

Sharing experiences of HEIs offering Joint Degrees in Albania: Good Practices and Challenges



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NOSTRA SIGNORA DEL BUON CONSIGLIO

2004 – *Our Lady of Good Counsel Foundation* decided to open a University in Abania

H.E. situation on 2004 → only 4 private and specialized HEIs

What kind of University ??

1) *national* or 2) *internationally* oriented toward the *excellence*

What was useful to Albania and helpful to its young generation?

HOW COULD IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



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The strategic choice was the second one, the most expensive and the most difficult

Joint Programs and *Joint Degree-s* as the *best instrument* and the *shorter pathway* to guarantee immediately *EU standards* and *quality* in the academic process and *EU recognized degrees* (“a passport” to EU job market)

Strategic Partners: Italian Universities



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5 Bachelors

4 Scientific Masters

3 Professional Masters

4 Integrated Programs of 2' cycle

4 Executive Masters

impact

35% of the graduates employed in European Union countries and North America (USA, Canada)

25% foreign students

Evolution of JPs framework in Europe

- After the years '90, the political changes in Europe and the democratic developments in the Central and Eastern European countries were accompanied with increasing efforts of the EU toward the introduction and the adoption of instruments of standardization and approximation, including also the higher education area
- **Phare Multicountry Programme** - Strategic workshops and seminars to boost Cooperation in Higher Education and Reforms
- Main topics: *Quality Assurance, Transnational Credit Transfer, Diploma Recognition, Joint Degrees, European Studies ...*
- **Tempus Programme**-“facilitator” & “implementing tool”
- Focused on the Reform and Modernization of Higher Education Systems in the Partner Countries



Higher Education Area - a new concept Steps & Tools

- **The Sorbonne Declaration (1998)**

A strategic choice in the introduction of the new concept - of *Higher Education Area*...

*We hereby commit ourselves to encouraging a common frame of reference, aimed at improving external recognition and facilitating student mobility as well as employability... achieved through ...**joint diplomas**...*

- **The Bologna Declaration (1999)**

*... Promotion of the **necessary European dimensions in Higher Education**, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter- institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research...*

- **The Bergen Communiqué (2005)**

*....In particular, we shall look for progress in the **awarding and recognition of joint degrees**, including at the doctorate level...*



Joint Programs

- A PRODUCT OF GLOBALIZATION AND GROWTH
- *“An integrated curriculum coordinated and offered jointly leading to a joint degree or to a double/multiple degrees”*
- double/multiple Institutional *Effort* and *Contribution*
- double/multiple Institutional *Responsibility* and *Guarantee*.



JPs - an added value in Higher Education

- **“An institutional, professional and cultural bridge”**
- the most *efficient, complex* and the *quickest* tool to the *internationalization* of the national HE toward the *Higher Education Area*
- a double vector \leftrightarrow in the exchange of institutional and professional experiences, bringing together professors, students and managers from different countries, regions and cultures
- Offer a *better quality* of teaching and learning process
- Produce graduates of the *same professional quality* for the labor market



JPs - an added value in Higher Education

- Produce *synergies* and *complementary professional capacities*
- Provide a *cooperative research environment* & joint research projects, leading to new alliances and networks
- Bring HEIs involved and their countries toward the *adoption of common/similar standards and procedures*
- *Facilitates the diploma recognition* process worldwide
- *Integration in EU job market* without recognition procedures
- Help the students to get a foreign education and degree at home, without going to study abroad
- Influence on the improvement of national HE legislation



JPs – a challenge for HEIs

- Leads to:
 - a reduced institutional and academic autonomy
 - a more difficult learning process for the students
- Requires
 - **full consensus** and **agreement** in the decision making process
 - *new governing joint bodies* must be instituted
 - **continuous negotiation** in the programing and implementation of JPs concerning all the academic and administrative issues
 - additional financial resources
 - additional infrastructures, facilities and labs are necessary
 - greater executive efforts from the HEIs
 - more human resources, from both institutions, in coordination



JPs – a challenge for HEIs

- Obstacles
 - differences between the national higher education legislations, in **standards** and **procedures** in the involved countries, are not take account
 - lack of particular provisions or insufficient ones in the regulatory acts, concerning the introduction and implementation of JPs
 - low flexibility in the *opening* and *quality assurance* procedures, that brings to double accreditation and higher costs, even in the case of JPs with EU HEIs ...
 - often, lack of international vision, subjective interpretations...
 - **excessive bureaucracy** in all the procedures