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Making Mobility the Norm-NORM

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IO1 DESK RESEARCH REPORT

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Contents

Executive summary

This report presents the results of desk research on the literature about mobility in the European Higher Education Area and a survey among Higher Education Institution partners of the NORM project. It is based on the analysis of reports and survey results. Its approach is primarily qualitative even though quantitative aspects are also dealt with. The report discusses different types of mobility schemes and performances (chapter 1) as well as forms of embedded mobility (chapter 2). It identifies the principal barriers and obstacles to both student and staff mobilites (chapter 3) and analyses in detail the results of a survey conducted among the HEI partners of the project. The report's principal findings confirm that the level of funding available for mobilities, especially in the Erasmus+ programme, continues to be perceived as insufficient by many students and staff members in Europe. Personal reasons remain another important obstacle, some of which might possibly be tackled in some respects, notably as far as problems of workload and recognition are concerned. To work towards the goal of making mobility windows a general practice in higher education, so-called blended mobility seems the most promising approach. There is a need for more incentives to motivate increasing numbers of students: an international distance learning experience, as well as short programmes such as intensive training programmes, summer schools or study trips abroad clearly function as pull-factors likely to trigger more physical mobility, while joint and double degree programmes with mandatory mobility provide manifest added value in terms of career perspectives. And there is a need for augmented staff incentives in terms of recognition of personal involvement, both to choose a staff mobility experience likely to trigger more student mobilities in turn, and to develop educational programmes that make mobility the norm.

Introduction

In 2008, Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune noted that "it would be logical to believe that to go and study abroad is becoming easier, even the 'norm' (in Byram et al. 2008, 12). "However," the author pursues, "mobile students represent but a minority among student populations. In most European countries, their number is considerably less than the 10% which the Brussels authorities were hoping for. Clearly, mobility is not available to everyone. While for some, it will be an obvious choice, for others, it will only be an impossible dream. For others still, it will be a necessity for which they will pay the heaviest price and, for a growing number of European students, it is becoming an uninteresting proposition" (in Byram et al. 2008, 12). More than ten years on, it appears timely to ask what the situation is like today, given the ambition of the European Commission and decision-makers of member states, including the recent European University Alliances initiative. To what extent has embedded mobility really become, if not the norm, a clear target in internationalization strategies of European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)?

A few more figures may help to frame this ambition as it has evolved over past years. "In 2009, the European Commission's High-Level Expert Forum on Mobility recommended the provision of cross-border mobility opportunities for 50% of the 'youth generation' by 2020", the authors of the report "Mobility: Closing the gap between policy and practice" note in 2012 (Colucci et al. 2012, 13). More modestly, a 2017 report on student mobility observes that "the Council conclusions on a benchmark for learning mobility (2011/C 372/08) specified that by 2020 'an EU average of at least 20% of higher education graduates should have had a period of higher education-related study or training abroad'" (Sánchez Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 2). But these are just objectives which are still quite far from being attained by HEIs

throughout Europe for a number of reasons this report will partly try to elucidate, even though some countries may have attained or come into close reach of this aim. As the results from the survey among NORM partners show, HEIs are likely to reply that they have a strategy of internationalization but the degree to which it is allowed to play a very active role in a given institution varies considerably. Our analysis of the replies from the seven HEIs clearly indicated that mandatory mobility remains the exception rather than being the rule. At the same time, the benefits of mobility for personal and professional development as well as integration as far as Europe is concerned are manifest, judging by studies such as the 2019 Erasmus+ Impact Study analysed in chapter 1. But before we reach the results of the project's proper survey, this report proposes an overview of mobility structures and performances (chapter 1), embedded mobility and mobility windows (chapter 2), followed by a discussion of challenges and main barriers to mobility in the European Higher Education Area (chapter 3) and the analysis of the project's survey (chapter 4).

Prior to that, however, it appears necessary to specify which mobile students and staff we are focusing on. As Murphy-Lejeune suggests in the article referred to above: "While the popular perception might be to classify mobile students as a homogeneous group, called "foreign" or "international" students, a more detailed classification of these students shows highly marked differences between them, particularly in the way they are treated or "welcomed" by the chosen country of study, depending on the category to which they belong, but also depending on the personal circumstances which motivate their project" (in Byram et al. 2008, 20). Murphy-Lejeune's classification of mobile students contains four categories: 1) permanent residents and internationally mobile students, 2) Europeans and non-Europeans, 3) institutional exchange students and free movers, 4) "A last distinction must be drawn within intra-European institutional mobility where several types of agreements exist" (in Byram et al. 2008, 20-22). In the present case, we will focus almost exclusively on intra-European institutional mobility and students, as well as staff, whose home institutions are part of the EHEA. Having distinguished different types of mobile students and staff, we now look at different types of mobility, including indications as to how they are defined.

Chapter 1
Mobility Schemes and Forms in Higher Education

1.1. Glossary

Academic mobility

Refers to students and teachers in higher education moving to another institution inside or outside of their own country to study or teach for a limited time.

Blended mobility

Combination of physical meetings abroad with 'virtual' teamwork from the home base.

Credit mobility

- The mobility of an exchange student, who stays at a host institution for a period, during which s/he can carry out activities awarding academic credits, which are then recognised by the home institution. short-term study periods (ECTS User's Guide, 2015).
- A mobility – usually a maximum of one year – aiming at the acquisition of credits in a foreign institution in the framework of on-going studies at the home institution. Thus, the student typically begins a programme in the home institution, moves to another institution for an agreed part of the programme, and then returns to the home institution in order to finish the programme. (Bologna report, 2012, 153)

- It is defined as temporary tertiary education and/or a study-related traineeship abroad within the framework of enrolment in a tertiary education programme at a "home institution" for the purpose of gaining academic credits (i.e. credits that will be recognised at the home institution (Bologna report, 2018, 252).

Degree mobility

- Degree mobility is a long-term form of mobility which aims at the acquisition of a whole degree or certificate in the country of destination (Bologna Report, 2012, p. 153)
- Degree mobility, the long-term form of mobility, is the physical crossing of a national border to enrol in a tertiary level degree programme in the country of destination. Students are enrolled as regular students in any semester/term of a degree programme taught in the country of destination, which is different from their country of origin (128) with the intention of graduating from the programme in the country of destination (Bologna report 2018, p. 252)
- Learning mobility for degree purposes, even if only part of the programme is undertaken abroad, e.g. in a jointly delivered or jointly awarded degree programme (Mapping University Mobility Project, 2015).

Double degree / joint programmes

(jointly developed by two or more international universities) are **agreed mobility schemes** adopted by the partner institutions, which include the rules for the automatic recognition of credits.

Duration of mobility

Short term mobility – international or comparative courses, supplementary/ elective courses, preparation of dissertation, language courses, summer schools abroad–the educational components with learning outcomes that can be easily achieved abroad and can be organised for groups of students or chosen individually by the student.

In the Erasmus Impact Study, short term mobility is defined as a academic mobility under 2 months.

Mid-term mobility is defined as an academic mobility from 2 – 6 months,

Long-term mobility above 6 months.

Free-movers

participate in credit mobility outside organised student mobility programs, when students choose a host institution and organise their studies at that institution independently.

Incoming and outward mobility

Incoming mobility refers to the country of destination – the country where the student moves to in order to study, while outward mobility refers to the country of origin – the country of permanent/prior residence or prior education from where the student moves.

Mobility windows

– a period of time reserved for international student mobility that is embedded into the curriculum, but may not be mandatory (Ferencz et al. 2013, 12).

Traineeships (internships/work placements) abroad/Student mobility for traineeship

are relevant for degree-related learning and personal development needs and, if possible, integrated in study programme; students/graduates' international work experience located outside the home country. The work is usually with a company, government or non-government entity, a research group or institute or some other organization abroad allowing hands-on experience in a student's major area of educational concentration or career interest.

***International distance learning experience*:** participation in a course fully or partly provided online by the student's home institution. The international dimension of the experience is due to the fact that teachers and/or students from outside the student's country of study are participating in the course or portion of course. Students might be either receiving lectures or contributing themselves to the content through student presentation which may or may not be prepared in pairs or small groups of students enrolled whose home institutions are located in at least two, if not more countries.

1.2 Mobility strategies

As Tommaso Agasisti has noted, "the literature on higher education points out that, when institutions behave strategically (i.e. defining their own priorities, within the set of rules and incentives defined by a national/regional public authority), the role of management is pivotal in determining" (Agasisti 2017, 187). According to Agasisti, developing a strategy thus means determining priorities within the framework defined by relevant authorities at regional and/or national level. It is clear from the research literature and the project's survey, that most HEIs are likely to indicate that they have a strategy of internationalisation. Of what it may

exactly consist is a matter not easy to determine since HEIs are not necessarily prepared to communicate about this openly. It seems obvious enough though that mobility plays a key role in this context and that mobility performance may be considered a central indicator as to the dynamics of such a process at a given HEI. As Colucci observes, HEIs "are aware of the opportunities presented by transnational and international mobility. Equally, they feel the pressure put on them not only to promote it, but to deliver it in measurable quantitative balance. They know full well that, depending on their national operating environment, the strategic imperative might generate performance indicators, while at the same time the internationally agreed instruments for measuring mobility might not be fully up and running." (Colucci 2012, 28).

Whatever the case may be, an important dimension of this strategy concerns *mobility flows*, that-is-to-say, the number of incoming and outgoing mobilities, as well as the balance between them, a critical issue, especially when considered as a potential indicator. Some European countries are clearly doing better in this respect than others, and logically also some HEIs more than others. Latest figures analysed by Brzenik and Skrbiniek indicate "Spain, France, Germany and Italy as the core centres for SMS mobility," the authors adding "we also find that countries in Northern Europe (Sweden, Finland, the United Kingdom), together with Portugal, are good receivers only, whilst Belgium and the Czech Republic are good senders only" (Brzenik and Skrbiniek 2020, 114). The question of mobility flows thus varies considerably from one country to another and, once again, among HEIs. According to one author, it appears even difficult, if not impossible, to obtain robust figures at national level since for instance "in France, there is no national system to systematically collect statistics concerning students abroad, nor is there a statistical device that would allow us to seize and monitor the evolution of international mobility among French students and academics" (Ballatore 2017, note 7 ; our translation). Ballatore suggests that national organisms can only produce estimates and that they do so by relying on several sources.

Credit mobility and degree mobility

If one wants to produce a large picture of mobility flows and related strategies, it is also necessary to distinguish between *credit mobility* and *degree mobility*, as Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi notably do in their report on student mobility in tertiary education, both of which depend on the *regional dimension of learning mobility,* including

"level of urbanisation, employment opportunities and regional education systems" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 3). Their conclusions reveal clear differences in terms of volume and distribution as far as the two types of mobility are concerned: 1) "degree mobility appears to be very concentrated in a few countries, while credit mobility tends to be more equally distributed across Member States"; 2) "degree mobility is higher than credit mobility across and within countries"; 3) "institutional characteristics tend to be associated with student mobility more than regional ones"; 4) "among institutional characteristics, better quality universities and those with a higher reputation are associated with a higher share of mobile students, while research orientation and excellence are more relevant for degree mobile PhD students"; 5)"among regional characteristics, the level of urbanisation of the region is an important factor in shaping students' mobility: high-density regions have higher degree mobility rates, but a lower share of credit mobile students" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 2). Of particular interest in our context is the difference between undergraduate and graduate mobility on the one hand, as well as PhD mobility on the other and the connection of the latter with the research orientation of an HEI. In terms of strategy, it seems apparent that HEIs do not deploy the same strategy according to different levels of study and early stage research, or that they do not reach the same or comparable results at each level.

Attractiveness of countries and HEIs

Concerning the attractiveness of *degree mobility*, Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi observe that it "appears to be very concentrated in certain countries, with the top three destinations (the UK, DE and FR) covering almost 80% of the mobile student population" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 13). As to *credit mobility*, it seems "more equally distributed among EU countries, with the top five destinations (which are also the five largest countries in the EU) receiving, altogether, just over half of the EU's total credit mobile students" Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 13). The same report reveals that Spain is "the main destination among Erasmus students" with more than 16.3% of all credit mobile students in 2013, followed by Germany (12.2Ù) and France (9.6%), the UK being fourth (9.4%). If one looks at the question from the point-of-view of HEI attractiveness, the same report shows that "eight of the top 10 HEIs that receive degree mobile students are based in the UK; three of these are located in London" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 14). The authors also note a similar dominance of one country when it comes to the attractiveness of

HEIs in terms of *credit mobility*: "Seven of the top 10 HEIs that receive Erasmus students are Spanish, with the University of Granada, the Complutense University of Madrid and the University of Valencia being the top three. The only non-Spanish universities are the Italian University of Bologna, the Czech Charles University in Prague and KU Leuven in Belgium" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 14). This appears to somewhat contradict the idea of the Czech Republic only sending students. Whatever the case may be, the striking difference between *degree mobility* and *credit mobility* destinations is explained by the authors as being in all likelihood due to "the presence of students from outside the EU" as far as the former is concerned (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 17).

Pull factors

The issue of attractiveness raises the question of *pull factors*, arguably an aspect of immediate interest in any institutional reflection on internationalization strategies. Such factors concern both teaching and research in *degree mobility*, as Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi observe (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 35). Regarding the former, this includes the teacher-student ratio and the level of fees. As to the latter, international rankings play an increasing role. Though this may still be a matter of debate, it seems apparent that there is a "positive relationship between the research activities of HEIs and the number of mobile students received, in particular for PhD students" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 36).

To return one more time to the question of the particular attractiveness of certain countries in relation to *credit mobility*, it has been suggested that "warmer countries might be more attractive" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 37 in allusion to Rodríguez-González et al. 2011). However, despite climate change, neither Germany nor the UK are necessarily considered "warmer countries" and still figure in the top 4 countries as *credit mobility* destinations. Rodríguez-González et al.'s conclusion that "Erasmus flows are somewhat driven by leisure/consumption" (Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi 2017, 37 in allusion to Rodríguez-González et al. 2011) is not supported by more recent results, as both the Sánchez-Barrioluengo and Flisi report and an ESN survey from 2016 analysed below show, even though Rodríguez-González et al.'s perimeters of "country size, cost of living, distance, educational background, university quality, the host country language and climate" (Rodríguez-González et al. 2011, 413) continue to be important factors as far as student and

staff mobility choices are concerned, though preferences in terms of climate may concern both "warmer" and "colder" countries.

Blended mobility

The term *blended mobility* has come increasingly to the fore in view of internationalisation strategies. Experience from the recent COVID-19 crisis that forced many European HEIs to resort systematically to online teaching and distance learning will no doubt lend arguments to those who believe that a mixed strategy of distance learning experiences in an international context and physical mobility to a foreign destination might be a more efficient tool to develop mobility flows as part of an HEI's internationalization strategy, especially embedded blended mobility. The distance learning experience in an international context has been frequently referred to as a "virtual mobility", a term the NORM project does not consider efficient to describe such an experience, even though the definition of "virtual mobility" provided by Caldirola et al. may serve to sum up what we refer to as an *international distance learning experience*: "a learning method which resorts to the ITCs to generate learning environments which include the collaboration of people from different countries in order to study and work together with the objective of improving intercultural understanding and knowledge transfer" (Caldirola et al. 2014, 203). If this description may serve as a definition of a an international distance learning experience, we can follow Caldirola et al. in identifying three principal challenges: 1) "The academic contents must be designed considering the special characteristics of an international exchange" (Caldirola et al. 2014, 203); 2) "Social learning and social aspects must be exploited in order to turn a single international e-learning experience into a more qualitative experience, comparable to a real mobility one" (Caldirola et al. 2014, 204); 3) "a student in a virtual mobility must acquire cultural knowledge from the host university's environment" (Caldirola et al. 2014, 203). The challenges thus concern academic content, social contact and cultural knowledge as well as interculturality. To what extent such a virtual experience could increasingly become an alternative to physical mobility is of course a matter of debate, if not a heated matter. It seems manifest, nonetheless, that the majority of European students will remain non-mobile for a long time to come, the 50% objective notwithstanding, and that a virtual experience could therefore be seen not only "as a complement of real mobility, but it can also be an alternative to it" (Caldirola et al. 2014, 203). That such a virtual experience is to be considered a complement of physical mobility is

of course one of the premises of *blended mobility*. To consider virtual experiences as an alternative, however, seems more controversial, although the new European University Alliances will resort massively to this device to (partly) attain their mobility targets. As we will see below, there are some study areas which are notoriously *immobile*, partly due to national regulations. International distance learning experiences might be an excellent way to allow students to come into contact with other learning environments and cultures at international level. More importantly for the present purpose, though, they might reveal themselves to be an efficient means of convincing students to opt for a physical mobility experience thereafter. But this is only one of the strategic devices an HEI can use or, rather, this is only part of a strategy that strives to make mobility the NORM as we will see below in chapter 2.

It should also be pointed out here, that virtual experiences foster specific challenges, identified by Caldirola et al. principally as relating to language issues (Caldirola et al. 2014, 207), technological competence (Caldirola et al. 2014, 208) and coordination (Caldirola et al. 2014, 209). The last of these three might prove particularly tackling given the variety of traditions in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as far as academic calendars and curricula are concerned. Facilitating technology and coordination appears one of the principal institutional challenges in this respect, as well as creating and enhancing *pull factors* concerning both students and staff to impact the performance of HEIs, a subject we turn to at present.

1.3. Mobility performances and impact

Erasmus+ impact study 2019

The most recent general study presenting results of interest in the present context, that-is-to-say the objective of mandatory mobilities and the principal obstacles to student and staff mobility, is the Erasmus+ Impact Study 2019 (Souto-Otero et al., 2019). It is based on 77 000 surveys. The study starts off by indicating the total number of Erasmus+ mobilities in the period 2014-18: “two million students and staff in higher education undertook a learning, training or teaching period abroad with the new Erasmus+ programme” (Souto-Otero et al.,

2019, 1). In view of discussing barriers to mobility, it is worth remembering some principal results of the survey about the impact of mobilities. As far as students are concerned, 72% indicate that the mobility "had been beneficial or highly beneficial in finding their first job" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 1). Regarding traineeships, "40% of participants who went on a traineeship were offered jobs with the companies/organisations in which they did their traineeship, and around 10% started their own company" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 1). As to students' main motivations, this is what they indicate: "experience life abroad (70% of students), improve their language (62%) and soft skills (49%), expand their social network (49%) and improve their career chances (49%)" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 3). **The principal barriers are financial concerns and personal reasons**: "around two thirds of non-mobile students reported some type of financial concern and around one in two reported family reasons and personal relationships" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 5). The authors of the study observe nonetheless that "the relative importance of a number of barriers, however, has decreased significantly under Erasmus+ compared to the previous programme", mentioning three points in particular: lack of information as a barrier has been reduced by over 50%, uncertainty about the costs of a stay by about 47% and uncertainty about the grant level by around 88% (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 5).

As to staff impact, the main reasons for staff mobilities are "collaboration and networking (93%), the development of field knowledge (93%) and the opportunity to experience different learning and teaching methods (89%)" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 5). The main barriers are "family reasons and personal relationships (67%)" as well as "working responsibilities in the home institution (64%)", followed by "Difficulties in finding an appropriate institution abroad (51%) and lack of information about the Erasmus+ programme and how it works (50%)" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 6). Staff who have taken part in Erasmus+ mobilities are considered more innovative, the study remarks and tend to cooperate more with the labour market (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 6).

To end on this introductory note, the Higher Education Institutions' principal impacts are improvements in their international competitiveness and the quality of their programmes (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 7). The demand for mobility in institutions is "higher than the number of places available, both for students (24%) and staff (28%)", whereas "in 21% of

institutions there is a lower demand than student mobility places available, and in 19% this is (the) case for staff" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 7).

Barriers perceived by students

To turn to barriers perceived by students in more detail, "additional financial burden is perceived as the main obstacle to enrolment abroad for students who have not studied abroad and are not planning to" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 22). Indeed, "**Around two thirds of the surveyed students rated financial aspects as either a quite big obstacle or a big obstacle**. This compares to 47 % who rated the separation from partner, children, and friends as a (quite) big obstacle, followed by insufficient foreign language skills (29 %), expected problems with the recognition of credits gained abroad, and a lack of information provided by the home institution (each 22 %)" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 22; my emphasis). The study also indicates that financial barriers are "more prevalent in Southern and Eastern Europe" and higher for students with non-academic family backgrounds. Problems with the recognition of credits also appear to be more acute in Southern and Eastern Europe, just like the lack of information from home institutions. It is worth noting that the extension of the list of barriers that students could choose from in 2016 to eight items (home ties, alternative expectations, disruption to studies, financial barriers, administrative problems, doubts about educational system, language problems, and lack of interest) did not produce significantly different results. "Overall," the authors point out, "the literature on barriers to mobility suggests that barriers to individual mobility are commonly attributable to **socio-economic and also to personal background and attitudinal factors**" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 23; my emphasis).

Barriers perceived by staff

As to barriers perceived by staff, it is first of all important to note that "no specific evidence distinguishing barriers by type of staff was identified in the research reviewed", with the exception of language skills (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 24). The main barriers indicated are **personal and family situations, language skills deficit and legal difficulties** (differences between social security systems, double taxation, and difficulty to obtain visas in some non-EU countries), as well as "lack of motivation and clear paths for career development as well as heavy workloads at home institutions" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 24). Another factor is the lack of recognition of the value of periods abroad. Teaching hours abroad tend not to be included in the mandatory teaching load of an academic, nor is their formal recognition of an

administrative experience abroad in view of career advancement. The same remark is valid for mobilities of administrative staff.

Barriers perceived by HEIs

From the point-of-view of HEI's, such **administrative mobilities** may be seen as an extra burden because of the **difficulty of "temporary replacement of mobile staff"** (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 24; my emphasis). Another issue is the **recognition of qualifications** of incoming staff and legal, as well as **administrative restrictions on employment contracts**.

Questions concerning internationalisation of studies at HEIs included "embedded mobilities" as an indicator of degrees of internationalisation. They reveal interesting results: "For many students, mobility is mandatory or an option explicitly integrated in the curriculum (embedded mobility). Between about half and one third of HEIs, depending on the field of study, report that mobility is mandatory or an option in at least in some of their study programmes" (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 165)

Business, Administration and Law are the most internationalised fields. As far as law is concerned, replies from NORM partners except UVSQ seem to be in contradiction with this indication. In the case of UVSQ, it can be observed that a considerable number of its law students are interested in international relations, a specialisation offered during their third and final year at bachelor level.

To return to the general European figures, business, administration and law are **followed by the arts and humanities** (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 165). Credit mobilities are an important tool in this respect as half of HEI's indicate (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 168).

The authors of the study conclude that **staff mobilities still have not become "a normal way of development"** (Souto-Otero et al., 2019, 183; my emphasis), unlike students who are far more actively participating in mobility programmes.

ESN 2016 survey

The second important document of reference in view of *mobility performance* is a survey by the Erasmus Student Network from 2016, entitled "The International-Friendliness of Universities", published on Feb 6, 2017 (Josek et al., 2016). Its key findings concern five topics: student migration in Europe, services for international students, academic adaptation,

social adaptation, as well as re-integration and post-mobility. The key findings in relation to the subject of potential obstacles to mobility can be summed up in the following way:

Student migration in Europe

- Only 10.2% of students considered that 80% or more of their expenses were covered.

Services for international students

- Only 48% of the total number of respondents were actually assigned a buddy.

Academic adaptation

- Overall satisfaction with studies abroad was higher when respondents agreed that professors supported the interaction of students from different countries.
- Creating an international-friendly environment is very important for a positive exchange experience.

Social adaptation

- Both exchange students (33%) and local students (35%) believe there are not enough opportunities for the two groups to interact.

Re-integration and post-mobility

- Close to 70% of the respondents believe that re-entry services should be offered to students after their return from abroad.

Comments: The report contains many interesting points but only those in relation to NORM are focused on here. They can be interpreted in the following way:

- The **funding** of Erasmus+ mobilities is still **not provided at a sufficient level** for many students; this issue represents one of the major obstacles, if not the principal barrier.
- Buddy programmes are far from being the norm though their efficiency is well-known, that-is-to-say **fear of social isolation** may well be identified as another obstacle.

- An internationally friendly environment is a major criterion for a successful mobility; this point connects with the previous one.
- About one third of students believes there is **not enough interaction between international and local students** which might be experienced by them as a disappointment.
- Two thirds of students indicate that re-entry services should be offered, suggesting there are **not enough re-entry services provided currently**.

In conclusion from this report, the two major concerns ESN identified are **insufficient funding** and **fear of social isolation**. They also provide a recommendation in identifying the students' need of re-entry services which are far from being common. Another major point emerging is the **importance of buddy programmes**. The present author's university UVSQ is a founding and associate member of the University of Paris-Saclay, one of France's and internationally leading Research Intensive Universities. Paris-Saclay is currently setting up a buddy programme as the importance and efficiency of such an action has been clearly identified by its international office. Finally, it is most interesting to note and stress that **the ESN report does not identify regional preferences as a decisive factor for students** to determine if they choose a physical mobility experience or not. Last but not least, the pivotal role of HEIs in providing an internationally friendly environment and staff to motivate students is confirmed by the survey.

Chapter 2
Embedded Mobility

2.1. Mobility Windows

Mobility windows play an essential part in building up regular *mobility flows*, one of the clear indicators of an HEI's internationalization strategy and performance. Having observed this, it is important to point out, however, as de Moor and Henderiks do, "that such intensive collaborations are realistic and feasible ***only for a limited number of specific, strategically selected international curricula***: niche specialisations, small disciplines, comparative approaches, international subject areas and top class international curricula, which also attract international students from outside the partner institutions" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 13; my emphasis). According to the authors, "Programmes best suited for embedded mobility are typically more research driven (e.g. the Erasmus Mundus programme on Nanotechnology between three European research teams), in which the complementarity in scientific expertise, technological logistics and equipment can be fully exploited." (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 15). Other examples would include "programmes that correspond to small scientific fields (so-called 'orchid-disciplines') or that are highly specialized" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 15). The author of this report can confirm this idea in some respects, having co-created a Master 2 programme in interdisciplinary Arctic Studies entirely taught in English in 2010. The programme's team consists of colleagues from Human and Social Science as well as environment and climate studies. Admittedly, a lot of the pedagogical and research expertise of the team was available at UVSQ right from the start, and, in time, within the larger framework of the University of Paris-Saclay. Two targeted Associate Professor recruitments were also possible over the years, but some required competence cannot be provided by the University of Paris-Saclay that the programme has been affiliated with since 2015. The programme's conference cycle worth 3 ECTS allows us to bring in visiting professors, either in person (thanks to an Erasmus+ staff mobility notably) or online. A double degree partially related to the field is currently under preparation at UVSQ.

Be that as it may, the development of mobility windows and joint or double degrees requires special efforts from staff and HEIs, as de Moor and Henderikx also point out: "Collaborative curricula and mobility require strategic partnerships at the curriculum level" (Moor and Henderikx 2012, 17). Such structured collaboration may represent an additional burden in terms of workload but the benefits for students, both those benefiting from a mobility window and free movers, as well as HEIs are manifest, de Moor and Henderikx note: "More structured collaboration will also contribute to the attractiveness of curricula for international students from outside the partner institutions" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 18). As to staff and HEIs: "Collaborative curricula strongly reflect the university's ambitions for high quality teaching, similarly to the high quality standards they expect in international research and innovation" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 18). Should staff be lacking motivation, one last element may be persuasive, at least from the management's point-of-view: **"**In some cases, programmes and curricula may become more cost-effective, i.e. when staff and resources are pooled and shared, especially in areas of specialisation and expensive infrastructure" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 18). One might add that career enhancement both for students and staff is another vector for motivation since the managing of and graduating from an international programme with structured mobility is no doubt considered as added value in any *curriculum vitae*.

Having made these observations, let us turn to the typology and analysis of mobility windows provided by Irina Ferencz et al. in the report entitled "Mobility Windows. From Concept to Practice. (Ferencz et al. 2013), based on the study of 32 bachelor and master programmes from Finland, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands and Romania (Ferencz et al. 2013, 12). The authors identify four types of *mobility windows* (Ferencz et al. 2013, 13): two *'extrema'* and two hybrid types:

- optional windows with loosely-prescribed content (Op-Lop) – the most flexible type of windows;
- mandatory mobility windows with highly-prescribed content (Ma-Hip) – the most structured type of mobility windows;

- mandatory windows with loosely-prescribed content (Ma-Lop) – more rigid in terms of the mobility experience and more flexible in terms of content; and
- optional windows with highly-prescribed content (Op-Hip) – more flexible in terms of the mobility experience and more rigid in terms of content.

Concerning the development or setting up of mobility windows, the authors observe that initiatives in this respect are usually launched *bottom-up* rather than *top-down* (Ferencz et al. 2013, 14). Although this may be true in general, it does seem apparent, nonetheless, that International Offices are likely to be of active assistance in this respect, if they are not the driving force behind a given project. Admittedly, the authors remark that "the success of mobility windows thus depends on both individual initiative and top-down support at the institutional, national and European levels" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 14).

What about the institutional reasons, in that case, for developing mobility windows? Ferencz et al. suggest a number of reasons and objectives: *developing closer cooperation with partners, developing the quality of the study programme, enhancing overall internationalization, international character of subject field, integrated mobility as an inherent element of joint programmes* (Ferencz et al. 2013, 49). But there is also the *"*student-focused rationale" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 50): *providing better education possibilities for students, enhancing students' employability*, as well as the "policy-focused rationale" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 50-51): *implementing institutional/national/European policy, increasing student mobility*.

The authors then identify institutional challenges in creating mobility windows. Apart from problems concerning the matching of curricula and academic calendars (very different from each other in the Franco-German context, for instance, with the German second or summer semester starting several months after the second French semester), mobility windows require extra funding (Ferencz et al. 2013, 73). Such additional cost usually has to be met through public funding (Ferencz et al. 2013, 74), entailing extra work in preparing, writing and submitting projects to request financial support. Some HEIs (or pedagogical teams) might find it difficult to provide a sufficient number of classes in English, unless the framework is bilateral, including the objective of linguistic proficiency in the partners' respective national

languages (Ferencz et al. 2013, 86). The content of courses may also be difficult to compare (Ferencz et al. 2013, 86) though it might also be pointed out that a lot of good will is required from the start to make such collaborative mobility work. In any case, the practical advice given by Ferencz et al. seems worth bearing in mind when intending to set up mobility windows: "Knowing the partner institutions and their curricula, credit and grading practices is therefore one of the key elements in ensuring the recognition of studies abroad" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 87) – hence the importance of monitoring and staff mobilities in view of team-building.

Regarding the students' point-of-view, the biggest challenges identified by Ferencz et al. are the following: "get used to different styles of teaching and learning in the host country", "examination formats and frequencies which students were not used to", as well as g*eneral mobility-related challenges: "*adaption to the foreign culture and language", *"*finding accommodation in the host" and *personal challenges* such as *"*homesickness, especially if the study abroad period was the first time the student had left home, or difficulties in maintaining a long-distance relationship" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 93-94).

To end, the authors voice a number of recommendations. The two most salient points concern a demand from students for preparatory courses, and advice for HEIs to motivate their staff: the latter "should set up institution-wide policies, rules and regulations for the introduction and operation of mobility windows, inclusive of compensation packages for those staff in charge of organising them (who are so far mostly 'volunteers')" (Ferencz et al. 2013, 93-94). This is of course a crucial matter since the setting up of mobility windows clearly requires a considerable work effort. Staff might only be inclined to become very active in such projects if there are incentives. Concerning teachers and researchers, this includes recognition of time spent on a mobility project within one's mandatory teaching and/or working hours. Increasing numbers of HEIs appear to adapt their rules in this respect by introducing for instance the possibility to have one's mandatory teaching hours reduced in order to spend the corresponding number of hours on a project in the field of pedagogical innovation, including the development of mobility windows. As to administrative staff, such personal investment should be recognised in the regular evaluation of their work.

2.2. Joint and Double Degrees

The most structured form of collaborative mobility are joint and double degrees. While the former are often very difficult, if not impossible, to implement owing to national regulations in some countries, double degree programmes may be rather time-consuming to prepare but certainly not impossible to develop. Indeed, as Suzanne Beech points out: "The last thirty years have witnessed a significant increase in the volume of students seeking an international education; globally the numbers have tripled since the 1980s" (Beech 2018, 18). Beech is of course largely focusing on the situation in the UK where international programmes with targeted extra fees for international students are the rule, rather than the exception. As to other European HEIs, increasing numbers of them have tried to cater for this demand, discovering, as they go along, that international programmes may not only provide their research structures with additional excellent students who might be potential candidates for a PhD at their institution but also with additional funds. The private HEI sector has been operating in this mode for many years. As to the public sector, pressure is increasing to generate extra funds through inscription fees. Germany has witnessed a number of cases and France has recently voted a law stipulating additional fees for international bachelor and master degree students. Whatever one may think of such regulations, double and multilateral degree programmes have been developing in Europe. The best-known example of programmes for which dedicated European funding can be sought are *Erasmus Mundus* projects that may serve as an "inspirational conceptual framework" for this type of degree with an international curriculum and "embedded mobility flows" (De Moor and Henderikx 2012, 12-13).

Given the remarks about the challenges of setting up mobility windows discussed above, it is apparent that the development of a double or multilateral degree programme represents a number of additional difficulties and possible barriers, starting with the elaboration of the very agreement linking HEIs stemming from different national contexts. Maria Yarosh et al. have identified a number of intercultural challenges to be mastered by students of such programmes: "studying at different foreign universities; not necessarily in exactly the same field as ones' undergraduate degree", "diversity students encounter within the group of their

classmates" and "outside the university", "living in the same flat with people from other cultures" etc. (Yarosh et al. 2018, 60). It may be observed that these points do not seem to be specific to double degree programmes since students going on a credit mobility are likely to face similar challenges.

As to the institutional barriers, the situation may differ considerably from one country and HEI to another. Magali Hardouin has discussed them from a French point-of-view and identifies a number of internal difficulties of HEIs to develop Erasmus Mundus projects (Hardouin 2020). Such problems include, according to the French National Higher Education and Research Evaluation Agency HCERES, the lack of proper internationalising dynamics at an institution, notably because its Senior Leadership does not consider that such an objective should be one of its priorities (Hardouin 2020, point 42). Lack of interest may also be observed among staff, though one needs to differentiate between research mobilities, very largely developed and popular in French Higher Education, and teaching staff mobilites which remain exceptional (Hardouin 2020, point 43). Hardouin quotes a staff member from one international office as having said that it is always the same colleagues who opt for such an experience. As to administrative staff, they generally benefit very rarely or in any case "insufficiently" from such an experience (Hardouin 2020, point 45). Another important barrier is the lack of proficiency in English of staff members (Hardouin 2020, point 46), as well as lacking incentives to improve one's language skills although programmes do exist. Finally, projects like Erasmus Mundus are considered too complex and time-consuming to develop. French medium-size and smaller universities in particular see themselves at a disadvantage in this respect, notably as far as human resources are concerned (Hardouin 2020, point 47). The low success-rate of relevant calls is another important barrier.

2.3. European universities

The last two points are also frequently voiced in relation to the recent European University Alliance initiative. Many HEIs decided against participation in the first round because of lacking motivation, resources and appropriate networks. According to the EUA Survey of

April 2020, “staff mobility closely followed by student mobility are most often mentioned as activities of such partnerships, in line with the focus on learning and teaching of many of such partnerships” (EUA 2020). Less than half of the projects selected during the first round also contain a strong research component. EUGLOH – “the European University Alliance for Global Health” – piloted by the University of Paris-Saclay is a case in hand (https://www.eugloh.eu). Concerning the challenges that consortia interested in such a project have to face, EUA mentions a number of points of special interest to us in the present context: firstly, “the need to provide substantial amounts of co-funding and ensure long-term sustainability”; secondly, regarding principal obstacles: “A lack of funding and other resources, time constraints as well as the difficulty to find partners are the reasons most often cited for higher education institutions not to participate”, and “the development of the research dimension” of such projects are mainly referred to. Having been partly associated with the process of developing the EUGLOH project, the author of this report can confirm that such projects are very time-consuming as far as their preparation and their execution are concerned. Once accepted, the project funds do allow HEIs to hire extra help to manage their consortium. Nonetheless, the expected mobility flows (50% of all EUGLOH students, be it physical mobility or an international distance learning experience) require the mobilization of many staff hours and contacts likely to deter some, if not many, from engaging in such an adventure, the sustainability of which beyond the project’s life cycle is difficult to achieve.

Chapter 3
Mobility – main barriers and challenges

3.1. General Barriers

The question of main barriers and challenges to mobilities needs to be considered in view of different stakeholder groups: students, staff (academic and administrative) as well as HEIs. The previous chapter has provided a number of elements to identify the principal barriers of staff mobilities: personal reasons (notably family life), lack of motivation due to non-recognition of mobilities in career assessments, lacking proficiency in English and other foreign languages, to which might be added the inappropriate level of the teaching mobility grant – according to some colleagues - in view of certain European destinations, especially some cities such as London, Paris or Munich.

As to HEIs, a major challenge to the development of dynamic mobility flows and embedded mobility in particular are lacking human resources and the extra workload the writing of new projects (in view of obtaining mobility funds notably) represents.

What about students, then? A report from 2007 published by ESIB, a network of national student unions in Europe, lists a number of items that were also prominent in the more recent ESN survey analysed above: discrimination in the education system of their home country (students with disabilities and chronical diseases, students with children or students from lower socio-cultural classes and socio-economic background), financing of the mobility period, the language proficiency, the availability of information on all matters concerning the mobility period, the recognition of study periods and degrees, the suitability of a mobility period in the respective curriculum structure and the field of study of the respective student (Brus and Scholz 2007, 17). It is interesting to note that potential discrimination comes top of the list in this report. This is an issue that continues to be a matter of concern. As noted above, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to be less mobile. This challenge is of course connected to the next point, financial issues, by far the most common barrier mentioned by studies and surveys. To counteract this dual tendency, in some countries and HEIs, mobility grants may be cumulated with other scholarships. In France, for instance, Erasmus+ mobility grants may be complemented by a scholarship from the regional authorities or other student scholarships awarded on social criteria. As to the value of Erasmus+ grants, lobbying efforts are currently on-going to achieve a significant rise of the mobility grants for students, notably the #Erasmus500 campaign launched by the European University Foundation (https://erasmus500.eu). As to the other points mentioned by the 2007 report, language proficiency might be less of a problem today than it was more than ten years ago given the growing role of English-language courses in curricula and English-language certifications in diploma. Nonetheless, socio-economic barriers are likely to play a role in this respect as well as students from more modest backgrounds may have benefitted from fewer opportunities to spend a term or a long holiday in an English-speaking country. HEIs usually provide considerable assistance to students in view of developing their language skills, notably thanks to their language centres, but attendance of these is far from mandatory for the

majority of students. As to the availability of information, this point is frequently mentioned by students though International Offices spend a good part of their energy promoting international mobility programmes, including presentations in lecture halls and during special Erasmus Days, mobilizing students to present their own mobility experience either in face-to-face meetings or via recorded audio-visual messages. The latter means is just one example of how international offices might have to adapt their communication strategies given the fact that students rarely consult institutional websites these days. Communication via social media is likely to reach a far wider audience, though differences may also be observed in the use of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter etc. Facebook, for example, no longer appears to attract large crowds of young people in western Europe while remaining very popular in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Regarding the issue of recognition, the ECTS system has of course facilitated decisively the recognition process. Nonetheless, as students have pointed out to the present author, some of their teachers do not easily accept the content of some courses at a partner university as equivalent or comparable with the curriculum of the home institution. Though the assumption usually is that students will greatly benefit from a mobility experience, some teachers visibly find it hard to accept that the students' study programme might vary somewhat from what the students would have been taught at home. Last but not least, statistics confirm that students from certain study fields clearly tend to be less mobile than others. As the 2007 report notes: "In general more students from humanities are mobile than students from engineering" (Brus and Scholz 2007, 24). According to the authors, the most mobile study areas are business studies, languages, social science and engineering, whereas the least mobile fields would be agriculture, geography, maths and computer science as well as communication. The project partners have identified other areas, especially theology, science in general and teacher training mobilities. The latter has also been listed by a number of studies referred to by Bauer and Kreuz who consider teacher training students as a "highly underrepresented group within the context of Erasmus and EHEA students" (Bauer and Kreuz 2015, 101).

Other underrepresented fields of study include health sciences and law, depending on the national context, although the latter may also be one of the most dynamic fields in a given HEI, notably as far as studies in international relations are concerned. In some French HEIs,

they are part of study programmes of Faculties offering Political Science and Law, a fact that leads to consider a number of case studies since the picture can vary quite considerably across the EHEA.

3.2. Case studies

Case study with participants from the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Poland, Sweden and the UK

A fairly large-scale study of cases was presented by Vossensteyn et al. in 2010, collecting replies from the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK. The survey contained a long list of reasons to choose from for non-mobile students to explain their reasons for not having chosen a physical mobility experience so far (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 87; the percentages indicate average scores):

- will take part at a later date (42%)
- applied but was not selected (6%)
- uncertainty about the benefits of the ERASMUS period abroad (19%)
- lack of information about ERASMUS programme and how it works (26%)
- difficulties to meet ERASMUS administrative requirements (16%)
- high competition to obtain an ERASMUS grant (22%)
- ERASMUS grant was insufficient to cover additional cost of period abroad (29%)
- I would lose part of my income in my home country (due to job, lack of flexibility of student financing system in my country of study, etc.) (20%)
- was not offered my preferred institution abroad (19%)
- it was not possible to choose the institution abroad myself (15%)
- difficulties to find appropriate institution and/or study programme abroad (25%)
- uncertainty about education quality abroad (21%)
- uncertainty about education system abroad (e.g. examinations) (25%)
- the study period abroad is too long (11%)
- the study period abroad is too short (8%)

- expected difficulties with the recognition of credits in my home institution (31%)
- lack of integration/continuity between study subjects at home and abroad (32%)
- incompatibility of academic calendar year between my home country of study and abroad (18%)
- need to delay studies due to the study period abroad (29%)
- lack of language skills to follow a course abroad (24%)
- lack of study programmes in English in hosting institution (abroad) (25%)
- decided to study for a full degree at a later date (12%)
- lack of support to find accommodation or in other student services abroad (16%)
- family reasons or personal relationships (29%)
- work responsibilities in my home country of study (14%)

Quite reassuringly one might say, the top score of the list is obtained by the item "will take part at a later date" (42%), suggesting that almost of half of the interviewees are not to be considered lost for mobility flows. Interestingly enough also, no other item comes any way near this score, some points representing a third of replies though, especially financial concerns (also massively voiced by those who have benefitted from a physical mobility) and then problems related to the recognition of credits and matching curricula. Admittedly, the results were published in 2010. The ECTS system has been generalized since then and presumably contributed to calming fears in this respect. The matter of matching curricula does remain a more immediate concern, however, as pointed out above. Personal reasons also remain quite high in the list and reluctance to delay studies because of a mobility, a reply that might reflect the increasing habit of students to take a gap year between secondary and higher education. As a colleague from Montreal recently told the author also, Canadian students do not like to go on medium- or long-term mobilities abroad. A month is apparently considered the maximum to quite a few. Similarly, U.S. students are keen on study-abroad programmes which involve cultural activities and that do not usually exceed one month. Similar attitudes are probably on the rise in Europe too. Whatever the case may be and to return to Vossensteyn et al., the report also lists a number of measures "that would have stimulated students to participate (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 91; my emphasis):

- increased value of ERASMUS grant (62%)
- increasing flexibility in student financing system (58%)
- information on ERASMUS programme (53%)
- information on the benefits of mobility (45%)
- recognition of credits (66%)
- flexibility in curriculum (61%)
- compatibility of calendar year (49%)
- **making the period studying abroad compulsory (36%)**
- language learning at secondary education (47%)
- language learning at higher education (54%)
- provide study periods in foreign languages (53%)
- possibility to participate in the full degree study programme (41%)
- **possibility to undertake ERASMUS study period in one year master programmes (47%)**
- possibility to undertake shorter mobility periods (44%)
- possibility to choose the university including the ones which do not have agreements with the home institution (61%)
- increasing attractiveness of the hosting higher education institutions (46%)
- increase the quality of experiences abroad (47%)

Quite logically, finance is near top of the list, recognition being the principal issue in a survey, once again, published in 2010. Other important issues include lack of information, language proficiency and the possibility to choose oneself a destination, possibly even outside a given HEI's partners. This last point might motivate some students more particularly though the logistics of such a system seem to be quite a challenging perspective. More interesting to our purpose is the response that over one third would have accepted the idea of a mandatory mobility- quite an encouraging sign in view of NORM's objectives – and that almost half of the students would wish for more opportunities to study abroad during their master programme. These two points invite comment. Mandatory mobilities might be challenging to set up but they certainly do correspond to a need voiced by students, staff and HEIs as well as policymakers. A crucial aspect in this respect is of course the number of mobility places

available at a given HEI and in a particular field. A particular programme, or even a specialization within a programme might include mandatory mobility, but enough places would have to be on offer. In an undergraduate programme this might mean having to provide dozens and dozens of places every year – not an impossibility of course, but quite a challenge that International Offices would have to lend a helping hand in. In a master programme, the numbers might not be as high, especially in an M2 specialisation as they exist in France, though it might be more difficult in that case to have colleagues agree that they give up potential teaching hours at graduate level to let the students benefit from a mobility, unless we are dealing with joint and double degree programmes from the start. Whatever the case may be, mobility flows at undergraduate level are higher than at graduate level, partly because there are fewer students at graduate level, but also, it is true, because quite a few graduate programmes do not facilitate a mobility project of a student by suggesting at least optional mobility windows, let alone offering mandatory mobility even though everyone seems to agree that career perspectives can be considerably enhanced by a physical mobility experience.

As far as students' interest in Erasmus+ mobilities is concerned, it is important to note, as Vossensteyn et al. do, that perception may vary from one country to another. For instance, Finnish students indicate in the 2010 study that more short-term opportunities such as study trips abroad, intensive programmes or summer schools "would perhaps attract those students that now refrain from participating due to family reasons". Dutch students indicated that they do not necessarily consider Europe as an "exciting" destination for going abroad (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 101). Polish students mainly voiced concern over financial matters (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 107), whereas in Spain "personal motivation is primarily related to personal development and language learning, whereas the importance of professional relevance seems to be an 'added value', and varies strongly by field of study" (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 116-117).

The Polish case study of this report also revealed the general lack of motivation among academics concerning staff mobilities: "Academics know and are aware of the ERASMUS programme, but the programme has no impact whatsoever on their academic careers. They are

evaluated on their publications and research, and ERASMUS has not an impact on their work" (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 108), a remark likely to be relevant also in other national contexts as suggested above.

Case study Denmark and Fenno-Scandia

The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) has provided an interesting case study dedicated to Denmark and Fenno-Scandia (Finland and Scandinavia) in 2013. In the introduction, the report observes that the "research literature identifies two main barriers, namely **financial limitations** and **language**" (CIMO 2013, 6; my emphasis). The financial issue certainly does not come as a surprise, but language proficiency in such a prominent place does, if that is really the issue best suited to represent barriers to mobilities in Europe in second place. In Northern Europe, however, "the expected economic burden is not the obstacle most frequently identified by students", CIMO notes; "rather, students from these countries point to the **separation from family and friends as the main obstacle** to enrolment abroad" (CIMO 2013, 6; my emphasis). The non-mobile students profile described in this report is more male than female and concerns some subject areas in particular: "field of **education and teacher training** and in many 'hard science' fields, e.g. **medical sciences, mathematics and informatics, communication and information sciences** and **agricultural science"** (CIMO 2013, 9; my emphasis). This partly confirms the underrepresented areas of study listed above. The social-economic background of students also plays a certain role: "study abroad experience is **more common among students from a high social background** than among students from a lower social background" (CIMO 2013, 10; my emphasis). Other barriers include academic issues: **"**didn't want to be delayed in studies, didn't want to miss part of studies at home, would be difficult to fit into studies at home institution) can also be found at the top of the list of barriers to mobility", as well as concerns of "lacking self-confidence, lack of guidance and information from home institution, work related barriers" (CIMO 2013, 11).

The survey also offered the possibility of free-style responses. One remark in particular confirms what we noted above: "**simply not interested, already have other kinds of**

international experience (lived/studied abroad, travelled a lot, participated in shorter exchange)" (CIMO 2013, 13).

3.2.3. Polish case study

In his 2014 report on mobility, Piotr Bryla states that "mobility is understood as one of the 5 key development factors for Poland, alongside trust, cohesion, creativity and competitiveness" (Bryla 2014, 12). The article presents selected results of a study among non-mobile Polish students. The main reasons for deciding not to study abroad are the following:

- insufficient financial support,
- fear of separation from one's partner or family,
- lack of motivation,
- insufficient information about mobility opportunities,
- fear of losing one's job
- obligation to take care of one's child or parent.

As we have seen repeatedly, insufficient funding is the barrier most frequently indicated by European students. It may be worth remembering that it was also identified by the ESN report in 2016 as the foremost obstacle to decide against mobility. Once again, initiatives are currently ongoing to lobby in favour of higher mobility grants. As to the fear of separation from partners and families, it is of course impossible to counter-balance this concern entirely. Nonetheless, it should be observed that opportunities of digital contact have increased spectacularly in recent times making it far easier to regularly touch base with home by audio and or video call. Other interesting points raised by Polish students include the fact that some have "a second field of study in Poland", "the necessity to catch up with the study programme after the return", and some "preferring to take part in summer jobs abroad" (Bryla 2014, 12).

3.3. Good practices

In conclusion to this chapter, we might like to envisage a number of good practices to engage students and staff in mobility experiences.

- through personal engagement – importance of staff mobilities (both academic and administrative)
- through more efficient communication about programmes
- get former mobile students and alumni to promote opportunities
- develop short-term mobilities as teasers (ISP, summer school, esp. for master programmes)
- use blended mobility: international distance learning experience to trigger physical mobility
- use embedded mobility, identifying mobility windows and
- introducing, if not making, mandatory mobility the norm

The lack of motivation among students is an issue that academic staff and international offices are regularly engaged in striving against by offering a large choice of destinations which they actively promote. The obstacle of insufficient information about opportunities seems to be decreasing since it is very easy nowadays to find out about mobility opportunities offered by an HEI. Internet and social media habits may, however, lead to students not regularly consulting institutional websites. More effort might have to be spent on **promoting mobilities through social media** and by **producing "teasers"** witnessing the experience of students who have gone on a mobility. The testimony of academics can also be precious in this respect as the author can confirm from personal experience, regularly presenting certain destinations during his own classes.

As to the engagement of staff:

- more institutional recognition: recognition of teaching hours in workload
- institutional support to develop embedded mobility

and HEIs:

- dynamic mobility flows highlight HEIs' research and quality teaching profile

- they may provide efficient indicators of internationalization, especially mandatory mobility

Results from the project's survey among its partners presented in the following chapter will show some concrete examples of mobility practices and how collaborative mobility works within the internationalization strategies of the HEIs of the NORM project.

Chapter 4
Survey among HEIs of the NORM consortium

4.1. Survey results

The survey was conducted by UVSQ among the HEI partners of the NORM consortium in 2020. The participating partners were:

- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUT, Greece)
- Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE, Hungary)
- University of Marburg (UM, Germany, project coordinator)
- University of Alcalá de Henares (UAH, Spain)
- University of Barcelona (UB, Spain)
- University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ, France)
- Vytautas Magnus University Kaunas (VMU, Lithuania).

The total number of universities represented is 7 and the total number of countries 6.
Their geographical distribution is the following:

- Northern Europe: Lithuania
- Western Europe: France, Germany
- Eastern Europe: Hungary
- Southern Europe: Greece, Spain (2)

The first point to be observed is that the size of the institutions varies considerably from a total of students below 10,000 to over 60,000; the number of bachelor and master programs also does so from one institution to another, the lowest figures being 35 bachelor and 56

master programs, the highest 111 bachelor and 157 masters. However, these figures do not systematically reflect the size of the university, i.e. the smallest university does not necessarily have the lowest number of programmes.

As to the question of how many of these programs had mobility in 2018 and 2019, replies differ in nature. AUT indicates mobility in all of its bachelor programs and between 15 and 21 master programs (in 2018-20) out of a total of 153. ELTE figures indicate mobility in 41 out of 91 bachelor programs and 52 out of 124. UAH states that there was mobility in all bachelor programs but only minimal or no mobility in the master programs. UB indicates mobility in all of their bachelors and no precise figures for masters, just specifying there are more international students in the masters than outgoing mobilities. At UVSQ, there was mobility in 16 to 17 bachelor programs out of a total of 78 and 7 masters out of a total of 89. The conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that there is clearly more mobility at undergraduate than at graduate level. This may not come as a particular surprise given that the number of undergraduates is considerably higher than that of students enrolled in master programmes. Nonetheless, the gap seems to be significant and the question of mobility at master's level (both embedded mobility and free movers) merits particular attention.

When it comes to double degree programs, the numbers remain well below 10 for the majority of partners, in between 3 to 6 programmes per HEI, mostly at master's level. Only the University of Barcelona goes well beyond that figure with a total of 17 double degree masters. These figures put internationalisation objectives well into perspective. Of course one needs to bear in mind the considerable administrative and pedagogical effort required to design such programmes, as well as the many obstacles that may be hindering such a process, but compared to the total number of programmes available at the HEIs, the total of double degrees remains relatively low in each HEI (mostly below 10).

Looking at mobility within those double degree programmes, 4 partners indicate mobility in all relevant programmes, Barcelona in all Mundus and most double degrees, VMU specifies that their three joint degrees have embedded mobility but that the double degree programmes mostly have incoming mandatory mobility only. This clearly shows that we need to distinguish between incoming and outgoing mobility based on a choice of the student, embedded mobility (incoming and/or outgoing) and free movers. Concerning the number of mobilities per HEI in these programmes, the figures vary from partner to partner and

programme to programme, some of the latter offering mobilities but no student benefitting from them in 2018 or 2019.

It is interesting to note also that the question of what an international programme is, was interpreted differently by partners although the survey offered some definitions. The most obvious examples of international programmes appear to be those entirely taught in English. The number differs considerably from one partner to another, with a minimum of two masters per HEI and up to 22 at the University of Barcelona (5 bachelors and 17 masters). The French partner also lists 5 French-language international programmes as their take-in of international students partly concerns Francophone undergraduates and postgraduates. Similarly, the Spanish HEIs might operate programmes particularly geared towards international Spanish-speaking students but no information was provided.

Concerning the academic disciplines offered, the most common international programs tend to be in computer science, economics and business studies, as well as tourism and international relations, that-is-to-say in social science. As to the number of international students enrolled in these programs, it was difficult to collect data. Only UVSQ indicates precise figures: a total of 80 students for 7 international master programmes, of which almost half enroll in the two Anglophone programmes on offer. The Hungarian partner ELTE mentions in relation to another question that its international programs in psychology and computer science are particularly successful, totaling several hundred students in a number of programmes of those two disciplines per year.

Regarding study fields where there is not any or only very little student mobility, the following disciplines are indicated with the number of partners listing them in brackets. It is to be remembered that all partners do not necessarily offer programmes in all of these areas: administration studies, art education, astronomy, civil engineering, dentistry, electronic engineering, French studies, gender studies, health sciences (3), history (2), law (3), meteorology, music, oriental studies, pharmacy, physics (2), political science, religious studies, rural studies and surveying, engineering, social work, teacher training programmes (2), theology (3), veterinary medicine.

To sum up these figures, **health studies, law, teacher training and theology tend to be the areas in which there is the least mobility**, several partners specifying that this is partly due to national rules defining curricula in view of professional training. When it comes to

discussing obstacles to mobility, this aspect needs to be taken into consideration. It may be added, however, that this situation is not necessarily due to a lack of interest though there appear to be little or no staff mobilities in these fields according to the survey. Still, the interest in bi- and multilateral programmes in health sciences is manifest, as the European University alliance EUGLOH (Global Health Challenges) piloted by the University of Paris-Saclay illustrates. Concerning law, it is worth noting e that even though 3 partners indicate low figures of mobility in this domain, others do not and in the case of UVSQ it can even be affirmed that its Law Faculty (which includes political science and international relations) is one of UVSQ's most active faculties in terms of mobility.

Partners were then asked to describe their most successful international programmes. The examples given include computer science and psychology at ELTE with large international intakes of free movers, a master in Economics and Institutions at Marburg and a joint master in Peace and Conflict Studies offered by Marburg together with the University of Kent; the Master 2 programme in interdisciplinary Arctic Studies (Humanities and Sciences) at the University of Paris-Saclay operated by UVSQ and UVSQ's Master in International Business (with specific, considerably higher fees). VMU mentions its joint-degree master in Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism (together with Mainz, Stockholm and Tartu), as well as several double degree programmes (master) in economics: International Economics (together with Trento and Aveiro), Finance & Management (with Louvain and Norwegian School of Economics) as well as a degree in Marketing and International Commerce (together with Louvain). Once again, as far as these international programmes are concerned, we need to distinguish between those, that are based on mandatory mobility cohorts, either both incoming and outgoing or only one-way, programmes that have a large intake of free movers and programmes that charge extra fees and depend largely on international free movers.

The second part of the survey was then concerned with internationalisation frameworks and indicators. All HEIs affirmed that there were guidelines provided by central administration and /or national agencies concerning international aspects of study programs. These guidelines include notably the following aspects: international developments in the relevant scientific fields (AUT), to represent highest quality and to make most of the study programs available for international students, mainly in English (ELTE), development of further international programs and study programs that are geared towards the international job

market (Marburg), facilitating the participation of students in mobility programmes at a later stage of their studies (UAH), easing the path for recognition of credits, particularly in those fields of education where the basic or compulsory part of the curriculum has a pronounced national character (UAH); mandatory English-language modules during all semesters of a degree in France, programmes to be developed on the basis of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (VMU). As we can see, different aspects and priorities emerge.

The procedures of internationalisation also vary considerably among the HEIs. Some have created a Quality Assurance Unit or have to comply with the rules of a national Quality Assurance Agency or framework. Some HEIs have defined indicators. Others are about to do so. Whatever the case may be, all HEIs state that they have an international strategy without going into further detail, though. All partners also observed that the national, federal and in once case also regional authorities have set rules of internationalisation standards that have to be respected in setting up new programmes.

Concerning possible internal rules in institutions hindering mobility, notably in certain disciplines, all partners remark that, generally speaking, there are no such rules. However, habits and certain practices can prove to be an obstacle: for instance, as AUT points out, "construction of curricula may hinder mobility, especially when successful completion of a module is a prerequisite for attending another". UAH observes that the "structure of some professional studies makes mobility impossible (lawyers, doctors and architects, primary and secondary education)", a remark no doubt also valid, at least partially, in other national contexts. UVSQ notes that in some of its programmes, it is not always easy to find an appropriate moment for mobilities (teacher training programmes, notably, in medicine only the 6th study year is possible; in chemistry not before the 6th semester); many master programmes are very intensive in terms of teaching and only a partnership with an equivalent programme abroad would render mobilities realistic. Concerning the last point, some colleagues are rather fidgety in accepting courses chosen abroad as an equivalent despite the ECTS system. It might be worth pointing out here also that in some faculties a mobility is either seen as considerably improving a student's job perspective (especially in law and political science); in science, any early stage researcher wishing to pursue a career in academia is strongly advised to do a postdoc abroad, an experience that is not mandatory from

a regulatory point-of-view but simply expected of anyone applying for a position at the university (especially in environmental science and climatology).

Habits of having to prepare a master thesis at the home institution and to defend it there are also seen as an internal obstacle.

Regarding different levels of internationalization at the HEI, all partners confirm that there are initiatives at central and faculty level. This concerns both studies and research. It is to be remembered, of course, that large-scale projects like the European Universities and other Erasmus+ projects initiated by International Offices excepted, many exchange programs are set up by individual staff members in the name of their department or faculty. Each partner was asked to provide examples of the most successful initiatives. AUT mentions a joint MSc in Organic Farming developed by its Department of Agriculture as well as its international summer schools, ELTE the Faculty of Computer Science's own Student Counseling Center which originally was established to reduce the dropout rate of Computer Science students (both Hungarian and international). Marburg refers to its two international programs in Peace & Conflict Studies and the MSc in Economics and Institutions. UAH is currently developing a Bachelor degree in Global Studies (Humanities widely defined) and reframing a Master degree in North-American Studies. UVSQ hopes that the European University EUGLOH piloted by the University of Paris-Saclay will encourage some departments to engage further in the internationalization of studies. UVSQ's Law Faculty is currently piloting a strategic partnership expected to lead to a new international master on "environmental and indigenous law"; the specialization "international law" of the faculty's bachelor programme is also working on a mandatory semester abroad during the third year of study. VMU highlights its MA programme in Social Anthropology (together with Southern Illinois University).

Finally, in response to the question of any exterior framework conditions that might hinder mobility, most partners mention professional or practical programmes for which there is a national framework to respect that makes mobilities very difficult, if not impossible, to organise during studies. This concerns mainly health science, law and teacher training.

4.2. Recommendations

To sum up the most significant results of the survey in view of the objectives of this project, one can mention the following points:

- the question of mobility at master's level (both embedded mobility and free movers) merits particular attention
- the number of double degrees remains relatively low in each HEI (mostly below 10).
- we need to distinguish between incoming and outgoing mobility based on a choice of the student, embedded mobility (incoming and/or outgoing) and free movers
- the most common international programs tend to be in computer science, economics and business studies, as well as tourism and international relations
- health studies, law, teacher training and theology tend to be the areas in which there is the least mobility
- we need to distinguish between international programmes that are based on mandatory mobility cohorts, either both incoming and outgoing or only one-way, programmes that have a large intake of free movers and programmes that charge extra fees and depend largely on international free movers.
- all HEIs indicate that they have an international strategy
- national authorities have set rules of internationalisation standards that have to be respected in developing new programmes.
- construction of curricula may hinder mobility, especially when successful completion of a module is a prerequisite for attending another
- it is not always easy to find an appropriate moment for mobilities
- some colleagues are rather fidgety in accepting courses chosen abroad as an equivalent despite the ECTS system
- Habits of having to prepare a master thesis at the home institution and to defend it there are also seen as an internal obstacle
- Regarding different levels of internationalization at the HEI, all partners indicate that there are initiatives at central and faculty level
- most partners mention professional or practical programmes for which there is a national framework to respect that makes mobilities very difficult to organised (esp. in health science, law and teacher training)

Conclusion

The present report shows that there are still a number of obstacles to making mobility the norm. The challenges identified in this report operate both at macro and micro level, at pan-European and national level, at senior management level in an HEI and its faculties, at faculty and departmental level, but also as far as different types of mobility are concerned, be they student or staff mobilities. At the pan-European macro-level, the value of an Erasmus+ mobility grant for students remains the single most prominent hurdle. Secondly, as Vossensteyn et al. pointed out ten years ago, "differences in academic calendars and national legislations for placements also act as barriers to the quality of the ERASMUS period abroad and the involvement of companies in ERASMUS placements respectively" (Vossensteyn et al. 2010, 117). The financial hurdle is of course a political and economic matter that decision-makers are presumably well aware of. As mentioned above, lobbying campaigns are currently striving for support to raise awareness at European level for significant revalorization of grant levels. As to calendars, it would indeed be practical to dispose of more comparable dates, but this might well prove to be an illusory goal given the strong academic traditions in each country and increasing autonomy of HEIs in Europe. Nonetheless,

harmonization efforts should be encouraged. The growing autonomy of public HEIs should also produce more lead-way in this respect.

Regarding action by HEIs, there are certainly two ways of considering the question: top-down and bottom-up initiatives. Concerning the former, HEIs are certainly in a position to define objectives and indicators of their internationalization strategy that may include mobility flows. Senior leadership can decide to offer incentives in order to motivate participation in targeted action. This may include specific funds for educational projects to be developed with a number of international partners the HEI considers strategic. Such projects include of course European University Alliances and double degrees (the most time-consuming examples), embedded mandatory mobility and optional mobility windows. Support from administration to develop such projects is vital. Typically, international offices engage in such activities. Dynamics can be created by increased efforts to develop Erasmus+ projects, for instance. Success in obtaining projects opens up new budgetary options.

One particularly sensitive issue in this respect is the recognition of staff members' contributions to such projects in their workload and possibly even career development. As regards the former, systematic recognition of the teaching hours during an Erasmus+ teaching mobility would no doubt contribute to a rise in such mobilities at a given HEI. This is also the case for European University Alliances, a point that was notably discussed during the kick-off meeting of EUGLOH. Secondly, time spent on developing embedded mobility and double degrees clearly fits into the category "pedagogical innovation", an objective that many HEIs are prepared to invest in and even have to, as the recent COVID-19 crisis has shown. Connected issues include proficiency in foreign languages. More incentives need to be provided for academics to decide for instance to switch to English in a particular course or even to develop a full programme in English. Habits and tendencies clearly vary across the EHEA but if the aim is to significantly boost mobility flows, the designing of programmes in languages that international students can also access becomes a major concern.

Looking at the question from the point-of-view of students, the financial aspect is no doubt the most central general concern. Nonetheless, it is encouraging to note that one survey in particular mentioned non-mobile students indicating in non-negligent numbers that a mandatory mobility might indeed have made them physically mobile. The contribution of mobilities to the effort of raising awareness about and interest in European identity is manifest

and so is the added value of mobilities and double degree programmes to an even greater extent in terms of career perspectives and development. To advance in this direction, more systematic efforts to conceive of mobility windows when designing or reshaping programmes, especially at master level, would no doubt be efficient. A first step might be the introduction of blended mobility, the most common model that European University Alliances are notably adopting. The length of proposed mobilities would also be a matter to reflect on. But that is an issue going beyond the scope of NORM.

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Appendix

NORM consortium internal survey of mobility practices among partners

Participating institutions:

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUT, Greece), Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE, Hungary), University of Marburg (UM, Germany), University of Alcalá de Henares (UAH, Spain), University of Barcelona (UB, Spain), University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ, France), Vytautas Magnus University Kaunas (VMU, Lithuania).

Number of universities: 7

Number of countries: 6

Geographical distribution

Northern Europe: Lithuania

Western Europe: France, Germany

Eastern Europe: Hungary

Southern Europe: Greece, Spain (2)

APPENDIX

NORM consortium internal survey of mobility practices among partners: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUT, Greece), Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE, Hungary), University of Marburg (UM, Germany), University of Alcalá de Henares (UAH, Spain),

University of Barcelona (UB, Spain), University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ, France), Vytautas Magnus University Kaunas (VMU, Lithuania).

Number of universities: 7
Number of countries: 6
Geographical distribution
Northern Europe: Lithuania
Western Europe: France, Germany
Eastern Europe: Hungary
Southern Europe: Greece, Spain (2)

1. The number of bachelor and master programs varies considerably from one institution to another, the lowest figures being 35 bachelor and 56 master programs, the highest 111 bachelor and 157 masters.
2. As to how many of these programs had mobility in 2018 and 2019, replied vary in nature, but only in one case no data was available (Marburg). AUT indicates mobility in all of its bachelor programs and between 15 and 21 master programs (in 2018-20) out of a total of 153. ELTE figures indicate mobility in 41 out of 91 bachelor programs and 52 our 124. UAH states that there was mobility in all bachelor programs but only minimal or no mobility in the masters programs. UB indicates mobility in all of their bachelors and no precise figures for masters, just specifying there are more international students in the masters than outgoing mobilities. At UVSQ, there was mobility in 16 to 17 bachelor programs out of a total of 78 and 7 masters out of a total of 89. VMU indicates the total numbers of outgoing mobility in 2018 as 404 students and in 2019 as 377 students out of a total of some 8450 students.
3. Number of double degree programs: AUT 5 masters, ELTE 6 masters, Marburg 3 masters, UAH 3 bachelors and 2 masters, UB 17 masters, UVSQ 4 masters, VMU 24 (not specifying if bachelor or masters).
4. Mobility within the double degree programmes: AUT indicates 4 programmes: *European and Comparative Social Law, Organic Farming, Archeological Materials Science and European Literary Cultures (Erasmus Mundus)*; ELTE, Marburg, UAH,

and UVSQ reply yes in all relevant programmes, UB yes in all Mundus programmes and most double international degrees; at VMU, the three joint programmes have mandatory mobility, in the double degree programmes it tends to be incoming mandatory mobility only.

5. Number of students enrolled in these programmes: AUT indicates 196 in Criminal Law and Addictions, none in European and Comparative Social Law, 18 in Organic Farming, 17 in Archeology and 36 in European Literary Cultures. ELTE state between a minimum of 5 and maximum of 40, Marburg a total of 49 (in 2018; UAH 2 students per year and programme and 3 in one of the joint masters; UVSQ a total of 30, UB does not provide figures, VMU indicates at Masters level 29 n Sociolinguistics, 78 in East European Research and Studies and 22 in Agri-Food Business Management.
6. Question about number of students in corresponding "national" programmes, if existing: only one partner indicates numbers.
7. The question about the number of international programs was interpreted in different ways by partners, some wondering about the definition. Concrete examples were provided by UAH: International Program on Computer Science, International Program on Computer Engineering & Economics, International Program on Telecommunication Systems, International Program on Electronics & Mechanics. As to UB, the website mentions 5 double degrees at Bachelor level taught entirely in English: Bioinformatics, Business Administration and Management, International Business, Physiotherapy, Tourism; and 17 master programmes 100% taught in English: Advanced Mathematics, Applied Linguistics and Language Acquisition in Multilingual Contexts, Artificial Intelligence, Astrophysics/Particle Physics/Cosmology, Bioinformatics for Health Science, Economics, Erasmus Mundus in Global Markets/Local Creativities, Fundamental Principles of Data Science, International Business, International Development, International Relations, International Security, Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, Photonics, Pure and Applied Logic, Theoretical Chemistry and Computational Modelling, Translational Medecine; UVSQ has 7 international programmes (including incoming mandatory mobility and/or intake of free movers), two of which are entirely taught in English: Arctic

Studies and Master of International Business, the others in French: Master of Business Administration, Master of Environmental Law, Master of Tourism, History Master.

8. As to the number of students enrolled in these programmes, replies depend on of how the previous question was interpreted. For the three universities detailing programmes in question 7, UAH and UB provides no numbers, UVSQ indicates 80.
9. As to the percentage of mobile students, the only relevant numbers are indicated are by UVSQ: 16 to 18 incoming Arctic Studies students (lost of them free movers), incoming MIB: 18
10. The question about the number of mobile students in the least international programme did not prove fruitful.
11. Regarding study fields where there is not any or only very little student mobility, the following fields are indicated with the number of partners listing them in brackets. It is to be remembered that all partners do not necessarily offer programmes in all of the areas indicated below:
    administration studies,
    art education,
    astronomy
    civil engineering
    dentistry,
    electronic engineering
    French studies
    gender studies,
    health sciences (3)
    history (2)
    law (3)
    meteorology,
    music,
    oriental studies,
    pharmacy
    physics (2)
    political science,

religious studies,
rural and surveying engineering,
social work,
teacher training programmes (2)
theology (3),
veterinary medicine.

To sum up these figures, health studies, law and theology tend to be the areas in which there is the least mobility, several partners specifying that this is partly due to national rules defining curricula in view of professional training.

12. As to staff mobilities in these fields, the general outcome can be summed us none, very little or some.
13. Concerning the most successful international programmes, replies vary from one partner to another: no indications for AUT, ELTE mentions computer science (with 375 international students enrolled) and psychology (248 international students); Marburg mentions a joint masters in Peace and Conflict Studies (together with the University of Kent) and a master in Economics and Institutions; UAH and UB do not provide data, UVSQ mentions its international Master 2 programme in interdisciplinary Arctic Studies (Human and Sciences) and the Master in International Business (added fees-paying programme). VMU mentions its joint-degree master in Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism (together with Mainz, Stockholm and Tartu), as well as several double degree programmes (master) in economics: International Economics (together with Trento and Aveiro), Finance/Management (with Louvain and Nprwegian School of Economics) as well as a degree in Marketing and International Commerce (together with Louvain).

    As far as these international programmes are concerned, we need to distinguish between those, that are based on mandatory mobility cohorts, either both incoming and outgoing or only one-way, programmes that have a large intake of free movers and programmes that charge extra fees and depend largely on international free movers (one example at UVSQ).

14. Any general guidelines as to international aspects in your study programs?

AUT: yes, following directions of Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditations Agency

ELTE: In terms of internationalisation, the university does not have a written guideline for the study programs, but there are central recommendations.

Marburg, UAH, UB, UVSQ and VMU: Yes.

15. Which aspects do they concern:

AUT: notably *international developments in the relevant scientific fields*

ELTE: the central guideline is to represent the highest quality and to make most of the study programs available for international students, mostly in English

Marburg: Development of further international programs and study programs that are geared toward an international job market

UAH: facilitating the participation of students in mobility programmes at that later stage of their studies, easing the path for recognition of credits, particularly in those fields of education where the basic or compulsory part of the education has a remarkable national character

UB: content, teaching plan, language

UVSQ: internationalization of studies has become an objective, though not a mandatory criterion for the accreditation of a programme; however, the validation of an English-language module during all semesters of studies is compulsory in France

VMU: programmes to be developed on the basis of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and include the requirements defined by these international standards.

Remark; notable variety of replies and priorities

16. Clear indicators and internal evaluation about international aspects at university/faculty/departmental level?

AUT: under development for whole university by AUT Quality Assurance Unit

ELTE: underwent an audit by National Agency leading to drafting of plan

Marburg: regular participation in audits about internationalisation; annual report at university level about internationalisation activities

UAH: quantitative indicators at faculty level

UB: yes

UVSQ: such indicators are being developed at the moment together with the other members of the University of Paris-Saclay

VMU: University-scale internal evaluation of studies includes the following indicators: opportunities to learn various foreign languages, opportunities for international mobility, student and teacher mobility data, scope of international cooperation.

17. International strategy of institution including these elements?

    AUT: strategy yes, ongoing process of including indicators

    ELTE: strategy under construction

    UAH: strategy currently under revision, will include indicators

    Marburg, UB, UVSQ, VMU: yes

18. National frameworks for international elements?

    AUT: A recent Law (4653/2020) regarding Quality Assurance Processes in the Greek Higher education foresees some international indicators for the state funding for undergraduate programs, but they have not yet been explicitly specified.

    ELTE: strict criteria provided by National Agency to open new international national and international programmes

    Marburg: yes, both at federal and regional level

    UAH: National Quality Assurance Agency has provided indicators in view of progressive adaptation of UAH programmes to the European Higher Education Space, but the Spanish system is still far from the more generalized 3+2 European system.

    UB: Internationalization indicators are used to evaluate the university or degrees, but it is not compulsory by itself.

    UVSQ: yes, the English-language module taught in all programs is a national obligation ; « internationalisation of studies » is one of the evaluation criteria of the national French higher education studies evaluation agency HCERES concerning the 5-year-plan of each university

    VMU: Lithuania does not have a national internationalisation strategy. The Ministry of Education and Science approves annual priorities of promotion internationalization in higher education. The Ministry of Education and Science is developing a Code of

Quality which will outline quality conditions which need to be ensured by the higher education institutions in order for them to be promoted by the state internationally

19. Any internal rules in institutions hindering mobility, notably in certain disciplines?

    AUT: no rules as such, but construction of curricula may hinder mobility, especially when successful completion of a module is a prerequisite for attending another

    Marburg and VMU: No

    UAH: generally no, but structure of some professional studies makes mobility impossible (lawyers, doctors and architects, primary and secondary education)

    UB: In some faculties or degrees there are some academic rules, such as not being able to submit the final degree thesis abroad, which limit mobility. Also the design of some curricula, which make international mobility difficult.

    UVSQ: no rules, but in some programmes, it is not easy to find an appropriate moment for mobilities (teacher training programmes, notably, in medicine only the 6th study year is possible; in chemistry not before the 6th semester, many master programmes are very intensive in terms of teaching and only a partnership with an equivalent programme abroad would render mobilities realistic; concerning the last point, some colleagues are rather fidgety in accepting courses chosen abroad as an equivalent despite the ECTS system, some academic staff at UVSQ are visibly not interested in promoting mobility programs and may even discourage students in some cases). It might be worth pointing out here also that in some faculties a mobility is either seen as considerably improving a student's job perspective (in law and political science notably); in science, any early stage researcher wishing to pursue a career in academia is strongly advised to do a postdoc abroad, an experience that is not mandatory from a regulatory point-of-view but simply expected of anyone applying for a position at the university (especially in environmental science and climatology).

    Remark: curriculum design bears potential threats to mobility, esp. in professional studies, but also due to system of prerequisites, habits of having to prepare a masters thesis at home institution etc.

20. Any initiatives at faculty level for internationalization?

    AUT: central procedure + participation at faculty and departmental level in Erasmus+ and H2020, bilateral agreements and initiatives

ELTE: Yes, faculties are very aware of the importance of internationalization. At the university a central internationalization budget helps to realize the aims, the allocation of the fund and the action funded are decided together with the faculties.

Beside the central actions, faculties have their own initiatives, especially the ones with larger number of international programs and foreign students.

Marburg: Yes, especially with regard to research, to a smaller degree some departmens/faculty also foster internationalization when designing new study programs (considering mobility windows and staff exchange)

UAH, UB and UVSQ: Yes

21. If yes, describe the most successful ones:

AUT: : Joint master degree programmes like the MSc degree in Organic Farming*(Department of Agriculture of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and Agrarian and Technological Institute του «Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN),* International conferences, international summer schools, university-business knowledge transfer

ELTE: the Faculty of Computer Science initiated its own Student Counseling Center which originally was established to reduce the dropout rate of the Computer Science students (both Hungarian and international).

Marburg: MA Peace & Conflict Studies and M. Sc. Economics and Institutions

UAH: A two-year strategy (post 2021) to put in place a Bachelor Degree on Global Studies (Humanities widely defined) alongside some of the elements integrating an international programmes, as it is defined below, as well as the reframing of a Master Degree on North-American Studies (currently of 60 ECTS) in much the same vein

UVSQ: it is hoped that the European University EUGLOH piloted by the University of Paris-Saclay will encourage some departments to engage further in the internationalization of studies; UVSQ's Law Faculty is currently piloting a strategic partnership supposedly leading to a new international masters on "indigenous law"; the specialization "international law" of the faculty's bachelor programme is also working on a mandatory semester abroad during the third year of study

VMU: MA programme 'Social Anthropology'. Due to international cooperation between Vytautas Magnus University and Southern Illinois University (USA) Social Anthropology students can receive Southern Illinois University's Certificate in Intercultural Understanding (they should take 3 courses (18 ECTS credits) held by visiting anthropology professors from Southern Illinois University): https://www.vdu.lt/en/study/program/show/278/

MA programme "Educational Management": If student choose to study in English, he/she will be awarded a UNESCO International Bureau of Education (Curriculum Design and Development) certificate along with a Master's degree in Education Management. Curriculum: https://www.vdu.lt/en/study/program/curriculum/277/

22. Any exterior framework conditions that hinder?

AUT: The state-centralized nature of Higher Education sector in Greece it could be deemed as a restrictive condition in further promoting international mobility, although steps have been taken recently to boost Greek HEIs internationalization through networking initiatives.

ELTE: Students studying at more research-based and practical programs tend to participate less in mobility programs.

Marburg: Study programs with state exam (Medicine, pharmacy, Law, Teacher Education) ; obstacles: recognition of credits by National Exam Board; no first/second cycle; in teacher training, specific regulations for traineeships (duration, supervision)

UAH: A two-year strategy (post 2021) to put in place a Bachelor Degree on Global Studies (Humanities widely defined) alongside some of the elements integrating an international programmes, as it is defined below, as well as the reframing of a Master Degree on North-American Studies (currently of 60 ECTS) in much the same vein

UB: Yes, especially in professional careers such as medicine, nursing, pharmacy or law, where professional associations establish certain criteria; or, in the case of medicine or nursing, there are many limitations related to the conditions (or insurance) for engaging in physical contact with a patient

UVSQ: teacher training programmes do not allow easily for any mobilities given their nature and schedule; in medicine, a mobility is not usually feasible before the 6th year;

VMU: Yes, like law – there are strict national requirements for fulfillment in order to obtain the diploma and qualification