SMART CITIES AND COMMUNITIES (SMACCs), AN ERASMUS MUNDUS JOINT MASTER DEGREE WITH PRELIMINARY FIRST YEAR PREPARATORY RESULTS TOWARDS A FUTURE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract
In July 2017 a new Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree under the short name SMACCs (Smart Cities and Communities) has been approved by EU as part of the action Learning Mobility of Individuals (KA1) and the corresponding call EAC-A03-2016. The programme is designed to educate the next generation of engineers and researchers in Smart Cities and Communities by learning best practice from four (4) of Europe’s most prestigious universities from Belgium (Project Coordinator), Spain, U.K and Greece fostering collaboration with industry through research. Students will have the opportunity to acquire new and valuable skills and benefit from state-of-the-art research at regional and transnational level, fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, employability, knowledge exchange and multidisciplinary learning. A programme that has been designed to improve the quality and relevance of higher education via the cooperation of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the labor market. The duration of the programme is for 5-years (2018-2023) with the first year being the preparatory year that is required to make all the necessary preparations so that in the 3-different intakes (one per year) taken place in the next years no problems would be appeared. This work presents this first preparatory year (2018-2019) that describes various parameters and especially that of the final applied students and the quality based that this programme was designed on and tried to bring with first results related with this very important issue (students quality and right selection/recruiting via a scientific methodology) that characterizes the final success of such a programme. A detailed statistical analysis is given where pros and cons are described and would be possible able to be considered in the next stage of that preparatory year making the final right selection of the candidates. This paper could serve as a base and example of other similar to be adopted programmes and the corresponding methodology used to achieve such a success result.

Keywords: Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree, Statistics, Preparatory year, Smart Cities and Communities.

1 INTRODUCTION
Previous work by the author [1-2] showed the preparation, steps and submission of a project named SMACCs under the action Learning Mobility of Individuals (KA1) and the corresponding call EAC-A03-2016 with the final successful result, that being the final approval and funding of the project. Once the funding of the project has been verified by EU, then as it is normal, under the call prerequisites it is required a preparatory period of 1-year before the beginning of the suggested courses and programme and any possible changes that will have to be done in any part of the programme and to be in this 1-year period and under the agreement of the E.U. officers. Thus in this case a short historic background of these changes follows in the next paragraphs to show some of the initial, medium and final steps taken towards the right, according to the author and programme director, approach to have a successful recruiting process of the candidates.

Thus in the first part of this paper the methodology on the recruiting process that was followed by the programme partners is described in detail and it is a methodology that contains information of what parameters would be the most appropriate ones to be used by the programme (or any other similar programmes of the MSc or PhD level) so that in the recruiting process the best candidates are selected while being as much objective as possible. Then some statistics related with the candidates profiles are presented along at the end with results showing the final selection completed under the methodology mentioned previously.
2 METHODOLOGY

Below it is described in detail the Admissions Evaluation Protocol followed in the SMACCs degree by its partners that was finally transferred in an Excel file worked by the secretary team in the project coordinator University that was adopted as the main tool to be used in the final evaluation process of the candidates. The reason of presenting this methodology lies is to be able for any future Universities that are considering of applying on such a programme or even for any Universities that would like to use a similar methodology to recruit their candidates in a scientific way that would bring the best outputs from the selected candidates based on quantitative but even more qualitative criteria of the same call or of similar calls.

**Step 1 - Evaluation panel**

According the existing text of the CA (Consortium Agreement) doc submitted and accepted by EU (pages ‘The Academic Committee (AC) will present the criteria to be used in the selection of the students to the EC for its approval’), this proposed evaluation panel consists of at least one representative member from each university. Thus this means that each partner must define their Academic Committee member which is maximum two members together with the Executive Committee member. Since the Evaluation Panel consists of one member of the Executive Committee (EC) from each partner then it is suggested to be the Executive Committee (EC) preparing a first report related with the recruiting process of the students (i.e. ranking list and parameters considered for that ranking list). Then this report will be processed and accessed by the Academic Committee (AC) in order to present the final evaluation protocol to the EC members for its final approval. It is rather suggested by the author that this is a simple but quite effective way to have the right people implicated in the recruiting process since it is rather common to have many people but finally to make the process rather more complicated.

**Step 2 - Application Screening Process**

The applications received via the SMACCs application platform were transferred to a data repository of UMONS (since in the beginning due to space problems the applications were hosted at IHU, Greece one of the four partners of the programme mentioned in previous step) where the Coordination Office (Administration Office of UMONS) will check the applications for the final eligibility and the accompanying documents. The applications that are complete, fulfil the criteria and involve a degree (BSc) in engineering or science (as stated preferably in the CA doc) get a Green colour indication (in the Excel Sheet) in order to be evaluated later. On the contrary degrees of other domains will have to be either accepted or rejected on a case by case basis. To this end they are given an Orange indication colour in order to be examined further by two members of the AC, which will have to either accept (Green colour) or reject (Red colour) the application. In case of a tie, a third member of the AC will play the role of the referee for its final decision. The applications that receive a Green colour will be uploaded to a shared workspace (provide by UMONS) so that they become available for evaluation.

**Criteria assessment** (how to assess the performance of each candidate on each criterion, namely when there might be some subjectivity involved)

All the files are available to all the members of the EC and the AC.

The evaluation of the applications will be equally distributed to two groups of two members of the EC

- Group 1: 1 member from UMONS + 1 member from IHU
- Group 2: 1 member from HWU + 1 member from UPV/EHU

For each candidate, the above members (group) for the evaluation are then randomly selected. Each candidate will be assessed by two (2) members of the evaluation committee. The assessments will be aggregated by taking the average between the two member’s evaluation mark. If there is large difference on the evaluation between the two members then a third mark will be given by one of the other two members of the EC.

Motivation and recommendation letters are part of the application and thus will be accessed according to the process defined above. Thus at least two members will access any part of the candidate’s CV.

**Criteria list**

*Academic record*

- undergraduate + postgraduate degrees
• marks (no minimum level is adopted since applications marks are from different academic systems and countries and there cannot be a common base)
• type of degree: engineering, science, economics (technical background!), other (case by case)

Motivation letter
Work experience
R&D experience
  – journals
  – conferences
Language Certificate
  Recommendation Letters
  – existence of such letters

Criteria descriptors and value levels

Academic record
The use of the QS World University Rankins List for undergraduate degrees is considered due to its regular and more detail information.


Apply correction factor to the 1st grade with Ranges from: 0-200 (1.1), 201-700 (1.0), > 701 (0.9)

Based on the existing rankings, HWU (300) – UMONS (600) – UPV/EHU (626), IHU is not ranked due to only graduate programmes, therefore all the 4 partner Universities have a correction factor of 1.0. No ranking is considered for the MSc degrees since there is not also any corresponding world ranking list at the QS World University Rankings.

The use of a normalized scale (0-100%) so that the different grading system from each different university can be handled. Then the correction factor for each University is applied based on the above ranking list.

BSc degrees (1st level degrees)

Applicants need to have a first (undergraduate) degree (minimum 3 years).

If the applicant has only one degree, this degree will receive the criterion weight multiplied by the grade of the degree in the normalized scale (0-100%).

In case of someone having two (2) undergraduate degrees, then only the one related to the topic of the EMJMD is evaluated. If both degrees are related, then a weighted average between the two is considered based on the years of studies (note: the correction factor related with the University Ranking is applied to each degree).

BSc + MSc degrees

In case of a candidate possessing both a BSc AND an MSc topic related degree, then the BSc degree receives (75%-85%) of the criterion weight and the MSc degree (15%-25%) regardless of its duration (i.e., an MSc of 1 or 2-years is treated equally). The correction factor related with the University Ranking is only considered for the 1st degree/level (BSc and Dipl. Ing/Ir, etc) BUT not for the 2nd one (MSc).

In case of multiple degrees and an MSc NOT topic related, then only the BSc degree mark is considered to be evaluated and is followed the procedure described in the previous paragraph.

BSc + MSc1 + MSc2

In this case, the weighted factors are as follows, i.e.: BSc (60%-80%) + MSc1 (15%-25%) + MSc2 (7.5%-12.5%).

1 The language certificate is a prerequisite. No weighting factor is applied on it.
2 There will be no difference between 3 or 4-year degrees since it is the system adopted by the Bologna assessment.
3 The usual Bologna assessment considers a 3 or 4-years BUT there are still degrees (i.e., Dip. Ing., Ir, etc) from many, especially European, countries that had or have the 5-years degree (i.e., Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Greece, etc). Therefore for this case the mark is based on the 5-years degree.
Motivation letter (Use a scale of 4 levels as below):

a) **A1% of the criterion weight** if the candidate had good written expression, was very motivated, and referred explicitly to the SMACCs specialization area.

b) **A2%** if the candidate had good written expression, was very motivated for the SMACCs Program, but does not show to be motivated for the Specialization area in particular.

c) **A3%** if the candidate’s motivation is unclear, either because of what the letter says, or because the written expression is poor.

d) **A4=0** if the candidate did not submit a motivation letter.

Work experience
(Use)

a) **A1% of the criterion weight** work experience in a SMACCs specialization area (at least 12 months).

b) **A2% of the criterion weight** work experience of less than 12 months, but at least 3 months (e.g. an internship), in a SMACCs specialization area.

c) **A3% of the criterion weight** work experience, but not in a SMACCs specialization area (at least 12 months).

d) **A4=0 otherwise.**

R&D experience
(Use)

a) **A1% of the criterion weight** if ≥3 international Journal and Conferences

b) **A2% of the criterion weight** if ≥2 international Journal and Conferences

c) **A3% of the criterion weight** if ≥1 International/national Journal and Conferences.

d) **A4=0 otherwise.**

Recommendation letters
If (and only if) at least 1 recommendation letter is by a referee from academia, use for each letter (maximum 2 letters)

a) **A1% of the criterion weight** recommendation letter favourable for the applicant corresponding to a top 5% of the class/colleagues (industry).

b) **A2% of the criterion weight** recommendation letter favourable for the applicant corresponding to a 5%≤x≤10% of the class/colleagues (industry).

c) **A3% of the criterion weight** recommendation for letter favourable for the applicant corresponding to a 10%≤x≤20% of the class/colleagues (industry).

d) **A4% of the criterion weight** recommendation for letter favourable for the applicant corresponding to a x≥20% of the class/colleagues (industry).

e) **A5=0** if there is no recommendation letter.

Criteria weights
Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>70%-80%</td>
<td>Academic degrees (independent of the number of degrees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>7.5%-12.5%</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>7.5%-12.5%</td>
<td>R&amp;D experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>2%-3%</td>
<td>Motivation letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>2%-3%</td>
<td>Recommendation letters (each letter 1.25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL MAXIMUM: 100.0%

ANNEX I. Examples

- A candidate with i.e., 80% grade of the degree in the normalized scale receives an evaluation score for the academic record equal to 80%*100%*A (70%-80%* correction factor from University ranking).
• A candidate has two (2) undergraduate degrees, i.e., a first degree in 3-years with mark 60/100 and a second degree in 4-years with mark 70/100. Both are related to EMJMD topics. The first one was obtained in one of the top 200 universities in the QS ranking, while the second one was obtained in a university ranked between 201-700 in the QS ranking. The correction factor for University ranking (1.1) is applied to the first degree and the correction factor for University ranking (1.0) is applied to the second degree. The final years are seven (7) and the weighted average is used, that is i.e, (3*60%*factor for university ranking+4*70%* factor for university ranking)/(3+4). The evaluation score for the academic record is then equal to ((3*60%*1.1+4*70%*1.0)/(3+4))*75%.

• A candidate obtained a BSc of 4 years with a mark of 70% and a MSc of 1.5 years related to the EMJMD topics with a mark of 80%. The University where he obtained his BSc is ranked 420 in the QS ranking (correction factor 1). The evaluation score for the academic record is then equal to (0.8*70%*1+0.2*80%)*75%.

3 RESULTS

In this part of the paper it is described the two different recruiting periods that were used in order to be able the programme and the partners to obtain the best possible students from all the world to apply. The reason to have finally two recruiting periods (or better said the extension of the first recruiting period) lies to the fact that although it has been arranged to have an initial recruiting period deadline on February 1st 2019, the number of applications received related with European applicants was very limited. This was creating a problem to the selection of the European future-funded candidates since the ‘pool’/number of the applied existing European candidates was small and was not representing according to the programme director and the committee to the reality of the programme. At the same time this would create an unbalanced selection between European and rest of countries candidates since the number of non-EU has been quite large and the selection ‘pool’ in this case was very difficult.

At this point it would be good to explain some major things regarding the Erasmus Mundus Scholarships and how they are distributed according to the existing regulations by E.U. As is shown in Table 1, our case the final number of Scholarships approved were in total 65, divided in the three different intakes (2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022) with the corresponding number, not being proportional but rather different and decreasing by the year, (25-21-19). If we see that as a percentage of the possible number of students declared in the initial proposal to become part of the 1st intake that would mean that in the 1st intake the students will have a 34.72% (25/72) of success to be accepted with a scholarship. Since the difficulty of a new programme is always in the beginning then it was thought in the submitted proposal to have more scholarships in the 1st intake so to create in this way a critical mass of submitted applications and then to start decreasing the number of scholarships since after various conversations with other programme managers of similar programmes once the critical mass is created then it is easier to have a better quality of recruited candidates. Therefore the 2nd intake shows a decrease scholarship rate of 27.63% that further drops to a 23.75% to the 3rd intake.

Table 1. EMJMD Student Scholarships approved and estimated enrollement.

Still it has to be mentioned here that the number of students to follow the three different intakes when the proposal was submitted was hypothetical (estimated), therefore the amount of money also that was approved by E.U. was based on this hypothesis and some other facts that strengthen the application and the final approved budget (that was not the one proposed by the submitted application and usually tends to be less that the proposed one). Yet, it is not rather strange to note that the amount of total students to follow the programme per intake (72, 76 and 80) is a number that does not has to be obeyed though it would be beneficial (especially economically) for the partners to approach it since it is rather common to have less that the expected and approved number final students in the
class. Of course one of the aspects that the programme countries and universities have to consider very seriously, as is also indicated by the E.U. officers, is the sustainability of the MSc degree since a success of such a degree is defined not just from the fact that a certain programme has been approved for a period of 5-years but even more from the further continuity of the programme even after this 5-years period. Thus if the programme is capable to continue as it is but without having any more the funding from E.U., since it is considered that the logo/brand of E.U. does help significantly these first 5-years, then along with simultaneous actions of the programme director and the partners the programme has to continue though based on a different sustainable business model, otherwise it would be considered rather a failure of not doing so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme and Partner Countries</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe (Region 1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia (Region 2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa (Region 3)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East (Region 4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far East (Region 5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania (Region 6)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. EMJMD Student Scholarships from Heading Countries approved.

The way that scholarships were used in the case mentioned before and appeared in Table 1 in the form of Programme and Partner Countries, was also followed in case of the extra scholarships approved for the Heading Countries. Thus the scholarship number approved were 5-4-3 for the 1st-2nd-3rd intakes. The Heading Countries corresponded to the ones as shown in Table 2. The reasoning of these countries falls to the fact that each partner had different yet complimentary existing network that was used so to include them inside the approved proposal. Yet, as a result this means that in the recurring final selection candidates form these countries would have to be selected as was approved by the funding scheme from EU.

3.1 Recruiting Phases

As mentioned in previous paragraphs the recruiting first deadline as initially agreed from all the partners was arranged to be February 1st. Still during the process that is described more in detail below and based on the criteria that EU has established for this kind of programmes (or even similar programmes) it was finally decided by the EC to extend the applications deadline for 2-weeks more thus being on February 15th 2019.

3.1.1 Recruiting Phase 1 (deadline 01/02/19)

In the 1st application deadline the total number of candidates applied were 177 from 51 different countries all over the world. From this number as it shows in Fig. 3 there was a 69%-31% ratio between males and females showing a nice first disperse of the applications according to the gender something that the organisers show with great pleasure. Yet, as it is also obvious from Fig. 1 the number or percentage of applicants that were from the Programme and Partner countries was very low, thus this was a first indication to the programme committee that there was a certain lack of promotion/advertising related with these countries’s candidates. Even more, Fig. 1 shows a clear indication of a great number of candidates being from Region 6 (light blue) where under the existing regulations from EU recruitment is only possible to recruit a maximum of 3 candidates per country,
therefore making a possible diversification of the future classes rather not homogenous which possibly would be against the quality of the programme itself. Still at the same time this was also an indication that the programme had a very high appeal in countries outside EU and Europe, especially in Asian countries, something that obeyed very well with the EU regulations of having candidates from all over the world.

As also was mentioned in Table 2, according the EU funding regulations, some countries (Heading) had to be fulfilled by the programme Scholarships so in this way to be able to characterise the programme truly ‘Mundus’ and adding to the above conclusions from the previous paragraph, it was decided by the EC to extend the application deadline for 2-weeks more (thus new deadline February 15th 2019). In this way it was expected to have: a) a larger number of candidates applications from Programme Countries (that is from Countries from the 4 different partners plus the ones from Europe characterised as Programme ones), b) more applications from the Heading Countries so to be able to fulfil the criteria established from EU regarding the diversification of the candidates including countries that EU has a certain interest (i.e. Kazakhstan, Brazil) or countries that do not have their students many opportunities to find scholarships (i.e., Regions 3 and 11).

3.1.2 Recruiting Phase 2 (deadline 15/02/19)

In the 2nd application phase the number of applications has increased as was expected and the final application received were 271 from 65 different countries as is clearly seen by the 2* indication in Figs. 4 and 5. From the total amount of applications received the ration related to the gender of the applicants was 68%-32% male to female (Fig. 6) something that also shows that there is a better ration compared with the previous deadline. Now as we can see clearly comparing results from Figs. 1 and 4 the number or percentage of applicants that were from the Programme and Partner countries has increased significantly compared with the 1st application deadline, a strong indication to the programme committee that the application extension deadline and the corresponding efforts for further promotion/advertising of the programme related with these countries’s candidates has brought the required results. Even more, Fig. 4 shows now a clear indication of the less percentage in the number of total applications of the candidates being from Region 6 (light blue) with an increase of countries and candidate’s applications from other regions such as Regions 8 and 11. Therefore it now seems to exist a better diversification of the future candidates in the classes and more homogenous while
possibly increasing the quality of the programme itself since the number of students to be finally selected is not dominated simply by the great amount of applicants only from one country or just region. Again the deadline extension shows at the same time that the programme had a very high appeal in more countries including now those of EU and Europe and not only outside EU and Europe, while a second ‘pole’ apart from Asian countries is noted in South America countries, making the globalization of the programme really very solid and according the programme’s and EU regulations of having candidates from all over the world and not just from one continent or a small number of countries.

3.1.3 Final Recruiting Phase and Selection

As it was clearly written in the web site of the programme (www.smaccs.eu) the applicants that applied for a Scholarship would be notified regarding their selection (or not) till May 25th 2019. Still at that point it has to be described shortly the process followed once the applications were received by the programme. So as mentioned in the evaluation protocol paragraph once the applications were received did not mean this by default that all the required docs that would be used to evaluate the candidates has been collected. On the contrary certain other docs were still to be collected till the end of the month of February such were the one of Recommendation and Motivation Letters since it was considered by the Committee that in the first case (recommendations) there might be some delay due to the fact that these letters were send directly from the referees to the programme and is well-known that sometimes there can be some delay in these cases.

Once the recommendation and motivation letters were received then it was followed the protocol and the different parts of the EC and the AC start the review process of the applications that were finally inserted in the created Excel Sheet along with the corresponding special Excel Sheet send to the Programme Director since in this way there could be at the same time the quality control that is required by the EU. The deadline that is given from EU for all the different benefited Universities of such programmes is the 15th of April, thus that would mean that the evaluation of the applicants would have to be done till then and then the EC immediately send the final Excel Sheet to the EU to give the OK with the final selection of the candidates. It has to be mentioned here that from 15th of April till 25th

![Candidates Applications and number of Candidates per Country in 2nd Deadline.](image)

![Candidates percentage regions.](image)

![Candidates Applications Gender.](image)

![Candidates Applications and # of Candidates per Country (*Countries included in initial proposal as Associated Countries - **New Countries added compared with 1st Deadline Application) - Colours referred to different Regions](image)
of May there is more than a month that some might ask the reason but this is simply due to the fact that once the secretary of the programme starts sending the official letters to the candidates it is required to have from some of them (actually the most of them) the VISA status resolved.

Finally before 25th of May the students with VISA status pending who applied for Scholarships are informed as well as the ones that applied as self-funded while the non-VISA status self-funded are informed by 30th of June. The last is due to the fact that EU candidates usually do take their last semester/quarter exams in the month of June thus it is then that they do know for sure if they have passed all the exams and are able to continue for a MSc degree.

Some interesting results also came initially out of the candidates applications since one of the issues was also to see the kind of background of the candidates since it would be able in the future to make any possible modifications in the recruiting process. Thus a first categorization based on their degrees background was done as can be seen in Fig. 7 that contained seven (7) categories as below and were:

a) Science - Environmental Science and management - Ecology and environmental management - Environmental Technology (Science 1)
b) Engineering - Building Engineering and Architecture - Automation and management - Urban Engineering (Engineering)
c) Data and science - Computer Technology - Information Technology/Management (Science 2)
d) Management and Marketing - Management/Innovation - Tourism management (Management)
e) Industrial design - International Economics relations - Social and Political Sciences - Social Work (Social)

From the above seven (7) categories finally there was a merge of categories: a and c as Science 1 and 2, d and e as Social/Management, b remained under the short name Engineering and f also remained under the short name Architecture. Thus the distribution of the total number of candidates based on the above categorization was as seen in Figure 7 below. It is quite evident, as also the call itself was mostly oriented to a rather more technical part (especially considering that the four different partners were from Engineering Schools), that the large majority of applicants had an engineering/technical background (60%). Still as was also one of the targets of the EC there were applications from Science (15%) and Architecture (20%) while still a small but very important percentage (5%) came from candidates with a background in Social/Management degrees. It has to be pointed also the large percentage of applications from Architects something clearly indicating the luck of such a programme globally and the great interest raised to the community.

Therefore the list of the funded students has been created and the total number of them selected as was required by Table 1 and were 25, 5 from Programme Countries and 20 from the rest of Regions. The final number of different countries selected were 16 (out of a total of 65, thus a 25%) with the following nationalities-countries of the applicants as shown in the Figure 8 below completing the
criteria established by the programme. There is a rather good student diversification covering four (4) continents thus completing the EU prerequisites regarding the candidates dispersion while still and mainly due to the great number and interest of candidates applications the majority of the accepted funded applications come from Region 6 (blue colour, Asia, 10) though covering five (5) different countries which shows a rather good dispersion. The average age of the selected with scholarship candidates is 25.7 years old compared with the 26.4 years average of the total amount of applications received showing that there is an interest in the programme not only from recent graduates but also from graduates that they do see this new MSc degree as a chance/opportunity to study on something that the existing market is not yet fully developed and is characterised by the experts as one that has and will have more job opportunities in really exciting and new sectors.

![Figure 8. Final Selected Candidates for Scholarships and their Corresponding Countries](image)

4 CONCLUSIONS

In this paper it was shown a methodology related to the evaluation process followed to the SMACCs programme and similar could be used by any other department/university that would like to proceed on a similar programme and especially when the candidates are from different countries, something that in general makes the recruiting procedure more difficult since different academic systems exist. Some major and minor statistics were given regarding the characteristics of the candidates and the multi-national background of them while it is very good to see that the programme had a great impact on the gender where a great percentage was noticed, something that recommendable and to be considered by the existing EC and adopt it accordingly since one of the major aspects declared by EU is the sustainability of the Programme after the initial 5-years period of time considered indirectly as a success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was partially funded by the EC under the FP7 RE-SIZED 621408 (Research Excellence for Solutions and Implementation of Net-Zero Energy City/Districts) and the H2020 SMACCs 586677EPP-1-2017-1-BE-EPPKA1-JMD-MOB (Erasmus Mundus MSc in Smart Cities & Communities), projects.

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