

*In the participants' own words*  
The REALISE European survey of  
international staff mobility

**REALISE**

Realising the potential  
of the international mobility  
of staff in higher education

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# What data did we have about staff mobility?

- Who went where, when, & a bit about what they did (Mobility Agreements, Mobility Tool)
- Feedback from each member of staff (individual reports)
- A summary of those reports at institutional level: data from MDX KA103 report 2016 & 2017: -
- 100% of staff reported being 'satisfied or very satisfied' with their mobility in general
- Questions around gained competences showed that staff felt that their mobility had significant impact on their CPD
- 52.94% (2016) / 55.10% (2017) 'felt satisfied with the level of recognition at the time of their report submission'

# The REALISE European survey of international staff mobility: figures, data and trends on Erasmus staff mobility

- The survey aimed at testing the practices, experiences and attitudes of university staff regarding Erasmus staff mobility
- Scope of survey: experiences regarding Erasmus staff mobility between 2012/13-2016/17
- The participants were academic and administrative staff working in HEIs in the 10 European countries of the project partners.
- Online questionnaire: quantitative and qualitative survey among all university staff: 6202 respondents
- Semi-structured interviews with members of senior leadership: 48 interviews

# 50 questions

- access to information;
- perception;
- satisfaction;
- main benefits;
- impact on professional activities and practices;
- impact on student mobility;
- main obstacles to mobility;
- institutional barriers;
- recognition;
- integration with international and modernisation strategy

# The Report's 4 chapters:

- 1. Mobility demographics
- 2. Management
  - Pre-mobility perceptions, issues and expectations
  - Benefits and impact
  - Obstacles
- 3. Promotion and dissemination
  - Promotional activities, visibility and effectiveness
  - Dissemination
- 4. Encouragement and Recognition
  - The perceived benefits of mobility
  - Perceived obstacles

# Positive experiences, benefits and good practice

- “It is a real enrichment both professional, personal and human.”
- “I believe that Erasmus Staff Mobility is a very good platform for teachers (especially new teachers like me) to experience broadened understanding of the different strategies of teaching internationally in order to contribute to the global vision of education”.
- “A chance to talk to a leading expert on an area of research I was just beginning to embark on, and on which I felt something of a novice. Three years on, this led to a £0.76m funding application, the outcome of which is pending.”
- “It was a fabulous experience to learn how another department managed the same issues my department faced, especially since administrative staff tend not to get much role-specific strategic training.”
- “I believe that my visit like shadow provided learning opportunities for the host too, by provoking analysis and improve communication and feedback skills.”
- “to refresh my point of view, to discover myself in that situation”

# Perceptions and expectations

- “The fear of the unknown is very present. Imagine going to a country we do not know that uses a language we are not fluent in...”
- “Mobility programmes, initially, spark curiosity. It is the expression of a wanting to discover the Other, with a capital letter. The Others are the other colleagues, another system, another culture and another language...”
- “Being in another culture first and secondly being in another environment always helps to look at your own situation and to not make your own situation the central point of the world...If you have been in other institutions, you learn that what we believe is the rule, it is not necessarily so obvious as we think it is.”

## Comparison between administrative staff and academic staff's reasons for not applying for mobility (n. of responses and %)

	Administrative staff		Academic staff	
	n. of responses	%	n. of responses	%
Big competition	54	2%	95	1%
Not enough funding available	220	6%	541	7%
Foreign language deficiency	506	15%	675	9%
Missing information about the programme	640	18%	1344	18%
Lack of support from manager	247	7%	434	6%
Lack of information about partner universities and their offers	570	16%	1112	15%
Too many duties – difficulties finding replacement	508	15%	1583	21%
Too complicated application procedure	137	4%	326	4%
Fear of falling behind with work	349	10%	797	11%
Lack of motivation	243	7%	479	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3474</b>		<b>7386</b>	



# Promotion and dissemination

- “For PAS [administrative staff], an annual event is organized where staff members who have taken part in a mobility program in the previous academic year share their experiences. This day coincides with the opening of the mobility call for PAS, so as well as providing an opportunity to learn about the experiences of others, it also goes some way to encouraging PAS to participate in international mobility”
- “Too much formalisation and structure may give a bureaucratic slant on the experience. Therefore, we have to find a balance: have some formalisation so that the experience may be shared by the greatest number and so that we can see the impact on the institution, but at the same time to keep a kind of spontaneity of the exchanges between staff members”

# Recognition through pay rise and promotion

- “PAS (technical and administrative) mobility is recognized as training hours that are automatically introduced into the staff member’s curriculum and become part of the calculations when competing for transfer, and so this has a direct impact on professional promotion.”
- “How we did it at the university college is when you have your assignment for 1 year, you have 40% teaching, research, service and also 5% internationalization. This is something that is now also in the personal objectives of staff here at the faculty”
- need elicited to have “a clear policy of human resources development integrating staff mobility”
- “if the visits were linked to strategic aims then actually we’d be going round to people saying you really should go to so and so, as opposed to just waiting until the applications pop into your mailbox.”

# Main impacts identified in interviews

- broadly, it enhances the university's educational mission and improves society's sustainability
- gives emotional benefits
- provides opportunities for personal development
- enhances skills
- provides collaboration opportunities
- reaches specific targets
- favours problem-solving
- “Professors can enrich their curricula by inviting foreign guest lecturers, enhance their teaching potential, improve the curricula (by broadening, deepening and enriching the topics of courses) of both hosting and sending institutions through exchange of experience, disseminate information about best practices and experience of the hosting institution among staff members of the sending institution.”

# Impact

- “Staff mobility contributes in the sense of internationalization of the institution and it gives individuals the possibility to experience other educational systems and to network. It would be a loss especially for young teachers and administrative staff, because they do not have many other possibilities”
- “We have forgotten that service to society is more than a spin off, it is also about how to translate international knowledge to your local society and local knowledge to international society. And that is something I think you can realize through international staff exchange.”

- Report available at: <https://realise-erasmusplus.fr/content/Comparative-Analysis>
- Thank you for your attention!
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