



**Questionnaire on the feasibility study**  
**for the establishment of a fully recognized and accredited blended**  
**Master in European Social Security**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background information**

The EFESE (European Format for Exchange of Social Security Education) project aims to create a format for virtual exchange of courses. Furthermore it wants on the basis of the commonly designed courses come to a truly European comprehensive curriculum on social security that will be accessible with help of virtual mobility of both the teachers and the students. This in its turn could be presented in a common blended Master programme on European social security (type joint or multiple degree) One of the **outputs of the project EFESE** consists inter alia of an in-depth study on the feasibility of such a joint study programme that is carried out partially on a remote basis by using IT tools (web, sharing video lectures, live-stream lectures, on-line assignments, interactive communication, etc).

**The feasibility study** mainly focuses on mapping and where possible on overcoming legal, administrative and practical obstacles and challenges on the road of establishing a fully recognised and accredited common Master programme at the participating educational institutions. This common programme will be based on the common courses put in an EFESE-format and hence will be predominantly virtually (through the application of modern IT possibilities, allowing distance learning). With the feasibility study we want to provide information on required procedural steps at each participating institution as well as at the different national levels. The study will focus principally on procedural issues in relation to the set-up of a common Master programme, and furthermore, on differences and deviations in national law and institutional regulation. It will provide a concrete blueprint of how the organisations could integrate their residential and on-line learning activities in order to develop to a fully recognized and accredited Master in European social security. In later stage it will present possible models of blended common study programme (such as joint degrees, double degrees and local degrees based on exchange with other universities, etc.).

The **following questionnaire** is considered to be the first step in the formation of the study and therefore aims at gathering all the essential data regarding the legal framework and its current state of each individual participating partner and satellite organisation. With the help of your answers the study will map the current hindrances to the establishment of new fully recognized and accredited master. Chapters are the following:

- Types and forms of study programmes;
- Types and forms of diplomas;
- Accreditation procedure;
- Financing;
- Rules on the study order;
- Ensuring and evaluating the quality of joint study programmes; and
- General assessment – your personal opinion.

### **Guidelines for completing the questionnaire**

At each question that addresses the matter of legal regulation, we kindly ask you to list all the relevant legal acts and also enclose them in their full text. Legal acts shall be clean copies (currently applicable version, if it exists), preferable in their English or German version. If the translation is not available and you find any of the provisions significantly important in terms of creating a blended international joint study programme, please briefly introduce their content.

For each response, if possible, please provide an appropriate legal basis. Name the legal act(s), mark their relevant articles and describe in detail the meaning of these provisions (in English). Please also add your experience of how these provisions work in practice, are there any administrative and/or practical obstacles for their implementation?

Please send the responses (which you are welcome to gather also from persons responsible for study programs at your institution) both on-line (accessible at: <https://www.1ka.si/a/68655>, password EFESE+, using block/capital letters) and as a Word document to [grega.strban@pf.uni-lj.si](mailto:grega.strban@pf.uni-lj.si) and [Kirsten.VandenBempt@law.kuleuven.be](mailto:Kirsten.VandenBempt@law.kuleuven.be), **by the 31st of July 2015 at the very latest**. Any earlier submission would be appreciated. Thank you sincerely in advance.

### **Terms used in the questionnaire**

*joint study programme* – study programme that is carried out in cooperation of at least two higher education institutions

*international study programme* – study programme, that is carried out in cooperation of at least two higher education institutions from at least two countries

*blended study programme* – study programme that is carried out partly residentially and partly remotely by using IT

*blended international study programme* – study programme that is carried out in cooperation of at least two higher education institutions from at least two countries, both residentially and remotely by using IT

*on-line study programme* – study programme that is carried out only by using IT

*residential study programme* – study programme that is carried out only residentially (in a classroom, on-campus)

*residential lecture* – lecture, carried out residentially, in a classroom

*residential mobility* – mobility where students in person visit other higher education institutions and attend their residential lectures for a certain period of time

*national law, rules, regulation* – law, rules, regulation adopted by a certain country (parliament, the government, ministry, etc.)

*institutional law, rules, regulation* – law, rules, regulation adopted by your university, faculty, research institution or other higher education institution

## QUESTIONS

### I. Types and forms of study programmes in the field of social security

1. How does the law in your country define degree levels after the 1st Bologna cycle (undergraduate level) of study (Bologna – master's degree , LL.M., doctoral study etc.)? Please list all possible degrees, the duration of study required to obtain them and describe them briefly.
2. How is the duration of study programme of the 1st in the combination with the 2nd Bologna cycle determined (e.g. 3+2, 4+1, 5+0 years)?
3. Could the system of postgraduate degrees and their duration in your country in any way affect (perhaps hinder) the formation of fully recognized and valid international blended study programme (for instance, such a rule would be a requirement that a master programme in law lasts at least two years)?
4. Is it possible to establish a part-time study programme at your institution? Under what conditions? Are there any constraints on implementing an international part-time study programme? Are there any constraints on implementing a blended part-time study programme? *Part-time study programme is here understood as a programme that lasts longer than full-time programme or the lectures take place in late afternoons or on Saturdays since it is established for persons already employed or for various reasons not being involved mainly in studying (as this is generally the case for regular, full-time students).*
5. What types and forms of joint study programs are identified and regulated by your national law (e.g. joint degree, multiple degree, others)?
6. Which of these are determined by legal acts of your university, faculty, institution and how?
7. What does the law (of your country and your institution) provide for the study programmes that are partially or fully carried out remotely with the use of IT (blended and on-line study programmes)?
8. Do these provisions on the use of IT also apply to joint study programmes?
9. Does the relevant law regulating use of IT contain specific provisions concerning blended joint study programmes?
10. What do the rules stipulate regarding the minimum or the maximum scope of remotely conducted learning contents (in general; as part of an individual course; as part of an individual study programme)?

11. What do the rules stipulate regarding the minimum or the maximum scope of residential mobility of students within an international study programme?
12. How does the law determine types of mobility within an international study programme (e.g. students collectively move from institution to institution; or with alternating sequential visits; to spend a whole semester, just a course or two)?
13. What is the minimum and maximum scope of work of students (measured in ECTS or by other specific criteria – please present it if it exist at your institution) required for postgraduate study programmes? And for individual courses? How do your national and institutional rules determine the structure and the scope of study programmes and individual courses from this point of view?
14. Does the law and institutional rules allow for the exchange of individual learning contents (e.g. individual lectures within an existing course)? Is or could this be introduced in practise? Is there a sufficient legal basis for this kind of exchange of learning contents?
15. What is your experience with the existing similar (joint or multiple degree) programmes or exchange of courses?

## **II. Types and forms of diplomas**

16. What do the (national and institutional) rules stipulate regarding the design, structure and content of the diploma (e.g. the form, language, the signatories, the diploma supplement, required data)?
17. What types and forms of diplomas does your national law provide for when considering joint study programmes (e.g. joint degree, double degree, dual degree, multiple degree etc.)? Do the rules stipulate any limitations and conditions?
18. Which of those are allowed for by the legal acts of your institution and therefore can be issued by your institution? Please describe them (and the relevant rules) briefly.
19. Does the relevant law contain specific provisions concerning diplomas to be issued in joint study programmes, particularly if the programme is international and blended?
20. Do you experience any difficulties with the existing joint programmes when issuing diplomas?

## **III. Accreditation procedure**

21. Which legal acts determine the accreditation procedure of a study programme:
  - in your country, in your region (in case of different regulation within the country)
  - at your university, faculty, research institution?

22. In what way does the accreditation procedure of joint study programme deviate from the general accreditation procedure? Which particularities are stipulated by the national law and which by the regulation of your institution?
23. Is accreditation procedure more complex, longer and demanding due to those particularities and how? Does it contain any additional conditions, requirements, acts, attachments, documents (contrary/additional to the general procedure)?
24. Does the national law or regulation of your university, faculty or research institution provide for any specific provision regarding the accreditation procedure of a blended study programme or of an on-line study programme?
25. Do these provisions apply equally in respect of joint study programmes or are there any particularities in this regard?
26. Does the relevant law require an accreditation of the entire joint study programme or only an accreditation of the part of a joint study programme which is to be implemented in your country, at your university, faculty or research institution?
27. Does the relevant law stipulate the type, form and content of agreements, acts and contracts that shall be adopted by partner institutions of a joint, especially international study programme (e.g. a memorandum of understanding, the consortium agreement)?
28. Does the national and institutional law allow for an accreditation of a study programme at your institution, which is already accredited (and implemented) abroad (by a foreign higher education institution)?
29. Have you experienced any legal or administrative/practical difficulties with accreditation (or termination) procedure of the current blended and joint programmes at your institution?
30. How long is the accreditation procedure when joint study programmes are concerned?
31. With respect to the blended and on-line joint study programmes, are there any distinctive features that might extend and prolong the procedure?
32. How frequent or rather, after what period of time is a renewal of accreditation required? Do accreditation validity periods vary when joint and especially blended joint study programmes are concerned?

#### **IV. Financing**

33. Does the national and institutional law contain any specific provisions regarding funding of joint, especially international study programmes? Are there relevant rules in regard to ensuring the

financial sustainability of the programme (and in the case its implementation is financially threatend)?

34. Does the national and institutional law contain any provisions regarding funding of implementation of a blended study programme (e.g. in terms of costs of remote learning or other specific costs)?
35. Does the national and institutional law allow for funding of the study programme from the tuition fees of students? Is there any distinction for international or blended program?
36. Does the relevant law stipulate any restrictions regarding the amount (e.g. minimum, maximum), the terms of payment, etc. of inscription/tuition fees? Is there any distinction for international or blended program?
37. Is there any difference regarding funding, inscription/tuition fees, if the study programme is implemented as part-time or full-time study programme?

#### **V. Rules on the study order**

38. Do rules regarding the call for enrolment to the study programme and the process of enrolment (e.g. the entry requirements) also apply to the blended international study programme? In what extent? Could these rules in any way interfere with or hinder the implementation of the blended international study programme (e.g. the minimum average of grades achieved in previous education, entrance examinations, the composition of the selection panel/admission committee)? How? Please describe relevant rules and/or potential practical barriers in this context.
39. Does the national and institutional law determine the rules regarding the use of a language when implementing the study programme? Do the rules allow for implementation of the study programme in a foreign language (e.g. in English)? Is there any distinction for international or blended program?
40. Could the national and institutional law regarding the protection and exchange of personal data in any way interfere with or hinder the implementation of the international study programme?
41. Does the relevant regulation contain specific provisions regarding the blended study programme or on-line study programme (as protection of personal data can be more delicate question when IT is used)?

#### **VI. Ensuring and evaluating the quality of joint study programmes**

42. Does the national and institutional law determine any particularities and criteria related to ensuring and evaluating the quality of a joint, especially international study programme?

43. Does the national and institutional law contain any particular provisions on ensuring and/or evaluating the quality of a blended and on-line study programme?
44. What procedures of internal and external evaluation of the study programme are specified as mandatory? Please describe them and indicate who is responsible for their implementation.
45. What are the essential elements of asserting and evaluating the suitability and quality of the partner institutions of a joint study programme?
46. What are the distinguishing characteristics (compared to previous two questions) when blended or on-line study programmes are concerned?
47. What is your experience with ensuring and evaluating current joint study programmes?

## **VII. General assessment – your personal opinion**

Please answer the questions below.

48. In your opinion, what are the greatest barriers for the implementation of a blended international study programme in your country with regard to:
- legal regulation;
  - administration and institutional obstacles;
  - practical, technical implementation and application of legal regulation?
49. Which form of cooperation would be in your opinion most:
- achievable, feasible;
  - useful, beneficial, interesting

in the point of view of your faculty, university, institution when considering the existing regulation and practice?

50. Would you like to point out any other relevant issue not explicitly mentioned before in the questionnaire or in your answers? Please describe.

**Thank you for your kind cooperation!**