



Co-funded by
the European Union



Preliminary SMARTT recommendations based on EUROSUD

October 2023





Delivery date	2023-October-31st
Document title	Preliminary SMARTT recommendations based on EUROSUD
Lead beneficiary	University of Bucharest
WP number	2
Nr of pages	

This report was produced for SMARTT by:

- **Romița IUCU**, University of Bucharest
- **Simona IFTIMESCU**, University of Bucharest
- **Alexandru CARȚIȘ**, University of Bucharest



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project number: 101114590

SMARTT is an innovative project aiming at analysing, testing, and piloting the new European Degree label criteria, improving the quality and increasing the transferability of future developments of European Degrees across Europe and beyond.

SMARTT is formed by the **CIVIS - Europe's Civic University Alliance** in cooperation with the European Universities Alliances EUTOPIA, NEUROTECHEU, and UNITA, alongside higher education institutions, national and regional stakeholders and relevant actors. Based on significant experience in designing and delivering joint and multiple degree programmes at transnational level, the higher education institutions involved in the SMARTT project propose to expand this experience and draw, based on clear methodologies and thorough analyses, recommendations and proposals both for the European Commission and the member states, to support the development of a European Approach for designing and implementing Joint European Degrees in the future. The consortium partners possess an extensive history of successful international collaboration and have consistently played a leading role in the co-development of the European Degree policy initiative since its inception.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Specific objectives of the SMARTT project	6
Specific objectives of WP2	8
General approach	10
Results	14
Recommendations	16
Structure of the European Label Degree Label criteria	17
Indicators defining the European Label Degree criteria	18
Preliminary results of the EDL criteria validation against EUROSUD	36
Recommendations for the European Label Degree criteria	41
Tackling obstacles in relation to the European Label Degree implementation	43

1

Specific objectives of the SMARTT project

Specific objectives of the SMARTT project

- Mapping the different regulations and goals at the national and European levels.
- Establishing a catalog of indicators for European criteria.
 - Proposing an approach that could be commonly agreed on for the delivery of joint degrees based on co-created European criteria by European countries at all education levels.
 - Testing the relevance of these criteria.
 - Conducting a joint reflection on possible scenarios for the delivery of a joint degree at all levels, based on these co-created European criteria.
 - Exploring and recommending possible optimization of the proposed set of criteria.
 - Sharing good practices at all levels.
- Organizing a large dissemination event and elaborating materials.

2

Specific objectives of WP2

Specific objectives of WP2

1. Analyze the extent to which the specific criteria outlined in the European Degree Label¹ align with the EUROSUD program, determine the degree of compliance and identify areas of alignment or potential gaps.
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the European Degree Label in relation to the EUROSUD program.
3. Gather diverse perspectives from stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, management team, experts, and external stakeholders, regarding the alignment of the European Degree Label criteria with the EUROSUD.
4. Contribute to the ongoing development and optimization of the European Degree Label by using the EUROSUD program as a benchmark.
5. Provide evidence-based insights to inform decision-making processes regarding the alignment of the EUROSUD program with the European Degree Label.
6. Validate the relevance of the European Degree Label criteria in the context of the EUROSUD program.
7. Assess whether the criteria effectively capture the essential elements required for a high-quality joint degree program and provide feedback on their applicability.
8. Evaluate the potential benefits of aligning the EUROSUD program with the European Degree Label criteria. Determine how the alignment can enhance the value, recognition, and credibility of the program among students, stakeholders, and external entities.

¹ For the purpose of clarity, the European Degree Label will also be referred to as EDL throughout the document.

3

General approach

General approach

To shape recommendations based on the EUROSUD case-study, we carried out an iterative process, each step building on the previous and ensuring flexibility. Moreover, we built a methodology to allow us a systematic approach throughout. Despite having specific plans for both WP2 and WP3, a series of steps were carried out in parallel, as to ensure coherence of the overall approach and allow for the results of the EUROSUD pre-testing to be integrated in the testing of the 50+ CIVIS and partners' programs.

The recommendations are based on a process which included:

1. Pre-Test alignment: We conducted a pre-test of the EUROSUD program. The aim was to assess its alignment against the European Degree Label criteria. Through this preliminary assessment, we could identify both areas of alignment and potential gaps that may exist.

2. Criteria review: To ensure clarity in the assessment process, we reviewed the established criteria and their associated descriptors. This step involved defining explicit indicators that would serve as benchmarks for the assessment.

3. Expert engagement: To enhance the credibility and depth of our approach, we actively engaged two key groups: the Core Experts Group and the Enlarged Experts Group. Their role was invaluable in offering insights and feedback which would shape the trajectory of our project. The initial objectives of engaging the Core Experts and Enlarged Experts working groups were:

O1. Develop a SMARTT vision for the European Label criteria.

O2. Develop a SMARTT proposal for the revised European label criteria.

O3. Propose methods for applying the SMARTT evaluation indicators.

O4. Identify, define, and describe the corresponding SMARTT evaluation indicators.

4. Research Methodology: We employed a range of methods and instruments, which included:

- Hosting focus groups with EUROSUD students and alumni. The objectives of these focus groups were to:

- a. Explore students' understanding and familiarity with the European Degree Label and its criteria.

- b. Gather students' perspectives on the relevance and importance of the European Degree Label within the context of the EUROSUD program.

- c. Identify students' perceptions of the potential benefits and challenges associated with implementing the European Degree Label criteria in the EUROSUD program.

- d. Assess students' expectations and suggestions regarding the alignment of the EUROSUD program with the European Degree Label criteria.

- e. Obtain feedback on how well the EUROSUD program currently addresses the European Degree Label criteria and identify areas for improvement.

- f. Explore students' experiences and examples of how the EUROSUD program already aligns with the European Degree Label criteria.

- g. Encourage students to share their recommendations and suggestions for enhancing the EUROSUD program's alignment with the European Degree Label.

- h. Gain insights into how the European Degree Label can contribute to improving the quality and recognition of the EUROSUD program.

i. Provide an opportunity for students to discuss their expectations and concerns regarding the implementation of the European Degree Label criteria.

j. Contribute to the ongoing development and optimization of the EUROSUD program by incorporating student perspectives on the European Degree Label and the SMARTT project.

- Conducting one-on-one interviews with team members affiliated with EUROSUD. The objectives of these interview sessions were to:

a. Explore the team-members' understanding of the European Degree Label and its criteria.

b. Determine the extent to which the EUROSUD program currently aligns with the European Degree Label criteria, identifying areas of strength and potential gaps or areas for improvement.

c. Explore the team-members' perspectives on the potential benefits and advantages of aligning the EUROSUD program with the European Degree Label, considering the impact on program reputation, student opportunities, and stakeholder engagement.

d. Identify challenges and obstacles that may arise during the alignment process and gather insights on possible solutions or strategies to address them effectively.

e. Gather recommendations from team-members on how to further align the European Degree Label criteria to the EUROSUD program.

- Designing a draft survey which was initially tested on EUROSUD participants. The aim was to refine this survey so that it effectively validates the European Degree Label against chosen CIVIS programs and those of nominated partners. The survey is aimed at validating the European Degree Label criteria against the selected CIVIS and partners' programs:

a. Provide evidence-based insights to inform decision-making processes regarding the EDL.

b. Evaluate the extent to which the European Degree Label (EDL) criteria aligns with the selected programs.

c. Validate the relevance of the EDL criteria in the context of the selected programs.

d. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each EDL criterion/cluster in relation to the selected programs.

e. Identify opportunities to better align program elements and the EDL criteria to further improve the quality of education and student experiences.

f. Identify best practices and lessons learned from selected joint degree programs or initiatives that can inform the EDL.

g. Provide feedback on the applicability of the EDL criteria in the context of the selected programs.

h. Identify the potential benefits of better aligning the selected programs and the EDL criteria.

i. Identify the potential drawbacks of better aligning the selected programs and the EDL criteria.

j. Explore attitudes and perception of CIVIS members and partners with regards to the EDL.

The survey is specifically addressed to representatives of the selected CIVIS and partners' programs. It aims to gather quantitative and qualitative data regarding the European Degree Label (EDL) criteria from the perspective of the selected programs. The purpose of the survey is to validate the EDL criteria through the perspective of the selected programs. The purpose of the survey is NOT to evaluate the selected programs.

5. Selection Questionnaire: A major part of our approach was to construct a selection questionnaire. This tool was essential in mapping out the CIVIS programs based on the European Degree Label criteria.

The roadmap of activities and milestones also includes:

1. An ongoing process of selecting CIVIS and partner programs using the previously mentioned selection questionnaire (piloted on EUROSUD)
2. The draft survey underwent testing against EUROSUD and feedback was used to finalize the survey.
3. Results derived from the initial phase (concerning EUROSUD) were integrated in the WP3.
4. Continued collaboration with the Core Experts Group and the Enlarged Experts Group for their feedback and insights.
5. The next stage will involve rigorous data collection and subsequent analysis based on the survey responses from all chosen programs.
6. Based on the pilot test with EUROSUD, results and recommendations were compiled.

4

Results

Results

Results are detailed in the final WP2 report. The report will include:

- The results of the pre-testing of EDL criteria against EUROSUD.
- The results of the selection questionnaire results based on EUROSUD.
- The results of the pre-testing of the survey against EUROSUD.
- Results from the:
 1. Focus-groups with students and alumni of EUROSUD
 2. Interviews with team-members affiliated with EUROSUD.
 3. Consultations and workshops with:
 - The Core Experts Group
 - The Enlarged Experts Group

For the purpose of this specific document, the focus will be solely on the preliminary recommendations derived from the EUROSUD pre-testing, reflected in the following chapter.

Recommendations

Based on the pre-testing of the EUROSUD program, the following categories of recommendations were drafted in relation to the European Label Degree:

- 1. Structure of the European Label Degree Label criteria.**
- 2. Indicators defining the European Label Degree criteria.**
 - Preliminary results of the EDL criteria validation against EUROSUD
- 3. Recommendations for the European Label Degree criteria.**
 - Content
 - Approach
- 4. Tackling obstacles in relation to the European Label Degree implementation.**

1. Structure of the European Label Degree Label criteria

Following pre-testing of the EDL criteria on EUROSUD one recommendation is to organize the EDL criteria into corresponding thematic clusters, to ensure more structure, logic and to provide a clearer and more focused overview of the areas that need to be addressed for programs interested in obtaining the EDL, enhancing effectiveness in both understanding and application of the EDL.

More specifically, this restructuring of the EDL into clusters was based on the following aspects:

1. Ease of understanding: Thematic clusters allow for a break-down of the information into more digestible sections. This makes it easier for stakeholders to understand and assess the criteria.

2. Cohesiveness: Thematic clusters create a sense of cohesiveness. Stakeholders can see how individual criteria relate to each other within the broader theme, providing context and meaning.

3. Efficient assessment: When reviewing or (self)assessing against the criteria, having them organized by theme can streamline the process. Stakeholders can tackle one theme at a time, ensuring a thorough and systematic approach.

4. Highlighting priority areas: Organizing criteria into thematic clusters can also help in emphasizing certain priority areas or themes. By doing so, the European Degree Label can signal to stakeholders which areas are of paramount importance and need particular attention.

5. Flexibility in implementation: Programs looking to align with the European Degree Label criteria might find it easier to implement changes or enhancements in phases based on thematic clusters.

6. Facilitates discussion & feedback: When stakeholders or expert groups need to discuss the criteria, having them clustered by theme can facilitate more focused discussions.

7. Supports development: As the European Degree Label criteria evolve over time, having them organized into themes can make the development process more efficient. If updates or changes are needed in a particular area, they can be addressed within the respective thematic cluster.

8. Communication and awareness: Information that is organized systematically is often easier to recall. Thus, stakeholders are more likely to remember the criteria when they are grouped into thematic clusters.

Therefore, the proposal is reflected in the following structure:

- I. Structural: Transnational Cooperation
- II. Functional: Labor Market & Employability
- III. Qualitative: Student Centered Teaching & Learning
- IV. European Values: Inclusion & Sustainability

2. Indicators defining the European Label Degree criteria

While having criteria is essential, specific indicators have the potential to make them more actionable, measurable, and meaningful. Indicators serve as the bridge between more abstract principles and tangible outcomes, ensuring that the European Degree Label criteria are effectively implemented and assessed. Therefore, based on the definitions of individual criteria, we propose the **inclusion of a set of specific indicators** to help better define the EDL, as follows:

Structural: Transnational Cooperation

I.1. Higher education institutions involved

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme is jointly designed and delivered by at least 2 higher education institutions from at least 2 different EU Member States

2. Indicators

a. Number of Participating Institutions:

- Total number of higher education institutions involved in the joint program.
- Number of institutions from EU Member States participating in the joint program.
- The types of full and associate partners.

b. Country Representation:

- Number of different EU Member States represented among the participating institutions.
- Percentage of institutions from EU Member States relative to the total number of participating institutions.

c. Program Collaboration:

- Existence of a formal agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) among the participating institutions for joint program design and delivery.
- Degree of participation from each institution in program design and delivery (e.g., curriculum development, teaching, assessment).

d. Student Mobility:

- Number of students participating in the joint program from each participating institution.
- Percentage of students who undertake mobility periods at institutions located in different EU Member States.

I.2. Transnational joint degree delivery

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme leads to the award of a joint degree or multiple degrees.
- Dissertations are co-evaluated by supervisors or a committee with members from at least 2 different institutions located in 2 different countries.

2. Indicators

a. Degree types:

- Number of different degree types awarded upon program completion (e.g., single degree, joint degree, multiple degrees).

- Percentage of graduates receiving a joint degree or multiple degrees.
- b. Documentation of degrees:
 - Existence of official documentation (e.g., diploma, certificate) specifying the joint or multiple degrees awarded.
 - Clear labeling of the degree(s) received, indicating their joint or multiple nature.
- c. Recognition by authorities:
 - Confirmation of the joint or multiple degree(s) by relevant educational authorities or accreditation bodies.
 - Inclusion of the program in official registries of recognized joint degree programs.
- d. Credit split:
 - Equitable distribution of number of ECTS between the providers.
- e. Supervising structure:
 - Percentage of dissertations with supervisors from at least two different institutions.
 - Frequency of joint supervision as compared to single-institution supervision.
- f. International committee:
 - Frequency of dissertation evaluation committees with members from at least two different countries.
 - Compliance with this requirement as a percentage of all dissertations submitted.

I. 3. Joint policies for the joint programme

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The higher education institutions involved have joint policies for admission, selection, supervision, monitoring, assessment, and recognition procedures for the joint study programme

2. Indicators

- a. Admission policies:
 - Existence of a joint admission policy that outlines the criteria, procedures, and requirements for student admission into the joint program.
 - Degree of alignment among participating institutions in terms of admission criteria and processes.
- b. Selection procedures:
 - Presence of a joint selection procedure that defines how students are selected for the joint program.
 - Degree of consistency in selection criteria and processes among participating institutions.
- c. Supervision and monitoring:
 - Availability of joint policies regarding the supervision and monitoring of students' progress throughout the program.
 - Establishment of mechanisms for cross-institutional supervision and monitoring of students.
- d. Assessment policies:

- Existence of joint policies governing the assessment of students' academic performance, including grading criteria and evaluation methods.
- Degree of coherence in assessment practices among participating institutions.
- e. Recognition procedures:
 - Presence of joint recognition procedures for the joint study program, specifying how the degrees or qualifications will be awarded and recognized by the participating institutions.
 - Level of harmonization in recognition practices among participating institutions.
- f. Transparency and accessibility:
 - Availability of clear, accessible, and widely communicated joint policies to students, faculty, and stakeholders regarding admission, selection, supervision, monitoring, assessment, and recognition procedures.

I.4. Transnational campus – access to services

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme provides enrolled students, regardless of their location, with seamless and free access to the participating HEI's services such as e.g., IT services, shared infrastructure, and facilities, (online) library services, faculty development and support, academic guidance and psychological counselling, career advice/mentoring, alumni systems.

2. Indicators

- a. Availability of accessible IT services:
 - Existence of integrated IT services accessible to all enrolled students, allowing them to access online resources, platforms, and communication tools.
- b. Shared infrastructure and facilities:
 - Accessibility to shared physical infrastructure and facilities across participating institutions, ensuring students have equitable access to essential resources like laboratories, workshops, and study spaces.
- c. Online Library Services:
 - Availability of an online library system that provides students with access to a comprehensive collection of digital resources, academic journals, e-books, and research materials.
- d. Faculty development and support:
 - Presence of faculty development programs that support teaching staff from all participating institutions in delivering high-quality education within the joint program.
- e. Academic Guidance Services:
 - Availability of academic guidance services that offer academic advising, mentoring, and support to students, regardless of their location within the joint program.
- f. Psychological Counseling Services:
 - Provision of psychological counseling services that are accessible to enrolled students, ensuring their mental health and well-being are supported.

- g. Career advice and Mentoring:
 - Existence of career advice and mentoring programs that assist students in career planning and development, and are open to all participants.
- h. Alumni systems:
 - Maintenance of an alumni system that fosters a sense of belonging and community among graduates of the joint program, regardless of their originating institutions.
- i. Seamless access:
 - Assessment of the ease with which enrolled students can access the mentioned services across different participating institutions.
- j. Equity of access:
 - Measurement of the equity and fairness in access to services among all students, including those studying remotely or at different partner institutions.

I.5. Visibility & awareness (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The higher education institutions offering the joint study programme conducts joint promotion and awareness-raising activities to ensure visibility of the joint programme and provide the necessary information about it for students and other relevant stakeholders such as future employers.

2. Indicators

- a. Joint marketing campaigns:
 - The presence of joint marketing campaigns, advertisements, or promotional materials that highlight the joint program's unique features and benefits.
- b. Online presence and Social Media:
 - Active and coordinated online presence, including official websites and social media platforms, to share information, updates, and success stories about the joint program.
- c. Information accessibility:
 - Accessibility and availability of comprehensive information about the joint program, its curriculum, admission requirements, faculty, and contact details through official websites.
- d. Student testimonials and alumni engagement:
 - Existence of student testimonials, success stories, or alumni engagement initiatives that showcase the positive experiences and outcomes of the joint program.
- e. Engagement with future employers:
 - Engagement with future employers, including businesses and sectors relevant to the joint program's field of study, to communicate the program's value and align its offerings with industry needs.
- f. Participation in education fairs and events:
 - Active participation in national and international education fairs, conferences, and events to promote the joint program and engage with potential students and partners.
- g. Visibility in relevant publications:

- Presence of the joint program in relevant publications, rankings, and reports that assess the quality and impact of higher education offerings.
- h. Feedback mechanisms:
 - Establishment of feedback mechanisms to gather insights from students, alumni, and other stakeholders about the effectiveness of awareness-raising activities.
- i. Monitoring and Evaluation:
 - Implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the reach and impact of awareness-raising initiatives and make improvements as needed.
- j. Collaboration with other institutions:
 - Collaboration with other higher education institutions or organizations to jointly promote the program and leverage their networks and resources for increased visibility.

II. Functional: Labour Market & Employability

II.1. Graduate outcomes

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme has a system to monitor graduate outcomes. This system can be at the level of the programme or institutional level(s). If possible, the content is aligned to the survey content of EUROGRADUATE.

2. Indicators

1. Outcome monitoring system:

- Existence of a structured system to monitor and assess graduate outcomes from the joint program. This system includes data collection, analysis, and reporting mechanisms.

2. Frequency of outcome assessment:

- Regularity of outcome assessments, indicating whether data on graduate outcomes are collected and reviewed on an ongoing basis (e.g., annually, biennially).

3. Alignment with EUROGRADUATE Survey:

- Alignment of the content and focus of the graduate outcome monitoring system with the survey content of EUROGRADUATE, ensuring compatibility and comparability of data.

4. Types of outcomes monitored:

- Specification of the types of graduate outcomes monitored, such as employment rates, further education pursuits, career advancement, and satisfaction with the program.

5. Institutional or program level:

- Clarification of whether the graduate outcome monitoring system operates at the institutional level, program level, or both, with well-defined responsibilities for data collection and analysis.

6. Feedback integration:

- Integration of feedback from graduate outcome assessments into program improvements, curriculum updates, and quality enhancement initiatives.

7. Reporting and dissemination:

- Availability of reports or summaries on graduate outcomes that are shared with relevant stakeholders, including students, faculty, and external entities.

8. Use of data for decision-making:
 - Demonstration of how data on graduate outcomes are used to inform decision-making processes, program enhancements, and strategic planning.
9. Longitudinal data collection:
 - Ability to collect longitudinal data on graduate outcomes, tracking graduates' progress and achievements over time.
10. Survey participation rates:
 - The extent to which graduates from the joint program actively participate in the graduate outcome surveys, reflecting the effectiveness of data collection efforts.

II.2. Cooperation with the labour market (optional)

1. **Definition of the criterion:**
 - The joint programme supports future labour market needs and/or includes cooperation with businesses and sectors in its curriculum.
2. **Indicators**
 1. Labor market alignment:
 - Demonstrated alignment of the joint program's curriculum with current and projected labor market needs, reflecting an understanding of industry demands.
 2. Business engagement:
 - Evidence of active engagement with businesses and industry sectors, including collaborations, partnerships, or advisory boards involved in curriculum development.
 3. Internships and work placements:
 - Inclusion of internships, work placements, or cooperative education opportunities within the joint program, providing students with practical experience in real workplace settings.
 4. Employer feedback integration:
 - Incorporation of feedback from employers and industry partners into curriculum updates and adjustments, demonstrating responsiveness to labor market demands.
 5. Employment outcomes:
 - Monitoring and reporting of graduate employment outcomes, including job placement rates, job types, and industries entered upon graduation.
 6. Career Services:
 - Availability of dedicated career services or counseling support for students within the joint program to facilitate job placement and career development.
 7. Industry guest lecturers:
 - Involvement of industry professionals as guest lecturers, speakers, or mentors in the program, offering real-world insights to students.
 8. Industry projects:
 - Integration of industry projects, case studies, or real-world challenges into the curriculum to provide students with practical problem-solving experiences.
 9. Industry recognition:
 - Recognition or awards received by the joint program for its efforts in preparing graduates for successful integration into the labor market.
 10. Monitoring labor market trends:

- Evidence that the joint program continuously monitors labor market trends and adjusts its curriculum accordingly to ensure ongoing alignment with industry needs.

II.3. Internships / work-based learning* (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme provides opportunities for international professional internships/work-based learning recognised through the award of ECTS.

2. Indicators

1. Internship availability:

- Presence of international professional internships or work-based learning opportunities within the joint program's curriculum.

2. ECTS recognition:

- Documentation and confirmation that internships or work-based learning experiences are recognized and awarded ECTS credits towards the joint program.

3. International opportunities:

- Evidence of internships or work-based learning experiences that offer international exposure, such as placements in different countries or collaboration with international organizations.

4. Diversity of fields:

- A variety of fields and industries are represented in the available internship or work-based learning options, ensuring relevance to students with diverse career interests.

5. Internship supervision:

- Mechanisms in place for the supervision and evaluation of students during their internships or work-based learning experiences, including feedback loops with host organizations.

6. Learning outcomes integration:

- Documentation of how the learning outcomes from internships or work-based learning experiences are integrated into the joint program's curriculum to enhance students' academic and practical development.

7. Student participation:

- Data indicating the percentage of joint program students who participate in international internships or work-based learning experiences.

8. Quality Assurance:

- Measures taken to ensure the quality and relevance of international internships or work-based learning experiences, such as evaluations, assessments, or partnerships with reputable organizations.

9. Student assessments:

- Evidence of assessments or evaluations of students' performance during their internships or work-based learning experiences, including methods for grading or feedback.

10. Integration of ECTS:

- A clear process for integrating ECTS credits earned through internships or work-based learning into students' academic transcripts and program completion requirements.

II.4. Career development plan* (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme includes a career development plan devised with the candidate and/or exposure to the non-academic sector (such as internships, seminars, networking).

2. Indicators

1. Existence of Career Development Plan:
 - Confirmation of the presence of a career development plan within the joint program's curriculum.
2. Collaboration with candidates:
 - Evidence of collaboration with candidates (students) in the development of their individual career development plans, including their career goals and aspirations.
3. Non-Academic sector exposure:
 - Documentation of opportunities provided to students for exposure to the non-academic sector, such as internships, seminars, workshops, or networking events.
4. Alignment with career goals:
 - Evaluation of the extent to which the career development plan aligns with each student's individual career goals and interests.
5. Incorporation into curriculum:
 - Details on how the career development plan is integrated into the joint program's curriculum, including specific courses, workshops, or modules dedicated to career development.
6. Access to resources:
 - Availability of resources and support services, such as career advisors, mentors, or career centers, to assist students in creating and implementing their career development plans.
7. Networking opportunities:
 - Evidence of networking opportunities provided to students, including access to industry professionals, alumni, and relevant organizations.
8. Internship opportunities:
 - Availability and accessibility of internships or work experiences related to students' career interests and objectives.
9. Feedback and Evaluation:
 - Methods for collecting feedback from students about the effectiveness and relevance of the career development plan and non-academic sector exposure.
10. Employment outcomes:
 - Tracking and reporting on the employment outcomes and career success of graduates who have completed the career development plan and engaged with the non-academic sector.

III. Qualitative: Student Centred Teaching & Learning

III.1. Transparency of the learning outcomes

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme is described in ECTS.
- A joint Diploma Supplement is issued to the student at the end of the joint study programme intended learning outcomes.

2. Indicators

1. Documentation in ECTS:
 - Verification of whether the joint program is documented in ECTS credits, including the total number of ECTS credits required for program completion.
2. Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):
 - Assessment of the extent to which the ECTS documentation aligns with the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the joint program.
3. Issuance of Joint Diploma Supplement:
 - Confirmation of whether a joint Diploma Supplement is issued to students upon completion of the joint study program.
4. Content of Diploma Supplement:
 - Review of the content of the joint Diploma Supplement to ensure it includes essential information related to the program, such as program structure, learning outcomes, and institutions involved.
5. Transparency of Learning Outcomes:
 - Evaluation of the clarity and transparency of the learning outcomes as described in both the ECTS documentation and the joint Diploma Supplement.
6. Accessibility to students:
 - Assessment of the accessibility of the ECTS documentation and the joint Diploma Supplement to students, ensuring they have easy access to these documents.
7. Alignment with European Standards:
 - Confirmation of whether the content and format of the joint Diploma Supplement adhere to European standards and guidelines for higher education documentation.
8. Verification of Learning Outcomes:
 - Verification of the procedures in place to ensure that students have achieved the intended learning outcomes as stated in the joint Diploma Supplement.
9. Utilization by graduates:
 - Survey or feedback from program graduates regarding their utilization of the joint Diploma Supplement in their academic or professional endeavors.
10. Alignment with Quality Assurance practices:
 - Assessment of whether the joint program's documentation practices align with quality assurance practices and standards for higher education.

III.2. Quality assurance arrangements

1. Definition of the criterion:

- Internal and external QA is conducted in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The programme, the study field or the institutions are accredited/evaluated by an EQAR-registered agency.
- If external quality assurance is required at programme level in the countries involved, the transnational programme should be accredited/evaluated preferably using the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA).

2. Indicators

1. Compliance with ESG:
 - Verification of whether the internal quality assurance (QA) processes of the joint program align with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).
2. External QA accreditation:
 - Confirmation of whether the joint program, study field, or participating institutions have received accreditation or evaluation by an EQAR-registered agency.
3. Accreditation level:
 - Assessment of the accreditation or evaluation level achieved by the joint program, study field, or institutions, indicating the extent to which they meet quality standards.
4. Use of European Approach (EA):
 - Confirmation of whether the transnational joint program has utilized the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programs (EA) for its external quality assurance, where required by national regulations.
5. Documentation of QA procedures:
 - Review of the documentation of the internal and external QA procedures, including evidence of compliance with ESG.
6. Frequency of QA activities:
 - Assessment of the frequency and regularity of internal and external QA activities, ensuring ongoing monitoring and improvement.
7. Transparency of QA results:
 - Evaluation of the transparency and accessibility of QA results to students, faculty, and relevant stakeholders.
8. QA responsiveness:
 - Assessment of the joint program's responsiveness to QA findings and recommendations, including evidence of continuous improvement efforts.
9. Stakeholder engagement in QA:
 - Feedback from students, faculty, and external stakeholders regarding their engagement and participation in the QA processes.
10. Alignment with National Regulations:
 - Confirmation of alignment with national regulations related to external quality assurance requirements at the program level in the countries involved.
11. Efficiency of QA processes:
 - Evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of QA processes, including their impact on program quality and enhancement.

III.3. Flexible and embedded student mobility arrangements

1. **Definition of the criterion:**
 - The joint programme includes at least 1 period of student physical mobility at another partner institution of at least 30 ECTS.
 - The joint programme includes a total of at least 6 months of physical mobility at another partner institution (including secondment).
 - If applicable, in addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes opportunities for doctoral candidates to participate in one or more of these activities at another partner institution: teaching activities, international events, international conferences, joint research scientific projects between partner institutions, joint research publications with researchers from partner institutions.

2. Indicators

1. Student mobility periods:
 - Verification of whether the joint program offers at least one period of student physical mobility at another partner institution, with a minimum of 30 ECTS credits.
2. Total student mobility duration:
 - Assessment of the total duration of student physical mobility across partner institutions, confirming that it meets the minimum requirement of at least 6 months (including secondment).
3. Doctoral candidate activities:
 - Evaluation of the inclusion of opportunities for doctoral candidates to engage in activities such as teaching, participation in international events, attendance at international conferences, collaboration in joint research scientific projects, and contributing to joint research publications with researchers from partner institutions.
4. Mobility planning and documentation:
 - Review of documentation demonstrating the planning and implementation of student and doctoral candidate mobility, including mobility agreements, learning agreements, and related administrative processes.
5. Integration of mobility:
 - Assessment of how student mobility is integrated into the joint program's curriculum and learning outcomes, ensuring that it enhances the educational experience.
6. Support for mobility:
 - Feedback from students and doctoral candidates regarding the support provided for mobility, including information, financial assistance, and logistical assistance.
7. Monitoring of mobility activities:
 - Confirmation of the existence of a monitoring system for student and doctoral candidate mobility activities, including tracking progress and ensuring successful completion.
8. Diversity of mobility activities:
 - Evaluation of the diversity and range of mobility activities offered, including their relevance to the joint program's goals and objectives.
9. Alignment with Learning Outcomes:
 - Verification of the alignment of mobility activities with the intended learning outcomes of the joint program, ensuring that they contribute to the development of key competencies.
10. Feedback and Evaluation:
 - Collection of feedback and evaluation from students, doctoral candidates, and partner institutions on the effectiveness and impact of mobility arrangements on their academic and professional development.

III.4. Innovative learning approaches

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme includes embedded interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary and/or inter-sectoral components using student-centered and/or challenged-based approaches.

2. Indicators

1. Interdisciplinary/Transdisciplinary components:
 - Verification of the presence of interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary components within the joint program's curriculum.
2. Inter-sectoral components:
 - Assessment of the inclusion of inter-sectoral components that bridge academia with other sectors (e.g., industry, government, non-profits).
3. Student-centered learning:
 - Evaluation of the extent to which the joint program adopts student-centered learning methodologies, such as active learning, problem-solving, and self-directed learning.
4. Challenge-based learning:
 - Confirmation of the integration of challenge-based learning approaches, where students engage with real-world challenges and problem-solving.
5. Curriculum integration:
 - Assessment of how these innovative learning approaches are integrated into the overall curriculum of the joint program.
6. Learning Outcomes alignment:
 - Verification of the alignment of interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and inter-sectoral components with the intended learning outcomes of the joint program.
7. Assessment methods:
 - Evaluation of the assessment methods used to measure the effectiveness of innovative learning approaches and their impact on student learning and competencies.
8. Student engagement:
 - Feedback from students regarding their engagement with interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and inter-sectoral components and their perceived value in enhancing their learning experiences.
9. Faculty training:
 - Confirmation of faculty training and development initiatives aimed at facilitating the implementation of innovative learning approaches.
10. Collaboration with external partners:
 - Assessment of collaborations with external partners (e.g., industry, organizations) in designing and delivering innovative learning experiences.
11. Innovation assessment:
 - Evaluation of the extent to which the joint program encourages and supports innovation in teaching and learning.
12. Student projects/challenges:
 - Identification of student projects or challenges that demonstrate the application of innovative learning approaches to real-world problems.

III.5. Alternative learning formats (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes additional formats of transnational learning activities with partner higher

education institutions (e.g., online or blended, in the format of regular or intensive courses, summer/winter schools).

2. Indicators

1. Online/Blended course availability:
 - Verification of the availability of online or blended courses within the joint program's curriculum.
2. Course catalog:
 - Confirmation of the existence of a course catalog or list of alternative learning formats offered by partner institutions.
3. Course diversity:
 - Assessment of the diversity of alternative learning formats, including regular or intensive courses, summer/winter schools, or other transnational learning activities.
4. Credit transfer:
 - Evaluation of the mechanisms in place for credit transfer and recognition of achievements for students participating in alternative learning formats.
5. Accessibility:
 - Feedback from students on the accessibility and ease of participation in online or blended courses and other alternative learning activities.
6. Curriculum integration:
 - Assessment of how alternative learning formats are integrated into the overall curriculum of the joint program.
7. Learning Outcomes alignment:
 - Verification of the alignment of alternative learning formats with the intended learning outcomes of the joint program.
8. Quality Assurance:
 - Confirmation of quality assurance mechanisms in place for alternative learning formats, ensuring the delivery of high-quality education.
9. Faculty training:
 - Confirmation of faculty training and development initiatives aimed at facilitating the effective delivery of alternative learning formats.
10. Student engagement:
 - Feedback from students regarding their engagement with alternative learning formats and their perceived value in enhancing their learning experiences.
11. Technology infrastructure:
 - Assessment of the availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure to support online or blended learning formats.
12. Synchronous/asynchronous options:
 - Identification of the presence of both synchronous and asynchronous options within online or blended courses.
13. Summer/Winter Schools:
 - Confirmation of the availability and diversity of summer and winter schools as transnational learning opportunities.

III. 6. Digital skills (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme includes components and actions related to the development of high level digital skills of students, it offers high quality digital education content, as well as assessment of student skills.

2. Indicators

1. Incorporation of Digital Skill components:
 - Verification of the inclusion of digital skill development components within the joint program's curriculum.
2. Digital content quality:
 - Assessment of the quality of digital education content provided within the program, including online courses, resources, and materials.
3. Assessment of Digital Skills:
 - Evaluation of the mechanisms in place for assessing students' digital skills and competencies.
4. Digital Skill diversity:
 - Identification of the diversity of digital skills covered within the program, including programming, data analysis, digital literacy, etc.
5. Digital Skill integration:
 - Assessment of how digital skill development is integrated into the overall curriculum of the joint program.
6. Feedback from students:
 - Feedback from students on the effectiveness of digital skill development components and the quality of digital education content.
7. Faculty expertise:
 - Confirmation of faculty expertise and training in delivering digital education content and fostering digital skill development.
8. Technology infrastructure:
 - Assessment of the availability and adequacy of technology infrastructure to support digital education and skill development.
9. Assessment methods:
 - Identification of the assessment methods used to evaluate students' digital skills, including practical projects, exams, or other forms of evaluation.
10. Digital Skill assessment tools:
 - Verification of the use of specific digital skill assessment tools or platforms within the program.
11. Digital Skill certification:
 - Confirmation of whether the joint program provides certifications or credentials for students who demonstrate high-level digital skills.
12. Alignment with industry needs:
 - Assessment of the alignment of digital skill development components with the needs and expectations of the digital job market.

IV. European Values: Inclusion & Sustainability

IV.1. Multilingualism

1. **Definition of the criterion:**
 - During the joint programme, each student is exposed to at least 2 different EU official languages, language classes excluded.

- Exposure to EU official languages can take place in active and/or passive use of language(s), at any level in teaching and/or learning activities, examinations, research activities, professional or civic engagement activities and during mobility periods, including by going on mobility to a country where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life.

2. Indicators

1. Language exposure in teaching and learning:
 - Assessment of the extent to which students are exposed to EU official languages in teaching and learning activities.
2. Language use in examinations:
 - Verification of the active or passive use of EU official languages in examinations within the joint program.
3. Language use in research activities:
 - Evaluation of language use in research activities, including language diversity in publications, presentations, and collaborative research.
4. Language exposure during mobility:
 - Confirmation of language exposure during student mobility periods, particularly in countries where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life.
5. Language use in civic engagement:
 - Assessment of the involvement of students in civic engagement activities that require the use of EU official languages.
6. Language diversity levels:
 - Identification of the number of EU official languages to which students are exposed throughout the joint program.
7. Language assessment methods:
 - Evaluation of the methods and tools used to assess students' active and passive language skills in EU official languages.
8. Mobility language requirements:
 - Verification of any language requirements or expectations during mobility periods to ensure exposure to different EU official languages.
9. Language exposure record:
 - Maintenance of a record or documentation of each student's exposure to EU official languages during the joint program.
10. Feedback from students:
 - Feedback from students on their language exposure experiences and the effectiveness of language integration within the program.
11. Language learning opportunities:
 - Identification of opportunities for students to actively learn and practice EU official languages beyond passive exposure.

IV.2. Inclusiveness and sustainability

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme commits to wide participation through socially and geographically inclusive admission through tailored measures for all categories of disadvantaged students.

- The joint programme commits to respect the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and commits to the principles of the MSCA Green Charter.

2. Indicators

1. Inclusive admission measures:
 - Assessment of the presence and effectiveness of tailored admission measures to ensure socially and geographically inclusive participation in the joint program.
2. Disadvantaged student participation:
 - Tracking and reporting of the participation of disadvantaged students across various categories (e.g., socio-economic background, geographical location, disability) in the joint program.
3. Compliance with European Charter for Researchers:
 - Confirmation of the joint program's commitment and adherence to the principles outlined in the European Charter for Researchers.
4. Compliance with Code of Conduct for Recruitment:
 - Verification of the joint program's commitment and adherence to the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.
5. MSCA Green Charter Commitment:
 - Evidence of the joint program's commitment to the principles of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Green Charter.
6. Tailored support for disadvantaged students:
 - Evaluation of the specific support measures provided to disadvantaged students to ensure their successful participation in the joint program.
7. Monitoring of inclusiveness:
 - Mechanisms in place to monitor and assess the inclusiveness of the joint program and its adherence to tailored measures.
8. Documentation of sustainability efforts:
 - Documentation of sustainability initiatives or efforts within the joint program, aligned with the principles of the MSCA Green Charter.
9. Feedback from disadvantaged students:
 - Gathering feedback from disadvantaged students regarding the effectiveness of tailored measures and inclusiveness efforts.
10. Inclusiveness reporting:
 - Reporting on the progress and outcomes of inclusiveness measures and the joint program's commitment to sustainability.

IV. 3. Language classes (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme offers the possibility to take language classes to enhance the command of multiple European languages.

2. Indicators:

1. Availability of language classes:
 - Confirmation of the availability of language classes as part of the joint program's curriculum.
2. Range of offered languages:

- Assessment of the number of European languages for which language classes are offered within the joint program.
- 3. Accessibility of language classes:
 - Evaluation of the ease of access for students to enroll in language classes as part of their joint program experience.
- 4. Language proficiency enhancement:
 - Measurement of the effectiveness of language classes in enhancing students' command of multiple European languages.
- 5. Student enrollment in language classes:
 - Tracking the percentage of students who choose to enroll in language classes as part of their joint program.
- 6. Language class diversity:
 - Assessment of the diversity of language classes offered, including common European languages and less commonly taught languages.
- 7. Student feedback on language classes:
 - Gathering feedback from students who have taken language classes regarding the quality and utility of these classes.
- 8. Language proficiency assessment:
 - Evaluation of students' language proficiency levels before and after participating in language classes.

IV. 4. Environmental care (optional)

- 1. Definition of the criterion:**
 - The joint programme includes components and actions related to environmental sustainability and implements measures to minimise the environmental footprint of its activities.
- 2. Indicators**
 1. Inclusion of environmental components:
 - Confirmation of the inclusion of environmental sustainability components within the joint program's curriculum or activities.
 2. Environmental awareness and education:
 - Assessment of the level of environmental awareness and education provided to students within the program.
 3. Environmental impact assessment:
 - Evaluation of the extent to which the joint program assesses and minimizes its environmental impact.
 4. Eco-Friendly practices:
 - Identification of specific eco-friendly practices or initiatives implemented within the joint program.
 5. Resource management:
 - Assessment of resource management practices, including energy conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable resource utilization.
 6. Sustainability measures:
 - Evaluation of the effectiveness of sustainability measures and their alignment with environmental goals.
 7. Carbon footprint reduction:

- Measurement of efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of the joint program's activities.
8. Environmental reporting:
- Examination of whether the joint program provides regular reporting or documentation of its environmental care initiatives.

IV.5. Democratic values (optional)

1. Definition of the criterion:

- The joint programme offers the possibility for students to participate in activities promoting democratic values and addressing societal needs of the local community(ies), including volunteering, and to receive ECTS for it.

2. Indicators

1. Availability of democratic value activities:
 - Verification of the existence of activities within the joint program that promote democratic values and address societal needs.
2. Participation rate in democratic activities:
 - Measurement of student participation rates in democratic value-promoting activities.
3. Documentation of participation:
 - Documentation and verification of students' participation in such activities, including the recording of ECTS credits awarded.
4. Relevance to local communities:
 - Evaluation of the relevance of these activities to the societal needs of the local community(ies).
5. Impact assessment:
 - Assessment of the impact of students' participation in democratic value activities on their understanding of democratic values and community engagement.
6. Feedback from students:
 - Collection of feedback from students regarding their experiences and perceptions of the democratic value activities.
7. Integration with curriculum:
 - Examination of the extent to which these activities are integrated into the curriculum or offered as extracurricular opportunities.
8. Community involvement:
 - Assessment of the level of community involvement or collaboration in these activities.

3. Preliminary results of the EDL criteria validation against EUROSUD

In order to provide an overview of the EUROSUD, we are including here the preliminary results of the EDL criteria validation against the program, following the cluster structure and the initial draft indicators².

Cluster	Criterion	Indicators	EUROSUD
I. Structural: Transnational Cooperation	I.1. Higher education institutions involved	The joint programme is jointly designed and delivered by at least 2 higher education institutions from at least 2 different EU Member States.	YES: NKUA, UAM, AMU, LUISS, UoG are all HEIs and NKUA, UAM, AMU and LUISS are based in the respective EU states: Greece, Spain, France and Italy.
	I. 2. Transnational joint degree delivery	The joint programme leads to the award of a joint degree or multiple degrees. Dissertations are co-evaluated by supervisors or a committee with members from at least 2 different institutions located in 2 different countries.	YES: Where national policy allows (in EUROSUD this is possible with all partners except the French partner (AMU) due to parchment requirements). The basic model is that three partners award the joint degree or double degree (when AMU is an awarding partner) depending on where the student spends three different mobility periods: semesters 1, 2 and 3 & 4 (together) over the 2yr period. YES: Dissertations are jointly supervised with primary and two secondary supervisors / markers from different partners. This is necessary to enable all three degree awarding partners to award the degree (ie sharing in dissertation supervision and assessment credits, which is a stipulated regulation for all partners).
	I. 3. Joint policies for the joint programme	The higher education institutions involved have joint policies for admission, selection, supervision, monitoring, assessment, and recognition procedures for the joint study programme.	Yes: the coordinating partner (UoG) manages application processing, using entry criteria which all partners have agreed. See text below Yes: assessment is managed by the consortium through an agreed grading equivalents table. Yes: joint recognition is managed through the various national accreditation procedures whereby each partner's HEI status, regulations, credits delivered and QA procedures are recognised by the other degree-awarding partners. These procedures are laid out in the consortium agreement.
	I.4. Transnational campus – access to services	The joint programme provides enrolled students, regardless of their location when allowed, with seamless and free access to the participating HEI's services	YES (in relation to UoG only): EUROSUD students are enrolled at UoG (the coordinating partner) for the full two years of the programme, irrespective of where the students are based for their mobility periods and

² Following the analysis, these initial indicators were further refined and restructured to better reflect the corresponding criteria.

		such as e.g., IT services, shared infrastructure, and facilities, (online) library services, faculty development and support, academic guidance and psychological counselling, career advice/mentoring, alumni systems.	they have access to all services throughout the two years [both academic and non-academic services]. EUROSUD students are enrolled at the other partners only for the period they are based there (eg semester 2 in year 1 or year 2 (semesters 3&4). This is as a consequence of registration requirements of the partners.
	I.5. Visibility & awareness (optional)	The higher education institutions offering the joint study programme conducts joint promotion and awareness-raising activities to ensure visibility of the joint programme and provide the necessary information about it for students and other relevant stakeholders such as future employers.	YES: EUROSUD is jointly promoted by all partners on their own websites and through the bespoke EUROSUD website and social media. Employers played a consultation role in the initial market research when the joint programme was being designed in 2016/17 and also take part in periodic evaluation of the programme.
II. Functional : Labour Market & Employability	II.1. Graduate outcomes	The joint programme has a system to monitor graduate outcomes. This system can be at the level of the programme or institutional level(s). If possible, the content is aligned to the survey content of EUROGRADUATE.	YES: EUROSUD runs two annual Surveys upon the graduation of each cohort (Graduate Survey). There is one anonymous survey that requests information about students' experience with the programme and a second eponymous survey that requests information about current and future internships/employment as well as contact details and willingness to be involved with the programme in future as Alumni. The content is aligned to EUROGRADUATE. EUROSUD also has a Linked-in page for students and Alumni.
	II.2. Cooperation with the labor market (optional)	The joint programme supports future labour market needs and/or includes cooperation with businesses and sectors in its curriculum.	YES: EUROSUD trains experts of the South European Region for which there is rising labour market demand. Few examples: EUROSUD graduates have become employed as foreign correspondents, diplomats, consultants, researchers, policy analysts and project managers as a result of their South European Region area expertise. YES: EUROSUD engages in co-operation and dialogue with professionals from various sectors through its Professional Track programme and the Lisbon Winter School. Representatives of industry and the third sector are invited to give talks to students and sit on its External International Advisory Board (EIAB)
	II.3. Internships / work-based learning* (optional)	The joint programme provides opportunities for international professional internships/work-based learning recognised through the award of ECTS	YES: EUROSUD has at least one placement opportunity during the 2 year programme with the option to deliver a research project/report or research dissertation, depending on the Study Track chosen by the student. Depending on the partner, these may or may not be credit-bearing.
	II.4. Career development	The joint programme includes a career development plan devised with the candidate	YES: Mentoring Sessions take place individually with each student across partners, whose purpose is partly to discuss career plans and offer advice.

	plan* (optional)	and/or exposure to the non-academic sector (such as internships, seminars, networking).	YES: students are exposed to the non-academic sector frequently, through internships, professional talks and seminars. Employability and career sessions are organised for EUROSUD students across partners
III. Qualitative: Student Centred Teaching & Learning	III.1. Transparency of the learning outcomes	The joint programme is described in ECTS. A joint Diploma Supplement is issued to the student at the end of the joint study programme intended learning outcomes.	YES: EUROSUD is promoted using ECTS (in the case of UoG the equivalence of SCQF is explained in the programme handbook) YES: a joint diploma supplement is issued on behalf of the joint degree EUROSUD partners by the coordinator (UoG), while the double degree partner (AMU) also produces an individual diploma supplement. YES: the consortium agreed ILOs (intended learning outcomes) are listed on the EUROSUD website, programme handbook and form part of the approval documentation of the respective partners.
	III.2. Quality assurance arrangements	Internal and external QA is conducted in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The programme, the study field or the institutions are accredited/evaluated by an EQAR-registered agency. If external quality assurance is required at programme level in the countries involved, the transnational programme should be accredited/evaluated preferably using the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA).	YES: all EUROSUD partners have internal QA procedures and the majority of EUROSUD partner countries are recognised externally by the EQAR for at least institutional QA purposes. Some are also recognised for programme specific purposes. Please note: accreditation through the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes (EA) is being considered by the EUROSUD consortium for action during the next 3 to 4 years.
	III.3. Flexible and embedded student mobility arrangements	The joint programme includes at least 1 period of student physical mobility at another partner institution of at least 30 ECTS. The joint programme includes a total of at least 6 months of physical mobility at another partner institution (including secondment). If applicable, in addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes opportunities for doctoral candidates to participate in one or more of these activities at another partner institution: teaching activities, international	YES: EUROSUD students spend at least 30 ECTS each with three different mobility partners over a 2yr period NOTE: EUROSUD is a master level programme (doctoral criteria is not applicable).

		events, international conferences, joint research scientific projects between partner institutions, joint research publications with researchers from partner institutions.	
	III.4. Innovative learning approaches	The joint programme includes embedded interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary and/or inter-sectoral components using student-centered and/or challenged-based approaches.	<p>YES: EUROSUD is delivered by a combination of faculties, facilitating interdisciplinarity: Politics, IR, Sociology, History, Law, Economics, Humanities. Courses on Research Design and Methodology are also offered from an inter-disciplinary perspective.</p> <p>YES: EUROSUD adopts a student-centred approach to learning throughout: students are offered maximum curriculum choice according to their interests and strengths. They can select from among 8 different Study Track combinations; within most Study Tracks they may also choose from among a variety of optional courses; within many courses, particularly the overview courses in S1, students have the capacity to select topics and themes, work in groups, develop critical capacities and receive tailored feedback. Furthermore, EUROSUD students come from different disciplinary backgrounds and have different learning needs in this respect. Staff expertise from across CPUs is drawn to accommodate these needs particularly with regard to methods training and at the Dissertation stage.</p>
	III.5. Alternative learning formats (optional)	In addition to physical mobility, the joint programme includes additional formats of transnational learning activities with partner higher education institutions (e.g., online or blended, in the format of regular or intensive courses, summer/winter schools).	YES: EUROSUD has blended learning opportunities: Some classes use reverse classroom design, combining online and offline elements; some of the Masterclasses and seminars held across CPUs and in the Lisbon winter school are hybrid and open to all EUROSUD students; an annual course on Methodological Techniques for Data Collection is offered online; Dissertation Colloquia for fourth semester students and vivas are held online.
	III. 6. Digital skills (optional)	The joint programme includes components and actions related to the development of high level digital skills of students, it offers high quality digital education content, as well as assessment of student skills.	YES: EUROSUD graduates are expected to be fully competent users of digital technology through their active participation in online modules (ICS-ULisboa), training in producing digital content (UAM) use of digital learning platforms (all partners), and profound understanding of ethics in the digital domain (as part of Dissertation training) by the end of their time in the programme.
IV. European Values: Inclusion & Sustainability	IV.1. Multilingualism	During the joint programme, each student is exposed to at least 2 different EU official languages, language classes excluded.	YES: EUROSUD students are immersed in at least three different languages and cultures during the 2yr programme, where they live in three different countries (two, if one of those languages/ countries is their home language/ country).

		Exposure to EU official languages can take place in active and/or passive use of language(s), at any level in teaching and/or learning activities, examinations, research activities, professional or civic engagement activities and during mobility periods, including by going on mobility to a country where a different EU official language is predominantly used in daily life.	YES: although EUROSUD is primarily delivered and assessed in English some of the partners offer courses in other languages, which students can attend, if they have the minimum required language level: UAM offers optional courses in Spanish in Semester 2 (students are assessed in Spanish or English). AMU offers all courses in French and assessment is in French. The Dissertation is written and assessed in English in all Year 2 CPUs (NKUA, UAM, AMU, LUISS)
IV.2. Inclusiveness and sustainability		<p>The joint programme commits to wide participation through socially and geographically inclusive admission through tailored measures for all categories of disadvantaged students.</p> <p>The joint programme commits to respect the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and commits to the principles of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Green Charter.</p>	<p>YES: all partners have policies for enabling students with disabilities/ individual needs to access the programme.</p> <p>YES: the EUROSUD programme has had ERASMUS MUNDUS funding in the past which enables it to promote scholarships in less advantaged regions of the world.</p> <p>YES: EUROSUD is not in receipt of MSCA funding, but it does adhere to the principles of the Green Charter: For instance, UoG and other CPUs have adopted renewables and sustainability strategies. As a programme EUROSUD adheres to a no paper policy and all Dissertations are submitted, disseminated and marked in electronic form. EUROSUD recommends low-emissions means of transport to access in-person meetings (i.e. train) and mostly use teleconferencing for CMBs, Exam Boards and Student-Staff Meetings.</p>
IV. 3. Language classes (optional)		The joint programme offers the possibility to take language classes to enhance the command of multiple European languages.	YES: students have the option to attend other 2 nd language courses throughout their programme. This may include EU languages (in preparation for a following mobility period) or it may be for a third country/ world language such as Turkish or Arabic.
IV. 4. Environmental care (optional)		The joint programme includes components and actions related to environmental sustainability and implements measures to minimise the environmental footprint of its activities.	YES: Courses on climate change and sustainability are offered in the EUROSUD curriculum in theory, law and policy-making, particularly in the Mediterranean context. An annual Summer School on Climate Change, Migration and the Rule of Law in the Mediterranean for 1 st year EUROSUD students (Istanbul) is planned to begin in the 2024-2025 AY. See above for environmental footprint.
IV.5. Democratic values (optional)		The joint programme offers the possibility for students to participate in activities promoting democratic values and addressing societal needs of the local community (ies), including volunteering, and to receive ECTS for it.	YES: EUROSUD students commonly take up internships, which may be credit bearing, depending on their study track. Quite often these internships take place in international organisations that promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law, or non-profits, embedded in local communities or serving communities of vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers or children. Students do engage in volunteering, but it is not ECTS accredited.

4. Recommendations for the European Label Degree criteria

Content

Following the initial analysis of the EDL criteria validation against EUROSUD, a series of recommendations were shaped, particularly addressing the content of the European Degree Label criteria.

1. Clarification/definition of **transnational** in the context of Transnational joint degree delivery.
2. Clarification regarding **the Transparency of Learning Outcomes** criterion with regards to the Intended Learning Outcomes and where those are visible to applicants and employers.
3. In what concerns the **Transnational Campus** criterion, explore the potential for the students to be registered at all degree-awarding partner institutions for the full duration of the degree (provided there are procedures in place to avoid duplicate tuition fees).
4. Enhance the **virtual mobility** component within the EDL.
5. Enhance the **labor market connection**, in particular with regards to the work placement and internship components.
6. Enhance the **visibility and awareness** criterion (from optional to mandatory).
7. Potential to include a new criterion relating to **institutional development of the academia and research components** through the joint degrees (potential integration with the European Research Area).
8. Potential to include an **employment criterion** (1 year after graduation) for programs with at least one graduate cohort.
9. Potential to include an optional criterion regarding **distribution of tasks and responsibility among partners** (e.g., Set of committees and rotating Chairs, change of coordinators with each funding period, etc.).
 - a. This could be part of a new, separate criterion, under the Structural cluster, that would reflect indicators on **administrative and organizational effectiveness**, ensuring that minimum standards of collaboration among partner institutions are in place.
 - i. A potential definition for the `Administrative and Organizational Effectiveness` criterion would be: `This criterion focuses on the internal infrastructure and operational mechanisms that institutions must establish to effectively introduce and sustain the European Degree Label. It underscores the importance of a coordinated, transparent, and efficient administrative framework that aligns with the overarching goals and standards of the EDL.
 - ii. The indicators could include administrative infrastructure, training and development, documentation, stakeholder communication, feedback mechanisms, periodic internal reviews, collaboration framework, resource allocation, crisis management, transparency.

10. Potential to include an optional criterion regarding **the quality of both educational provisions as well as of processes** (e.g., External International Advisory Board).

Approach

Furthermore, several recommendations were formulated in relation to the general approach towards the European Degree Label development, launch and implementation.

1. **Motivation:** Clarify the motivation for EDL development and implementation and clearly **communicate** it to the interested parties.
2. **Differentiation:** Clarify whether the EDL is based on an all-or-nothing approach, or whether the EDL could be awarded based on different levels/percentage of alignment (e.g., Bronze, Silver, Gold, etc.).
3. **Renewal:** Clarify if/how often the EDL should be renewed and how (particularly if awarded differentiated on percentage of alignment).
4. **Financial model:** Explore the possibility of creating/allowing for a new financial model to support joint degrees under the EDL.
5. **Financial incentives:** Consider offering financial incentives (grants) for institutions that may require significant resources to align to the EDL criteria.
6. **Integration with existing systems:** Where/if possible, ensure that EDL requirements and processes integrate seamlessly with existing academic systems and infrastructures to minimize disruption.
7. **Integration with other certifications:** Explore synergies and possible integrations with other academic certifications, quality assurance systems or labels to provide added value and reduce redundancy.
8. **Visibility:** Make the EDL more visible to all interested parties to ensure buy-in.
9. **Gradual deployment:** Explore a gradual deployment of the EDL that would entail several steps throughout a longer period, to allow stakeholders to better understand the process and its scope, as well as to foresee and address any potential resistance to implementation.
 - Consider a pilot phase for deployment, first introducing EDL it to a small group of institutions. This will help identify any potential challenges or areas of improvement before a full-scale launch.
10. **Provide case-studies/best-practice example:** Following the initial deployment, showcase a range of case studies highlighting how different programs and institutions have successfully adopted and benefited from the EDL.



6

**Tackling obstacles in
relation to the
European Label Degree
implementation**

Tackling obstacles in relation to the European Label Degree implementation

Based on the obstacles identified in the process of developing and deploying the EDL, these are some of the recommendations shaped to address them (currently under revision).

Curriculum:

1. Establish an EU-wide committee/body to ensure alignment with EDL criteria (and potentially award the EDL).
2. Develop guidelines for consistent learning outcomes for EDL, while allowing for flexibility.
3. Organize workshops and seminars to align EDL (self) assessment/validation methods.
4. Ensure curriculum relevance through continuous industry feedback and employability surveys at the European level.
5. Strike a balance between European integration and national educational identities through a modular curriculum approach, as part of the EDL.

Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Qualifications, and Standards:

1. Streamline EDL labelling processes using best practices from successful programs.
2. Regularly audit online education to ensure parity with traditional methods.
3. Potentially develop a common qualification framework for EDL.

Recognition and Transferability:

1. Address structural barriers through dialogue and support for legislative reforms (national/European level).
2. Streamline professional skill validation processes.
3. Organize European university fairs to enhance the reputation of European degrees.

Administration, Governance, and Norms:

1. Develop a governance framework for the EDL, involving all stakeholders.
2. Reduce bureaucratic obstacles through e-governance and digital platforms.
3. Support the harmonization of academic calendars and the streamlining of program agendas.
4. Foster collaborative platforms for stakeholder communication.

Resources:

1. Increase funding allocations for Erasmus and other mobility grants.
2. Provide financial support for modernization where needed to reduce gaps.
3. Facilitate infrastructure grants targeting technology for education.

4. Encourage collaborative research to pool resources, thus adding an European Research Area dimension to the EDL.
5. Ensure continuous funding for European degrees through public-private partnerships.
6. Enhance global marketing campaigns to attract international students.

Cultural Particularities:

1. Encourage the design of curriculum modules that respect diverse historical interpretations.
2. Promote and prioritize cultural sensitivity training for educators and administrators.
3. Support the development of multilingual programs to develop language skills.

Resistance to Change:

1. Organize awareness campaigns emphasizing the benefits of the EDL.
2. Provide training to faculty and administrative staff, highlighting the advantages of the EDL.
3. Address student concerns through interactive sessions and feedback mechanisms.
4. Overcome institutional inertia through incentives and recognition for early adopters.
5. Launch public campaigns to highlight the broader benefits of the EDL.