



AGREEMENT

on co-operation in the field of Joint BOVA study programmes

General

The Estonian Agricultural University, Latvia University of Agriculture, Lithuanian University of Agriculture and Lithuanian Veterinary Academy (BOVA member universities), hereinafter referred to as "the Parties",

- pursuant to the Agreement between the Estonian Agricultural University, Latvia University of Agriculture, Lithuanian University of Agriculture and Lithuanian Veterinary Academy signed in Jelgava on February 25, 2000;
- based on the positive experience of joint short Master courses,

have agreed on the following:

The Parties undertake a joint activity in the elaboration and implementation of post-graduate joint study programmes referring to joint degrees.

The Parties admit that the articles regulating the awarding of joint degrees are conditional and will be binding to the Parties only after the adoption of the regulations that enable the awarding of joint degrees by the national authorities.

Aims of the Agreement

The Parties agree that

1. The implementation of joint study programmes and joint degrees are important instruments to achieve the Bologna objectives.
2. The added value of joint study programmes and joint degrees reflects quality, efficiency, mutual recognition and employability, contributing to an individual's cultural and academic enrichment, as well as improving the individual's career prospects.
3. The Parties co-operate in the elaboration and implementation of joint Master and Doctoral programmes within agreed areas, paying particular attention to the starting areas:
 - Agroecology and Organic Agriculture;
 - Management of Biodiversity and Multifunctional Landscapes;
 - Bioinformatics;
 - Business Economics and Management;
 - Game Management;
 - Veterinary Medicine

Results of the Agreement

4. The process of developing and offering joint study programmes based on the initiative of parties and the demand from students is the core activity, but the long-term vision is to build sustainable collaborations between the Parties and to award joint degrees.

The results of the Agreement will be implemented joint curricula awarding joint degrees.

Definitions

5. A joint degree should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as

5.1. a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas;

5.2. a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma;

5.3. one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of the joint qualification in question.

6. Teachers from other than host BOVA universities deliver at least 25 per cent of curriculum.

7. Students from other than host BOVA universities constitute at least 25 per cent of the programme, attending at least one semester of lectures or participating at selected courses amounting to at least 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits.

8. Study trips to all Baltic countries are arranged within the programme.

Principles of recognition

9. The Parties providing joint degrees should be encouraged to inform the competent recognition authorities at the national level of programmes giving rise to such degrees.

10. The Parties expect that competent recognition authorities of Parties whose higher education institutions confer joint degrees will recognize these degrees with greatest flexibility possible.

11. While qualifications arising from transnational arrangements fully stand outside the national qualifications systems, in case of joint degrees, each component most often belongs to a national system and it is the combination of these elements that makes competent recognition authorities consider joint degrees either as belonging to more than one national system or not fully belonging to any single national system.

12. In order to facilitate recognition, candidates earning joint degrees should be provided with a Diploma Supplement, and study programmes leading to joint degrees should make use of the ECTS.

13. The Diploma Supplement issued with a joint degree should clearly describe all parts of the degree, and it should clearly indicate the institutions and/or study programmes at which the different parts of the degree have been earned.

14. Joint programmes and courses under this Agreement are prepared and provided in English.

Administering joint activities

15. The Parties agree to co-operate by the way of

15.1. exchange of information on educational systems, development plans and reforms;

15.2. student exchanges in Master and Doctoral degree programmes;

15.3. exchange visits of teachers, professionals and administrators;

15.4. meetings and workshops on organisational and administrative issues, seminars and conferences with the aim to provide and process joint study programmes.

15.5. joint doctoral degrees, which may range from joint supervision of thesis by professors from different countries to actual joint doctoral programmes where parts of the research towards the doctoral degree are carried out at different partners.

16. Parties should be encouraged to elaborate incentives for students and teachers to participate in joint study programmes.

17. An agreement should be reached on the faculty or department level before a certain joint study programme becomes a subject for this Agreement and is approved by the BOVA Committee for Joint Studies;

18. Contact persons, governable by the vice-rectors of study, should be officially appointed by each Party participating in the programme and they are responsible for the coordination and promotion of the joint programme on the national level and the contribution to the overall development of programme. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- i) coordination of the creation of programme development strategy;
- ii) submitting the applications to the funding organisations;
- iii) maintaining continuous contacts between the Partners at Member Universities and with BOVA secretariat.

19. Offices for international relations at Member Universities and BOVA University secretariat (including BOVA coordinators at Member Universities) are obliged to provide necessary assistance in the organisational issues of every joint programme falling into the scope of this Agreement.

20. To ensure the implementation of this Agreement, BOVA Member Universities establish the "BOVA Committee for Joint Studies". Vice-Rectors of Studies or Academic Affairs are appointed by the Member Universities to this Committee. Committee for Joint Studies is responsible for the overall coordination of the development of joint programmes and their implementation at Member Universities.

21. The Parties should annually report on the progress made in the elaboration and implementation of joint programmes to the BOVA Rectors' Board.

Financial Management of joint programmes

22. The Parties take on financial obligations according to the design of programme. The Parties agree that all initiatives shall be carried out within the financial limits planned each year in the annual budgets.

23. Implementators of joint programmes are encouraged to apply for external funding. All external grants are managed pursuant to the rules of the donor.

24. The financial management of the expenses of the specific joint programme activities under this Agreement is laid down in a separate Annex.

Applicable Law

25. Any amendments or supplements to this Agreement shall be made in writing upon the mutual consent of the Parties.

26. This Agreement shall be governed by the legislation of Parties. All parties shall attempt to settle any dispute concerning the interpretation hereof or their performance hereunder in an amicable way.

27. Should such attempts fail, Parties hereby agree to submit disputes to the jurisdiction of the court system of the corresponding country.

28. This Agreement shall enter into force on the day of its signing by the Parties and remains valid for three years.


29. The Agreement shall automatically be renewed for further three years' periods unless one of the Parties notifies the other Party at a three months' written notice of its intention to terminate the Agreement.

30. In case of the termination of this Agreement, all projects and activities started under the Agreement would be carried out under the same conditions in which they were started.

In witness whereof, the Parties have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives.

Done in Pärnu on 29th day of October, in four original copies in the English language, all copies being equally valid.

Contracting Parties

<p>The Estonian Agricultural University Kreutzwaldi 64 51014 Tartu Estonia</p>  <p>Rector Alar Karis</p> <p>Authorized representative: Vice-rector Hardi Tullus</p>	<p>Latvia University of Agriculture Liela 2 LV-3001 Jelgava Latvia</p>  <p>Rector Juris Skujāns</p> <p>Authorized representative: Vice-rector Arnis Mugurēvičs</p>
<p>Lithuanian University of Agriculture Studentu 11 Akademija 53067 Kaunas district Lithuania</p>  <p>Rector Albinas Kusta</p> <p>Authorized representative: Vice-rector Antanas Juodvalkis</p>	<p>Lithuanian Veterinary Academy Tilzes 18 LT-47181 Kaunas Lithuania</p>  <p>Rector Henrikas Žilinskas</p> <p>Authorized representative: Vice-rector Raimundas Mockeliunas</p>