PROJECT	AS A % OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS
France	122	52%
Spain	107	46%
Germany	102	44%
Italy	101	43%
United Kingdom	71	30%
The Netherlands	67	29%
Portugal	65	28%
Sweden	54	23%
Belgium	52	22%
Poland	32	14%
Denmark	23	10%
Czech Republic	23	10%
UNITED STATES	22	9%
Norway	22	9%
Brazil	20	9%
Finland	19	8%
Ireland	18	8%
Hungary	17	7%
China	15	6%
Austria	14	6%
Greece	13	6%
India	11	5%
Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Egypt, Equator, Estonia, Indonesia, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Moldavia, Morocco, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Sudan, Switzerland Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey and Uganda	Less than 10 projects	Less than 4% for each of these countries





33%

engineering, the manufacturing industry and construction



22%

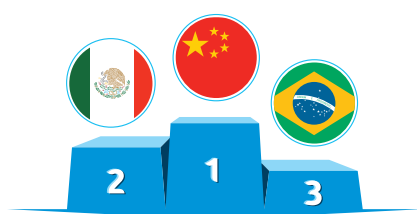
sciences, mathematics and information technology

A third of the French endeavour related to courses in the field of engineering, the manufacturing industry and construction and 22% sciences, mathematics and information technology. France was underrepresented in Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Law courses.

● **Table 2: Erasmus Mundus Programme participation by disciplines from 2009 to 2016**

(Source: Erasmus Mundus data provided by the EACEA, data mining by Technopolis France)

DISCIPLINES	FRENCH PARTICIPATIONS	PARTICIPATIONS FOR ALL ESTABLISHMENTS
Agriculture and veterinary medicine	17%	14%
Engineering, manufacturing industry and construction	33%	31%
Healthcare and wellness	11%	11%
Humanities and arts	10%	14%
Sciences, mathematics and information technology	22%	20%
Social sciences, business and law	6%	9%
Not available	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%



China, Mexico and Brazil are among the top 3 countries with the most study stays abroad for Erasmus Mundus courses

Between 2009 and 2016, France hosted 3,891 students<sup>6</sup> under Erasmus Mundus courses out of 26,317 students hosted overall under the Erasmus Mundus Programme. This represents 15% of all students.

We have identified 139 different nationalities across the observation period. Chinese students rank number one in French establishments under Erasmus Mundus courses, with 220 students in all, representing 6% of all study stays in France. Mexico is second with 181 students (5%), followed by Brazil with 164 students (4%)<sup>7</sup>.

The first European country, Spain, ranks 4th with 159 study stays and is followed by France which totals 157 study stays.

<sup>6</sup> Students who were hosted in two French establishments are counted twice. 3,619 individual students representing 3,891 periods of study in French establishments.

<sup>7</sup> The programme envisages that there are no more than 3 students per nationality in each course. However, countries may benefit from complementary scholarships for these students.





{1.2}

## Differentiated impacts dependent on establishments' international strategies

France's involvement in the Programme raises the question as to whether there is a link with establishments' strategy. Did establishments embrace the Erasmus Mundus Programme to forge and/or develop an international strategy or did they use it as a tool for operationalizing a pre-established international strategy?

Although the internationalization and strategic reflection process was well underway for several

years, not all the establishments had developed a clearly-defined and formalized international strategy. Identifying establishments' international strategy level makes it possible to differentiate establishments which have an explicit strategy from those whose strategy is imprecise.

For the test group, 21 establishments have a well-defined strategy and 16 have a vague strategy. For the control group, 5 have an explicit strategy and 5 an imprecise strategy.

● **Table 3: Establishments' international strategy queried by establishment type**

(Source: Technopolis France establishments study)

	EXPLICIT STRATEGY		IMPRECISE STRATEGY	
	Test group	Control group	Test group	Control group
Universities	10	3	12	5
Schools	11	2	4	0

There is a strong correlation between explicit international strategy and international visibility: establishments which are featured in international rankings are more likely to have an explicit strategy

(7/10) than not to have one. Notwithstanding, half of the establishments which are less visible on an international scale still have an explicit strategy.

● **Table 4: Establishments' international strategy queried by establishment type**

(Source: Technopolis France establishments study)

	ESTABLISHMENT WITH AN EXPLICIT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY	ESTABLISHMENT WITH NO EXPLICIT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY	TOTAL
Establishments with international visibility	13	5	18
Establishments with no international visibility	14	15	29
Total	27	20	47

The establishments which have embraced an explicit international strategy have a different view and policy regarding Erasmus Mundus courses compared to establishments without an explicit strategy.

Three perspectives can be distinguished:

- Erasmus Mundus courses play a structuring role in international strategy implementation.

- Erasmus Mundus courses form part of the implementation of the establishment's international strategy but are only a tool amongst other strategy-dedicated tools.

- Erasmus Mundus courses remain on the level of a partnership between teacher-researchers and have no impact on the international strategy which is, more often than not, insufficiently clear.

## Perspective 1: the Erasmus Mundus course plays a key and pivotal role in international strategy implementation

For these establishments, an Erasmus Mundus project frequently plays a key role in the strategy as an Erasmus Mundus course is considered as an accolade from an educational standpoint which is truly reflected on the establishment. For these establishments, Erasmus Mundus courses are part of a proactive international development initiative. This frequently leads to fieldwork with departments and educational teams for raising awareness and for providing support for setting up the project as well as for implementing it.

*"Today, by embarking on this experience, the establishment is able to develop a realistic international strategy! The teams are familiar with stumbling-block mechanisms (financial aspects, joint degrees, etc.). Today, the establishment is far more ready for this type of course!"*

*"For us, the Erasmus Mundus Master is crucial. We aren't a university of excellence and we aren't well ranked. However, thanks to this Master, we have excellent students who, otherwise, would not enrol in this university. [...] The Erasmus Mundus label is important for us. It is not necessarily for the funding but more particularly for the quality label. Without this label, the Master appeals less".*

Establishments with poor international visibility use Erasmus Mundus courses as an opportunity to be recognized internationally and to be acknowledged by the European Commission for offering high-quality courses. For these establishments, an Erasmus Mundus project accelerates the development of an active internationalization strategy.

## Perspective 2: the Erasmus Mundus course as one of the tools dedicated to implementing the establishment's international strategy

For these establishments, Erasmus Mundus courses are used as a vector for internationalization and fuel their strategy. They are an opportunity for strengthening partnerships and a policy for enhancing appeal frequently related to the development of offshore courses. Erasmus Mundus

courses are just a tool and do not play a structuring role. In most cases, these establishments already benefit from international visibility and renown and the Erasmus Mundus tool is not considered as instrumental to their attractiveness.

*"Erasmus Mundus is a tool amongst others for the establishment's internationalization".*

## Perspective 3: the Erasmus Mundus course, a tool which has limited impact on the strategy for establishments which do not have an explicit international strategy

Establishments which do not have a clearly-defined international strategy do not have a specific strategy for Erasmus Mundus courses either. The international activity of this type of establishment generally focuses on teacher-researchers who cooperate with their foreign counterparts even though these collaborations are not necessarily formalized at institutional level. Involvement in Erasmus Mundus courses is not systematically policy-focused. For these establishments, the impacts of the

Erasmus Mundus Programme on their international strategy are limited and peripheral.

Erasmus Mundus courses appear to have little impact on establishments' international strategy with the notable exception, however, of establishments with poor international visibility. Notwithstanding, most of the establishments which offer these courses will use the Programme for promoting attractiveness and for strengthening partnerships.

{2}

## Implementation of the Erasmus Mundus Programme by French establishments

The desire to create or to be involved in the creation of Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees and Doctoral Programmes serves a number of purposes which are not mutually exclusive:

- **to transform cooperation between teachers and researchers into an institutional partnership or to strengthen already-existing partnerships:** as such, French establishments aim to strengthen already-existing cooperations and to support a clearly-defined strategy targeting partnerships with a limited number of foreign establishments;
- **to strive for a label and to boost international visibility:** the aim is for establishments to be recognized as high-quality establishments at

European level, acknowledged by a label of excellence;

- **to attract extremely high calibre foreign students:** Erasmus Mundus courses are a means for establishments to reach out to high calibre students who are likely to integrate laboratories as future doctoral students;
- **not to be out of step in relation to the other establishments:** the establishments state that it is important for them to be involved in Erasmus Mundus courses because of the involvement of other establishments which may be rivals (on national and European levels).

*"We have a lot of existing contacts. Yet, this has been an opportunity for developing [...] new partnerships with new departments under this partnership. The Joint Master Degree offers a very restrictive framework, yet enables us to structure partnerships much more".*

*"Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees are very important. They were highlighted as part of the IDEX application, as proof of excellence and as a tool for recruiting tomorrow's top researchers".*

*"Every establishment wants an Erasmus Mundus. It's the ultimate label of acknowledgement for a double degree".*

Querying the control establishments (i.e. establishments which are not involved in Erasmus Mundus courses - Action 1) supports the findings for the different motivations: Non-participation is not the result of a deliberate strategic choice but of

a failing in the courses they have been offering to date. Overall, French establishments participated in the submission of 717 projects, including 123 which were selected, i.e. a general selection rate of 17%.

{2.1}

## Partnerships and collaborations developed

### *Consolidating partnerships*

The primary purpose for an establishment which becomes part of Erasmus Mundus courses is to promote already-existing research partnerships (formal or informal) and to structure and consolidate research networks.

*"One of the most prevalent dynamics when setting up Erasmus Mundus consortiums: around older research cooperations. You should already have an established network. Experience shows that this works better if it develops from individual relations / at team level. Afterwards, institution level can be accessible".*

*"These various courses have helped us strengthen our partnerships selectively for certain disciplines. This has led us to foster more meaningful research partnerships and to increase our contributions in research schemes".*

Foreign partners of French establishments which coordinate Erasmus Mundus courses believe that these programmes have furthered relationships with French partners, in particular by providing the opportunity to better understand specializations, fields of excellence and the strengths of each establishment. In some cases, partnerships established under Erasmus Mundus courses can even represent a first step towards measures for structuring research cooperation.

*"The partnership is highly-effective. Today, we know that we can count on the other partners to tender for a Call for Proposal, even when timeframes are limited: we are familiar with the others' specializations, their constraints, etc.". (Partner establishment)*

*"Several projects have already been submitted as part of the ongoing partnership. Even though some were not successful, there is already a project underway". (Partner establishment)*

## Partnerships with stakeholders from the socioeconomic world

Relationships with stakeholders from the socioeconomic world, in particular with businesses, exist under the Erasmus Mundus course framework but they are still relatively poorly developed. The Erasmus Mundus label, on the other hand, is a means for businesses to take more interest in the world of education and research. In some instances

(though still rare), businesses may finance a number of scholarships. Thus, it is frequently stated that industrial groups have a vested interest in these courses as they offer them access to very high calibre students, yet these industrial groups are still rather reluctant to finance the scholarships themselves.

*"Thanks to the Erasmus Mundus Master Degree Programme, new contacts have been created with businesses which welcome students. Viva, dissertation, thesis preparation are opportunities for exchanging, an invitation to make contact. Afterwards, this may lead to participations in the Master Degree Programme, or to joint research projects. No financial contribution is made by businesses as yet, even though the establishment wishes this were the case. Occasionally funding comes from scholarships, although most comes from foreign businesses. It's not easy to do in France".*

The quantitative analysis of inter-establishment relationships completes the interviews which were conducted.

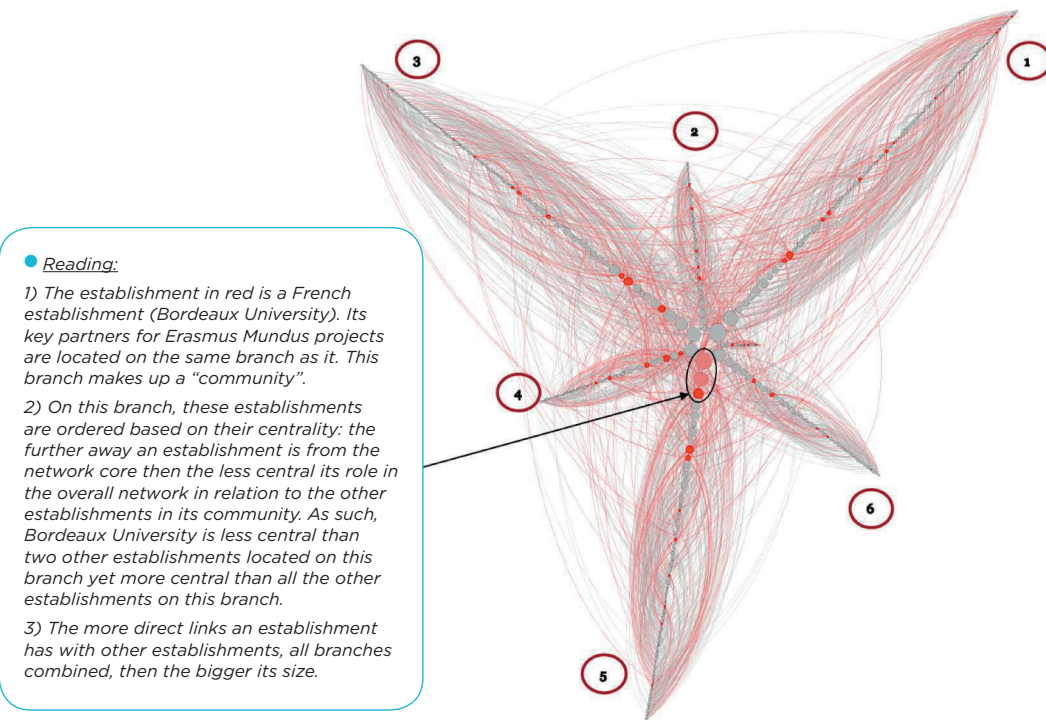
This analysis was carried out on 607 organizations and returned 3,344 links and 6 key communities.

In a network, a community comprises stakeholders (nodes), strongly interconnected and loosely connected with the rest of the network. In each community, establishments are ordered

based on their level of centrality. The further away an establishment is from the centre of the network, then the less pivotal it is in the global network in relation to the other establishments of its community. Node size (establishments) is proportional to the number of direct relationships. The more participations an establishment has in Erasmus Mundus programmes, the bigger the size of its node.

● **Figure 1: Higher education establishment partnership network under Erasmus Mundus projects**  
 (Source: Erasmus Mundus data provided by the EACEA, data mining by Technopolis France)

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● **Reading:**

- 1) The establishment in red is a French establishment (Bordeaux University). Its key partners for Erasmus Mundus projects are located on the same branch as it. This branch makes up a "community".
- 2) On this branch, these establishments are ordered based on their centrality: the further away an establishment is from the network core then the less central its role in the overall network in relation to the other establishments in its community. As such, Bordeaux University is less central than two other establishments located on this branch yet more central than all the other establishments on this branch.
- 3) The more direct links an establishment has with other establishments, all branches combined, then the bigger its size.

*The 6 communities' 10 key establishments:*

**Community 1:**

Universitat Politecnica de Catalunya, Universidade Tecnica de Lisboa, Universita degli studi di Torino, Université de Liège, Technische Universitaet Dresden, Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (KTH), Universidad nacional autonoma de Mexico, Politecnico di Torino, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Technische Universiteit Delft

**Community 2:**

Lunds Universitet, Freie Universitaet Berlin, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Università degli Studi di Roma la Sapienza, Universiteit Antwerpen, Kozep Europai Egyetem, Stockholms Universitet, Universidade de tras-os-montes e alto douro, **Museum national d'histoire naturelle**

**Community 3:**

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Université Catholique de Louvain, Università di Padova, **Université de Lorraine**, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Università ta malta, Univerzita Karlova, Tallinn University, **Université Aix-Marseille**

**Community 4:**

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, **Université de Montpellier**, České vysoké učení technické v Praze, **Université Paul Sabatier Toulouse 3**, Università degli Studi di Padova, Luleå Tekniska Universitet, **Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne**, Norges idrettshøgskole, Universidade do Porto, University of Limerick

**Community 5:**

Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna, Universitat de Barcelona, **Université de Bordeaux**, Universidade de Coimbra, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universidad de Oviedo, Kobenhavns Universitet, Universidade nova de Lisboa, **Université Pierre et Marie Curie - Paris 6**, **Université de Poitiers**

**Community 6:**

Universiteit Gent, Universiteit Stellenbosch, Universidad complutense de Madrid, Universitet Wroclawski, Wageningen Universiteit, **Université Paris Descartes**, Universitaet Wien, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Universitaet Stuttgart, **Institut national supérieur des sciences agronomiques, agroalimentaires, horticoles et du paysage**

Several findings have emerged from this network analysis:

- French establishments are **well represented in all communities** set up via Erasmus Mundus collaborations;
- French establishments have, overall, an average number of direct relationships which means that they are **not amongst the most connected network stakeholders**;
- French establishments, even though they may be only averagely connected, are relatively central in relation to the other establishments in the communities to which they belong. This is because French establishments are directly connected to the network's most strongly connected and central establishments. This centrality means that,

in the community to which they belong, French establishments are **not the network core but are very close to it**. Consequently, they act as intermediaries which enable cooperation between the most distant establishments and the core establishments;

- French projects are widely disseminated among establishments. There does not seem to be any "big" French establishment which stands out strongly from the others.

Some French establishments are involved in few projects, however, through large-scale consortiums (for example the Université Pierre et Marie Curie) whilst others participate in several projects with smaller-scale consortiums (for example AgroParisTech).

## {2.2}

### Strengthened international standing and attractiveness

The Erasmus Mundus label is key to developing establishments' international standing. For smaller establishments, this illustrates their ability to host

courses of excellence – as such guaranteeing credibility for involvement in other types of project (H2020 for example).

#### *Greater visibility and recognition*

The analysis of the "decision tree", which is intended to quantitatively support the interview analysis, led to the following finding: establishments with poor international recognition, regardless of their size, stated that there was greater impact on their attractiveness when they participated in the Erasmus Mundus Programme. At the same time, Erasmus Mundus courses had but limited impact on the standing of establishments which were internationally visible in contrast to less well-known establishments, regardless of their size.



*"These courses influence the standing of the establishment abroad. We found that it was much easier to be involved in consortia and that international universities proposed more often to join them in their research projects".*

Erasmus Mundus courses are clearly perceived and acknowledged as vectors for recognition and attractiveness for higher education establishments. Establishments, which have never participated in an Erasmus Mundus course and, as such, have no experience of this, all hold the view that being involved would help them become more attractive.



*"Being involved in Erasmus Mundus courses could help us: enhance cultural diversity by receiving students from other countries; boost our attractiveness, gain better international perspective, step up the development of our quality process". (Control establishment)*



*"Erasmus Mundus is the apotheosis of university internationalization. It offers European-level exposure". (Control establishment)*



The impact on the establishment's recognition is even greater as promotional and communication work is also undertaken focusing on these courses. To maximize the impact of courses on attractiveness, establishments must make use of them and implement them as communication tools.

*"Erasmus Mundus encouraged us to communicate internationally, something we would not have done if we hadn't been involved in this Programme. This prompted us to become known internationally".*

These overall results should, however, be put into perspective because, although they contribute to an establishment's overall standing, improvements related to recognition and attractiveness are felt to a lesser extent at establishment level per se and more so at the level of the courses themselves or of the faculties / departments / disciplines concerned in establishments.

*"It's not that easy to assess the impact. Recognition is often related to the Programme rather than the establishment. But, what is sure is that Erasmus Mundus courses bring new recognition and make an establishment known to people who would not have applied for it other than through Erasmus Mundus. Erasmus Mundus courses didn't alter the establishment's standing for the engineering cycle which was already well established. As regards the Masters, this wasn't measured. The limit, however, lies in the fact that a lot of Masters outside Erasmus Mundus are in French and this can be an obstacle".*

Impacts on standing and on recognition vary in particular based on establishments' initial international renown. Establishments with little international prestige benefit enormously from the impacts stemming from their participation in the Programme whereas these impacts are less pronounced for establishments which already enjoy extensive visibility.

Those in charge of Erasmus Mundus courses also believe that the attractiveness of these courses comes, first and foremost, from the European label (and related scholarships) and less from the establishments involved in these courses.

### Contrasts as regards foreign students hosted

From a quantitative standpoint, the impacts of Erasmus Mundus courses on establishment attractiveness are difficult to assess using objective and tangible criteria. Nevertheless, if we compare the nationalities of students on mobility schemes arriving in France with those of students enrolled in Erasmus Mundus courses, they differ significantly.

While students of African origin represented over 40% of student mobility arriving in France between 2009 and 2016<sup>8</sup>, only 11% of the latter registered for the Erasmus Mundus Programme participated in a study stay in France over the 2009-2016 period. More specifically, Maghreb countries (Morocco,

Algeria, Tunisia) are marginally represented in study stays in France under the Erasmus Mundus Programme (2.2%) whereas they represented around a quarter of student mobility arriving in France.

France, as such, received proportionally more students from America (21% for Erasmus Mundus versus 9% at national level) and in particular a high proportion from Latin America (17%), from Asia (32% for Erasmus Mundus versus 24% at national level) and from Europe (36% for Erasmus Mundus versus 24% at national level)

*"This still represents relatively few students out of the 36,000 enrolled. Nonetheless, it is an opportunity for establishing centres of excellence and for reaching out to different students. Without these courses, the university would reach less foreign students".*

<sup>8</sup> Data was gathered from various statistical Benchmarks and References on education, training and research published between 2009 and 2016 by the French Ministry for National education, Higher Education and Research. For the 2009-2010 period, 8% of foreign students enrolled in French higher education were nationals of a country of the American continent, 46% were nationals of a country of the African continent, 24% of a country of the Asian or Oceania continent and 22% of a country of the European continent. For the 2015-2016 period, percentages were as follows: 9% for the American continent, 45% for the African continent, 22% for Asia-Oceania and 24% for Europe. We note that the foreign student nationalities, per large continent, have remained highly-stable.

The participations of the 70 French establishments represented 13% of all participations. At the same time, these establishments hosted 15% of students

in study mobility. As such, France has a relatively high level of attractiveness.

● **Table 5: Country weighting as a % of student study stays under Erasmus Mundus courses (for countries hosting Erasmus Mundus courses)**

(Source: Erasmus Mundus data provided by the EACEA, data mining by Technopolis France)

COUNTRY	COUNTRY WEIGHTING AS A % OF STUDENT STUDY STAYS	COUNTRY WEIGHTING AS A % OF PARTICIPATIONS IN ERASMUS MUNDUS PROJECTS
Germany	10%	9%
Austria	2%	1%
Belgium	6%	5%
Cyprus	0%	0%
Croatia	0%	0%
Denmark	3%	2%
Spain	12%	10%
Estonia	0%	1%
Finland	2%	2%
France	15%	13%
Greece	1%	1%
Hungary	2%	1%
Ireland	1%	1%
Iceland	0%	0%
Israel	0%	0%
Italy	9%	9%
Latvia	0%	0%
Lithuania	0%	0%
Luxembourg	0%	0%
Malta	0%	0%
Norway	3%	2%
The Netherlands	6%	6%
Poland	2%	3%
Portugal	6%	6%
Czech Republic	2%	2%
Romania	1%	1%
United Kingdom	8%	6%
Slovakia	0%	0%
Slovenia	1%	1%
Sweden	6%	5%
Switzerland	0%	1%
Turkey	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>86%</b>

The key objectives which led French establishments to participate in the Erasmus Mundus Programme stem primarily from the desire to gain international standing, i.e. to become more attractive and to develop partnerships abroad. Notwithstanding, even though the development of curricula and activities

which enhance the international, intercultural and professional skills of establishment stakeholders, students and staff did not seem to be the main objective, Erasmus Mundus projects have had significant impact on the quality of all courses and professional practices in establishments.

{3}

## Significant impact on the quality of courses offered by French establishments

Three significant impacts of the Erasmus Mundus Programme can be identified in French higher education establishments: dissemination of the European quality approach, internationalization of curricula and improvement in hosting foreign students.



{3.1}

### A quality approach which spreads to the establishment

The obligation to implement a quality approach is a component of Erasmus Mundus. Generally-speaking, courses included in this Programme benefit from quality procedures which are frequently more developed than those at national level and, as such, were precursors for many establishments. This leveraging is due, in particular, to being exposed to other national practices which are more developed on these aspects (in Northern European countries especially) and being obliged to work towards the emergence of joint processes. In universities in particular, where this demand for quality was not established in such a systematic manner for "conventional" courses, the Erasmus Mundus-based quality approach encourages establishments to improve their practices. In regard to schools awarding engineering degrees, the French Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI – Engineering Accreditation Institution) also requires establishments to implement a thorough quality procedure, as such the Erasmus Mundus Programme leveraging on these practices is less noticeable.

Becoming involved in these courses is perceived as a way of sparking change as regards certain administrative practices related to the practical

implementation of degrees involving several establishments from different countries:

- creating generic partnership agreement templates;
- translating various documents into English (enrolment form, student welcome handbook, etc.);
- developing procedures for converting grades, for selecting students, etc.

**Certain establishments have stated that Erasmus Mundus courses obliged them to review all administrative practices in order to meet European Commission prerequisites. They emphasize that this was highly beneficial, as it encouraged them to put European practices into effect and, as such, to move away from purely French practices.**

Virtually all establishments mentioned a higher degree of professionalism of their administrative staff as regards conditions for managing graduate student mobility, as a result of financial and human resources provided through their involvement in the Programme. The French coordinators' management of administrative and educational aspects was commended by the foreign partners.

*"Administratively-speaking, the coordinator university was always very clear as regards files to complete, scholarship utilization, budgets, selection criteria". (Partner establishment)*

*"We have learnt a great deal from the French coordinator, concerning administrative follow-up as well as educational coordination". (Partner establishment)*

Although today the processes implemented for Erasmus Mundus courses are, to a large extent, available for other courses, dissemination remains a challenge.

*"These Master Degrees work and are attractive. They boost the other courses. We use them as best practices for our other courses".*

*"It's an incredible catalyst. It's really revolutionary for the establishment. It's an opportunity for bringing innovation to teacher-researchers, technicians, administrative staff. But it takes time. For administrative staff for example: they had to learn to accept and validate agreements drawn up in English. That had never been done before. The same holds true for partnerships and sponsoring, documents were never in English before. It's being done slowly but surely. But now, we have a base for other partnership programmes. Likewise for the Diploma Supplement, which is now a model for other Masters. And likewise for the selection procedure, which is integrated into local Master selection procedures".*

*"It's a label. It brings funding but more importantly quality and international culture. I'm convinced that it is fundamental to pursue our efforts in this direction. But this means making efforts in terms of internal organization for monitoring purposes. We need to improve our internal processes so that we can adapt. However, it is difficult to make the scheme viable. Erasmus Mundus' mode of operation, for the teams which have benefited from it, has forged a genuine culture of quality. It continues to be an asset in the department and has spread relatively well. It has had a bit of a ripple effect".*

*"One of the consequences of Erasmus Mundus courses for us: we were obliged to set ourselves up as a service to tender for these Calls for Proposals because otherwise it was going to be too much for the teacher-researchers. Now we have a unit for helping set up Erasmus Mundus and H2020 projects. We hired someone to work full-time to deal with our Erasmus programmes: we've gained in quality and in professionalism. This has led us to upgrade positions (obligation to be bilingual). We are now seeing the arrival of people with skills which we didn't have before, it's a gigantic qualitative leap forward. Erasmus Mundus has helped us organize ourselves and become more professional; it's a real value for us"*

There are quite a few checks, however, as regards the dissemination of quality processes, namely:

- administrative staff turnover;
- compartmentalization of courses and disciplines and a lack of communication between administrative directors;
- the undersizing of international relations departments;
- a lack of will on policy level with regard to dissemination issues.

*"Best practices are gradually replicated in other international courses. But we could sometimes do with a one-stop service in our establishment to ensure that the work of all concerned is not duplicated. More often than not, each department manages its international students alone, in its own corner".*

### {3.2}

## Shared innovations in education

The "Erasmus Mundus" label promotes innovations in education through the highly-international nature of the students as well as through the resources made available. Several educational innovations were more specifically developed for these courses:

- English language classes and creation of lessons focusing on a more clearly Anglo-Saxon-influenced method;
- summer schools, linking together the course, research and industry and providing the opportunity

for interaction between different year groups and open to other students/doctoral students;

- development of online refresher course modules, made available to students before course start-up;
- reevaluation of the signification of the Master dissertation, in particular in sciences referred to as "hard" sciences towards obtaining the degree;
- initiation of educational packages and degrees exportable to foreign countries.

*"Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees demanded a lot of energy. All this energy did not necessarily spread throughout the department for the course in question. We're working on this, with new European tools. Results are really positive. This has helped colleagues expand the courses they offer, reach new audiences, adopt new education methods (ICT, English classes)".*

## Integrating Erasmus Mundus courses into curricula

Given the resources available and student profiles, these courses may be perceived as somewhat different from establishments' other courses. However, the constraints placed on establishments (in particular budget constraints) and the desire to use Erasmus Mundus courses as a lever for improving the content of the overall course offering has resulted in these courses being **integrated, to a certain extent, into more significant series of courses**. This has, as such, led to joint modules

between Erasmus Mundus students and other students, to the opening up of summer schools to students other than the initially-targeted audience, etc. **The existence of Erasmus Mundus courses is therefore a vector for internationalizing courses, especially whenever establishments and those in charge of grading choose to maximize opportunities for interaction between Erasmus Mundus students and the others.**

*"Erasmus Mundus programmes are organized alongside other programmes and comprise some joint classes. And this is expanding so that a large number of students may benefit from it. Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees were created focusing on an already-existing base. Through the merger, the University reviewed its whole course offering and Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees have played a significant role".*

## The offer of classes in English and in French as a foreign language (FFL)

Beyond the "direct" dissemination impacts, Erasmus Mundus courses were frequently one of the first to develop programmes in English. Today, many establishment Heads promote the development of this type of course, drawing on Erasmus

Mundus examples. This occasionally involves the development of modules specifically for teacher-researchers to help them develop lessons in English, or the implementation of a service dedicated to translating course material.

*"We introduced a strictly local Master Degree in English, based on the Erasmus Mundus Master model. This course targets students who have not been granted a scholarship, who are good students but who do not have the means to pay. Both courses use the same model and the same contents but have different professors. This offers high calibre students the opportunity to study this course. By creating this local Master in English, we are encouraging our local students to study an international programme"*

As regards engineering schools more specifically, it is worth mentioning that the trends promoted by the European leaders of the Erasmus Mundus Programme on innovation in education (foreign

language courses, integration of ICT, etc.) were concurrent with the priorities of the Conférence des Titres d'Ingénieurs (College of the French Engineering Accreditation Institution).

*"Demands concerning the Erasmus Mundus Programme are along the same lines / same trend as the CTI's (French Engineering Accreditation Institution) demands (courses in English, Virtual Grand Ecole, MOOCs, etc.). The dynamics merge as they follow global trends. It is important to remain active by innovating in order to be acknowledged internationally (engineering schools are highly-recognized in France, but less so elsewhere). These students pursue excellence. This demands high performance. These students query, question, have high ambitions. Excellence stems from this: their background and their demands. This compels the consortium to look for high-level players, who are in tune with reality, who reflect different cultures, different countries. This requires intellectual agility, which is a criterion of excellence in the world in which we live".*

Although courses in English represent a significant part of the courses offered under Erasmus Mundus, several establishments took advantage of obtaining

the label to develop and reinforce their "French Foreign Language" course offering, an offer which is now available to all non-French-speaking students.

## Joint degrees

Finally, in spite of the interest expressed by the European Commission for establishing joint degrees as part of Erasmus Mundus courses, hardly any Erasmus Mundus course coordinated by a French establishment managed to effectively implement such a degree (in particular because of the diversity of education systems and regulations between

European countries). The value of joint degrees is not highly acknowledged by stakeholders especially as students seem to strongly favour double or multiple degrees, specific degrees awarded by each of the partner establishments, rather than by a single degree awarded jointly by partner establishments.

### {3.3}

## A personalized set of reception services for foreign students to be developed

### *Highly-valued reception services*

Generally-speaking, participating in an Erasmus Mundus course enables participating establishments to propose reception services which are more personalized than the traditional services offered to international students: administrative procedures (travel, visa, accommodation, bank account opening, etc.), dedicated welcome/induction, organization of special cultural events, language lessons, etc.

Some establishments have managed to extend the reception services developed under Erasmus Mundus to other categories of foreign students. Several establishments have stated that Erasmus Mundus courses encouraged them to develop reception services different to those traditionally

proposed by establishments. For certain aspects, Erasmus Mundus courses were an opportunity to develop a tailored service offer, which was subsequently extended to other foreign students (negotiation for accommodation via the CROUS (French regional organization providing student grants, university halls of residence, foreign student reception, cultural activities and student restaurants) for at least a year, knowledge of procedures for obtaining visas, etc.). For example, an establishment stated that the Erasmus Mundus course led it to propose a quality charter for international degrees which is used as a benchmark in the establishment for contracting.

*"These practices have been extended to the rest of the school, which now receives 450 foreign students every year. Virtually all the services are available to the other foreign students. Mutualizing (because of the number) makes discussions easier, with the CROUS, local operators, etc. The Erasmus Mundus Master Degree has led to a very high improvement in services for foreign students in the school. The status is highly favoured in the school compared to in University, given the possibility to be even more involved in student follow-up".*

Participating in the Erasmus Mundus Programme and in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees offers establishments the means for creating or developing effective reception tools and procedures, which may be extended and deployed for receiving all foreign students. However, replicating these student mobility management services and extending them more widely is, in actual fact, difficult to achieve. Extending the services is easier in schools which benefit from a higher budget per student (French and

international) and which receive less foreign students. The ultra-personalization of the services offered to Erasmus Mundus students makes it more difficult to replicate them to all foreign students enrolled in the establishments. It should be noted that services for hosting foreign students differ greatly from one establishment to another, which makes it difficult to identify the major trends in terms of dissemination of these reception services.

*"It's more so for "standard" foreign students and it's not extended too much as it requires a lot of energy and resources. Except at CROUS level. At the beginning, the agreement was only for Master Degree students. Today, we have concluded an agreement at establishment level for all foreign students".*



*“Highly-personalized support in these programmes where the establishment is the coordinator. Premium quality services. This gives examples of best practices in the establishment. It is sometimes difficult to extend, because of a lack of resources (possible for international Masters, with higher school fees). But, in any case, it gives an idea of what we’re aiming for. And some things can be mutualized”.*

### Students followed up after graduating

Support for Erasmus Mundus students also continues once they have graduated to accompany them towards their future pathways.

*“It’s the priority for those in charge of the Master and it’s a reality. This action is made possible through various follow-up interviews (at 6 months, 12 months, 18 months)”.*

**For Heads of Studies, Erasmus Mundus courses have a demonstrated, positive impact on students’ employability and career. First of all, placement rates (for employment and studies) are high and, secondly, skills acquired during the Master course**

**are an added value on the job market. The ability to be mobile and gaining work experience in different cultural and multicultural environments are factors which set these students apart from others, above and beyond excellence.**

*“The students’ professional positioning is excellent. There is a huge difference between the jobs which these Erasmus Mundus students take on and those which our national students take on, in spite of the fact that they are also high calibre.”*

Data from the last study conducted by the Erasmus Mundus Association<sup>9</sup> shows that it is important to pursue studies after completing one of these Masters. In the 6 months following graduation, over 22% were pursuing studies and, in particular, doctoral programmes. For those who had entered the job market (69%), 85% found a job within 6

months. Access to employment varies depending on the discipline and country of origin. In an earlier study, J. Calmand<sup>10</sup> illustrated that “young people working in Southern countries seem to have less difficulties promoting their Master on the job market where, in all likelihood, rivalry between higher education degrees is less intense.



<sup>9</sup> Kruger T. et alii (2017), Erasmus Mundus. Graduate Impact Survey, 41 pages, Erasmus Mundus Association.

<sup>10</sup> Calmand J. (2013), Les mobilités en cours d'études, un passeport pour l'insertion professionnelle ? Le cas des/du cursus Erasmus Mundus, Journal of international Mobility, Vol.1 (1), pp.125-143, Peter Lang.

Conclusion

*Sustainability to be created*

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees have a major impact on participating French higher education establishments. They are used as a tool for the establishment's internationalization, for attracting high calibre foreign students and for developing research partnerships. **The primary impact of Erasmus Mundus lies in the dissemination of quality processes, innovations in education and reception services provided for foreign students studying in the establishments.** Notwithstanding, now that European funding has been interrupted, the sustainability of these courses remains problematic. Virtually all establishments questioned stated that the end of the European Commission's funding will mark the end of Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees over time. In the past, some universities were obliged to discontinue

courses, because of a lack of resources. Other establishments state that they manage to sustain a cohort but that without scholarships, it is impossible to attract students of the same level as those who enrol and are granted scholarships. Lack of funding calls into question the continuation of the partnership, at the same level of excellence, as well as the sustainability of courses. Without funding, it will be rather difficult for establishments (in particular universities) to offer the same level of service. In this respect, there is a substantial difference between universities and schools, the latter adapt more easily when faced with the loss of funding as they enjoy more flexibility legally-speaking and, in practice, as regards establishing school fees.

*"These courses will come to an end without European funding as they are cost-intensive. The university does not have the fiscal base for funding this type of project on its own. Courses were already discontinued in the past because of this. Nonetheless, the university and the teacher-researchers have maintained contacts at research level".*

*"Only European funding is capable of providing funding for this type of programme. It is wrong to imagine that these courses can keep going single-handedly. They're all going to fall apart".*

Even though some establishments have initiated partnerships with businesses, financing from the private sector continues to be extremely limited (in particular for courses with a strong academic focus). Companies are not likely to provide stable funding comparable to that injected by the European Commission.

Some establishments believe, however, that sustainability solutions may be envisaged. Sustainability conditions for these courses are fourfold:

- that the Master has reached a level of attractiveness and recognition which is significant and adequate enough to continue to attract high calibre students;
- that a strong network and dense ecosystem

have been created around the Master to ensure it continues to be supported by stakeholders once scholarship funding comes to an end;

- that sliding transitional funding can be guaranteed by Europe for several years to give establishments the time to come up with alternatives whilst continuing to ensure course quality;
- that supplementary funding is mobilized via other tools (Initiatives of excellence - IDEX, Knowledge and Innovation Communities - KIC - for example).

There are clear indications that many establishments are currently at the stage of reflecting on the sustainability of Erasmus Mundus courses.

*"Today, the establishment is working on economic models for these international courses. We have to study the potential for reducing certain costs, for developing private partnerships. But this depends on the fields. It will certainly be complicated to continue without funding, because international is expensive".*

*"We need to think about sustaining and enhancing the partnership. For example, a meeting with these partners may be possible, to see how to extend this partnership to other configurations".*

## Conclusion

Above and beyond funding, the major difficulty that establishments face with the end of scholarship funding is the concomitant loss of the label. The visibility that the Erasmus Mundus quality label provides is, in fact, a strategic tool for enhancing attractiveness. Without the label, courses lose some of their worth and it becomes more difficult for these courses to attract students, thus calling into question their sustainability.

*"If the consortium loses the EU's financial support, they will still try to carry on. A very important aspect: the label. It's the most important, because it's a quality label which guarantees visibility throughout the world. Notwithstanding, financial support and scholarships are also useful: to attract visiting scholars (teaching diversity), to attract students (even if they don't have a scholarship, they apply for one at the start)".*

*"It's a label. I'd love to encourage teacher-researchers to create one. It brings funding but more importantly quality and international culture. I'm convinced that it is fundamental to pursue our efforts in this direction. But this means making efforts in terms of internal organization for monitoring purposes. We need to improve our internal processes so that we can adapt. However, it is difficult to make the scheme viable".*

*"As long as we continue to attract students, we can keep on going easily. Scholarships create a sense of security for us. We need to be able to ensure that 5-7 students enrol with scholarships. The idea is to use our network to finance our course. We need to come up with ways and means to keep going. But this is difficult to do. We've contemplated crowdfunding. We're still looking into this".*

**Appendix 1** *Best practices and recommendations*

Best practices identified:

- using an Erasmus Mundus project to transform an interpersonal collaboration between teacher-researchers into an institutional partnership,
- establishing a network of industrial partners and co-developing course modules,
- integrating the Erasmus Mundus Programme into a Master distinction,
- mobilizing available funding under IDDES / I-SITE to complement or replace European funding,
- setting up an Erasmus + “unit” in establishments,
- reduced teaching load / “special” gratification for teacher/researchers in charge of coordinating international courses,
- using the Erasmus Mundus administrative framework for all of the establishment’s international courses,
- pooling skills acquired by teams by developing and implementing Erasmus Mundus course projects using integrated management approaches,
- systematically attending meetings organized by the Erasmus + France / Education & Training Agency,
- developing French Foreign Language classes,
- developing online modules to help international students integrate,
- extending summer school enrolment to students outside Erasmus Mundus courses,
- organizing an annual or biannual conference with former Master students.

● **Recommendations which stem from the aforementioned findings are as follows:**

Recommendations related to Erasmus Mundus Programme impacts on the international strategies of French higher education establishments participating in the programme	<b>P1</b> - Initiate overall reflection on how Erasmus + can be included more systematically when higher education establishments’ define their international strategy
Recommendations related to Erasmus Mundus Programme impacts on international partnerships	<b>P2</b> - Consider introducing innovative solutions for enhancing relationships between higher education establishments and socioeconomic stakeholders
	<b>P3</b> - Organize an annual or biannual conference with former Erasmus Mundus Master students to create links between former students’ host companies and research laboratories.
Recommendations related to Erasmus Mundus course sustainability	<b>P4</b> - Anticipate more so and more optimally potential ending of European funding by initiating reflection on viable solutions as early as possible.
	<b>P5</b> - Think about mobilizing available funding under other national (IDEX, ANR, etc.), European and international schemes (funding from foundations for example) to finance the “training” aspect of the Masters.
	<b>P6</b> - Examine in more detail the continuing granting of the Erasmus Mundus label once European funding comes to an end and make operational proposals to the European Commission.
Recommendations related to Erasmus Mundus Programme impacts on the practices of establishments participating in this Programme	<b>P7</b> - Set up an Erasmus + “unit” in establishments or at least one key contact person for awareness sessions for educational teams, for supporting teacher-researchers in setting up projects and for administrative follow-up.
	<b>P8</b> - Place greater emphasis on the role of staff involved in managing Erasmus Mundus courses
	<b>P8.1</b> - To reduce staff turnover, initiate reflection in establishments on the relevance of obtaining a financial bonus or additional reduced teaching load for teaching staff and administrative staff involved in managing Erasmus Mundus courses.
	<b>P8.2</b> - Review the system that takes account of the involvement of staff in Erasmus Mundus courses.

Appendix 1

Recommendations related to Erasmus Mundus Programme impacts on the practices of establishments participating in this Programme

**P9** - Strengthen the dissemination of skills acquired through Erasmus Mundus courses in terms of administrative and educational practices to establishments' other international courses.

**P10 - Ensure that mutualizing and building on all best practices is given top priority**

**P10.1** - : Make COMUEs (French groups of universities and establishments) and school networks (Centrale, Polytech, INSA, etc.) spaces for reflection, for mutualizing and for building on best practices for developing and managing Erasmus Mundus projects.

**P10.2** - Use Erasmus Mundus as a means for becoming more familiar with the way in which foreign partner establishments mobilize and manage their relationships with the private sector.

**P10.3** - Provide the human resources required for the Erasmus + France / Education & Training Agency so that it may carry out work to identify best practices and disseminate them to French establishments.

**P10.4** - Provide the human resources required for the Erasmus + France / Education & Training Agency so that it may create a network of French establishments involved in Erasmus Mundus courses and organize an annual conference for these establishments to discuss best practices, problems encountered and ways of overcoming them.

## WHO ARE WE ?

**The Erasmus + France/Education & Training Agency** promotes and manages the Erasmus + programme for France and its schemes in the “education and training” sections.

The Agency plays an active part in reflecting on the development of the Erasmus + programme as well as industrial, national and international issues in the fields of education, higher education and vocational training.

A public body (Groupement d'Intérêt Public) under the authority of three ministries (National Education; Higher Education, Research and Innovation;

Labour), the Agency is based in Bordeaux.

Erasmus+ is the European programme for education, training, youth and sport launched in 2014. It has three main areas of action: individual mobility, cooperation between stakeholders and support for political reform.

The Erasmus + (2014-2020) programme is the foremost financial instrument designed to democratise mobility, with special attention paid to the groups facing the most difficulties.





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