# The Blueprint for a European Degree

# Main outcomes of the 6 E+ pilots

A **mapping of 50+ existing barriers** for the creation of joint programmes and award of joint degrees

A reflection on the **added value and benefits of a European degree** (as a label and as a type of joint degrees)

**Analysis of preliminary criteria** to define the concept and scope of a European degree

Proposal for a **common and consensual list of refined criteria** to define what kind of programmes would qualify as a "European degree" programme

Analysis of **possible ways to implement** a European degree (as a label vs as a type of joint degrees)

**Policy advices** to move forward and make it  a reality

# Identified benefits and added value

## For students

**Higher employability**

**More opportunities** to engage transnational study programmes

Enhanced personal development and global mindset

## For employers

**Certified highly-skilled graduates**

**Europe as a destination for talented students**

**Increased possibilities to work with universities**

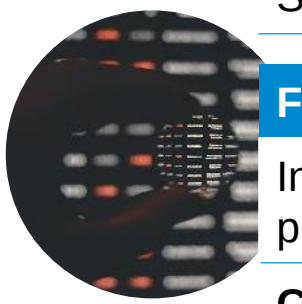
## For universities

**Reduced administrative burden – To pool resources** more efficiently

**Increased flexibility** for joint programmes **–** To create more opportunities **to innovate together**

**Wider offer** to students & staff

Support **internationalisation strategies**



## For EU and Member States

Increased **transparency and trust** in joint programmes

**Competitiveness and attractiveness of national higher education**

Talent retention

**Tackle skills gaps** and labour market needs at European level

# 3 dimensions reflected by the refined criteria

1. Higher education institutions involved
2. Transnational joint degree delivery
3. Joint arrangements for the joint programme
4. Quality assurance arrangements
5. Graduate tracking

6. Student-centred learning
7. Interdisciplinarity
8. Labour market relevance
9. Digital skills
10. Transnational campus – access to services
11. Flexible and embedded student mobility
12. Co-evaluation and co-supervision for dissertations

13. Democratic values
14. Multilingualism
15. Inclusiveness
16. Green transition

**1- Transnational programme organisation and management**

**2- Learning experience**

**3- European values**

The list of criteria serves a**s a definition** of what kind of educational programme would qualify as ‘European degree’. **They do not replace accreditation procedures.**

# Key considerations guiding the E+ pilots

**Flexibility and proportionality**

The criteria were drafted to be flexible and **to accommodate many possible ways** for universities to prove compliance with them.

**Academic freedom**

The criteria were drafted to **respect academic freedom** and to leave up to universities to decide what and how to teach.

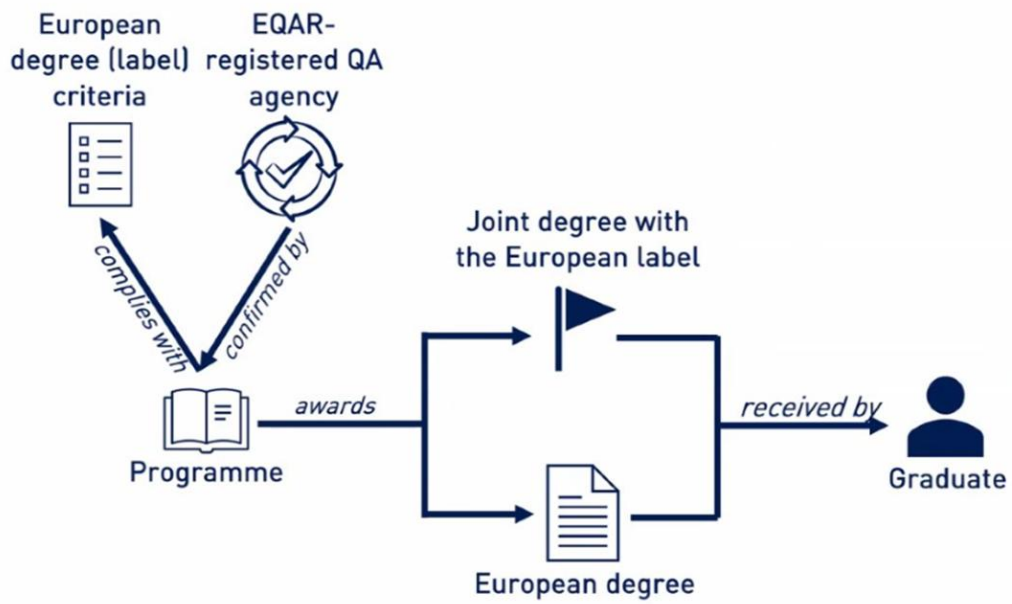
They **don't impose the use of pedagogies or topics** in curricula.

**Alignment with Bologna**

**All Bologna tools are integrated in the criteria.**

This ensures full **compatibility** and **complementarity.**

# Award process and actors



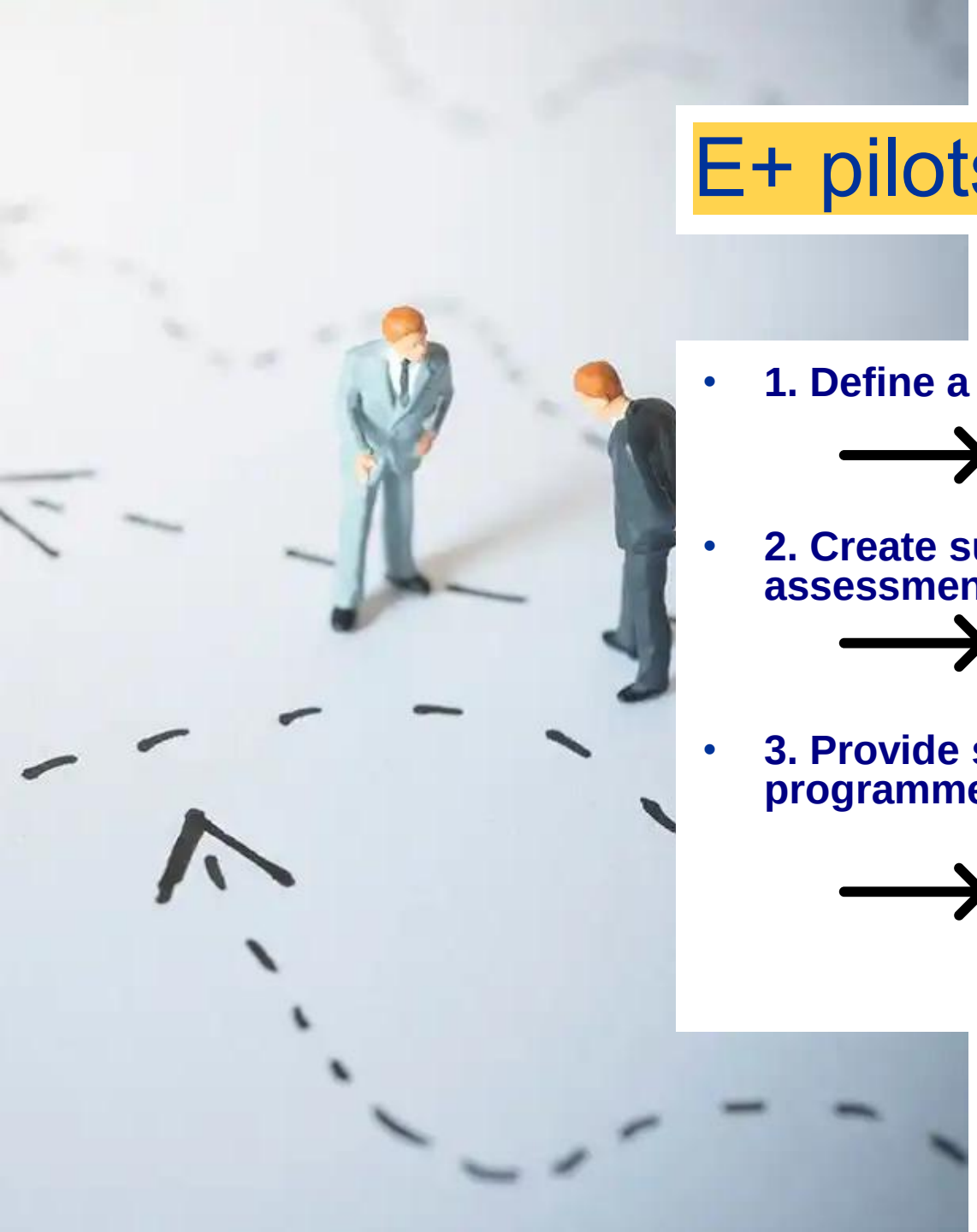

**- All E+ pilots agreed that the process should be integrated into existing accreditation and/or quality assurance processes (without replacing them).**

- Compliance with the criteria could be verified by an **EQAR-registered agency** during the accreditation or evaluation of a joint programme.

- Self-accrediting institutions could verify such compliance themselves once the process would be checked by an EQAR registered agency.

- The process could be similar for both a European degree and a European label, and **both could coexist**. **However, only a European degree would directly bring simplification**.

The proposal for a Council recommendation proposes that MS could allow their QA agencies and/or higher education institutions (depending on the approach to external QA) to verify compliance with the criteria **for the award of a label**



# E+ pilots' advice for policymakers

- **1. Define a clear roadmap for implementation**

  → Roadmap proposed in the Blueprint for a European degree

- **2. Create support documentation for the interpretation and assessment of the criteria**

  → Proposal to carry out the work in a European degree policy Lab

- **3. Provide support and incentives for the development of programmes leading to a European degree (label)**

  → European degree pathway projects and European degree support measures planned under E+ AWP 2025

# The road towards a possible European degree: illustration of proposed next steps

**Blueprint for a European degree March 2024**

**Q3-Q4 2024**

- Erasmus+ pilot projects final report published
- **Discussions at national level**

**By 1st semester of 2025**

- Council discussions in EDUC Committee
- Adoption of the **European degree criteria**
- Setting up the **European degree policy lab**

**Mid-2025**

Launch of Erasmus+ call to support **European degree pathway projects** and **European degree exploratory action**

**End of 2025 and end of 2026**

1st and 2nd **European Degree Forum**

**2025-2027**

- Member States can issue a European label
- And have a look at their national systems

**2027**

Commission tables a proposal for a **Council Recommendation on a European degree**

**2028 - 2030**

Mainstreaming of the European degree across all Member States

**European degree mainstreamed all over Europe**

European Commission

# Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme 2025 (pending decision of the Council)

**Partnerships for Excellence: European Universities – European Degree exploratory action**

Objectives:

- The design and implementation of joint programmes matching the criteria for a possible European

- Support inclusive approaches for student participation in joint programmes

Budget: EUR 14.000.000

**Forward-Looking Projects: European Degree Pathway Projects**

Objectives:

Support, enable and accompany Member States to work together with their accreditation and quality assurance agencies, universities, students, economic and social partners, to continue exploring and navigate the pathway towards a possible European degree

Budget: EUR 7.000.000