

4° EDLab Webinar THE ROAD AHEAD TO A EUROPEAN DEGREE

Lessons learned from the European Degree Label
institutional laboratory

The webinar is starting in a few minutes



Co-funded by
the European Union



Introduction & Agenda

Today's speakers

Speakers:

- Fernando Galán, Arqus European University Alliance
- Andries Verspeeten, Ghent University
- Lotte Laenen, Ghent University
- Isabel Cavaco, University of Algarve
- Bart Merci, Ghent University
- Yann-Mael Bideau, European Commission DG EAC

Moderators:

- Alessandra Gallerano, University of Padua
- Andries Verspeeten, Ghent University

Agenda

- **10:00-10:10: Welcome & Short introduction to EDLab**
Fernando Galán, Arqus European University Alliance
- **10:10-10:40: Testing of the label and label certificate: Lessons learned on compliance and criteria**
Andries Verspeeten & Lotte Laenen, Ghent University
- **10:40-10:50: Testing of the label and label certificate: Insights from joint programme coordinators**
Isabel Cavaco, University of Algarve
Bart Merci, Ghent University
- **10:50-11:10: A blueprint towards a European degree**
Yann-Mael Bideau, European Commission DG EAC
- **11:10-11:30 Q&A**



The EDLab project

Objectives, partners and activities

BUILDING BRIDGES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION

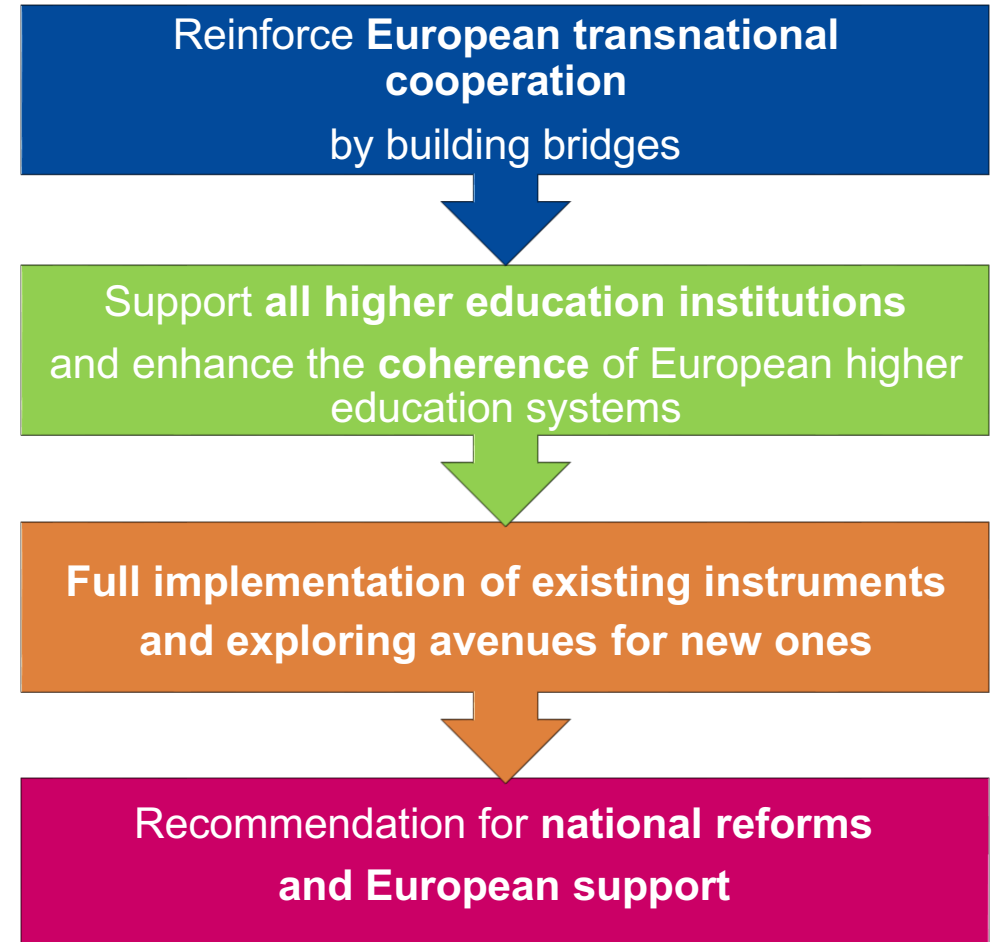
 **FACILITATING TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

 **FIRST STEP TOWARDS:**

- Institutionalised cooperation instruments (e.g. legal status for alliances)
- Common criteria for a European label for joint programmes, followed possibly by voluntary joint degrees based on these European criteria

 **SUSTAINABLE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCES**

 **WIDENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN STUDENT CARD INITIATIVE**



Two flagship initiatives



Explore common criteria leading to a potential **European label for joint programmes**, to be piloted as of 2022 under Erasmus+. Later on, the possible design and delivery, on a voluntary basis, at national, regional or institutional level, of joint degrees at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria, could be envisaged



Erasmus + pilot call topic 1:
Pilot a joint European degree label



Examining the need for and feasibility of institutionalised cooperation instruments, such as a possible **legal status for alliances of higher education institutions**: pilot as of 2022 under Erasmus+ the implementation of existing European instruments



Erasmus + pilot call topic 2:
Pilot institutionalised EU cooperation instruments to explore the feasibility for a possible European legal status for alliances of higher education institutions

Main objective

The project aims to further the implementation of European and international joint degree programmes and the European Degree Label with special, but not exclusive, emphasis on four target countries facing obstacles of diverse nature:

France, Italy, Portugal and Spain





Key information



European policy experimentation in higher education: piloting a joint European degree label

- **Duration:** 12 months
- **Budget:** 200.000 EUR (EU contribution)
- **4 Alliances represented:** Arqus, ENLIGHT, EUTOPIA, SEA-EU
- **13 Full partners** from 5 countries
- **Diverse associate partners:** national ministries and quality assurance agencies, European and global university networks, student and alumni associations, along with other partner universities from our four alliances.





Full
partners



UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA, Spain (Coordinator) – **Arqus Alliance**

UNIVERSIDAD DE CADIZ, Spain – **SEA-EU Alliance**

UNIVERSIDAD POMPEU FABRA, Spain– **EUTOPIA Alliance**

UNIVERSIDADE DO ALGARVE, Portugal - **SEA-EU Alliance**

UNIVERSIDADE DO MINHO, Portugal– **Arqus Alliance**

UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA, Portugal– **EUTOPIA Alliance**

UNIVERSITA CA' FOSCARI VENEZIA, Italy– **EUTOPIA Alliance**

UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI PARTHENOPE, Italy - **SEA-EU Alliance**

UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA, Italy – **Arqus Alliance**

CY CERGY PARIS UNIVERSITE, France – **EUTOPIA Alliance**

UNIVERSITE DE BRETAGNE OCCIDENTALE, France - **SEA-EU Alliance**

UNIVERSITE LYON 1 CLAUDE BERNARD, France – **Arqus Alliance**

UNIVERSITEIT GENT, Belgium – **ENLIGHT Alliance**



Associated
partners



National authorities: Ministries responsible for higher education in Flanders (Belgium), France, Italy, Portugal and Spain

Quality Assurance Agencies: NVAO (BE), HCERES (FR), ANVUR (IT), A3ES (PT), Aneca, AQU and DEVA/ACCUU (ES), ECA

Student associations: European Student Union (ESU), Erasmus Student Network (ESN), local student associations (Minho, Padua....)

Alumni associations: Erasmus Mundus Alumni (EMA), Padua Alumni Association

European Networks: Coimbra Group, the Guild, Academic Cooperation Association

Global University Networks: Unimed, Montevideo Group (AUGM), CASA

ENIC-NARIC: CIMEA (IT)

Universities from the participating alliances: **Arqus:** Graz, Leipzig, Vilnius, Wroclaw; **ENLIGHT:** Bordeaux; Basque Country; **EUTOPIA:** Cluj, Ljubljana, Gothenburg, VU Brussels, Dresden, Warwick; **SEA-EU:** Split, Kiel, Gdansk, Nord, Malta.



EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL
Institutional Laboratory

Specific objectives &
activities



Mapping and Screening of existing joint programmes

- Analysing the **suitability of the criteria** proposed by the EC for the award of the ED Label in the call and screening existing joint programmes against them
- Analysing the **barriers** of all kinds existing for their fulfilment, with particular but not exclusive reference to **France, Italy, Portugal and Spain**

Global attractiveness

- Analysing how an ED Label and joint programmes in general enhance the **global attractiveness** of the European Higher Education System

Design and testing of the European Degree label

- Analysing the **procedure for the issue of an ED Label and its format**, along with potential barriers to be addressed
- Producing detailed and **robust recommendations** on the basis of findings



EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL
Institutional Laboratory

Key deliverables



WP2 – Mapping and Screening of existing joint programmes (SEA-EU – UCA)

- Report on existing joint programmes
- **Discussion paper on the ED label criteria**
- Report on barriers in applying the criteria in current joint programmes

WP3 – Global attractiveness (EUTOPIA – UNL)

- Report on the global attractiveness of already existing European joint degrees
- Report on the potential attractiveness of a European Degree Label
- **Discussion paper and recommendations about the global attractiveness of a European Degree Label**

WP4 – Design and testing of the European Degree label (ENLIGHT – UGent)

- Repository of existing joint degree models
- Report on (joint) degree certificate prescriptions
- Report on the potential of adding a digital label to existing paper-based joint degree models ('hybrid' mode), weighed against the options of delivering fully digitalised certificates
- **Template for European joint degree label**
- Report on the pilot awarding of the European joint degree label



Key information



The project **has analysed 457 existing joint programmes** to map the current situation, screening them against the proposed criteria for the award of the Label.

- The European Degree Label should be seen as a **marker of excellence in European jointness**.
- The **Label is seen as a necessary intermediate step** towards the implementation of a full European degree
- In principle the Label should be of application to **all higher education EQF levels** and applicable to microcredentials.
- For clarity and ease of application, **all criteria should be mandatory, clear and transparent**, with simple formulations.
- In general, the criteria should **cover all aspects of the programmes**: organization and management, learning experience, student and staff support as well as European core values on which programmes are based.
- The criteria should be related explicitly to the relevant **ESG standards** as well as those of the **European Approach** for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. This necessarily implies that the institutions, fields or programmes should be evaluated by an **EQAR-registered agency**.

Testing of the label and label certificate: Lessons learned on compliance and criteria

Andries Verspeeten, Lotte Laenen, ENLIGHT, Ghent University

Label
and
label
certificate

Key question: Is it feasible?
Learning by doing

The context

- **Looking back**
 - EC Communication 'Achieving the EEA': September 2020
 - Preliminary discussions: Mid 2021
 - European Strategy for Universities: beginning 2022
 - Pilot call launched: Summer 2022
 - Project start: Early 2023
- General sense '**Time is short**'
 - The societal context requires us to act
 - The project time frame was limited
- The project ran in an **ever-evolving** policy context
 - Dialogue with European Commission and other pilot projects
- In the meantime: launching of **HE package** with EU proposals

Key observations as starting point for our involvement

- Based on **experience**
 - integrated joint programmes (EM)
 - with joint diplomas and degrees (facilitating BE-FL regulatory context)
- JPs remain **time-consuming** to set up
- Each consortium needs **tailored solutions**
- Ambition to award joint degrees is **often hampered**
 - By respective regulatory contexts
 - Certification: fall back to endless combinations of double, multiple and joint degrees (diplomas)
- New **momentum** through the European Universities Initiative

Why joint degrees?

- Ambition to set up **integrated** joint programmes
 - Based on joint design and joint implementation
 - a.o. Joint decisions on admission and degree-awarding
- Joint diploma with joint degree to render the integrated nature of the transnational cooperation
- Easily **recognisable** as such for
 - Students
 - Employers
 - Credential evaluators (HEIs, ENIC/NARICs)

Key principles and questions prior to starting our WP

- **Hands-on approach:** focus on the issue of certification
 - The label is a marker of excellence in jointness awarded to joint programmes
 - The label certificate is issued to students who graduated from such programme, alongside the actual joint diploma
- Can we have the label certificate **render 'jointness' and 'Europeanness'?**
- Can we design the label certificate in the shape of an **'ideal' joint diploma?**
 - Intent: to **inspire policy makers** that such an undertaking is feasible, for the label certificate but also with a view to the actual joint diploma models

Activities

- **Samples of joint diplomas** as currently used in practice
- **Survey** current practice in issuing joint diplomas
- **Design** models for a pilot label certificate, including a label logo
- **Identify** JPs for pilot issuing, based on the draft minimum criteria (close cooperation with WP2)
- Provide **guidance** to (pilot) issuers
- **Test** the issuing of label certificates in practice
- Draw **conclusions** from all this on
 - Label criteria
 - Label awarding process
 - Design and issuing of label certificate

Data collection and data analysis

D4.1. 'Repository of existing joint degree models'

D4.2. 'Report on (joint) degree certificate prescriptions'

D.4.3. 'Report on the options for a digital joint European degree label'

Data collection and data analysis

Collect (anonymized) **samples** of joint diplomas and joint diploma supplements as currently used in practice by beneficiary universities

Collect data on applicable **prescriptions** at national / regional / institutional level for the model of joint diplomas and corresponding diploma supplements to beneficiary universities

What works for EDLab HEI partners?

Identify common denominator(s)

Input feeds into **format and design** of the joint European degree label

Conclusion

1/ Complementary certificate, paper-based/PDF

2/ Design that reflects the integrated nature of a joint programme

- in terms of components

- in terms of lay-out

To showcase that a common lay-out is possible for joint diplomas across national / regional contexts, through a common template for the label certificate

Co-design of a joint European degree label certificate and label logo

D4.4. 'Template for a joint European degree label certificate'

D4.5. 'Report on the pilot issuing of a joint European degree label certificate following the compliancy exercise'

Label certificate template

- In EDLab context, as a **stand-alone document**
 - Complementary to the joint diploma
 - In PDF form (also allowing for print)
- **Aim**
 - To design a clear template for the label certificate
 - Reflecting the **transnational character** of a joint programme
 - Easily recognizable
 - Yet **adaptable** to the context of individual joint programmes
 - While maintaining recognizability of the label initiative by using a harmonized template
 - Through applying the principles comprised in a guiding document

Guiding document

- A guiding document
 - that stipulates the **elements** to be included on the label certificate
 - Components
 - Basic lay-out
 - that provides a **framework to issue** the label certificates
 - Different scenarios on points of contention
 - Language(s) of the label certificate
 - Number and type of signature(s)
 - Authentication of the label certificate
 - that does not presuppose nor impose a regulatory framework in its own
- **Balance** between
 - Providing sufficient guidance to design and issue the label certificates
 - Keeping away from too prescriptive rules that hamper much needed leeway

Label logo

- To tie together the label and label certificate: joint European degree **label logo** that is consistently used as a **key visual identifier**
- To reflect
 - Jointness, integrated nature of joint study programmes
 - Character of a label
 - European initiative (while also remaining sufficiently neutral) -> colours
 - Values underpinning the E(H)EA
 - Timeless, thus abstract
 - Applicable in digital context



Pilot issuing a joint European degree label certificate

D4.5. 'Report on the pilot issuing of a joint European degree label certificate following the compliancy exercise'

Pilot issuing

- **What?**
 - Pilot issue joint European degree label certificates
 - Currently as a complementary certificate, in PDF form (also allowing for print)
 - In pilot context: Issued alongside the joint diploma
- **Who?**
 - Joint programmes that comply with the minimum criteria as they initially stood (thus joint programmes that would receive the label)
 - Label certificate tailored to individual joint programme context
- **To whom?**
 - To students having graduated from a joint programme that complies with the minimum criteria as they initially stood
 - Label certificate personalized for each graduate

Pilot issuing

- **Why?**
 - To **test** the process of issuing this label certificate
 - Is it feasible / acceptable?
 - Which steps to take?
 - Which actors to involve?
 - Which obstacles?
 - Etc.
 - In secondary order
 - Insights into the interpretation of the initial (minimum) draft criteria
 - Insights into compliance with the initial (minimum) draft criteria

Pilot issuing

- **How?**
 - Step 1: Identify joint programmes by EDLab HEI partners that comply with the draft minimum criteria
 - Step 2: Process of pilot issuing a label certificate to its graduates
- **Important**
 - **Pilot** issuing in **experimental** context, to **test** process
 - Not a complete picture of all existing joint programmes that (do not) meet the (minimum) draft criteria



Step 1 Identifying joint programmes

- In close cooperation with colleagues from WP2
- (1) Self-assessment via compliance survey (WP2)
 - Joint programmes by EDLab HEI partners invited for self-screening against draft minimum and optional criteria
 - Results feed into pilot issuing exercise

But, as misinterpretations of the criteria may occur:

Step 1 Identifying joint programmes

- (2) Gathering evidence for verification
 - **Longlist** based on joint programmes self-indicating to meet the draft *minimum* criteria
 - ✓ 25 joint programmes
 - **Shortlist** based on compliance with 'joint degree' criterium
 - ✓ 7 joint programmes

Longlist	Shortlist
2 joint bachelor's programmes	/
18 joint master's programmes, 9 EMJMs	7 joint master's programmes, 6 EMJMs
5 joint doctoral programmes	/

Step 1 Identifying joint programmes

- (2) Gathering evidence for verification
 - **Reduced shortlist:** Check validity of the responses in compliance survey
 - Videocalls with joint programme coordinators and EDLab contact(s)
 - **Supporting document** developed
 - Combining minimum definitions/requirements and explanations with examples of good practices

GATHERING EVIDENCE ON COMPLIANCE WITH MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – EQF 6, 7

<i>Higher education institutions involved</i>			
1. The joint programme is jointly designed and delivered by at least 2 higher education institutions from at least 2 different EU Member States.¹			
<i>Explanation of criterium/suggestion for evidence</i>			
<p>A. At least 2 HEIs from at least 2 EU MS:</p> <p>a. See consortium composition, as defined in the Consortium Agreement, ruling the design/delivery of the joint programme</p> <p>B. Jointly designed:</p> <p>a. Content: Processes for the joint design and approval of the joint programme should be in place. The programme should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for it, including explicit intended joint programme-level learning outcomes (cf. ESG 1.2). All cooperating institutions should be involved in the design of the programme.</p> <p>b. Process: How was the programme jointly designed? How were the different partners involved in the process? At different times, at different levels, to a different extent?</p> <p>C. Jointly delivered:</p> <p>a. Content: Related to jointly delivering the (integrated) curriculum of the joint programme, as also tuned via joint implementation policies (cf. criterium 8, but also joint decision on the awarding of the degree). All cooperating institutions should be involved in the delivery of the programme.</p> <p>b. Process:</p> <p>i. How are the different HEIs involved in putting the academic programme into practice? Continuum according to the degree of integration: Is part of the curriculum offered individually by institutions of the consortium, are some parts organised jointly (e.g. summer school), or does the joint delivery include joint teaching/joint virtual offers/...?</p>			
<i>Compliance survey</i>		<i>Evidence gathering through video call</i>	
Answer in survey	Comments in survey (if any)	Evidence/comments	Compliance
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No			<input type="checkbox"/> No

Step 1 Identifying joint programmes

- **Conclusions**

- Related to **formulation** of the label criteria and (future) corresponding guidelines
 - Need for clear, unambiguous and to-the-point minimum criteria
 - Accompanied by clear, uniform extensive guidelines to facilitate assessment of compliance
 - ✓ Label criteria are valuable, realistic to comply with, provided adjustments and clear guidelines
- Related to **challenges to comply** with the criteria
 - Compliance may be dependent on factors that are beyond the control of the joint programme consortia
 - Such as transnational campus, quality assurance, joint diploma and joint diploma supplement
 - ✓ Joint European degree label as an incentive for transformation



Step 2 Pilot issuing joint European degree label certificates

- **Selection** of three joint programmes to participate in pilot issuing
- Successfully issued a total of **59** tailored, personalized label certificates to its graduates

Erasmus Mundus Master of Science in Chemical Innovation and Regulation ([ChIR](#))

Erasmus Mundus Master in Quality in Analytical Laboratories ([EMOAL](#))

International Master of Science in Fire Safety Engineering ([IMFSE](#))



Joint European Degree Label Certificate

This certificate is awarded to

born on

having successfully completed the

International Master of Science in Chemical Innovation and Regulation

This is a joint study programme of the Universidade do Algarve (Portugal), Universitat de Barcelona (Spain) and Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna (Italy), amounting to 120 ECTS. The programme is evaluated as meeting the joint European degree label criteria.*

This certificate is awarded on behalf of the participating higher education institutions.
The certificate is issued alongside the joint diploma.

Faro, 19th of February 2024

Universidade do Algarve

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X Paulo Águas
Reitor



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

Label certificate number: ChIR / 2023 / n°ChIR/2023/18

*The joint European degree label is pilot-awarded to joint study programmes that meet the draft criteria, as expressed under the Erasmus+ 2022 funding Call for European Policy Experimentation in Higher Education – pilot a joint European degree label (ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP-Eudegree). This certificate is pilot-issued as a complementary document to the joint diploma.
For more information on the label initiative, please refer to www.ed-lab.eu/pilot-label-certificate-info

Joint European Degree Label Certificate

This certificate is awarded to

[REDACTED]

born [REDACTED]

having successfully completed the

Erasmus Mundus Master in Quality in Analytical Laboratories

This is a joint study programme of The University of Bergen (Norway), The University of Algarve (Portugal), The University of Barcelona (Spain), The University of Cádiz (Spain) and Gdańsk University of Technology (Poland) amounting to 120 ECTS. The programme is evaluated as meeting the joint European degree label criteria.*

This certificate is awarded on behalf of the participating higher education institutions.
The certificate is issued alongside the joint diploma.

Issued in Bergen, on March 20th, 2024

XXXXXXXX

Gunn Mangerud

Dean

XX
Universitetet i Bergen



Joint European Degree Label Certificate

This certificate is awarded to

██████████

born on ██████████ in ██████████ (██████████)

for having successfully completed the

International Master of Science in Fire Safety Engineering

This is a joint academic study programme of Ghent University (Belgium), Lund University (Sweden) and The University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom), amounting to 120 ECTS. The programme is evaluated as meeting the joint European degree label criteria.*

This certificate is awarded on behalf of the participating higher education institutions.
The certificate is issued alongside the joint diploma.

Issued in Ghent, 20 February 2024

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Prof Dr Rik Van de Walle

Rector Ghent University

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LUND UNIVERSITY



Label certificate number: IMFSE / 2023 / 1

*The joint European degree label is pilot-awarded to joint study programmes that meet the draft criteria, as expressed under the Erasmus+ 2022 funding Call for European Policy Experimentation in Higher Education – pilot a joint European degree label (ERASMUS-EDU-2022-POL-EXP-Eudegree). This certificate is pilot-issued as a complementary document to the joint diploma. For more information on the label initiative, please refer to www.ed-lab.eu/pilot-label-certificate-info

Conclusions and general recommendations

D4.5. 'Report on the pilot issuing of a joint European degree label certificate following the compliancy exercise'

Label criteria

- Input
 - In-depth interviews and focus groups with stakeholders discussing the label criteria
 - Surveys on mapping existing joint programmes, suitability of the criteria, compliance through self-assessment
 - Joint identification exercise WP2-WP4
 - EDLab workshop Barcelona, January 2024

Label criteria

- Output
 - Set of **reworked label criteria**
 - Mandatory criteria only
 - Restrictive
 - Clear and transparent
 - Organized conceptually into different areas
 - Related to the ESGs and EA principles, reference to other existing Bologna tools
 - Aligned with EU policies in general
 - Well reflected in the criteria as included in the recently published HE Package
- * D2.3. 'Report on barriers in applying the criteria to current joint programmes'

Label and label certificate

- **Future labelling procedure**
 - Incorporate the label awarding procedure into the procedures for the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes
- **Evaluation of compliance**
 - Per criterium, on two-tier or three-tier scale
 - In view of a final decision, including the option for a conditional advice

Label and label certificate

- **Label logo** indispensable as key visual identifier
- **Label certificate**
 - To reflect transnational character of the joint programme
- **Issuing a label certificate**
 - Clear template, combined with guidelines that do not presuppose nor impose a regulatory framework in its own

Final words

- We managed to successfully issue pilot label certificates
 - After a thorough identification exercise
 - And intense thought-process on design and procedure
- This pilot exercise contributed to the development of
 - Consolidated detailed input on the label criteria
 - Combined WP₂-WP₄ exercise
 - Concrete recommendations and tools for the shaping of a future labelling procedure

Testing of the label and label certificate: Insights from joint programme coordinators

Panel debate

Joint programmes

Erasmus Mundus Master of Science in Chemical Innovation and Regulation ([ChIR](#))

Prof. dr. Isabel Cavaco, University of Algarve

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