Erasmus+

Building on Experience

Testimonials of Erasmus Mundus Promotion Projects
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FOREWORD

Dear reader,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some examples of EU-funded projects which we - the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) - have been supporting in recent years. This will give you an insight into the field of international higher education and offer you ideas for the current Erasmus+ programme, which has been the EU’s flagship programme since its launch in 2014.

The European Commission established EACEA in 2006 to implement EU programmes in the fields of education, audiovisual and culture. Over the last 10 years, we have learnt a lot from the projects we have funded, and this gives us valuable input to feed back to the European Commission for the future programme design. Your experiences in managing projects are therefore of great importance to us.

This brochure looks at one of the most diverse actions of the Erasmus Mundus Programme: the Erasmus Mundus Action 3 (EM Action 3). This action promoted Europe as an attractive destination for students and established it as a global centre of excellence in higher education.

My colleagues invited several EM Action 3 project representatives to tell their stories and share their experiences. These testimonials form the core part of this brochure. My special thanks go to all EM Action 3 representatives for their support in turning EU-funded programmes into true success stories. I would like to highlight their contribution in supporting higher education internationally through successful collaboration in Europe and around the world.

I invite you to read about their achievements and to reflect on how these can be used in a new context under Erasmus+. You will discover more about the EM Action 3 projects and their impacts, many of which could be relevant to your own projects.

Feel free to visit our website www.eacea.ec.europa.eu where you can learn more about Erasmus+ and the other programmes EACEA is managing.

I look forward to continuing working with you or welcoming you as a new partner in the future.

Brian HOLMES
Director
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
Erasmus+ is the European Union programme which supports projects, partnerships, events and mobility in the areas of education, training, youth and sport. The programme, which runs from 2014 to 2020 with a budget of almost EUR 16.5 billion provides funding opportunities for cooperation in all these areas, both among European countries and between European countries and Partner countries throughout the world. It offers a number of opportunities for higher education students, doctoral candidates, staff and higher education institutions from around the world. You will find more information under the chapter ‘Common ground for future initiatives’.

The Erasmus Mundus Programme was launched in 2004 as an EU cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education, playing an important role in the worldwide promotion of European Higher Education Area and aiming to establish the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning. During the period from 2004 to 2013 the Erasmus Mundus (EM) Programme funded 285 Joint programmes, 308 Partnerships and 98 Promotion projects with a total budget of approximately EUR 1.3 billion. The programme funded more than 67,000 scholarships for students and staff. The programme promoted the following main components:

- Higher education institutions to implement joint programmes at postgraduate (EM Action 1) level or to set-up inter-institutional cooperation partnerships between EU and non-EU universities (EM Action 2);
- Scholarships for students, researchers and university staff to study/research/teach in the context of a joint programme (EM Action 1) or within partnerships (EM Action 2);
- Organisations active in the field of higher education to develop projects enhancing the attractiveness, profile, visibility and image of European higher education worldwide (EM Action 3).

In the second phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme (2009-2013), promotion projects under EM Action 3 were launched. The European Commission committed an approximate total amount of EUR 11.5 millions for the realisation of EM Action 3 as integral part. In total 44 projects, lasting between 2-3 years, with a wide range of priorities were financed during this phase. A number of projects have been on-going until 2016/17.

This brochure presents mainly a selection of the final generation of projects. A great variety of higher education institutions, public or private organisations, research bodies, NGOs, university associations or networks with significant experience in the field of higher education were involved.

The coordinating institutions had to be located in countries of the European Union. 15 different EU countries were actively involved managing EM Action 3 projects. More than half of them were coordinated by institutions in Belgium and Italy (7 each) as well as Spain and the Netherlands (5 each). It is remarkable that almost all EU countries (25 out of 28) have been represented with institutions involved as partners.

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A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT

The previous section gives some general information on EM Action 3 projects. But to really understand how this particular Erasmus Mundus scheme has worked, it is worth to take a look at concrete examples of project realisation.

This brochure presents a selection of the latest EM Action 3 projects with a good level of sustainability and high importance to activities under Erasmus+. Furthermore, the projects selected are good examples to illustrate the wide geographical scope and the manifold subjects of the EM Action 3 projects. They all demonstrate that arrangements for dissemination of results, quality assurance, plans for sustainability and the long-term exploitation of their results were properly addressed.

It should be highlighted that the broad majority of EM Action 3 projects were successfully implemented. The very good results have been achieved to a great extent thanks to the commitment and passion of people directly involved in the projects. The good interaction between the participants has been identified as one of the strong elements of the EM Action 3 projects. Most of the project testimonials reconfirm that the success of their projects depended to a large extent on the good cooperation and communication between all involved partners.

This is why this brochure turns to the project representatives and let them talk about their experiences and observations on a number of questions. You can read their testimonies next to the brief description of the respective project and get inspirations for your on-going or eventually future projects under Erasmus+.

1. EM ACE - Promoting Erasmus Mundus towards Students: Activate, Communicate, Engage
EM-ACE worked on increasing the visibility of the Erasmus Mundus/Erasmus+ programmes. Its target groups were students and higher education staff/promoters in Europe. It achieved its aim thanks to a series of promotion activities, analyses and publications. It cooperated with Higher Education Institutions, and students’ associations from various countries.

2. TuBeMATES - Boost Erasmus Mundus, European Higher Education and Employability through Video Sharing Community
TuBeMATES promoted academic cooperation under Erasmus Mundus between Europe and the Far East in an original way. It encouraged Erasmus Mundus students to build a video-community to share their academic experience. Students became the main actors for promotion by means of their knowledge and expectations being published in a multimedia contest.

3. JDAZ - Joint Degrees from A to Z
JDAZ responded to a genuine need of Higher Education Institutions and relevant advisory bodies dealing with joint programmes, to create a practical guide providing a comprehensive knowledge about joint programmes. The guide pays special attention to quality assurance and recognition of double degrees. Besides, it includes information about employment perspectives.

4. ECCE MUNDUS - Enhancing Cross-Regional Cooperation with Erasmus Mundus
ECCE MUNDUS focused on facilitating co-operation between higher education institutions in Austria, Hungary and Slovakia and regions outside the EU – Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Its main goal was to increase the number of participants from those regions by information sharing and training.

5. QACHE - Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education
QACHE originated from a real and perceived need to address, in terms of information and practical support, the quality assurance (QA) of cross-border higher education (CBHE). Its main goal was to reinforce a dialogue within European countries and between Europe and other world regions on QA of CBHE, to provide practical support primarily to QA agencies and to facilitate thus the further development of a European dimension in QA.

6. Adde Salem - Double Degree in Europe, South American Leadership and Employability
Adde Salem analysed to what extent engineering joint degrees’ curricula reflected job market needs in the most developed countries of Latin America. Research and analyses made by the project resulted in creating new joint academic courses and in preparing special publications.

7. Social economy - Enhancing the studies and practice of the social economy in higher education
Social economy gained an in-depth knowledge of the nature, origins and practice of a people-centred economic approach (the social economy system). It gave recommendations on how this system could interact more efficiently with other economic systems to enhance the values of equality, efficiency and reciprocity for human development.

8. ASK Asia - Agriculture, Skills, Knowledge in Asia: Competences and employability of Erasmus Mundus Graduates in Agriculture on the Asian Professional Market
ASK Asia allowed European and Asian universities to identify specific competences and skills in agriculture-related life-sciences. The project aimed to provide Erasmus Mundus Alumni with a comparative advantage in the job market in Asia. Higher education institutions, graduates and employers were involved in the activities. The study was oriented towards six countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam.

9. SUSTAIN - Strengthening higher education in Urban Sustainability and Transitions towards internationalisation of Academic Institutions and Networks
SUSTAIN improved the quality of higher education in Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) in Europe and partner Universities in Asia. The project increased the employability of students and facilitated the access of Asian students to European Higher Education (EHE). Standardised educational modules related to SUD were developed.

10. EDBKN - European DesignBuild Knowledge Network
EDBKN focused on the development of a European DesignBuild Knowledge Network. The project promoted the implementation, distribution, and sustainability of the innovative DesignBuild methodology. This teaching and research model enables students to undertake architectural projects that develop balanced future living environments.
How can students be attracted to Erasmus Mundus? According to the La Sapienza University of Rome and its international partners, visibility is the key to success. They have proven highly successful. During the project implementation, all partners have brought new ideas to the project (even enlarging the scope of the proposed workplan) as well as ongoing constructive feedback. Moreover, all partners have demonstrated high commitment to the project. This has resulted in a sense of shared ownership, which we consider as the key to EM-ACE’s success.

What is your best project memory? It is hard to think of just one best memory, since all of us remember this project with a sense of pleasure and pride. But to give just one example, we should mention the excellent cooperation between partners and the sense of shared ownership of the project. In addition, great promotional events and training sessions took place at HEIs spread across Europe proving how the work done under the project was of interest to Erasmus Mundus coordinators and students. We also had funny moments while catching buses in the middle of Brussels and trying to find a warm room for a meeting in a freezing European college.

What was the most important thing you learnt during the implementation of the project? We’ve understood how important it is to take students’ views into account when developing marketing materials and how easily one forgets about it while constantly being involved in the administrative side of the programme. We also now know how much work still must be done to professionalise marketing of international study programmes within European universities.

And what do you like about your project? The expertise of the EM-ACE consortium members is certainly among the strongest added values of the EM-ACE project. During the proposal preparation phase, partners were carefully selected to bring a mix of competences that could, in synergy, contribute to the development of an effective marketing strategy for Erasmus Mundus. Different organisations, including universities in four different countries (Sapienza, UGent, ULB/ULB), a HEI network (UNICA), a consultancy company specializing in HEI marketing (The Knowledge Partnership), a nation-wide organisation in charge of HE internationalization and promotion (Campus France), and the Erasmus Mundus Student and Alumni Association (EMSA) were included in the consortium. Such a shared coordination of the consortium has proven highly successful. During the project, implementation, all partners have brought new ideas to the project (even enlarging the scope of the proposed workplan) as well as ongoing constructive feedback. Moreover, all partners have demonstrated high commitment to the project. This has resulted in a sense of shared ownership, which we consider as the key to EM-ACE’s success.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it? The transition from the former Erasmus Mundus to the new Erasmus+ programme has certainly been among the most difficult times. The political context in which the EM-ACE project has first been implemented has, indeed, posed some key challenges in terms of outcomes and first impact. Indeed, without a definite brand it became difficult to develop an effective marketing strategy. Also, in the advent of a new programme, Erasmus Mundus promotion was less valued by some target groups. Some Erasmus Mundus coordinators were not interested in the project outputs as they were already looking for new opportunities under Erasmus+. But despite the above challenges, we worked very hard as a team to ensure that products developed under the first phase of EM-ACE could be easily adapted and used in different contexts. Hence, once the retention of the Erasmus Mundus brand (for the Joint Master programmes) under the Erasmus+ programme was announced, the EM-ACE team adjusted the website and material accordingly in a relatively short time. What is more, the uncertainty over the name and brand, moved us to make sure our marketing toolkit could be used to check that any joint degree offers Erasmus Mundus or not, is being marketed effectively. Now Erasmus Mundus coordinators are looking with strong interest at the material produced by the EM-ACE team, as also demonstrated by the high number of registrations received for the EM-ACE final conference.

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation? With hindsight we could have tried to have a direct involvement of the HEIs’ marketing units on top of the Erasmus Mundus project coordinators, which are our usual target group. The reality is that many universities still don’t even have marketing as a function, so it’s been really difficult to do this. Moreover, it would have been interesting (with more time and resources) to complement the EM-ACE marketing strategy with practical advice/suggestions on how to engage different channels for Erasmus Mundus promotion.

Has EM-ACE had the intended impact? Yes, EM-ACE has had a direct impact. Here are some examples:

- The EM-ACE marketing strategy was developed with the input of over 300 students and coordinators from across Europe, which ensured its relevance and effectiveness.
- The project produced a comprehensive toolkit that covered a wide range of marketing strategies, such as social media, email marketing, and traditional print materials.
- The project also facilitated the exchange of best practices and ideas among coordinators, which helped to improve the overall marketing strategy for Erasmus Mundus.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? The marketing outcomes of the EM-ACE project will be used by Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Coordinators and other university staff involved in the marketing of international study programmes. All products and results are published on the EM-ACE website and are easily accessible and downloadable. They can also be adapted to different contexts and languages. We also hope that the strong dissemination and exploitation strategy put in place during the project will continue in the future, as well as the integration of the marketing toolkit within the existing and well-known EMQA platform (www.emqa.eu), will also ensure that the results are known to coordinators and useful to them.

As far as students are concerned, EM-ACE produces a series of products directly targeting students including the EM-ACE website, guidelines on how to prepare a successful application, videos, social campaigns, paper cards promoting Erasmus Mundus, etc. Students will mostly access these products online.
TuBeMATES
Boost Erasmus Mundus, European higher education and employability through video Sharing community

Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+ programmes have been active in developing new ways of communication with students and academics. The TuBeMATES project concentrated on audio-visual productions promoting academic cooperation between Europe and Asia. It created a video sharing community on a YouTube channel which presents numerous testimonies, conference statements and advice on various aspects of the Erasmus Mundus programme. Apart from videos, the project organised events and conferences which were a very good opportunity for information exchange and networking.

What is your best project memory?
For us, the most motivating part of the project was to see the outcome of the platform created from the videos of the students who participated during the second year of the project. The use of digital storytelling applied in the videos was very interesting. It allowed us to learn about many unique experiences that reflect the different views and expectations of European and Asian students.

The final conference in Hanoi (Vietnam) was also particularly interesting. Asian students participated and shared experiences. We have identified a major interest from Asian students in participating in the Erasmus Mundus Program, but at the same time they do not have much information about how to get involved. In my view, the dissemination of the outputs of TuBeMATES can help to promote the competition.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?
Our biggest challenge was the creation of the Video Sharing Community because participation in it required maintaining promotion and dissemination efforts through multiple channels; student associations, universities, digital social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook), etc. However, we realized 58 videos, which was a good result given the short lifespan of the contest itself.

During the second year, a lot of effort was made to disseminate the project in order to improve participation in the network and to promote the competition.

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?
Looking from today’s perspective and considering that we are satisfied with the results, we should have foreseen more time for the evaluation of videos.

Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?
Yes, definitely. In fact, we have proposed a new project to extend the use of the TuBeMATES Video Sharing Community and expand the scope of employability.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future?
Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?
The outcomes of the project are directly addressed to the students; they are the main target group and users of the network.

The TuBeMATES Video Sharing Community is as well a useful tool for the Universities to disseminate ERASMUS Mundus in Asia and Europe.

In future, the network could be used to incorporate new student video materials through the platform.
Joint programmes from A to Z

Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+ programmes are rich in various scholarship opportunities. It is not easy to find one’s way in the plethora of initiatives, actions, partnerships and consortia. Fortunately, the Dutch Organisation for Internationalisation in Education and national structures of five other European countries prepared a single, comprehensive reference guide (JDAZ guide) dealing with all aspects of joint programmes with a special focus on development, quality assurance and degree recognition. In addition, the project organised seminars and conferences, such as ‘Practical examples for practical guidelines’.

What is your best project memory?
The final project session was a true celebration of the launching of the JDAZ guide. We presented the project results and set them in a global perspective to make clear how joint programmes are being supported in the EHEA. The celebration was completed with a dinner where we made some toasts (with genuine champagne), here are some of them:
- Proud to the work done and the successful completion of the JDAZ guide. We’ve made it!
- Proud to having fun!
- Proud to love and life!
- Proud to the capacity of seeing small beautiful things around you!
- Proud to women over 40!

What was the most important thing you learnt during the implementation of the project?
Do not underestimate the amount of research and coordination work needed to implement an EU project (like JDAZ)!
When we started reviewing the available literature and project results, we found ourselves looking at an ocean of information! It was a big challenge to read, select and organise all the information in a complete coherent picture. We have spent a record time discussing:
- The precise definition of the terms: joint degree, joint programme, joint degree programme, joint qualification (is it possible to have a joint programme leading to a qualification that is not a joint qualification? or is the qualification of a joint programme always a joint qualification?)
- The difference between a reference guide and a guide with references.

These differences can have can have large implications for the project findings and outcomes.
We have succeeded in turning the ocean of information into a practical manual for practitioners working with joint programmes.

After the work done, new information can be easily added to the structure of the JDAZ guide.
Following the ‘key messages for practitioners’ proposed in the JDAZ guide, we can list the following lessons learned:
- base your cooperation in solid knowledge and trust in your partners
- make sure the management at your organisation supports the project and understands its relevance
- be ready to be flexible and learn!

And what do you like about your project?
We appreciate an excellent opportunity to collaborate both internationally and internally within our organisation (colleagues from the department National Agency Erasmus+ and department Expertise & Innovation at EP-Nuffic). A very close collaboration based on a solid mutual trust (professional & personal) enabled us to produce a text that is not a ‘Frankenstein’ and meets the expectations of all its authors. It has been a very enriching experience and an opportunity to learn and grow for all the persons involved.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?
You do not realise at first, but a project like this takes years of your life! In this time we faced several moments of personal trouble which made two members of the core team temporarily stop their work. Fortunately the JDAZ planning was not tight and we could implement all the project actions and finish the guide perfectly on time.

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?
Looking back, we may have spent less time on finding good practice examples, since our experts made us realise that good practices were specific to a particular context and couldn’t be easily generalised. But several things we would have done differently were necessary stages we needed to go through to arrive at better insights.

Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?
Yes, mostly because our guide has been very well received and we have received several invitations from HEIs and advisory bodies to deliver training on joint programmes. Now we face the challenge of how to tackle specific situations of various country/HEIs but we find it very encouraging and stimulating. We intend to pick up the moment and come up with ideas for possible future steps.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future?
Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?
The JDAZ guide will serve professionals at HEIs wishing to develop or already working with joint programmes. Furthermore, advisory bodies, National Agencies, Quality assurance bodies, ENICs NARIC, and a broad community involved in higher education can profit from the guide. Besides being available in pdf format on www.ecahe.eu the JDAZ guide is also available at ECAPEDA and very easy to consult at www.ecahe.eu/index.php?pg=guide&lang=en&from=fr. Even though students are not the first target group, the guide insists on the importance of checking for example the quality or the recognition of the degree, with the view to assure the interest of the student. Therefore the guide will also indirectly benefit the students, by alerting HEIs to all the issues involved in the development of joint programmes that have direct influence on students (from the linkage to the curriculum with the labour market, tuition fees, recognition, professional requirements, etc.).
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ECCE-MUNDUS
Enhancing Cross-regional Cooperation with Erasmus Mundus

KEY INFORMATION
Coordinator
Tempus Public Foundation, Hungary

Institutions/Countries involved
Tempus Public Foundation, Hungary, Slovakia
Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research, Austria
Slovak Academic Association for International Cooperation, Slovakia

Geographical focus
Eastern Europe, Western Balkans and Central Asia

Year of activity
2011 - 2014

Total budget
€ 174,070

Grant received
€ 156,663

Website
www.eccemundus.eu

What is your best project memory?

And what do you like about your project?

What was the most important thing you learnt during the implementation of the project?

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?

What is your best project memory?
All of us are united by a common purpose: the promotion of Erasmus Mundus. Everything we do and try to achieve is motivated by the desire to contribute to the internationalisation of higher education. The ECCE-Mundus project was an opportunity to foster a network of interested parties across the regions. The project’s success is a testament to the commitment of all involved.

What do you like about your project?

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“Almost three quarters of seminar participants developed their ideas into actual project proposals.”

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And what do you like about your project?
The Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education (QACHE) proposal stemmed from a real and perceived need to address, in terms of information and practical support, the Quality Assurance (QA) of cross-border higher education (CBHE). The project looked closely into different ways in which European QA agencies and higher education institutions (HEIs) address the accreditation and quality assurance of the programmes delivered outside of their countries. Based on good practices from Europe, Australia, Asia-Pacific and the Gulf Region, the project elaborated a toolkit for Quality Assurance Agencies. This toolkit provides practical guidance to quality assurance agencies on how they can improve the sharing of information relating to CBHE and enhance cooperation in its quality assurance. The final report of the project concludes the main findings, provides good practice cases and a suggestion for further research, and gives policy recommendations to policy makers at national and European levels.

In addition to these main findings, we have learned that challenges concerning the topic do not differ very much between countries / regions. Although national / regional settings are somewhat different, core challenges remain the same. This supports the idea of further strengthening cooperation between regions.

And what do you like about your project?
The project has managed to stimulate discussion about the topic amongst a wide community in higher education in Europe and in the participating regions (Gulf and Asia-Pacific). It has been genuinely a positive learning experience for all counterparts from each of the participating regions.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?
Preparing the regional forum in Macao, China was a little challenging due to different time zones of persons involved in the planning (Brussels, Belgium – Bangalore, India – Shanghai and Macao, China). This was a hectic especially in the last days of the planning before the actual event took place. The preparations of the final conference were demanding as very small team of staff from ENQA and HECR was organising a large scale, international event (with some support from partners of course).

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?
Schedule should have been planned better in order to allow more time between regional events. The surveys we prepared for higher education institutions and QA agencies should have been tested beforehand in order to gain more accurate and complete answers. Some questions appeared to be too difficult and detailed for the respondents. Between the final event and the end of the project duration, more time should have been reserved to conclude the findings in the final report.

Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project? Yes, indeed, the overall impression among the project partners is that this project has only been the first step in truly understanding and getting a grasp of the QA of CBHE and the attempts to make it better. We need to look into ways to take the project further.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?
The main output of the project, “Cooperation in cross-border higher education – a toolkit for quality assurance agencies” is a manual for quality assurance agencies all over the world, helping them in planning and carrying out the QA of CBHE. The project has also put QA of CBHE more prominently on the agenda among regional QA networks.

At the end of the day, students are the main beneficiaries of the project. Although they might not be exposed directly to the findings in the project, the outcomes (enhancement and better coordination of the QA of CBHE) will eventually serve the students in the form of a high quality education provision across borders.
**ADDE SALEM**

**A Double Degree in Europe, South American Leadership and Employability**

One of the biggest higher education challenges of today is how to link studies with job market requirements. The Adde Salem project tried to confront this challenge by identifying students’ needs and job-market requirements relevant to the Erasmus Mundus Joint and Double Degrees in engineering delivered in South America. As a result, it issued a special publication on the basis of its research “ADDE SALEM: A double degree in Europe South American leadership and employability”. The project also contributed to a number of new double degree agreements signed between European and South American institutions and held open conferences, working groups and international seminars.

**KEY INFORMATION**

- **Coordinator**
  Polytechnic University of Milan, Italy
- **Institutions/Countries involved**
  - Central Graduate school of Lille, France
  - Central Graduate school of Nanterre, France
  - Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary
  - Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), Portugal
  - Technical University of Madrid, Spain
  - Lund University, Sweden
  - Austral University, Argentina
  - Buenos Aires Institute of Technology, Argentina
  - Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
  - São Paulo University, Brazil
  - Federcro Santa Maria Technical University, Chile
  - Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Chile
  - Javeriana University, Colombia
  - University Norte Foundation, Colombia
- **Geographical focus**
  South America
- **Year of activity**
  2011 - 2014
- **Grant received**
  € 335,760
- **Website**
  www.addesalem.org

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**“WE LIKED THE GREAT SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION AMONG PARTNERS”**

Giancarlo Spinelli
Coordinator
Polytechnic University of Milan

Francesca Fogal
Project Officer
International Relations
Polytechnic University of Milan

Barbara Del Sole
Project Officer
EU Projects Office, Polytechnic University of Milan

What is your best project memory?

Interestingly enough, our best memory is linked with planting a big tree in Barranquilla (Colombia) at UNINORTE, in March 2014. This event was attended by the Rector of Uninorte, Jesús Ferro Bayona, and the coordinator of the project, Giancarlo Spinelli and representatives of the partner institutions. The tree has a plaque dedicated to our project and it will be a reminder of our work in the years to come.

What was the most important thing you learnt during the implementation of the project?

The project made us realise that although joint-master graduates were appreciated by employers, employers’ knowledge of the Erasmus Mundus programme (their aims, curricula, acquired skills and competencies) was very limited. Through this we learnt that what was really needed was a better promotion of the programme.

And what do you like about your project?

We liked a lot the fact that we managed to set a procedure for partner institutions to continuously get feedback from all the stakeholders involved (professors and administrative staff, alumni, students, employers). Another thing we liked was a great spirit of collaboration among partners and the special links we created between European and Latin American Institutions, are a guarantee for future successful joint activities. As an example we already used the acquired know-how in a project (FAE - Feedback from Alumni and Employers) of the T.I.M.E. association made up of 55 institutional members from 4 Continents.

The collaboration with some of the Adde Salem partners is also continuing within the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 - Strand 1 project entitled “SustainIT: Technologies for Sustainable Development.”

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?

We would have involved a greater number of employers, in order to be able to group them by industrial or tertiary sectors and still have a sufficiently wide statistical sample to compare them different needs.

Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?

The above mentioned great spirit of collaboration among partners and the special links we created between European and Latin American Institutions, are a guarantee for future successful joint activities.

What would you have improved in the project implementation?

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?

The outcomes of the Adde Salem project are addressed to 3 major stakeholders: Higher Education Institutions, companies and students. Higher Education Institutions will be able to develop double degrees which are more oriented toward the industrial needs of the respective countries. Companies will have a clearer picture of the competences and skills acquired by double degree alumni and will be keener to hire them. Furthermore, double degree alumni will benefit of potential employers increased consciousness when looking for jobs.

Students will be more aware of the opportunities offered by double degrees in terms of their future professional development for example and will be able to participate in double degree projects whose curricula will be more responsive towards the industrial world.

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**Erasmus Mundus: Building on Experience - Testimonials of Erasmus Mundus Promotion Projects**
ERASMUS+ BUILDING ON EXPERIENCE - TESTIMONIALS OF ERASMUS MUNDUS PROMOTION PROJECTS

The economic downturn following the banking crisis of 2008 raised serious questions about how European higher education addresses and perpetuates the limitations of a specific economic model which has proved to be highly unsustainable. The Social Economy project gained an in-depth knowledge of the nature and practice of the people-centred economic approach. One outcome was a 240 pages handbook (“Enhancing studies of the social and solidarity economy”) in three languages, which includes values, epistemology, ways of working and social enterprise ecosystems in universities. It contains literature reviews, practical cases from four continents, dialogical models, pedagogical activities and professional competences. The end-of-project conference addressed how the social and solidarity economy could interact more efficiently with the public and private sectors, to enhance equality and reciprocity for human development.

Outreach: The number of delegates at the end-of-project conference from universities and social enterprises demonstrated that the scope of the project had been far greater than originally envisaged. This confirmed the dissemination strategies used in the project had been highly effective. These included delegates from universities, social enterprises and public sector representatives from Argentina, Germany, Cuba, South Africa, Somalia, The Netherlands, Uruguay, the U.S. and Zambia.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?

It is difficult to pinpoint just one! Probably the most difficult issue, rather than movement, was dealing with the fact that the co-funding which had been promised didn’t arrive when expected and there was a growing possibility it would not materialise at all. This posed a real threat to the project and to the agreements made with partners. As coordinators we spent an inordinate amount of time dealing with this administrative issue and the situation was highly stressful. In consultation with our university we decided to give this issue a cut-off point and then work on the basis that the co-funding agreement would not be honoured. York St John University leadership team made the decision to honour its own commitment to the project and to Erasmus Mundus and underwrite the shortfall in funding, while we sought alternative sources. This meant that the work on the project could continue according to agreed plans.

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?

There were regular Skype meetings between partners. In retrospect we would have considered more face-to-face meetings at the implementation stage in order to accommodate different cultural and working styles.
Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?

The answer to this is a resounding ‘yes’, both in our university and with the many collaborators and contacts we have made during the project. We are already using the handbook to promote critical thinking about the role and responsibility of our university and other universities. The material in the handbook and project blogs is being used as part of university courses in the Consortium universities and elsewhere. We have plans to continue working with the network of partners and collaborators to further develop this.

York St John University’s strategy and action is now focussed on making the social economy one of its guiding principles, in line with the university’s historic mission to promote social justice. We are collaborating in this endeavour in our own university and with others as they have decided to move forward in the same direction.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?

Each of the partners will be implementing processes and findings from the project into their teaching and research. The practical and values-based curriculum advocated by the handbook will also have positive implications for student engagement in social innovation, social entrepreneurship, and employability. In some of the participating universities, students have been involved in collecting data and have based their own research projects around this. According to their tutors, this process of interacting with local social enterprises and initiatives in their communities has been transformational for the students. We expect this to continue with future cohorts of students internationally. We also hope this link between the university and the community will bring the benefits of educated young people having direct participation within their own communities, as they gain insights into the variety of social, economic and environmental dimensions of enterprises in the social and solidarity economy.

The handbook is being distributed through international networks: Red de Educación de Economía Social y Solidaria at the Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Argentina; Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia through their Instituto de Economía Social y Cooperativismo (INDESCO); Intercultural Network for the Promotion of Social and Solidarity Economy (IPRESS) and its Solidarity Economy Network, USA; Red Española de Estudios del Desarrollo (REEDES); Spain; Rede Portuguesa de Economia Solidaria (RedPes), Portugal; Consejo de Educación Popular de América Latina y el Caribe (CEAAL). We have also established a relationship with the British Council Canada-UK and their Students for Social Impact exchange programme which we are seeking to develop in the future.

Social and Solidarity Economy in Higher Education

Fundraising

Creating links and relationships

Education for change

Raising active awareness

Democratic participation

Co-responsibility and transparency

Advocacy

Visibility and rights based-actions and objectives in common

Accountability

Building trust

Building interactive community for ...
Ask Asia succeeded in promoting the Erasmus Mundus programme in Asia and strengthening the links between European and Asian institutions through its focus on employability. The Ask Asia project assessed how the Erasmus Mundus (EM) graduates in Agriculture and related life-sciences perform on the professional job market in Asia. It identified as well specific competences and skills that provide these graduates with a comparative advantage in meeting the expectations of their first destination employers following the education/training period. In order to reach their objectives they carried out an online survey on the totality of the EM students graduated in 6 countries in Asia (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam), collected primary data and interviewed employers of Erasmus Mundus alumni. The activities also provided a valuable glimpse of how Asian institutions perceive European higher education systems. They prepared seven studies and reports (available online), and organised six national workshops to discuss face to face comparative skills and competences with selected representatives of alumni and employers.

Agriculture, Skills, Knowledge in Asia: Competences and employability of Erasmus Mundus Graduates in Agriculture on the Asian Professional Market

**KEY INFORMATION**

**Coordinator**
Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Czech Republic
Institutions/Countries involved
BOKU, Austria
Ghent University, Belgium
AGRINATURA, Czech Republic
Agreensburg, France
Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia
Nanjing Agricultural University, China
Tadaku University, Indonesia
Mongolian University of Life Sciences, Mongolia
Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association, Thailand
Prince of Songkla University, Thailand
Hue University, Vietnam
Geographical Focus Asia
Year of activity 2013 - 2015
Total budget € 321,225
Grant received € 233,970
Website www.askasia.culs-prague.eu

**What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?**
It was really challenging to find consultants who were able to communicate in local language and in English, and who could collect data in the country concerned. Thanks to the support and the work of PhD students from the Czech Republic, who also came to Asia to collect data from employers together with the local consultants, we get the relevant results. One of the most demanding parts of the project was also to finalise the individual country studies which had to be published. As there were six teams of mixed nationalities, each of them working on one country study, as well as many authors involved in the writing and editing process, it really was time consuming to integrate all the comments and suggestions in the final document. However we managed to do it and the report is now done.

**What was the most important thing you learnt during the implementation of the project?**
To manage a group of people based in several different countries, with different opinions, skills and expectations was quite challenging, and I learnt a lot from this experience. We learnt the importance of clearly assigning individuals with tasks and deadlines. Personally, I compare the project with my two years-old daughter, who was born exactly at the beginning of the project. The first months were difficult, I had to take care of her, feed her and balance her requests with my capacities. It was the same with the project coordination. Now after two years my daughter is able to walk, eat by herself, play with other children and be more independent. This is similar to the project: the results of the research are published, disseminated and, hopefully, useful for the EU, Asian universities, the European Commission, students and other stakeholders.

**What is your best project memory?**
The best memories are the workshops and in particular the final project workshop held in September 2015 in Prague, where all the results of the research done within the Ask Asia project team were presented. During the workshop, we met with all project partners, representatives of other EU and Asian universities, international organisations and also with students from Asia who study in Europe thanks to the Erasmus Mundus scholarship.

"The results of the project provided us with the matching link between the study programmes and the requirements of the job market"

**Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?**
I would have specified better the research questions, planned properly the data collection methods and improved the selection of the consultants. From the consortium management point of view, I would have organised a longer Kick off meeting (2-3 days) and would have invited the whole project team in order to explain properly the objective and all the expected activities. Although everything was written in the project proposal, everyone understood it in a different way and looking from today’s perspective it is very important to clarify all points, aspects and consequences of the activities since the beginning.

**How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future?**
Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?
The results of the project provided us with the matching link between the study programmes and the requirements of the job market (company, institutions). The project is focused on alumni employability in the field of agriculture, however some outcomes are quite general and can be disseminated to others faculties (internally) as well to other universities (externally). The outcomes of the project are relevant to academic and international relations offices as they will be able to better understand how to promote higher education and cooperate with overseas universities. The students can benefit directly from a wider access to international nobilities and indirectly through the findings that will be adopted in the teaching and education systems.

**Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?**
We would like to contribute to institutionalise the interaction between universities and the world of work. For example the following methods could be used: facilitating tracer studies, participation of professionals to teaching modules, integration of internships in the curricula, offering incubator services. The conclusions and policy implications obtained by the project contributed to improving both European and Asian higher education (by understanding better the barriers, and the similarity, between the higher education systems).

Petra CHALOUPKOVA
Vice dean for International relations
Faculty of Tropical Agriculture, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

"The results of the project provided us with the matching link between the study programmes and the requirements of the job market"
Cities need to develop the capacity and implement the policies that will drive them to the transition to sustainable urban development. Higher education has a significant role to play by educating and training the future urban managers and planners. The Sustain project tried to confront this challenge by improving the quality of higher education in Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) and by promoting international collaboration both in and between European and Asian universities. It developed for example educational modules related to SUD for participants of Erasmus Mundus programmes (for both students and lecturers).

The Sustain team focused as well in increasing the employability of students and the visibility of and access to European Higher Education in Asia in the field of SUD, attracting prospective Asian and international students. The project developed a series of learning modules and e-learning courses that combine the best knowledge, experience and practices on SUD from Europe and Asia. It has also published a student guide that covers programmes related to SUD, internship positions and job opportunities in organizations working in the field, and city networks and partnerships. The above information along with further details on workshops/meetings organised for the project partners and promotional seminars for students can be found in the project website. 

What was the most important thing you learned during the implementation of the project?

Considering the fact that the project is relatively low budgeted, partners often tend to give priority to other commitments. Therefore it is essential to set the right monitoring mechanisms, set milestones and realistic deadlines to ensure smooth and timely delivery. Furthermore, regular updates and communication with the partners is deemed necessary for keeping the momentum and ensuring that any issues or delays that might occur can be quickly detected.

And what do you like about your project?

We valued the co-design and co-development of the educational modules in sustainable urban development involving not only partners but also external collaborators that in return to the inputs they provide, they can access all the material developed. So there is a self-sustained mechanism in place that stimulates co-creation of knowledge and value. Furthermore, the diversity of outputs of SUSTAIN project entails innovative and high quality of curriculum development, e-learning development and implementation, development of an informative e-platform and organization of promotional workshops, seminars and conferences.

What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?

Aside from the development of educational modules (and the implementation of e-learning courses) and participation in promotional seminars and workshops, there are multiple outputs from different partners, such as the toolbox for decision making, the development of a lecturer’s guidebook, and a handbook on skills and competences. This requires delegation of tasks, constant coordination and follow-up with project partners to ensure that they provide the deliverables needed. Considering the limited project budget, assurance of inputs delivery by each partner is a priority. Smart ways of continuously motivating and stimulating delivery of project products is a key issue to this challenge. Giving responsibility to specific partners for specific project outcomes, regular coordination/monitoring Skype calls, and synergies with other existing curriculum development activities are some of the ways we coped with the aforementioned challenges.

Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?

Continuously motivating SUSTAIN partners and collaborators to keep on delivering inputs and meeting deadlines was quite a challenge particularly the first year of the project implementation. Eventually, through a learning by doing project management approach regarding this issue, we introduced regular skype calls in order to better monitor the progress of the project implementation, detect issues and delays and further provide and facilitate support to project partners that were lagging behind. It is also essential in these meetings to consider time differences with non-European partners in order to make sure that the vast majority of the partners are able to attend these coordination skype calls. Having a real face to face meeting with all partners is also essential for better bonding and understanding of partners views regarding the project and assuring that all partners are on board while sharing a common vision of the project.

Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?

We reflect on how we can further advance the outcomes and results and how we can further expand our network and collaboration with our existing partners. The objective is to continue using the thematic modules, developed by SUSTAIN, in higher educational programmes as widely as possible for maximizing further the impact of the project. In addition courses, summer schools, building blocks in Master courses in the field of Sustainable Urban Development could be developed based on SUSTAIN modules and products. Furthermore, the SUSTAIN consortium after the completion of the project aims on publishing a book on the thematic SUSTAIN modules where partners and collaborators could provide inputs in the form of book chapters.

How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? Will students have a particular benefit from the outcome?

The outcomes of the SUSTAIN project will benefit lecturers, educators, educational programme managers and students in the field of sustainable urban development. Firstly lecturers and educators can incorporate SUSTAIN educational modules in their own curriculum and programmes and benefit the students who are enrolled in these programmes. Secondly, in addition to the opportunities that students will have to get trained through high quality educational modules, they have also the opportunity to enrol in the SUSTAIN e-platform and follow these online courses from anywhere they are without any costs. Thirdly, they can access the SUSTAIN e-platform and get information on the other thematic modules that are offered in the field of sustainable urban development along with information on fellowships and practical issues for studying in Europe.
In recent years, DesignBuild-Studios (DBS), a teaching and research model enabling students to take responsibility for developing balanced future living environments, are undertaking architectural projects from design to realisation. They became a new paradigm in architectural education in Europe and all around the world. The focus of the EDBKN project is the development of a European DesignBuild Knowledge Network (EDBKN), which aims to increase the attractiveness of European Institutes of Higher Education towards third countries as well as promoting the implementation, distribution, and sustainability of the innovative DesignBuild methodology. In order to reach that goal, an interactive DesignBuild web platform has been developed and launched as the most effective tool of the EDBKN. A pilot building project in Egypt was realised and monitored on the web-platform.

**What is your best project memory?**

The EDBKN provided us with the chance to initiate a DesignBuild project on Dahab Island in Cairo as a pilot project for our web platform designbuildXchange. For us as Coordinators based in Berlin it was difficult to follow all the obstacles and challenges that the team in Cairo was going through in order to get the various permissions to implement the project. A highlight occurred as, against all odds, the project finally achieved completion. The first pictures of local children playing on site were posted on the network platform on one of the first project profiles. Some months later another 150 DesignBuild projects were uploaded - what an overwhelming resonance!

**What was the most difficult moment you learnt during the implementation of the project?**

Choose the right people to work with! That is something that we had already learned from our previous DesignBuild projects. Knowing who to collaborate with is an essential part of making a project successful. This was proved once again within this project.

**What was the most difficult moment and how did you cope with it?**

The most difficult moment was when we, the passionate DesignBuilders were confronted with what it actually means to run a web platform and getting a sense of feeling helpless. Team brainstorming and asking the right experts was most helpful in combating this situation.

**Looking from today’s perspective, what would you have improved in the project implementation?**

Looking back, it would have been better if we would have allowed more time for the conceptual development of the web-platform. The first version was developed within a regular study course at the ZIIK – Centre for intercultural and international communication at TU Berlin. Due to logistical reasons related to the students study course at the ZIIK – Centre for intercultural and international communication at TU Berlin. Due to logistical reasons related to the students curriculum we were developing the basic concept for the platform parallel to the programming work of the students. It proved impossible to coordinate this phase differently.

**Has the EM Action 3 initiative encouraged you to continue the work initiated during the project?**

Indeed! We built up the first network promoting European DesignBuild Studios. Thus we made DesignBuild visible for various stakeholders worldwide. Building on all the positive feedback we feel highly encouraged to further sustain and develop it’s great potentials.

**How and by whom the outcomes of your project will be used in the future? Will students have a particular benefit from the outcomes?**

The designbuildXchange platform will be used by different stakeholders such as students, teachers, craftsmen, clients, donors and their related organisations. DesignBuild project participants in particular will benefit from the outcomes of the EDBKN project.

**What is the increasing number of DesignBuild Studios doing in order to make it happen?**

The dbXchange platform will be used by different stakeholders such as students, teachers, craftsmen, clients, donors and their related organisations. DesignBuild project participants in particular will benefit from the increasing number of DesignBuild Studios being initiated throughout the world, transforming architectural teaching methods by allowing them to get engaged in shaping future built environments.

**Who is your best project memory?**

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COMMON GROUND FOR FUTURE INITIATIVES

The testimonials of the EM Action 3 coordinators highlight elements that are common in all the projects. Furthermore, the coordinators provide recommendations for anyone who wishes to organise a successful project in the field of international higher education.

In the following you can learn more about the projects’ results, their benefits for the different target groups, their impact for the concrete field of study or the geographical area.

A solid partnership

The EM Action 3 projects involved versatile partnerships grouping institutions and organisations from several countries or from different regions. The projects benefited from the involvement of a great variety of higher education institutions and public or private organisations active in the field. In addition some projects also involved research bodies, NGOs, university associations or networks with significant experience in the field of higher education.

The coordinators of the projects emphasised the importance of choosing the right and matching partners. They all strived to create close cooperation based on mutual trust at the initial project phase. They underlined how crucial it is to divide the tasks clearly and set work plans and deadlines. They also made extensive use of the new technologies for project monitoring and communication purposes although they did not undermine the necessity of face-to-face meetings occasionally. Overall they attributed a big part of the success of their projects to their excellent partnership and their strong team of committed collaborators with a participatory approach.

The partners usually complemented each other in terms of capacity, knowledge and expertise. Each partner brought in their distinctive value added in the field, thus increasing the impact of the project activities and their outcomes. Many projects involved professors and administrative staff, while others asked input from decision makers in academia, education advisors or researchers. However, what all participants had in common was their strong commitment to the project and their focus on the quality of the outcomes.

From policy to practice

One of the main objectives of the EM Action 3 was to better promote the European higher education. Similarly, there was an emphasis on creating synergies between the EU policy dialogue at international level and the cooperation projects that are supported by the EU programmes in higher education. EM Action 3 projects represented an interesting opportunity to respond to particular challenges in the field of higher education and to contribute to overcome shortcomings or deficits identified in the EU policy dialogue within the European Higher Education Area and worldwide.

EM Action 3 projects transformed priority needs and policies into practical tools and concrete initiatives.

Through their activities and mainly through their outputs they have translated theory into practice. A representative example of this is the JDAZ project. It produced a comprehensive guide about joint programmes which has become a reference document for project coordinators.

In general EM Action 3 projects acted as ambassadors of European education in the regions they worked on. They set up platforms for collaboration and for exchange of innovative practices. The projects provided the framework to the organisations involved to re-examine their promotion and cooperation modalities and to tackle upcoming challenges. Through this type of joint work, new methodologies of setting up integrated high quality courses emerged and new tools were tested and adopted by the institutions.

From local to global

EM Action 3 projects demonstrated a strong international dimension. Some projects implicated countries with significant student flows while others involved countries or regions that are less represented in international cooperation projects in education. In both cases, EM Action 3 projects produced multiple outputs that were relevant for all the countries and regions involved and had good transferability.

The geographical scope varied greatly from project to project. However, most projects analysed themes that were of common interest to many institutions or organisations despite their geographical location. Many of the challenges found at regional or national settings were relevant to a broader geographical audience and demanded global solutions. EM Action 3 addressed issues that were potentially interesting to European as well as to international societies. They have advanced the dialogue on all aspects of higher education with an international scope.

Most actors in the field of higher education face similar problems related to enhancing cooperation, understanding joint programmes, supporting quality assurance, and facilitating employability. By tackling these issues through their activities, EM Action 3 projects became highly relevant to support policy.

Focus on the students

Students, researchers and doctoral candidates were on the focus of EM Action 3 projects. Interesting and fun outcomes were developed as for example marketing tools, and campaigns targeting only students. The EM-ACE and TuBeMATES projects among others have proposed innovative web-based information platforms and intercultural learning material. Many EM Action 3 projects have worked on methods of making the study courses more accessible and inclusive for students from different geographical or social backgrounds.

In addition, EM Action 3 projects have systematically taken students’ views into account when developing material and setting up new services. The members of the Erasmus Mundus Alumni Association collaborated with some of the EM Action 3 projects and gave their input during various activities such as conferences, surveys and development of online tools for students.
Links to the world of work

Reinforcing the links between universities and employers enhances the quality in higher education. EM Action 3 projects looked at the balance between the theoretical and practical components in the curricula to foster the career prospects of joint programme graduates.

In this respect, EM Action 3 projects strived to facilitate the interaction between universities and the world of work. They explored potential synergies between businesses and employers. The objectives of such projects, as for example ASK ASIA or ADDE SALEM, were to investigate how the academic content proposed by the joint programmes responds to the employers’ needs. Through their surveys and outputs they have raised awareness among the professional world about the assets of joint programmes with a mobility component. They also exposed the challenges of successful marketing of joint programmes to international audiences or different geographical regions. EM Action 3 projects contributed significantly towards alumni employability through services that facilitate tracer studies, promotion of internships in the curricula or simply a better marketing of joint programmes.

Dissemination and use of results

EM Action 3 projects focused strongly on the dissemination and exploitation of results. Information and promotion events were an important part of their work-plan. The institutions strived to render the outputs sustainable and took measures to reach all relevant actors. In many cases, the innovative project results are transferrable and adaptable in different academic and geographical environments. Furthermore, conscious work has been put into disseminating the project outputs to co-ordinators and partners of Erasmus Mundus joint programmes and creating synergies.

Excellence and Quality

EM Action 3 projects addressed the international dimension of quality assurance, an element that has acquired increased importance in global higher education. The activities of projects such as QACHE were strongly linked to any measures taken by higher education institutions to monitor and evaluate their academic programmes. They were also linked to the concepts of recognition and accreditation of diplomas and study periods abroad as well as to quality assurance of cross-border higher education.

Quality assurance implies on-going processes that involve many actors from academics and students to external experts and national accreditation authorities. EM Action 3 projects targeted this theme through creation of platforms of dialogue as well as through proposing specific instruments for joint programme development: guides, training sessions or toolkits.

The outputs of these projects are important for promoting the culture of quality, competence and excellence in integrated study programmes involving international students. They contribute to further accommodating the realisation of the European Approach for quality assurance of Joint Programmes.

An important learning experience

Organising and participating in the EM Action 3 projects was fun! This was something that all co-ordinators that were interviewed agreed to. The networking, inter-institutional collaboration and the joint development of the activities were positive learning experiences to all the beneficiaries involved. Some have gone so far as to remark: ‘this was the best project related experience in our professional life’.

Part of the constructive and positive learning coming from EM Action 3 projects derives from their structure.

The calls for proposals granted enough freedom to the participating organisations to compose their partnerships in a complementary manner, to define the main thematic focus of the project, to decide on the methodologies of work and the type of their final outcomes. The nature of EM Action 3 was such that although activities had to adhere to certain principles and a contextual focus had to be respected, the organisations involved had ample choice on which key elements in their field they could work on through the project. This allowed for key issues to be addressed. The projects were able to identify and work on the main factors that increased the quality and effectiveness of the joint programmes and were of interest and benefit to all the persons involved.

In conclusion it can be said that EM Action 3 projects contributed toward a better realisation of joint programmes in higher education. They were more than just an accompanying measure for the mainstream elements of the Erasmus Mundus programme. The outcomes of EM Action 3 brought about innovation, novelties and modernisation in the work of the institutions and organisations involved. The structure and functioning of this Action allowed the organisations involved to have a better access to their target groups and to respond with specific initiatives to theoretical challenges of their work but also to political priorities in the field of higher education. In many cases, EM Action 3 became a good engine for future projects and had the potential to offset new academic collaborations. This multi facet nature of the Action is the part that can produce a ripple effect that will hopefully extend beyond the current programmes in higher education or possibly influence future policies in the field.

New perspectives

The testimonials give learning experiences that are clearly relevant for institutions and organisations that are involved or are interested in the new actions currently offered under the Erasmus+ programme. The following short descriptions present a selection of different Erasmus+ actions for which the past experience is mostly relevant. At the same time these actions offer new opportunities also for those who have been actively involved in the past.

Learning Mobility of Individuals

You will find an increased number of opportunities under Mobility Projects for individuals and organisations from all parts of the world. EM Action 3 focused strongly on joint programmes and on international mobility and as such the outputs remain highly relevant and transferable to the new generation of mobility for higher education students and staff as well as the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs).

Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

There are many new and diversified possibilities for organisations from different participating countries to work together, to develop, share and transfer best practices and innovative approaches in the fields of education, training and youth. You may consider establishing Strategic Partnerships, Knowledge Alliances or enter into Capacity Building to cooperate with Partner Countries.

Support for policy reform

Erasmus+ aims to stimulate innovative policy development and dialogue. You can contribute to this by exchanging your knowledge in the fields of education, training with others. There are for example opportunities for forward-looking cooperation projects on policy developments and European policy experimentations. You can discover opportunities for studies and surveys, European policy tools to support the Bologna process, to strengthen cooperation with partner countries and to promote further the European Higher Education.
USEFUL LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

All Action 3 projects funded through the Erasmus Mundus programme

Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013

Erasmus+ general information
www.ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus

Erasmus+ Programme Guide
www.ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en

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www.em-a.eu

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Erasmus+: Building on Experience
Testimonials of Erasmus Mundus
Promotion Projects

This brochure presents mainly a selection of the final generation of projects. A great variety of higher education institutions, public or private organisations, research bodies, NGOs, university associations or networks with significant experience in the field of higher education were involved.

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