



**Course integration:  
partnership, student selection,  
student facilities and support**

**Gábor Mészáros**

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# The EMABG consortium (1)

- European Master in Animal Breeding and Genetics
- Objective
  - To offer an integrated high quality programme in the area of animal breeding and genetics
- Groups involved:
  - Coordinator: Wageningen (The Netherlands)
  - Uppsala (Sweden), Aas (Norway), Kiel (Germany), Paris (France), Vienna (Austria)
- Builds on previous experience in EU program

# The EMABG consortium (2)

- Erasmus Mundus grant from EU
  - Quality stamp for period of 5 years (1 of the 80 EMMC)
  - Access to Scholarship programme for non-EU and EU students (20 per year)
  - First group started in August 2007
- April 2011: apply for grant for second period of funding with new innovative elements compared to the first EMABG

# From students' perspective (1)

What	Aim	Year (%)		ECTS
		1	2	
Orientation period	Introduction + academic skills	100		6
Disciplinary subjects	Increasing understanding of Animal Breeding and Genetics	60	40	30
Complementary subjects	Gaining flanking knowledge (including multidisciplinary subjects)	70	30	24
Free choice	Option to specialise or to broaden skills/expertise	50	50	0-36
Thesis research	Conducting research related to Animal Breeding and Genetics	30	70	30-60
Degree at two universities		50%	50%	120

# From students' perspective (2)

- Welcome to EMABG (August)
  - The whole group meets at the first time
  - Lectures, introduction to staff from all partners
- First year university
- Summer event (August)
  - The same place and time as the “Welcome”
- Second year university
- Graduation (June)



# The BOKU system (1)

- A short description how we organize ourselves
- Assumptions:
  - The coordinators are always busy
  - An EMMC takes a lot of extra work
  - The students often need assistance
- Our solution: Divide the work

# The BOKU system (2)

- Person in the Office for international relationships
  - Skilled in dealing with official issues
  - Role: paperwork and advisor
  - Tasks: visa, residence permit, diplomas, help with university registration

# The BOKU system (3)

- Student guide
  - PhD student or post-doc
  - Potentially more time
  - Role: general support and advisor
  - Tasks : day by day issues, help with university registration, study advisor, (teaching)

# The BOKU system (4)

- Local coordinator
  - Professor
  - Role: head of the local group and advisor
  - Tasks : strategic decisions, meetings, official issues, study advisor, teaching
- The EMMC group cooperates with teachers and university management

# Partnership

- *Within* university
  - Increased communication between teachers
  - Increased number of lectures given in English
  - Increased communication between working groups
- *Between* universities
  - Joint thesis supervision
  - Joint research and data exchange
  - Staff mobility



# Partnership in EMABG (1)

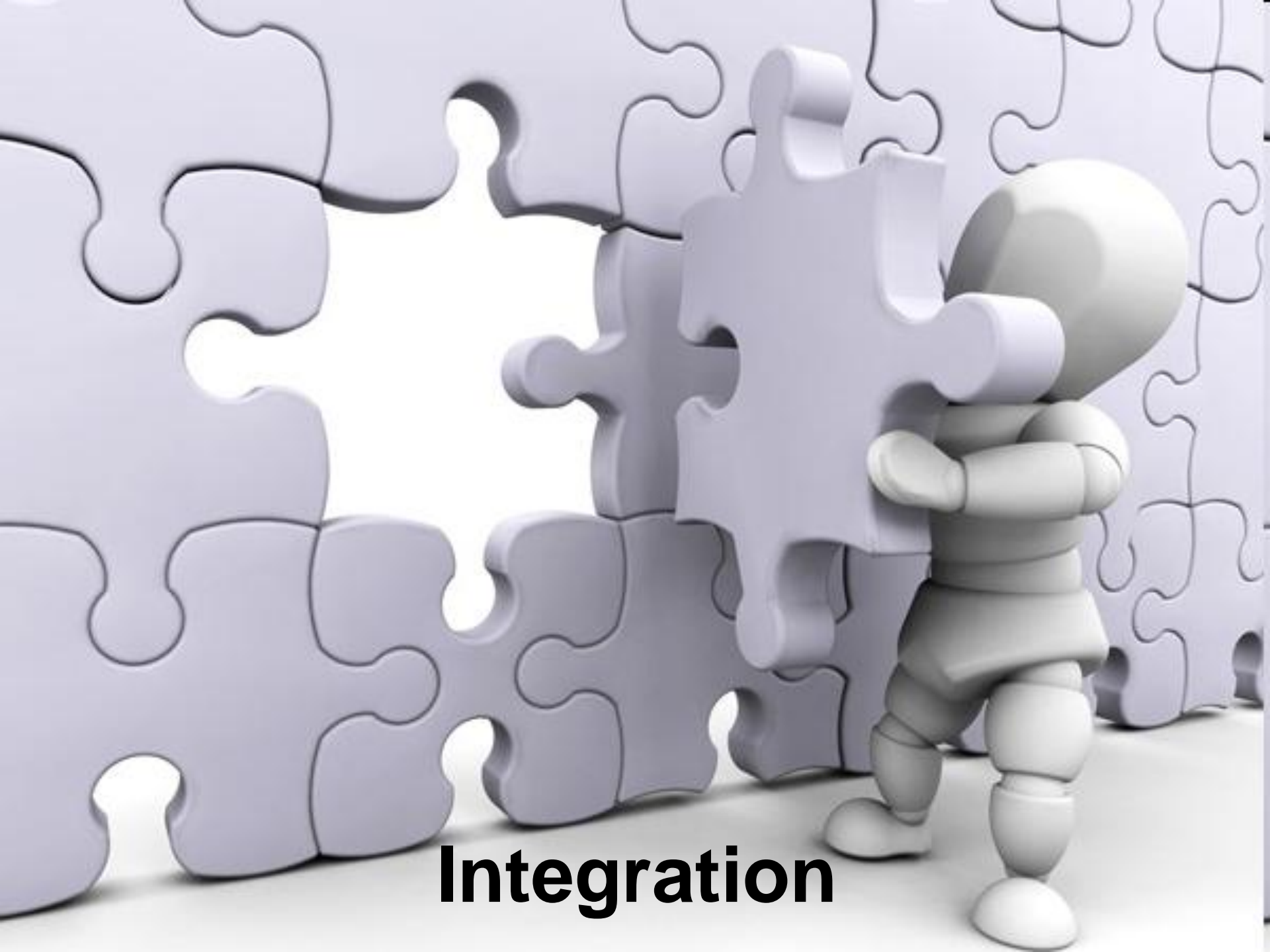
- The main office in Wageningen, The Netherlands
- Centralized system – finances, general student support and insurance, agenda for annual meetings, correspondence with EU
- Intensive communication between the central office and other partners

# Partnership in EMABG (2)

- Annual consortium meeting (January)
- Rotation in the event hosting
- Connected with student selection
- Open discussion
- Everybody is equal
- Other meetings: graduation ceremony, Welcome to EMABG / Summer event
- Continuous self-reflection

# Partnership in EMABG (3)

- Partnership acknowledged on the official level in Consortium agreement
- Legally binding document signed by all universities
- Agreement about the implementation of the joint program
- Guidelines and good practices for consortium agreements at EACEA website



**Integration**

# Course integration (1)

- Mutual recognition of EMABG course, its components and degrees awarded at each university
- All universities award ECTS
- Easy acknowledgement of exam results
- National grades translated to ECTS grading system

# Course integration (2)

- EMABG universities are similar
- EMABG universities are different
- We ***complement*** each other
  
- Working towards joint curriculum to avoid overlap between year 1 and year 2
- Formulating learning outcomes for subjects

# Course integration (3)

- Joint supervision of the MSc thesis
- Officially declared in the *Thesis contract*
- Main supervision: Year 2 university
- Progress of the work is discussed with co-supervisor from Year1 university throughout the year
- Students receive double degrees with joint diploma supplement
- Working towards joint degrees in the future

# Course integration (4)

- Outreach to third country scholars
- They participate in teaching of subjects
- University level or for the whole badge of students (e.g. researchers from International Livestock Research Institute during the Summer event)

# Course integration (5)

- Student participation costs:
  - 8000 € for non-EU and 4000 € for EU student per year
  - Tuition fees include: costs of university registration, “Welcome” and “Summer” event, research grant for thesis
  - Very diverse study fees in different universities

# Student applications

- Online application tool
- Requirements:
  - BSc. Degree in animal science or related fields
  - Grade point average min. 70%
  - Pass TOEFL exam (min. scores: paper based 580, computer based 237, internet based 92) or score of 6.5 from IELTS test

# The selection procedure (1)

Example:

- 300 applications received until deadline
- Pre-selection done by the main office (too weak English, too low grade point average, no genetics background, ...)
- Approx. 70 applications remaining
- Similar procedure for category A (non-EU) and B (EU) students

# The selection procedure (2)

- Remaining applications sent out to consortium members (approx. 20 to each)
- Students scored on 1 – 5 scale by 2 peers
- Results ***standardized*** and summarized by the central office
- Successful applicants distributed to universities according to their preference

# The selection procedure (3)

- Scoring weights
  - BSc transcript 50%
  - Curriculum vitae 20%
  - Motivation letter 20%
  - 2 recommendation letters 10%

# The selection procedure (4)

- Scholarship rules of EU are applied

Example results:

- 8 scholarships for non-EU
- 1 window

#	Nationality	Main list	Reserve list
1.	China	1.	
2.	Ethiopia	2.	
3.	China	3.	
4.	USA	4.	
5.	China		1.
6.	Brazil	5.	
7.	Iran	6.	
...	...	...	
15.	Bosnia	W 1.	

# The selection procedure (5)

- If somebody falls out you need to take the next one from the reserve list
- BUT you can bring up *only* those students on the reserve list
- This might become an issue if a “window” student falls out

# The story of the red suitcase



# Outcome of the story

- What is obvious for someone, might not be known to other
- Students from different places, background and culture
- Prepare yourself for everything

# Example

- One of the student just refused to be instructed by a woman...
- ...what was quite problematic when his supervisor was a woman
- Consequences for EMABG: emphasizing the European standards of communication during the “Welcome to EMABG”

# Student facilities and support (1)

- Assistance with application procedure provided by the central office
- Selected students assigned to universities
- Local administration assists with:
  - visa application
  - residence permit
  - accommodation

# Student facilities and support (2)

- Informing students in time is a top priority
- Means of information delivery
  - Email
  - Possibility: Dedicated storage place online
  - Possibility: Information on USB once they arrive

# Student facilities and support (3)

- Insurance scheme according to the requirements of Erasmus Mundus
  - The same insurance company for all students
- Students integrated into the local environment
- Taking the same courses and use the same facilities as national students
  - Library, IT facilities, student restaurant, ...

# Student facilities and support (4)

- EMABG students taking part in activities designed for international students
- “First time in Austria” – workshop to understand Austrian culture and university environment
- “Welcome days” at the beginning of the winter semester
- Increased networking and intercultural exchange / communication

# Student facilities and support (5)

- Language policy
  - English is the language of instruction
  - Necessary to have *enough* courses given in English
  - Each university offers national language courses
  - Costs for these are (currently) paid by the students

# Student agreement

- Contract between the Consortium and the Student
- Includes the rights and responsibilities of the Consortium and the Student
- Addresses academic, financial and administrative issues
- Explicitly states what happens if the Student is excluded or quits the program

# General advices to future consortia

- Be sure you use EU language (e.g. **course** and **subject** are not synonyms)
- Keep it small (max no. of partners = 5)
- Think on beforehand about what you will do when you don't get the funding
- There is a huge competition, emphasize the added value of your course compared to others, why would they choose *you*

# Show that you are a team



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Thanks for your attention!

...and good luck!

Gábor Mészáros - [Gabor.Meszáros@boku.ac.at](mailto:Gabor.Meszáros@boku.ac.at)