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ALFA III CLOSING EVENT **25th June, 2014**

ALFA III AND ERASMUS MUNDUS ACTION II (LATIN AMERICA) COORDINATION EVENT **26th – 27th June, 2014**

Lima, Peru



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Introduction

The ALFA III Closing event was held on the 25th June 2014 and *The ALFA III and Erasmus Mundus joint coordination event* between the 26th and 27th June 2014 both in Lima, Peru.

These two events brought together a broad spectrum of actors from academic institutions, from the European Union and Latin America (LA).

The meeting on the 25th June, attended by 80 people, was focused on ALFA III projects and was structured to facilitate discussion of results, synergies, and promote reflection on the issues of sustainability and impact of the projects.

The meeting aim was to show that the European Commission keeps providing help for a better higher education in LA.

This meeting started with an Opening Speech followed by two workshops on ALFA III and a plenary session including the conclusions obtained during the workshops. The day closed with a visit to the Universidad Pontificia Católica del Peru.

The ALFA III and Erasmus Mundus joint coordination event aims were to collect opinions on results, impact and lessons learned with ALFA III and Erasmus Mundus Action 2 programmes. In addition, meeting also sought to establish synergies and discuss future challenges with new programmes such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020.

The meeting on the 26th was attended by more than 180 people. It was structured in two blocks. The first one aimed to facilitate discussion of impact and results on ALFA III & Erasmus Mundus Action 2 as well as sharing best practices and direct experiences of academic professionals/ students. The second block was focused on presenting the new programme Erasmus+, its actions and international dimension. The day closed with a cocktail where participants exchanged material and experiences in an informal atmosphere.

The meeting on the 27th was attended by 130 people and it was the continuation of what was discussed during the afternoon on the 26th : Erasmus+ and key components of these new programme. The day included also workshops where participants shared lessons learnt with ALFA III and Erasmus Mundus as well as future challenges to be faced with the Erasmus+. The day closed with an informal networking meeting where participants shared their contacts and exchanged points of views.

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The purpose of this report is to provide a consolidated document of notes taken during the *ALFA III Closing* and the ALFA III & Erasmus Mundus events which covers the discussions, questions and answers, recommendations and preliminar conclusions. This report summarises these event in the form of minutes with focus on key points and recommendations from participants; It is not a full transcript.

The report will follow the below structure:

- Day 25th ALFA III CLOSING EVENT
 - Opening
 - Workshops

- Day 26th & 27th ALFA III, ERASMUS MUNDUS ACTION 2 & ERASMUS+
 - Opening
 - Impact and results ALFA III
 - Erasmus Mundus Action 2
 - Erasmus+
 - Workshops

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25th June ALFA III CLOSING EVENT

OPENING ADDRESS

Mr José González y González, Head of Sector, Sustainable Development and Higher Education, regional Latin America and Caribbean Programmes, Directorate General of Development Cooperation - EuropeAid, European Commission.

González y González highlighted that the EU remains committed to the higher education in America through various programmes in the new cycle 2014-20.

There was a clear focus on 3 concepts: Mutual understanding and commitment between the participants of ALFA III programme and the European Commission; The important gains reaped during the last years; results that should continue to be cultivated with the new initiatives and taking into account the new context of AL and the new challenge that this entails.

In this line, the ALFA III programme was briefly explained and the introduction of a component more focused on the fight against poverty and social exclusion was highlighted. Mr González y González remarked that it has been shown that institutions of higher education are essential vehicles for social change and development in the region and said that they should remain an integral part of this process (of development and social change in the region) in line with the new needs of LA's society. "LA is considered by the EU as a partner and not just as a direct beneficiary of development assistance," he said.

Mr González y González insisted that the meeting in Lima is a great opportunity to consolidate the excellent team work done so far. He said that the successes achieved through ALFA III need to continue cultivating and new initiatives such as Erasmus+ will be the new platform for these inter-university collaboration networks already established through the ALFA III programme.

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WORKSHOP 1

The first workshop was made up of 5 separate thematic groups focused on sharing views on monitoring and evaluation of projects and to define future strategies for sustainability

- ❖ New Technologies / Innovation + pedagogical methodologies / e-learning
- ❖ Public Health / Climate Change. Environment
- ❖ Curricular modernization
- ❖ Insertion in the labor market / SME + IES: + socio economic development actors towards a more inclusive university
- ❖ Institutional strengthening

1.1 Thematic Session **New Technologies / Innovation + pedagogical methodologies / e-learning**

Main conclusions

- It is necessary to know the characteristics and needs of the region;
- Important to be flexible in the proposed indicators;
- Be relevant to the needs raised;
- Be consistent with the specific dynamics of the universities involved.

General comments and recommendations related to the conclusions

- Important to know how the programmes of the EU are called and how they are managed;
- Need to give more attention to the issue of intellectual property;
- Betting on the creation of future networks to continue the work; Generate sustainable projects that continue running when the project ends;
- Create NGOs to keep the sustainability of the projects;
- Use of free software;
- Provide training for those involved in the sectors of education;
- Create observers;
- Convene thematic conferences;
- Provide technical assistance;
- Generate contracts with companies or institutions;
- Save skilled professionals such as graduate students or post alumnus thesis and incorporate them into the networks to continue to work.

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1.2 Thematic Session **Public Health / Climate Change / Environment**

Main conclusions

- Need to know in more depth the initial state of the project, its activities, changes and processes generated for proper evaluation thereof;
- Important to improve the evaluation system;
- Need to expand partnerships;
- Important to reach compromises with national and regional governments.

General comments and recommendations related to the conclusions

- Important to have evaluations where at least one of the members is an outside expert ;
- Need to make a "call for evaluation" so groups with similar interests can make use of other projects;
- Need to improve the evaluation forms that currently are very complex
- Have similar projects at the interfaces of each project evaluation;
- Require more visits and field evaluations by project evaluators;
- Recommend institutionalizing certain products of the project;
- Propose the establishment of partnerships with other actors, especially those linked to the project;
- Encourage to research for human and financial resources;
- Need to determine how the project can help the public policy of the country.

1.3 Thematic Session **Curricular modernization**

Main conclusions

- Need to identify common points between the different projects;
- Need to involve different actors and make them part of the project;
- Urge making a wider compression of the educational process;
- Propose a set of indicators obtained for impacts;
- Highlight the importance of ensuring the sustainability of the project and not just in the financial part;

General comments and recommendations related to the conclusions

- To involve all stakeholders it is important to make them understand what the purpose of the project is so they get attached to it with absolute conviction;

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- Emphasize that it is important to provide financial sustainability to the project but also keep developing what was achieved. For that, to have more synergies and foster collaborative networks are essential;
- Important to make evaluations by peers but also by others to get to know the opinion of those not involved in the project and better understand the impact thereof;
- Request for the establishing of mechanisms to disseminate all the information about the project and "massively" spread what it has achieved;
- Requirement to study how they interconnect.

1.4 Thematic Session **Insertion in the labor market / SME + IES: + socio economic development actors towards a more inclusive university**

Main conclusions

- A further institutional development is necessary to achieve more impact projects (encourage that results will result in institutional plans and be included in curricula for continuity);
- They ask higher entailment of project activities with the social, economic environment and the creation of enterprises;
- Claim a higher institutional and financial support and to link the project to the state apparatus;
- Propose a dissemination of the project through promoting networks that ensure its continuation such as conferences and workshops, advice to politicians, etc;
- Request more commitment of countries to make more projects.

1.5 Thematic Session **Institutional strengthening**

Main conclusions

- They consider very important to identify strategic partners that have knowledge of the project subject to ensure the project's success (and generate knowledge through the capabilities of the partners);
- Request that from start of the project a plan is drafted to ensure project sustainability and continuity;
- Require the development of initiatives focused on the common benefits of the projects;
- Projects must be shielded so that, if governments change, it does not affect them.

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WORKSHOP 2

In the second workshop participants focused on the options for creating synergies between different regions of LA and discussed about the social impact of having a strong Higher Education. This workshop was made up of 3 separate regional area groups:

- ❖ Central America
- ❖ Andean Community
- ❖ South America + Mexico

2.1 Central America

Main conclusions

- It is necessary that projects have new action strategies with local actors and make sure they have an impact both inside and outside the universities;
- Must continue to strengthen networks to solve problems together;
- It is important to strengthen the feeling of "Central America as a region" and identify areas to facilitate integration and study common problems and find out solutions.

2.2 Andean Community

Main conclusions

- Request to increase the collaboration within the Andean community as they have a similar culture among them, which would facilitate the implementation of methodologies in the projects and would maintain ties for future calls. However, they consider that the big challenge are policies which are not consolidated in many of these communities;
- While universities should provide higher education to the most vulnerable groups, they conclude that is the responsibility of the governments to improve the lives of these people in the first instance;
- They believe that the university has a social role and it has to be identified as an engine of progress. To do this, it is necessary to get companies to liaise with universities.

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2.3 South America + Mexico

Main conclusions

- Consider necessary to establish geographical synergies: to identify common thematic exercises and to create repositories that exist in isolation and seek their connexion;
- They think it's the time that LA and universities must take the lead and not wait for the EU to always take the initiative;
- They call for discussions on the lessons learnt through forums or to make use of information technology;
- Need to bring the university closer to disadvantaged communities to draft accurate investigation projects. To do this, it is necessary to bring teachers and students closer to these communities;
- It is necessary to break with the pattern of a University directed towards a mercantilist market and look to create a University of greater social inclusion;
- Request to make a constant use of information technology to bring projects to underserved areas.

Impromptu speech by González y González

The *head of Sector, Sustainable Development and Higher Education, regional Programmes Latin America and Caribbean at the European Commission* explained that *Eurosolar* has invested heavily in trainings, equipment and resources in Central American communities through projects that not only cover energy, also health and education. He showed his concern because some communities will not use these facilities when the project ends.

González y González urged the academic sector and communities to seek synergies and together find a way to give a second life to those facilities. For example, by offering their students to do an internship at one of those facilities: they will get experience while teaching the community how to use, for instance, Word (Office). González y González undertook to facilitate contacts for a future collaboration with institutions concerned.

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26th & 27th June: ALFA III, ERASMUS MUNDUS ACTION 2 (LA) & ERASMUS+

OPENING ADDRESS

Mr José González y González, Head of Sector, Sustainable Development and Higher Education, regional Programmes Latin America and Caribbean, Directorate General of Development Cooperation - EuropeAid, European Commission.

González y González defined the audience as “the great ALFA III family” since they have been many years fighting and working together.

After a brief description of the programme, he listed the achievements so far obtained by ALFA III, “which go beyond the expected,” he added.

He was pleased to say as well that the investment made by the EU in the ALFA III programme through its 51 projects has been a great success.

He highlighted a number of these successes: The creation of networks and synergies between the countries of LA and the Caribbean; The development of new curricula and modernization of the existing courses; The improvement in access to higher education for the remote areas and vulnerable groups; The creations of connections between public policy, the private sector and universities; etc..

Therefore, the head of sector urged universities to remain an integral part of the process of development and social change in the region and make it in tune with the changing needs of the LA society.

In this line, González y González announced that the EU sees LA as a partner and not just as a beneficiary. Therefore, the EU will continue investing in higher education in LA through several programmes in the new cycle 2014-2020, particularly with Erasmus+ and Horizon 2012 with a total investment of € 163M.

“It's a great opportunity to consolidate the excellent team work done so far. Successes achieved through ALFA III should continue and new initiatives such as Erasmus+ will make a new platform for these networks of collaboration between universities already consolidated through ALFA III Programme”, in his own words.

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Sr. Julio Mario Rodriguez, Dean Faculty of Engineering, University Central Colombia

The coordinator in Colombia and general academic coordinator of ALFA III projects defined as exhilarating the adventure of collectively construct knowledge based on trust, love and respect;

Projects coordinated by himself (related to innovation, technology transfer and knowledge) were highlighted by the following attributes that, in consideration of Mr Rodriguez, have been the foundation of the work:

Friendship because he believes that success of the projects is based on the construction and maintenance of relations among its members; Confidence because, in his own words, "trust was built in a dynamic and enriching way"; Authority that for Mr Rodriguez was founded on the authority of knowledge and wisdom; The creation and dissemination of knowledge since the flow of ideas coming from different disciplines and cultures allowed, according to the engineer, the interaction of about twelve universities, forty participants, about twenty partner organizations and countless hours of work; Humility because Mr Rodriguez considers that the holders of knowledge is not every one in particular, but also others have important things to contribute and finally the satisfaction to achieve the goals outlined at the beginning of projects

Sra. Irene Horejs, European Union Ambassador in Peru

Mrs Horejs said that Latin America is growing fast and emphasized that such growth demand attention of many horizontal sectors such as Education. In this line, she said it is necessary an education at all levels and focused on training.

In addition, the European Union Ambassador in Peru noted that the lack of highly qualified personnel is becoming a serious obstacle for companies and suggested that cooperation programmes in the field of higher education should focus on it. In her own words, "it is necessary that universities adapt the training (of professionals) to what it is demanded by the productive sector".

Mr Flavio Figallo, Deputy minister of Education management, Peru.

Mr Figallo discussed the reform of the education system in Peru and recognized that the university system has developed a lot in recent years but has been largely unregulated, which has reduced its quality.

The deputy minister of Education management explained that the university system in Peru needs a strong political reform to regain lost time and the Ministry of Education will get the role of rector. In his opinion, it is necessary to promote resources for research, enhance the scholarship programme,

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strengthen the system of accreditation and must be established license policies to be renewed cyclically so to verify that these institutions offer an effective and quality service.

ALFA III

Mrs Anna Herrero Romeu, Programme Manager, Higher Education, Regional Programmes LA & Caribbean, Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – EuropAid, European Commission

Mrs Herrero made a brief presentation of ALFA III and urged to obtain more information on the official website. ALFA III information to be highlighted:

Direct Impact:

- At a personal level because is a unique experience for everyone involved in the project;
- At the institutional level since it has supported the relationship of government, agencies and HEIs;
- Socially, since the HEIs were directly addressed to their social environment.

Impact by categories:

- Improves access to higher education;
- Contribute to the creation / modernization of university degrees;
- Promotes knowledge transfer;
- Contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals;
- Promotes cooperation partnerships;
- Creation / Strengthening of networks;
- Broad dissemination of knowledge.

Impact on Higher Education:

- Creation of a common area of higher education in the region and promoting its synergies with the EU;
- Continuous training of groups in remote areas without access to higher education;
- Establish synergies with the private sector to promote employment;
- Develop innovative teaching skills, focused on the needs of the student;
- New technologies shared through networks in the HEIs;
- Sustainable development: management of natural resources, climate change adaptation and the promotion of renewable energies.

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Mrs Herrero listed the sectors and thematic action of projects that have been developed under ALFA III. In this line, she explained that there are two types of projects: joint projects and structural projects. For better understanding, here is a presentation on the impact and good practice of each type:

→ Example of Joint Projects: Alfa-Puentes

Mr Juan Guillermo Hoyos, Colombian Association of Universities. Project Coordinator Alfa-Puentes.

Best practices:

- The University Partnerships as the principal agents of cooperation (rectors, teachers and other professionals in the Higher Education);
- Identification of University Partnerships as lead partners increases the likelihood that the structures maintain many of the initiatives sponsored by Alfa-Puentes;
- It is considered particularly relevant that the management of Alfa-Puentes is decentralized in the three subregions (is notably helping to strengthen the capacity of Latin American parties).

Impact:

- Consolidation of contacts;
- Better understanding of higher education in Latin America;
- Institutionalization of cooperation with key actors (from conferences to specific projects, etc);
- New perspectives on harmonization processes: The European way is not the only one; 'Spin-offs' options with partners and other stakeholders.

→ Example of Structural Projects: UNICA

Mrs Gloria Esperanza Jurado Gallego. University of Caldas, Colombia. UNICA project coordinator.

Results:

- 387 rural youth in vulnerable conditions received the Professional Technician Certificate on Sustainable Farming;

Impact and best practices:

- A dropout rate of only 5%
- Training of young rural leaders

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- Over 80% of students with interest in continuing the programme to professionalize it
- Establishment of agreements and alliances that allowed the sustainability of the programme
- Linking local community actors

In addition, some ALFA projects also had the opportunity to narrate the experiences of academic professionals through ALFA III. As follows:

→ Project CAVEMAT

Mrs Jella Haub, Technische Universität Berlin, Germany and **Sr Juan Carlos Trujillo**, National Polytechnic School, Ecuador

It is a project of educational development that benefits vulnerable actors in Ecuador, Chile, Colombia and Peru, whose main objective is to facilitate the access of high school students to university careers with a high mathematical component, and support in their learning processes for the successful completion of their higher education.

Actions:

- Creating a virtual community of mathematics;
- Mathematical bridge course;
- Creating a classroom tutoring programme in mathematics for freshman college.

Impact:

- CLAVEMAT has benefited 3500 users. 97% come from public institutions and 43% belong to rural areas;
- Teachers and students from the community have created 69 working groups;
- About 100 high school students participated in a pilot bridge course implemented in 2013;
- There have been 3 online courses involving 840 teachers.

→ Project EQUALITY

Mrs Ana Rosa Ruiz, Technological Institute of Costa Rica

This project aims to promote gender equality in education and the labour market. Likewise, it also targets the strengthening of gender equality from a Regional Network for the leadership of women as a sustainable platform.

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Impact:

- Building of 12 HEIs: 1 Observatory, 3 commissions, 1 Centre, 1 department, 2 Committee, 1 programme, 1 group and 2 in progress;
- 10 HEIs chose for a modernization process;
- Design and implementation of an information system;
- With data: enrollment by gender and area of knowledge;
- Develop strategies including protocols to address sexual harassment in HEIs;
- Draft a methodology to promote a gender plan within the HEI;
- 62 materials produced by the HEI to support the training plan for facilitators;

ERASMUS MUNDUS –ACTION 2 (LA)

Mrs Monika Holik, Head of Unit Erasmus+: Higher Education Joint Master Programmes; Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), European Commission

Mrs Holik made a brief presentation on Erasmus Mundus Action 2 (LA). To be highlighted:

Impact:

- Regional level: Tightening the relationship in two dimensions: LA / EU and LA / LA
- Country level: contributing to social cohesion: participation of students in economic and social disadvantage;
- Institutional level: establishment of bilateral agreements, joint research areas; joint programmes; international visibility;
- Individual level: personal and professional

Results:

- Projects in accordance with the EU-LA cooperation strategy;
- Number of planned mobilities achieved;
- High participation of universities;
- Consolidated collaboration between universities on both sides;
- Internationalization of universities from less favored regions;
- Enthusiasm and cultural enrichment for trainees.

The introduction by the Head of Unit of EACEA was followed by the presentation of two Erasmus Mundus projects:

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→ Project ANIMO CHEVERE!

Prof. Dr. Artur Schmitt, University of Granada, Spain. Project Coordinator Animo Chévere!

Best practices:

- Cooperation and exchange of knowledge between Europe and Latin America & within the countries and the regions.

Impact:

- General comment: High degree of satisfaction among partners and grantees;
- Individual academic achievements;
- Complementary studies and research opportunities;
- Intercultural competences;
- Participation in academic and research networks;
- International projects;
- Implementation of new teaching and research methods at the 'sending' universities;
- Access to innovative teaching and research;
- Participation at international conferences;
- Contributions in relevant scientific journals;
- Elaboration of PhD Theses;
- Awards for projects;
- Personal development;
- Single and collective experience highly appreciated;
- Integration into the culture and daily life of the host country;
- Positive cultural experience when adopting new points of view;
- Establishing of friends and colleagues networks;
- Appreciation of the universality of the Human Rights;
- Institutional impact;
- New academic and scientific equipment;
- International publications and awards;
- Quantitative and qualitative increase of international teaching and research projects;
- Effective widening or setting up networks for academic, research and development cooperation;
- International PhD theses;
- Improved language proficiency of the academic community.

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→ Project MUNDUS LINDO

Sra. Berta Schnettler, Universidad de la Frontera, Chile. Co-coordinator of the MUNDUS LINDO project.

Best practices:

- Strong partnership;
- Strong social dimension;
- Good results of the mobilities;
- Actions to establish a sustainable cooperation;
- Transparent and rigorous selection of fellows;
- Importance given to the situation of those fellows in economic disadvantage;
- Development of common material to support the preparation of mobility;
- Continuous dissemination of the project activities;
- Participatory partners (there are no sleeping partners);
- Commitment of all partners = solid consortium= Successful Project;
- Mutual trust between partners: credit recognition, decision making (interruption of scholarships);
- All decisions are taken collectively by the Management Committee (made up of 20 members);
- Fast and fluid communication;
- Flexibility and continuous improvement of procedures;
- Collaboration with Babel Project;
- Website: good platform for Application and Management;
- Signature of bilateral cooperation agreements (EU-LA, LA-LA).

Impact:

- Social impact of the project;
- Universities, academic and Latin American students: Growing interest in internationalization.

A former student of Erasmus made a presentation on his experience as a scholarship student in Europe:

→ Student experience:

Mr Ronny Alberto Atoche Maceda, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Peru

Impact:

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- On a personal level: he learned to manage his time and money; To have more commitment; To be more realistic and increase his concept of society;
- In the professional field, he raised his knowledge of Physics (his career), the ability to work in team and lead when necessary; He grew in confidence and became more aware about his commitment to/with society;
- Institutionally, Mr Atoche managed to become president and representative of the group of Astronomy and Space Science in Peru; Learnt to disseminate information from this organization through seminars to students of the Faculty of Sciences;
- This Erasmus student also had an impact on the social level because he offers free workshops and field observations to the general public and motivational tutorials for those who have interest in astronomical and cosmic sciences.

ERASMUS+

Mrs Sofia Wong Ortiz, Director General of International Relations and Cooperation -National Assembly of Rectors - Peru

As a body that brings together 76 universities, the National Assembly of Rectors of Peru took the floor to speak about the situation of university education in the country and its needs.

The Director General of this Assembly stressed that academic mobility (both of students and teachers) is an activity of great importance to their members. Mrs Wong made special emphasis on the mobility of teachers, urging the establishment of promoting and encouraging policies for the training teacher who travels abroad as well as the reinstatement of those young teachers who travel abroad.

In this regard, she stressed the importance of universities to anticipate the future and begin to worry about raising the profile of their teachers and invest in young teachers by improving their language skills, among other things.

She considered that the internationalization of higher education is fundamental and thanked the EU for their assistance in this regard because the EU has helped to improve the quality of the Peruvian research.

Efforts by the regional and continental integration were another issue addressed by Ms. Wong. She considered that the links in Latin America are increasingly powerful and fruitful, economically, culturally and politically. In addition, the Director General of the Assembly of Rectors of Peru noted that links are generated to face the challenges in science, technology and innovation.

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Sra. Deirdre Lennan, Policy officer, Cooperacion Internacional: Higher Education in the world; Erasmus+, General Directorate Education and Culture, CE.

Mrs Lennan explained the nature of the new education and training programme for EU and explained how it differs from the previous. She explained in detail each of the actions included in Erasmus+ and responded to questions from the audience. In summary, including Q & A:

1- Credit mobility

It replaces Action 2 of Erasmus Mundus and consists of opening up the current Erasmus programme to the whole world. It will use the same quality instruments as the Erasmus programme uses (they will be explained in detail and up loaded in the official website). Subject to the approval of the relevant committees it foresees about 800 mobilities per year and the budget will be approximately 4.7 M Euro for 2015. The Erasmus+ programme has an indicative budget for a 7 year period (2014-2020) and is reviewed at mid term in 2017.

Beneficiaries are both students and staff. Remark: staff can teach and learn abroad. The flow of students not only goes from LA to Europe but also the other way round.

Unlike the previous programme, with the Erasmus+ all national Agencies located in European Member States will now manage the applications and the European universities will apply on behalf of the LA universities for sending and receiving mobility to/from Partner countries. Both the sending and receiving university have a bilateral agreement (inter-institutional agreement). The majority of applications will be on behalf of one university in a Member State and one university from Latin America but it is also possible for a group of universities from the same country to join together and submit a single application. In this case, one institution applies on behalf of all.

Call for proposals will be published in September 2014 and universities will have until February 2015 to submit the application. Mobility would start from September 2015.

This programme meets the EU Internal agenda (see Communication 'EU Higher Education in the World') and the EU Agenda for Change, with a particular focus on:

- Individuals from lower middle-income countries;
- Economically and socially disadvantaged individuals in partner countries
- Gender balance, while taking into account the overall number of active university students of each gender in the partner country;

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- Disabled people;
- Individuals belonging to vulnerable groups in conflict regions/countries.

2- Joint Masters Degree

This action corresponds to the Erasmus Mundus Action 1 with new elements such as :

- Increased budget for the 7-year period (around 1 billion euros, allowing to support 20.000 scholarship holders and 350 JMDs). In addition specific dedicated regional envelopes will allow for additional scholarships for a given region. Thus, in addition to the students selected for Latin America under the general budget, an additional approximate 6.2 MEuro will be made available in 2015 for additional scholarships for LA.
- Updated student scholarships amounts, comprising students' participation costs (including the tuition fees, full insurance coverage and any other mandatory costs), student travel and installation cost, subsistence allowance for the entire duration of the JMD study programme
- Increased focus on the socio economic environment, the employability of graduates and the sustainability prospects of the JMD
- Increased focus on the excellence of the selected JMD through a strengthened selection and monitoring procedure
- Reviewed funding cycle for the JMDs with a "Quality Review" process after 3 intakes , opening the possibility for the funding of up to 3 additional intakes

Projects on Master Degrees are open to international opening of Erasmus and Joint Master Programmes of excellent quality offered by a consortium of EU/non EU Universities.

Main principles:

- Very high selectivity of the JMDs: only excellent joint master programmes will be selected and funded
- Implemented by consortia of fully recognised HEIs, in the EU and (where relevant) in Partner Countries
- Full scholarships for the best master students with a priority on non-EU students (a minimum of 75 % will be earmarked for students from Partner Countries)
- Support to invited scholars (/guest lecturers) contributing to the JMD teaching/training/research activities
- Joint degrees encouraged but not mandatory (double/multiple degrees still eligible)
- Centrally managed in Brussels by the Executive Agency

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3- Capacity building

This action is the follow-up to the ALFA programme in Latin America, Tempus for the Balkans and Neighbouring countries and Edulink for the ACP countries. Joint and structural projects are submitted. Projects are for 2 or 3 years. The Joint Projects focus on impact at institutional level while Structural Projects aim for an impact at systems level. Projects will resemble the ALFA projects presented at the Conference (see above).

Any public or private organisation offering higher education degrees or other recognised tertiary education level qualifications can participate in capacity building projects. Also public or private organisation active in the labour market or in the fields of education such as a research institute or a foundation. Non-profit organisation, association, NGO are also welcome to apply.

However, application can be submitted only by a higher education institution, an association or organisation of higher education institutions and, only for structural projects, by a legally recognised national or international rector, teacher or student organisation located in a Programme or a Partner Country. Ministries must be partners in Structural Projects.

- Application is done through an annual “call for proposals” and the action is centrally managed in Brussels by the Executive Agency.
- Applications can be done by either a Partner country or a Programme country (with power of attorney).
- The applicant institution will need to apply for a PIC registration number. The registration is done through the Unique Registration Facility (URF), which is an online web interface that provides access to the registration service. Access to URF is provided through a single-entry point, the Participant Portal.

See URF homepage and related manual:

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/register.html>

<http://erasmus-plus.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Erasmus+-Registration-URF-manual.pdf>

Key components ERASMUS+

Sra. Deirdre Lennan, Policy officer, Cooperacion Internacional: Higher Education in the world; Erasmus+, General Directorate Education and Culture, CE.

Mrs Lennan gave a brief overview of the components of the new Erasmus+, as presented during the previous afternoon.

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She explained that the new programme is structured around 3 new angles: learning mobility, cooperation and policy support (which includes dialogue, promotion, etc.)

She went through all the Erasmus+ actions -Credit mobility, Joint Masters Degree and Capacity building- and reminded some indicative budget figures related to these actions.

The Policy Officer of International Cooperation explained that Consortia are based on bilateral agreements between universities of European states and universities in LA. In this line, she reminded that the application process is new and is done by the European institution, on behalf of both institutions.

She stressed the importance of the inter-agency agreements between the two parties which serves as the basis for the agreement, responsibilities and duties of the two parties, whose forms will be available over the coming weeks in the official website.

Mrs Lennan briefly reviewed the financial support available for mobility, travel funding for students, money for their daily expenses, etc. She also recalled the period of mobility (students, from 3 to 12 months and 5 days to 2 months for the staff) and highlighted that mobility will be in both directions but with a significant focus on LA to EU mobility.

During her speech several participants expressed doubts and concerns. Especially because the demand for mobility is greater than the scholarships offered to LA universities. Mrs Lennan replied explaining that funds are limited and reminded that the EU is also working with other countries, not just LA. She explained that the funds will have to be broken down by universities and therefore agreements will be limited to certain number of students.

For participants who requested more information on the selection criteria, Mrs Lennan explained that all that information would be detailed in the guide, to be released over the summer. This guide will provide clear guidelines on how to manage the process and expectations. She said that the selection would be made on the basis of merit of the proposal. She also reiterated the commitment of national agencies and the EU to be transparent and not to make vain interpretations of the applications.

Regarding the selection made between partners, Lennan explained that the university from LA would have to send a request to the receiving university including the number and type of mobility (which is based on their strategy). And then the European university will respond according to availability and possibility of catering in terms of the study programme. Subsequently both institutions shall define and agree on programmes, which can afterwards be further revised.

On the question of LA university participation in the Joint Master degrees, it is indeed possible for LA countries to be part of the consortium offering the joint master degree programmes insofar as they

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have a programme to offer and the joint degree is developed prior to the application being made. Mrs Lennan reminded attendees that it is possible for a partner country to become associated, which would be a solution for universities that are not ready yet to be complete partners. She added that it is an action based on academic excellence.

On the same subject, Mrs Lennan explained that there are currently 138 Masters programmes that will keep receiving funding for the coming 3 years. She added that if additional co-financing is found EU may continue funding these projects. "A review of the quality of the programme and its ability to attract additional funds will be made. Then maybe we can continue funding it for additional intakes." When participants were concerned that the EU will only be focusing on the existing joint programmes, Mrs Lennan clarified that Erasmus+ will select new joint masters (there is currently a selection round underway – this will be done yearly). 9 new ones will be selected this year and will obtain funds for the preparatory year and 3 intakes meaning that the catalogue keeps growing.

Regarding the administrative difficulties and with the purpose of reducing it, she recommended using the different actions available to cooperate in a firm and structured manner. Thus i.e. To use the mobility focused on the staff who need to go to Europe and afterwards study the configuration of a joint Master, work on a capacity building project on programme design and then develop the joint degree.

On a question related to the credit mobility and if they will have defined areas, Mrs Lennan said that all disciplines will be covered with Erasmus+ and the choice of areas will very much depend on the LA universities' strategic needs.

For doubts about the capacity building action, the European Commission policy officer explained that the objectives are very similar to ALFA's and it includes joint and structured projects. She recommended to partner countries to get registered as soon as possible if they wish to be applicants (see 26 June report).

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WORKSHOP 3

The third workshop was made up of 6 separate thematic groups focused on sharing views on lessons learnt with ALFA III and Erasmus Mundus and future challenges to be faced together with the new programme, Erasmus+. These were the areas addressed:

- ❖ The process of internationalization
- ❖ Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes
- ❖ Mobility of students and staff
- ❖ Employability and higher education
- ❖ Sustainability
- ❖ Participation of HEIs from remote-disadvantaged areas and students from vulnerable groups and/or economic and social disadvantage

3.1 Thematic Session **The process of internationalization**

Main conclusions

- It is necessary because it changes the academic and institutional reality.
- It involves openness to the world by universities and positioned on it.
- Facilitates sharing of experiences and strengthens alumnus, faculty and institutions
- Generates international relations offices or professionalizes the existing
- Universities gain internal credibility
- Allow being closer to the most vulnerable populations
- Internationalisation arrives to smaller or remote universities
- Conferences are held
- The acquired knowledge is applied to curriculum
- Many persons are trained
- Associations are created by thematic areas (based on the results of the project).
- Encourages the rapprochement between public and private universities
- The expectations with Erasmus+ are: Open Forums in the regions, More academic material; The creation of joint masters; Consolidate academic networks; Give more training to be more competitive;
- They warn of the danger of possible exclusion of the smaller universities or those located in remote locations.

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3.2 Thematic Session Erasmus Mundus joint programmes

Main conclusions

- There are different levels of integration for joint programmes
- It is necessary to consolidate instances of collaboration in programmes that do not necessarily have to be PhDs or masters
- Warn that the Erasmus+ can drive to homogeneity of the programmes
- Challenge: to consolidate the type of evaluation, the administrative management, the credit system.
- They wonder if universities plan has the inclusion of joint programmes and if this is part of the internationalization process of universities.
- Increase the familiarity with the internal procedures of the joint programmes and the impacts (which generate for students and institutions).

3.3 Thematic Session Mobility of Students and Staff

Main conclusions

- Main concern is to know how to send students that do not speak the language of the member state
- Credits: they wonder how it will be recognized when students are back to their universities
- Doubts about the technical aspects of the application (Number of requests to the national agency; several universities joined in a consortium can submit only one application? What happens to the places that have not been used?)
- They think going from Erasmus Mundus to Erasmus+ is a paradigm shift. Before it was possible to share information between partners and now everyone is on his own.
- It's a challenge how to give importance to the inter-institutional relationship when Erasmus+ tends more toward individual mobility rather than to inter-relationship

3.4 Thematic Session Employability and Higher Education

Main conclusions

- Growing concern on the issue of employability. It is necessary to give more importance to improve the impact of universities so that they can exercise their social role
- Necessary to give more attention to emerging sectors and help build their future
- Need to identify environmental conditions and analyse the output profiles and the perception of teachers
- Need for continuous adaptation, making a continuing effort to define a professional profile and that the curricula are tailored to the needs of society and the market
- Necessary to build a development model adapted to the environment of each one
- Need to encourage entrepreneurship
- Many uncoordinated and not consensual actions are agreed, which is inefficient. Thus, Institutionalization and systematization is required throughout the learning process

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- Need to coordinate local, national and international strategies to enhance the employability and entrepreneurship
- University is a strategic actor and it is a must to create common spaces between the various actors involved
- Need to link education with universities and other educational institutions with other training offers for professional insertion
- Improve sustainable access to employment (important here the SMEs sustainability).

3.5 Thematic Session Sustainability

Main conclusions

- They suggest that all receiving counterparts anticipate which activities are replicable when external funding ends;
- Need to promote management capacity in the institutions involved allowing the authorities to be involved to ensure institutionalization, political will and the possibility of additional financial support.
- In the field of the dissemination it is important to consider the lessons learnt. That way, initiatives can be launched in order to optimize the use of resources to tangible achievements in education, research and social development in general.
- In terms of impact, there is a must to increase the participation of stakeholders at different levels of action - institutional, local, regional, national) since it would have incidence throughout the process cycle, seeking divulgation, transfer of results, etc.

3.6 Thematic Session Participation of HEI's from remote-disadvantaged areas and students from vulnerable groups and/or social disadvantage

Main conclusions

- In LA there is no difference between vulnerable population and disadvantaged population. The issue of indigenous poverty and displacement, refugees prevails.
- Immigration from LA countries or Caribbean can not access to Erasmus programmes because they don't have the nationality
- The poor access of vulnerable populations to high school limits a meaningful participation to academic mobility projects.
- They believe that the tools that facilitate access to HEIs are: the creation of pre-university centres with limited scholarship programmes; The creation of decentralized offices; Modify didactic modalities and didactic approach to some higher education programmes carried out in areas of disadvantage.
- It is considered that the academic content for the entire university would have to assume a transversal approach to inclusion.