

NVAO • THE NETHERLANDS

INTERNATIONAL JOINT MASTER DEGREE
PROGRAMME EUROCULTURE: SOCIETY, POLITICS
AND CULTURE IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen; Georg-August-Universität Göttingen; Universidad de Deusto Bilbao; Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie; Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci; Université de Strasbourg; Università degli Studi di Udine; Uppsala Universitet

PANEL REPORT

21-1-2020



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UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI; UNIVERSITÉ DE STRASBOURG; UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI UDINE; UPPSALA UNIVERSITET

NVAO ACCREDITATION ACCORDING TO THE EUROPEAN
APPROACH FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE OF JOINT PROGRAMMES

21-1 2020



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1 Executive summary

This report is issued by the panel appointed by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) and assesses the conditions for re-accreditation of the academic international joint master programme 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context' as submitted by the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. The application was submitted on behalf of the Euroculture consortium which also features Université de Strasbourg (France), Universidad de Deusto (Spain), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany), Università degli Studi di Udine (Italy), Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie (Poland), Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Czechia), Uppsala Universitet (Sweden), and as associate partners Savitribai Phule Pune University (India), Osaka University (Japan), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) (Mexico) and IUPUI (USA).

The application concerns a joint English-language master's degree of 120 European Credits (EC). The programme is offered as a full-time two-year, integrated multi-university programme in the Netherlands, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland, Czechia, Sweden, India, Japan, USA and Mexico. The panel based its assessment on the standards of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in the European Higher Education Area of October 2014, approved by the EHEA ministers in May 2015, which in turn are based on the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance.

The Euroculture programme is delivered through close and joint cooperation of the institutions within the consortium. It does so in line with the Consortium Agreement signed in April 2017. The panel appreciates how the flexible and sophisticated organisational structure of the programme enables substantial mobility among students. The panel encountered a clear culture of trust and cooperation across the partners, which is managed centrally in Groningen.

The Euroculture programme explicitly takes the citizen's perspective as its starting point, and focuses on interculturality and interdisciplinarity *of and in* the programme. The 21 intended learning outcomes (ILOs) are presented in a matrix, showing how they comply with the Framework for Qualifications in the EHEA and the European ones for Lifelong Learning. The panel wondered to what extent these, rather abstractly formulated, learning outcomes could guide the programme as they should do. The panel was reassured in this respect by the meetings with staff and Directors of Studies and by closer examination of some syllabi. The syllabi also show that the tightly coordinated first semester includes disciplinary input and that the interdisciplinary approach prevails from the second semester onwards. In the semesters after the first one some more local variation is allowed, in line with the academic profiles of the institutes involved. Students reported to appreciate these differences and do not feel that these withheld them from achieving the ILOs.

All students work on some clear capstones: Eurocompetences, work placement or research secondment, and the final thesis. The compulsory intensive programme (IP) at the end of the first year turned out to be the highlight of the Euroculture programme for students, staff and management. The panel is impressed by the set up and fostering function of the IP as a well-organised and strong element in the curriculum, which facilitates interdisciplinary and intercultural integration among students.

The 96% success rate of the programme attracted the panel's attention. Staff, students and alumni almost unanimously ascribed this to the selection procedure resulting in highly motivated students and the design of the programme. The panel encountered clear and appropriate admission criteria. It only wondered why students are encouraged to master some extra languages apart from English, which is the default language of the programme. This was clarified as being helpful when researching topics in a multi-lingual European context.

The panel appreciated both the structural design of the curriculum, and also that a variety of interactive and student-centred teaching and learning methods is implemented. It observed that students have substantial degrees of freedom to find and organise a work placement, provided they account for their choices and activities in relation to the ILOs and their personal ambitions.

The panel ascertained that the assessment of the learning outcomes in course assessments and the thesis corresponds with the ILOs. The panel discussed its concerns regarding the grade conversion table with the consortium. It suggested the introduction of a uniform grading matrix based on described performances transferred to grades. The panel considers that this is feasible, as there was an example of a good practice

in the rubrics used for assessing the IP. The panel advises the consortium to consider extending this practice to the whole programme.

The panel encountered appropriate examination regulations and mechanisms to ensure consistent formal application of them. However, it has some concerns about the organisational structure regarding the Examination Board and its sub-boards, because even though the independency from the management of the partner institutions is guaranteed, there is some overlap with the management of the consortium. According to the panel, there are some weaknesses in the mechanisms that monitor the quality of assessments and grading. The panel noticed, and students mentioned, some cultural differences across partners in the marking of course assessments. Therefore, the panel recommends that more attention is given to the alignment and coordination in cross-marking of courses.

The process of supervising and grading theses attracted the panel's attention. It values the uniform assessment form and the incidental involvement of a third assessor as helpful practices for potentially consistent assessment and grading of theses. However, it found variation in the consistency of the assessment of the theses reviewed.

The panel is not fully convinced of the independence of the supervisors in their role as assessor. It sees as a potential risk that supervisors partially assess their own work, and some may assess the process of thesis writing rather than the product delivered. The Examination Board announced that they will include in the TER that theses close to pass / fail will always get an extra assessor, which is positive. It feeds the impression of the panel that there is not any structural problem with the theses and the uniform assessment forms used, but that the issue is more in the process of organising, supervising and assessing theses. The panel recommends that the Examination Board addresses these issues.

Students as well as alumni expressed their satisfaction with the provisions for student support and facilities like Blackboard, access to libraries and electronic databases. There is transparent provision of information before and during the programme.

The panel met dedicated and well qualified staff providing the Euroculture programme. Most core staff have a PhD, and as a group they show a good mix of disciplines, subject areas, geographical coverage and senior international specialists. It became clear to the panel that staff cooperates within the jointly agreed and documented rules and intentions of the programme as laid down in the TER and the guidelines for syllabi and courses, and (sometimes in consortium wide) syllabi and assessment forms.

According to the panel, almost all stakeholders are adequately consulted, and the methodology of the quality assurance arrangements adheres to the approved European standards. The panel found the concept of round tables very interesting. The panel noticed that quality assurance mainly focusses on improving courses and the alignment of the programme as a whole. It advises to monitoring more explicitly the quality of assessment practices.

The application documentation, programme materials and on-site discussions with delegations from the EU partners, except from Sweden whose representative was not able to attend (due to sudden illness), provided the panel with a comprehensive view of the programme. It became clear to the panel that the Euroculture programme combines a good theoretical overview of different trends and phenomena affecting contemporary Europe, with attention for and fine-tuning of practical skills by the students. The programme attracts a large community of students, also beyond Erasmus Mundus funding. This shows its relevance, both academically and in terms of graduate career paths. The programme is efficiently managed by the consortium. The facilities and academic credentials of the teaching staff meet the required standards. There are some recommendations, the most important being that the programme should further professionalise the quality control of assessment practices.

Based on the documentation presented, the site visit and the additional information provided on 5 November 2019, the panel concludes that the Euroculture programme meets eight standards of the assessment framework and meets one standard partially. With some explicit recommendations the panel assesses the overall quality of the Euroculture programme as positive. The panel concludes that it is convinced of the quality of this joint master's programme on Euroculture.

The panel advises NVAO to take a positive decision regarding the quality of the academic master's programme International Joint Master Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands), Université de Strasbourg (France), Universidad de Deusto (Spain), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany), Università degli Studi di Udine (Italy), Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie (Poland), Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Czechia), Uppsala Universitet (Sweden).

The Hague, 21-1-2020

On behalf of the Accreditation panel convened to assess the academic International Joint Master 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in Global Context' at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen,

Prof. dr. E. Versluis
(chair)

drs. J. Braaksma
(secretary)

2 Introduction

On 23 May 2019, the NVAO received a request for an accreditation procedure regarding the master programme of academic orientation (wo-master) International Joint Master Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context. As this concerns a joint programme issued by twelve higher education institutions in the Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, India, Italy, Poland, Czechia, Sweden, Japan, Mexico and USA, this request was submitted on behalf of the Euroculture Consortium by the University of Groningen.

Given the particular features of this application, the NVAO convened an international panel of experts:

- Prof.dr. E. (Esther) Versluis (chair), Maastricht University, Professor of European Regulatory Governance and Head of Department Political Science;
- Prof. O. (Oscar) Mateos, Associate Professor & Research Coordinator – Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations, Ramon Llull University, Barcelona, Spain;
- Prof. M. J. (Michael) Blakemore, Emeritus Professor, Department of Geography Durham University, United Kingdom;
- Dr. S. B. (Sergiusz) Bober, Senior Research Associate/Head of Politics and Civil Society Research Cluster European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg, Germany;
- M. (Mary) Hayrapetyan (student), University of Pavia (Italy), Université Clermont Auvergne (France), Palacky University, Czechia (September 2017-August 2019), Joint Master Degree in International Development Studies (GLODEP) with the major in Development Economics.

The composition of the panel reflects the expertise deemed necessary by NVAO for this accreditation exercise. The panel composition is also in line with the procedural requirements in the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (C.2. Review Panel). On behalf of NVAO, ir. Lineke van Bruggen was responsible for the coordination of the assessment process. The secretary, drs. Johanneke Braaksma, drafted the panel report in close cooperation with all panel members and in agreement with the chair. All panel members and the secretary signed a statement of independence and confidentiality.

The panel based its assessment on the Standards for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), issued in October 2014 and approved by the EHEA ministers in May 2015. This European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes should be applied for quality assurance of international joint programmes if some of the cooperating higher education institutions require external quality assurance at programme level. The standards to be assessed are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG). This procedure allows the possibility that only one procedure can lead to accreditation in several countries.

The panel members studied the application documentation of the programme and reported their preliminary findings to the secretary before the site visit. The secretary collected them and processed them for the preparatory meeting in Groningen on 4 November 2019. At this meeting, the panel discussed the preliminary findings, identified the most important issues for discussion on site and prepared the sessions with the delegations.

The site visit took place on 5 November 2019 at the University of Groningen. The panel met with delegations of the management of the consortium and the programme, as well as with lecturers, members of the examination board, students and graduates. The schedule of the site visit is presented in Annex 2. Annex 3 lists the materials made available by the programme before and during the site visit.

Immediately after the discussions with the delegations, the panel discussed the findings and formulated its considerations and preliminary conclusions for each standard. These are based on observations during the site visit and on the assessment of the programme documents.

Based on the findings, considerations and conclusions, the secretary wrote a draft advisory report that was first presented to the panel members. After the panel members had commented on the draft report, the chair endorsed the report.

On 13-12-2019 the advisory report was sent to the institution, which was given the opportunity to respond to any factual inaccuracies in the report. The institution replied on 10-1-2020. A small number of

factual inaccuracies was noted and corrected. Subsequently, the final report was endorsed by the panel chair. The panel composed its advice fully independently and offered it to NVAO on 21-1-2020.

2.1 Panel report

The first chapter (above) of this report is the executive summary. This chapter introduces the structure of the main report.

The third chapter provides a description of the programme including its position within the institution, the University of Groningen, within the consortium and within the higher education system of the Netherlands.

The panel presents its assessments in the fourth chapter. The programme is assessed according to the themes and standards in the European Approach Framework. For each standard the panel presents an outline of its findings, considerations and a conclusion. At the end the panel gives its overall assessment of the programme.

The panel concludes the report with a table containing an overview of its assessments per standard.

3 Description of the programme

3.1 General

Country	The Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Poland, Czechia, Sweden, India, Japan, USA and Mexico
Institution	University of Groningen (Netherlands) Université de Strasbourg (France) Universidad de Deusto (Bilbao, Spain) Georg-August-Universität (Göttingen, Germany) Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie (Poland) Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Czechia) Università degli Studi di Udine (Italy) Uppsala Universitet (Sweden) Osaka University (Japan) Savitribai Phule Pune University (India) UNAM (Mexico) IUPUI (Indianapolis, USA)
Programme	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context'
Level	master
Orientation	academic (wo)
Specialisation	none
Degree	MA
Location	Groningen, Göttingen, Kraków, Strasbourg, Olomouc, Uppsala, Bilbao, Udine (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th semester) Indianapolis, Osaka, Pune, Mexico City (3 rd semester)
Study Load	120 EC
Field of Study	Humanities (ISCED Field 22) and Social and Behavioural Sciences (ISCED Field 31)

3.2 Profile of the consortium

The application is filed by a consortium of twelve higher education institutions in twelve countries, eight European degree awarding partners and four non-European associate partners offering a semester programme. The consortium partners signed a joint programme agreement in April 2017, which was a follow-up of the agreement signed in 2012.

The Euroculture programme first started as a European Studies programme in 1998, succeeded as a European master programme 'Euroculture: Europe in the Wider World' and since 2015 has its current name 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context'. It was awarded the Erasmus Mundus label in 2006, 2012 and 2017, and the EM Brand name for the 2011 edition.

The five founding partners were the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, the Universidad de Deusto in Spain, the Georg-August-Universität in Germany, the Università degli Studi di Udine in Italy and the Uppsala University in Sweden. In 2006, the Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie in Poland and the Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci in the Czechia joined the consortium. In 2012, the Université de Strasbourg in France joined as a full partner and degree awarding institution. The four non-European universities offering semester programmes also became full partners, after having been associated partners for the period 2008-2011. The consortium has accommodated an average of 93 students per year since 2015.

3.3 Profile of the programme

The 120 EC European master 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context' takes the citizen perspective as its point of departure and interculturality as the focus of the programme and *in* the programme. The aim is to understand how multiple and different perspectives (social, cultural and religious) on Europe and the European Union (EU) have developed and what they imply for social stability and social integration.

This interdisciplinary programme offers students the possibility to specialise in either research or a more professional orientation. Throughout the programme, the language of instruction is English. Students spend the first term in one of the eight European institutions and the second term in another European institution. At the end of the first year, there is what is called an 'Intensive Programme' (IP) which lasts a week and brings together all students of one cohort and many staff from all institutions involved. In the third semester, students either follow the professional track by doing a work placement which results in a thesis outline, or they opt for the academic track which involves a research secondment, and results in an outline for the thesis. In the third semester, students can choose to study at a non-European institution. This applies especially for the students choosing the academic track. In the fourth semester, the final thesis is written at one of the European institutions. Thesis supervision and grading is provided by staff from the two European institutions where the students have studied the first and second semester. These institutions award the degree.

4 Assessment per standard

In this chapter, the panel assesses the Euroculture programme according to the standards of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in the EHEA. The criteria for each standard are mentioned. Per standard, the panel presents a brief outline of its findings, as well as the considerations that led to a concluding judgement on a three-point scale: the programme either meets, partially meets, or does not meet the standard. At the end of this chapter, and based on its judgements on the individual standards, the panel issues an overall conclusion on the quality of the entire programme. This conclusion can be either positive, conditionally positive or negative.

4.1 Standard 1: Eligibility

4.1.1 Status

The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks should enable them to participate in the joint programme and, if applicable, to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.

Outline of findings

The consortium offering the programme is a network of internationally recognised strong research institutions. It consists of partner universities from twelve different countries, varying in nature, and representing faculties from various disciplines. All partners are recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries and are permitted to award degrees.

However, not all partner universities and their programmes are subject to external quality control, i.e. accredited by external agencies. This applies to Poland, Italy and Sweden, countries with forms of internal accreditation of programmes. Two EU institutions have a slightly different position in the context of awarding European Approach degrees: the Università degli Studi di Udine (as in Italy the European Approach is not available to higher education institutions) and Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (which requires an institutional accreditation).

The documentation provided to the panel describes how the programme has developed organically over 20 years. It became sustainable, especially since it received its Erasmus Mundus label in 2006, 2011, 2012 and 2017. The expansion of partners since 2006 demonstrates that the programme has both, European and global relevance.

The name and status of the degree are clearly detailed for each partner institution. All titles of the degrees include the phrase 'Euroculture'. From the eight European institutions, six award joint degrees and two award double degrees (Université de Strasbourg and Università degli Studi di Udine). On the joint diplomas, all twelve members of the Euroculture consortium are mentioned, although the non-European (full) partners only offer semester programmes and do not award degrees.

Considerations

All institutions in the consortium awarding degrees are nationally recognised and offer nationally recognised programmes. The differences in national mechanisms for external quality control according to the panel do not impede the degree awarding practices of the consortium. All degrees include the phrase 'Euroculture' and are awarded by the European institutions where students followed their first or second semester.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 1.1, status.

4.1.2 Joint design and delivery

The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.

Outline of findings

The programme has a clear joint mission expressed in numerous informative booklets, and an introductory reader which all students have to study before starting the degree programme. The joint mission is also expressed in guidelines for syllabi, a similar first semester with core courses at all European institutions and all institutions issuing the same diploma mentioning 'Euroculture'. The core courses cover the main theoretical concepts regarding political integration, disintegration and conflict; historicising European multiplicity; constructing and contesting European institutions; and cultural diffraction of Europe. The core courses also comprise course modules on Eurocompetences and research methodology.

In addition, there is a joint Intensive Programme (IP) with a unique theme each year that students from all partner universities attend. Following the well-coordinated similar first semester, all partners design a special programme that contributes to the overall programme goals. Students acknowledged during the site visit that they indeed experience the programme as a joint venture. They mentioned the introductory reader, the first semester, the IP, the Eurocompetences, the supervision of theses, and the interpersonal contacts. They emphasised that they experience especially the Eurocompetences, the IP and the thesis as the main common framework within which they can specialise and develop their own Euroculture profile.

All students follow their first, second and fourth semester at one of the eight European institutions of their choice, based on the preferences they express during the admission procedure. The third semester can be followed either at a European or a non-European institution within the consortium or at an internship organisation. The non-European partners can enrol up to 20 EU/EEA students in the third semester. Thus, about 25% of one cohort can choose to study a semester outside Europe.

The panel noticed in the documentation and during the site visit that this substantial student mobility contributes to the intended inter-cultural and inter-disciplinary dialogue among staff and students. Staff mobility, moreover, also fosters the jointness of the programme. When the panel enquired how staff mobility is realised in practice, teaching staff and course managers explained that there is not only 'distance' contact about courses and subjects, but that there are also mutual visits of staff in order to contribute to certain elements of the programme. The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree status involves provisions for a substantial number of student scholarships and mobility grants for staff exchange every year. The student mobility is, furthermore, supported by Erasmus+ grants for students who have not been awarded an Erasmus Mundus scholarship.

Pivotal in achieving programme coherence are the Consortium Director and the supporting Consortium Secretariat. Each of the twelve partner universities has appointed a Director of Studies for implementing and monitoring the programme and a course manager who also acts as study advisor. The Director of the consortium and the Directors of Studies meet twice a year as Management Committee, which is responsible for running and monitoring the implementation of the programme. The minutes of these meetings indicate that the Committee discusses student cohorts, possible changes in key staff per location, alignment of the first semester, the introductory reader, the IP, thesis related issues, and admission and selection. Other businesses discussed include Erasmus+, finances, the cooperation with the third country partners and issues on student support like visa bureaucracy and how to cope with mental health problems of students.

During the IP, there is a round table of representatives of staff and students which discusses experienced strengths and weaknesses of the programme and possible improvements. Results of the round table are dealt with by the Management Committee. Students met by the panel reported that the programme has been adjusted on the basis of their input, for example regarding the number of assignments and group work. The documentation gave the panel the impression that systematic exchange of best practices among staff could be improved. This impression has not fully been counterbalanced by findings during the site visit. Nevertheless, it became clear that best practices enhancing jointness are exchanged; especially during the IP.

Considerations

The panel appreciates that the flexible and sophisticated organisational structure of the programme causes substantial mobility among students, which is supported by the Erasmus Mundus grant and the Erasmus+ student mobility grants.

The close cooperation between the partner institutions aligns with the programme's intention to provide a nuanced picture of different "Europes" within Europe. The panel noticed that all cooperating institutions (and students) are actively involved in the development and execution of the programme through the Management Committee, the round table, staff mobility and student mobility. During the meetings, it became clear to the panel that the programme management and staff are keen to adhere to the jointly agreed rules regarding the academic and administrative implementation and monitoring of the programme, while also allowing some flexibility in how partners realise this locally. This applies for all semesters but especially for the second and third one.

The panel at first assessed that the programme offers a limited truly joint experience with regard to core courses, Eurocompetences and methodology courses. However, during the site visit it became clear that neither staff nor students consider this to be a problem and all of them do experience these courses as genuinely joint ones. Suggestions of students found in the minutes of the round table do not address the jointness but the planning of the methodology course in relation to the IP and the extent to which professionals from the field provide input in some Eurocompetence courses. This persuaded the panel that the current more tightly aligned first semester and thesis supervision contribute adequately to the coherence and jointness of the programme.

During the site visit, the panel also had the impression that some institutions are more intensely involved than others. This seems to be endorsed by the distribution of students among the partners: the universities of Göttingen, Groningen, Strasbourg and Uppsala accommodate most students, closely followed by Bilbao and Udine (with some variation through the years). Nevertheless, it became clear, when meeting several groups of interlocutors and reading minutes of the Management Committee, that the jointness in the design and delivery of the programme is realised and guaranteed adequately.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 1.2, joint design and delivery.

4.1.3 Cooperation Agreement

The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement should in particular cover the following issues:

- *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
- *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)*
- *Admission and selection procedures for students*
- *Mobility of students and teachers*
- *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.*

Outline of findings

The Consortium Agreement signed in April 2017 lists all roles, activities and obligations for each partner, the entities in the Consortium and the students. The entities to be distinguished in the consortium are: the Consortium Director, the Secretariat, the coordinating Institution, the Management Committee (also acting as Board of Examiners), the partner institutions, the Associated partners, the Selection and Admission Committee, the International Relations Office and the students.

Annexes of the agreement include: an outline of the programme, a management chart, the learning outcomes, the diploma supplement, joint selection criteria, the financial agreement, teaching and examination regulations (TER), and a programme handbook comprising the introductory reader, several guidelines, and teaching manuals for the Eurocompetences and for theory and methodology. Most of this information is found in the self-evaluation report, although it appeared that not all formal

annexes of the agreement are included in it.

The TER and the selection criteria and procedure show adequate jointness, driven by a culture of trust across the partners and managed centrally in Groningen. The panel wondered how students can 'track' the process of their application. When students and alumni were asked how they perceived the admission procedure, no comments or complaints came up.

The panel also wondered how the rules and regulations of the consortium harmonise with different national (or partner) regulations and to what extent they confuse students. During the site visit, the Director of the consortium regularly mentioned that it is a challenge to transfer ideas about the design and implementation of the programme into regulations for the consortium that do not interfere with national legislation that the partners have to comply with. Some examples of these tough issues can be found in grading scales and awarding diplomas.

Developing one uniform grading matrix had turned out to be impossible for this consortium, due to national legislative constraints (see also 4.5.2). The other example concerns the thesis. Four out of the eight European partner institutions are not allowed to award a diploma unless students have defended their thesis (Spain, Poland, France and Czechia) and in one case (Czechia), they also need to do a final exam on top of the thesis. The consortium solved this problem by grading theses before the defence and by adjusting the exam.

As mentioned above, the Consortium Examination Board consists of the Directors of Studies. In addition to this Examination Board there are local examination boards acting as sub-boards. These sub-boards are responsible for implementing the programme at partner level according to the TER of the consortium. The Examination Board operates independently from the general management of the institutions involved, but it overlaps with the management of the consortium.

Considerations

The Consortium Agreement signed in April 2017 clearly lists all roles, activities and obligations for the partners, the entities in the consortium and the students. The panel has some concerns regarding the organisational approach to the Examination Board. The Examination Board overlaps with the management of the consortium albeit not with the management of the partner institutions. Although the local examination boards act as sub-boards, the panel considers this arrangement as probably too sensitive to the local autonomy of the partner institutions.

Nevertheless, the agreement and the discussions during the site visit convinced the panel that there is a culture of trust across the partners which is managed centrally in Groningen. Furthermore, it became clear to the panel that the consortium is inventive in resolving tensions between its own ambitions and national legislation that the partners must comply with.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 1.3, cooperation agreement.

4.2 Standard 2: Learning Outcomes

4.2.1 Level {ESG 1.2}

The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).

Outline of findings

The 21 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are organised in a matrix: vertical dimensions are linked to the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area, and horizontal descriptors are derived from European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. As a consequence, the four main vertical descriptors are: knowledge and understanding; integration of knowledge, handling complexity and formulating judgements; ability to communicate; and learning skills. Horizontally, the three main descriptors are knowledge, skills, and wider competences.

The cells of the matrix are filled with the 21 ILOs which are formulated in line with the mission of Euroculture as described in 3.3. They cover:

- a. analytical understanding of European identity and consequences for citizens (7),
- b. identification and problematisation of what Europe and the EU represent for its citizens and the world,
- c. analytical and interpretative skills to engage with current issues (7).

Thus, the ILO matrix seems to be built up logically from the starting point of the human being in European society. The ILOs are well connected to the Eurocompetences and embedded into the course structure. They are also inspired by the experiences in participating in the TUNING projects initiated by the EU and the involvement of Groningen in the development of CALOHEE¹. The panel values the way the ILOs of the programme intend to combine theoretical and practical aspects. Advisory skills, project-management experience, leadership-related capacities etc. make programme graduates competitive on the job market, which is very important for any programme in the field of humanities.

However, while in principle they are sufficient and of the right level, the ILOs do tend to be rather abstract. This makes it questionable to what extent module coordinators can really use and apply them at module level, and to what extent they invite to active learning as they are supposed to. The panel raised these questions during the site visit.

Teaching staff and the Examination Board / Directors of Studies indicated that they experience the ILOs as broad enough to be flexible and tailored enough to guarantee that ILOs guide the learning outcomes of courses, and consequently also the content and the design of courses. Furthermore, teaching staff explained that they must develop their local courses and syllabi in line with the consortium guidelines for courses including on the ILOs based learning outcomes at module level. Syllabi are updated every year, whereas guidelines are more stable because they last for several years.

The panel performed a trail in the documentation for the course on Theory and Methodology. The annex of the self-evaluation contains a 'Euroculture theory and methodology syllabus' from 2009². It states as an aim: *'to provide students with concrete theoretical and empirical methodological tools needed for the writing of their IP paper and MA thesis'*. It also includes IP writing preparation and the discussion of the yearly IP themes and refers explicitly to the ILOs. It presents three units, the components that these units should cover, and a suggested bibliography.

The panel gained the impression that this syllabus has the status of a guideline since it also came across more detailed local syllabi from Groningen, Göttingen, Krakow and Bilbao; some apparently from the year 2017-2018, others from 2018-2019, but all four covering 10 EC and referring to ILOs. The assessments vary, although they all seem to include a kind of portfolio with at least some assignments and IP preparation. All four courses also seem to combine theory and practice through hands-on research and methodological activities.

Considerations

The panel appreciates the table presenting the 21 ILOs and the way it is built up logically from the starting point of the human being in European society. The table also shows clearly and convincingly how the ILOs are related to the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. The panel found no explicit reference to national qualification frameworks, but assesses this as sufficient, based on the fact that national accredited institutions and programmes need to work with ILOs complying with international standards.

According to the panel, the ILOs are formulated at a rather abstract level. The panel therefore wondered to what extent they align and focus the programme as they should. The panel was reassured in this respect by the meetings with teaching staff and Directors of Studies and the closer examination of the syllabi for the course on Theory and Methodology preparing for the IP.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 2.1, level.

¹ Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe

² Although the date in the annex is 2009, the syllabus does include three references from a later date.

4.2.2 Disciplinary Field

The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).

Outline of findings

The ILOs do mention (although in a rather abstract way) the relevant skills and competencies and indicate the interdisciplinary nature of the programme. For a reader who only reads the ILOs, however, the panel estimates that it will be hard to grasp which disciplines play a key role in this programme. Also, the rather abstract listing of relevant skills and competencies allows for a wide variety of research methods to be appropriate in the programme.

The self-evaluation report mentions the following main disciplines involved in the Euroculture programme: contemporary history, cultural studies, international relations, political sciences and international law, media studies and religious studies.

In the self-evaluation and in several meetings during the site visit, it was emphasised that students must study an introductory reader before starting the programme. This reader covers the main theoretical and methodological concepts and approaches to understanding contemporary Europe and most relevant knowledge concerning each field. Students do this in order to bridge the gap between their different disciplinary backgrounds and the essential knowledge for the Euroculture programme.

The design of the first semester focusses on the most relevant knowledge regarding the disciplines in relation to the Euroculture theme and approach. In the second semester, this multidisciplinary approach turns into an interdisciplinary one through the module on Theory and Methodology and the research seminars on specific topics regarding Euroculture, depending on the field of specialisation of the partner university.

The module on Theory and Methodology provides the theoretical backbone and the methodology that facilitates interdisciplinarity. This module also prepares students for the IP where their first interdisciplinary research-based papers are presented and discussed. They are again required to select and execute relevant and appropriate research methods when conducting research for their final thesis. The syllabi that the panel has studied endorse that the composition of the programme pays attention to several disciplines and research methods. They show a consistent and interdisciplinary approach throughout the curriculum, especially from the second semester onwards.

Considerations

At first, the panel wondered how the rather abstract ILOs could indicate precisely enough the knowledge, skills and competences in the disciplinary fields. However, the design of the programme as explained in the self-evaluation and endorsed by the syllabi the panel has studied, shows that disciplinary input is offered especially in the first semester and is expanded and incorporated with interdisciplinarity in the following semesters. Taking into account the relatively high employability of the graduates, it can be concluded that the balance of disciplinary and interdisciplinary input in the programme is successful.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 2.2, disciplinary field.

4.2.3 Achievement [ESG 1.2]

The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Outline of findings

The programme identified several capstones for deciding upon achievement of the ILOs, especially the ILOs regarding analytical and interpretative skills to engage with current issues. In this respect, the self-evaluation report mentions as integrative capstones: project work, presentation of a project plan, a work placement report or research secondment, and the thesis. Furthermore, it is described how each course unit of the Euroculture programme is designed to contribute to the ILOs in an incremental way and how

the programme as a whole contributes to all ILOs.

Each course unit has its own learning outcomes included in the course guidelines. Across partner universities, a number of shared course units exist for courses that are deemed essential for achieving the ILOs of the programme. The guidelines for these shared course units are the basis for the local programmes to develop their courses, syllabi and forms of assessments, taking into account their own academic profile and the TER. References to, and further operationalisations of, the ILOs were found in the syllabi the panel reviewed. Consortium-wide course guidelines have been prepared for the three Eurocompetence modules, the module on Theory and Methodology, the student IP guide, work placements and the final thesis.

The self-evaluation report also describes how students are brought together in international, multicultural classroom settings where interaction with peers and exchange of experiences are important in order to complete assignments and to make progress in learning. Assessment practices reflect the active learning concept as well, as students are regularly asked to display their achievements through participation in class, case-discussions, group projects, reports, papers, peer reviews, proposals and presentations. Thus, the student-centred and active learning approach that the programme claims is realised.

The design of the programme enhances the achievement of the ILOs as well as the high success rate of 96%. Students and alumni confirmed during the site visit that they are expected to be active learners. They ascribe the success of this approach to a procedure that selects highly motivated students, a programme that stimulates cooperation between students, and the dynamics of moving to another partner university each semester. According to the alumni report of 2019, the graduates value the following ILOs the most: adaptability to new contexts or environments, working successfully and goal-oriented in international and multicultural groups, and presentation skills. Another indicator for achieved ILOs is the type and level of employment that is obtained by graduates. About 50% of the graduates finds employment within two months; about 75% within half a year. From all the students who started between 2011 and 2016, about 38% ended up in the public sector, 45% in the private sector, 14% in the non-profit sector and 3% obtained positions in other sectors. Since 2006, at least 62 alumni have started a PhD project.

Considerations

The panel appreciates the clear capstones that all students work on: Eurocompetences, work placement or research secondment, and the final thesis. It noticed that a positive effect results from the joint guidelines for certain courses, at least the capstones. The same applies for the favourable effects of the continuous and well aligned assessments in the programme (exams, assignments, presentations).

The panel is impressed by the 96% success rate. It also noticed that staff, students and alumni explained the success factors almost unanimously. These include for example the selection procedure resulting in highly motivated and talented students entering the programme and the design of the programme facilitating study success and achieving ILOs relatively timely. The panel found that this was also convincingly illustrated by the variety in sectors and organisations where students find an internship, the high percentage of alumni offered a position at their internship host, and the substantial number of graduates starting a PhD trajectory.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 2.3, achievement.

4.2.4 Regulated Profession

If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common trainings frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.

Outline of findings

This standard is not relevant for the assessment of the Euroculture programme.

Conclusion

The panel issues no conclusion as standard 2.4, regulated professions, is not applicable.

4.3 Standard 3: Study programme [ESG 1.2]

4.3.1 Curriculum

The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Outline of findings

The Euroculture programme is designed as a transnational and interdisciplinary joint master programme. The curriculum design distinguishes four sets of competences. Competences are defined as combinations of knowledge, skills and 'wider competences' like autonomy and responsibility. Each set of competences is focused on during one semester: acquisition of key competences in disciplinary fields (1st semester), training of professional and research competences (2nd semester), interaction of professional and/or research competences (3rd semester), and reflection and application of research and professional competences (4th semester).

Furthermore, there are four learning strands: core concepts, Eurocompetences, Theory & Methodology / IP, and the two orientations research and professionalism. The research orientation prepares for third cycle education or research related employment. The LOs of the strands build up to the ILOs of the programme. A semester represents 30 ECTS; divided in units of 5 credits or its multiple number.

The documentation and the discussions at the site visit all illustrated consistently that the structure of the curriculum is clear for everybody involved and that it works well in practice. The panel initially wondered to what extent there is a joint content that leads to the ILOs, especially in the first semester, along both lines: the competences and the strands. Paragraph 4.2.1 already described how the guidelines for several courses at consortium level facilitate the aligned development of syllabi at the local course level. Students and staff apparently do not find that alignment is lacking when a course is offered at several locations (see also 4.1.2).

The panel initially had some hesitation regarding the restricted capacity of the ILOs guiding LOs and consequently, the way courses are actually delivered. These hesitations turned out to be mostly unjustified (see 4.2.1). The relatively low focus on research methodology is another aspect that puzzled the panel and that was fed by a documented remark from students on insufficient methodology training. The panel has wondered whether this applies to students who opt for the professional track, and whether action has already been undertaken in this respect. The panel did not identify any systematic methodological issues in the theses, nor did it have concerns about the amount of methodology in the programme during the site visit. The teaching staff provided some suggestions for improvements for achieving the ILOs in the curriculum. They suggested that practical matters might be better aligned and that the expectations of students might be better managed in order to let them adjust more smoothly to the different locations.

Considerations

The panel encountered a well-structured curriculum with a unique profile. The focus is Europe, approached from the citizen's perspective, and heavily concentrates on a deeper understanding of cultural and social diversity in society. The ILOs turned out to be flexible enough so that all locations can offer courses matching with their expertise and tailored enough to ensure that students can achieve all ILOs. Due to this structure, the panel noticed that similar courses sometimes display differences in the topics they address. Students told the panel that they appreciate these differences and do not feel that these prevent them to achieve the ILOs. The panel appreciates the design of the curricular structure which combines sets of competences and learning strands in four semesters, each of which has its own unique focus.

The panel also values that students may opt for either a research or a professional orientation serving the ILOs. Students told the panel that they are pleased to get the opportunity to reach the ILOs with a personal profile; not only do they have a choice between a professional and a research orientation, but

their profile also depends on the locations where they follow particular courses. The panel is impressed by the joint set-up and by the fostering function of the IP in the middle of the programme. The IP is a well-planned and strong element in the curriculum facilitating interdisciplinary and intercultural integration among students.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 3.1, curriculum.

4.3.2 Credits

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.

Outline of findings

The ECTS model is applied and all course units cover 5 EC or its multiple number. Guidelines and syllabi mention the number of credits involved.

Considerations

The panel noticed that the distribution of ECs over the semesters is clear and equal.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 3.2, credits.

4.3.3 Workload

A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified. The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.

Outline of findings

The programmed workload for the master in Euroculture is 120 ECTS, which seems suitable for this programme. The programme appears to be achievable according to the high completion rate of 96% and the 98% of students who are on track in their study programme. The alumni research report mentions that the workload varies across partners and indicates low scores on depth of the programme. Combined with the high success rate, this could lead to a concern whether the programme is demanding enough.

When requested, students reported that cultural differences may cause the variation in actual workload. They also mentioned that, although there is quite some discrepancy, the workload is not too high anywhere. It did not become fully clear to the panel to what extent this implies that planned and actual workload fail to cover the number of ECTS allocated. A contra-indication for this is the increase in students submitting their theses later than planned (for the second deadline instead of the first one). However, the panel thinks that any serious imbalances would have been identified through the monitoring of the workload by online course questionnaires, the round table, etc. This was corroborated by the fact that the Management Committee mentioned that some courses were rearranged in order to redistribute workload.

Considerations

The panel encountered an appropriate workload of 120 ECTS for the Euroculture programme. The programme appears achievable according to the high success rate of 96%. Due to this success rate and some remarks of alumni and students, there was discussion about whether the programme might be a bit too easy, but this was counterbalanced by an increasing number of students submitting their thesis late. The panel concludes that the workload generally seems in order but recommends the consortium to pay more attention to variation between partners. The panel considers the mechanisms for monitoring and redistributing workload as being adequate.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme meets standard 3.3, workload.

4.4 Standard 4: Admission and Recognition [ESG 1.4]

4.4.1 Admission

The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.

Outline of findings

Admission to the programme starts with several formal requirements checked by the Admissions Office of the University of Groningen (Consortium Secretariat). If these are met, the application is assessed by the applicant's first and second choice of institution. Assessment is done by at least two academic staff members per institution. The actual assessment is based on an agreed set of criteria covering academic, professional and personal competences.

The panel established that the website is informative for applicants and includes an online application system. There are three deadlines for uploading the joint application form and required documents, depending on whether students are from a non-European country and/or whether they apply for an Erasmus Mundus grant. The outcome of the assessment process is recognised by all other partner institutions and confirmed by the Management Committee.

Applicants must have completed a first cycle, higher education degree in a field relevant to the Euroculture programme: European studies, history, law, theology, linguistics, literature, philosophy, international relations, political sciences, area studies, cultural studies, anthropology or sociology. In certain cases, other degrees are also welcomed, such as business and economics, but then the courses and additional work experience will be assessed to check whether admission is feasible. Furthermore, an adequate level of English is a pre-condition to be selected for the programme. Students are asked to prove their command of English on the basis of a proficiency test: either a minimum TOEFL score of 580 or 237 (computer test) or 92 (internet-based test), or a minimum IELTS score with an average of 6.5 with no sub-score lower than 6.0. Applicants must prove their academic writing skills by uploading their bachelor thesis or a representative paper. A complete application also includes: a motivation of their choice for the master programme Euroculture (max. 4,000 characters), two reference letters, and an academic and professional curriculum vitae.

The panel wondered about the rationale regarding language abilities. The admission criteria require a good command of the students' native language and English, as English is the default language of the programme. Besides, the passive and/or active command of some more other languages is appreciated and might be assessed. The Management Committee explained that these requirements ensure that students have access to materials in other languages when they study particular topics.

The panel noticed the increasing number of self-funding students in recent years (56 out of 88 entrants in the most recent cohort). It also wondered how the intake of students is spread over the partners. Distribution of students among the partners of the consortium was illustrated by figures regarding the 2016-2018 and the 2017-2019 cohort. These figures show that the 'top three' universities for the first two semesters are Göttingen, Groningen and Strasbourg. The third, research-oriented semester shows a small number of students who are enrolled for the research orientation, and who are equally spread among all the partners. In the fourth semester the three institutions of the first two semesters again are the 'top ones', closely followed by Uppsala and Bilbao.

Considerations

The panel assesses the admission criteria as clear and appropriate. They are well communicated via the website. The same applies for the selection procedure, which is facilitated by a joint online application tool. The questions of the panel regarding the language requirements for extra languages on top of the native language and English were adequately answered during the site visit. These extra language abilities

are considered as being helpful when researching topics in a European context. The panel concludes that there is adequate jointness in the entire admissions procedure, and a clear central management of the process at the University of Groningen.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 4.1, admission.

4.4.2 Recognition

Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.

Outline of findings

The self-evaluation report describes clearly how recognition of periods of studies, qualifications and prior learning is addressed. Any evaluation of potential recognition is undertaken at each partner institution, except for scholarship applications where the evaluation takes place at the University of Groningen in order to guarantee uniformity in the assessment of dossiers. Credits obtained at one partner university are automatically recognised by any other partner institution. The consortium is aware of the necessity to do so due to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, and it is able to achieve this because all institutions are accredited according to their respective national legislative arrangements.

Considerations

The panel considers that the recognition of previous qualifications and prior learning is adequately provided for in the Euroculture programme. It also encountered that all credits obtained at any institution of the consortium are automatically mutually recognised.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 4.2, recognition.

4.5 Standard 5: Learning, Teaching and Assessment [ESG 1.3]

4.5.1 Learning and teaching

The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.

Outline of findings

Teaching and learning (plat)forms are designed to advance student-centred and active learning and distinguish between theoretical and practical training. The self-evaluation report describes several examples of these principles: computer- and work-based learning, public activities, project work and developing generic competences like conflict management and social entrepreneurship. It also mentions that seminars aim to make full use of the advantages inherent to the national diversity of the participants. Thus, the learning and teaching environment corresponds to the ILOs and facilitates interdisciplinarity, interculturality, focus on recent developments, and strong attention for competences. The IP is presented as the ultimate form of teaching and learning, bringing together many staff and all students, with their knowledge-oriented and competence-oriented experiences.

Across the consortium, students are regarded as 'one student body' per cohort. It was mentioned in the self-evaluation report, as well as during the meetings, that the provision of social and other activities helps to maintain this one student body identity effectively. Students and alumni spoke enthusiastically about the IP, extra-curricular activities like discussing films, guest lectures in the evenings, simulations of the EU parliament and their contacts with other students. The panel suggested during the site visit to add

a kind of shared social event at the start of the programme, but it was explained that practical reasons make this extremely hard to realise.

The panel wondered whether the courses are offered to Euroculture students only, or whether they are also accessible for students from other master programmes. In the courses on Eurocompetences and the IP, only students from the consortium participate. From the second semester onwards, courses offered by the partners might also be attended by other students. These may include students from other master programmes in general (Kraków, Olomouc) or from other EM programmes (Göttingen) more specifically.

The consortium has developed a separate syllabus for placements, which includes learning outcomes and procedures and responsibilities of the three parties involved: student, placement provider and university. A list was provided of placement providers, which shows an impressive number of organisations varying from universities to public and private organisations in almost all European countries and worldwide (for example Thailand, Chile, Russia).

Students must search a placement themselves. Once they have found one, they need to explain in a brief placement plan what type of organisation they found, how the placement would be filled in and organised and how they think the placement relates to the Euroculture programme. After the work placement, they then write a report on their experiences and findings, and an evaluation of more practical and organisational aspects of the work placement. Placement providers are also asked to complete an evaluation report about their experiences with a student. The consortium intends to further fine-tune the syllabus on the basis of these evaluations and the current cooperation with non-academic partners during the career day in the IP and in the modules addressing Eurocompetences.

When asked how the programme intends to further develop and exchange best practices of teaching and learning among teaching staff, the panel was told that that this happens mainly on an informal basis. Especially when lecturers visit other institutions, when teaching staff meets twice a year, when lecturers participate in expert panels, at study days, when staff co-teaches in the IP preparation and during the IP. When the panel asked students which possibilities for improvement they see, one of the few things they mentioned was more intense sharing of best practices among staff. Therefore, the panel advises the consortium to foster the exchange of best practices in teaching and learning in a more structured way alongside or instead of the current informal ways.

Considerations

The panel appreciates that the programme is well-designed in terms of teaching and learning methods. These comprise varied approaches like work-based learning and project work.

The panel is impressed by the natural way interlocutors seem to cope with cultural diversity among staff and students. Their tolerance for differences does not seriously threaten the joint ambitions and ILOs of the Euroculture programme. The panel also encountered tolerance in terms of a substantial degree of freedom for students in realising and organising their work placements, providing they can account for their activities in relation to the ILOs and their own ambitions. The consortium plans to further improve the materials supporting the work placements on the basis of an exchange of best practices and experiences with non-academic partners. The panel encourages the consortium to not only systematically do this for the work placements but also to structurally exchange best practices for other parts of the programme.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 5.1, learning and teaching.

4.5.2 Assessment of Students

The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.

Outline of findings

Assessment is formally regulated in the TER. The TER prescribes the modes of assessment for the core modules, the modules on Eurocompetences, the module on Theory and Methodology, the IP, the research seminar, the work placement and the thesis. The self-evaluation report mentions a consortium wide assessment framework following the ILOs. This framework is described as being based on the following parameters: knowledge, theory and methodology; application of knowledge and skills in practice; employability; and civic, social and cultural engagement. This is operationalised in assessment plans, an example of which (from Groningen) is enclosed in the documentation. It clearly indicates the ILOs per course, and illustrates that each module is assessed using a variety of assessment methods. The panel was not sure whether the other partners also have such assessment plans.

Assessments per course are further operationalised in joint guidelines and syllabi. The panel analysed the course syllabi of four institutions offering the core course on Theory and Methodology (see 4.2.1) and found that, despite local variations, all assessments of this course at least consist of a portfolio including several assignments and preparation for the IP, which is in line with the requirements of the TER. It has already been described in 4.2.3 how forms of assessment are aligned with the concept of active learning, taking into account the academic profile of the local institution concerned.

The panel asked the Examination Board whether it checks the quality of the assessment of courses of the partners. This turned out not to happen as the consortium relies on other control mechanisms like the guidelines indicating what is assessed and how this should be done, the Directors of Study monitoring what is going on in classes, the consortium based evaluations of courses and the IP meeting with its unanimously aligned and used assessment rubrics. These five scale rubrics with clear criteria and weighted categories are included in the Intensive Programme Student Guide. The panel did not see graded IP work, but it trusts that there is a good practice since students had no comments on the fairness of these assessments and felt well informed about the assessment of the IP in advance.

The same applies for the assessment of theses. The procedure for the thesis trajectory is well described in the consortium version of guidelines that students receive in advance. Students obtain a written evaluation of their thesis and a motivation for the awarded grade. The grades and motivation are based on a unanimously aligned and used assessment form. This assessment form consists of categories with indicative questions per category. There are no explicit weightings per category.

The panel reviewed fifteen theses from the cohort 2016-2018, and from the cohort 2017-2019, and reviewed the completed assessment forms. Most of them are informative in their comments. Sometimes, the final verdict is rather hard to follow, sometimes a thesis appears to be graded too high, but mostly, the panel could agree with the grades. In one case, the panel came across a third assessor, who appeared to be introduced because supervisors disagreed. One weak thesis was reviewed by the whole panel because it was a marginal pass according to the programme and should probably have been a fail according to the panel.

Reviewing the theses raised some concerns for the panel. The first concern has to do with the extent of independency of the student during the thesis research. Assessors seem to value a substantial extent of independency sometimes positive and sometimes negative. From the comments, the panel could not determine why these differences are there. Is there any guiding principle suggesting how assessors are expected to value independency of students?

The second concern has to do with the organisation of thesis supervision. Each student has two supervisors from two different partners of the consortium. Several interlocutors provided the panel with different information regarding the status of these supervisors. Some said they are equal and the process of supervision should be a tripartite process where everybody is constantly informed about all relevant developments. Others informed the panel that there is a first and a second supervisor and illustrated that the second supervisor is more at a distance so he/she can almost be considered as an independent assessor.

The third concern has to do with the degree to which supervisors intervene and guide in the thesis writing process. This is because the panel saw some weak links in theses that normally should have been addressed by supervisors. On the other hand, the supervisor sometimes appeared too involved with the process, so that they in fact partly assessed their own work (guidance). All in all, the panel's general feeling is that there is no structural problem with the theses, but that the issue is more in the process of organising, supervising and assessing theses. It therefore wondered and asked whether there are calibration sessions in order to streamline the process of supervising and grading theses (and other course assessments). This turned out not to be the case.

The panel therefore discussed with the Examination Board whether there is another procedure for checking the quality of theses and assessors. The Board does not feel a need for that as there is already so much cooperation throughout the programme and a third assessor from a third institution gets involved in a particular thesis assessment once or twice a year. Nevertheless, the panel suggested to introduce an independent assessor for all theses. The Examination Board explained that this is extremely difficult to organise due to underlying national legislations and the fact that each thesis already involves institutes from two countries. However, the Board announced that they will include in the TER a rule requiring an extra assessor for theses close to pass/fail.

Some other topics discussed with several interlocutors, and especially the Examination Board, are the defence of theses and the grade conversion matrix. At four of the eight partner institutions, a defence of the thesis is required in order to graduate. As explained in 4.1.3, the consortium solved this inequality among partners by grading the theses before the defence. An alternative way to reach alignment would be to let all students defend their thesis. The panel recommends that the consortium considers this, as it might be beneficial for all students to have the experience of defending their final work before graduation.

The consortium uses a grading conversion table in which the grades provided through the different grading systems of the partners are included in order to convert and interpret the grades students receive at the different locations. The panel asked why this is preferred above one uniform grading matrix like some other EM programmes use. The Management Committee/Examination Board replied that this turned out to be impossible for this consortium, due to several national legislative constraints. Students reported that they find the conversion table sometimes confusing. Moreover, the minutes of the round table indicate that sometimes students are surprised by the results they receive and the way grades are converted. Therefore, the panel advises the consortium to reconsider the current grading system and enquire at similar EM programmes how they organise their uniform grading matrices. Students also mentioned that in general they feel that they are fairly assessed and graded, despite some cultural differences in this respect between partners of the consortium.

Considerations

The panel ascertained that the assessment of the learning outcomes in course assessments and the thesis formally correspond with the ILOs, and also correspond in practice. Information concerning examination and assessment procedures applied throughout the programme and turned out to be mostly readily available to the students, especially through the syllabi accompanying different courses, the IP and the thesis trajectory. The panel noticed, and students mentioned, some cultural differences across partners in the marking of course assessments. The panel recommends that more attention is given to the alignment and coordination in cross-marking of courses.

The panel has some concerns regarding the grade conversion table as such conversions tend to 'average down' grades and cause discussions about individual marking. Students reported that indeed they are sometimes surprised by how they are graded and by the effects that the conversions have on their grades. Therefore, the panel discussed with the consortium to consider introducing a uniform grading matrix, similar to the ones used in other Erasmus Mundus programmes. Despite the difficulties presented by the Management Committee/Examination Board, the panel advises a reconsideration of the current practice in this respect. This may be done for example by first describing student performances required and then transferring these to grades. The IP rubrics provided a good practice for this, which, according to the panel, could probably be extended to the whole programme.

The panel encountered appropriate examination regulations and mechanisms to ensure consistent formal application of these, such as the Examination Board. However, it has some concerns about the organisational structure regarding the Examination Board (see 4.1.3). These concerns were enhanced by the mechanisms for monitoring the quality of assessment and grading, which were in some respects weak according to the panel. This applies especially to the process of supervising and grading theses. The panel considers the uniform assessment form and the incidental involvement of a third assessor as helpful practices for potentially consistent assessment and grading of theses. However, it is not yet fully convinced of the independence of the supervisors in their role as an assessor due to variation it found in the assessment of the theses reviewed. The panel considers it a potential risk that supervisors partially assess their own work and assess the process of thesis writing rather than the product delivered.

In addressing these concerns, the panel sees a role for the Examination Board, but it wonders whether the board itself is independent enough to do so. The Examination Board made a welcome announcement during the site visit: they will include in the TER that theses close to pass / fail will always be assigned an extra assessor. It feeds the impression of the panel that there is no structural problem with the theses, but that the issue is more in the process of organising, supervising and assessing theses. The panel advises the Examination Board to address these issues.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **partially meets** standard 5.2, assessment of students.

4.6 Standard 6: Student Support [ESG 1.6]

The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.

Outline of findings

Every partner institution has a Director of Studies, and a special course manager who also acts as study advisor and a work placement coordinator. The course managers are pivotal in student support. They are the first people to whom students can communicate their questions. Course coordinators indicated that many questions have to do with visa, mobility, alignment of semester dates and the flow of information. They see their role as a mediator between students, local institutions and the consortium and are aware of the importance of proper expectation management for students (and staff).

Study advisors can call upon the provisions for more professional counselling in the local institutions if students' questions require more specialised support. The arrangements for this vary per institution and whether they are useful for students of the consortium depends on the availability in English. All partners have provisions and rules regarding special needs of students. The consortium's policy is that all students enrolled are insured for health-care.

Students are stimulated to develop passive and/or active command of a third language besides their national language and English. National language training at the partner institutions is provided free of charge. The programme has a challenging mobility scheme implying that each cohort of students deals with a differently composed student group from semester to semester. The consortium subsidises the mobility period by a grant that covers travel costs, additional insurance costs and additional costs of living.

At the IP, the whole cohort meets at once. During the site visit, it became obvious that this is the highlight of the programme for students, staff and all others involved with the programme. The alumni organisation ARETE stimulates contacts between different past cohorts.

Students mentioned that they especially need support with accommodation and visa, as support for accommodation varies per university and visa rules change constantly. They appreciate that there are contact persons with short lines, even during holidays. When asked for possibilities for improvement, the alumni recommended to increase support for finding housing and internships, meanwhile mentioning that the list of work placement providers was helpful. They also suggested more coordination and consistency in hands-on advice to students.

Considerations

The panel encountered strong and well appreciated provisions for student support. Although there is already substantial attention for problems with visa and accommodation, this could probably be further strengthened. Students, especially alumni, would also appreciate some more assistance with choosing appropriate internships and suggest more consistency in practical advices given to students. These suggestions only emerged at the end of lively and positive discussions with students and alumni about student support.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 6, student support.

4.7 Standard 7: Resources [ESG 1.5 & 1.6]

4.7.1 Staff

The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.

Outline of findings

The Euroculture programme is realised by 85 lecturers of the European partner institutions, 36 female and 49 males. Most staff (75) have a PhD. The core staff and the different partner universities have profiles that ensure that the programme can reach its interdisciplinary ambition. They show a comprehensive depth in disciplines, subject areas, and geographical coverage, as well as a combination of senior international specialists. The profiles of the staff do not provide insight into the extent to which they are publishing regularly. When asked, the Management Committee explained that the main selection criteria for staff are: international teaching experience, specialisation in content, and an understanding of the intercultural and interdisciplinary character of the programme. The Management Committee also stated that it has a shared mind-set which it transfers to staff as ‘the standard of the programme’.

The staff developed an interdisciplinary approach, taking into account their diverse disciplinary backgrounds. Expert staff for the Eurocompetences modules train students on the basis of the interdisciplinary domain of knowledge. Staff from different countries develop teaching and learning materials together. This is a clear asset, due to the different academic, cultural and educational backgrounds, and experiences of experts. Consequently, the course contents may vary at the level of examples provided and research topics even though all lectures use the same model and guidelines for course and syllabi development. Some variation may also be observed in assessments and how these are graded, according to the syllabi seen by the panel and to what students reported, although this is always constrained by the TER and the guidelines provided.

The staff and the Management Committee are keen on mobilising complementary expertise among partners in order to reach the ILOs if necessary (see also 4.5.1). They do so by bringing in staff or streaming input from partners. The four non-European partners deploy staff and offer courses relevant for the theme of the Euroculture programme. Thus, they provide students with the possibility to also look at Europe from an ‘outsiders’ perspective’ (see also 4.1.2).

Considerations

The panel met dedicated and well qualified staff who provide the Euroculture programme. Most core staff have a PhD, and as a group they display a good mix of disciplines, subject areas, geographical coverage and senior international specialists. The panel noticed that, although the division of gender among staff is more or less equal, the Management Committee is predominantly male. It remained unclear to the panel how staff’s individual performance is monitored by all the institutions involved in the consortium, but the minutes of the Management Committee show that sometimes staff is replaced or reallocated in order to optimise the delivery of the programme. During the site visit, it became clear to the panel that staff cooperates within the jointly agreed and documented rules and intentions of the programme as laid down in the TER, the guidelines, and in (sometimes in consortium wide) syllabi and assessment forms.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 7.1, staff.

4.7.2 Facilities

The facilities should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes.

Outline of findings

The consortium uses Blackboard as its virtual learning environment. Students are enrolled at the university where they follow the semester programme, so that they can use all the facilities. Students told the panel that as a consequence, their e-mail addresses change every half year, a problem they solve by using personal e-mail addresses. They also reported that they sometimes need to organise access to certain facilities via fellow students, but generally they have adequate access to library and information databases. Students run an electronic magazine where articles by students are published and success stories and student experiences are shared.

Considerations

The facilities are sufficient and adequate according to the panel. They are clearly described in the documentation. When the panel asked students and alumni, they expressed their satisfaction with the facilities. Even when there is an inconvenience like regularly changing e-mail addresses, they do not complain but solve the problem. The panel appreciates the facilities on the single Blackboard environment and the fact that students have access to library and electronic databases wherever they study within the consortium.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 7.2, facilities.

4.8 Standard 8: Transparency and Documentation [ESG 1.8]

Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.

Outline of findings

Information about the programme and the admission procedure is communicated through the websites of the consortium and the partners. In addition, there are numerous insightful resources about various elements of the programme for students (e.g. on the Intensive Programme). There is a range of briefing materials for students about issues such as writing styles, referencing, searching, and ethics. The thesis briefing document and the guide for the IP seem particularly useful.

Blackboard and e-mail are used for internal communication. Students receive the information for the IP via monthly newsletters in addition to the study guide. Students and alumni indicated that they were informed adequately and timely. Information regarding courses may vary due to the institution delivering the course, but this variation remains within the constraints set by the consortium and mostly does not seem to affect transparency.

The self-evaluation report was in the main text less informative than expected and difficult to master in its organisation of the annexes. Also, the panel asked for additional information in order to get a better understanding of the whole programme. Nevertheless, the panel managed to find all the necessary information and once found, the information turned out to be adequate.

Considerations

The panel encountered clear and transparent information about the programme and its procedures, which was well organised for (interested) students on the website and in booklets. The provision of

information in the programme turned out to be adequate and mostly timely as well, despite some variation among partners in the more detailed information, for example on courses.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 8, transparency and documentation.

4.9 Standard 9: Quality Assurance [ESG 1.1 & part 1]

The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the ESG.

Outline of findings

There are joint guidelines for the internal quality assurance of the programme. These guidelines are implemented and regularly reviewed under the final responsibility of the Management Committee. This recently resulted in another design of the round table, which was first tried out last June and led to satisfying results for all participants. The system of quality assurance includes online student evaluations for all modules, the yearly round table during the IP and regular meetings and discussions in the Management Committee and among staff.

Third country partners apply their own student evaluation forms. Guest lecturers and other external experts are asked to complete a questionnaire on strengths and weaknesses of the programme. The minutes of the Management Committee show that quality assurance procedures result in adjustments of the programme and eventually may lead to replacement of staff. This was endorsed by staff and students during the site visit.

The consortium plans to set up national panels in order to also involve non-academic partners and placement providers in the process of quality assurance, in order to further improve and develop the programme. Thus, it is likely that employers might also become involved. The panel missed their experiences and input for the programme as stakeholders in the documentation as well as during the site visit.

From the perspective of external quality assurance, all partners of the consortium comply with national accreditation standards and there is yearly reporting in the context of the Erasmus Mundus status.

The panel asked students and alumni how student representatives are chosen and to what extent students receive feedback on their comments and suggestions regarding the quality of the programme. They explained that for the round table, candidate representatives are chosen at each partner institute from students who follow the second semester. Students receive feedback about the round table from these representatives. Furthermore, students told the panel that they sometimes email about concerns and that there are occasional additional meetings with the course coordinators about certain issues. Students gave some examples of improvements due to their evaluative comments. These had to do with adjustments in the number of assignments and aspects of group work. The panel noticed that the quality assurance focusses more on enhancing the quality of course development and alignment of the programme than on the quality of assessment practices (see also 4.5.2).

Considerations

According to the panel, almost all stakeholders are adequately consulted, and the methodology of the quality assurance arrangements adheres to the approved European standards. The panel found the concept of round tables very interesting. It was convinced that this is a good example of a well-functioning mechanism by the minutes of the last meeting and by conversations with students and alumni. The panel noticed that the main focus of quality assurance is on improving courses and aligning the programme. It advises more explicitly monitoring and enhancement of the quality of assessment practices and to more actively involve stakeholders from the employers. Nevertheless, the panel is convinced that the quality assurance meets the standard.

Conclusion

The panel assesses that the Euroculture programme **meets** standard 9, quality assurance.

4.10 Conclusion

Overall, the panel concludes that the Euroculture programme combines a good theoretical overview of different trends and phenomena affecting contemporary Europe, with attention for and fine-tuning of practical skills (academic writing, project management etc.) by the students.

It is now a long-established international Master programme with a very clear brand and a strong reputation. Its ability to attract a large community of students beyond Erasmus Mundus funding is a strong sign of its relevance, both academically and in terms of graduate career paths.

The programme is efficiently managed by the consortium with adequate provision of information. The facilities and academic credentials of the teaching staff also meet the required standards.

According to the panel there are some weaknesses in the mechanisms for monitoring the quality of assessments and grading. It advises the Examination Board to address these. There are some more recommendations, but the most important is that the programme should further professionalise the quality control of assessment practices. As a consequence, the programme meets eight out of nine standards and meets one partially.

Overall the panel comes to a positive conclusion on the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context'.

5 Overview of the assessments

Standard	Assessment
1. Eligibility	
1.1 Status	Meets the standard
1.2 Joint design and delivery	Meets the standard
1.3 Cooperation Agreement	Meets the standard
2. Learning Outcomes	
2.1 Level	Meets the standard
2.2 Disciplinary field	Meets the standard
2.3 Achievement	Meets the standard
2.4 Regulated Professions	Not applicable
3. Study Programme	
3.1 Curriculum	Meets the standard
3.2 Credits	Meets the standard
3.3 Workload	Meets the standard
4. Admission and Recognition	
4.1 Admission	Meets the standard
4.2 Recognition	Meets the standard
5. Admission and Recognition	
5.1 Learning and teaching	Meets the standard
5.2 Assessment of students	Partially meets the standard
6. Student Support	
	Meets the standard
7. Student Support	
7.1 Staff	Meets the standard
7.2 Facilities	Meets the standard
8. Transparency and Documentation	
	Meets the standard
9. Quality Assurance	
	Meets the standard
Conclusion	Positive

Annex 1: Composition of the panel

Prof.dr. E. (Esther) Versluis (chair)

Esther Versluis is Professor of European Regulatory Governance at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Maastricht University. She currently acts as the Head of Department of the Department of Political Science. Previously Prof. Versluis was the Director of Studies of the Bachelor European Studies, and of the Master European Public Affairs. Her research concentrates on the EU policy process in general, and in particular on the implementation of EU policy and on the regulation of risks. Prof. Versluis' PhD received the Van Poelje prize for the best Dutch dissertation in the field of public administration. She published a student handbook on policy analysis within the EU with Palgrave MacMillan, and her research is published in journals such as the *Journal of European Public Policy*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, and the *European Journal of Risk Regulation*. Prof. Versluis was a Fulbright visiting professor at Cornell University.

Prof. O. (Oscar) Mateos

Oscar Mateos is an Associate Professor of International Relations at Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations, Ramon Llull University in Barcelona (Spain). He is the Main Researcher of the GLOBALCODES Research Group (Globalization, Conflict, Security and Development) at the same School. He holds a PhD in International Relations from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) (2012). He was visiting professor at the University of Sierra Leone (Fourah Bay College) between 2006 and 2008 and Visiting researcher at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London) in 2008. He has published and edited several books, articles and policy papers on conflict analysis and post-conflict peacebuilding processes, mainly focused on Sub-Saharan Africa. He has also undertaken some consultancies and research for Doctors Without Borders in Southern Sudan or Conciliation Resources in Sierra Leone. He is also a member of the Executive Board of the Catalan Institute for Peace (ICIP) and an Associate researcher at the Barcelona International Affairs Centre (CIDOB). He has been recently appointed as the Rector's Delegate for the Agenda 2030 at the Ramon Llull University.

Prof. M. J. (Michael) Blakemore

Michael Blakemore is a Director of Ecorys UK, Emeritus Professor of Geography at Durham University, and has been an Honorary Research Fellow at Durham Business School. His work over recent has been at the interface between education and employment/business, and in the ongoing developments in digital society. He has worked extensively on projects relating to the Expertise Framework currently run by Ecorys. He has been a UK EHEA (European Higher Education Area) expert 2014-16, and was previously a UK Bologna Expert. He was quality advisor for the large TEMPUS projects in Jordan on modernising renewable energy curricula (MUREE), and in developing integrated distributed learning for technology curricula (EQTEL). He was Chair for the European Commission of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships, Economics and Social Science Evaluation Panel, 2012-2016, and has worked extensively as an expert in evaluations for DG CNECT. In 2017-2018 Michael was joint lead scientist in establishing the 'Digital Transformation – Governance of Human Societies' project at the Joint Research Centre (Ispra) Centre for Advanced Studies.

Dr. S. B. (Sergiusz) Bober

Sergiusz Bober is a Senior Research Associate and head of Research Cluster Politics and Civil Society at European Centre for Minority Issues (Flensburg, Germany), a Danish-German research institute focusing on issues concerning ethnic and linguistic diversity in Europe. He holds M.A. in law (2003) and PhD in politics (2010), both from Jagiellonian University (Kraków, Poland). He has teaching and supervising experience from British, German and Polish universities. He was a member of bodies responsible for studies curricula, creation of new study programmes and improvements concerning the didactic process whilst employed at the Jesuit University Ignatianum (Kraków, Poland). At ECMI he is also involved in organization of internships as well as selection and supervision of interns from such institutions as, for example, University of Hamburg and OSCE Academy in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan).

M. (Mary) Hayrapetyan (student)

Mary Hayrapetyan is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree Scholar in Development Economics. She is a member of the quality assurance pool of the European Students' Union and used to be a Head of Social Affairs Committee of the Armenian National Students' Association till 2017. While in Association, Mary co-authored the first student manual for quality assurance for Armenian students. She drafted and

conducting projects addressing higher education reforms in Armenia, including a nationwide survey devoted to reveal the students' perceptions on higher education reforms in Armenia with collaboration of OSCE office in Yerevan. Mary was a Higher Education Reform Expert by the joint agreement of the Erasmus+ office in Yerevan and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia from 2015 to February 2018. She provided consultation to higher education institutions and students and participated in the development of higher education policies and reforms in Armenia.

The panel was assisted by ir. Lineke van Bruggen, policy advisor at NVAO, and by drs. Johanneke Braaksma, secretary.

All members and the secretary of the panel completed and signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality.

Annex 2: Schedule of the site visit

On 5 November 2019, the panel visited University of Groningen as part of the external assessment procedure of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD) Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context. The schedule of the visit was as follows:

08.30 – 09.00	Welcome by Vice dean of the hosting institution the University of Groningen and the Consortium President in presence of Directors of Studies and Course coordinators
09.00 – 09.45	Session 1 – Meeting with President of the Consortium and Directors of Studies of partner institutions: Consortium/ Programme management
10.00 – 10.45	Session 2 – Meeting with Euroculture teaching staff
11.00 – 11.45	Session 3 – Meeting with Examination Board Euroculture (Quality assurance)
12.00 – 12.45	Session 4 - Meeting with current Euroculture students (1 st and 2 nd year)
12:45– 13:30	Panel meeting, lunch (<i>confidential</i>)
13:30– 14:15	Session 5 - Meeting with Euroculture alumni
14:30 – 15:15	Session 6- Meeting with local Euroculture Course coordinators / Student counsellors
15:15 – 16.30	Panel meeting (<i>confidential</i>)
16.30 – 16.45	Session 7 - Extra meeting with four members of the Examination Board
16.45 – 17.00	Preliminary judgement by the panel
17.00 – 17.15	Oral report of main findings of the panel
	Reception afterwards

Annex 3: Documents reviewed

1. Self-evaluation report for the accreditation procedure under the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, May 2019.

2. Appendices to the Self Evaluation report EUROCULTURE

I. Agreements and management related documents

1. Overview of issues and problems discussed by the Euroculture Consortium and solutions found
2. Specific EU Grant Agreement Erasmus Mundus
3. Template Euroculture Joint diploma certificate and joint diploma supplement
4. Mobility scheme for groups 2015-2017 and 2016-2018 and 2017-2019 (1st year)
5. Consortium agreement Euroculture 2017-2022
6. Financial Agreement Euroculture consortium – year 2017-2019
7. Joint Selection Criteria Euroculture consortium (2019)
8. Teaching and Examination Regulations Euroculture (2018)
9. Overview of Associate partners of the Euroculture consortium
10. IP Roundtable format 2019
11. Academic and Professional Orientation: distribution of students
12. Toetsplan Master European Studies (Groningen, november 2018) (Assessment plan Master European Studies-Euroculture, University of Groningen, November 2018)
13. Assessment criteria / matrix IP papers
14. Euroculture ECTS Grading conversion table 2019
15. Draft Student Agreement Euroculture (to be used for EM grant students)
16. Alumni Survey 2019 (in preparation; expected to be ready in September 2019)
17. Overview of placements taken by Euroculture students in the past years
18. List of final theses of students of the editions 2015-2017 and 2016-2018
19. Overview of academic and supporting staff involved in the Euroculture programme

II. Syllabi and forms

1. Intensive Programme Student Guide
2. Intensive Programme Tutor Guide
3. Eurocompetence modules handbook
4. Course unit Theory and Methodology
5. Euroculture Consortium Placement Guidelines
6. Euroculture Consortium Thesis Guidelines
7. Euroculture Consortium Thesis Supervisor Guidelines
8. Euroculture Consortium Thesis Portfolio Guide
9. Euroculture 2nd semester information booklet
10. Euroculture Research Track within Europe booklet (3rd semester)
11. Euroculture Third Country research Track booklet (3rd semester)
12. Euroculture 4th semester information booklet
13. Evaluation forms used for quality assurance of courses
14. Evaluation form used for quality assurance of MA thesis process (in preparation)
15. Evaluation form used for quality assurance of full master (in preparation)

3. Documents made available during the site visit

1. Euroculture courses 2018-2019 semester 1 per partner institution
2. Syllabi of some partner institutions for the courses on Theory and Methodology, core courses of the first semester and Eurocompetences
3. Example of a grade sheet for a first semester course in Groningen (political construction of Europe)
4. Various booklets explaining the Euroculture programme
5. Minutes of Management Committee meeting
6. Minutes of a round table
7. Student distribution across consortium universities cohort 2016-2018 and 2017-2019
8. Overview of lecturers regarding gender and PhDs

Annex 4: List of abbreviations

CALOHEE	Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcomes in Higher Education in Europe.
EC	European Credit
EEA	European economic Area
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EM	Erasmus Mundus
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines
EU	European Union
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
IP	Intensive Programme
LO	learning outcome
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
TER	Teaching and Examination Regulations Euroculture
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
MA	master
NVAO	Dutch Flemish Accreditation Body
wo	wetenschappelijk onderwijs (academically oriented higher education)

The panel report has been ordered by NVAO for the accreditation of the academic international joint master degree programme 'Euroculture: Society, Politics and Culture in a Global Context' of Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.

Aanvraagnummer: 008618



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