



CHARLES
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**Quality Assurance of European Universities and the
European Degree**

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Presentation structure

- **Part I** *Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes from Alliance's Perspective*
- **Part II** *Does The European Degree Initiative Bring Anything New?*



QUALITY ASSURANCE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES FROM ALLIANCE'S PERSPECTIVE

PART I



Ambivalent Terminology

“A review of the literature, university web pages, survey reports and research articles shows a **plethora of terms** used to describe international collaborative programs, such as double and joint degrees. These terms include: **double, multiple, tri-national, joint, integrated, collaborative, international, consecutive, concurrent, co-tutelle, overlapping, conjoint, parallel, simultaneous**, and **common** degrees. They mean different things to different people within and across countries, thereby, causing **mass confusion** about the real meaning and use of these terms.”

(KNIGHT, Jane: Doubts and Dilemmas with Double Degree Programs. In: “Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education” [online monograph]. Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del Conocimiento (RUSC). Vol. 8, No 2, pp. 297-312. UOC. 2011. ISSN 1698-580X)



Ambivalent Practice

“The advantage of Double Degree is that students gain two degrees (from the home as well as the foreign university), in a significantly shorter time than if they had studied two study programmes one after another.”

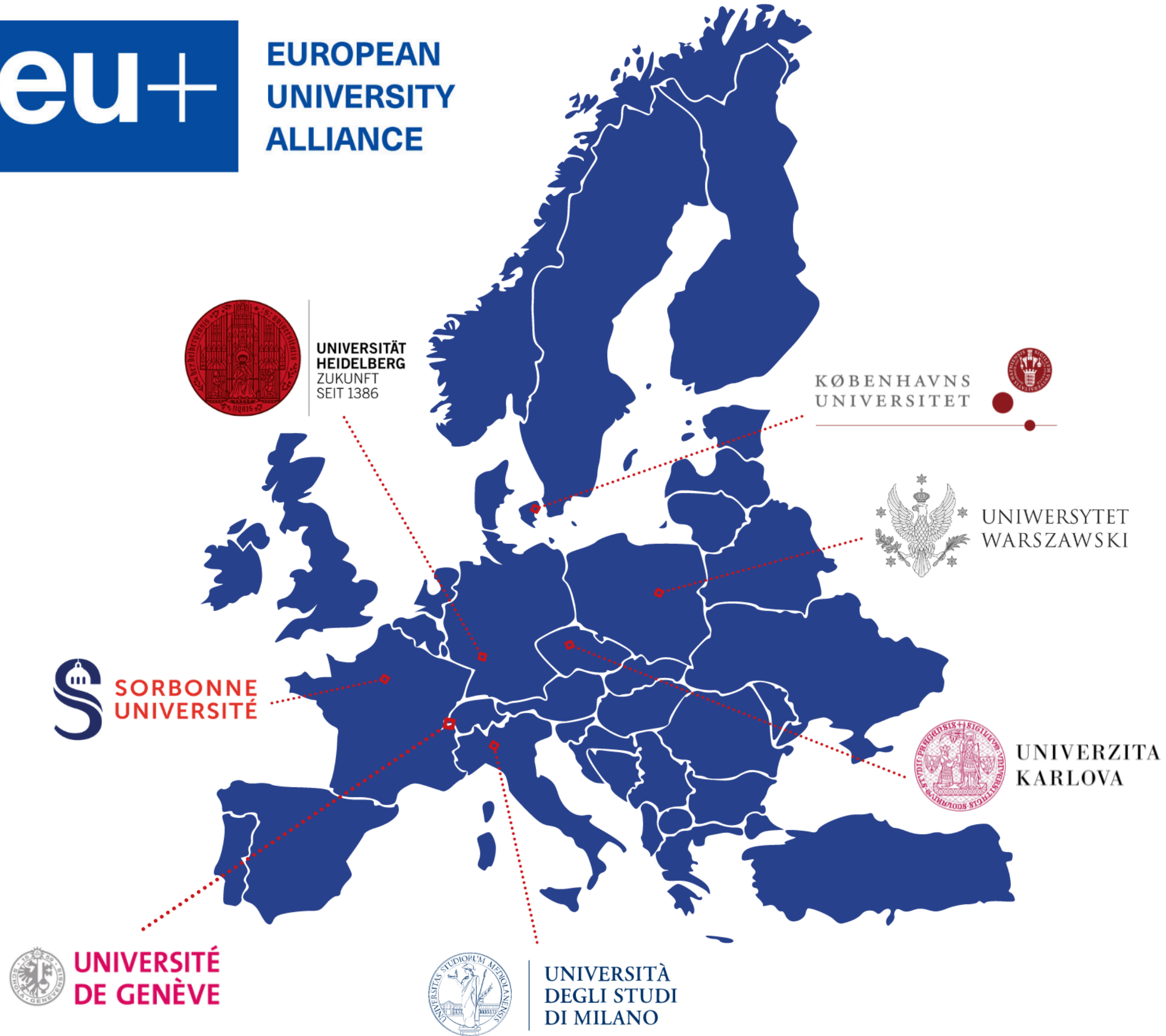
“The Double Degree Programme offers the possibility to obtain two diplomas (both from domestic and foreign university) for significantly less time than if you completed both degree courses separately or in succession. Due to the fact that some courses are recognized in both degree programmes, you can kill two birds with one stone (or exam).”

“By combining two single degrees into a double degree, you’ll study focused courses in each program, allowing you to complete two degrees in less time.”

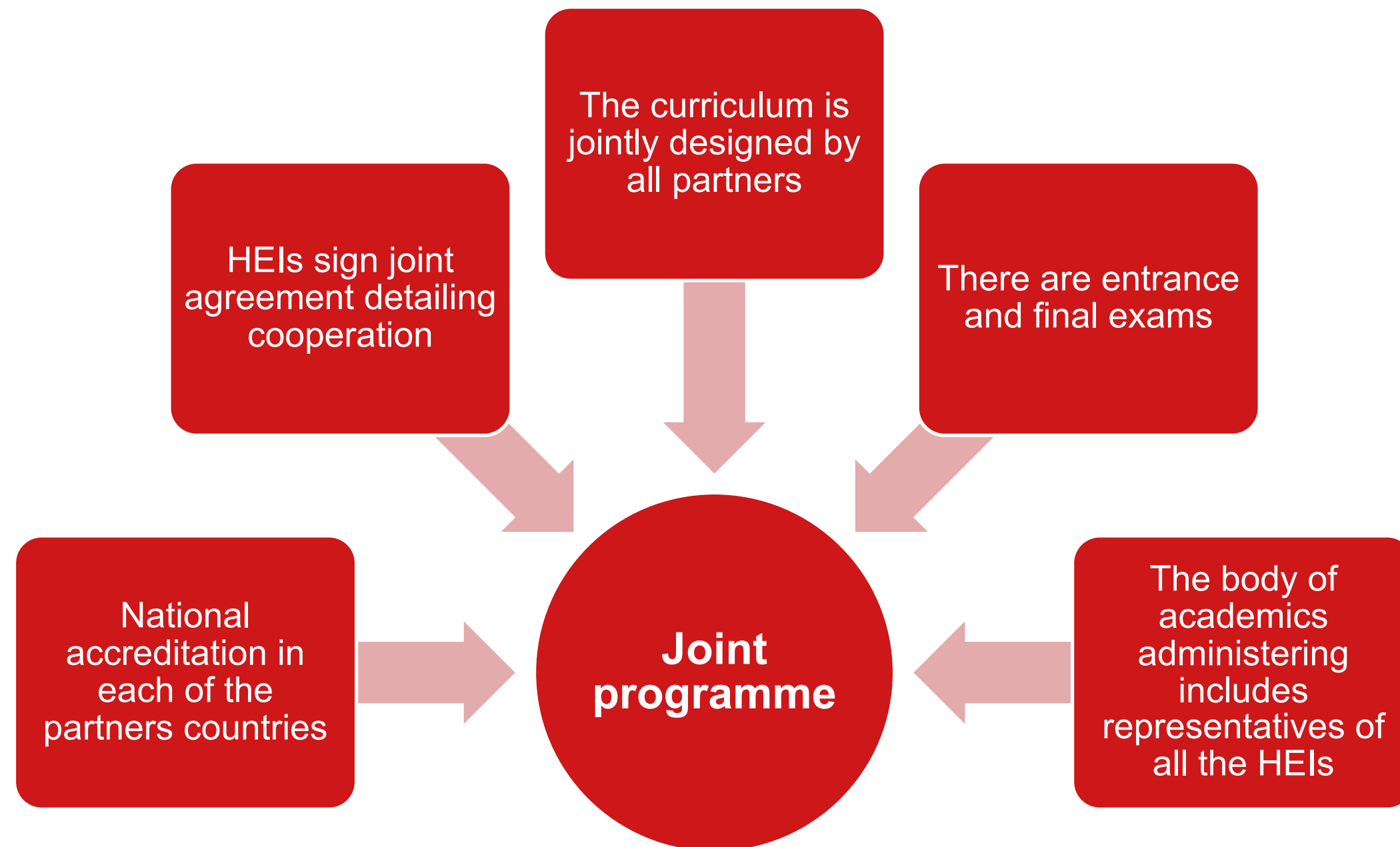




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Introduction: “Speaking the same language” I



Joint (study) programmes are **realised and offered jointly by the higher education institutions**

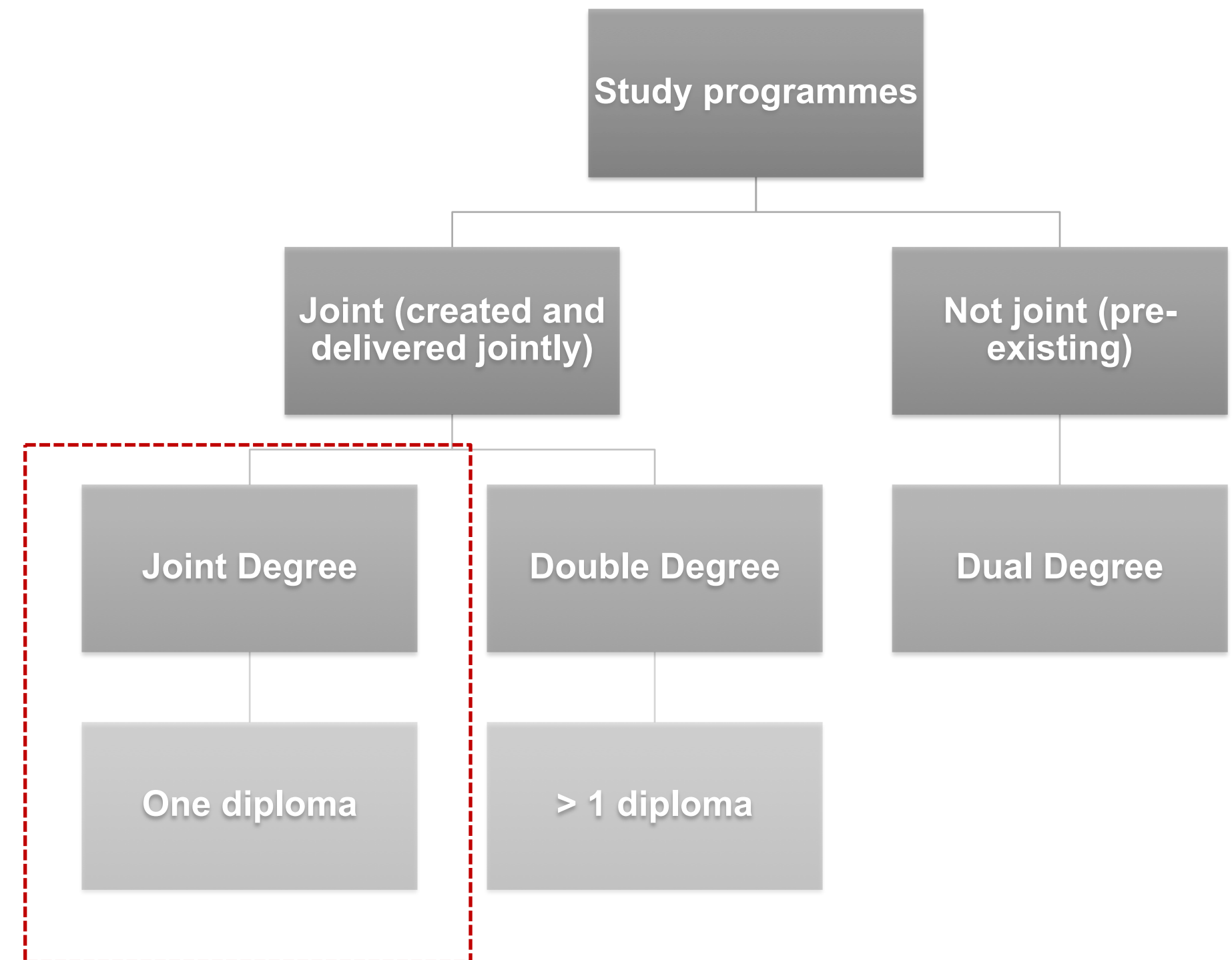
A **joint degree is a type of document** in which the graduation is attested by only **single document (certificate/diploma)**

- This document needs to be **legally accepted in all countries** where the joint programme operates.
- This form is endorsed by the **Commission** as it most fittingly corresponds to the jointness of the studies → **European Degree**.
- **The ED aims to facilitate issuing joint diploma/degrees/certificates across the EHEA.**

Introduction: “Speaking the same language” II

Important!

- The **double/multiple degree/diploma/certificate** is also a type of document certifying completion of studies. However, unlike with the joint degree, **two or more documents are issued to graduates**.
 - This is commonly selected when the HEIs cannot – due to legal or other reasons – agree on a singular version of joint degree/diploma/certificate.
 - These **documents are valid only when presented together**, as they all (regardless of the number) attest the completion of the joint study programme.
- A **dual degree** (sometimes mistakenly called “double degree”) is **NOT** a joint study programme. It describes a model of cooperation between two or more pre-established study programmes. Dual degrees are not joint and so do not usually lead to joint degree/diploma/certificate.



DOES THE EUROPEAN DEGREE INITIATIVE BRING ANYTHING NEW?

PART II



Added value?

“At this stage, it is **not clear** what we need the European degree for. Therefore, the value-added of such a European degree needs to be made explicit. Stakeholders need to discuss their expectations and needs in this respect, and understand the complexities related to the different possible models of its implementation. It is important to avoid a situation in which **additional bureaucracy** is created for **little added value**.”

An alternative way forward would be to focus on promoting and fully implementing the **already existing tools** supporting the development of joint programmes.”

(KELO, M., LOUKKOLA, T.: Possible scenarios on the path towards a European degree. EUA website. 09 July 2020. <https://eua.eu/resources/expert-voices/186:possible-scenarios-on-the-path-towards-a-european-degree.html>)



Already existing policies

- **Lisbon Recognition Convention** was established 1997 and expanded by *Recommendation on the recognition on the joint degrees* in 2004. (The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region: *Recommendation on the recognition on the joint degrees*. Adopted on 9 June 2004 www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/recommendation-joint-degrees-2004.en.pdf)
- **European Area of Recognition Project** builds upon the grounds provided by the LRB and is composed by several members of ENIC-NARIC, produced a *European Area of Recognition Manual* in 2012. ([European Area of Recognition - EAR Manual \(enic-naric.net\)](http://www.enic-naric.net)).
- **European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes** from October 2014 was approved by EHEA ministers in May 2015 (available here: [European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes \(eqar.eu\)](http://www.ehea.europa.eu/quality-assurance/european-approach-for-quality-assurance-of-joint-programmes)). It sets basic standards, definitions, admission and recognition policies, procedures for evaluation and accreditation etc.
- **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)** were adopted by the Ministers responsible for higher education in 2005 following a proposal prepared by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in cooperation with the European Students' Union (ESU), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the European University Association (EUA). The revised ESG 2015 were adopted by the Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area in May 2015 (www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)



European Degree Label Pilot Call – potential criteria

- “These potential criteria cover both eligibility (composition of the alliance offering the joint programme, joint degree and quality assurance arrangements, use of Bologna instruments) and potential criteria that reflect the transnational and European dimension of the joint programme (embedded mobility, multilingualism, transdisciplinary, links with labour market, etc.)”

▪ *Background. Criteria for a joint European degree label, Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe, 6.04.2022*

Transnational dimension of the cooperation

- ...of the consortium delivering the programme, of the joint campus, of the joint programme and joint degree

Flexibility and innovative dimension of the curricula

- Flexible mobility schemes
- Multilingualism
- Innovative teaching and learning
- Labour market relevance

Inclusiveness and sustainability

- Green and digital components and actions
- Civic engagement



Common Vision

The consortium shares a **strong united vision**, as expressed in a joint position paper on the European Degree, officially supported by all participating European University Alliances. This position constitutes a strong basis for collaboration and acts as the guiding thread of this project proposal.



Key Objectives

Contribution to the mapping with a critical mass of high-quality joint programmes across all levels of higher education, spanning a range of academic fields and disciplines as well as 51 higher education institutions

Design of a European Degree label that has maximum impact on the visibility and attractiveness of Europe's joint degree programmes and ultimately its higher education offer at large

Contribution to a competitive European higher education offer of the future that attracts the best global talent and promotes European values, creating a truly European student experience

Development of a more inclusive, accessible and transparent framework that simplifies the development and implementation of joint degrees in Europe and opens up opportunities for all types of HEIs

Recommendations to support full implementation of Bologna tools in the EHEA along with more flexibility at national levels and room to experiment in the context of transnational collaboration





Thank you for your attention!

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