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

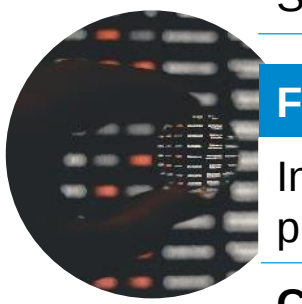
For universities

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.

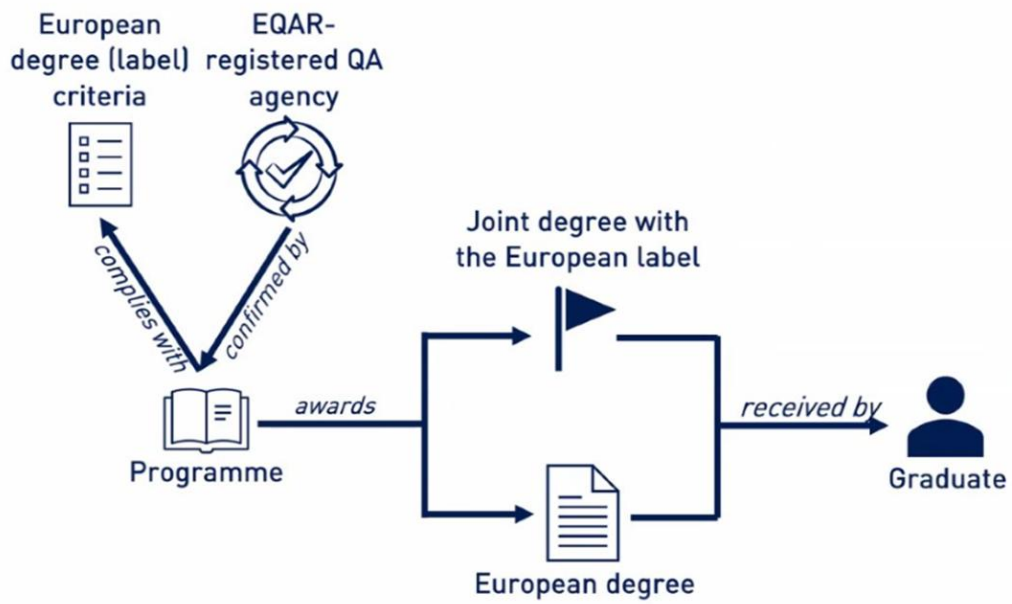
They **don't impose the use of pedagogies or topics** in curricula.

Alignment with Bologna

All Bologna tools are integrated in the criteria.

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

Award process and actors



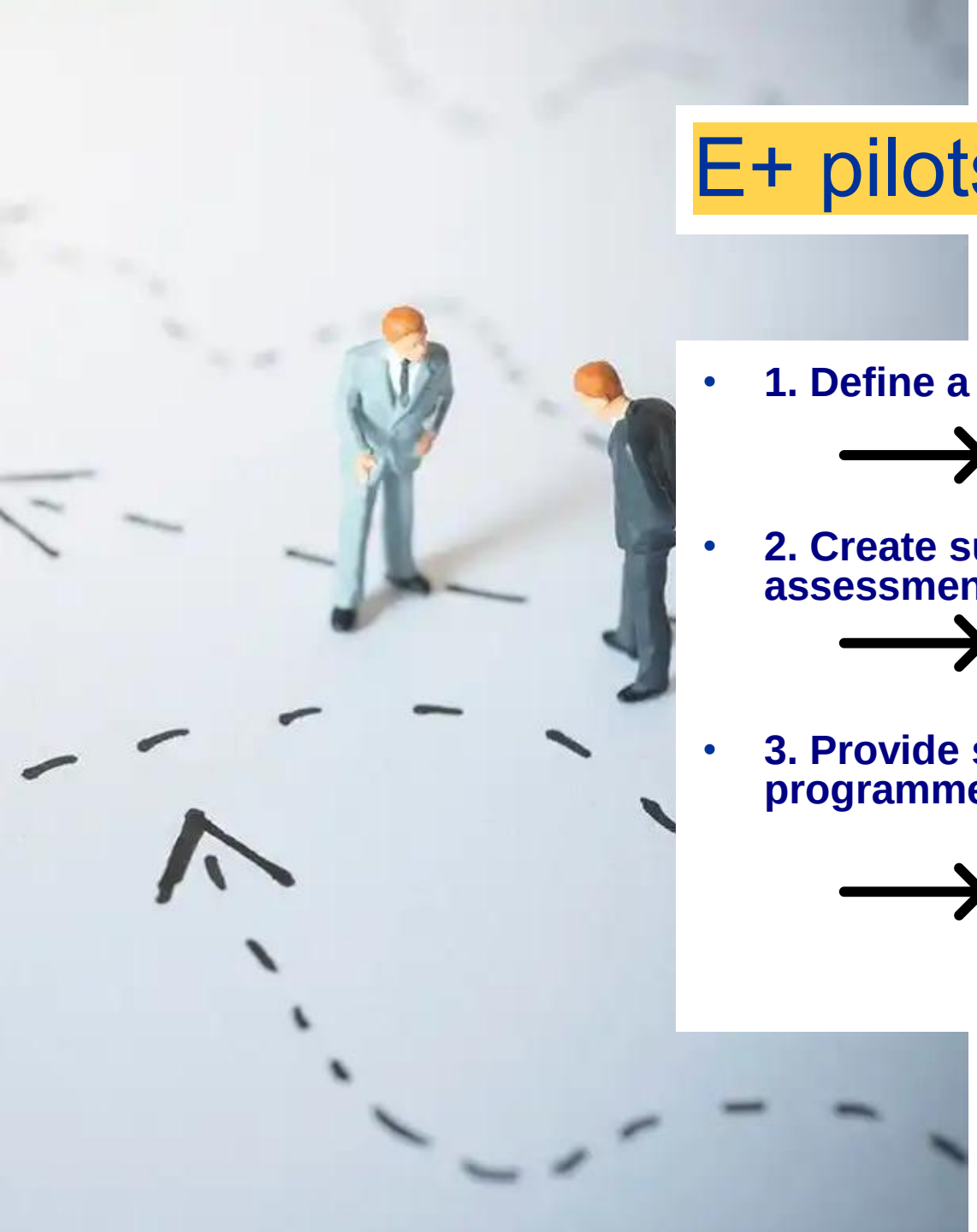
- All E+ pilots agreed that the process should be integrated into existing accreditation and/or quality assurance processes (without replacing them).

- 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