Self-Evaluation Report

Version 09-07-2024

Name of the programme

Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics

MIPMAL

Name of the coordinating institution

University of Cadiz

We must trust the Sea to guide us to a safe harbour

Homer, *The Odyssey*

SEA-EU Consortium for the Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics
MIPMAL

University of Cadiz

(Spain)

University of Split

(Croatia)

University of Malta

(Malta)

University of Gdansk

(Poland)

University of Algarve

(Portugal)

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Glossary (see Annex 14)

Consortium. The 9 partner universities of the SEA-EU Alliance:

SEA-EU: The European University of the Seas
1. UCA: University of Cádiz, Spain (Coordination)
2. UBO: University of Western Brittany, France
3. CAU: Christian-Albrechts University of Kiel, Germany
4. UG: University of Gdańsk, Poland
5. UNIST: University of Split, Croatia
6. UM: University of Malta, Malta
7. UPN: University of Naples Parthenope, Italy
8. UAlg: University of Algarve, Portugal
9. NORD: Nord University, Norway

Abbreviations:

EHEA: European Higher Education Area
EQAR: European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
ERA: European Research Area
HEIs: Higher Education Institutions
LOs: Learning Outcomes
MIPMAL: Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics
PLOs: Programme Learning Outcomes
QA: Quality Assurance
QF-EHEA: Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area
SER: Self Evaluation Report

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Introduction

The Future of Higher Education in Europe: Trends and Perspectives

Higher education in Europe boasts a rich diversity of institutions, programmes and traditions, unified by a shared commitment to excellence, innovation and accessibility. The European Higher Education Area (EHEA), established through initiatives such as the Bologna Process, aims to create more comparable, compatible and coherent higher education systems across Europe. This collaborative framework has facilitated student and staff mobility, mutual recognition of qualifications and the promotion of European values in education.

Despite these achievements, Europe's higher education landscape faces a number of new and changing challenges. Demographic changes and global competition are testing Europe's position as a major centre of knowledge creation. Environmental concerns such as global warming and sustainability require a rethinking of educational priorities and practices. The rapid pace of technological development requires continuous adaptation of curricula and teaching methods to equip students with relevant skills. In addition, the growing importance of digital technologies demands significant investment in infrastructure and digital literacy. These challenges are compounded by the need to maintain inclusiveness and accessibility in education, ensuring that all segments of society can benefit from higher education[1].

To navigate these complexities, the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) called for the establishment of an 'agenda for higher education transformation, with a focus on inclusion, innovation, connectivity, digital and green readiness and international competitiveness, as well as fundamental academic values and high ethical principles, as well as employment and employability'.

In this context, the Council conclusions on the New European Research Area identified ***'institutional transformations, research careers, science education, training, international cooperation and knowledge circulation as possible fields of a more determined cooperation'*** *between the European Research*

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[1] Council conclusions on a European strategy empowering higher education institutions for the future of Europe (2022)

Area, the European Higher Education Area and the higher education dimension of the European Education Area. The Council also took note of 'the Commission proposal to develop a roadmap of actions for creating synergies between higher education and research' and expressed support for the further development of the '"European University Alliances" as a flagship example for modern and inclusive higher education institutions of the future in Europe'.

Transnational Collaboration and Research Development in Europe. The "European Universities" initiative

Transnational cooperation and research development in Europe are epitomised by the 'European Universities' initiative, which represents a concerted effort to promote innovation, cooperation and excellence in higher education and research. Through this initiative, consortia of universities across Europe form strategic alliances aimed at fostering cross-border cooperation, mobility and the pooling of resources and knowledge. These partnerships go beyond traditional borders to facilitate joint research projects, curriculum development and student and staff exchanges. By leveraging their combined strengths and resources, European universities aim to address common challenges, solve pressing societal problems and enhance their global competitiveness. The European Universities Initiative embodies the vision of a unified European Higher Education Area, characterised by openness, diversity and mutual respect, while acting as a catalyst for innovation and progress in research and education on a continental scale.

Embarking on a transformative educational journey, the European Universities Initiative targets key elements that are shaping the evolution of higher education. First, *Internationalisation* is at the forefront, with European universities becoming magnets for students and faculty from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering a dynamic global learning environment. Second, there's a notable emphasis on *Innovation and Research*, which is driving higher education towards fostering centres of excellence in innovation and research. This focus on innovation is a major contributor to advances in science, technology and scholarship, moving Europe forward in the global knowledge landscape.

However, as higher education ventures into this new frontier, it encounters a spectrum of challenges. First, the perennial issues of ***funding and accessibility*** persist, with equitable access to higher education hampered by financial constraints and inherent socio-economic disparities. Additionally, institutions are grappling with the intricate task of ***integrating technology*** into their educational frameworks, navigating the complexities of adopting new teaching methodologies and digital learning environments. Furthermore, there's a pressing need to bolster ***global competitiveness*** by raising quality standards, promoting academic rigour, and gaining international recognition for educational endeavours. Central to this pursuit of competitiveness is the ability to adapt and cultivate an environment conducive to innovation, which entails attracting top-tier talent and fostering intellectual growth through pioneering practices. By addressing these facets comprehensively, the Alliance seeks to fortify the collective strength and influence of European higher education on the global stage.

The University of the Seas. *What is SEA-EU[2]?*

The European University of the Seas - SEA-EU[3] is one of the 17 alliances selected in the European Universities programme in its first call for 2019. Initially configured by six founding Universities: University of Cadiz (UCA, Spain), University of Western Brittany (UBO, Brest, France), University of Kiel (CAU, Germany), University of Gdańsk (UG, Poland), University of Split (UNIST, Croatia) and University of Malta (UM, Malta), it will become a consortium of 9 European universities in January 2022 with the integration of 3 new universities: Parthenope University of Naples (UPN, Italy), the University of Algarve (UAlg, Portugal) and Nord University (NORD, Norway).
SEA-EU, in its second phase (SEA-EU 2.0), is a geographically-balanced and enlarged university alliance with a coastal and marine-maritime character as its hallmark. The distributed inter-partner open governance will consolidate transformative structures and dynamics that reinforce complementarities, multiculturalism and multilingualism in its nine nodes. Through proven internal and external evolving dynamics, SEA-EU 2.0 channels its own development while unfolding into a decisive co-transformative EHEA and ERA actor, intensifying the effect of high quality European HE missions.

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[2] https://sea-eu.org/

[3] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HWoNP138Ps
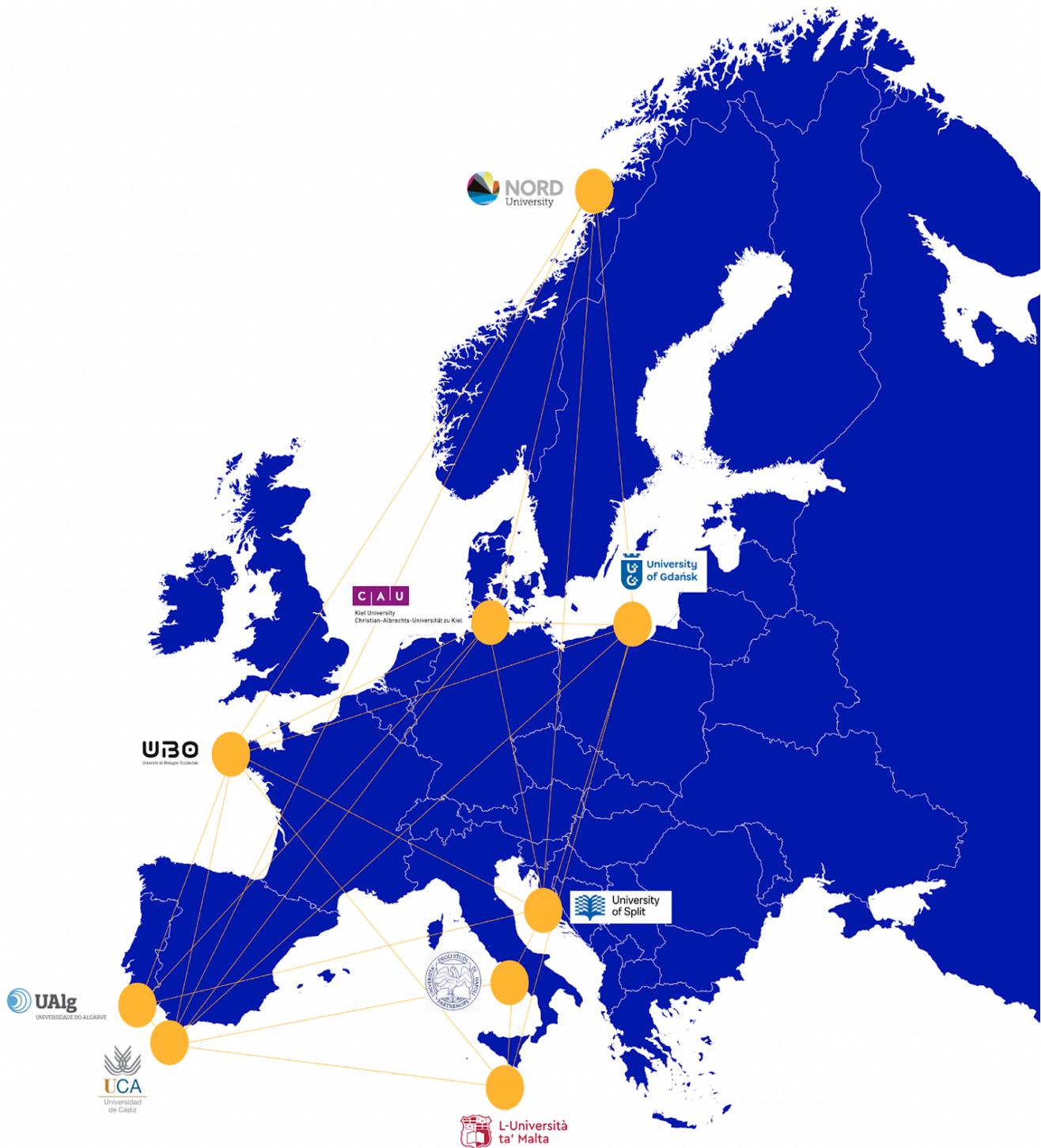
Figure 1. *The SEA-EU Inter-Campus*

Table 1. MIPMAL Universities. Figures and facts (academic year 2023-2024)

	UCA	UG	UNIST	UAlg	UM
Founded	1979	1970	1974	1979	1592
Scope[4]	COMP	COMP	COMP	COMP	COMP
City Country	Cadiz Spain	Gdansk Poland	Split Croatia	Faro Portugal	Malta Malta
City in HE Cities Mission					Gozo
Language	Spanish	Polish	Croatian	Portuguese	English
Students	21,266	20,219	18,675	10,091	11,500
Technical & Admin. Staff	875	1,514	671	373	1,000+
Academic Staff faculty	2,137	1,801	1,257	465	2,000+
Faculties & Schools	17 Faculties 2 Affiliated centres	11 faculties	11 faculties 1 Academy of Arts 4 University Departments	4 faculties, 4 polytechnic schools	14 Faculties 16 Institutes 3 Schools 1 Junior College
Research groups	197	126	49	N/6	13
Sci. & tech based companies & partnerships	4 EBTs 13 External Business Chairs 21 Spin-off	170 business and government partnerships	40 Horizon 13 COSTS 19 European Development 16 Interreg 5 Ministry of Science & Education 2 Ministry of Agriculture	218 Start Ups 61 Partnership Agreements	4 spin out 264 collaboration agreements
Patents and trademarks	237	Patents 177 Trademarks 25	N/A	128 Patents, 111 Trademarks, 808 Companies	30 patents 14 designs
Research centres	9	6	3	9	13

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[4] COMP (Comprehensive), TECH (Technical), UAS (University of Applied Sciences)

The nine universities involved in SEA-EU are engaged in the co-creation and implementation of four joint programmes to be launched as pilot projects: (1) a bachelor degree in "*Sustainable Blue Economy*"; (2) a master degree in "*Sustainable Management of Organisations*"; (3) a master degree in "*Port Management and Logistics*"; and, (4) a doctorate programme in "*Marine and Maritime Sciences and Technologies*". This initiative has been developed jointly, and in conjunction with our associated partners, key public research agencies, local and regional administrations including Municipalities or Port Authorities, NGOs and companies dedicated to the study, knowledge and economic activity related to the sea that flanks our territories. The nine partner universities have the support of their national and/or regional education authorities for their participation in the SEA-EU Alliance.

Table 2. SEA-EU Associated Partners

		SEA-EU Associated Partners
Common to all thematic challenges	External partners	2
	Regional Governments	9
	City Halls	14
	NGOs & Citizen Associations	2
	Student Associations	6
	Foundations	5
	Research Centers/Scientific Institutes	18
	Clusters	8
Companies & public bod-ies specific to thematic challenges/Stakeholders	Business Confederations & Think tanks	21
	Ports	12

The SEA-EU academic & research goals.

Navigating towards a modern, co-transformative inter-campus life; people-driven, planet-friendly, knowledge-based progress for all.

The vision of the European University of the Seas (SEA-EU) is to establish a distinctly international, pluri-ethnic, multilingual and interdisciplinary European University. SEA-EU aims to strengthen the links between teaching, research, innovation and knowledge transfer. It will encourage excellence in research and teaching to gain more knowledge and a better understanding and management of the marine environment. It will assist in building the human resources and skills necessary to match the needs of the evolving marine and maritime sectors, now and in the foreseeable future. SEA-EU will provide and improve tools and techniques to measure and anticipate ocean-based and driven impacts, build frameworks for more effective ocean governance as well as empower societies and communities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for the oceans.

After the successful pilot experience of the SEA-EU 1.0 project, three specific objectives are key on the SEA-EU alliance in this second phase is:

Specific Objective #1: Develop and implement **an integrated long-term joint strategy** that is responsive to the digital and green transition and key socio-economic challenges, while remaining committed to excellence.

Specific Objective #2: Establish **a European higher education inter-university 'campus'**. This objective aims to create a collaborative educational and research environment between partner universities, with the objective of fostering student mobility, academic collaboration and networking across Europe.

Specific Objective #3: Build European knowledge-creating teams ("**challenge-based approach**"). This objective involves fostering the formation of multidisciplinary teams that address specific challenges through innovative and collaborative approaches, in order to promote the generation of knowledge and effective solutions to complex problems in Europe.
The SEA-EU project seeks to promote academic excellence and inter-university collaboration in Europe, with a focus on digitalisation,

sustainability and solving socio-economic challenges through collaborative knowledge creation.
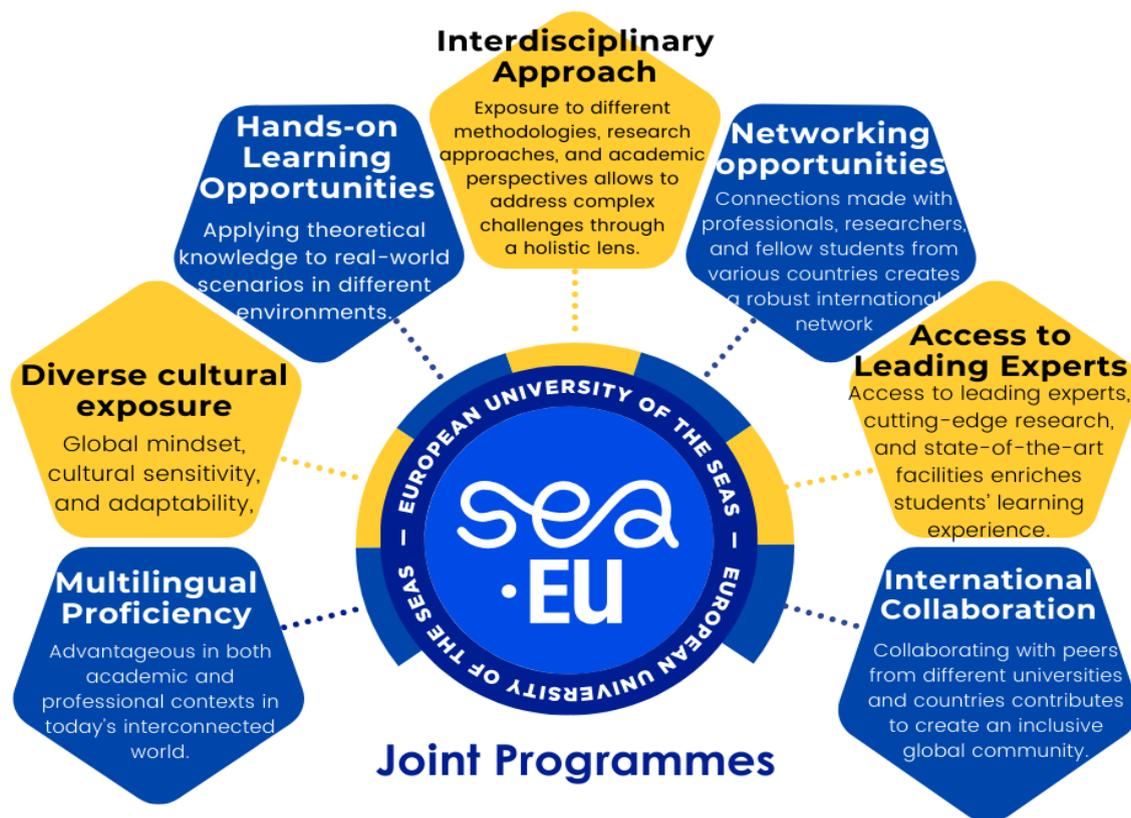
Figure 2. SEA-EU Joint Programmes's academic & research goals.

The figure highlights the numerous benefits of the joint programs offered by the European University of the Seas (SEA-EU). This visual diagram emphasises seven key aspects that make these programmes unique and valuable for students. SEA-EU's joint programmes provide an interdisciplinary approach, networking opportunities, access to leading experts, international collaboration, multilingual proficiency, diverse cultural exposure, and hands-on learning experiences. Each of these elements contributes to a comprehensive and global education, preparing students to tackle complex challenges in an increasingly interconnected world.

The Seas of SEA-EU

In the original SEA-EU 1.0 (2019-2022) the University of the Seas presented itself as a geographically balanced alliance, with two universities in Western Europe (CAU and UBO), two in the South (UCA and UM) and two in Central

and Eastern Europe (UG and UNIST). The alliance was also balanced in terms of ocean basins, an important descriptor in our alliance given the coastal nature of our universities, with two universities in the Baltic (UG and CAU), two in the Atlantic (UBO and UCA) and two in the Mediterranean (UM and UNIST). As defined in the call, "the realisation of the voluntary expansion strategy should strive to ensure a balanced geographical coverage of regions in Europe". In the inclusion of 3 new universities joining the alliance in SEA-EU 2.0 (2023-2026), the geographical balance has again been considered as a relevant criterion.

SEA-EU now incorporates a Northern European University (Nord University, in Bodo, Norway), thus solving a gap we had in our first period where a partner from this geographical area was lacking. The other partners come from Central-East Europe (University of Gdansk [Poland] and Split Croatia]), 4 from the South (University of Cadiz [Spain], Malta, Algarve [Portugal], Naples [Italy]) and finally 2 from the West (University of Bretagne Occidentale [France] and Kiel [Germany]). From the point of view of ocean basins, the distribution is as follows: we have representation in the Baltic basin (University of Gdansk, University of Kiel), in the Arctic (Nord University), Atlantic basin (Nord University, University of Western Brittany, University of Algarve and University of Cadiz) and finally in the Mediterranean basin (University of Split, University of Malta, Parthenope University of Naples). This is a distribution that fits well with the size of the different basins.

Finally, we can establish a distribution in three sectors with three representatives each: (1) the Northern Seas (including the Baltic, North Atlantic and Arctic) in which there would be 3 representatives (NORD, CAU and UG), (2) the mid-latitude Atlantic (UBO, UAlg, UCA); and (3) the Mediterranean (UM, UPN, UNIST).

The Relevance of Ports in the SEA-EU Alliance

Ports play a crucial role in the SEA-EU Alliance, acting as essential connectivity hubs that bridge institutions and regions physically and culturally. Collaboration with SEA-EU ports enhances education and research through maritime insights, leveraging the strategic locations of member universities. This partnership benefits both academia and broader coastal regions by fostering innovation and sustainable solutions. Beyond their economic

importance in trade, ports are also becoming centres for innovation and sustainability, driving research in maritime engineering, logistics, and sustainable development. Overall, ports are key to the Alliance's success, promoting cultural exchanges and supporting the sustainable growth of coastal communities.

The Ports Council

The creation of a Ports Council within the SEA-EU Alliance marks a significant advancement. Composed of representatives from ports in the member universities' cities, this council brings essential knowledge, resources, and opportunities that drive trade, economic growth, and offer practical insights to students. It facilitates internships, research collaborations, and job placements, thereby giving students a competitive edge. The Ports Council also promotes sustainability and marine conservation, aligning with the alliance's environmental goals, and drives technological advancements to keep the alliance at the forefront of innovation. Additionally, it integrates cultural and historical heritage into programs, enhancing students' understanding of global trade, influences tourism and hospitality education, and fosters community development through joint initiatives with local councils.

The council's involvement enhances interdisciplinary collaboration and practical learning experiences, attracts investment and funding for research, and boosts the alliance's resources and reputation. Overall, the Ports Council is a cornerstone of the SEA-EU Alliance, contributing significantly to economic development, sustainability, technological innovation, cultural heritage, community engagement, and strategic partnerships, thereby enriching the alliance's academic and societal impact.

Currently, the SEA-EU initiative includes twelve ports from nine different countries: Cadiz Bay Port Authority and Algeciras Bay Port Authority from Spain, Brest Port Authority from France, Seehafen Kiel GmbH from Germany, Port of Gdynia Authority from Poland, Port of Split and DIV Group from Croatia, Transport Malta from Malta, Autorità di Sistema Portuale del Mar Tirreno Centrale/Representative of the Salerno Harbour from Italy,

DOCAPESCA Portos e Lotas, SA from Portugal, and Bodo Havn and Trondheim Havn from Norway[5].

The Ports Council consists of one high-level representative from each port, the SEA-EU Vice-Rector for Stakeholders, the SEA-EU General Coordinator, and the SEA-EU Technical Manager, who acts as Secretary without a vote, or a delegated Local Manager. The Council's responsibilities include nominating representatives for other SEA-EU bodies, contributing to tasks related to ports and logistics, disseminating SEA-EU within port communities, presenting proposals for the Executive Committee and Governing Board, and exchanging best practices to foster collaborative opportunities, thereby enhancing the economic prosperity of the regions involved. The Council meets annually in a hybrid format, with an additional kickoff meeting at the start of SEA-EU 2.0, and also conducts virtual meetings each year.

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[5] For information on each port, visit https://sea-eu.org/sea-eu-ports/
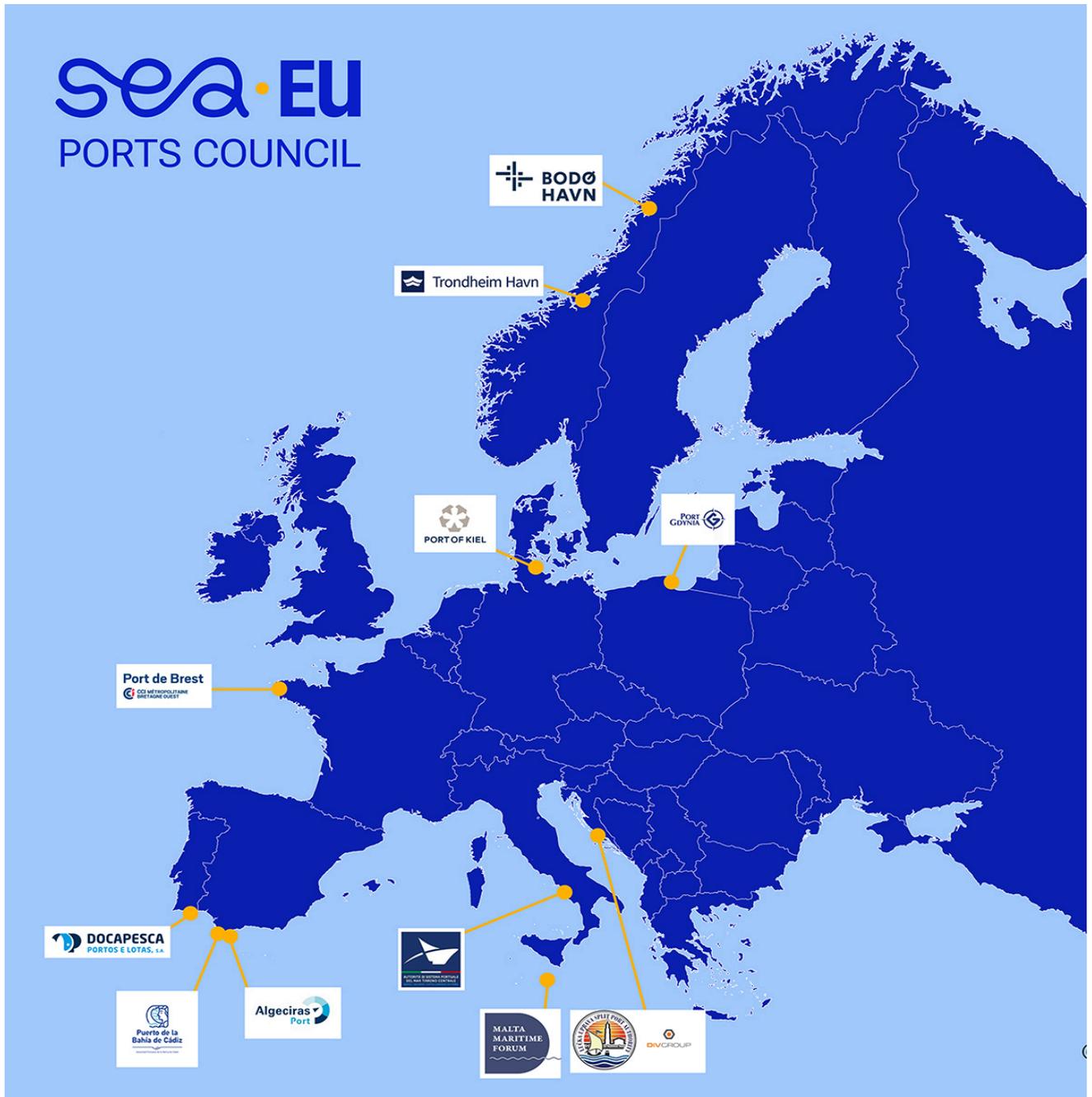
Figure 3. SEA-EU Port council

Why a Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics? Justification

Nearly 90% of all trade is still seaborne, and the tourism industry continues to expand its reach into coastal and maritime travel and hospitality, despite environmental concerns. Import trade is a brisk business, but poses a challenge to local manufacturing. Ship repair and shipbuilding keep recreational, commercial and military fleets operational. Containerisation is the safest and most tangible form of globalisation; and 'box logistics' is moving from the sea to organising cargo handling on land. In fact, a wide range of activities are taking place in these areas, which now need to be reconciled with initiatives to meet the global challenge of a changing climate.

Ports are vital to today's world, requiring a strong base of knowledge, skills, and experience from those involved professionally and socially. Optimal trade management is key to enhancing global competitiveness, with maritime transport and logistics being crucial facilitators of the supply chain and economic activity. New demands from customers necessitate the development of modern, sustainable transport systems. A truly multimodal transport system is essential to meet the growing needs of various logistics chains efficiently and sustainably.

MIPMAL Programme Scope and Goal

The MIPMAL programme addresses the labour market demand for specialised professionals with an official international university degree offered by five European universities: Cadiz, Gdansk, Malta, Split, and Algarve. The programme trains professionals with the following characteristics:

- Skills in port management and maritime port operations.
- Ability to integrate logistics processes in digital environments.
- Competence in integrating logistics activities with procurement, production, distribution, transport, storage, sales, and after-sales services.
- Vision for sustainability and energy transition in ports.

The degree's structure has been designed with the unique involvement of companies to create a collaborative learning and skill development

environment between academia and business. This integration ensures a coordinated and planned approach to the teaching-learning process. To achieve this objective, face-to-face meetings have been held between the lecturers coordinating the Master's degree at each university and the stakeholders and port authorities of the ports where our universities are located: Algeciras Bay (Cadiz), Gdansk, Malta, Split, and DOCAPESCA (Ports and Auctions) in the Algarve.

Despite some infrastructural shortcomings, the maritime port sector in these regions holds strategic importance in activity volume and technological innovation. Ports serve as hubs for port communities, necessitating investment in human capital to foster Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) development, which generates wealth and employment.

The Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics offers an opportunity for economic development and European regional integration. It meets the need for qualified personnel in the maritime port sector, covering subjects like international transport, port management, customs operations, maritime law, logistics, and sustainability.

Mission

Ports, and port cities are the lifeblood of many island and coastal regions. The 'land-sea' interface is the source of their economic well-being, the main platform for the unfolding of history, and a gateway for all sorts of 'invasions', mobilities, and exchanges - of people, ideas, trade, language, religion, and culture. Ports and port cities are also the pivots for a new wave of interest and investment in things marine and maritime, often subsumed under the title of 'the blue economy'.

This master's degree offers an interdisciplinary focus on the details of what makes a 21st-century port: its geography and history, its economics and governance, its legal coda, and its role in logistics and supply chain management.

Vision

The programme aims to nurture a cadre of port service professionals who better understand how ports work, emphasising sustainable port management practices, marine conservation efforts and advancements in green technologies. To expose a new generation of undergraduates to the

opportunities involved in port-related careers; To develop a stronger and wider expertise in port related knowledge and skills that are so useful to island and coastal communities and societies,

Overall, the Master in Port Management and Logistics is designed to develop the next generation of leaders in the maritime industry, equipped with the expertise, resources, and opportunities to drive sustainable development, technological advancement, and economic growth in port management and logistics.

Academic interest in the programme.
MIPMAL provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in managing port operations, optimising logistics processes and ensuring the efficient and sustainable movement of goods through maritime transport networks.
Overall, this European Master's degree offers students the opportunity to explore a wide range of academic interests related to port operations, logistics management, maritime economics, policy development, risk mitigation, sustainability, technology adoption and legal aspects of port management. This collaborative, interdisciplinary approach equips graduates with the knowledge and skills to address the complex challenges facing the maritime industry and to contribute to the sustainable growth and development of ports and logistics networks.

Some relevant aspects to highlight:

Interdisciplinary character - In this Master's programme, the port becomes the nexus and focus of integrated knowledge from several disciplines, such as logistics, cargo handling, economics, maritime sociology, international and environmental law, sustainability, organisational studies and governance.

Innovative structure - A large team of academics from five universities in different countries and stakeholder experts has been assembled to define the learning objectives of the Masters. They have provided the academic and practical core of the programme, where internship opportunities will be at the heart of the programme. Mobility is integrated into the programme as part of the curriculum.

Professional interest of the Master Programme. Demand from international markets.

As stated in the justification of the objectives of this Master's degree, in today's globalised world, the competitiveness of economies depends on the optimal management of commercial exchanges. Consequently, transport, especially maritime transport, and logistics are key factors in national and international economic activity.

It can be pointed out that there are international and national reports on employability which indicate that the educational profile to which this degree corresponds represents an excellent professional opportunity in the coming years. Thus, and in relation to these reports, the following can be listed:

.- The future of work in Europe[6] (McKinsey & Co, 2020). This study is based on ad hoc surveys. Most of the analysis has been carried out before the pandemic, but it has also taken into account some of the consequences of COVID-19.

.- Future Work Skills 2020[7] (Institute for the Future, University of Phoenix Research Institute).

.- Labour Market Roadmap[8] (HAYS, 2020).

.- Jobs of Tomorrow[9] (World Economic Forum, 2020). This report draws on historical data from LinkedIn and Burning Glass Technologies to identify trends in online job supply and recruitment.

.- What is Trending in Jobs and Skills[10] (Burning Glass Technologies, 2020).

In relation to these reports, the analysis of all these studies shows that there is a dependence of companies on personnel profiles that know how to handle the current technology in the logistics chain, especially in the port phase.

Another important aspect to highlight is the differentiation of this joint degree with respect to other postgraduate courses on similar subjects but in national languages. In this sense, it should be pointed out that the objectives of this Master's degree respond to a labour market demand for a very specific

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[6] https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-in-europe

[7] https://www.iftf.org/projects/future-work-skills-2020/

[8] https://www.haysplc.com/

[9] https://es.weforum.org/publications/jobs-of-tomorrow-mapping-opportunity-in-the-new-economy/

[10] https://www.bcg.com/publications/2019/what-is-trending-jobs-skills

specialisation profile, focused on the international market. Therefore, the aim was to design a Master's degree in English that would lead to a profile with a high projection in the international market of the maritime, port and logistics sector. In short, a programme focused on the training of international professionals with the following characteristics:

- Professionals who incorporate competencies in simulation and transport modelling in the logistics chain as a whole, focusing on the port phase.
- Professionals with training to integrate logistics processes in digital environments.
- Professionals with the ability to interrelate logistics activities in the port phase, globally integrating legal, management, and economic analysis tools.
- Professional with a vision on sustainability and energy transition.

The structure of the degree has been designed with a unique participation of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors of all the ports located within the scope of the participating universities: Cadiz and the Bay of Algeciras, Gdansk, Malta, Split, and Algarve, so that a shared learning and competence development environment is established between academia and industry. It is about the integration in the teaching-learning process of both sets of actors in a coordinated and planned way.

Contribution of the Master Programme to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)[11].

This goal focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. A direct link between MIPMAL and SDG 4 is the increasing number of people with relevant qualifications in the international labour market through the cooperation of professors within the SEA-EU Alliance.

The programme prepares students for careers in the maritime industry, offering opportunities for employment and economic growth. By training skilled professionals in port management, logistics, and related fields, and by reducing the proportion of young people who are neither in employment nor in education.

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[11] https://sdgs.un.org/goals
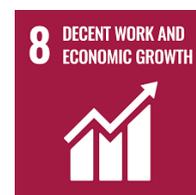
The programme equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to improve port infrastructure, enhance logistics networks, and foster innovation in port management practices. By training professionals in areas such as technology adoption, process optimization, and sustainable infrastructure development, the programme contributes to advancing SDG 9.

Sustainable development can be achieved with good management of urban space. Ports are key components of urban ecosystems, and their sustainable management is essential for creating resilient and inclusive cities. The programme emphasises sustainable port development, environmental stewardship, and community engagement, aligning with the objectives of SDG 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The oceans play a crucial role in regulating the Earth's climate, and sustainable blue economy practices can help mitigate the impacts of climate change. For example, marine renewable energy technologies can contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while coastal ecosystem restoration projects can enhance climate resilience.

Ports and maritime activities can have adverse effects on marine ecosystems and biodiversity. The programme emphasises the importance of marine conservation, pollution prevention, and sustainable fisheries management, aligning with the objectives of SDG 14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

Collaboration between academia, industry, government, and civil society is crucial for achieving sustainable development objectives. The programme fosters partnerships and knowledge exchange among stakeholders in the port and logistics sectors, promoting cross-sectoral cooperation and collective action to address shared challenges.

Basic information

Name of the programme: **Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics, MIPMAL**

EQF level: **7**
QF-EHEA level: 2nd cycle

Degree awarded: **Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics**

Number of ECTS points: **120**
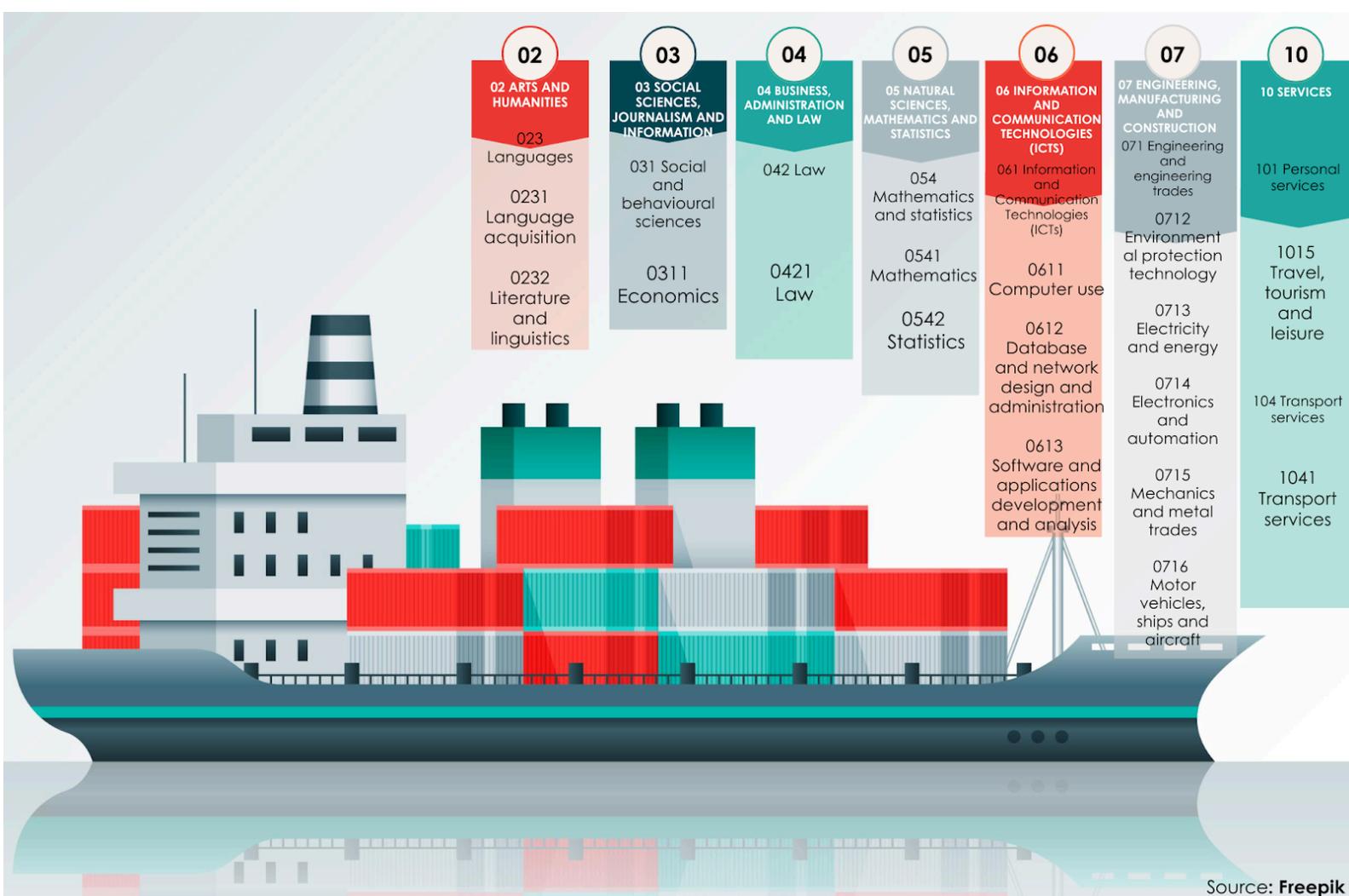
Figure 4. *ISCED fields of study*[12]

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[12] https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/isced-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-en.pdf

1. Eligibility

1.1. Status

The five consortium partners are all members of the SEA-EU European University Alliance and are recognised higher education institutions in their respective countries (see Annex 1). Each of them operates within a national legal framework that allows them to participate in joint programmes (see Annex 3). Spain, Portugal, Poland and Croatia are able to apply the European Approach to Quality Assurance in Joint Programmes. Meanwhile, Malta is a self-accrediting institution.

The accreditation process for this joint master's degree has involved several key steps to ensure that the programme will meet quality standards recognized by educational authorities in several European countries.

Table 3. Status of the external quality assurance systems, as well as national frameworks for joint programmes, in SEA-EU countries and Universities:

University/Country	Evaluation Agency registered in EQAR		European Approach for accreditation of joint programmes allowed (Yes/No)	Awarding Joint Degree
University of Cádiz/Spain	ACCUA[13]	Yes	Yes	Yes
University of Gdansk/Poland	Self-accrediting[14]	Yes	Yes	No
Faculty of Maritime Studies University of Split/Croatia	AZVO[15]	Yes	Yes	No
University of Algarve/Portugal	A3ES[16]	Yes	Yes	No
University of Malta/Malta	MFHEA[17] (self-accrediting)		No	No

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[13] ACCUA: Agencia para la Calidad Científica y Universitaria de Andalucía (https://ws262.juntadeandalucia.es/accua/)

[14] Self-accrediting institution. PKA: Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna (https://pka.edu.pl/)

[15] AZVO - Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje (https://www.azvo.hr/)

[16] Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior (https://www.a3es.pt/)

[17] Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (https://mfhea.mt/)

1.2. Joint design and delivery

In MIPMAL, which involves five of the nine European universities that make up the SEA-EU Alliance, each partner plays a crucial role in the co-creation, co-design and co-delivery process. The implementation of the programme is guaranteed by the cooperation agreement, which has been developed taking into account the specific role of each of the participating universities in the implementation of the joint programme (see Annex 17 for more detailed information on the process).

Table 4. Distribution of roles among Partner universities, students, and associated partners

Partners Universities	Roles	
	Co-Creation Phase	*Implementation Phase*
UCA (Coordinating Institution)	Programme Design Governance Admission, Selection, Enrolment Recognition Teaching & Training Mobility Assessment Internships Master Dissertation's supervision Internal Quality Assurance	General Coordination Administration & Financial Management Accreditation (EA - ACCUA) Awarding the joint degree and joint DS
UCA, UG, UALG, UNIST, UM (Full Partners)		Admission, Selection, Enrolment Recognition Teaching & Training Mobility Assessment Internships Master Dissertation's supervision Student's support Resources Promotion & Dissemination Internal Quality Assurance
Ports Council/ Port Authorities	Advising/Consultation	Programme Design Internships Master Dissertation's supervision Internal Quality Assurance (when appropriate)
Students	Advising/Consultation	Programme Design Student Support/Buddy System Governance Internal Quality Assurance

Joint design of MIPMAL. **Co-Creation Phase**

The development of MIPMAL is not simply a merging of existing curricula; it is a journey of co-creation, a collaborative process in which all participating universities have worked together to design, develop and implement a cohesive and dynamic educational framework in line with the recommendations made by the Port Authorities during the visits held during the design process. This process transcends traditional academic boundaries, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, cultural exchange and mutual learning. MIPMAL has unfolded in several interrelated stages (see figure roadmap below). It has been jointly designed by the five SEA-EU partner universities, with the advice and consultation of the port authorities and students, under the coordination of the University of Cadiz.

A general roadmap has been established that demonstrates the process from the co-creation of the programme to its finalisation with the submission of the self-evaluation report to the accreditation agency and the implementation of the Master's programme
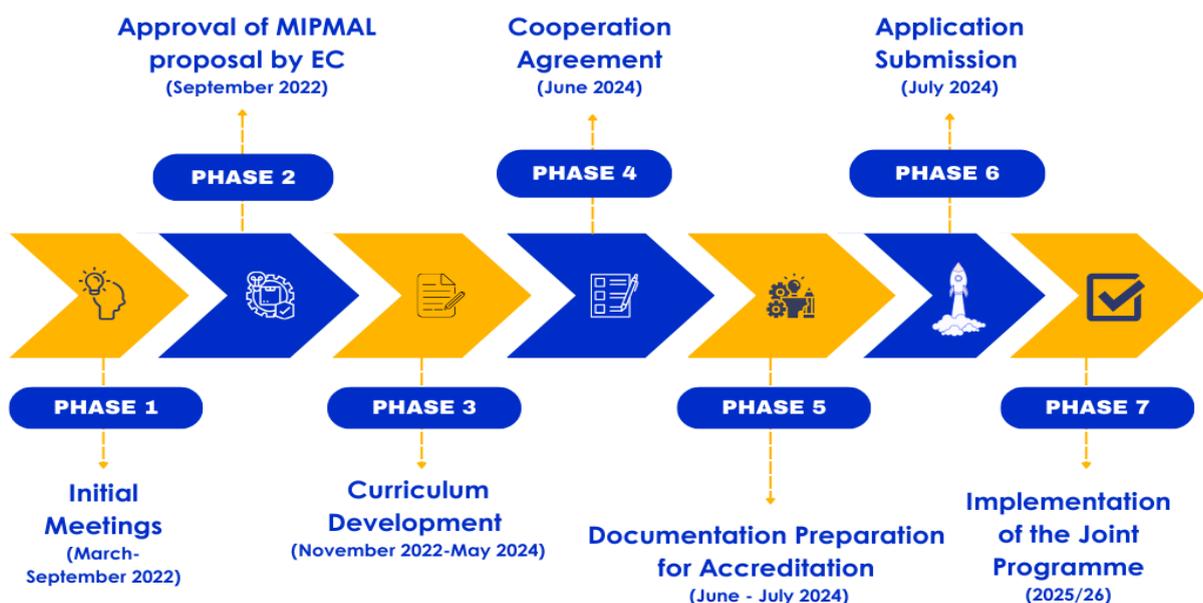

Figure 5. *General Roadmap for the co-design and implementation of the Joint Master's Programme*

Joint delivery of **MIPMAL. Implementation Phase**

The joint governance structure created for the proper management of MIPMAL within the European SEA-EU alliance refers to the organisational framework established to oversee and coordinate the implementation and operation of the joint degree programme. This structure is designed to ensure that all universities involved in the Consortium, students and other relevant stakeholders, can participate effectively and that the set objectives and quality standards are met.

Table 5. List of the institutions delivering the programme:

Name of the institution	Higher Education institution (Yes/No)	Degree awarding institution (Yes/No)	Role in the consortium (i.e. coordinator, etc.)
University of Cadiz	Yes	Yes	Coordinator
University of Gdańsk[18]	Yes	No	Partner
University of Split/ Faculty of Maritime Studies	Yes	No	Partner
University of Algarve	Yes	No	Partner
University of Malta[19]	Yes	No	Partner

Several key reasons underline the importance of the Governance Bodies such as a) strategic alignment, ensuring that the joint master's programme aligns with the overarching goals, values, and priorities of the participating universities and the alliance as a whole; b) coordination and collaboration, with five universities involved, effective coordination and collaboration are essential for the smooth functioning of the programme. The governance team will facilitate communication and collaboration among partner

[18] **The University of Gdansk** generally requires the student to spend a minimum of one semester (30 ECTS) at their campus to be in the position to issue a diploma signed by the Rector. However, considering the high level of jointness of the Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics, both in terms of co-design and co-teaching, the University of Gdansk will make an exception and sign the joint degree issued by the University of Cadiz.
[19] **The University of Malta** generally requires the student to spend a minimum of one semester (30 ECTS) at their campus to be in the position to issue a diploma signed by the Rector. However, considering the high level of jointness of the Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics, both in terms of co-design and co-teaching, the University of Malta will make an exception and sign the joint degree issued by the University of Cadiz.

institutions, ensuring that academic and administrative activities are synchronised and cohesive across different locations and departments; c) quality assurance, maintaining high academic standards and ensuring the quality of the educational experience is a priority for this governance team. Mechanisms for quality assurance, monitoring the implementation of the joint programme, and conducting regular evaluations to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement have been established as described in the standard 9; d) student mobility and support: Facilitating student mobility is a key feature of joint programmes in SEA-EU Alliances. A procedure for student mobility, ensuring the budget and providing support services to help students navigate the challenges of studying in different cultural and linguistic environments, is a task of utmost importance for the JPWG; e) Effective resource management is also a key task of this governance team which oversees budgeting, fundraising and resource allocation, ensuring that financial resources are used efficiently and equitably to support programme activities and objectives; f) Engaging with stakeholders, fostering strong relationships with stakeholders, soliciting feedback, participation in seminars, promoting the master programme and addressing concerns to ensure that their perspectives are taken into account in decision-making processes.

The relevance of the governance team for running a joint international master's programme in the SEA-EU Alliance cannot be overstated. This team serves as the backbone of the programme, responsible for overseeing its strategic direction, coordination, and effective implementation. The governance structure for MIPMAL, is organised into three levels. At the top level, the Governing Board and the Executive Committee of the SEA-EU alliance are present. The Governing Board is responsible for making high-level decisions, setting strategic goals, and ensuring the overall direction of the alliance aligns with its mission. The Executive Committee provides guidance and support to the Governing Board, ensuring that the strategic initiatives are feasible and aligned with the academic and operational capabilities of the institutions involved. These two entities work closely to ensure coherent and unified leadership. Additionally, the top level includes the Joint Programmes Coordination Office. This office is responsible for overseeing the implementation of Joint Programmes. Acting as a central forum, it addresses common issues faced by joint degree programmes, allowing members to share experiences, identify challenges, and propose collaborative solutions.

The second level of the governance structure comprises bodies specifically related to the implementation and operational management of the MIPMAL Joint Degree. This includes the Academic Steering Committee, coordinated by the Academic Coordinator. The committee ensures the academic integrity and coherence of the programme. The Technical Officer oversees the logistical and technical aspects, while the internal quality committee ensures the programme meets high standards of excellence. Additionally, the Student Selection Committee is responsible for the admission processes, and the Jury Board ensures fairness and transparency in assessments and evaluations of the Master's Theses.

Finally, at the bottom level, the local bodies of the universities participating in the joint degree programme are found. These include the Local Academic Coordinators, who ensure that the programme's academic standards and requirements are met at each institution. The Local Administration Offices manage the day-to-day administrative tasks, ensuring smooth operations. Student Representatives provide a voice for the student body, ensuring their needs and concerns are addressed. Lastly, the Stakeholders, which can include industry partners, employers, and community representatives, offer valuable insights and feedback to ensure the programme remains relevant and aligned with external expectations and opportunities.

The success and effectiveness of the programme will be ensured through the definition of the individual roles of each partner as outlined here:
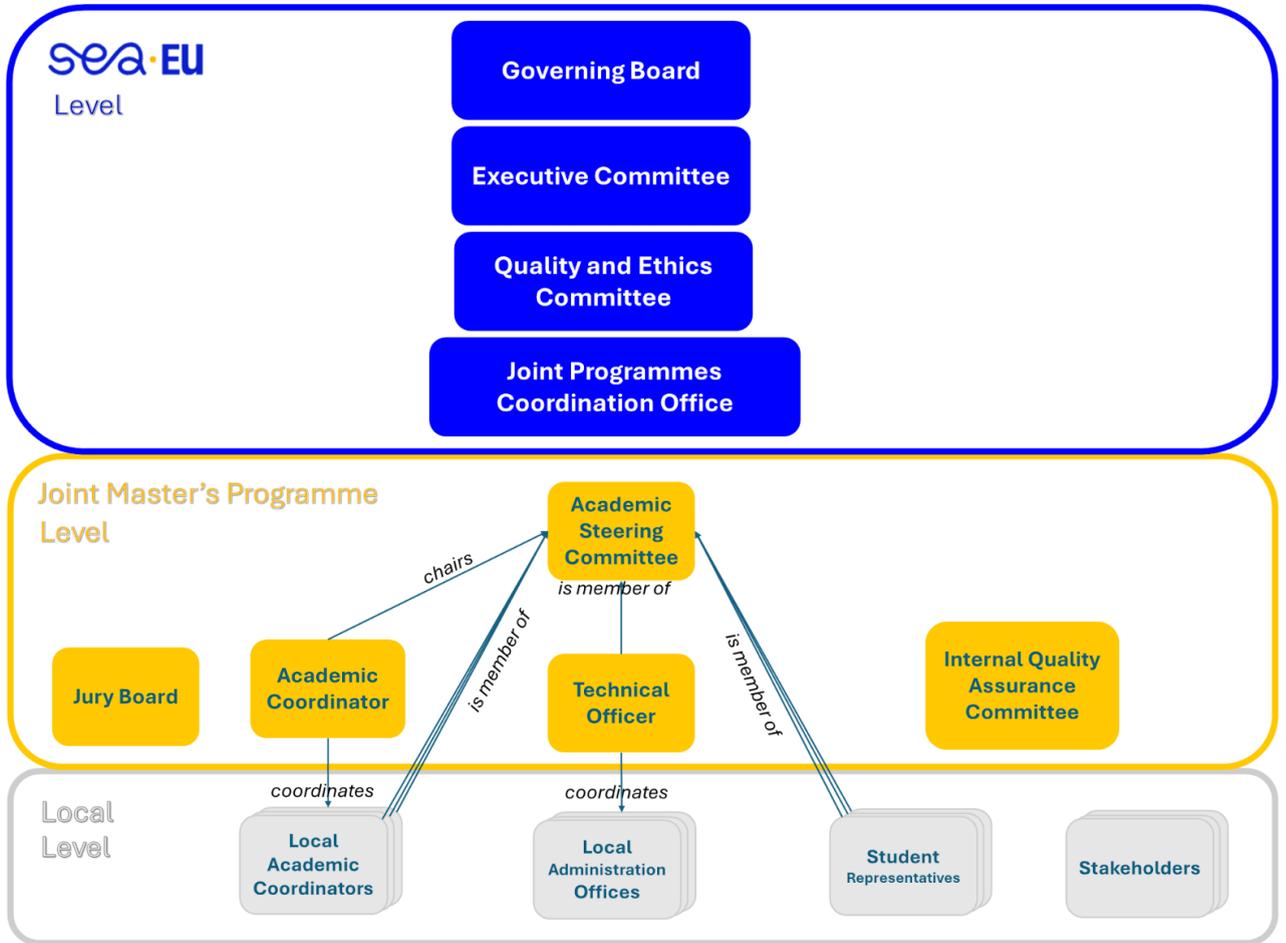
Figure 6. *GOVERNANCE. Joint structure for academic governance, internal quality assurance, administration, and financial management*

1.3 Cooperation Agreement

The cooperation agreement between the five universities of the SEA-EU Alliance for the delivery of the joint master's degree is detailed in Annex 2. It explicitly states that the agreement will be signed by the rectors of each participating university prior to the final decision of the Accreditation Agency ACCUA. Meanwhile, the letters of commitment and responsibility to participate in and implement the joint degree as designed are also included in Annex 2.

The financial plan will also be appended to this cooperation agreement.

In addition to the programme's implementation, the five universities are connected through the Erasmus+ programme, ensuring student, academic, and staff mobility, with the relevant agreements being established accordingly.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1. Level

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is characterised by its adherence to the overarching principles of quality assurance, transparency, and compatibility across national higher education systems. At the heart of this framework lies the alignment of qualifications through the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA)[20] and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The second cycle of the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) corresponds to Master's qualifications and is aligned with level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Typically requiring 60-120 ECTS credits or 1-2 years of full-time study, this cycle is characterised by advanced knowledge and understanding in a specific field, building on the foundation of a bachelor's degree. Graduates are expected to apply their knowledge to solve complex problems in new or multidisciplinary contexts, to make informed judgements with limited information, taking into account social and ethical implications, and to communicate their conclusions effectively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences. In addition, they should have the skills for self-directed learning that will prepare them for high-level employment or further doctoral study.

This framework facilitates international mobility and recognition of qualifications, promotes academic and professional opportunities across Europe and contributes to the harmonisation of higher education standards within the EHEA.

Second cycle qualification. Master level

The LOs corresponding to the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) of the second cycle are:

• QF-EHEA-1: have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with

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[20]

https://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/WG_Frameworks_qualification/85/2/Framework_qualificationsfor EHEA-May2005_587852.pdf

the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.

• QF-EHEA-2: can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.

• QF-EHEA-3: have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.

• QF-EHEA-4: can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.

• QF-EHEA-5: have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for the Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics, MIPMAL

Learning outcomes (LO) are statements that define what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process, which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and, learner´s responsibility and autonomy[21].

Knowledge: Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research. Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields.

Skills: Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields.

Responsibility and autonomy: Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.

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[21] https://europass.europa.eu/en/description-eight-eqf-levels
https://www.nokut.no/en/norwegian-education/the-norwegian-qualifications-framework-for-lifelong-learning /beskrivelser-av-laringsutbytte-for-nivaene-i-nkr/#:~:text=The%20categories%20describing%20learning%20outc omes,%2C%20creative%20and%20communication%20skills).
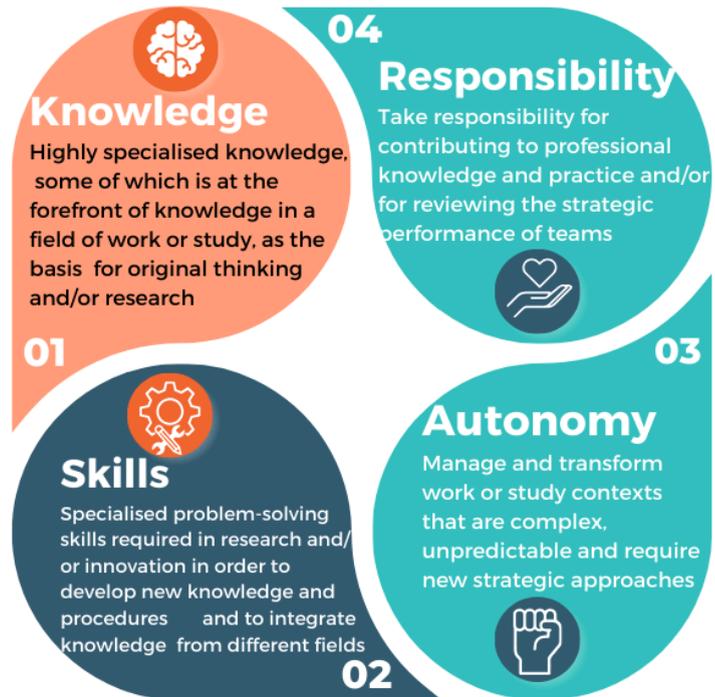
Figure 7. *EQF level definitions*

The definition of programme learning outcomes is a task undertaken jointly by all partners in the design of the final programme, which covers all courses of the programme. Therefore, at the end of this programme, students should be able to:

PLO1: Interpret and be able to properly apply the scientific method to analyse and formulate judgements, either experimental and/or theoretical, in the field of Port Management and Logistics.

PLO2: Demonstrate proficiency in the use of scientific bibliography, databases and relevant information, and in the analysis of scientific and technical documents in the field of Port Management and Logistics.

PLO3: Compare, review and develop reports, presentations and/or academic publications in the field of Port Management and Logistics.

PLO4: Interpret the basic regulatory framework governing the field of Port Management and Logistics.

PLO5: Determine and apply Information and Communication Technologies, both for general and specific use, in the field of Port Management and Logistics.

The alignment of the MIPMAL PLOs with the QF-EHEA learning outcomes is included in Annex 4. A matrix showing the alignment of QF-EHEA, PLOs and CLOs (Course Learning Outcomes) is also included.

The learning outcomes of the joint Master's programme have been designed to ensure that students acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant to the industry. The integration of internships and the master dissertation is crucial to this aim, providing a comprehensive educational experience that bridges academic learning with real-world application.

Internships are a fundamental component of the programme, offering students the opportunity to immerse themselves in professional environments within the port management and logistics sector. These placements enable students to apply classroom knowledge to practical situations, thereby enhancing their understanding of industry operations and challenges. The hands-on experience gained during internships helps students develop critical skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and effective communication, which are essential for their future careers. Furthermore, internships foster professional networking and can lead to potential employment opportunities upon graduation.

Master Dissertation. The master dissertation serves as a capstone project that allows students to engage in independent, in-depth research on a topic related to port management and logistics. This component of the programme is designed to develop students' research skills, critical thinking, and ability to conduct rigorous analysis. By addressing real-world issues or innovative topics within the industry, students contribute original insights and solutions, demonstrating their expertise and readiness to tackle complex challenges. The dissertation also encourages students to synthesise knowledge from various modules, ensuring a holistic understanding of the field.

Together, the internships and master dissertation ensure that graduates of the programme are not only well-versed in theoretical concepts but also possess practical experience and research capabilities. This combination prepares them to excel in the dynamic and evolving landscape of port management and logistics, making them highly competent and competitive in the job market.

2.2. Disciplinary field

The current port transport landscape is characterised by a mix of challenges and opportunities influenced by various global factors. Uncertainty in the dynamics of global trade, exacerbated by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, is affecting cargo volumes and shipping routes, while capacity constraints and congestion remain major issues, especially in major port hubs. Environmental sustainability is gaining in importance, driving efforts to reduce emissions and adopt green practices. Digitalisation and automation are transforming port operations, increasing efficiency and supply chain visibility. Security threats and regulatory compliance remain major concerns, requiring investment in resilience and compliance with complex regulations. Despite these challenges, ongoing infrastructure investments and efforts to navigate regulatory changes signal a commitment to improving the efficiency, sustainability and resilience of port operations.

MIPMAL equips students with essential knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for excellence in this dynamic and ensures graduates are well-prepared to meet industry standards and tackle the challenges within this sector.

Students will develop the ability to create, review, and present comprehensive reports and publications, enhancing communication within the field. They will understand and navigate the regulatory framework governing port management and logistics, ensuring compliance and strategic operational management. Additionally, the programme emphasises the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to improve efficiency and innovation in port operations. This integrated approach prepares graduates to meet current industry demands and drive future advancements in port management and logistics.

The Joint Master's Degree in Port Management and Logistics within SEA-EU is aligned with the current challenges and opportunities facing the port transport sector, preparing students to navigate and contribute to its sustainable and efficient future.

2.3. Achievement

To achieve the programme objectives, the joint degree curriculum has been designed to fulfil the Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs). MIPMAL is organised as a 120 ECTS programme over two years, comprising 4 semesters.

A. Throughout the first three semesters, students engage in an interdisciplinary and technically focused core programme, designed to establish a solid foundation in the specific technical and technological aspects of port and logistics management, as defined during the co-creation process sessions. Consequently, the following course blocks have been established:
   a. Year 1, First Semester: Module 1. Port Services & Operations. 30 ECTS
   b. Year 1, Second Semester: Module 2. Port Economics & Logistics. 30 ECTS
   c. Year 2, Third Semester: Module 3. Port Law & Digitalisation. 30 ECTS
B. Year 2, Fourth Semester: Module 4. Research Track. 30 ECTS. In this semester, students will pursue the pathway chosen during the first academic year. Two options have been delineated to cater to students' interests, offering the choice between a more professional or research-oriented profile:
   a. Option A: Industrial Master's Dissertation. This option involves work linked to the student's internship (minimum 3 months – 20 ECTS), culminating in the defence of the dissertation (10 ECTS).
   b. Option B: Research Track. This option involves completing a master's dissertation (30 ECTS).

In summary, the programme ensures a coherent synchronisation of learning outcomes, curriculum, teaching and learning activities and assessment practices. The course catalogue will provide reliable, up-to-date and quality-assured information on the programme, available on the website and in information brochures. All relevant details regarding the curriculum, student support and enrolment procedures for the MIPMAL Joint Masters Programme will be accessible in the 'Student Handbook' (see Annex 18).

2.4. Regulated Professions

The European Union Directive 2005/36/EC lays down rules for the recognition of regulated professions between EU Member States. The MIPMAL programme does not conform to a regulated profession, although the graduate profile is closely related to the broad and transdisciplinary field of port management as detailed:

> *Ex 716. Activities allied to inland water transport (such as operation and maintenance of waterways, ports and other installations for inland water transport; tug and piloting services in ports, setting of buoys, loading and unloading of vessels and other similar activities, such as salvaging of vessels, towing and the operation of boathouses)[22].*

While the Master's programme does not lead to a regulated profession, it actively promotes students' employability, industry-specific skills, innovation, entrepreneurial competencies, intercultural communication and academic career advancement.

The European Commission's Blue Growth Strategy exemplifies a concerted effort to increase jobs in the marine and maritime sectors, highlighting the socio-economic growth potential in the Mediterranean area while addressing the complexities of sustainable management in these diverse and ecologically sensitive regions.

Similarly, initiatives like the BlueMED Initiative aim to foster research and innovation to support sustainable growth and job creation in the blue economy sectors across European and non-EU Mediterranean countries, emphasising the importance of scientific knowledge and stakeholder engagement in this process.

In essence, blue jobs represent a crucial component of the blue economy, aiming to create environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially equitable employment opportunities within ocean-based industries, thereby contributing to the global transition towards a more sustainable and inclusive economic model.

The EU is supporting the development of blue jobs, especially innovative cooperation projects, combining blue economy industry and relevant marine and maritime, educational/academic institutions. The main focus of that is e.g., promoting and developing blue skills, reskilling, and upskilling. The multidisciplinary approaches are encouraged to start teaching especially young people to avoid the gaps in the labour market. The MIPMAL

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[22] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/36/oj

programme fits into this area very well, proposing mixing the hard and soft skills for blue economy sectors.

MIPMAL will assist students in identifying various career paths by organising Career Guidance sessions during the second year of their studies. In these counselling sessions, students will align learning outcomes with the needs of industry, business, academia, and civil society stakeholders. Upon graduation, students will have numerous potential employment opportunities:

Port Operations Manager.
Oversees day-to-day operations, ensuring efficient cargo handling, berth utilisation and vessel scheduling.

Logistics Coordinator.
Manage the transportation, storage and distribution of goods, optimising supply chain processes for maximum efficiency.

Shipping and Forwarding Manager.
Organising and coordinating the movement of goods across different modes of transport, negotiating contracts with carriers and ensuring timely delivery.

Supply chain analyst.
Analysing supply chain data to identify areas for improvement, optimise inventory management and reduce transportation costs.

Customs Compliance Specialist.
Ensure compliance with international trade regulations, manage customs documentation and facilitate the smooth clearance of goods.

Port Development Planner.
Participate in the planning and development of port infrastructure projects, assessing feasibility and optimising port layout and design.

Maritime Risk Analyst.
Assessing and mitigating risks associated with port operations, including safety, security and environmental issues.

Port Marketing and Business Development Officer.
Promoting the port's services to potential customers, identifying new business opportunities and developing marketing strategies.

Environmental Compliance Manager.
Ensuring compliance with environmental regulations, implementing sustainable practices and managing environmental impact assessments.

Port Technology Specialist.
Implementing and managing technology solutions to improve port efficiency, such as container tracking systems, automated cranes and digital cargo management platforms.

In general, blue jobs in ports cover a wide range of occupations that contribute to the sustainable development, economic growth and environmental management of coastal regions and port resources.

Graduate Tracking

The implementation of graduate tracking within the SEA-EU Joint Programmes will be developed as it offers numerous benefits that can enhance the overall effectiveness and success of these programmes. This process will involve collecting and analysing data on various aspects of students after graduation, such as their career progress, further education, geographical location, professional achievements and contributions to their field or community.

The system will allow measuring programme outcomes, identifying areas for improvement and showcasing the success of graduates to strengthen partnerships with stakeholders. By building strong graduate networks, the joint programme will provide valuable networking, mentoring and job placement opportunities for current students. In addition, tracking graduates will identify potential donors and support resource development, contributing to financial sustainability.

Highlighting graduates' achievements enhances the reputation of the joint programme, attracting future students and increasing enrolments. Personalised professional services and ongoing engagement with graduates ensures continued support, while detailed tracking data helps to meet accreditation requirements and demonstrate the impact of the programme. Overall, graduate follow-up is essential for continuous improvement, community development, reputation enhancement and long-term sustainability.

3. Study Programme

3.1. Curriculum

The philosophy of the programme revolves around a multidimensional view of port operations, emphasising the interconnection between maritime and land logistics, and fostering practical experience through internships and thesis projects. The programme is structured in three thematic semesters followed by an internship and a dissertation project.

Semester 1: View from the Sea Side

The first semester focuses on the maritime aspect of port management, emphasising the importance of the sea in global trade and logistics. This semester aims to provide students with a deep understanding of maritime logistics, shipping operations, and the role of ports as critical nodes in international supply chains.

Semester 2: View from the Land Side

The second semester shifts the focus to the land-side aspects of port operations, exploring the logistics and supply chain management from the point of cargo arrival at ports to its final destination. This semester highlights the integration of various modes of transport and the infrastructure supporting efficient logistics.

Semester 3: Connections among Both Sides

The third semester integrates the sea-side and land-side perspectives, emphasising the interconnectedness of the entire logistics chain. Students learn to manage the seamless flow of goods from maritime transport through to final delivery, ensuring efficiency, sustainability, and competitiveness.

Semester 4: Research track. Internship + Dissertation/Research Dissertation.

The final phase of the programme combines theoretical knowledge with practical application. Students can choose Option A, where they undertake an internship in a relevant organisation to gain practical experience and industry knowledge, and write a dissertation. Option B, the research track, allows students to conduct in-depth research on a specific topic and contribute to the field of port management and logistics.

Y1. First semester. View from the Sea Side

Module 1. Port Services & Operations. 30 ECTS

Code	Course name	ECTS
MIP1.1	**Introduction to MIPMAL**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP1.2	**Operations and Services in Ports**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP1.3	**Terminal Design & Construction**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP1.4	**Cargo-handling Equipment Technology**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP1.5	**Energy Transition**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP1.6	**Sustainable Port Cities**	**5** (Compulsory)

Y1. Second semester. View from the Land Side

Module 2. Port Economics & Logistics. 30 ECTS

Code	Course name	ECTS
MIP2.1	**Port Governance**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP2.2	**Strategic and Port Master Plans**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP2.3	**Economic Evaluation of Port Infrastructure**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP2.4	**Port Competition & Competitiveness**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP2.5	**Supply Chain Management**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP2.6	**Port Logistics**	**5** (Compulsory)

Y2. Third semester. Connections among Both Sides

Module 3. Port Law & Digitalisation. 30 ECTS

Code	Course name	ECTS
MIP3.1	**Logistics Modelling**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP3.2	**Digitalisation and IT Tools**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP3.3	**Introduction to the International Law of the Sea**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP3.4	**Core Issues and Development of Maritime Shipping Law**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP3.5	**Port Activities and the Environment**	**5** (Compulsory)
MIP3.6	**Research Methods**	**5** (Compulsory)

Y2. Fourth semester.

Module 4. Research Track. 30 ECTS

Code	Dissertation	ECTS	
MIP4.1	**OPTION A. Industrial Master's dissertation.** *The scope of the work is linked to the student's internship (minimum 3 months).*	**DIssertation** **Internship**	**10** **20**
MIP4.2	**OPTION B. Research track (no internship)**	**Dissertation**	**30**

Student Mobility.

1.1 Integral Mobility.

The master's programme includes a compulsory mobility period of 12 months, encompassing two semesters in the second year. The integrated mobility provides invaluable advantages to students across each cohort. By experiencing diverse academic environments and cultures, at two or three of the consortium universities, students broaden their academic perspectives and cultural understanding (see table 6). This exposure not only enriches their academic journey but also equips them with adaptable skills crucial for navigating global professional landscapes. Furthermore, the flexibility to select their master dissertation and internship locations in the final semester empowers students to tailor their learning to align with personal and career aspirations, fostering deeper engagement and professional development in their chosen field.

1.2. Applicable requirements

To be eligible for mobility in the final semester of the MIPMAL programme, students must have successfully completed all the credits from the first year. This prerequisite ensures that students possess the necessary academic foundation and are fully prepared to engage in their chosen research or internship activities at the partnering institutions. Without prejudice to the above, the Academic Steering Committee has the authority to decide on exceptional cases regarding this requirement.

1.3. Application and selection procedures

At the end of the second semester of the first year, students will select their preferred university for the fourth semester, ranking the five participating universities in order of preference. The Academic Steering Committee will then assign internships to students based on their academic performance during the first year. Students will be informed of their placements in a timely manner.

The student's mobility will be financed by Erasmus+ funding. The International Offices of each university will maintain close contact with the MIPMAL Technical Officer and the Academic Coordinator to organise mobilities well in advance, ensuring ample time for thorough planning. Support will be provided throughout the mobility period, including guidance, language training and administrative assistance.

Students. Mobility scheme

Figure 8. *MIPMAL Mobility Scheme*

Figure 9. *Example of the mobility scheme for the 1st cohort.*

Academics mobility

The Council conclusions on enhancing teachers' and trainers' mobility[23] urge Member States to incentivize education and training institutions to incorporate mobility into their learning, development, and internationalisation strategies. By embedding mobility into these strategic plans, institutions can promote professional growth, cross-cultural understanding, and collaborative innovation among teachers and trainers. This approach enriches the educational experience, broadens global perspectives, and strengthens the overall quality and competitiveness of education systems. Its recommendations include:

> *21. Facilitate, where appropriate, the formal recognition of outcomes of mobility periods, particularly of teaching and training periods abroad, in initial teacher and trainer education, for professional development or for career progression.*

Handling academic staff mobility in a joint programme under Erasmus+ involves a number of key steps to ensure smooth coordination and effective exchange of expertise between SEA-EU partner institutions. This will involve the establishment of formal agreements between the SEA-EU institutions, following the identification of programme needs and the selection of staff who will jointly deliver the courses.

Academic staff participating in any of the SEA-EU joint programmes must initiate a pre-planning process and the Joint Programmes Coordination Office will define the requirements for smooth communication between the participating universities.

Support will be provided throughout the mobility period, including guidance and administrative assistance. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms ensure consistency with programme objectives and recognition of mobility activities by sending and hosting institutions.

In addition, blended mobility will be encouraged, for example by using a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) methodology that connects students and professors in different countries for collaborative projects and discussions as part of their coursework or Blended Intensive

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[23] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022XG0421%2801%29

Programmes (BIP), a combination of a physical mobility and a virtual component.

Administrative staff mobility

Non-academic staff mobility is also a key priority within the SEA-EU Alliance. To support this, work is underway to design a specific exchange programme, funded by Erasmus+. This programme will facilitate the mobility of staff responsible for the administration offices, in particular those involved in the management of joint programmes.

The main objective is to improve the efficiency and cohesion of the administrative team overseeing SEA-EU Joint Programmes. By promoting peer learning, the exchange of good practices and the sharing of innovative ideas, the programme aims to increase the impact and transformative capacity of SEA-EU activities and initiatives. This exchange will not only strengthen administrative processes, but also contribute to the overall progress and success of the SEA-EU Alliance.

Green travel and sustainable principles

Green mobility is an integral part of our identity, as our peripheral and coastal geography puts us in a unique position to embrace Europe from its shores, shaping our distinct identity and future trajectory. However, this advantage comes at a significant environmental cost. Our dependence on air and coastal transport poses a clear threat to the environment, affecting ecosystems and contributing to pollution. Despite these challenges, we are committed to finding sustainable solutions that preserve our coastal heritage while minimising our ecological footprint.

To implement green mobility in SEA-EU joint programmes involving various European universities, several key aspects have been considered:

Promoting Active Transportation. Encourage students and academic and administrative staff to use environmentally friendly means of transport (walking and cycling as primary modes of transportation). This will be detailed in the student handbook, which will include information on public transport (timetable, discounts, connections) or vehicle sharing facilities.

Initial information sessions are planned to raise students' awareness of the importance of sustainability in transport and integrated mobility in the joint programme. The aim is to improve mobility planning by addressing sustainability principles such as environmental responsibility, social equity, economic viability, health and well-being, resilience and adaptation.

Integrated Mobility Planning among countries/intercampus mobility. An integrated approach to student and staff mobility, covering all phases of the mobility process, will be developed as recommended to ensure the coherence and effectiveness of the joint programme. *Supporting Alternative Mobility Solutions* guidelines will be defined prior to implementation.

Reducing Carbon Footprint. Continuous assessment and improvement. SEA-EU recognises the importance of mitigating our impact on the environment, especially with regard to carbon emissions. As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, there is a commitment to publish the carbon footprint of each Government Week, including all associated travel. The development of the same tool to assess the mobility impact of SEA-EU Joint Programmes will be considered for further analysis.

3.2. Credits

Please describe the implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the clear distribution of credits with regard to the intended learning outcomes.

MIPMAL follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which awards credits based on defined learning outcomes and associated workload. The programme requires a total of 120 ECTS credits (60 ECTS per year), with each credit representing approximately 25 hours of study, in accordance with the Bologna standards of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), as described in the ECTS User Guide.

The use of ECTS by all European and most non-European partners facilitates the creation and documentation of learning pathways, increasing flexibility and comparability. Workload allocation has been agreed collaboratively, ensuring that it is distributed efficiently and equitably among students in accordance with ECTS guidelines.

3.3. Workload

MIPMAL encompasses a total workload of 120 ECTS credits, which equates to approximately 3,000 hours of study. This is based on the standard that one ECTS credit corresponds to roughly 25 hours of student effort. The programme has been designed to be completed over two academic years, with each year comprising 60 ECTS credits, translating to around 1,500 hours of study per year. This workload includes a combination of lectures, seminars, independent study, research projects, internships, and assessments, ensuring a comprehensive educational experience.

The procedure for monitoring student workload has involved planning and continuous assessment. Each course has described the learning outcomes and associated workloads, ensuring alignment with the allocation of ECTS credits. This includes the calculation of total hours of lectures, practical sessions, independent study and assessments A detailed description of the workload in credits and percentages of the total can be found in the individual course contents in Annexes 5 & 6.

Table 6. Description of the workload per ECTS Credit:

Total workload per ECTS Credit (25 hours)	*1 ECTS is distributed as follows: Teaching contact hours (7h) + self-study time (18h).*
Total ECTS per course = 5 ECTS	**Workload in hours**
Total teaching contact hours:	**35h**
Self - study time	**90h**
Total Learning hours	**125h**

One of the main functions of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee will be to gather regular feedback from students through surveys and course evaluations to gauge their perceptions of workload and to identify any discrepancies.

Academic Coordinators will monitor students' progress and advise them on how to manage their study commitments effectively. Courses are also regularly reviewed to ensure that the actual workload is in line with the planned workload and adjustments are made where necessary. Comprehensive evaluations are carried out at the end of each course to review workload

distribution, analysing student performance and feedback to identify areas for rebalancing. An annual review of the entire programme will incorporate accumulated performance data and student feedback, allowing adjustments to be made to the curriculum, teaching methods and workload distribution to optimise the student learning experience.

The master's programme is designed to be completed in two academic years, with regular monitoring of student progress, identification of delays and analysis of completion rates to ensure that students complete their ECTS requirements on time.

4. Admission and Recognition

One of the strengths of the cohesion between SEA-EU universities will be reflected in the creation of a common platform for all joint programmes of the SEA-EU Alliance. This will involve the development of a centralised digital system that will initially integrate the admission processes of all joint programmes and provide access to all participating members for both admission and selection.

In a first phase, designed by the experts of the Joint Programmes Working Group (JPWG), this platform will streamline the application and selection processes and provide a single point of admission for prospective students.

The platform will ensure consistency and transparency by unifying criteria and procedures, improving coordination and communication between institutions. It will improve accessibility through a user-friendly interface, reduce administrative burden through automation and centralise data for better management and analysis. It will also support mobility management by aligning with the internationalisation objectives of the partnership and optimise the use of resources, making joint programmes more attractive and efficient. The application, selection and admission platform will be hosted on the main SEA-EU Alliance website[24].

4.1. Admission and Selection Procedure

The admission and selection process for MIPMAL aims to identify and admit students who demonstrate academic potential, a strong interest in the topic and a commitment to pursuing careers in fields related to Port Management and Logistics. A full description of the procedure is described in Annex 7.

Figure 10 illustrates the timeline of the application process, highlighting the roles involved and emphasising the primary resource for the process: the Joint Platform for Application, Selection, and Admission:

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[24] https://sea-eu.org/
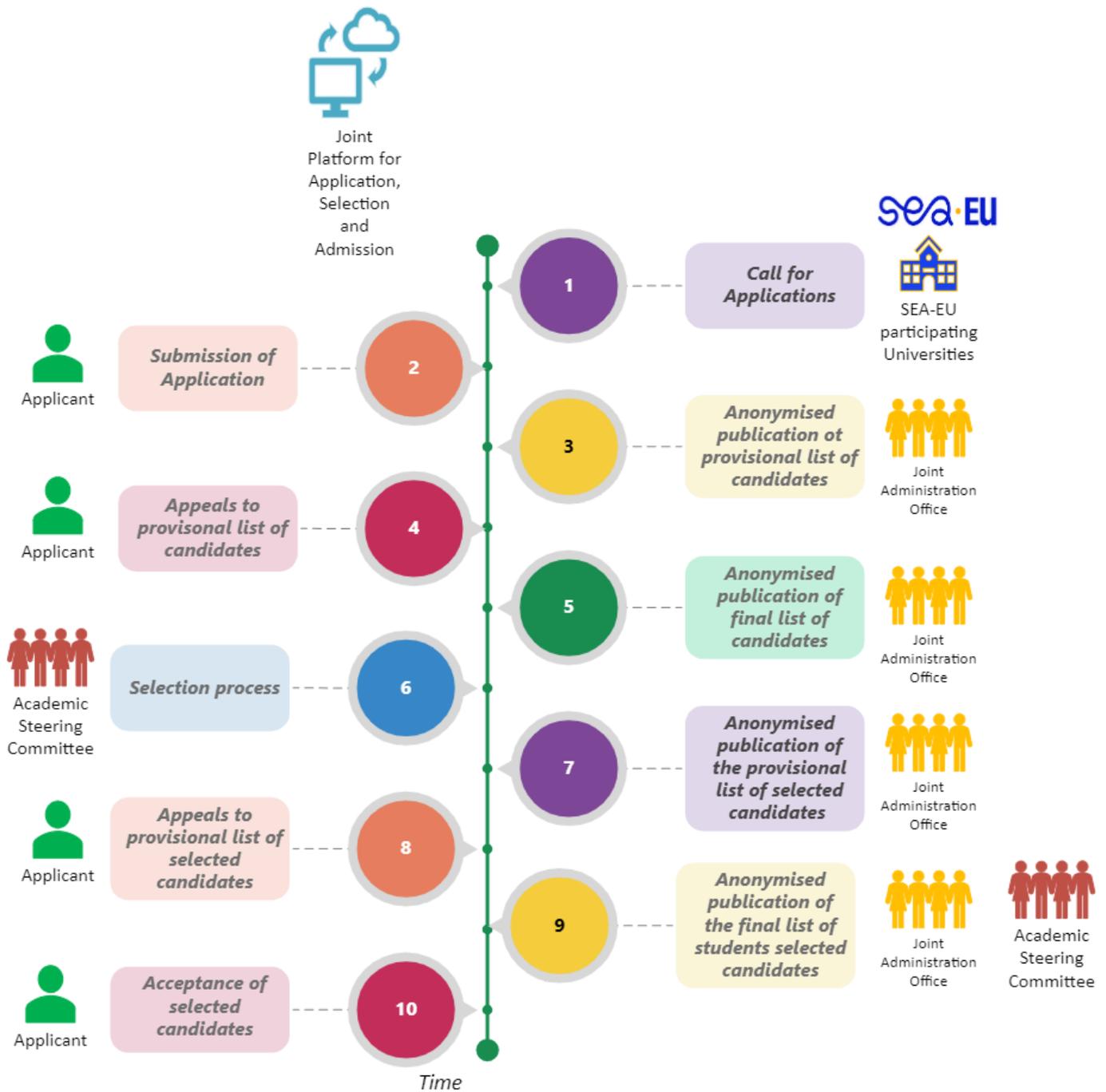
Figure 10 *The Joint Platform for Application, Selection, and Admission.*

4.2. Recognition of prior learning

All SEA-EU partner universities have internal regulations and procedures for the recognition of qualifications and periods of study, including prior learning.

SEA-EU will recognise qualifications, prior learning, and professional experience for both SEA-EU accredited joint programmes and non-accredited coursework based on the principles established at the *Lisbon Recognition Convention*[25] and its subsidiary texts. The number of credits recognised depends on the QF-EHEA level[26] of the completed studies and their compatibility with the Joint Master's course content, in accordance with national regulations on academic recognition:

> *13. Practices concerning the recognition of qualifications have developed considerably over the past decades. Whereas an assessment of foreign qualifications often entailed a detailed comparison of curricula and lists of material studied ("equivalence"), the emphasis has now shifted to a broader comparison of the qualifications earned ("recognition"). Likewise, a tendency has become apparent for formal international regulations to emphasise the procedures and criteria applicable to the process of recognition of foreign qualifications rather than to list or define degrees and diplomas that shall be recognized under the regulation[27].*

SEA-EU will develop a general "Agreement on Academic Recognition in SEA-EU," which will include provisions for the automatic recognition of qualifications, periods of study, prior learning, and work experience abroad (see Annex 8b). This agreement will ensure coordination with the academic bodies responsible for recognition at each SEA-EU partner university to promote flexible and automatic academic recognition.

Recognition of Studies Among Partner Universities Awarding the Degree

The mutual recognition of achievements obtained at partner universities is guaranteed, as this is a joint master's degree with an integrated curriculum. Both the academic and administrative management of students' results within the consortium universities will be conducted automatically.

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[25] https://rm.coe.int/168007f2c7

[26] THE FRAMEWORK OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA
(https://ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/EHEAParis2018_Communique_AppendixIII_9527
78.pdf)

[27] https://www.enic-naric.net/Upload/Documents/Explanatory_Report_LRC.pdf

A common procedure has been developed within the SEA-EU joint programmes, where student records will be completed by the local administrations of each institution without the need to establish a separate recognition protocol. Subsequently, the degree-awarding university will have access to the repository of results to verify programme completion by the students, and will then issue the joint degree.

Recognition of Prior Studies

A major challenge, initially addressed in the SEA-EU 1.0 project and to be further developed and completed in SEA-EU 2.0, is to identify and remove academic barriers to credit recognition and to develop a protocol for joint SEA-EU programmes at all levels of education. An expert group, comprising representatives from all SEA-EU universities, has been established to focus on the recognition of degrees. This working group has produced the document "Conceptual Analysis of Automatic Recognition of Foreign HE Qualifications and Learning Period Report" (Annex 8b), which identifies recognition policies, practices, and strategic planning in EU and SEA-EU partner countries. The report also includes a list of key concepts related to automatic recognition, such as the "User Guidelines for Automatic Recognition." All other key concepts related to the project activities are detailed in the SEA-EU Quality Manual, a document developed by the QES Sub-Committee.

The analysis aims to ensure understanding of the concept of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications and those specifically related to automatic recognition, national legislation and differences among countries, the benefits, needs and interests. The analysis will be used to:
    a) Develop the Model for automatic recognition of foreign higher education qualifications (FHEQ) and period of learning;
    b) Test the Model for automatic recognition;
    c) Develop the Users' guidelines for automatic recognition of FHEQ and period of learning;
    d) Implement the system for automatic recognition of qualifications acquired throughout universities.

The recognition of studies completed outside the consortium will be handled by the Academic Steering Committee, which will evaluate candidates' applications alongside their academic achievements from other universities.

These will be reviewed by the committee and recognised if there are no significant differences. The following outlines the procedure to be followed:

Formal application. Students submit an application for recognition of previous knowledge to the coordinating university. Applicants should provide a certified copy of documentation such as transcripts, certificates, work experience records, and detailed descriptions of relevant learning experiences (see the template in Annex 8).

Preliminary assessment. The Academic Steering Committee (ASC) reviews the application to ensure it meets the basic eligibility criteria for accreditation. Students may receive guidance on the type of evidence required and how to compile a comprehensive portfolio.

Portfolio Review. The ASC evaluates the portfolio based on predefined criteria, such as relevance, depth of knowledge, workload, and alignment with course outcomes.

Decision and Feedback. The ASC makes a decision on the accreditation of previous knowledge, determining the amount and type of credit to be awarded. It provides students with feedback on their submission.

Credit Award. Approved credits are officially recorded in the student's academic transcript, reducing the number of credits required for their degree programme.

Appeal Process. Students have the right to appeal the assessment decision if they believe it was unfair or did not consider relevant evidence. An appeal must be submitted within a specified timeframe, and the university will review the case.

Record Keeping. The coordinating university maintains records of all accreditation decisions, including submitted portfolios, assessment outcomes, and awarded credits.

A model application form has also been included in Annex 8

5. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

5.1. Teaching and Learning

The co-teaching model for MIPMAL is a collaborative approach that integrates the expertise of five participating universities, enriched with sessions from external industry experts. This model ensures comprehensive, interdisciplinary training that aligns with current industry needs and trends. By leveraging the strengths of each institution, the programme offers a balanced and thorough education in port management and logistics.

In this model, each university is responsible for teaching specific modules based on its academic strengths and expertise. Lecturers from all five universities collaborate to ensure the programme's content is coherent and well-integrated.

This approach allows lecturers from different universities to combine their expertise and perspectives, offering a richer learning experience. Additionally, industry experts from the port and logistics sectors deliver specific sessions, providing practical, up-to-date insights. These experts also participate in seminars and workshops, sharing case studies, best practices, and real-world challenges. Beyond teaching, they may mentor students, offering career guidance and networking opportunities, thus preparing them for the job market. They can also supervise students during internships and dissertations, further supporting their academic and professional development.

1st Academic Year.

Module 1. Port Services & Operations. First semester. 30 ECTS (From October Y1 to mid-February Y2)

Code	Course name	UCA	UNIST	UG	UM	UALG	External Contribution (provider)	TOTAL
MIP1.1	Introduction to MIPMAL	2	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.5		5 ECTS
MIP1.2	Operations and Services in Ports (UNIST)	1.5	2.5				0.5 (UM) 0.5 (UALG)	5 ECTS
MIP1.3	Terminal Design & Construction (UNIST)		2.5			1.5	1 (UNIST)	5 ECTS
MIP1.4	Cargo-handling Equipment Technology (UNIST)	0.5	3.5				1 (UNIST)	5 ECTS
MIP1.5	Energy Transition (UNIST)		2.5	0.5		1	1 (UNIST)	5 ECTS
MIP1.6	Sustainable Port Cities (UAlg)		0.5	1	0.5	3		5 ECTS

Module 2. Port Economics & Logistics. Second semester. 30 ECTS (From February Y2 to June Y2)

Code	Course name	UCA	UNIST	UG	UM	UALG	External Contribution	TOTAL
MIP2.1	Port Governance (UCA)	2	1			0.5	0.5 (UM) 1(UALG)	5 ECTS
MIP2.2	Strategic and Port Master Plans (UCA)	2				1	1.5 (UCA) 0.5 (UAlg)	5 ECTS
MIP2.3	Economic Evaluation of Port Infrastructure (UCA)	1.5		1.5		1.5	0.5 (UCA)	5 ECTS
MIP2.4	Port Competition & Competitiveness (UCA)	3				0.5	0.5 (UCA) 1(UALG)	5 ECTS
MIP2.5	Supply Chain Management (UG)	0.5		3			1(UG) 0.5 (UCA)	5 ECTS
MIP2.6	Port Logistics (UG)		0.5	3			1(UG) 0.5 (UM)	5 ECTS

2nd Academic year.

Module 3. Port Law & Digitalisation. Third semester. 30 ECTS (From October Y2 to mid-February Y3)

Code	Course name	UCA	UNIST	UG	UM	UALG	External Contribution	TOTAL
MIP3.1	Logistic Modelling (UG)	2		3				5 ECTS
MIP3.2	Digitalisation and IT Tools (UG)			2		2	1(UG)	5 ECTS
MIP3.3	Introduction to the International Law of the Sea(UM)			0.5	4.5			5 ECTS
MIP3.4	Core Issues and Development of Maritime Shipping Law (UM)				4	1		5 ECTS
MIP3.5	Port Activities and the Environment (UM)		0.5		4		0.5(UM)	5 ECTS
MIP3.6	Research Methods (UAlg)				1.5	2.5	1(UM)	5 ECTS

SUMMARY

UCA = Module 1 (2 + 1.5 + 0.5) + Module 2 (2 + 2 + 1.5 + 3 + 0.5) + Module 3 (2): 15 + 3 External

UNIST = Module 1 (1.5 + 2.5 + 2.5 + 3.5 + 2.5 + 0.5) + Module 2 (1+ 0.5)+ Module 3 (0.5): 15 + 3 External

UG= Module 1 (0.5 + 0.5 + 1) + Module 2 (1.5 + 3 + 3) + Module 3 (3 + 2 + 0.5) =15 + 3 External

UM= Module 1 (0.5 + 0.5) + Module 2 (0) + Module 3 (4.5 + 4 + 4 + 1.5) = 15 + 3 External

UALG= Module 1 (0.5 + 1.5 + 1 + 3) + Module 2 (0.5 + 1 + 1.5 + 0.5) + Module 3 (2 + 1 + 2.5) = 15 + 3 External

Teaching: Since the programme's contents have been co-created by teachers from different universities, the lecturers are well-prepared to collaborate and co-teach the jointly developed courses. This collaborative approach ensures that the teaching staff can effectively integrate their diverse expertise and perspectives into a cohesive learning experience for students. Teaching teams are carefully assembled and confirmed each year before the start of the academic year. This annual finalisation process allows for the optimal alignment of instructors with their respective courses and ensures seamless coordination and communication among the lecturers throughout the programme.

Active Learning

The curriculum emphasises active learning strategies, integrating case studies, field visits, and group projects to immerse students in the practical application of port management and logistics principles. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in internships, research projects, and experiential learning activities with industry partners to gain valuable hands-on field experience.

Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) is an educational methodology that engages students in solving real and meaningful problems, fostering collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. Applied to the joint master in port and logistics management, CBL is articulated around specific challenges in the port and logistics sector, reflecting current and relevant issues. Students work in multidisciplinary teams to research, design and propose innovative solutions. This approach allows them not only to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom, but also to develop crucial practical and professional skills in the field of port and logistics management.

Benefits of CBL in Port Management and Logistics:
a. *Active and Engaged Learning*: Students are more motivated and engaged when working on real-world problems that have a tangible impact on the industry.
b. *Development of Key Skills*: CBL promotes the development of critical skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking.
c. *Industry Connection*: Students have the opportunity to interact with industry professionals, allowing them to build networks and gain a deeper understanding of the sector.
d. *Preparation for the Workforce*: By tackling real challenges, students gain practical experience and knowledge directly applicable to their future careers in port management and logistics.

Students will be taught to, and evaluated on the intended learning outcomes of each of the courses which lead towards the PLOs as previously mentioned. There are two main advantages to this:
1.   It is only by doing this that the trade-offs associated with each possible solution to a particular problem can be looked into.

2.   This should also help students scaffold each other's learning and help to create a collaborative learning environment between students from different backgrounds and with different stories to tell.

5.2. Assessment of students

Assessment serves as a potent educational instrument that extends beyond mere technicality. It shapes the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding the curriculum's focal points. Its impact should yield positive outcomes, aligning with the expectations of students, educators, and the curriculum alike.

Following the principles of aligned teaching, MIPMAL co-teaching teams will employ assessment methods that are purposefully designed to match the specific learning outcomes. These methods are designed to accurately assess the required capabilities for relevant roles within the appropriate context, whether functional or subject-specific. The assessments will focus on the specific subject matter and offer students opportunities to demonstrate their skills and competencies in alignment with the intended learning outcomes.

A variety of assessment methods will be employed throughout the courses. Examples include, but are not limited to (for a more detailed description, refer to Annexes 5 & 6):
- Coursework and assignments. Case studies allow students to apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios, demonstrating their problem-solving skills and understanding of industry practices.
- Continuous assessment involves class participation, where students' engagement in discussions, seminars, and workshops is evaluated, and formative assessments that provide ongoing feedback, enabling students to identify areas for improvement and track their progress.
- Examinations, comprising written and oral exams. Practical assessments, including simulations and role-playing exercises, replicate real-world port management scenarios, allowing students to apply their practical skills and decision-making abilities in a controlled environment.
- Projects, which can be both group and individual.
- Internships at ports or logistics firms are a crucial part of the joint master's degree programme, culminating in detailed internship reports. These reports assess students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings and develop industry-relevant skills.

● The final dissertation involves a research proposal, independent research, data analysis, and a coherent presentation of findings, culminating in an oral defence where students demonstrate their in-depth knowledge and scholarly engagement.

In summary, the MIPMAL programme integrates continuous assessment methodologies with traditional examinations and academic writing to provide a comprehensive evaluation of students' knowledge and skills. The full description of the Student's assessment is included in Annex 9.

SEA-EU Grading System

Within the SEA-EU Alliance institutions, each university traditionally uses its own grading system. To address this, the Joint Programmes Working Group (JPWG) has developed a standardised grading system for all SEA-EU universities (see Annex 9). Five universities have a numerical grading scale, while the University of Malta presents letter grades, where A+ means excellent and F means insufficient. In the case of the University of Cadiz, the scale includes up to 10 points, where '0' to '4.9' is insufficient, with '10' being excellent. At UBO, the scores range from 0 to 20, with up to 10 points being 'fail/insufficient' and 20 being excellent. Grades are similar at UAlg. In the case of CAU, scores range from 1 to 5, with the highest grade (very good) being '1' and insufficient/insufficient above '4'. In the UG, numerical ratings range from 2 to 5, where 5 is the highest and 2 means 'fail'. At UNIST, numerical grades range from 1 to 5, with '1' being insufficient and '5' outstanding.

Given the diversity of education systems within the SEA-EU, where each university represents a rich tapestry of education systems, it also presents challenges in assessing and comparing student performance.

The creation and adoption of a unified qualifications system is an important step towards fostering a more interconnected and equitable European education landscape. By addressing existing challenges and building on its benefits, this initiative paves the way for a future where academic achievement is consistently recognised and valued across Europe.

This standardised grading system, developed by the JPWG, provides a common language for academic achievement and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and skills (see Annex 9 for a full description of the SEA-EU Common Grading System).

Table 7. SEA-EU Common Grading System.

	FAIL	SUFFICIENT	SATISFACTORY	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT	EXCEPTIONAL
ECTS	FX - F	E	D	C	B	A	A+
SEA-EU Joint Programmes	**0 – 49%**	**50 – 59%**	**60 – 69%**	**70 – 79%**	**80 – 89%**	**90 – 99%**	**100%**
CROATIA	1	2		3	4	5	/
FRANCE	0 – 9.9 (<10 Insufficient; <7 Very insufficient)	10 – 10.9 (10 Average)	11 - 11.9	12 – 13.9 (12 Satisfactory)	14 – 15.9	16 – 17.9 (>16 Very good, excellent)	18 - 20
GERMANY	4,1 – 5,0	3,6 – 4,0	3,1 – 3,5	2,1 – 3,0	1,6 – 2,0	1,0 – 1,5	-
ITALY	0 – 17.9	18 - 22	23 - 25	26 - 27	28 - 29	30	30L
MALTA	F 0–44%	PG*: 45 - 49	**D+** UG**: 50–54 **D** UG: 45–49 PG 50 - 54	**C+** UG:69–60 **C** UG - 55–59 PG – 55 - 69	**B+** UG - 75–79 **B** UG - 70–74 PG -70-79	UG - 80–89 PG 80-100	90 - 100
NORWAY	F	E	D	C	B	A	**A**
POLAND	2 (Fail 50% and less)	3.0 (Pass – 51%–60%)	3.5 (Satisfactory – 61%–70%)	4.0 (Good – 71%–80%)	4.5 (Very good – 81%–90%)	5 (Excellent – 91% and more)	
		satisfactory (3.0) (average of grades up to 3.20)	satisfactory plus (3.5) (average of grades 3,21 – 3,70)	good (4.0) (average of grades 3,71–4,20)	good plus (4.5) (average of grades 4,21 – 4,50)	very good (5) (average of grades 4,51 – 5,00)	
PORTUGAL	0 - 9	Passing 10 - 11	Satisfactory 12 -13-	Good 14-15	16 - 17	18 - 20	
SPAIN	0 – 4,9 (Suspenso – failed)	5 – 5,9 (Aprobado – passed)	6 – 6,9 (Aprobado – passed)	7 – 7,9 (Notable – credit)	8 – 8,9 (Notable – credit)	9 – 10 (Sobresaliente – outstanding)	9-10 MH (Distinction – limited to 5% of students)

5.3. Tackling the diversity of students

Accessible Course Materials: Ensure that course materials, including textbooks, presentations, and online resources, are accessible to students with disabilities. This may involve providing alternative formats, such as braille, large print, or accessible digital formats, as well as captioning videos and providing audio descriptions.

Flexible Learning Options: Offer flexible learning options, such as online courses, asynchronous lectures, and alternative assessment methods, to accommodate the diverse learning needs and preferences of students with special needs.

Peer Support Networks: Facilitate peer support networks and mentorship programs where students with special needs can connect with peers, share experiences, and provide mutual support. Peer mentors can also serve as advocates and allies for students with special needs within the academic community.

Regular Communication and Feedback: Maintain open lines of communication with students with special needs to ensure their needs are being met and to solicit feedback on their experiences. Regular check-ins and opportunities for feedback help identify areas for improvement and ensure ongoing support and advocacy.

5.4. The SEA-EU virtual environment for learning, teaching, and assessment

We will be utilising a virtual campus based on Moodle to enhance our educational experience. Moodle is a robust learning management system (LMS) that facilitates online learning and provides a comprehensive platform for managing and delivering educational content. The primary aim of using a virtual campus is to create an accessible and flexible learning environment that supports both students and instructors. It allows for the seamless integration of various educational tools and resources, fostering a collaborative and interactive learning community.

As open-source software, Moodle allows institutions like SEA-EU to customise and tailor the platform to suit their specific educational needs. The benefits of using Moodle are manifold. Firstly, it offers a centralised location for course materials, assignments, and assessments, making it easier for students to stay organised and up-to-date with their coursework. The platform also supports diverse learning activities, including forums, quizzes, and multimedia content, which cater to different learning styles and enhance student engagement. Moodle also facilitates communication and collaboration among students and educators through features such as messaging, discussion forums, and collaborative tools. Additionally, Moodle's tracking and reporting features enable instructors to monitor student progress and provide timely feedback, thus improving the overall learning experience. By leveraging the capabilities of Moodle, we aim to create a dynamic and inclusive educational environment that meets the needs of all learners.

5.5. Improving teacher's competences

In order to ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to teach effectively in an international and collaborative context, a number of strategies and recommendations have been envisaged to enhance teachers' competences in such joint programmes.

Improving teachers' competences for this joint European programme involves a multi-faceted approach including professional development, training in intercultural competences and improving language skills. It also involves facilitating teacher and researcher's exchanges, collaborative curriculum planning and the integration of European themes. The use of digital tools and technologies is crucial, along with continuous assessment and quality assurance to meet European standards. Support systems such as mentoring, administrative assistance and research opportunities are essential, along with cultural immersion through study visits and cultural activities. Institutional commitment and policy alignment play a key role in fostering a supportive framework for these initiatives, exemplified by programmes such as Erasmus+, which offer mobility projects and strategic partnerships for comprehensive professional development.

Participation in a range of practical activities and events will enhance their pedagogical skills, knowledge and practice. These include interactive workshops on modern teaching methods and technology integration, specialised professional development courses and collaborative projects with other teachers and researchers. Teacher exchange programmes and study visits offer new perspectives across a variety of educational settings. Participation in educational conferences and symposia keeps teachers and researchers abreast of the latest trends and research, and action research projects allow them to evaluate new teaching methods in their own classrooms. Networking opportunities through professional learning communities and online forums encourage the exchange of strategies and experiences. Cultural workshops and language courses enhance cultural competence, and simulation and drama activities help refine classroom management and teaching strategies.

6. Student Support

Strong student support services are essential to enrich the student experience, promote academic success and foster a sense of belonging and inclusion in each of the joint programmes offered by the SEA-EU Alliance. However, student support extends beyond the classroom to encompass their holistic well-being.

Particular attention has been paid to the development of the Student Handbook (see Annex 18), which provides students with up-to-date documentation on what is available at each of our SEA-EU campuses. The information ranges from psychological support to sports facilities on each campus, from diversity and inclusion policies to accommodation and visa support, from a jointly developed buddy system to a common exam resit policy, etc. The Student Handbook has been developed and designed to be a one-stop-shop for students, all with the help of the SEA-EU Student Council. The election of student representatives to sit on various councils, where issues can also be raised more formally as part of the quality assurance system, has also been established.

Furthermore, a Joint Programmes Coordination Office has been established, along with local administrative and pedagogical contacts on each campus, ensuring that students have both local and central points of contact.

Table 8. Students support services at MIPMAL partner universities

UCA	https://oficinadelestudiante.uca.es/?lang=en
UALG	https://www.ualg.pt/en/International
UG	https://en.ug.edu.pl/study
UPN	https://uniparthenope.esse3.cineca.it
UNIST	https://www.unist.hr/studies/16100
NORD	https://www.nord.no/en/student/student-life
UM	https://www.um.edu.mt/services/

7. Resources

7.1. Teaching, Administration and Services Staff

Educational Practitioners/Actor in Co-Teaching

MIPMAL will be primarily coordinated and taught by the academic staff who established the partnership and jointly developed the course syllabi. Their expertise is complemented by other teachers and researchers from their institutions, and external experts from the industry, who research and teach in neighbouring areas relevant to the intended learning outcomes and qualification goals. Particular emphasis is placed on curricular elements that sharpen interdisciplinary and application-oriented perspectives, and support students in further developing their academic and professional profiles. Overall, the staff involved are highly qualified and possess the necessary professional and international experience (for further detailed information see Annex 10).

Transnational and interdisciplinary teaching teams will be set up between the following actors:

- **Academic Staff/Researchers from SEA-EU partner universities**, their departments, and research centres.

Table 9. Faculties and departments involved in the joint master's programme from participating universities

Partner Institution		Departments
UCA	Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería	.- General Economy .- Applied Economics .- Business Organisation .- International Public Law & International Relations .- French & English Department, English for Specific Purposes Unit .- Nautical Sciences & Naval Constructions .- Industrial & Civil Engineering .- Computer Science Engineering
UNIST	Faculty of Maritime Studies	.- Management of Maritime Technologies; .- Nautical Engineering; .- Marine Engineering

UG	Faculty of Management Faculty of Economics	.- Management .- Finance .- Accounting .- Computer Science .- Econometrics .- Transport and Logistics
UM	Faculty of Laws Faculty of Arts	.- International Law .- Commercial Law .- Environmental & Resources Law .- Sociology
UALG	Instituto Superior de Engenharia (ISE)	.- Civil Engineering .- Eletrotecnhical Engineering
	Research centres	.- CinTours – Research Center for Tourism, Sustainability and Well-being[28] .- CISCA – Research Center in Cyber Physical Systems[29]

- **SEA-EU Associated Partners from public administrations**, public companies, technological centres, and citizen associations. These collaborators facilitate students' exposure to real-world scenarios and actively engage in teaching and assessment activities, with a special focus on traineeships and master's dissertations.
- **Invited Experts** from the industry, research institutions, public, and private sectors. These distinguished individuals enhance the teaching teams with their profound expertise in research and innovation, coupled with extensive experience in the labour market.

Co-teaching preparation workshops have been planned in preparation for the implementation of the programme among the participating universities. These workshops are designed to equip faculty members with the skills and knowledge essential for effective collaboration in interdisciplinary education. These courses cover the pedagogy of collaboration, emphasising strategies for integrating diverse perspectives and knowledge across academic disciplines. They will also focus on new assessment methods tailored to interdisciplinary learning goals, encouraging innovative approaches to assessing student performance.

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[28] https://www.cinturs.pt/site/index.php
[29] https://cisca.ualg.pt/

Management and services

A technical coordination office for the management of the SEA-EU joint programmes will be established under the leadership of the University of Cadiz. The governance and management structure of MIPMAL and its coordination with SEA-EU and the local management and internal control bodies are fully described in Annex 17.

7.2 Facilities and material resources

The Consortium commits to providing SEA-EU joint programme students with access to all available facilities and resources, including those jointly developed within the SEA-EU European University framework and those offered by individual partner universities.

The SEA-EU universities hosting students have state-of-the-art classrooms equipped with the latest technology, ensuring an immersive and versatile learning experience. Students have the flexibility to attend both online and face-to-face courses, benefiting from a combination of virtual and on-campus teaching. In addition, these facilities prioritise accessibility, ensuring that classrooms are fully equipped to accommodate those with mobility disabilities, fostering an inclusive learning environment.

In addition to the traditional classroom, the programme goes beyond conventional boundaries by offering dynamic and immersive on-site learning experiences that provide students with hands-on opportunities to develop skills and apply knowledge in the real world.

SEA EU Common Services

Shared infrastructure and research facilities	https://research.sea-eu.ug.edu.pl/resources
SEA-EU Research Data Management Toolkit	https://guides.sea-eu.org/subjects/guide.php?subject=SEAEUtoolkit#tab-0

UCA

Innovation Centre UCA-SEA

(Algeciras - Spain)

UCA

Campus Library

(Algeciras - Spain)
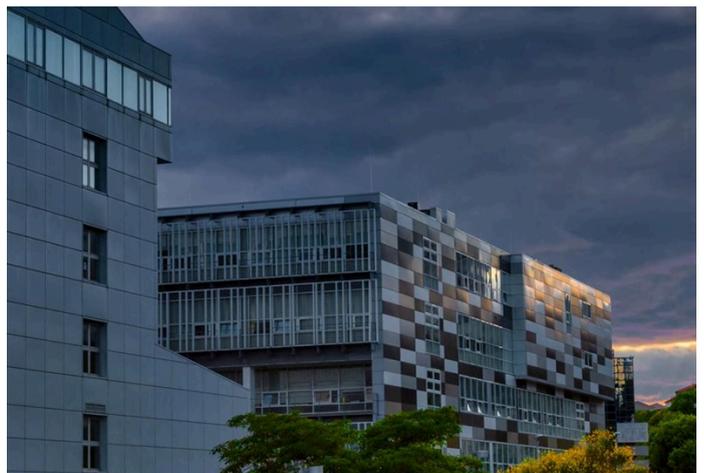
UNIST

Faculty of Maritime Studies

(Split - Croatia)

UNIST

Northern Tower -

Campus Library

(Split - Croatia)

UG

Oceanograf Research Vessel
(Gdansk - Poland)

UM
Msida Campus
(Malta)

UM
Msida Campus
(Malta)

UALG
Higher Institute of
Engineering – ISE
(Faro - Portugal)

UALG
Higher Institute of
Engineering – ISE
(Faro - Portugal)

The **SEA*EdUcation Joint Digital Platform** (under development)

The SEA*EdUcation Joint Digital Platform streamlines and integrates all stages of the student lifecycle, from application to diploma issuance, ensuring secure and reliable data exchange, comprehensive quality assurance, and informed decision-making across the participating universities. The platform constitutes a key resource for the implementation of the joint programme as it provides the **IT support** for the secure and reliable storage, exchange, and management of the data generated in academic and teaching administration. Implementing this unified system presents significant challenges due to the diversity of existing processes and IT tools each participating university employs. Harmonising these varied procedures, technologies and information systems of each partner university constitutes a genuine challenge. Differences in data formats, security protocols, administrative processes, and supporting tools can significantly complicate direct integration efforts. Therefore, we will adopt a two-phased integration approach.

In the imminent *first phase (Phase 1)*, we will follow a decentralised, API-less integration approach. This approach offers several advantages, notably the ability for each partner university to maintain its existing systems without the need for costly and time-consuming overhauls. It reduces the initial financial investment and allows for quicker implementation, as universities do not need to develop complex API integrations. It also provides flexibility, enabling each institution to manage and update its systems independently while adhering to agreed-upon data exchange standards. In this stage, we will delineate the data exchange standards essential for seamless collaboration across partner universities. This entails establishing protocols to ensure compatibility while prioritising data security. To achieve this, we will implement secure file exchange mechanisms, leveraging tools like secure FTP/SFTP servers and a private cloud infrastructure. This approach ensures adherence to GDPR regulations, safeguarding sensitive information throughout the exchange process. However, this approach is conceived as a temporary solution, as it impacts the long-term efficacy and scalability of the joint programmes of the SEA-EU alliance.

In *a subsequent phase (Phase 2),* we will aim to integrate the systems using standards such as the European Learning Model and the issuance of digital

diplomas. By adopting the European Learning Model, we will ensure that all educational data is formatted and communicated consistently, facilitating the seamless exchange of academic records, achievements, and credentials across all participating universities. This integration will likely be supported by the Europass platform, which provides a standardised framework for documenting and sharing educational and professional qualifications throughout Europe. The implementation of digital diplomas will modernise the certification process, enhancing security and reducing the risk of fraud, as these digital credentials can be verified quickly and easily by employers and other educational institutions.

Moreover, this advanced integration will streamline administrative processes, reducing manual work and the potential for errors, and significantly enhancing interoperability, allowing for more efficient coordination and collaboration among partner universities. It will also better support student mobility. Ultimately, the full development of an integrated information system will be achieved once each university has adapted to these European standards, leading to a cohesive, efficient, and future-proof system that benefits students, faculty, and administrators alike. By leveraging these advanced standards and platforms, we will create a more interconnected and resilient educational environment that supports the long-term goals of the joint programmes of the SEA-EU alliance.

Figure 11 illustrates the architectural components of the SEA*EdUcation Joint Digital Platform as conceived in Phase 1. This architecture encompasses several modules designed to streamline the student lifecycle experience. Key stakeholders interacting with the different components of the architecture are:

- **Students**, who are enrolled in the joint programme.
- **Lecturers** from the different participating universities, responsible for implementing the teaching, learning and assessment processes.
- **Administrative staff** from the various local administration offices, tasked with coordinating and managing the programme logistics and support services.
- **SEA-EU Joint Programme Coordinating Institution**, represented by UCA in the MIPMAL programme, which coordinates the programme and issues diplomas and transcripts.

- **SEA-EU Joint Programme Governing Bodies**, which encompass bodies from the joint programme and local governing levels, such as the Academic Steering Committee, Academic Coordinator, Local Academic Coordinators, Technical Officer, Jury Board, Student Representatives, Industry stakeholders and Internal Quality Assurance Committee.

In the figure, each stakeholder is represented by a distinct colour, which also highlights the arrows indicating their interactions with the various components of the platform. The main components of the platform architecture are labelled with letters, which are referenced below to describe each element in detail.

A. **SEA-EU website**. The SEA-EU website serves as a key information hub for all stakeholders. It provides updated information about the joint programme and access to essential applications involved in the educational process, such as the Application app and the Enrolment System. A notable feature is the "LEARN" page, which acts as the entry point for information on the educational programmes of the alliance. This can be accessed at https://sea-eu.org/education/.

B. **SEA-EU Application app**. This web application, currently in development, provides a common platform for students to apply for any of the joint programmes offered by the SEA-EU alliance. It facilitates the application, selection, and admission processes as defined in Annex 7. Students use this app to submit their applications and receive notifications about the outcome. Administrative staff manage application deadlines, while lecturers evaluate applications and compile the final list of admitted students. The app securely stores data in the SEA-EU Private Cloud.

C. **Enrolment System**. This system simplifies the enrolment process for admitted students. Acting as a front-end to UCA's enrolment system, it ensures that all student records are updated and maintained within the coordinating institution's student management system, ensuring the issuance of diplomas and transcripts. Data collected by the enrolment system is securely stored in the SEA-EU Private Cloud.

D. **SEA-EU Private Cloud**. This private cloud, located at UCA facilities in Spain, ensures secure and reliable data storage and exchange across

the participating universities. It complies with the Data Protection and Sharing Regulations of the SEA-EU Joint Programmes (see Annex 2) and supports informed decision-making by the governing bodies of the MIPMAL programme.

E. **Student Management System**. This component encompasses various information systems used by each participating university, including:

  a. **Enrolment Systems**. Local systems at each university for maintaining student records, synchronised with the SEA-EU Private Cloud.

  b. **Learning Management System**. Virtual campuses at each university, primarily using Moodle, for course management, communication, and collaboration. Upon agreement, priority will be given to using a single virtual campus hosted by the coordinating institution.

  c. **Academic Management System**. Systems for securely storing student academic performance records, which are updated in the SEA-EU Private Cloud once finalised.

  d. **Mobility Management System.** Systems for managing student mobility and associated financial support.

  e. **Internship Management System**. Systems for managing student internships, with performance results uploaded to the academic management system and shared via the SEA-EU Private Cloud.

  f. **Scholarship Management System.** Systems for managing student scholarships.

  g. **Services Management System**. Systems for managing various student services, such as libraries, labs, sports facilities, and communication services.

A comprehensive list of the individual facilities, including IT facilities provided by the SEA-EU partner institutions involved in the MIPMAL Programme, can be found in Annex 19.

F. **Quality Management System**. Systems at each university for monitoring and collecting data to calculate indicators for the internal quality processes defined in the Internal Quality Assurance System Handbook for the SEA-EU Joint Programmes (see Annex 11). Locally collected

indicator values are shared through the SEA-EU Private Cloud to calculate aggregated values as described in the handbook.
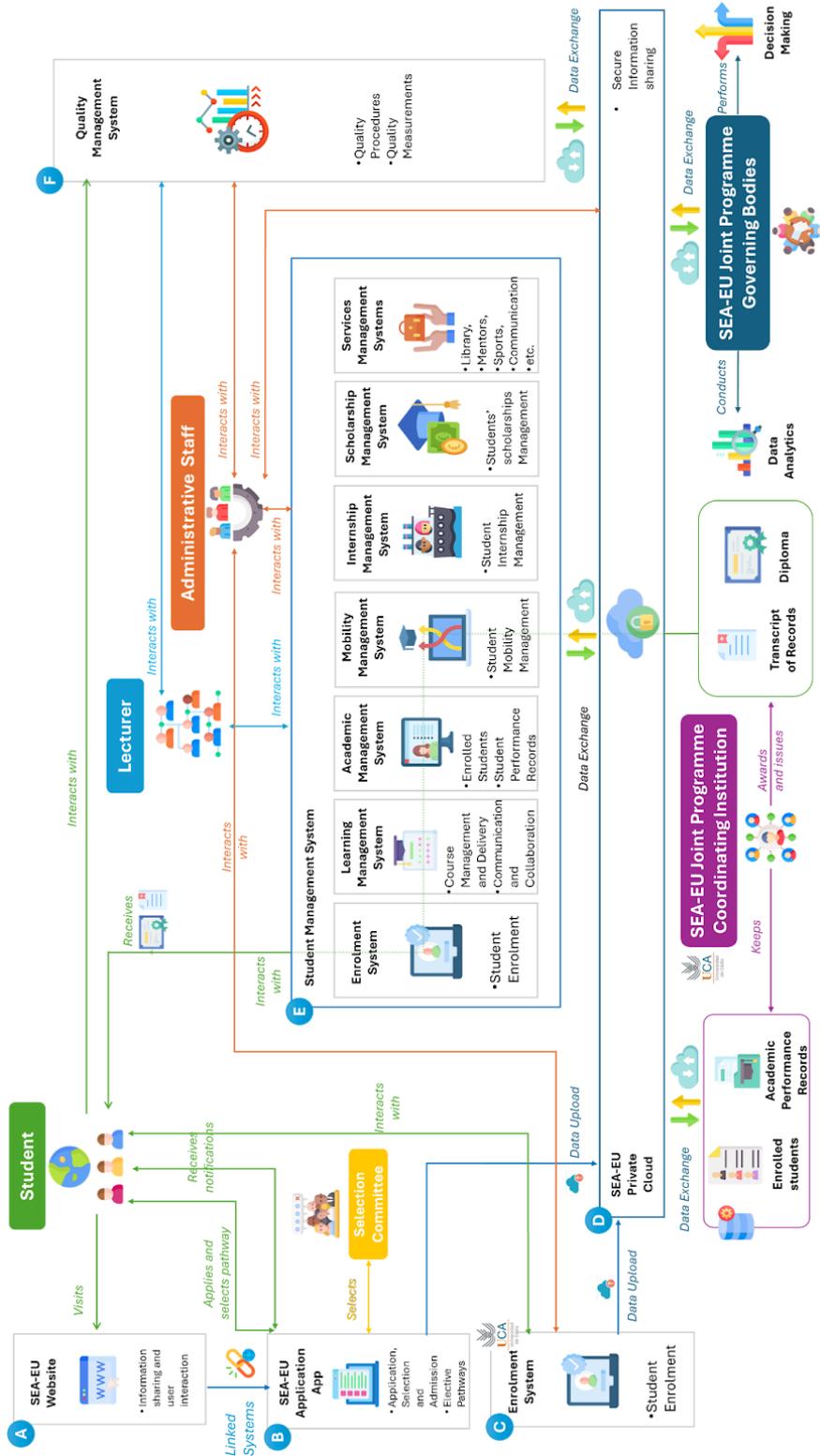

Figure 11. *Architecture of SEA*EdUcation Digital Platform (Phase 1)*

8. Transparency and Documentation

If nobody talks about it, it didn't happen!

The consortium has collaboratively crafted clear and equitable guidelines for the application process, student selection, progress monitoring, and assessment criteria, alongside co-developing the curriculum. These regulations will be readily accessible to all stakeholders through the programme website and the student handbook (see Annex 18). Furthermore, they will be disseminated through the consortium universities' social media channels and relevant platforms representing SEA-EU at the Alliance level.

In addition, the consortium is committed to proactively engaging with stakeholders, students, and alumni to ensure ongoing communication regarding the MIPMAL's programme. Efforts to keep these groups informed have already begun and will continue in earnest.

Transparency ensures that stakeholders, including students, faculty, administrators and external partners, have access to relevant information and can understand the functioning and outcomes of the programme.

To this end, the SEA-EU Joint Programmes will be supported by the SEA-EU Communication Office and the communication departments of the partner universities. These departments will contribute to the implementation of a joint dissemination strategy, which will include the following actions:

1. **SEA-EU website**. Publication of all information related to the MIPMAL Master's Programme.

    i) Application, selection and admission calendar, including admission criteria, language of instruction, appeal procedure for candidates not-admitted; number of places available, anonymised list of selected and non-selected participants, including the ranking resulting from the application selection process (see Annex 7), etc.
    ii) Enrolment fees
    iii) Full description of the joint master's programme (course catalogue, examination and assessment; integrated mobility plan; procedure of issuing the Joint Diploma and Supplement Diploma, internal quality assurance system, etc).

2. Inclusion of MIPMAL in the **academic catalogue of the SEA-EU partner universitie**s. A summary of all admission requirements, the course catalogue, the courses and the awarding of the joint degree and diploma will be displayed. The selection process will be duly publicised, together with the course structure and information on the application process, in accordance with the above-mentioned communication programme.

3. Social media: The social media channels of SEA-EU will be used to actively promote the application period as well as key milestones during the academic year. All partners will agree on an annual social media campaign. Furthermore, they will be disseminated through the consortium universities' social media channels and relevant platforms representing SEA-EU at the Alliance level.

4. Student Handbook and sustainably printed leaflets. The Student Handbook will include both detailed general and specific information and will be updated periodically according to the edition, following the SEA-EU brand. It will be available in both online and printable versions.

5. Info sessions. Live info-sessions (online and in-person) at partner universities, including a welcome week at the beginning of the academic year and open-door days. A minimum of one info-session per year must be organised at each partner university. Introductory sessions will be organised by the teaching teams at the beginning of every course, etc. In addition, the consortium is committed to proactively engaging with stakeholders, students, and alumni to ensure ongoing communication regarding the Master's programme. Efforts to keep these groups informed have already begun and will continue in earnest.

9. Quality Assurance

Rooted in the SEA-EU's mission statement, Quality Assurance is integral to the governance and processes of the Alliance. A key component of the SEA-EU ecosystem is the Quality and Ethics Committee (QEC), which oversees the overall quality operations of the Alliance. Within the QEC, three working groups exist, with two being particularly relevant for the SEA-EU joint programmes:

- The Working Group on Quality of Learning Programmes: This group focuses on establishing common standards to ensure the highest quality in joint programmes and learning activities.
- The Working Group on Personal Data Protection: This group addresses data protection and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance issues.

9.1. Scope

The SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) guarantees that the joint programmes within the Alliance meet the highest standards. It aims to strengthen the recognition of qualifications and learning periods abroad while minimising administrative burdens. The IQAS is in line with the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, and the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). It ensures the relevance of programmes, promotes core academic values, and supports inclusive higher education and sustainable academic careers. The IQAS covers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as micro-credential programmes.

9.2. Objectives

The general objectives of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS, hereafter) of the SEA-EU Alliance Joint Programmes are the following:

- Ensure satisfaction of societal needs and expectations.
- Enhance transparency and compliance within the EHEA framework.
- Foster continuous improvement across all university functions.
- Promote quality assurance in teaching and accreditation processes.

- Support sustainable development and growth through strategic partnerships and research enhancement to an optimal work environment for organisational member development.

9.2. The SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance System Handbook

The SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance Handbook outlines the Internal Quality Assurance Approach of the SEA-EU Alliance, detailing its objectives, scope, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC), and the structure of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). It also covers the planned management of IQAS documentation, the involved stakeholders, and the implementation approach across the participating universities. The handbook also provides an in-depth description of the various processes that constitute the SEA-EU IQAS. For each process, the aims, description, indicators, data collection tools and formats, records of evidence, and standardised templates for data analysis. The SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance System Handbook is included as Annex 11.

9.3. The Implementation Approach

The implementation of the SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) aims to establish a cohesive framework across participating universities while respecting their existing quality assurance systems. This approach serves as a general guideline, detailing processes, indicators, data collection tools, data exchange formats, and repositories for evidence.

The implementation approach for the IQAS is based on the following principles:

Framework Integration: Each joint programme's Internal Quality Assurance Committee, supported by the Academic Coordinator and Technical Officer, as well as the Local Academic Coordinators and the Local Administration Offices, will align local quality processes with the IQAS framework outlined in the SEA-EU Internal Quality Assurance System Handbook. This alignment facilitates the mapping of existing university-specific processes to the model proposed in the handbook.

Collaborative Effort: Given that each participating university has its own established quality assurance practices, integration efforts will involve mapping these practices within each participating institution. Utilising the handbook as a guide, universities will identify relevant indicators, share them

across the alliance, conduct joint analysis, and leverage insights for continuous programme improvement.

Data Exchange Standards: Once each university has collected values for the indicators outlined in the internal quality assurance system (IQAS), it is crucial to establish a standardised approach for integrating and jointly analysing this data. This standardisation ensures consistency and comparability across all participating universities within the SEA-EU alliance. By adopting a uniform framework for data integration, universities can aggregate diverse datasets effectively, facilitating comprehensive analysis and meaningful insights.

Shared Document Management: By utilising a unified document management system, participating universities can streamline communication, enhance transparency, and ensure that all stakeholders have timely access to relevant documentation. The SEA-EU Private Cloud will serve as the shared data repository.

Decision-Making and Continuous Improvement: The shared data and joint analysis facilitated by the IQAS will enable informed decision-making for enhancing the quality of SEA-EU Joint Programmes. Universities will utilise these insights to iteratively refine their programmes, ensuring alignment with evolving educational standards and regulatory requirements.

9.4. Processes

To achieve the outlined objectives and effectively perform the Internal Quality Assurance functions, the following comprehensive processes will be implemented:

P01. Design and Approval of Joint Programmes. This process ensures that joint programmes are systematically designed, evaluated, and approved in alignment with academic standards and stakeholder needs.

P02. Monitoring and Improvement of Joint Programmes. This process involves continuous monitoring, evaluation, and enhancement of joint programmes to maintain their quality and relevance.

P03. Student Lifecycle Management. This process encompasses the management of all student-related activities, from admission through graduation, ensuring a smooth and supportive academic journey.

P04. Teaching, Learning and Assessment. This process focuses on the development, implementation, and evaluation of effective teaching, learning, and assessment strategies within joint programmes.

P05. Academic Staff Development. This process aims to support the continuous professional growth and development of academic staff to enhance teaching quality and academic excellence.

P06. Learning Resources and Student Support. This process ensures that students have access to adequate learning resources and support services to facilitate their academic success and well-being.

P07. Information Management. This process manages the collection, analysis, and dissemination of relevant data to support informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

P08. Public Information Management. This process ensures that accurate and up-to-date information about joint programmes is publicly available to stakeholders through various communication channels.

P09. External Quality and Internal Quality Assurance System Improvement. This process involves conducting internal audits and external evaluations to enhance the quality assurance systems and ensure compliance with accreditation standards.

Table 10 provides a detailed mapping of each process within the SEA-EU Joint Programmes Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) against the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Part 1). This alignment ensures that our joint programmes adhere to the highest standards of quality assurance, promoting excellence in educational outcomes, student support, and institutional management across the participating universities. The table serves as a comprehensive reference for understanding how each specific process corresponds to and fulfils the established European quality assurance criteria.

Table 10. Mapping of ESG 2015 – Part 1 Standards to SEA-EU Joint Programmes IQAS Processes

ESG 2015 – Part 1 Standard	SEA-EU Joint Programmes IQAS Process
1.1. Policy for Quality Assurance	Quality is a cornerstone of the SEA-EU Alliance, as outlined in its mission statement. The Alliance is supported by the highly specialised Quality and Ethics Committee, which leads the policies and processes of a cohesive transnational quality assurance system. Each joint programme has an Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC) responsible for implementing and maintaining the internal quality assurance system. This committee works in coordination with the Academic Coordinator and Technical Officer of each joint programme, who, in turn, collaborate with local academic coordinators and local administration offices to ensure consistent quality efforts. The Alliance counts also with a Code of Honour and specific Assessment Regulations to ensure academic integrity and freedom, transparency in the assessment processes, respect for diversity, and active prevention of academic fraud. In addition, a procedure for the internal review of the IQAS ensuring ongoing enhancements is included in P09. External Quality and Internal Quality Assurance System improvement.
1.2. Design and Approval of Programmes	P01. Design and Approval of Joint Programmes
1.3. Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment	P04. Teaching, Learning and Assessment
1.4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	P03. Student Lifecycle Management
1.5. Teaching Staff	P05. Academic Staff Development
1.6. Learning Resources and Student Support	P06. Learning Resources and Student Support
1.7. Information Management	P07. Information Management
1.8. Public Information	P08. Public Information Management
1.9. On-going Monitoring and Periodic Reviews of Programmes	P02. Monitoring and Improvement of Joint Programmes
1.10. Cyclical External Quality Assurance	P09. External Quality and Internal Quality Assurance System improvement