



## **REPORT ON BRIDGE PROJECT ACTION 1**

**EMNS Responsible: Spain, Direction General for Higher Education. Ministry of Education**

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Spreading knowledge about National Recognition Information Centres –NARIC- activities among Erasmus Mundus National Structures –EMNSs- and Cooperation between both networks.

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### **SUMMARY**

This report describes the first activity designed under the EMNS-BRIDGE-NARIC project financed by the European Commission which consists of a survey conducted from December 2010 to May 2011 among the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EMNSs), being the Spanish EMNS the main responsible for this activity. The double purpose of this study was firstly, to spread knowledge about the National Academic Recognition Centers (NARIC) activities among the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EMNSs) and secondly, to examine the extent to which the cooperation between both networks EMNSs and NARIC Centers needs to be improved and strengthened. The survey constitutes a qualitative and quantitative study with the use of a questionnaire, as the technique applied to compile the targeted data. The questionnaire, which has been designed by means of an electronic on-line tool, it is composed of three blocks of contents with 35 questions focused on qualitative and quantitative features. The subjects targeted of this study have involved 31 EMNSs. The most significant results of this survey indicate that the majority of the EMNSs have heard about their NARIC Centers and their activities, seem to know about their competences, and have established contacts with them occasionally to request for information; however, they show a significant lack of knowledge about the European Network of Information Centers (ENIC) and the Mediterranean Recognition Information Centers (MERIC) and their activities; besides, they do not make any difference between the competences of their NARIC centers and the ENIC network. Other results reveal that the majority of EMNSs have invited their NARIC centers to participate in meetings and seminars as speakers and attendees, but most of them have never been invited to events organized by their NARIC centers, and have never organized nor carried out nor issued joint events, projects and publications together. Nevertheless, the few that have realized joint activities, have got success experiences and good practices. Finally, most EMNSs demand more regular communication, contacts, interaction and exchange of information with their NARIC centers.

Therefore, according to these results we may conclude that 1) EMNSs need clarification of the competences and activities of ENIC network and NARIC centers and more knowledge of the MERIC network; 2) EMNSs and NARIC centers need to know more about each other (their activities and competences) and need some training on topics of interests for both, and 3) both need to increase their collaboration in a more regular, systematic and formal procedure. Besides, there is a clear evidence of the need to share activities and projects among ENIC-NARIC-MERIC and EMNSs networks at both national and international levels, as well as to reinforce and support cooperation by initiatives carried out not only by the former networks, but also by the European Commission.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since 2004 when the Erasmus Mundus programme started to run in Europe, there has been a significant increase of the number of European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) involved in Erasmus Mundus joint Master and Doctorate programmes that have to deal with recognition issues during the different phases of the Erasmus Mundus programme life.

Due to the fact that the EMNSs and NARIC Centers run independently in most of the European countries and the contacts and cooperation between them could have been occasionally, it has been identified the need to strengthen the cooperation among EMNSs, NARIC centers, and ENIC and MERIC networks with the purpose to exchange information that will enable EMNSs to give effective support and advice to HEIs on recognition issues and diploma awarding. At the same time, it has been observed that a few European countries share both the status of EM National Structure and NARIC Centre. This is the case of the five partners of the EMNS-BRIDGE-NARIC project: Estonia, Malta, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. As a result of this, we think that the experience of the former countries could contribute to make possible to establish a fruitful collaboration between these two networks, which will also involve two other networks operating in the field of recognition: the ENIC and the MERIC networks.

Therefore, three are the main objectives of the present study: firstly, to spread knowledge about the National Academic Recognition Centers (NARIC) activities among the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EMNSs); secondly, to examine the extent to which the cooperation between both networks EMNSs and NARIC Centers needs to be improved and strengthened, and thirdly, to identify topics and actions that could be implemented to increase their cooperation.

In the next sections the following contents of the report describing the study are presented: first, the methodology applied in the survey with the description of the research design and methods, the research context, the targeted subjects and the phases of the study; In the next part, the results obtained are analyzed and discussed, and finally the conclusions are provided.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this section the overview of the study will be described: the research design and methods, the research context, the targeted subjects, and the phases of the study.

### **Research Design and Methods**

The study is integrative insofar as it employs several different research methodologies – both those descriptive and qualitative and also quantitative. To target our objectives, it has been needed, on the one hand, to quantify statistically the information obtained to verify the significance of the results; on the other hand, to analyze the informational content of the data in order to identify what should be reinforced and strengthened between both EMNSs and NARIC Centres networks cooperation and ways to achieve it.

The technique used to compile data was a questionnaire composed of three parts with a total of 35 questions. Each part was focused to a specific topic and objective:

- The topic of Part 1 is the “Level of Knowledge of NARIC-ENIC-MERIC networks” and contains 12 questions (from 1 to 12) of different types: multiple choice, yes/no answers and open questions. By means of these questions, subjects – the EMNSs - were asked if they knew about the existence of NARIC-ENIC-MERIC networks and their activities and competences.

- Part 2 is focused on the “Types of cooperation and identification of good practices and weaknesses” in order to identify, on the one hand, some examples of good practices between EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC networks; on the other one, some weaknesses with the purpose to work on them. This part is

composed of 16 questions (from 13 to 29). They are mostly multiple choice questions to find out the frequency of the cooperation, if existed, and some open questions referred to the types of activities involved as good practices and the weak points that should be strengthened.

- Part 3 is the last block of information titled “How to improve cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC Centers”. In these part subjects – the EMNSs- were requested for suggestions on topics and specific actions that could be implemented to get a closer cooperation between EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC networks. It consists of 6 open questions (from 30 to 35).

All the former questions have been designed according to the targeted objectives pursued in each part, and thus, in part 1 and 2 they have been designed to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data; however, questions of part 3 are all of them focused to get basically qualitative data to obtain a descriptive analysis.

The questionnaire model is provided in annex 1.

Besides, the electronic mail has been the communication tool used to carry out the implementation of the on-line questionnaire in order to send the targeted subjects – the EMNSs- the specific instructions to access the questionnaire and to fill in it.

### **The Research Context**

The survey has been conducted in Europe among the 27 countries that are members of the European Union and 3 European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries:

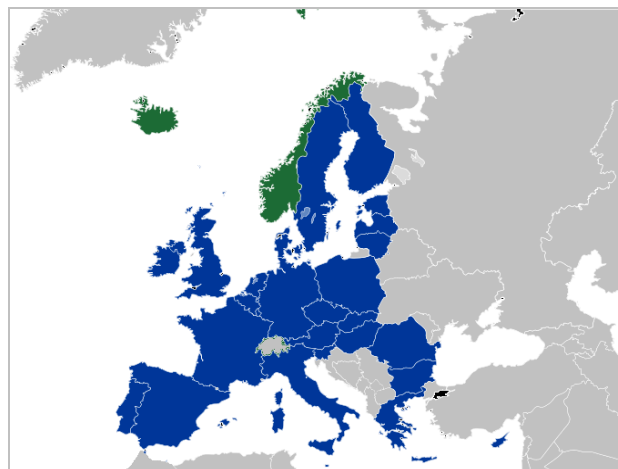


Figure 1. EU and EFTA countries

27 European Union countries (EU)

3 European Free Trade Association (EFTA): Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway

Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EU\\_and\\_EFTA.svg?uselang=es](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EU_and_EFTA.svg?uselang=es)

### **The Targeted Subjects**

The targeted subjects involved a total of 31 Erasmus Mundus National Structures of the following countries keeping the above-mentioned criteria:

Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community and Flemish Community), Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania,

Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

### Erasmus Mundus - List of National Structures

 <a href="#">Austria</a>	 <a href="#">België - Belgique - Belgien</a> - Flemish community - French community
 <a href="#">Bulgaria</a>	 <a href="#">Cyprus</a>
 <a href="#">Czech Republic</a>	 <a href="#">Denmark</a>
 <a href="#">Estonia</a>	 <a href="#">Finland</a>
 <a href="#">France</a>	 <a href="#">Germany</a>
 <a href="#">Greece</a>	 <a href="#">Hungary</a>
 <a href="#">Iceland</a>	 <a href="#">Ireland</a>
 <a href="#">Italy</a>	 <a href="#">Latvia</a>
 <a href="#">Liechtenstein</a>	 <a href="#">Lithuania</a>
 <a href="#">Luxembourg</a>	 <a href="#">Malta</a>
 <a href="#">Netherlands</a>	 <a href="#">Norway</a>
 <a href="#">Poland</a>	 <a href="#">Portugal</a>
 <a href="#">Romania</a>	 <a href="#">Slovakia</a>
 <a href="#">Slovenia</a>	 <a href="#">Spain</a>
 <a href="#">Sweden</a>	 <a href="#">United Kingdom</a>

Figure 2. The 31 targeted countries involved in the present study.  
Source of figure: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-mundus/doc1515\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-mundus/doc1515_en.htm)

Although questionnaires were distributed to obtain just only one answer per country, we encouraged participants to discuss and collect answers and opinions from all the EMNS staff.

#### Phases of the study

To carry out the present study, the following phases have been implemented:

1. Identification of targeted subjects
2. Questionnaire Design

3. Questionnaire Application
4. Analysis and discussion of results
5. Final Report Writing

#### Phase 1. Identification of targeted subjects

The targeted subjects, that is, the 31 EMNSs from all the countries acting as national contact points in Europe and/or the European Higher Education Area NS with their contact e-mail address were identified.

#### Phase 2: Questionnaire Design (from November 2010 till the end of January)

In this phase a questionnaire was drafted according to the expected objectives, as explained previously in the section "Research design" and then, circulated by e-mail among all Bridge partners for them to revise its structure and content and provide with some kind of feedback to improve it. This work was completed from November 2010 till the end of January 2011. Once agreed by all the partners, the questionnaire was downloaded in an on-line application tool of free access for the targeted research subjects.

#### Phase 3: Questionnaires Application (from February till the end of May 2011)

Three steps have been needed to apply the questionnaires.

***The first step:*** In February 2011 all 31 targeted subjects – the EMNSs- (see the list on figure 1) were sent a first e-mail message with information on the general nature and objectives of the EMNS-BRIDGE-NARIC project, the specific instructions to access the on-line questionnaire, how to fill in it and the deadline of delivery. Besides, the questionnaire on Word format was also sent attached to this message as another way to be filled in by those participants who could prefer this option. One week before the stated deadline, a second reminder message was sent again by e-mail to all 31 EMNSs, encouraging them to participate in the project by filling in the questionnaire. As a result of this, only 12 answers were obtained by the fixed deadline.

***The second step:*** Because we were aware of the fact that during this period of time the volume of activities of the EMNSs was very high, we estimated the need to extend the deadline in 3 weeks. Thus, a third reminder message was again sent to those EMNSs left, informing them about the new deadline and the importance of their participation in the present project as potential beneficiaries of its results. In this occasion 6 answers were provided with clear reasons based on extra work that justified the delay.

***The third step:*** a subsequent reminder message by e-mail was sent at the beginning of May. In this occasion, we gave the targeted EMNSs left a final extra opportunity to collaborate in the project. We also reminded them on the importance of their collaboration during the formal meeting of Erasmus Mundus National Structures organized by the European Commission and held in Brussels on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2011. Finally, we received another 5 answers else.

In summary, the questionnaires obtained in the three steps of the implementation phase add a total of 23, what means the 74, 19 % of the targeted subjects.

#### *Phase 4: Analysis and discussion of results*

The most relevant results obtained by means of the questionnaires were analyzed and, thus, a first draft was written by the Spanish EMNS partner, responsible for this study. This draft was presented and discussed by all the Bridge partners during the second consortia meeting held in Madrid on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2011 which was hosted by the Spanish EMNS.

#### *Phase 5: Final Report Writing*

Having being analyzed and revised the report draft by all the consortia partners, the final report was written and ended on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

### Analysis and Discussion of Results

As specify above, from the 31 targeted countries –EMNSs- 23 of them have participated in the Bridge project, what means a high participation with the 74, 19%.

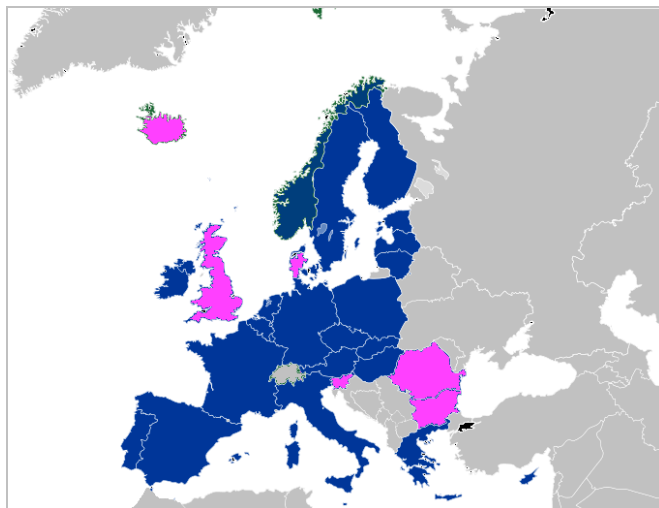


Figure 3.

23 Participating countries

7 Non-participating countries: Bulgaria, Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Romania, Slovenia, United Kingdom.

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The 23 participating countries are: Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community and Flemish Community), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The non-participating countries are: Bulgaria, Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Romania, Slovenia, and United Kingdom.

In the next paragraphs of this section the results will be provided by analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the 35 questions of the three parts of the questionnaire that correspond to the three objectives of the study, coming from the 23 EMNS respondents.

#### **Part 1: “Level of Knowledge of NARIC-ENIC-MERIC networks”**

Objective: to spread knowledge about the National Academic Recognition Centres (NARIC) activities among the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EMNS)

Subjects (n) = 23

Questions (n) = 12 (from 1 to 12)

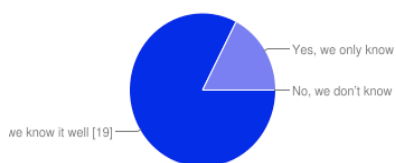
In the first part of the study by means of questions 1 to 6, the EMNSs were asked if they knew about the existence of NARIC-ENIC-MERIC and its activities; when affirmative answers, they were asked in question 7 to specify which NARIC centre/s they have been in contact with and for which reasons/purposes.

When the subjects were asked about their knowledge and contact with ENIC and MERIC networks, the results show that most of EMNSs have answered that they know very well (83%) the ENIC network or know about its existence (17%); in contrast, the 48% of them do not know the MERIC network (see figures 4 and 5). From those who seem to know both networks, the 70% have been in contact with ENIC or MERIC (see figure 6) through their national centers basically for three main purposes:

1. to get information or discuss on:
  - the state of the implementation of joint degrees,
  - the present legislation of joint degrees
  - recognition degrees issues in general
  - the Diploma Supplement
  - recognition of joint degrees
  - recognition of degrees awarded by foreign HEIs
  - accreditation of universities and HEIs
  - awarding of multiple joint degrees in Erasmus Mundus programmes
  - Higher Education Structure and degrees (before Bologna)
  - eligibility check of degrees for Erasmus Mundus programme
  - recognition problems of certain Erasmus Mundus programmes with third countries degrees for admission.
2. to give or exchange information on:
  - the Erasmus mundus programme
  - the recognition of degrees and diploma
  - Lisbon recognition convention
3. to share professional work or activities:
  - evaluation of EM applications related to the eligibility of the HEIs
  - organization of joint seminars
  - participation in common meetings

The majority of respondents' answers fall into the first category that refers to the purpose of "getting information or discuss" on the issues listed above. In contrast, only the 13% of them (3 EMNSs) have been or are in contact with ENIC to share professional work or activities.

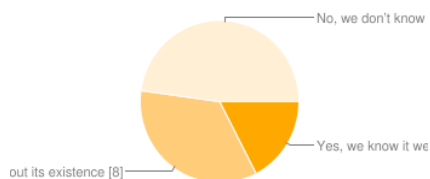
1. Do you know the ENIC Network and its tasks?



Yes, we know it well	19	<b>83%</b>
Yes, we only know about its existence	4	<b>17%</b>
No, we don't know it	0	<b>0%</b>

Figure 4

2. Do you know the MERIC Network and its tasks?



Yes, we know it well	4	<b>17%</b>
Yes, we only know about its existence	8	<b>35%</b>
No, we don't know it	11	<b>48%</b>

Figure 5

3. Have you ever been in contact with an ENIC or a MERIC centre?

Yes	16	<b>70%</b>
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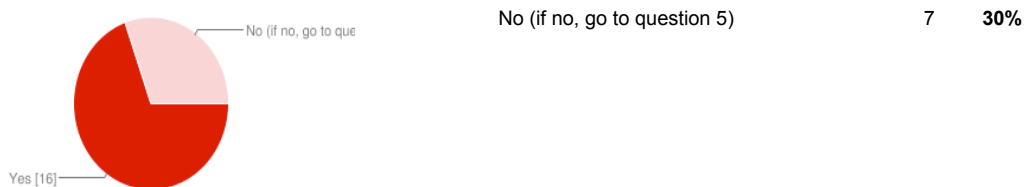


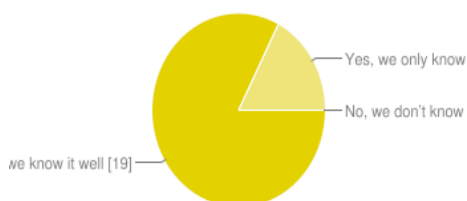
Figure 6

Related to their knowledge of NARIC centres and their activities/competences, as well as the kind of cooperation with them, again most of the EMNSs answered that they know them very well (83%) and from those, nearly all of them have been in contact with their national centre (91%) (See figures 7 and 8). When requested for the reasons or purposes to contact them, the answers given were practically the same as the ones above in question 4 related to ENIC contacts, due to the fact that in most countries NARIC centres are members of the ENIC network and both activities seem to be competences of the same institution.

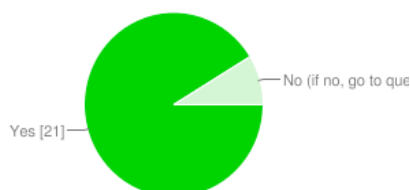
Therefore, similarly to the purposes to contact ENIC centres described above, the answers are sorted in the same three categories:

4. to get information or discuss on:
  - the state of the implementation of joint degrees
  - the present legislation of joint degrees
  - recognition degrees issues in general
  - the Diploma Supplement
  - recognition of joint degrees
  - recognition of degrees awarded by foreign HEIs
  - accreditation of universities and HEIs
  - awarding of multiple joint degrees in Erasmus Mundus programmes
  - Higher Education Structure and degrees (before Bologna)
  - eligibility check of degrees for Erasmus Mundus programme
  - recognition problems of certain Erasmus Mundus programmes with third countries degrees for admission.
  
5. to give or exchange information on:
  - the Erasmus mundus programme
  - the recognition of degrees and diploma
  - Lisbon recognition convention
  
6. to share professional work or activities:
  - evaluation of EM applications related to the eligibility of the HEIs
  - organization of joint seminars
  - participation in common meetings

**5. Do you know the NARIC Network and its tasks?**



**6. Have you ever been in contact with a NARIC centre?**



Yes 21 91%



		No (if no, go to question 8)	2	9%
Yes, we know it well	19	83%		
Yes, we only know about its existence	4	17%		
No, we don't know it	0			

Figure 7

Figure 8

When interpreting the former data obtained, the results reveals that it is not clear the nature and competences of NARIC and ENIC centres for most EMNSs because they do not make any difference when mentioning the purposes to contact them.

As far as questions 8 to 10 are concerned, the EMNSs were asked whether they know about the competences of NARIC centres, how often they contact with them and, if appropriate, what kind of information usually they request to them. According to the results shown in figures 9 and 10, the majority of EMNSs know about the competences of NARIC centers as authority for academic recognition (87%); however, when requested about competences for professional recognition only the 30% attribute this competence to their national NARIC centres, the 39% say that it is not their competence and the 30% show a lack of knowledge about it.

Besides, the results also reveal that most EMNS mention that NARIC centres give information about academic and professional recognition (96% and 65% respectively), national and foreign HE systems (96% and 61% respectively), assess foreign qualifications (87%) and act as National Information Center for the Lisbon Convention (61%), but the 39% do not know if their NARIC centers have this last competence.

In contrast, only the 30% state that their NARIC centers act as National contact point for the European Qualification Framework, but the 52% do not attribute this competence to them (NARICs) and the 17% do not know if their NARIC centers have this competence (see from figures 11 to 17).

It is important to stress that these results may respond mainly to two reasons: 1) EM NSs have a lack of knowledge about all the activities and competences carried out by their national NARIC centres and/or 2) Not all NARIC centres have the same competences in all the countries, and if so, it could be interesting to design a study about it.

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Is the competent authority for academic recognition**

Yes	20	87%
No	3	13%
I don't know	0	0%

Figure 9

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Is the competent authority for professional recognition (i.e. Directive 2005/36/EC)**

Yes	7	30%
No	9	39%
I don't know	7	30%

Figure 10

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Gives information about academic recognition procedures**

Yes	22	96%
No	1	4%
I don't know	0	0%

Figure 11

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Gives information about professional recognition procedures**

Yes	15	65%
No	5	22%
I don't know	3	13%

Figure 12

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Assesses foreign qualification**

Yes	20	87%
No	1	4%
I don't know	2	9%

Figure 13

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Gives information about the National HE system**

Yes	22	96%
No	1	4%
I don't know	0	0%

Figure 14

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Gives information about foreign HE systems**

Yes	14	61%
No	4	17%
I don't know	5	22%

Figure 15

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Acts as National Information Centre on the Lisbon Convention**

Yes	14	61%
No	0	0%
I don't know	9	39%

Figure 16

**8. As far as you know, your National NARIC centre: - Acts as National Contact Point for the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)**

No	12	52%
I don't know	4	17%
Yes	7	30%

Figure 17

Related to the frequency of contacts with NARIC centres (see figures 18 and 19), the majority (61%) contact them occasionally, only the 24% do it regularly, and the most requested information is firstly on *national legislation on joint programmes (62%)*, being the 3 next most cited items *evaluation of foreign qualifications in compliance with national legislation (52%)*, *recognition/accreditation status of foreign HEIs (38%)*, *Elegibility of HEIs (33%)* and *procedure to award a joint degree (33%)*.

**9. Do you contact your national NARIC centre?**

Yes, very often (5 or more contacts/month)	4	17%
Yes, often (1 or more contacts/month)	4	17%
<b>Yes, occasionally</b>	14	<b>61%</b>
No, never (if no, go to question 11)	1	4%

Figure 18

**10. What kind of information do you usually ask for?**

<b>Eligibility of HE institutions</b>	7	<b>33%</b>
<b>Recognition/accreditation status of foreign HEIs</b>	8	<b>38%</b>
<b>National legislation on joint programmes</b>	13	<b>62%</b>
Procedures for admission to and enrolment in an EM course	3	14%
<b>Evaluation of foreign qualifications in compliance with the national legislation</b>	11	<b>52%</b>
Procedure to develop a joint programme	5	24%
<b>Procedure to award a joint degree</b>	7	<b>33%</b>
Procedure to award a joint DS	5	24%
Other	1	5%

Figure 19

In the last questions of part 1 (11 to 12), the information requested was focused to find out if EMNSs have been ever contacted by NARIC centres and if so, what kind of information they have been or are requested by these centres. We can observe in the results obtained in figures 20 and 21 that more than half of the EM NSs requested (57%) have been contacted by their national NARIC centres in order to request for information mostly related to Erasmus Mundus courses (67%) and consortia (50%), followed by topics on assessment and recognition of Erasmus Mundus degrees (42%) and partner HEIs of EM courses (42%). In contrast, the 43% of them have never been contacted which seems to be a high percentage.

**11. Have you ever been contacted by your national NARIC centre?**

Yes, very often (5 or more contacts/month)	2	9%
Yes, often (1 or more contacts/month)	2	9%
Yes, occasionally	9	39%

No, never (if no, go to question 13) 10 43%

Figure 20

12. What kind of information do they usually ask for?

<b>EM courses</b>	8	<b>67%</b>
<b>EM consortia</b>	6	<b>50%</b>
Admission to and enrolment in EM courses	2	17%
<b>Assessment and recognition of EM degrees</b>	5	<b>42%</b>
<b>Partner HEIs of EM courses</b>	5	<b>42%</b>
Other	3	25%

Figure 21

The former results indicate that most EMNSs contact their NARIC centers more often than the last ones contact them.

**Part 2: “Types of cooperation and identification of good practices and weaknesses”**

Objective: to examine the extent to which the cooperation between both networks EMNS and NARIC Centres needs to be improved and strengthened.

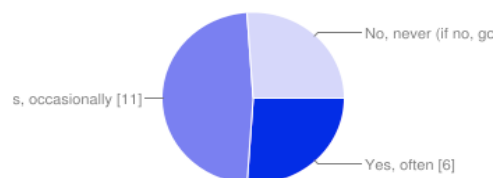
Subjects (n) = 23

Questions (n) = 17 (from 13 to 29)

In the second part of the survey through questions 13 to 15 EMNSs were requested if they had ever invited their national NARIC centres to meetings/seminars or presentations of the Erasmus Mundus calls for proposals, and if so, if they participated and what role they played. The data obtained in figures 22, 23 and 24 indicate that most of them (74%) have invited their NARIC centre to meetings or seminars, having participated frequently (65%) both as speakers (80%) and attendees (67%). These results contrast with the answers given by EMNSs in questions 16, 17 and 18 (see figures 25, 26 and 27) when they indicate that most of them (65%) have never been invited by their NARIC centers to participate in meetings or seminars, and the few that were invited participated mostly as attendees.

However, it is important to mention that the reason because EMNSs have not been invited in most of the cases could be attributed to the fact that NARIC centers did not organize any kind of event.

**13. Have you ever invited your national NARIC to your meetings/seminars (presentations of the call for proposal, seminars with national coordinators, etc.)?**



Yes, often	6	<b>26%</b>
Yes, occasionally	11	<b>48%</b>
No, never (if no, go to question 16)	6	<b>26%</b>

Figure 22

14. If yes, did they participate?

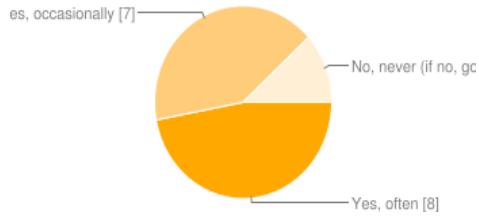


Figure 23

15. Generally, they participated as:

Yes, often	8	35%	Speakers	12	80%
Yes, occasionally	7	30%	Attendees	10	67%
No, never (if no, go to question 16)	2		Other	0	0%

Figure 24

16. Have you ever been invited by your national NARIC centre to their national meetings/seminars?

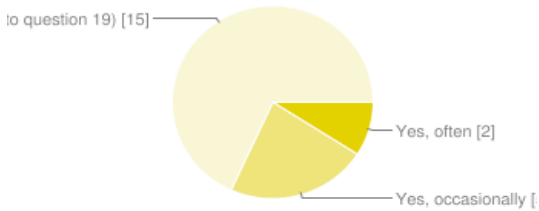


Figure 25

Yes, often	2	9%
Yes, occasionally	5	22%
No, never (if no, go to question 19)	15	65%

17. If yes, did you participate?

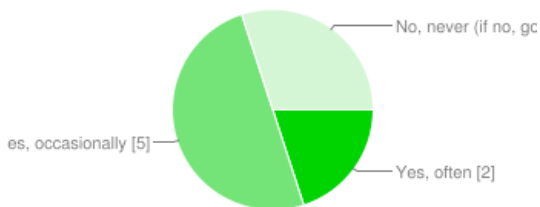


Figure 26

18. Generally, you participated as:

Yes, often	2	9%	Speaker	2	29%
Yes, occasionally	5	22%	Attendee	7	100%
No, never (if no, go to question 19)	3	13%	Other	0	0%

Figure 27

In order to investigate deeply into the types of cooperation between EMNNs and NARIC centers, questions 19 to 24 have been designed. Through these questions EMNSs were asked whether they have been carried out activities working together, such as joint events, projects and/or publications and their role played.

In figure 28 the results reveal that the majority of EMNSs (78%) have never organized joint events with their NARIC centers. Only the 22% of them have done it occasionally whose topics were related on (questions 19 and 20):

- Bologna issues
- Bologna expert projects
- Information seminar on Joint Study programmes + Erasmus+ Tempus as speakers on Lisbon Convention & DS & Europass (more with LLLProgramme)
- Training seminar on joint programmes and degrees for university administrative staff (NARIC as organizer and EMNS as invited speaker)
- Different seminars & workshops on recognition issues in the framework of the Bologna project in 2010. VIAA with AIC (Latvia) organized the Conference.
- Common seminar on Diploma Supplement in May 2009.
- Workshop on Higher Education Policy related to legal issues for awarding Erasmus Mundus joint degrees and Diploma supplements, as well as related to the accreditation of Erasmus Mundus joint programmes in 2010 and 2011. Spanish EMNS was the organizer and the head of NARIC as invited speaker.

**19. Have you ever organized joint events with your national NARIC centre?**

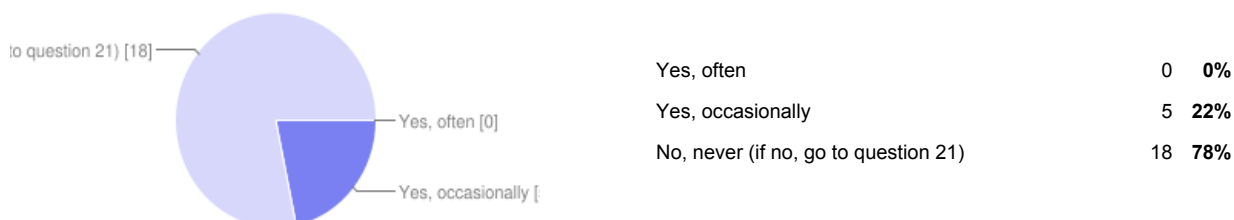


Figure 28

Similar to the previous results we can observe (see figure 29) that most EMNSs have never carried out joint projects nor activities (70%) with their national NARIC centers. Only few of them have done it occasionally (17%) or often (13%). The topics were related to the following ones (questions 21-22):

- Bologna issues
- Bologna experts project
- The present EMNS-BRDIGE-NARIC project (2010-2012)
- CIMEA: Pro Joint database on Joint programmes in the Italian context (2009)
- The JOIMAN project (2008-2010)
- Dissemination of the results of the ENIC\_NARIC project CoRe II (coordinated by the Dutch ENIC-NARIC.
- The JOQAR project
- The drafting of the new Royal Decree in Spain (2010) that regulates the awarding of Diploma and Diploma Supplement under the Bologna framework. The Spanish EMNS was

requested by NARIC to design the model of the Erasmus Mundus joint degree for master and doctorates programmes, as well as the model of the joint Diploma Supplement which was carried out by an Erasmus Mundus working group.

**21. Have you ever carried out joint projects with your national NARIC centre?**

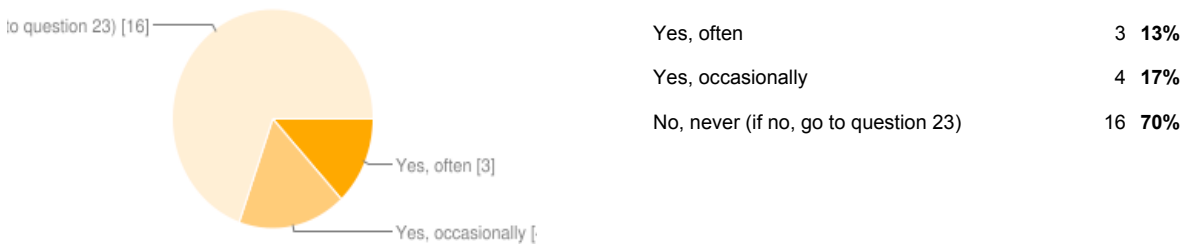


Figure 29

Related to joint publications issued by EMNSs and NARIC centers (see figure 30), the 87% of EMNSs state that they have never issued joint publications, being only the 13% of them that have done it occasionally on the following topics (questions 23-24)

- Publications on national state scholarships programmes
- Publications made by other institutions where they appear together
- 2003 Joint Degrees: the Italian experience in the European context
- Information materials on Latvian Higher Education system and institutions, and on ECTS user guide.

**23. Have you ever issued joint publications with your national NARIC centre?**

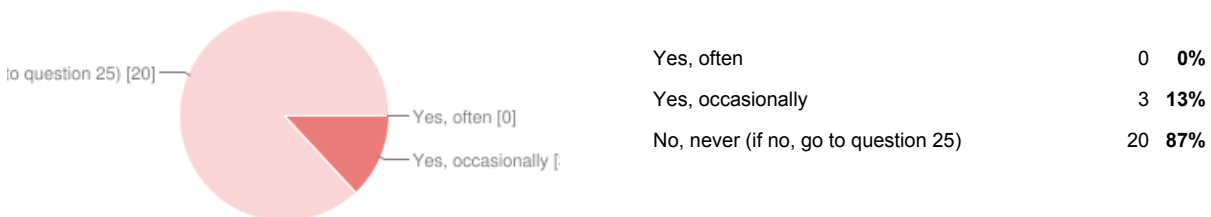


Figure 30

Finally questions 25 to 28 are focused to identify good practices and weaknesses emerged from the cooperation or lack of it between EMNNS and NARIC centers. On question 29 it is requested whether the kind information asked by EMNSs to NARIC centers has been useful to solve doubts and/or problems.

When analyzing the results shown below (figures 31 and 32), the 57% of the EMNS could identify some examples of good practices emerging from the relation with their national NARIC centers (question 25); in contrast, only the 26% could provide some weaknesses (question 27).

**25. Could you identify any good practices emerging from the relation with your national NARIC centre?**

Yes

13 57%

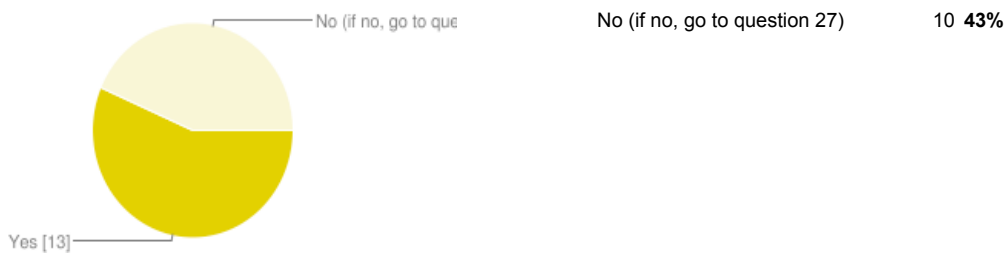


Figure 31

27. Could you identify any weaknesses emerging from the relation with your national NARIC centre?



Figure 32

Here below are provided the list of good practices and weaknesses mentioned by EMNSs (question 26-28):

### Good Practices

- To share experience during seminars organized by National Structures
- To share information in publications edited by NSs and ENIC-NARICs
- excellent cooperation in the field of recognition on professional qualifications
- To form part of the same department because it is easier to contact each other and exchange information, usually in an informal way.
- To be located in the same office, what makes information flow very smoothly.
- To develop a new Royal Decree on the Diploma and Diploma supplement awarding in Spain. There was a part focused on the joint diploma and the joint diploma supplement issue with a specific model for Erasmus Mundus diploma. This part was developed by the Erasmus Mundus National Structure.
- To follow a standard procedure of consultation about procedures for joint programmes and awarding joint degrees for assistance to HEIs in drafting EM applications as well as during the lifetime of the EM projects.
- To compare the EMNS understanding of knowledge about joint programmes and joint degrees thanks to meeting and comparing different models, recognition practices, positions, etc. These reflections were arisen to the Ministry. Besides, by discussing the different views on topical issues, such as joint degrees, it was possible to acquire together a more thorough understanding about the policy level issues.
- To have a regular exchange of information between VIAA and AIC in Latvia on recognition issues and Bologna process which facilitates qualitative communication with HEIs in VIAA competence areas.
- To improve the cooperation between NS and NARIC centers in Germany (issue which is being discussed at present). The outcomes and results of this will be provided at a later stage.
- To have more awareness of each other's existence in the context of Bologna Experts.



## Weaknesses

- Lack of communication on relevant issues
- Weak links in joint activities
- Lack of contact or relation between EMNSs and NARIC centre in France
- The informal and occasionally contacts should be conducted to more often and formal contacts.
- Both EMNSs and NARIC centers have few staff and are always overburdened; thus, there is a lack of regular interaction and exchange of information to get mutual support and advice.
- No sustainable relation is developed because of little and sporadic contact.
- Insufficient knowledge about recent development in the field of expertise of both parts.

In the last question (29) of this second part of the questionnaire the EMNSs subjects were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the information provided by their national NARIC centers when they asked for information. The majority of them indicated that the answers given were useful to solve the problem (83%). Only few answered that the information was not useful (4%) or difficult to understand or different from the EM glossary (4%) and that they never asked for information (13%) (See figure 33).

29. When you ask for information to your national NARIC centre, their answers are:

<b>Useful to solve the problem</b>	19	<b>83%</b>
Difficult to understand, too technical	0	0%
Difficult to understand, different from the EM glossary	1	4%
Not useful at all	1	4%
They never answered	0	0%
<b>We never asked</b>	3	<b>13%</b>
Other	0	0%

Figure 33

### **Part 3: "How to improve cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC Centers**

Objective: to identify topics and specific actions that could be implemented to increase and reinforce cooperation between EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC networks.

Subjects (n) = 23

Questions (n) = 6 (from 30 to 35)

In the third part of the questionnaire by means of open questions that range from 30 to 34, the EMNS subjects were requested for suggestions on topics and specific actions that could be implemented to get a closer cooperation between EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC networks. The last question number 35 requested for some case studies about issues arising from EM programmes that could be relevant in order to reinforce the cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC centers.

As far as recommendations and suggestions for a closer cooperation concern (question 30), the majority of responses were related to topics all concerning joint studies, such as joint programmes development, accreditation, recognition procedures system and legislation, awarding of joint diploma and diploma supplement, at both national and international levels, consortia agreement (structure and contents), admission and enrollment of foreign students in Erasmus Mundus programmes, recognition of study and mobility periods and eligibility check procedure by EMNSs. Other topics of interest highlighted were:

transnational higher education systems, Erasmus Mundus/NARIC/Bologna Process, the European and national Qualification Frameworks, as well as practical influence of Lisbon recognition convention on recognition of study periods and diploma.

Related to the topics on which EMNSs staff could be trained by their national NARIC Centers (question 31), the following have been mentioned as the most useful ones:

- National Higher Education legislation
- National legislation on accreditation and recognition of joint programmes and degrees
- General NARIC competences and possible communication fields
- NARIC network's activities and missions
- Lisbon Convention
- Admission and enrollment procedures of foreign students in joint programmes (rules, documents for admission, etc.,)
- Information on different European degrees to allow EMNSs to know that all European participants are delivering equivalent degrees
- Evaluation and recognition procedures of foreign qualifications and joint degrees in compliance with the national legislation
- Information on eventual problems found with Erasmus Mundus degrees (diploma)
- The Diploma Supplement
- Information about degrees obtained outside Europe (e.g. Bachelor of Art, Bachelor of Science and other ones necessary to enroll in Erasmus Mundus and joint programmes)
- Recognition and accreditation issues in other EU countries in order to give advice to higher education institutions who apply for Erasmus Mundus programmes
- Practices and working methods of the networks from the point of view of each national system
- Information about the international cooperation between the ENIC/NARIC centers

Besides, when asked about topics on which national NARIC centers staff could be trained by EMNSs staff (question 32), the following were mentioned as the most interesting ones:

- The Erasmus Mundus programme and the problems arisen from joint degrees awarding
- Informing about the emerging international joint programmes so that their specific features could be taken into account in the national legislation
- Joint degrees development and requirements to create them and to award the joint diploma and the joint diploma supplement
- The structure and running of Erasmus Mundus programmes
- EM National structures activities, missions and competences
- Joint European cooperation programmes (Action 2)
- Types of degrees awarded by Erasmus Mundus programmes: double, multiple and joint degrees
- Youth on the move and mobility in general
- Learning to read the Erasmus Mundus degrees/diploma
- Good practices emerging from EM experiences
- Models of EM joint programmes
- The challenges of the Erasmus Mundus programme

The suggestions given by the EMNSs respondents to improve the cooperation between NARIC Centers and EMNSs can be sorted as general actions and specific activities as it is shown below (question 33):

#### GENERAL ACTIONS AT BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

- To reinforce the mutual provision of information on foreign diploma
- To promote discussion on joint programmes and joint degrees

- To exchange regularly information, experience and ideas related to joint degrees awarding and joint degrees procedures for recognition
- To facilitate contacts and more interaction between National structures and NARIC Centres in the recognition of Erasmus Mundus degrees
- To increase cooperation on general policy issues at a European level
- To increase the exchange of information related to the European Qualification Framework and the National Qualification Framework
- To get NARIC Centers outside Europe to know about the specific features and peculiarities of the Erasmus Mundus programmes and degrees
- To promote discussion on joint programmes and joint degrees
- To collaborate on the recognition of joint degrees and the recognition of foreign Qualifications of EM student applicants
- To provide active “infoservice” on national legislation on joint programmes and procedures to award a joint degree
- To get National Structures to know better ENIC/NARIC MERIC centers and networks
- To increase contacts between both networks

#### SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES AT BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

- To provide mutual information and training about the activities and competences of both organizations and networks (EMNSs and ENIC/NARIC centers)
- To have joint brainstorming sessions to define joint activities and fields to improve cooperation
- To organize joint workshops, seminars and meetings focused on specific topics and targets of interest for both organizations and networks
- To have joint participation at events for higher education institutions
- To organize international thematic seminars in Brussels between EMNSs and ENIC/NARIC with both formal and informal meetings
- To carry out projects working together as partners
- To create a collaboration and communication platform
- To prepare and publish joint material in certain issues relevant for the programme
- To create databases in English with information about higher education institutions of European countries
- To have periodical visits during some days to know in detail more about each other

To the question (34) related to how the European Commission could help to improve the relation between the two networks (EMNSs and ENIC/NARIC centers), these are the suggestions and ideas given by the EMNSs:

- To promote and fund joint publications
- To promote, organize and/or fund joint meetings, events, seminars, workshops and conferences addressed to both EMNSs and NARIC centers
- To organize training seminars on NARIC and NSs networks’ activities and missions
- To support information exchange about the activities of both networks
- To organize joint meetings on specific topics for EMNSs, NARIC centers and Bologna experts
- To invite regularly some representatives of NARIC centers to give presentations on their activities and missions at National Structures formal meetings organized annually by the European Commission in Brussels
- To invite regularly some representatives of EMNSs to give presentations on their activities and missions at ENIC/NARIC formal meetings organized annually by the European Commission in Brussels
- To promote knowledge about the NARIC centers and the Erasmus Mundus programme
- To identify potential cooperation issues and promote this cooperation

- To promote and finance projects carried out together
- To finance some European visits for staff to spend 3-4 days in some NARIC centers or EMNS centers to know more about each other
- To carry out actions to create synergy and provide exchange of information between Life Long Learning Programmes, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and NARIC centers, especially in the management of the programmes
- To provide funding for the functioning of the NS contact points in order to increase the time their staff can use to improve their participation in Erasmus Mundus restricted calls.

As a final question of the survey (question 35), the EMNSs were asked to provide some case studies about issues arising from Erasmus Mundus programmes that could be relevant in order to reinforce the cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC centers. The answers have been classified as “Case Studies on General Topics” and “Specific case studies” as they can see below.

#### CASE STUDIES ON GENERAL TOPICS

The following topics have been provided as case studies that have needed or will need in the future some kind of cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC centers:

1. The recognition of an EM Master course Multiple degree
2. The recognition of joint degrees
3. The recognition of EM programmes which are shorter than the minimum length required for a similar national degree
4. The description of national legislation about the length (ECTS) of master and doctorate programmes, possibility of awarding joint, multiple and double degrees/diploma, useful links and other additional comments. This kind of information was requested to all the coordinators of the EMNSs by the EACEA Agency and in some countries was compiled with the collaboration of the corresponding NARIC center.

#### SPECIFIC CASE STUDIES

This following list includes the names of specific EM programmes that constitute case studies to be analyzed by both EMNSs and NARIC centers because they seem to have some difficulties in awarding the joint, double or multiple diploma.

1. Master in Law and Economics
2. Master in Photonic NETWORKS Engineering (MAPNET)
3. European Master Course in Aeronautics and Space Technology (EuMAS)
4. Etudes Urbaines en Region Méditerranéennes (EURMed)

The above programmes could be proposed to be analyzed for the phase 4 of the present BRIDGE project with the purpose to find possible solutions that could lead to the successful awarding of the corresponding diploma.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The three main objectives of the present study have been accomplished: firstly, to spread knowledge about the National Academic Recognition Centers (NARIC) activities among the Erasmus Mundus National Structures (EMNSs); secondly, to examine the extent to which the cooperation between both networks EMNSs and NARIC Centers needs to be improved and strengthened, and thirdly, to identify topics and actions that could be implemented to increase their cooperation.

As far as the main objective set up in the first part of the survey, the results obtained have allowed to know “the level of Knowledge of NARIC-ENIC-MERIC networks”. The most significant results have been grouped in two main topics: *Level of Knowledge of ENIC & MERIC networks and NARIC centers*, and *Frequency and types of contacts of EMNSs with NARIC centers*.

#### LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF ENIC & MERIC NETWORKS AND NARIC CENTERS

- The majority of EMNSs (83%) seem to know very well the ENIC network or know about its existence (17%); in contrast, near half of them (48%) do not know the MERIC network, and from those who seem to know both networks, the 70% have been in contact with their national ENIC or MERIC centers.
- The majority of EMM (83%) know very well the NARIC centers (83%) and from those, nearly all of them have been in contact with their national centers (91%).
- Most EMNSs do not make any difference when mentioning the purposes to contact ENIC and NARIC and this may respond to two possible reasons: 1) it is not clear for EMNSs the nature and competences of NARIC and ENIC centers or 2) in most countries NARIC centers are members of the ENIC network and both activities seem to be competences of the same institution.
- The majority of EMNSs know about the competences of NARIC centers as authority for academic recognition (87%); however, when requested about competences for professional recognition only the 30% attribute this competence to their national NARIC centres, the 39% say that it is not their competence and the 30% show a lack of knowledge about it.
- The answers given by the EMNSs show that 1) most EMNSs have a lack of knowledge about all the activities carried out by their national NARIC centers and/or 2) not all NARIC centers have the same competences in all the countries.

#### FREQUENCY AND TYPE OF CONTACTS OF EMNSs WITH NARIC CENTRES

- The majority of EMNSs (61%) contact their NARIC centers occasionally, but not regularly, and the most requested information is firstly on “*national legislation on joint programmes (62%)*”, being the 3 next most cited items *evaluation of foreign qualifications in compliance with national legislation (52%)*, *recognition/accreditation status of foreign HEIs (38%)*, *Elegibility of HEIs (33%)* and *procedure to award a joint degree (33%)*.
- More than half of the EMNSs requested (57%) have been contacted by their national NARIC centres to request for information mostly related to Erasmus Mundus courses (67%) and consortia (50%), followed by topics on assessment and recognition of Erasmus Mundus degrees (42%) and partner HEIs of EM courses (42%). In contrast, the 43% of EMNSs have never been contacted by the NARIC centres, what seems to be a high percentage.

The following conclusions arise from these results:

1. Both EMNSs and NARIC centers need to know more about each other (their activities and competences).
2. EMNSs need clarification of the competences and activities of ENIC network and NARIC centers and more knowledge of the MERIC network.
3. A comparative analysis of the competences of European NARIC centers should be carried out to identify similar and different competences and missions in all the studied countries.
4. The majority of EMNSs contacts their NARIC centres with more frequency than the latter ones contact them; nevertheless, their contacts are mostly occasional, not regular.

5. The most requested information by EMNSs is about: *national legislation on joint programmes*, being the 3 next most cited items *evaluation of foreign qualifications in compliance with national legislation*, *recognition/accreditation status of foreign HEIs*, *Eligibility of HEIs and procedure to award a joint degree*.

The second objective of the survey established in the second part, to examine the extent to which the cooperation between both networks EMNS and NARIC Centers needs to be improved and strengthened, has also been targeted. The results are provided below sorted into two main topics: *type of cooperation between EMNSs and NARIC centers*, *Identification of good practices and weaknesses*.

#### TYPE OF COOPERATION BETWEEN EMNSs AND NARIC CENTERS

- Most of EMNSs have invited their NARIC centers to meetings or seminars, having participated frequently both as speakers and attendees. In contrast, most of them (EMNSs) have never been invited by their NARIC center to participate in meetings or seminars, and the few that were invited participate only as attendees. The main reason of this fact could be that NARIC centers did not organize any kind of event.
- The majority of EMNSs (78%) have never organized joint events with their NARIC centers. Only the 22% of EMNSs have organized occasionally joint events on topics related to higher education both at national and international levels, Bologna process, joint degrees, joint study programmes such as Erasmus Mundus + Erasmus + Tempus, recognition of joint degrees, legal issues for awarding Erasmus Mundus joint degrees and Diploma supplements, as well as related to the accreditation of Erasmus Mundus joint programmes.
- Most EMNSs have never carried out joint projects or activities (70%) with their national NARIC centers. Only few of them have done it occasionally (17%) or often (13%) which were mainly related to European projects on higher education and regulation of national legal issues for Erasmus Mundus programmes.
- The 87% of EMNSs state that they have never issued joint publications with their NARIC centers, being only the 13% of them that have done it occasionally.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES AND WEAKNESSES

- The 57% of the EMNS could identify some examples of good practices emerging from the relation with their national NARIC centers; in contrast, only the 26% could identify some weaknesses.
- The examples of good practices provided by EMNSs are related to sharing experiences, information and tasks, having regular professional contacts (joint meetings and events, and joint publications), as well as working together on legal documents and issues.
- The majority of them indicated that the effectiveness of the answers given by their national NARIC centers when they asked for information were useful to solve the problem (83%). Only few answered that the information was difficult to understand or different from the EM glossary (4%) or that they never asked for information (13%)
- The issues that have been identified as “weaknesses” by EMNSs can be sorted as: 1) lack of contact, communication and exchange of information on relevant issues, 2) lack of knowledge about recent development in the field of expertise of both parties and 3) weak links in joint activities.

From the former results we can deduce the following generalizations:

- 1) Few joint projects, joint events (conferences, seminars, meetings, etc.) and joint publications have been carried out by EMNSs and their NARIC centers.
- 2) Most EMNSs are satisfied with the effectiveness of the answers given by their NARIC centers when requested for information.
- 3) A more sustainable, regular and formal relationship between EMNSs and NARIC centers should be developed, both at national and international levels.

By means of the answers obtained in the third part of the survey we have reached the last objective of this study, that is, to identify topics and specific actions that could be implemented to increase and reinforce cooperation between EMNSs, NARIC centers and ENIC-MERIC networks. The results are provided under the following headings: *Topics for a closer cooperation, Topics for receiving training and Actions to be implemented.*

#### TOPICS FOR A CLOSER COOPERATION

- All topics mentioned are related to joint studies such as joint programmes development, accreditation, recognition procedures system and legislation, awarding of joint diploma and diploma supplement, at both national and international levels, consortia agreement (structure and contents), admission and enrolment of foreign students in Erasmus Mundus programmes, recognition of study and mobility periods and eligibility check procedure by EMNSs.
- Other topics of interest highlighted are: transnational higher education systems, Erasmus Mundus/NARIC/Bologna Process, the European and national Qualification Frameworks, as well as practical influence of Lisbon recognition convention on recognition of study periods and diploma.

#### TOPICS FOR RECEIVING TRAINING

- The topics on which EMNSs staff could be trained by their national NARIC Centers are issues related to joint programmes and their legislation, accreditation and recognition; joint diploma and diploma supplement issue; admission and enrollment procedures of foreign students in joint programmes; information on different European degrees (diploma), among others. EMNSs are also interested in other topics such as general NARIC competences; ENIC/NARIC network's activities and missions, and the Lisbon Convention.
- The topics on which national NARIC centers staff could be trained by EMNSs staff are mainly concerned with the special features of joint programmes, particularly Erasmus Mundus, such as, structure and implementation of EM masters and doctorates, problems arising from awarding Erasmus Mundus diploma, types of Erasmus Mundus diploma and their peculiarities (double, multiple and joint), Joint degrees development and requirements to create them and to award the joint diploma and the joint diploma supplement, models of EM joint programmes, good practices and challenges emerging from EM experiences, models of EM joint programmes, joint European cooperation programmes, and EM National structures activities, missions and competences, among others.

#### ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

- General actions at both national and international levels have been identified.

As the most relevant actions we can summarize the following ones: to exchange regularly information, experience and ideas related to joint degrees awarding and joint degrees procedures for recognition; to facilitate contacts and more interaction between National structures and NARIC Centers in the recognition of Erasmus Mundus degrees; to collaborate on the recognition of joint degrees and the recognition of foreign Qualifications of EM student applicants; to increase cooperation on general policy issues at a European level; to increase the exchange of information related to the European Qualification Framework and the National Qualification Framework; to get

NARIC Centers outside Europe to know about the specific features and peculiarities of the Erasmus Mundus programmes and degrees, and to get National Structures to know better ENIC/NARIC MERIC centers and networks.

- Specific national and international activities have also been provided.

The next activities have been provided: to organize joint workshops, seminars and meetings focused on specific topics and targets of interest for both organizations and networks (EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC centers); to provide mutual information and training about their activities and competences; to carry out projects working together as partners; to create a collaboration and communication platform; to prepare and publish joint material in certain issues relevant for the Erasmus Mundus programme; to create databases in English with information about higher education institutions of European countries, and to have periodical visits during some days to know in detail more about each other.

- Actions and activities to be promoted by the European Commission have been highlighted.

The actions and activities suggested by EMNSs are addressed to promote, support and fund initiatives leading to national and international joint events, meetings, projects, publications on topics of mutual interest and benefit, as well as professional visits for staff.

The results of the third part of this study will lead to the following conclusions:

1. A wide range of topics, general actions and specific activities for a closer cooperation among EMNSs, NARIC centers and ENIC-MERIC networks have been identified (national and international joint events, meetings, projects and publications on relevant common topics, as well as European professional visits for staff)
2. The need of training on relevant issues addressed to both EMNSs and NARIC staff has been highlighted by the majority of EMNSs, having also been identified a high number of targeted topics.
3. Joint events of different types (workshops, seminars, conferences, meetings, training sessions, etc.) should be organized and projects and publications should be promoted and carried out at national and international levels by initiatives that could come from both networks (EMNSs and NARIC centres).
4. The European Commission has also an important role to strength the cooperation among EMNSs, NARIC centers and ENIC-MERIC networks. The following actions to be implemented have been suggested by the EMNSs subjects:
  - Joint meetings and seminars focused on topics of interest for both networks to give the opportunity to know more deeply the activities and missions of each other.
  - Representatives of EMNSs and NARIC centres should also be invited to formal meetings organized by the European Commission in Brussels to give presentation on topics, activities and projects of mutual interest.
  - An info-service platform to exchange and promote information among EMNSs and ENIC-MERIC-NARIC is needed as a motor to define common activities and projects.
  - Both national and international projects for the cooperation of EMNSs and ENIC-NARIC-MERIC networks should also be promoted and financed by the European Commission.
  - European and international visits for staff to spend 3-4 days in some NARIC or EMNS centers to know more about each other should also be promoted and financed by the European Commission.

The future implications of the outcomes of this study will lead mainly to two great challenges to be faced for the next years:



- 1) To disseminate the knowledge of EMNSs and NARIC-ENIC-MERIC centers and networks' competences and missions among them.
- 2) To define joint activities of mutual interest and benefits for the promotion of the European Education and Research all over the world.
- 3) To reinforce their cooperation by promoting and funding joint activities, projects and publications that will contribute to the follow-up phase of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA) construction.