



Study on the perceptions of  
students and professors  
regarding the international  
mobility programmes

Mai 2019



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# Objectives of the study

## **General objective**

- > Identifying the attractiveness of the Erasmus + program
- > Outlining recommendations for increasing the interest in Erasmus+ outgoing mobility

## **Specific objectives**

- > Measuring the awareness of the Erasmus+ programme among non-participating students
- > Measuring the degree of interest for the Erasmus+ programme among non-participating students
- > Identifying the factors that influence the decision of the students to be involved in the Erasmus+ programme
- > Identifying the brakes affecting the decision to opt for Erasmus+ programme.
- > Evaluating the satisfaction degree concerning the Erasmus+ (among participants)



## Design Metodologic

<b>Method</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Observations</b>
Survey among non-participating students	1300	<i>Face to face</i>
Survey among participating students	600	<i>Face to face and Online</i>
Interviews with non-participating students	30	<i>Face to face</i>
Interviews with participating students	21	<i>Face to face</i>
Interviews with representatives of Erasmus+ offices	20	<i>Face to face and by phone</i>
Interviews with professors	15	<i>Face to face</i>



## I. SURVEY RESULTS AMONG NON-PARTICIPATING STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES

- > Perceptions on international mobility
- > Perceptions on Erasmus+
- > Socio-demographic data

## Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

		<b>Total n=1.301</b>
Gender	Male	34%
	Female	66%
Age (average age – 21,4 years)	18-20 years	37%
	21-22 years	40%
	23-24 years	15%
	25 years and over	6%
	NA	2%
Household income	Maximum 3000 RON	29%
	Between 3000 – 5000	25%
	Between 5000 - 7000 RON	13%
	Over 7000 RON	21%
	NA	23%
Residence	Rural	31%
	Urban	69%
At present	Living in a student residence	41%
	Renting, living with host	28%
	Comuting	7%
	Living in this town	23%

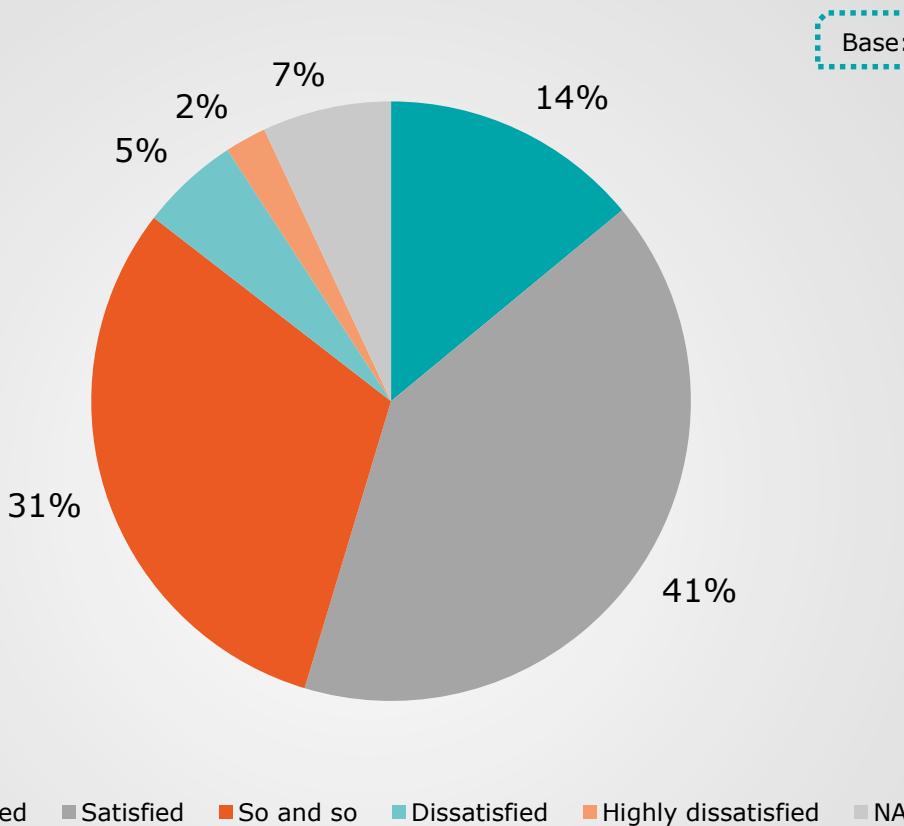
		<b>Total n=1.301</b>
University size	Large (over 20k students)	37%
	Medium (10k-20k students)	36%
	Small (under 10k students)	27%
Share of ERASMUS+ scholarships*	Large (over 2%)	16%
	Average (1-2%)	39%
	Small (under 1%)	45%
	1	27%
Year of study	2	31%
	3	31%
	4 or above	11%
Level of studies	Bachelor	91%
	Master	9%
No. of universities included in the survey		28

- Percentage calculated based on the average number of Erasmus scholarships in the last 4 years, based on the total number of students



# **Perceptions on international mobility**

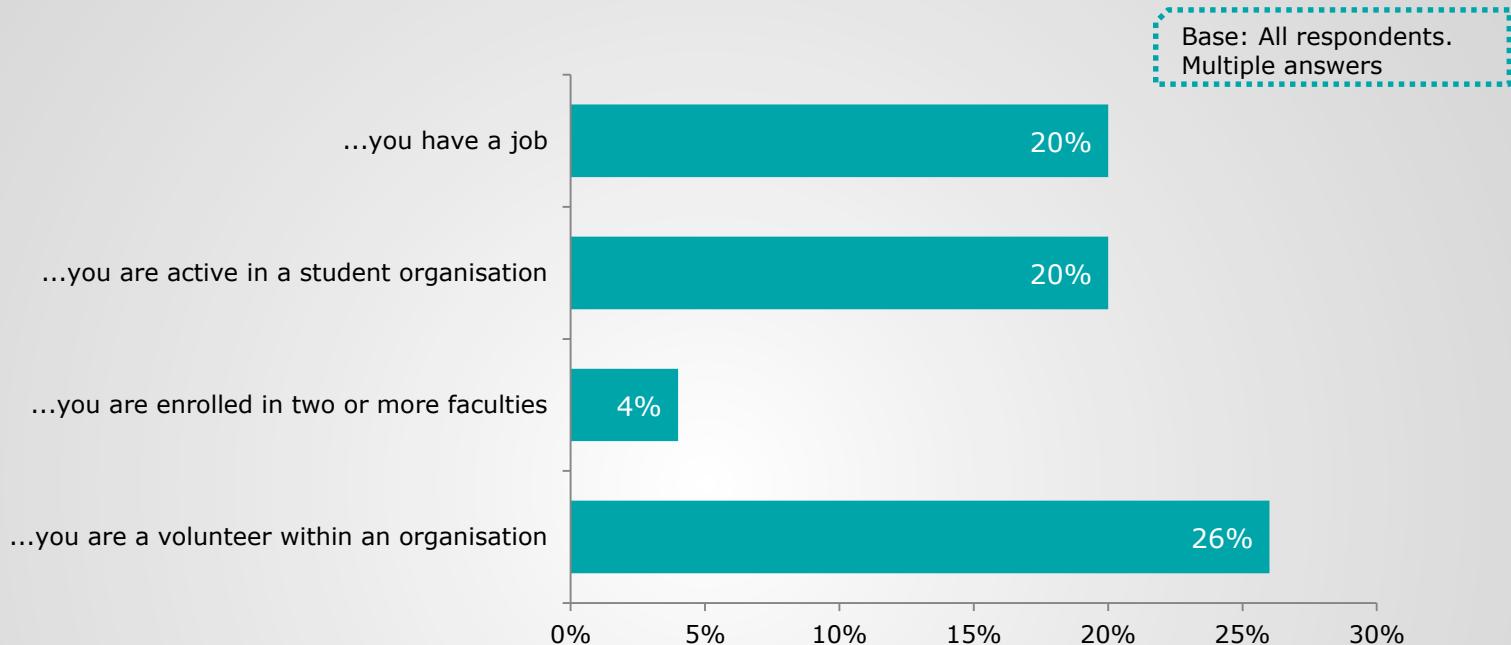
## How satisfied are you with the opportunities you have at present to study abroad?



Base: All respondents

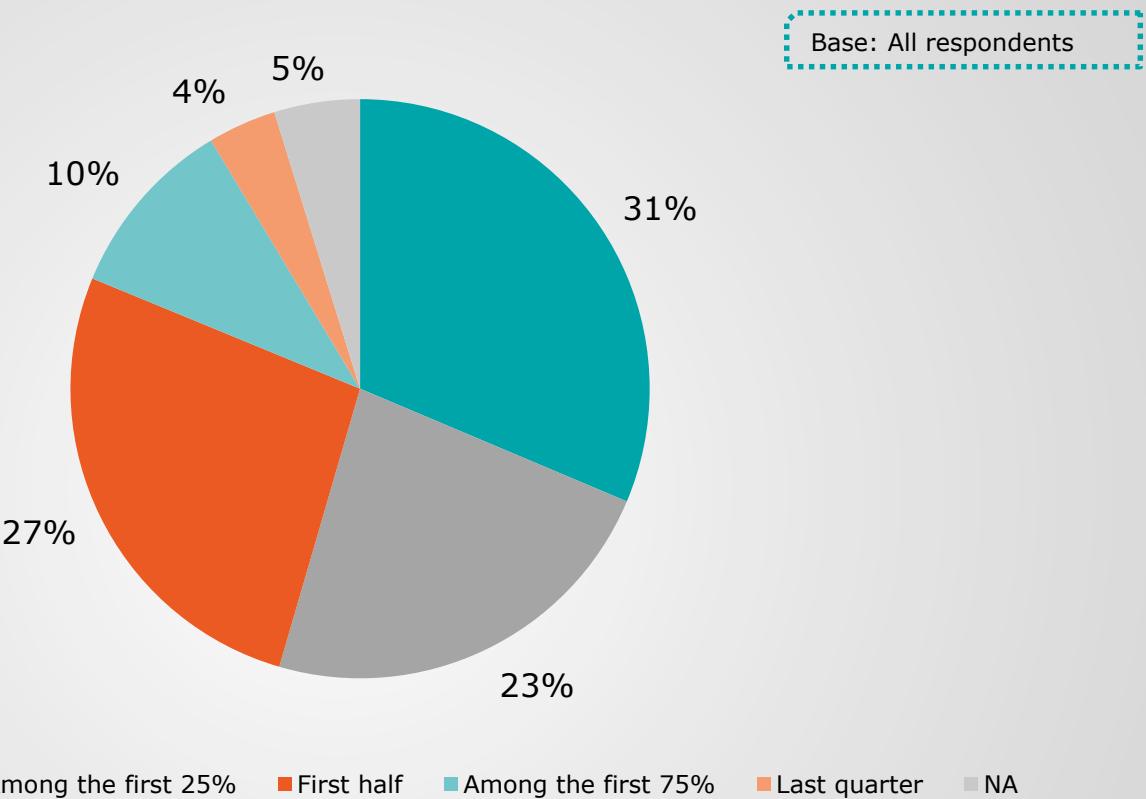
The level of satisfaction with mobility opportunities is quite high. Over 50% (55%) of respondents say they are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the opportunities to study abroad. The level of satisfaction is higher among students who are considered to have better results, but the differences are not significant between the categories of students.

## At present..?



Activities outside class hours range from "volunteering" (26%) to "working within a student organization" or "a job" (20%)

## If you compare to your colleagues, where would you place yourself, in terms of exam grades?

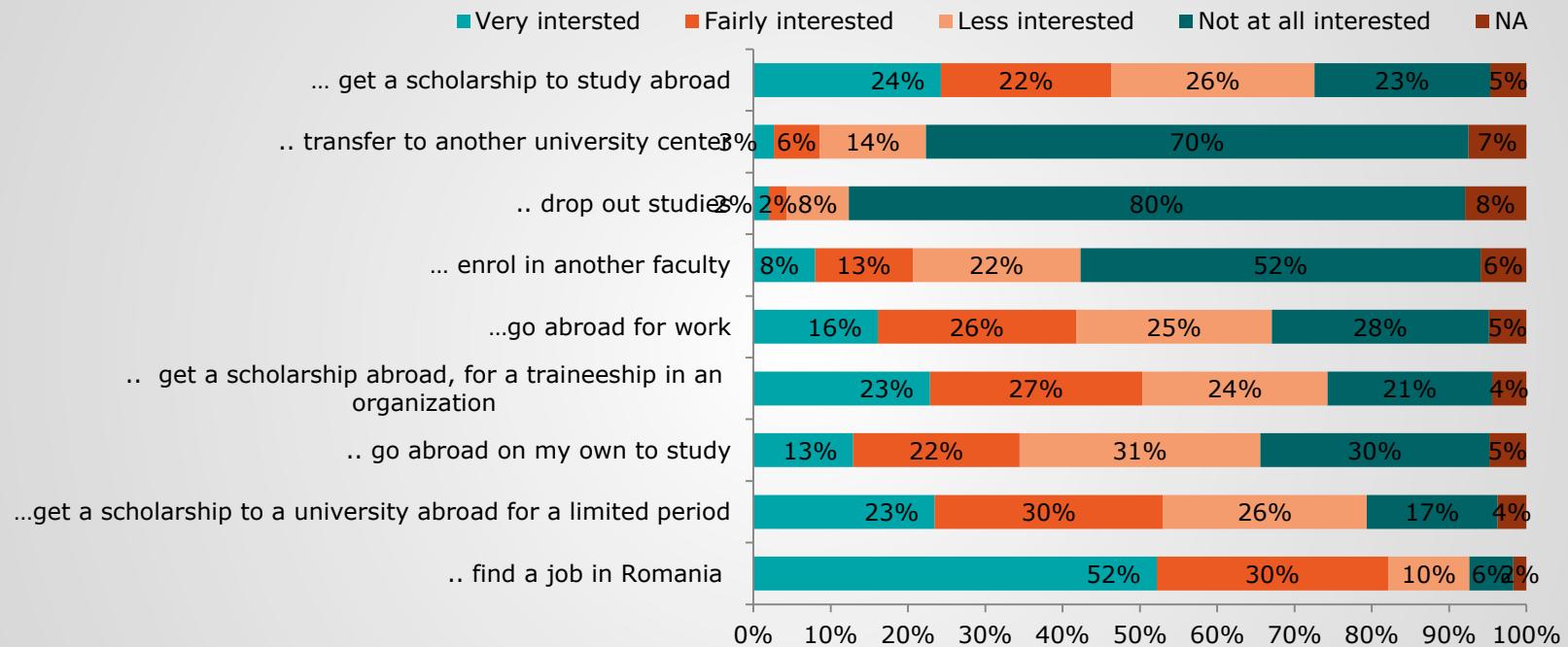


Self-ranking in the hierarchy of the study year indicates a higher share of those who consider themselves as belonging to the first tenth of the best performing students. Another 23% place themselves in the first quarter and 27% in the first half. The higher share of students who consider themselves to have top results is a useful one, as it allows us to better analyze the behavior of the most likely Erasmus+ scholarship candidates.

The sample is a representative one for the population of potential ERASMUS+ candidate students, being oriented towards identifying a segment of students with average and high learning outcomes and covering as many fields as possible.

## How interested are you that, in the next 2 years, to...?

Base: All respondents

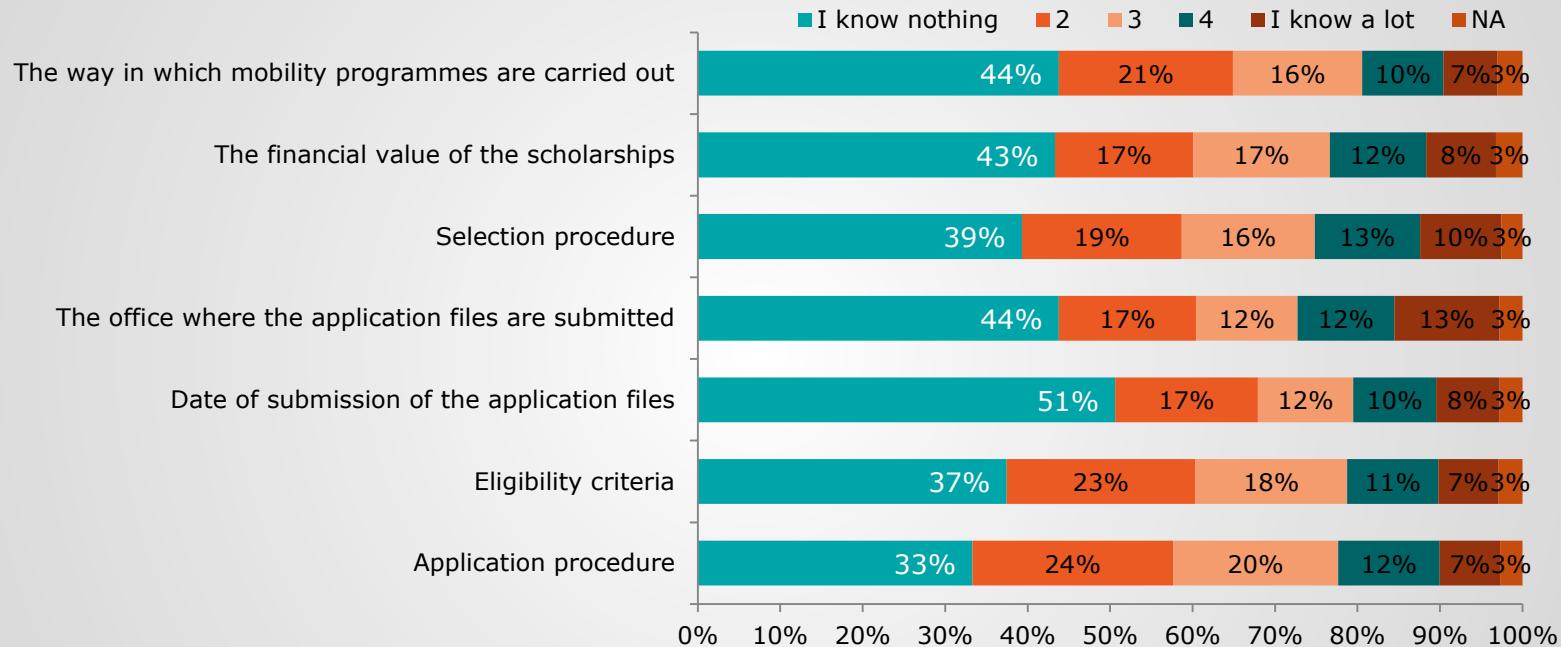


 The main future plans of the students aim at finding a job in Romania (52% very interested), getting a scholarship abroad, either for studies or for a traineeship (23% -24% very interested) and the intention to emigrate for work ( 16%). Students from large universities (with over 20k + students) are those who declare themselves to a lesser extent as interested in finding a scholarship abroad, while students from small universities (maximum 10k students) and medium (10k-20k) are the ones who are most interested in leaving abroad with as beneficiaries.

## Next, we propose to discuss about the student scholarships for international mobility. How informed are you about them?

Please rate from 1 to 5, where 1 means you know nothing about them, and 5 means you know a lot!

Base: All respondents

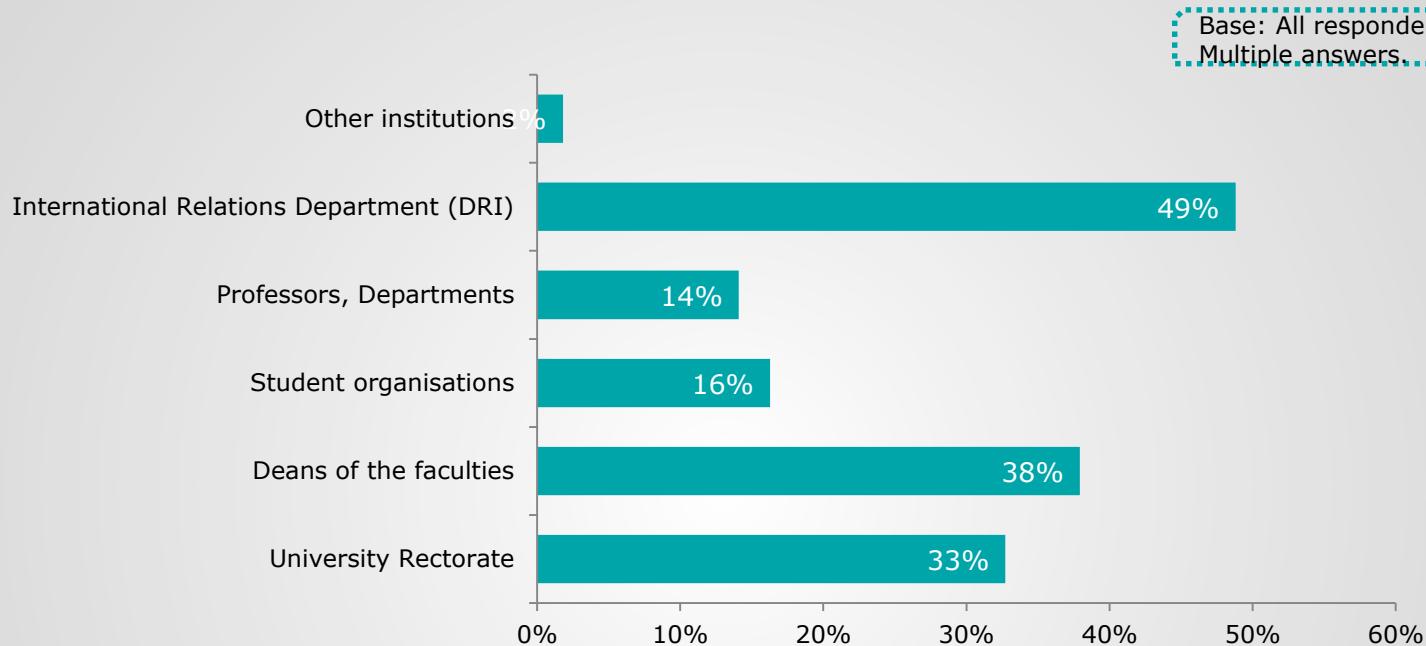


 The level of information is quite low. More than a third of students are not aware of any of the seven tested aspects.

The level of information is higher among:

- Better performing students, who rank in the top 10%
- Medium and small universities
- Universities with an average share of ERASMUS+ scholarships

## As far as you know, who is in charge with managing student mobility scholarships?

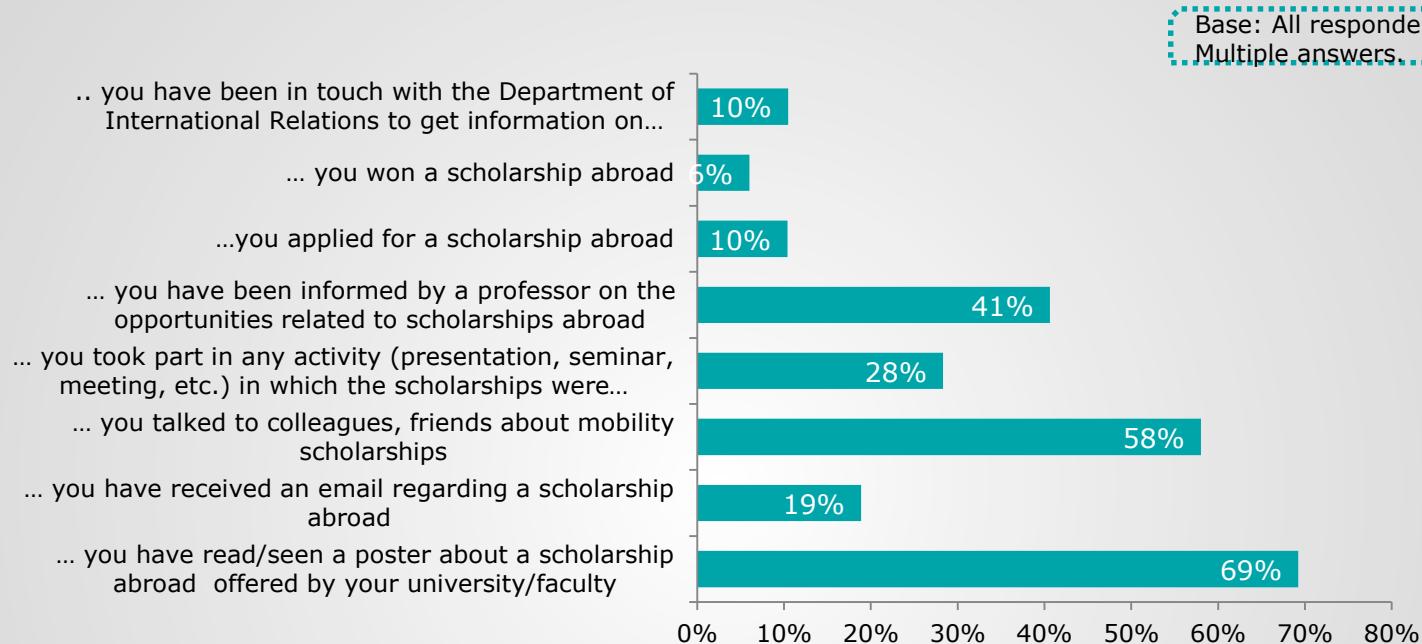


The institutions considered to be those in charge to manage student mobility scholarships are:

- DRI (referred to by 50% of the respondents)
- Deans of the faculties (38%)
- University Rectorate (33%)

The involvement of professors or student organizations in the management of the scholarships is mentioned to a lesser extent compared to other institutions.

## During the last year..?



The impact of promoting the scholarships was high, over two thirds of the students read/saw a poster about such a scholarship. In the same time, the topic was one of medium-high interest, with 58% of the respondents discussing it.

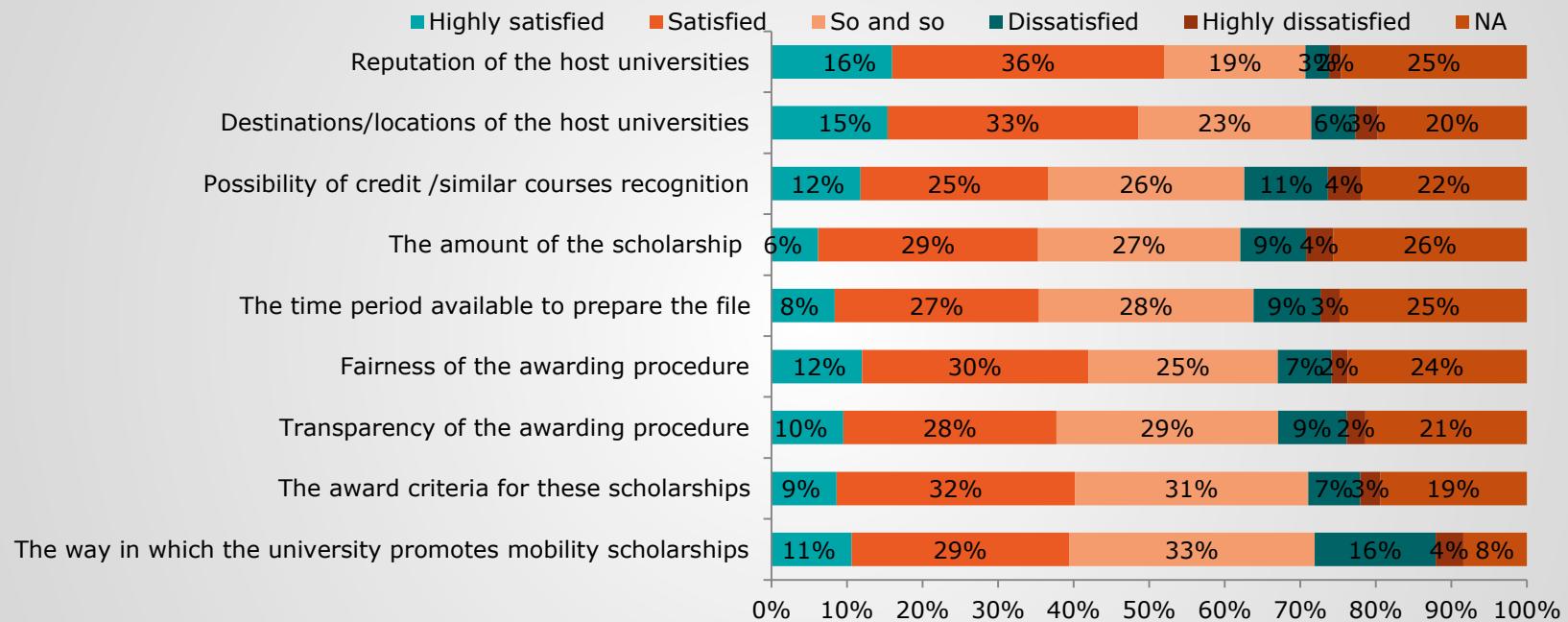
Professors' involvement was significant, 41% of the students saying that the professors presented them mobility opportunities.

In contrast, the concrete step towards obtaining a scholarship was only made by 10% of those interviewed.

Data indicate that those who have been informed at the DRI applied for a scholarship and some of them winning it, are among students who place themselves in the top 10%, are enrolled at medium-sized universities, with an average share of scholarships per students.

## Overall, how satisfied are you with the following issues?

Base: All respondents.

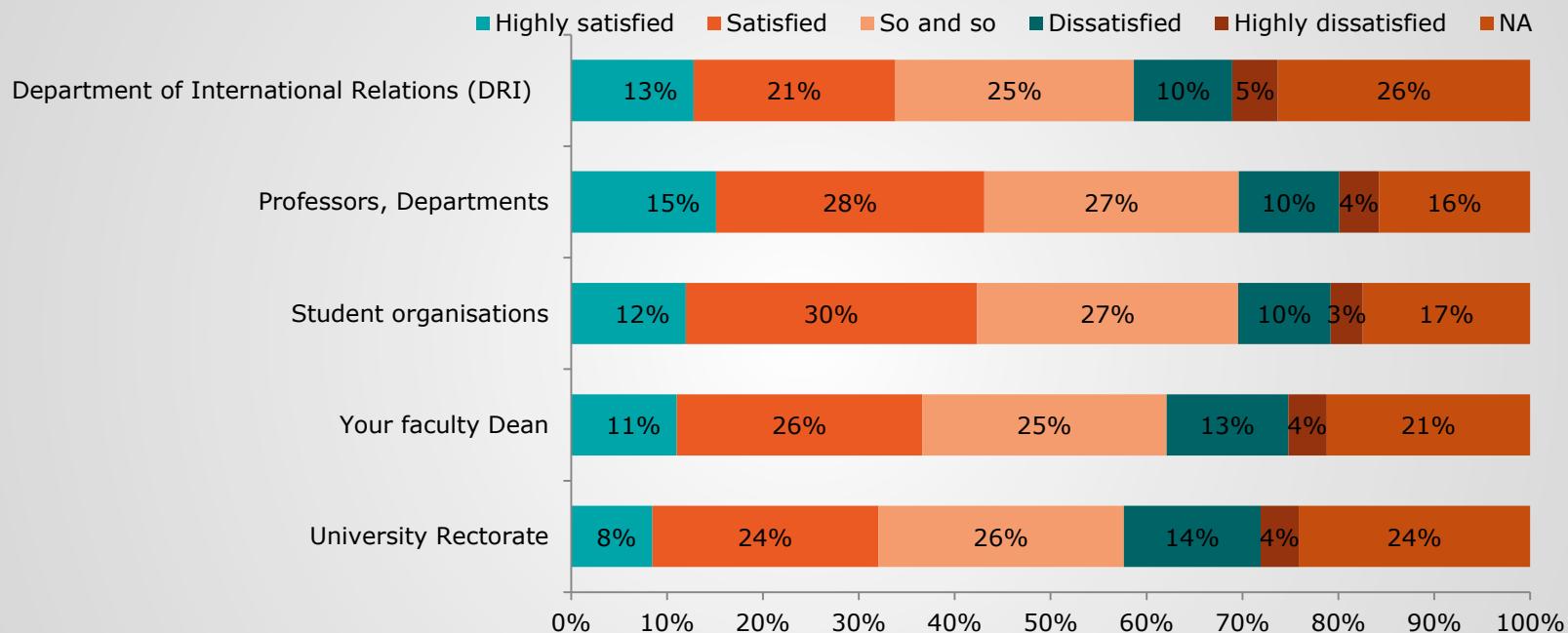


 The level of satisfaction with the characteristics of the scholarship offer is a medium-high one. The share of "dissatisfied" and "highly dissatisfied" varies between 9% and 20%, while the share of "highly satisfied" and "satisfied" ranges from 35% -52%.

If the perception does not differ in relation to the level of performance of the students, it is different depending on the university environment. Students from the mid-sized universities are more satisfied with the characteristics of the scholarship offer than those from the large or small universities.

# How satisfied are you with the way in which the following institutions promote mobility scholarships and encourage students to apply for them?

Base: All respondents.

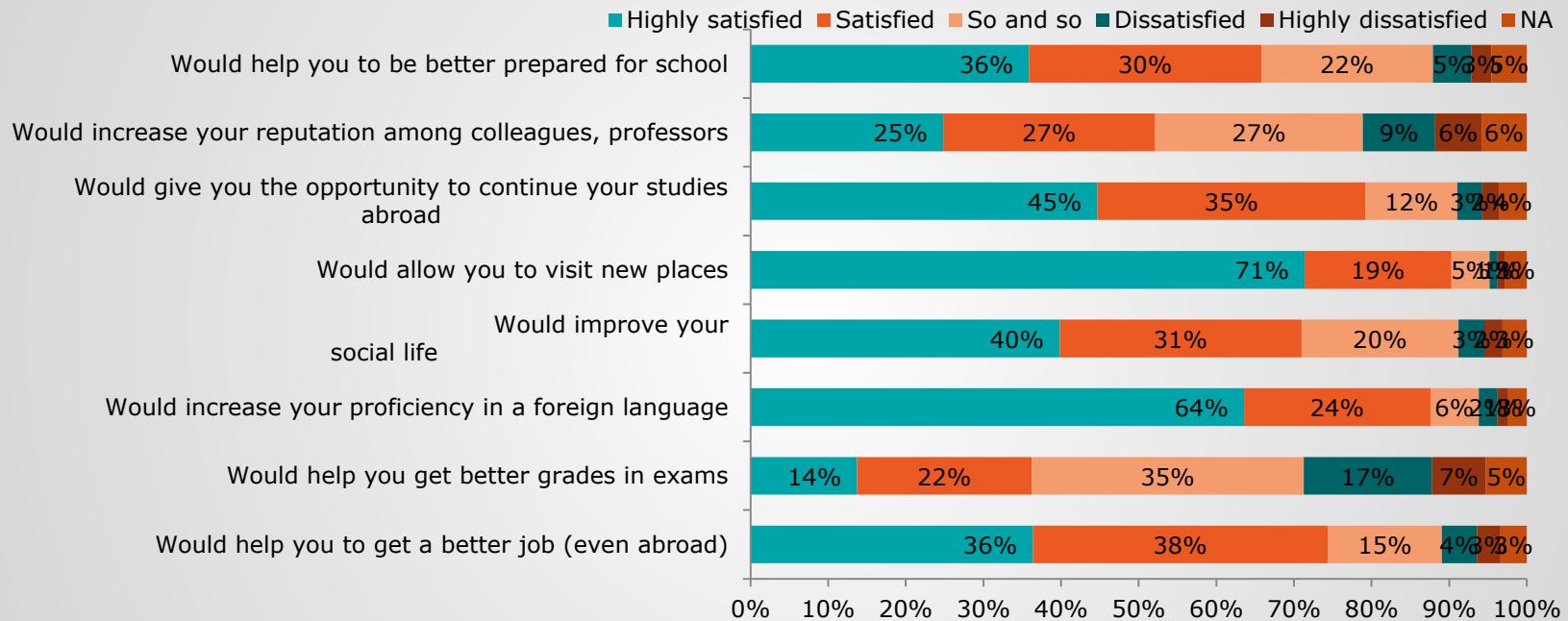


The level of satisfaction with the "performance of institutions in promoting scholarships and encouraging students" is high. The share of the dissatisfied varies between 13% and 18%, while the share of the satisfied, between 32% and 43%. The hierarchy indicates that the students are satisfied, in the following order, with the professors, the student organizations, the dean, the DRI and the rector.

The data are somewhat at odds with the role that students assign to these institutions in managing the scholarships.

# In general, to what extent do you consider that a scholarship abroad...?

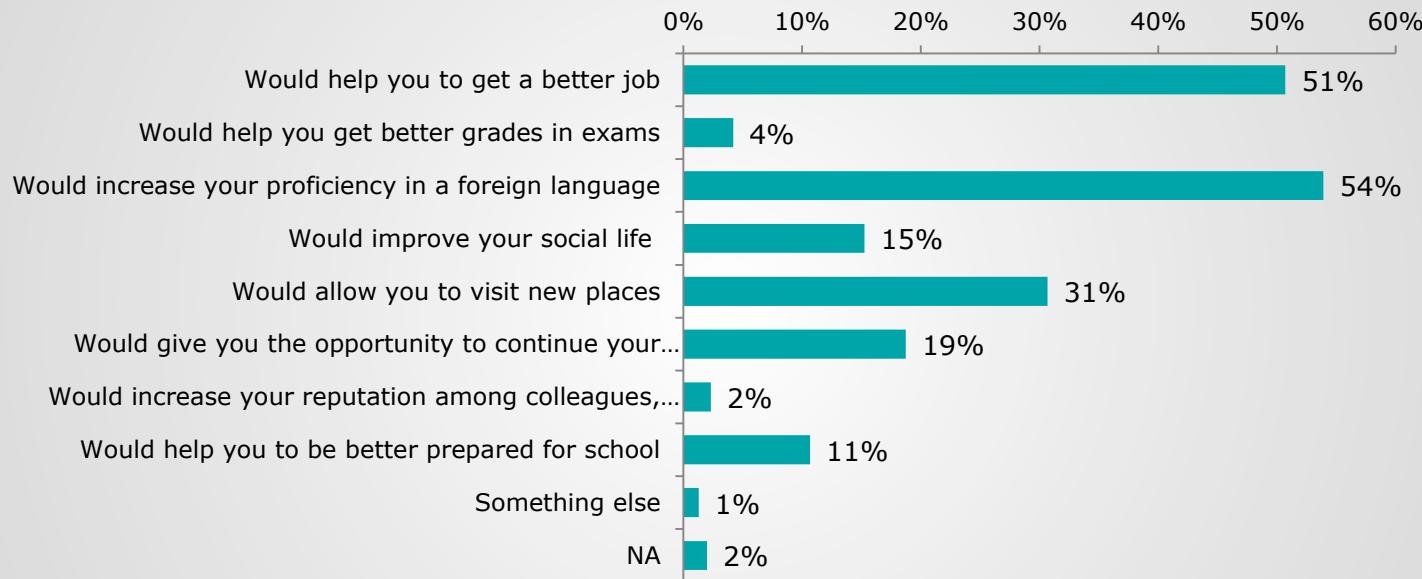
Base: All respondents.



What would a scholarship abroad offer to students in their view? Firstly, "*the possibility to visit new places*" and "*increased proficiency in a foreign language*". These main benefits exclude the professional dimension as the main opportunity resulting from mobility, the latter being of a secondary importance. "*The possibility to be better prepared for school*", and "*to continue studies abroad*", as well as "*to improve the social life*" or "*getting a better job*" are of a secondary importance. "*Reputation among colleagues and professors*", and "*the possibility to get better grades in exams*" are considered less important aspects/benefits that result from an international mobility.

## Of all these, what would be the main advantages of being awarded a scholarship abroad...?

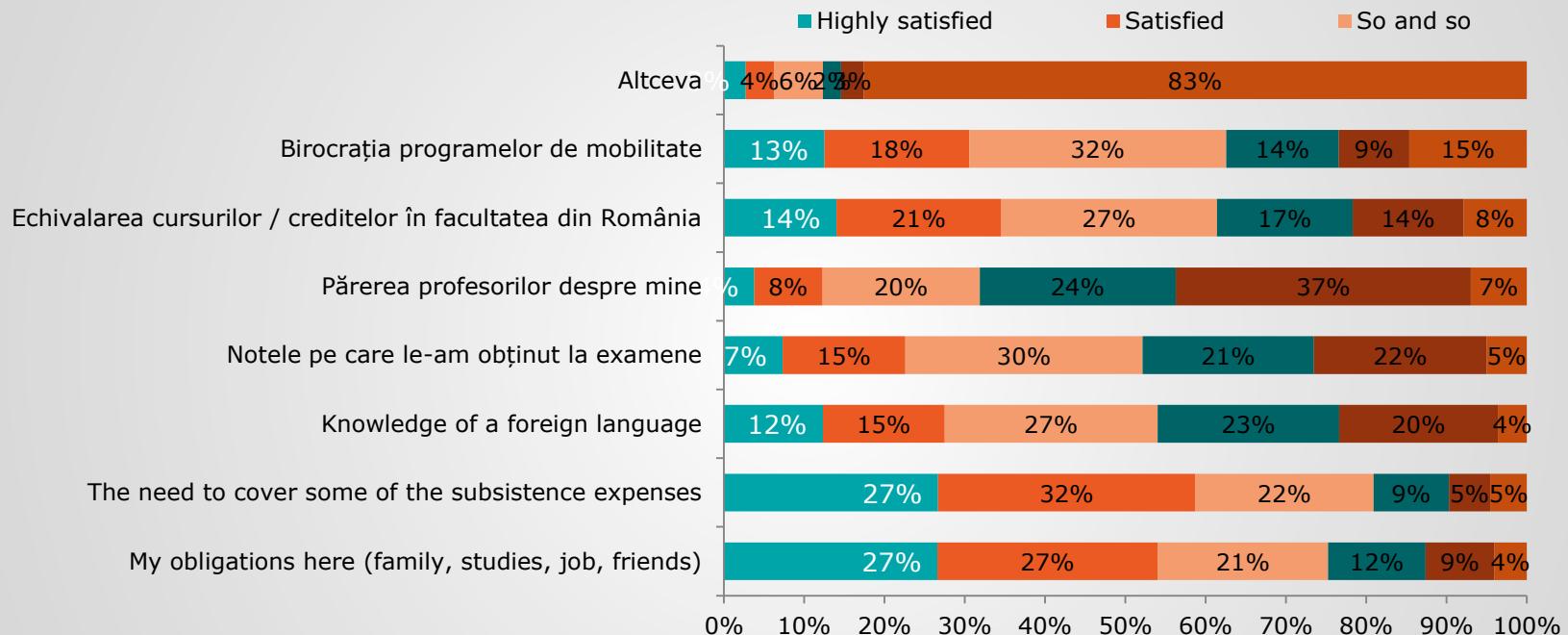
Base: All respondents.



Getting a better job, being able to learn a foreign language and visiting new places are the main advantages offered by a scholarship abroad. Therefore, the general perception is stemming from extracurricular benefits, of a gain that will facilitate the success for other moments of life.

## To what extent the following aspects would represent a hindrance to get a scholarship abroad...?

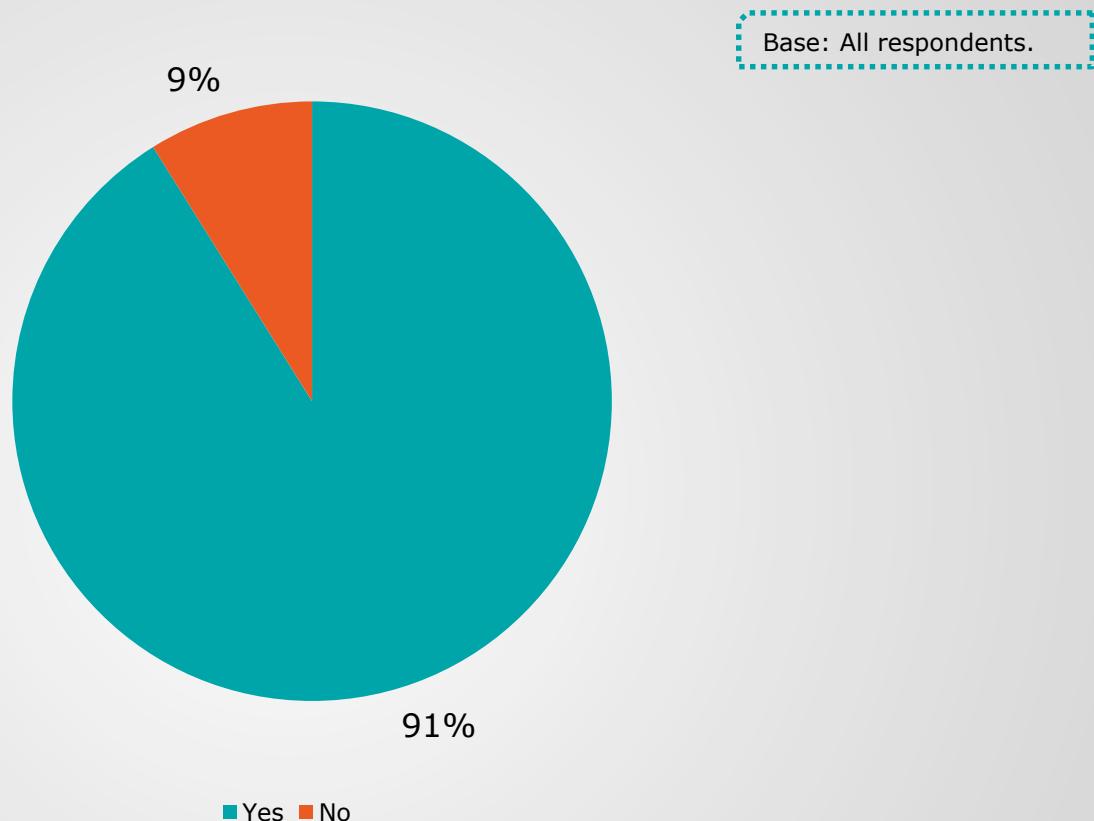
Base: All respondents.



 The main obstacles to winning a scholarship abroad are "the need to cover part of the expenses" and "the existing obligations". Also, the "bureaucracy of mobility programmes" and "the recognition of courses at my home University" are other factors that could slow down access to a scholarship. "Own school performance" and "Professors' opinion" do not seem to constitute important obstacles.

# **Perceptions on ERASMUS+**

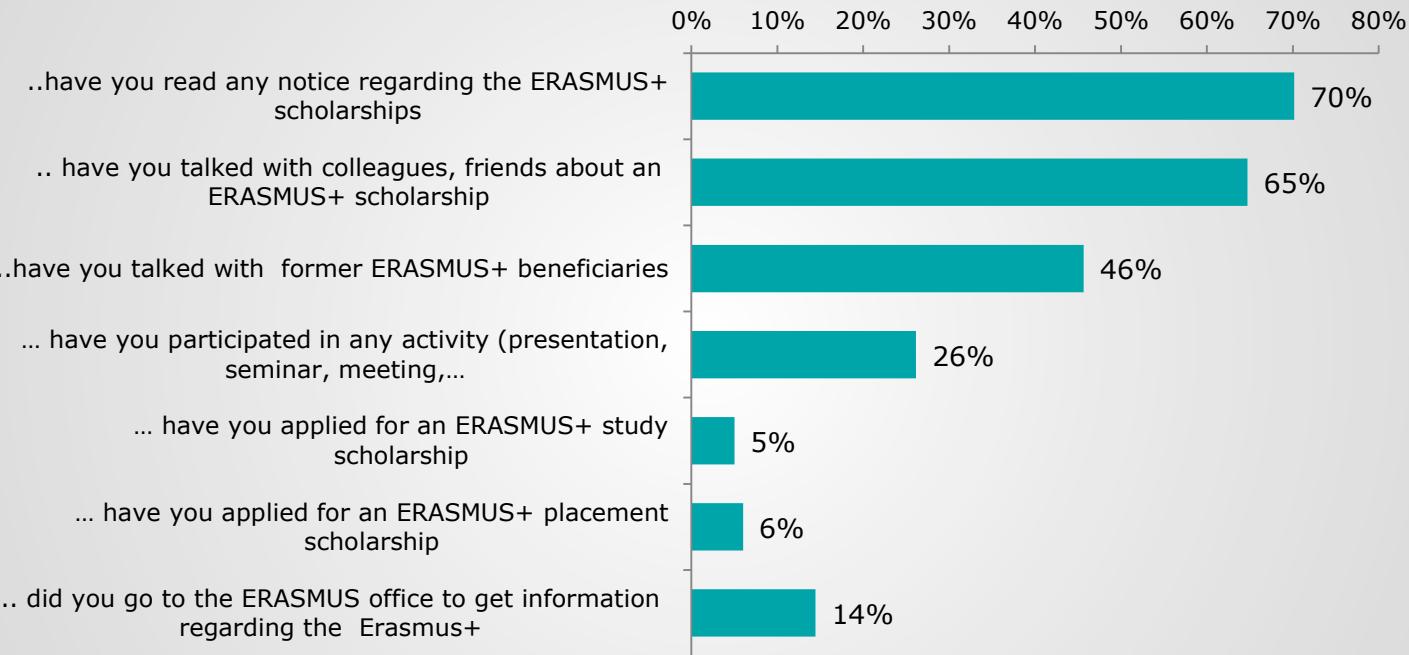
## Did you hear about the ERASMUS+ programme for international mobility scholarships?



ERASMUS+ is a widely-known programme. Basically, only one student in 11 has not heard about this programme.

## During the last year..?

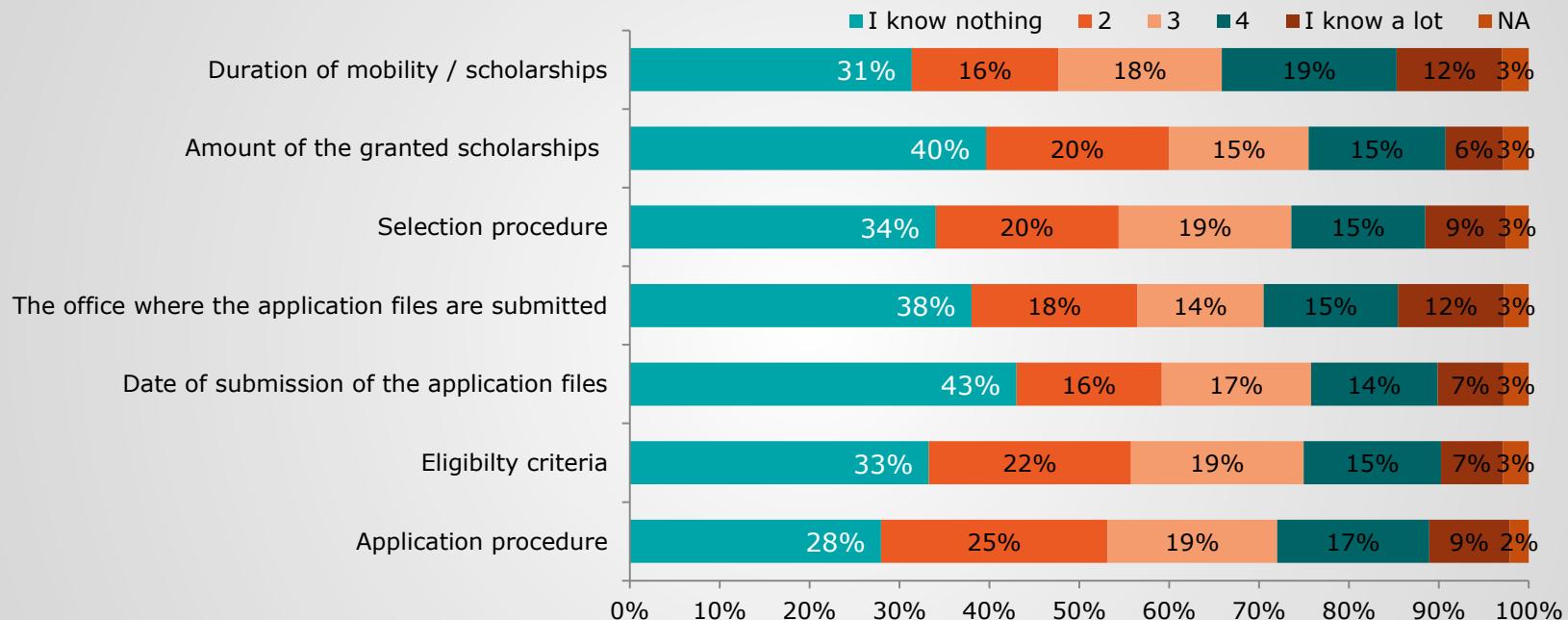
Base: Those who are familiar with the Erasmus+ programme.



 Similar to the perception regarding scholarships abroad in general, the visibility of promoting ERASMUS+ is a high one, the topic is one of interest at a conversational level, but the percentage of students who act and take concrete steps is a relatively reduced, at about 5% scholarship applicants, respectively to 6% for placements.

## How informed are you about the ERASMUS+ programme? Rate from 1 to 5, where 1 means you don't know anything about the following aspects and 5 means you know a lot.

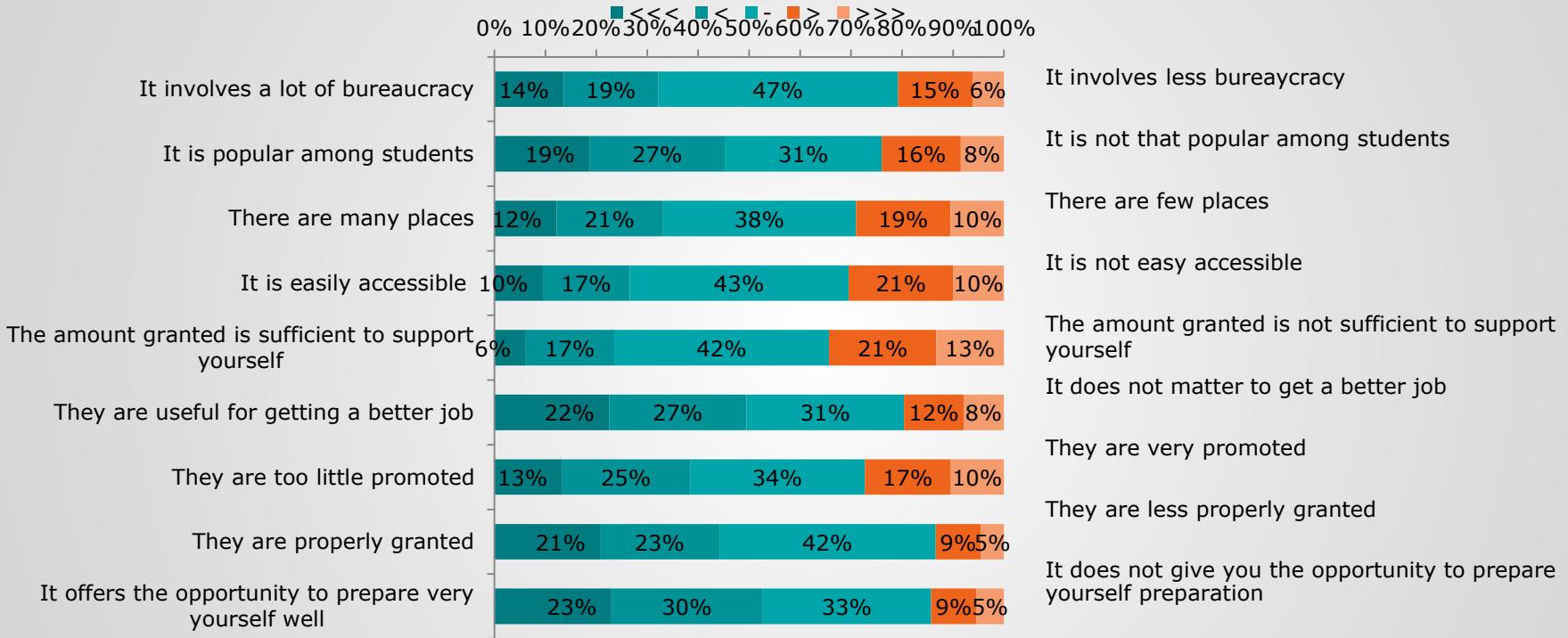
Base: Those who are familiar with the Erasmus+ programme.



 The level of information on the ERASMUS+ programme is high. The correlations between the level of information and satisfaction with the characteristics of the scholarships ( $R$  Pearson - .311, sig. < .001) or the interest towards scholarships ( $R$  Pearson - .210, sig. < .001) are of average value, but significantly higher than 0.

# How would you evaluate the ERASMUS+ programme/ scholarships+?

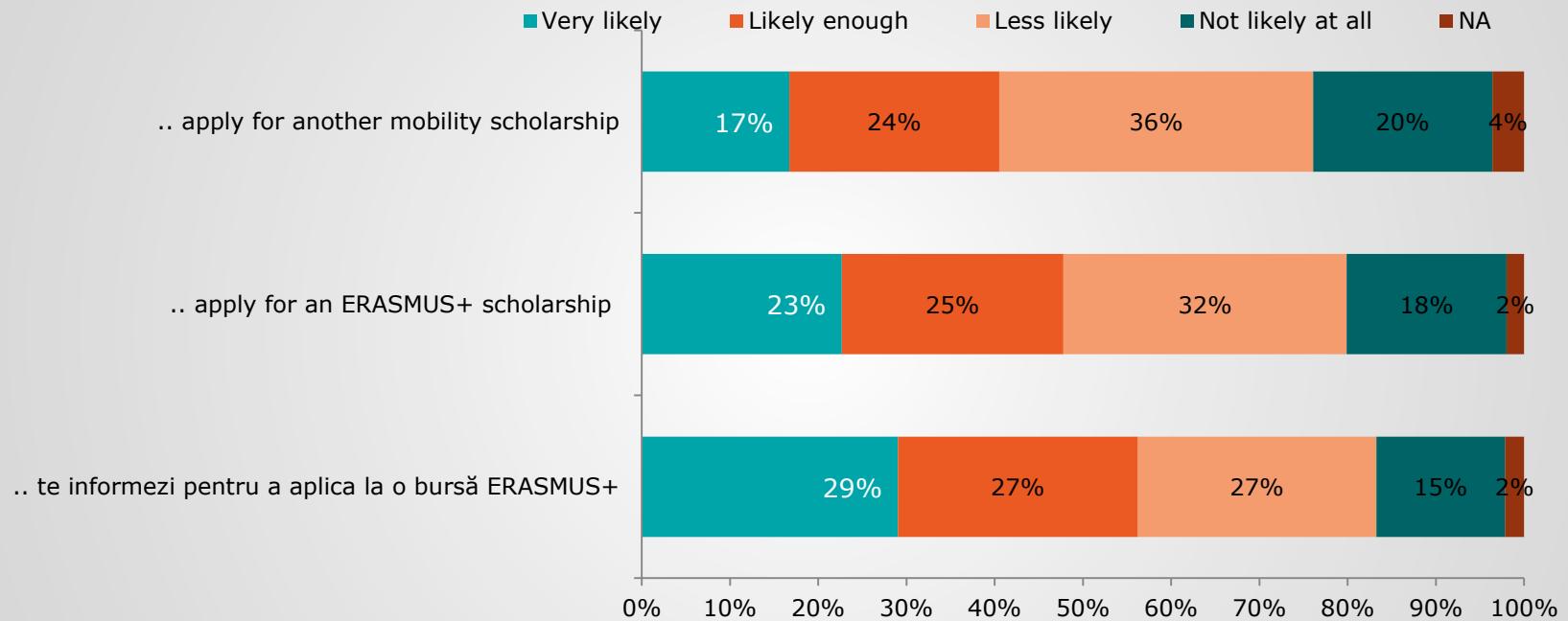
Base: Those who are familiar with  
the Erasmus+ programme.



The evaluation of the programme is generally expressed in positive-moderate terms. ERASMUS+ scholarships are rather "a way to prepare yourself very well", they are "useful for getting a better job", they are "properly awarded" and they are "popular among students". On the side of negative evaluations it is noticeable *the insufficient amount granted* and that the scholarship are *not easily accessible*.

## How likely it is that in the next 2 years...?

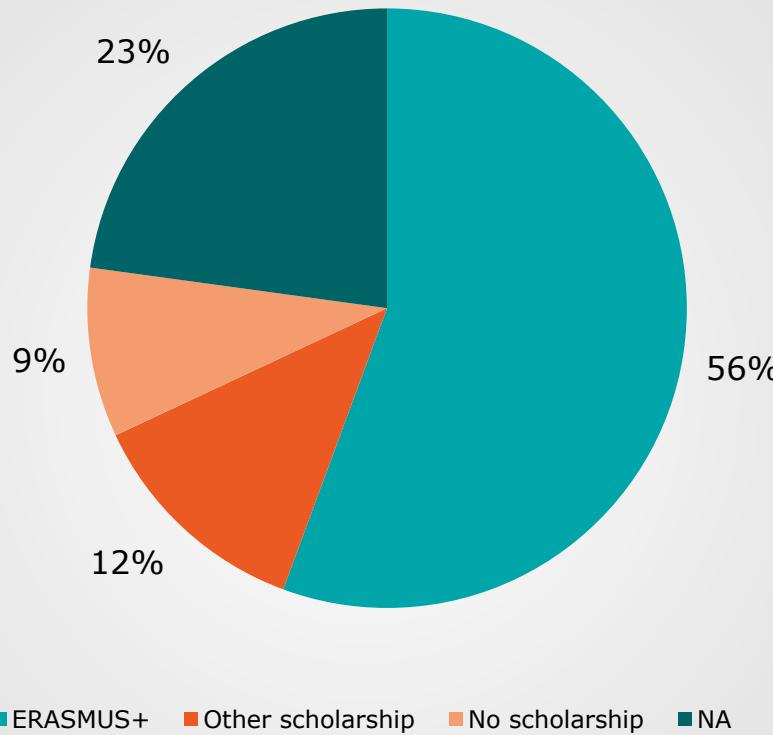
Base: Those who are familiar with the Erasmus+ programme.



The share of applicants with a high probability for an ERASMUS+ scholarship, in the next two years, is of 23%. For other mobility grants, the share is 17%.

**If you had to choose now between an ERASMUS+ scholarship and another scholarship abroad, currently available, which one would you choose?**

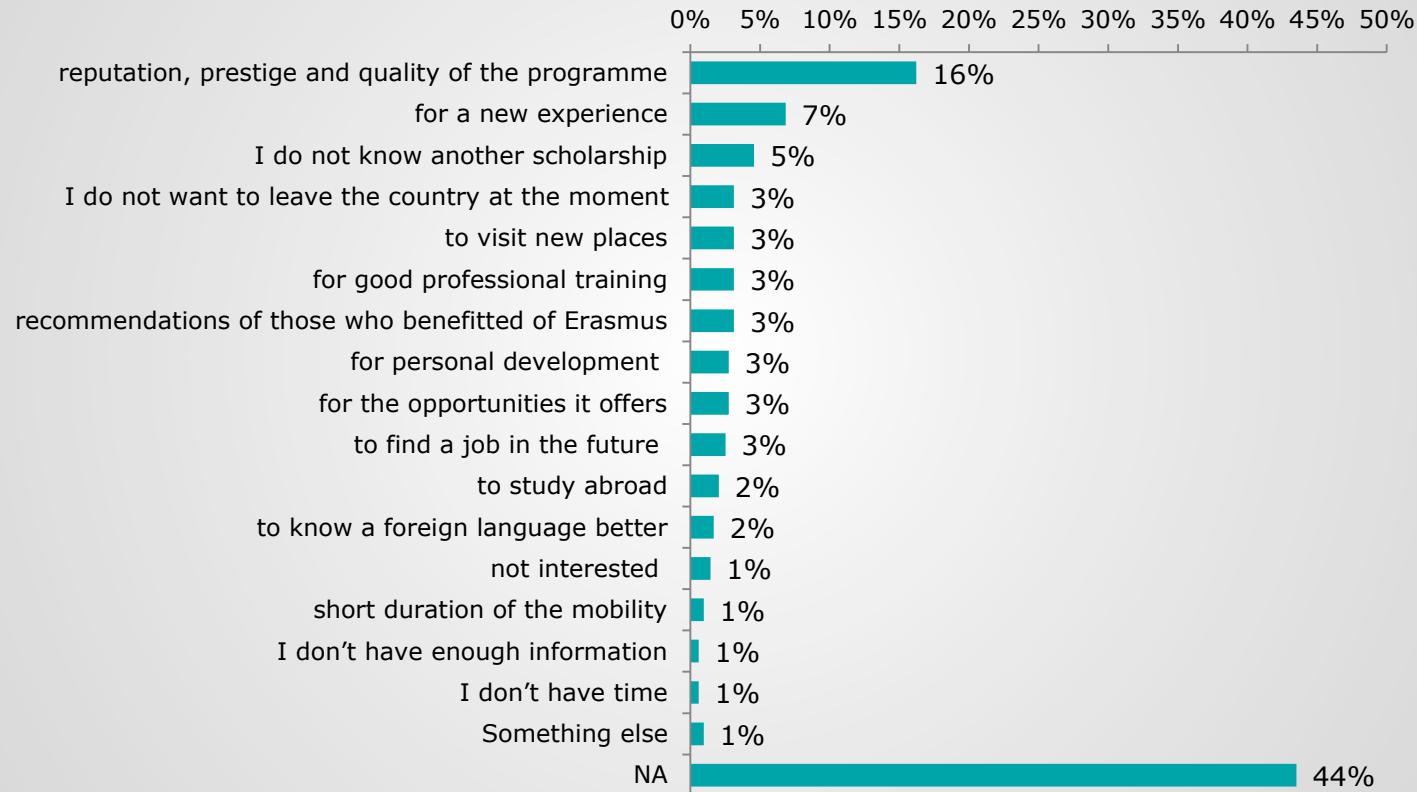
Base: Those who are familiar with the Erasmus+ programme.



56% of students would choose the ERASMUS+ scholarship, while only 12% would choose other scholarship.

## Why would you make this choice?

Base: Those who are familiar with the Erasmus+ programme.



The main reasons for choosing Erasmus+ are the reputation and prestige of the scholarship and the new experience.

## A model for predicting the high probability of applying for an Erasmus+ scholarship

The regression procedure used is the linear regression procedure. The values that give us the degree of adequacy of the proposed model are R square

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.579 <sup>a</sup>	.335	.330	.4078

The R square value is .330, a high average value, which allows us to consider the model as being quite adequate.

F Anova:

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	72.171	7	10.310	61.993	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	143.067	860	.166		
	Total	215.238	867			

The F Anova value is high with sig. <.001, which again indicates a high degree of model suitability

# A model for predicting the high probability of applying for an Erasmus+ scholarship

Coefficients of the regression equation :

Model		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>							
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	.483	.019		25.052	.000			
	Scholarship interest	.198	.014	.409	13.730	.000	.869	1.150	
	Interest in change	-.063	.014	-.132	-4.603	.000	.943	1.060	
	Scholarship application	.067	.017	.131	3.978	.000	.715	1.398	
	Scholarship valuation	.073	.015	.145	5.036	.000	.930	1.076	
	Information on Erasmus	.044	.016	.086	2.656	.008	.740	1.351	
	Medium-sized university (10k-20k)	-.093	.029	-.090	-3.142	.002	.942	1.062	
	High rate Erasmus (> 2%)	.149	.040	.105	3.733	.000	.973	1.028	
a. Dependent Variable: Erasmus probability									

As it can be noticed, all coefficients are significantly different from 0 for sig.<.05 and the level of collinearity is a reasonable one.

## A model for predicting the high probability of applying for an Erasmus+ scholarship

To be taken into account for an increased likelihood of applying for an Erasmus scholarship is:

- The general interest for scholarships
- The concrete step taken to get a scholarship
- Perceiving the scholarships as a big gain
- A high level of information on the Erasmus+ programme
- Being enrolled in a university with a high rate of granting Erasmus scholarships (over 2%).

The main obstacles seem to be:

- The interest to change the faculty or the university (a change in the educational path)
- Being enrolled in a medium-sized universities (10k-20k students).

78% of the students can be correctly included in this model (their probability of applying for an Erasmus scholarship can be predicted).

# CONCLUSIONS

## CONCLUSIONS

The level of information regarding student mobility opportunities is medium-high. We can say that the message reaches the students who could be the most likely beneficiaries of the programme.

Students in the top 10% are those who show the greatest interest in scholarships abroad. But this feature is mediated by the type of university in which students are enrolled.

Data show a greater interest for scholarships of students from medium and small seized universities and who hold an average number of scholarships per student (1% -2%). Students from large universities are more interested in getting a job.

We can consider the level of local development, the emergence of various employment opportunities as a factor that competes and/or conditions the mobility opportunities.

On the other hand, the perception of real chances of being granted the scholarship (perception determined in its turn by self-placement in the area of students with good results, the average or high number of scholarships per student, the perception of a fair selection) represents one of the motivational factors in applying for a scholarship.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main obstacles to accessing the programme:

- The need to cover some of the expenses. The amount of the scholarship does not always cover the costs of maintenance, as such the personal financial contribution can sometimes be significant.
- Currently existing obligations (workplace, family, friends). The connection with the significant group, with the workplace, makes the temporary departure more difficult, involving either symbolic costs or the decision to give up certain things.
- Alternative opportunities (especially in large, developed cities): jobs, volunteering. The greater the number of existing opportunities, the lower the temptation to access a scholarship abroad, the more if it is perceived only as a utility (only as a means of accessing a better job).
- Perceived added-value of scholarship abroad. If the perception on the advantages offered by a scholarship is placed on the level described above, as a way to facilitate a better job, alternative ways of achieving this goal may appear (eg. the experience required for a job can be gained through volunteering or other temporary jobs).



## II. SUMMARY INTERVIEWS WITH ONE-PARTICIPANT STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PROGRAMMES

- > Perceptions on Erasmus+
- > Obstacles in accessing mobility programs
- > Expectations and recommendations



# Perceptions on international mobility experiences

## - Pereceived disadvantages

- > Exchange of experience
- > Knowing new cultures
- Possibility to meet
- > new friends
- > Interaction with another education system
- > Personal development
- Maturity lesson
- > Opportunity to improve the knowledge of a foreign language
- > The opportunity to get in touch with the labor market the European countries



## Perceived disadvantages of mobility

*It is an interesting experience, as you have the opportunity to interact with new professors, understand the way in which other university venters work, interact with other groups. It improves your knowledge of a foreign language, for example English or another language. (student Cluj)*

*It supports your personal development, you learn to live alone, you make new friends, it's a lesson in maturity, it forces you to move out of the comfort zone. (student Bucharest)*

*Get more information on other countries, visit other universities, learn about new cultures. Students can exchange experience, meet new people, see other cultures, not necessarily the aspects related to the faculty and the study itself. (student Mureş)*

*Exchange experience, you can see how study is organised in other countries. It's important to see how it is there, to have the chance to experience something else. It's the opportunity to get to know a new world, each student should try something like this.*

## Perceived disadvantages of mobility

*As far as I am aware from the experiences of my colleagues who went on a mobility, I know that not all their exams have been recognised. One of my colleagues went on a mobility in England during the second semester of the second and was surprised that when she came back only some of her exams were recognised, mostly for subjects that are taught at Master level.*

*She was quite disappointed because she had to take the exams during the re-examination session and it was quite difficult for her to study for all the courses in only two weeks, basically the course materials for the entire semester. (student Cluj)*

*The scholarship amount is insufficient, this would be the biggest disadvantage, because you need more money. It would also be difficult to be away from home. (student Mureş)*

*Maybe for some students it is difficult to be away from their family, they may miss some interesting things or opportunities here in the country, during that period, but there are no real disadvantages.*

*I have nothing to lose. I didn't leave because I could not find a company for placement, it was a big headache. If I had found it, I'd definitely have gone. (student Bucharest)*

## The main obstacles for accessing an international mobility programme

- > The amount of the mobility scholarship, the fear that the money would not be enough, the fear that they would not find additional sources of income to supplement the scholarship
- > Failing to meet the eligibility conditions with regard to the grade point average, knowledge of the foreign language
- > Fear that they would not be able to meet the foreign educational system's requirements/standards that are higher than at home
- > Anxiety about separating from family and friends the fact that they would miss some opportunities at home
- > The fact that they do not have enough information to make an informed decision
- > The fact that they do not perceive the immediate benefits or contribution of experience in finding a job



## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*I was scared to get out of the comfort zone and try new things. There may be other factors as well, such as the close relationship colleagues have with family members, which prevents them from leaving even for a limited period of time. (student Cluj)*

*As for leaving the country, I think the adaptation process would be more difficult. I don't want to go abroad. I think we need trained people here to bring a contribution to our country's economy. It holds me back that I do not know foreign languages and I cannot communicate well. Then financially, that the amount is not very big. But I personally want to know better what is happening here in the country. (student Mureş)*

*In my case, an obstacle was the English language - I understand and speak it, but not at an academic level. Another obstacle was the financial one, because without a job there I would not have been able to support myself. I also informed myself on the scholarship amount and what the expenses are. I wouldn't make it without having to take a job, that is, as I would have needed about 1000 euros in total, scholarship included. That's why I never really considered Erasmus seriously. (student Cluj)*

*Regarding the university experience there, if I was to think about my colleagues who went on Erasmus, and on the training side, I don't think it was a plus. I mean, it was a plus, but not from an academic point of view. So the benefit is that you go and interact with other cultures, so culturally, definitely yes, but not necessarily an educational one ... For example, I have a colleague who went to Sorbonne for master, but that did not help her after graduation in finding a job, either in university or in research. As proof, she is now in Germany and is working in a field that has nothing to do with her studies. So on the training side, in the cases that I know of, the benefits are not necessarily very great. (student Cluj)*



## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*I do not have enough information about these programmes. I think I would be more worried about the transfer of grades, or the fact that I would have to take my exams again and that would be a financial burden. (student Mureş)*

*I do not want to be alone, I would only go if I had friends who would come with me, and I would still know the language at a high level so that I could cope. (student Mureş)*

*Obstacles related only to the recognition of courses, grades, as I do not see other obstacles. In Germany it is more expensive to live, so that the scholarship amount should be adapted to the living costs in the host country. (student Bucharest)*

*Expenses, this factor can affect some people, not all of us have a good financial status. Foreign language would also be a hindrance, for example I understand English very well but I have a block in communicating. There would also be the grade issue, as they cannot be always recognised according to our expectations. (student Cluj)*

*Some people may not get involved due to fears about the foreign language, new places and people they need to know, it all depends on the person, but if you don't risk, you won't win. (student Timișoara)*

*Mainly, the obstacle would be that I would leave alone and that I should handle everything alone. And I hope I could deal with a limited amount of money. The main obstacle would be that I am far from family and friends. (student Iași)*

## Suggestions and recommendations on increasing awareness of the programme

Targeted information about the Erasmus+ programme: students recommend additional presentations within the university, so that to encourage them to take part in this programme.

*They did not come to our university to introduce us to the program, not even the past participants. Some leaflets have been simply left on the bulletin board and you could walk past them to read them, but it wasn't quite clear what was going on there. For example, it was not clear to me how you should take it get in touch with the people there. It was an email address and some pictures. Nothing concrete. It would have been more interesting if an Erasmus representative came to the classroom or had former participants tell us what it is like - these are the expenses, that's what you learn, that's why it's good to go, that's why it's not good to go. (student Cluj)*

*It would be good not to let us search for information, but to have presented the list of things you need to do, something that will make us interested, because if we do feel that we are supported, of course we are not too daring. (student Bucharest)*

More involvement of the professors in promoting international mobility and their benefits.

*Professors do not promote this programme. At our university I do not think they had a very good promotion. Basically, the students had to take this step, to find more information, they were looking for them and not the other way around. As a consequence, went on a mobility only those students who really wanted a mobility experience, wanted to see another country, knew the language, and also had something financial support – as a profile. (student Iasi)*

## Suggestions and recommendations on increasing awareness of the programme

Increase the scholarship amount or supplement it from other sources

*The amount of the scholarship should be high enough that it can guarantee a decent living, without having to take a job there. I spoke to a colleague, who was on an Erasmus scholarship in Poland and told me that the Master is a full time job there, not like here. There you really need to read, work hard, go to the library, do research, get involved, because otherwise you have no chance, that's what he told me, who had this experience. And in this case I would not be able to take a job so that to supplement the scholarship. (student Cluj)*

More information about the expectations of the Professors from the host universities and the requirements which have to be met by students

*I would like to know in advance and very exactly what are the expectations of the professors there are and the level of the host university. How big will be the volume of work there in the university, compared to the one here? (student Iași)*

## Suggestions and recommendations on increasing awareness of the programme

### Other suggestions:

- Establishing an emergency fund for students, which they could use during mobility for exceptional situations, something that would give them some sense of security
- Support from faculties/offices in finding placements/internships
- More promotion sessions
- Better promotion, more use of social networks
- Updated information on the faculty websites and on the FB page
- More agreements with those countries that are most demanded by students

### III. INTERVIEWS RESULTS OF ERASMUS+ OFFICES REPRESENTATIVES AND PROFESSORS

- > Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes
- > Trends within the programme regarding the interests of the students
- > Expectations and recommendations

# Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

## Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

**Factors related to "competition" on the market for study mobility offers** or cultural mobility, the fact that the offer that has been higher in recent years with opportunities that students have outside the Erasmus programme: *For students from different fields, the Erasmus+ programme is not the only mobility option. There are good students who have various other funding opportunities and various other pathways and openings to the European universities: scholarships and internships offered by European universities, free courses, summer schools. It can be applied directly for scholarships at the European universities, either for longer or shorter periods than in Erasmus +. At the same time, it is easy to apply directly to universities in the EU, which offer tuition under favourable financial conditions.*

**In conclusion, student mobility increased overall and outside of the Erasmus programme, while freedom of movement affected part of the student's motivation to leave through the Erasmus+ programme.**

One of the factors affecting mobility is the fact that "going abroad" is somewhat within reach, as such, the motivation of accessing an Erasmus+ mobility only for the opportunity to go abroad is lower compared to previous years.

## Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

### **Factors related to the institutions that manage the programme at the university level and to their resources:**

*The universities in Europe will no longer want to host, at the same time, there are few experts at European level who want to learn, thus an issue with recruiting the staff, salaries at international relations offices are low, there is also a large fluctuation of staff, lack of know-how of the staff; All these difficulties are also reflected in the mobility situation.*

*In order to be able to absorb more mobile students, EU universities must radically change the way they organize international relations offices. Increase the level of funding. There is also a resistance on behalf of the faculties. Receiving more international students mean courses in English for that faculty, it means more effort and resources from the faculty and professors. There are still accommodation issues and those faced with the administrative staff. We receive calls from the partner university telling us that if we do not receive an equal number of students with the ones we send, the partnership will no longer continue*

# Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

## Factors related to characteristics of the programme (students' perspective)

**The amount** of the scholarship generates pressure to identify alternative resources - finding a job in the host country, support from parents or other sources of funding. According to respondents, funding is an issue in countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Finland, Denmark; rents in these countries are expensive and then students are less attracted to access the scholarship, because the amount of 520 euros does not seem sufficient to them:

*Students who went on mobility to these countries told us that they needed to make an additional financial effort to cover the living costs. (Pitesti)*

*The scholarship would be ok for the Eastern countries - Poland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, this amount would be sufficient. But it is not for the Nordic countries and also for Spain, which does not offer places in student residences and it is necessary to rent apartments. (Suceava)*

*A student who pays here for rent 300 euros per month, would not be in a very different situation during Erasmus. Here as well, you have expenses. If you would consider the expenses incurred here in Cluj and add them to the money offered by Erasmus, there would be no difference. (Veterinary Medicine)*

*However, money represents a challenge. The first question most students ask us at information sessions - how much is the scholarship? Is the accommodation provided? Do we have discounts on anything? An increase in the amount of the scholarship would mean more mobility, no doubt about this. (UT Cluj)*

*The scholarship may represent the reason for which there are not too many applications, the amount is too low especially for the Nordic countries. (Bucharest Architecture)*

*Our students cannot afford the living expenses in Sweden with the amount offered by Erasmus+, talking about the study grants. And this is one of the reasons why the figure has dropped. Only those who can be helped by parents through loans, supplements, etc. go on Erasmus. We could certainly have more mobility if we had additional sources of funding to supplement the Erasmus scholarship. (ULB Sibiu)*

*For example, students avoid Paris because it is very expensive, no accommodation is offered and what is found is very expensive. For students from poorer regions, where home support is lower, the amount of the scholarship is an issue. (AIC Iasi)*

# Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

## Factors related to characteristics of the programme (students' perspective)

**The difficulty of finding accommodation** at decent prices in places where no accommodation is provided; At the same time, there are situations in which the accommodation has to be paid in advance or large deposits must be made, which is not affordable by all those who would like to undertake a mobility: *the value of the grants does not cover the value of the expenses, especially in the Nordic countries, students are required a guarantee, some advance payments, and the amount of accommodation far exceeds the grant offered by the programme, for example in Sweden.*

**The foreign language** is a problem reported by most respondents, especially in the case of certain countries/universities where courses are taught only in the language of the host country (eg. Spain, France). Students who do not understand the language at a satisfactory level have difficulties with the subjects taught through collective courses, together with students from the respective universities. Professors say that many students do not access the syllabus due to the level of knowledge of English - many students have problems with English at a conversational level, they do not master it at a level where they can handle decent English language exams. Although funds are allocated to access free foreign language courses, this remains an obstacle to mobility, an aspect also confirmed by students.

*Foreign language, English more specifically, seems to me to be the first barrier; the point is that they don't learn conversational English, and then it is more complicated for them. (ASE professor)*

*There is also the language barrier in countries such as Spain, where medical subjects for example are taught in Spanish. Some subjects are also in English but others are in the curriculum only in their mother tongue, Spanish, Italian, whatever. (ULB Sibiu)*

## Obstacles towards accessing an international mobility programme

Other obstacles mentioned by the office representatives as coming from the students:

- > Concerns of students regarding the fact that, during the mobility, they would register a **lower school performance** (either due to the fact that the examination standards would be at a higher level than at home or because the exams are taken in a foreign language)
- > **Duration of mobility** - it may represent an obstacle in some cases: *being good students, they have high chances of finding a job at home and then the duration the mobility would represent a hindrance, they are not willing to give up a job for mobility.*
- > **The curricular incompatibility** is the biggest obstacle according to some respondents, the differences between the subjects taught is too large to ensure full recognition: *you can only send someone unless the curriculum and the subjects taught are close to ours! Different programs, systems scoring, teaching methods (cyclic, modular), etc.;*
- > Limitations related to the "*mobility window*": the second year for 3-year studies is the period with the least impediments to the students' program, while, at the last year of the bachelor, master and doctoral studies, there are several factors limiting the access to mobility (preparing the final exams, the labour force market, social obligations, etc.)



## Obstacles towards accessing an international mobility programme

*The differences depend on the structure of the curricula of the different faculties. If the curriculum of our university does not correspond to the one abroad, mobility becomes very difficult. There are faculties such as Pharmacy, where the curricula do not correspond almost at all. So the student would return without learning anything he would learn here. And nobody risks repeating a year. The higher number of scholarships go to General Medicine, where there is the highest compatibility. For Dental Medicine less, and for Pharmacy, almost not at all. Then, the western universities have a modular curriculum, we have a linear one. Until making them compatible, there will be difficulties. (UMF Timișoara)*

*In the field of medicine, regarding the scholarships, it gets more difficult, because the fields are not very similar. We understand that the credits are not the same, but we cannot let him go on Erasmus and then repeat a year of study here. We try to see what else can be done, talk to the partner universities to allow them take subjects from other years, not just the one they go to. The curricula of the two universities are not the same, which is hindering them. The courses, the different subjects and I would say the language, these are the obstacles. Because Spanish is mandatory in Spain, in Italy - Italian. Now they have started to persuade them to go to the English section as well, so that we can increase the number of mobility. For example, if we manage to get places in the English department of some of the Italian universities this year, the interest would be much higher for our students. For placements, this language impediment is not as great as in studies. (UMF – Mureş)*

*There is also the fear that they will not pass or get good grades in exams. In Romania, taking exams in Romanian, the chances are higher to get good grades. In general, they come with lower grades than they would have obtained here, not always, depending on the students. The point is, they're afraid of it. (Politehnica TM)*

*There was a discussion among us at a certain point - why students get low grades while in Erasmus. It can be a hindrance to the student that these grades can pull him down to a scholarship or something. So no credit differences, but grades obtained there or maybe they don't even take their exams there. It was a problem discussed at the level of professors. (professor, Bucharest)*



## Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

**Factors related to student motivation and general attitude towards education** and professional career, attitude towards extracurricular activities. According to some of the respondents, we can talk about an attitude of general state of disregard showed by the students, who no longer have the desire to try new things, are no longer curious to experiment - an attitude expressed not only towards the Erasmus+ programme but also towards other curricular or extracurricular activities. Thus, some representatives of the Erasmus+ offices have come to the conclusion that the most important factor affecting the mobility is due to the students' comfort, a state of blaze, a certain avoidance of responsibilities and a reluctance to get involved in various things. To this is added the state of anxiety, fear of leaving home.

*We are not just talking about involvement in Erasmus. There is a state of apathy, no matter what you offer them. I have the feeling that if you do not offer something immediately or an immediate result, they are not interested. (USAMV Cluj)*

*Students are less interested in school. Their majority comes already tired from the high-school period. The interest in mobility is also an expression of professional interest. The lack of interest in mobility is also the lack of interest in the career. They think it is still difficult enough at the university, if they will also go to study in a foreign language, it will be even harder for them ... It is a generation for which things that come quickly and ready, without putting in much effort. (UT Cluj)*

## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*Issues related to student motivation: **they do not have any pressure to generate a motivation**, they have a somewhat professional future - the labor market is ok; but this generates a decrease in motivation; is a an attitude which no longer associates education with development. And the fact that they have the impression that they have access to everything. (Bucharest)*

*The same thing happens with the students as with the high-school students, nothing interests them anymore. We organize two events a year, one in the fall, after the opening of the school year, after they become a little used to the environment - Erasmus Open Doors in November and another one in March, after launching the selection. At the November event the participation is very low, only to the one in March, after they find out more information, some more come. The fear of low language proficiency and fear of the unknown is another obstacle, as well as the fear that they would not cope or that they would not perform well. There is also bureaucracy, a lot of papers and documents are required and students are scared of it. Maybe if we get to full digitalization, it might be easier. (MBM Bucharest)*

*Considering the way in which we currently relate to education, and to the models of our society, to what it is broadcasted in the media, it is difficult to **promote the idea of personal development**, it is an effort to get them out of that zone. There are generational differences, we must come up with a different approach. (USAMV)*

**Student motivation is generally lower, not just related to Erasmus.** There are too many opportunities that they have and they really do not know where to go, where to apply. On any activities we have to organize with them - for example a summer school - you have to call repeatedly, individually. If they just post on their Facebook page, nothing happens. Then, after we know the ones who would be fit and able to go, they thank us. But each individual must be convinced somehow. They need mentoring. They come somehow undecided from high-school, the professors at the university teaching their subject matter and that's all, so that the students are a little lost. They need guidance. (professor Bucharest)



## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*These generations of students now have **the pressure of work and money all the time**. And they can't see any further. **Such jobs can block their career development**. They want to earn now and do not see the long-term stake of the scholarships. Then there is the pressure of time. They are not explained the benefits of the studies they do, they do not have career counselors who do their job and are always afraid that they will have nowhere to be hired when they graduate, that they will be poorly paid, that they do not have enough money. And they don't really perceive that this experience would increase their chances for something like that. I mean, they perceive it as such, but they don't see how things would actually evolve. Yes, they say that it would improve their ability to speak a foreign language, that they would meet new people, but it is still difficult for them to see the connection between this and how they will make more money. They still have the problem of not knowing how to manage their time. They face the pressure of a multitude of exams, they are stressed by the exam session, they do not know how to deal with the requirements imposed by the university. It is a rigid system that puts pressure on them, a way to teach them the courses without explaining to them how all these could be helpful, they perceive that many courses are useless. It's a pressure stemming from the near future and they can't see any further. (professor Iași)*

*Many find it difficult. There are still financial elements, they have the impression that money will not be enough. Then it's **the fear of leaving home**: "how could i be away for so long". (professor Cluj)*

## Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

**Socio-economic related factors:** obligations related to the family and social context, but especially to the professional context, more specifically, to the dynamics of the labour market at national level. There is a pressure of the labour market, of the employers, not only related to the job offers but also as to the internships offers, mobility offers and practical experiences in foreign companies, which become a serious competition for Erasmus+, in particular in fields such as Economic Engineering, IT, Machine Construction Technology, Computer Science. The pressure of the labour market increases with the level of education.

The labour market also seems to be the main reason for drop out, in cases where applicants give up after they have been selected for study or placement mobility.

*The fact that they can be hired almost from the first year of studies, even on full-time jobs, in important companies, takes away any chance of undertaking a mobility for the respective young person. In addition, the value of the grant is very low, especially of the scholarships. And the requirement to only give them 80% on departure and the rest when they return .... To send a child with 400 euros to a Western country, it is not possible. He has to double this amount from his own resources, to be able to support himself. (Politechnica TM)*



## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*In Sibiu we have an international platform for employers. Companies come and recruit students from the second year of faculty, being interested in specializations such as Applied Engineering, other applied sciences, IT, and others. Students in the second year receive internships and scholarships amounting 2000-2500 euros for internships abroad, to the parent companies. An example is Continental which takes 400-500 students and sends them to BMW and other companies in Europe to practice and the grant given by these companies far exceeds the Erasmus grant. There are also available internships shorter than 2-3 weeks, and part-time jobs in the afternoon. For example, at Economic Engineering previously we had 100- 120 mobilities, now we have only 6, for this reason explained above. (ULB Sibiu)*

*We make colossal efforts to cover our mobility. At the university, about 60% -70% of our students work, they have jobs. This is because many of them pay study fees, they do master and doctoral studies, and then cannot give up the job to leave. There are several contributing factors. (ULB Sibiu)*

*Employers hire them from year two of studies when they study the basics basic, mechanical things, and then in the third year when they are taught complicated subjects, students are already seized of those jobs - this affects their career progression, they abandon studies, etc. In Economic Informatics, too - at master's level all students are employed. (professor Iași)*



## Obstacles and difficulties in attracting students to mobility programmes

**Factors related to the promotion of the programme.** Although the information activities are diverse, the interviewed professors point out a problem that concerns the openness of the students to the types of information offered. It is mentioned that the mass media would no longer necessarily have the desired impact. At the same time, the interviewed respondents point out the lack of a strategy that will involve the professors to a greater extent in promoting the programme and the benefits of mobility experiences. In this context, of informing and promoting the programme, one of the conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis of the opinions expressed is that, as regards the large mass of students, **we are not talking about an informed decision not to involve/not access the programme:** non-involvement/lack of interest in the case of many students is not a consequence of the non-attractiveness of the programme, but of the fact that they are not exposed to an in-depth information.

*They do not understand very clearly why they should apply; they know the name, the programme is promoted as an idea. There are many programme details that seem complicated and students no longer have the interest get further information. I have never received questions from students on this topic, on their own initiative. (professor ASE)*

## Obstacles towards the decision to access a mobility programme

*Students are quite lost in the university environment. The professors do not explain the benefits, some even reject the idea of Erasmus for the reason, "let them do their job here at university, why wasting time abroad " and have an attitude contrary to the idea of mobility and then students do not get this information sufficiently and clearly explained. (professor Iași)*

*Students fear that they will fail, it is something unknown, diffuse, deriving from the fact that they are not practically explained what life is like there, what difficulties they face, how they can solve them. They are given information on how the program works, but they have these fears of life, how they will pass their exams, what will happen to them, which are not very clearly explained during the public meetings. (professor Iași)*

*Many have a foreign language barrier, which is strange. They want to know exactly how much money will spend, how difficult is to pass the exams. But there are many of them who do not try to understand what the programme is about: this scholarship is in an area which they perceive it unclear, it is for the geniuses, it is not for them, or they reject it because they do not understand it, either it is not considered good enough for it, or they pretend that they are not interested. (professor Iași)*

*People who deal with Erasmus are important. If you don't have the drive to get you involved, you don't motivate the students. The professors have no motivation to get involved. Usually the vice-deans are responsible, but they do not take concrete steps for promotion, to be there, among students.*



- Trends within the programme regarding the interests of students

## Trends within the program regarding the interests of students

There are some certain areas of study identified as more suitable for mobility. Interviews reveal that the fields/specializations in which more students participate are architecture and arts, letters (foreign languages), economics, business administration, political science, sociology. The areas where the mobility is more difficult seem to be the technical fields, both due to the differences in school curricula, differences between subjects and their contents, as well as the opportunities existing on the national labour market, which mainly attract students from these specializations.

The technical fields are somewhat more difficult, thus the mobility in the technical field is more difficult than in socio-human or economic fields. In humanistic specialties, it is easier to recognize credits. (*UVT Timișoara*)

*Interest is also high for those from Arts, who want to see museums, to be in contact foreign cultures. The interest increases each year. We have reached almost 10% of all students participating in Erasmus. (UNARTE BUC)*

*Architecture is clearly identifiable in mobility, they have to study the European architecture, to them the benefit on their career is direct, immediate. For other faculties I think that the obstacles are due to students who do not feel so attracted... to go to study is no longer as attractive as leaving abroad, as it was 15-20 years ago. All undergraduate students also apply for a master's degree. So it's clear that the obstacle is related to perception. (UT Cluj)*

## Trends within the program regarding the interests of students

Representatives of several universities confirmed a high degree of mobility among students from the Republic of Moldova: they are constantly accessing, the motivation to go abroad is higher: *from us, from last year, over 50% of outgoing mobilities are students from the Republic of Moldova, and in the current period, over 80% of those who go on mobility are students from Moldova and Ukraine.* (Suceava University)

According to interviews, there are also some favorite destinations: Hungary is preferred as destination by Romanian students of Hungarian origin due to the possibility to take courses in Hungarian. As a general trend, Western European countries are also preferred due to the prestige of some universities, but also Italy and Spain in the case of students who have parents abroad.

*I think the whole Hungarian section of the UMFT is in undertaking an internship in Hungary this Summer. Spain, Italy, even Greece are favourite destinations.* (UMF Mureş)

The interviews also show an increasing interest for internships, although it has been warned that their quality is more difficult to be assessed. Most representatives of the Erasmus+ offices said that the interest of the students increased compared to the one for the scholarships due to their higher flexibility (it does not require the earning of credits, shorter mobility duration, the possibility to undertake it during the Summer vacation, a higher the amount of the scholarship)

## Trends within the program regarding the interests of students

*There is an interest in placement mobility due to the Summer mobility period and its duration (2 months). They are more flexible than the study mobility, where it is required to attend courses, take exams, accumulate credits, this means a mobility period of 4-5 months.*

*Perhaps the difficulty of certain exams is a little scary and students prefer to go for the placement option. (UVT TM)*

*For the study scholarship you are required to accumulate 30 credits. But it is not easy anyway, in the case of placements, it is a bit more concrete and risk-free than for study. Architecture students access most easily the scholarships, the nature of their matches the internationalization. They also have a tradition of studying abroad. It is easy for them to identify placements during Summer within the European architecture offices. It's not the same as an energy engineer who should go to a power station, I think. (Politehnica TM)*

*We have not seen a decrease in the number of mobilities as a whole. It is true that the mobility rates for scholarships decrease and those for placement increase. For study you only have 500 euros, but almost all the universities provide you accommodation. In the case of placements this is not provided. And yet placements are preferred, the explanation would be the difference in the study programs. Placements have the advantage that you can go on a Summer vacation and that there is no problem of having the courses recognised. They have the possibility to opt for either a public or private institution, the student can choose his or her field or not, so there is a higher flexibility. In this case you can also count on student organizations, such as AIESEC. (USAMV Cluj)*

*In placements we far exceed the planned targets, even at the bachelor, master and doctorate level. The scholarships are stagnant. Students are much more comfortable to go for two months on a Summer vacation, for a placement, than for a study scholarship. Because we allow them to go to clinics without PIC code and then it is much easier for them to find their clinics. The field of medicine is highly foldable for mobility. In General Medicine and Pharmacy find mobility locations very easy. (UMF Mureş)*

Recommendations for increasing the awareness  
on the programme and its attractiveness among  
students

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE AWARENES ON THE PROGRAMME

- > Promotion should be carried out within a **strategy which to include high-school students**, 12th grade, promotion made by representatives of the ERASMUS+ offices, so that, in the first year of university, students are already familiar with the basic information and the internationalization opportunities;
- > There is a certain comfort of the generations when it comes to receiving and processing information: "*If it is not easy accessible, it is not worth looking for, everything should be one click away*". Paradoxically, the higher the access to information, the lower the degree of information or the desire to deepen the information. In this context, the promotion strategy must be focused on **friendly, simple, direct information, preferably face-to-face**: *They no longer search, they stop reading. When the student sees a person, he or she has more confidence in the information*;
- > Focus on **visual information, either written or voice, photo galleries, stories of the beneficiaries**, the presentation of the team, it is important to reflect the problems and how they were overcome;
- > More **aggressive information** –more **information provided during courses** adding to the information sessions;
- > A more **applied, decentralized information** that goes up to the level of the various years of faculty;
- > **More personalized communication**, niche communication, focused on different groups of students, differentiated according to their different interests;
- > **More specific communication** beyond presentation the general rules. **Greater emphasis on promoting the benefits of student mobility**: professional and personal development of the student, contribution to the professional career or to finding a job.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE AWARENES ON THE PROGRAMME

- > Increased attention in communicating the Programme's brand which needs to be maintained towards the qualitative area: many students prefer the programme because of its reputation and high confidence in Erasmus+
- > Higher use of social media: alternative ways to the traditional ones are needed to communicate about the programme through more specific information (overcoming communication channels such as mass meetings, posters, roll-ups, etc.)
- > Higher involvement of former Erasmus+ beneficiaries, more capitalization of their experiences
- > **Higher involvement of faculties and professors** in promoting the programme, which to complement the efforts of the mobility offices: *unfortunately the teaching staff, do not talk to the students, do not go beyond the stage of teaching the subject, and could clarify a large part of the students; a promotion made by professors would be welcome.*
- > The promoters of the information must be persons close to the students, to avoid the formal level of communication

*In front of the students must come an energetic institutional coordinator, a friendly face, preferably not someone from the management of the university or faculty, who might inhibit. Students should know that at the other end of the phone is someone who answers them. Our attitude is important, being close to them, they trust us. The stability of the office staff is also important, and the relationship with the faculty staff is also important. (USAMV Cluj)*



## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME

**The significant increase of the grant** (especially for the study and research scholarship) is, in the opinion of the interviewees, the main measure that would certainly increase the number of students participating in the programme. It is suggested to complement the scholarship from other sources, considering the model of some programmes from abroad or designing it so that to meet the standard of living/expenses of the countries participating in the programme. Also related to the financial part it was mentioned the idea of creating a reserve fund, which the student could use in emergencies, an aspect that would create some mental comfort and alleviate certain anxieties related to unexpected situations: *A safety issue, a reserve fund in case of something. The one who leaves, somehow leaves with many worries, I thought if something happens to me ... there is no one to help you. Surely many have this uncertainty.*

**Developing national policies to strongly stimulate the international mobility** would increase the chances of improving *outgoing rates*. An example would be the **inclusion of a mobility window in the study programme, an aspect that would eliminate both the obstacles related to the study program at the university of origin and the difficulties related to credit equivalence**: *it could be a period in which to study 75% of their field and 25% something else, and that wouldn't be detrimental here, at home university*. Moreover, the Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu intends to introduce in the university strategy a request for compulsory international mobility for academic performance.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME

**Flexibility during the mobility**, both for placements and scholarships, an aspect that would meet the professional obligations at home (jobs, exams, bachelor degree, etc.), maybe the possibility of gradually reducing the duration as the level of study increases (shorter internship, study or research periods for doctoral students would increase their involvement in the programme because they would not have to give up a job); a shorter period for placements (possibly up to one month) would also facilitate to be accessed to a greater extent throughout the school year.

**Students' awareness of the benefits of mobility experience should be combined with professional career counselling, realised at all faculties.** Thus, the function of an "international mentor" can be considered, working at the faculty level, not the university, and who will deal only with counselling: *the respective person will only that. He would know the field, the market, could advise students on what road to take and the role played by international mobility throughout this course. He should apply professional counselling combined with the one regarding mobility. The students are quite lost, they are not consciously forming their professional destiny. More information focused on the benefits and relevance of the Erasmus scholarship/experience, and not necessarily on the content of the programme. One of the main barriers is the student's motivation. Information needs to be turned into counselling, because we are talking about generations that need to be oriented, they must encouraged to do something. Counselling on mobility provided in cooperation with the professional counselling so that the student can really place the respective scholarship in a career plan.* (professor)

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME

During the interviews made with the professors, it occurred the idea of a centralized application system, not at the university level, but at national level, in which the student enrols himself and chooses his destination university or the host organization. In the opinion of those who support this idea, **the chances of a student to go into mobility would no longer depend on the ability of a certain university to conclude partnerships**: *There is also a limitation in some cases, the fact that your university may not have partnerships with certain universities where you would like to go. Maybe a centralized system would give everyone a chance. This would avoid the poor capacity to mobilize the respective university. And you would have a larger selection to choose from. In this case, it doesn't matter at what university you are, it doesn't matter at what faculty, it matters to be able to apply from wherever you are in your area of interest, to the country you want.*

**Support in identifying the organizations/companies where the placement is undertaken:** *Support them to find their organizations, not just leave them, some databases ... they do not have the capacity to find, it is a limit and it is normal, it would be difficult for us, too!*

Increase the number of employees within the Erasmus+ offices, **but also investments in their training would increase the efficiency of the programme.**

There have also been suggestions related to: reducing bureaucracy, increased use of digital tools and measures to improve the knowledge of foreign languages, preserving the prestige of the programme by promoting the benefits on professional and personal development, a curricular reform, so as to increase the compatibilities between curricula.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME

*If the student does not see the purpose of an experience, whether it is an Erasmus scholarship or something else, he will not get involved. He wants to see very concretely in what way the experience will be useful, to see the entire pathway, from the very beginning with clear examples. He has to understand, if this experience will be useful and for what purpose? It's a problem of student apathy and we need to address that. It is a problem of general motivation. They need information, personal attention. (UBB)*

*It should be promoted from high-school, because everything is very fast. They come in the first year. In the second year some may apply but they are already discouraged that they graduate after the third year, when they have a degree. It's a vicious circle. And this if I know in advance about the programme. You need a more aggressive promotion, so that they come to University already with the basis and just think let's see what the options are and where we go. (Bucharest)*

*More individual examples - case studies that specifically reflect the experience of mobility. The structures of the university related to career counselling should do their job, they should explain to them what the purpose of the mobility is, that education does not just learning at courses, that the main purpose is not to make money immediately and what personal development is, etc. To help them understand what it means to build a career. (professor Iași)*

*A higher scholarship would be needed. It would be an element that would increase mobility. It's not just an impression, we see it this year when the EEA grants started again, where the students leave the respective countries with 1200 euros per month. You see the difference. (AIC Iași)*



## IV. SURVEY RESULTS AND INTERVIEWS OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

- > Perceptions towards international mobilities
- > Perceptions on Erasmus+
- > Socio-demographic

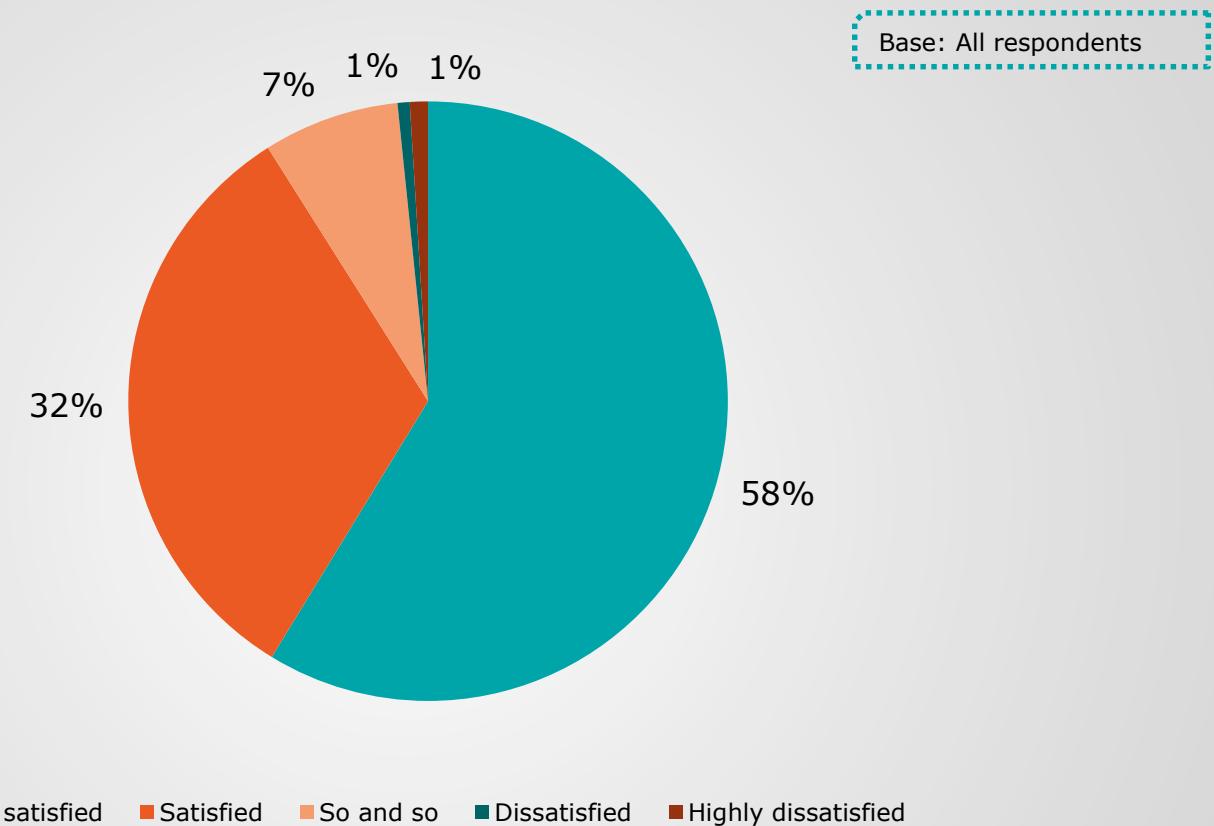
## Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

<b>Total n=616</b>		
Gender	Male	30%
	Female	70%
Age (average age – 21,4 years)	18-20 years	6%
	21-22 years	32%
	23-24 years	31%
	25 years and over	32%
Household income	Maximum 3000 RON	32%
	Between 3000 – 5000	23%
	Between 5000 - 7000 RON	12%
	Over 7000 RON	10%
	NR	23%
Current residence	Romania	89%
	Hungary	2%
	Germany	2%
	Italy	1%
	France	1%
	Other countries	6%

<b>Total n=616</b>		
University size	Large (over 20k students)	37%
	Medium (10k-20k students)	36%
	Small (under 10k students)	27%
Share of the ERASMUS+ scholarships *	Large (over 2%)	16%
	Medium (1-2%)	39%
	Small (under 1%)	45%
	Before 2013	2%
Year when the ERASMUS+ scholarship was granted	2013-2014	1%
	2015	4%
	2016	6%
	2017	20%
	2018	66%
	Bachelor	91%
Level of studies	Master	9%

- Percentage calculated based on the average number of Erasmus scholarships in the last 4 years, based on the total number of students

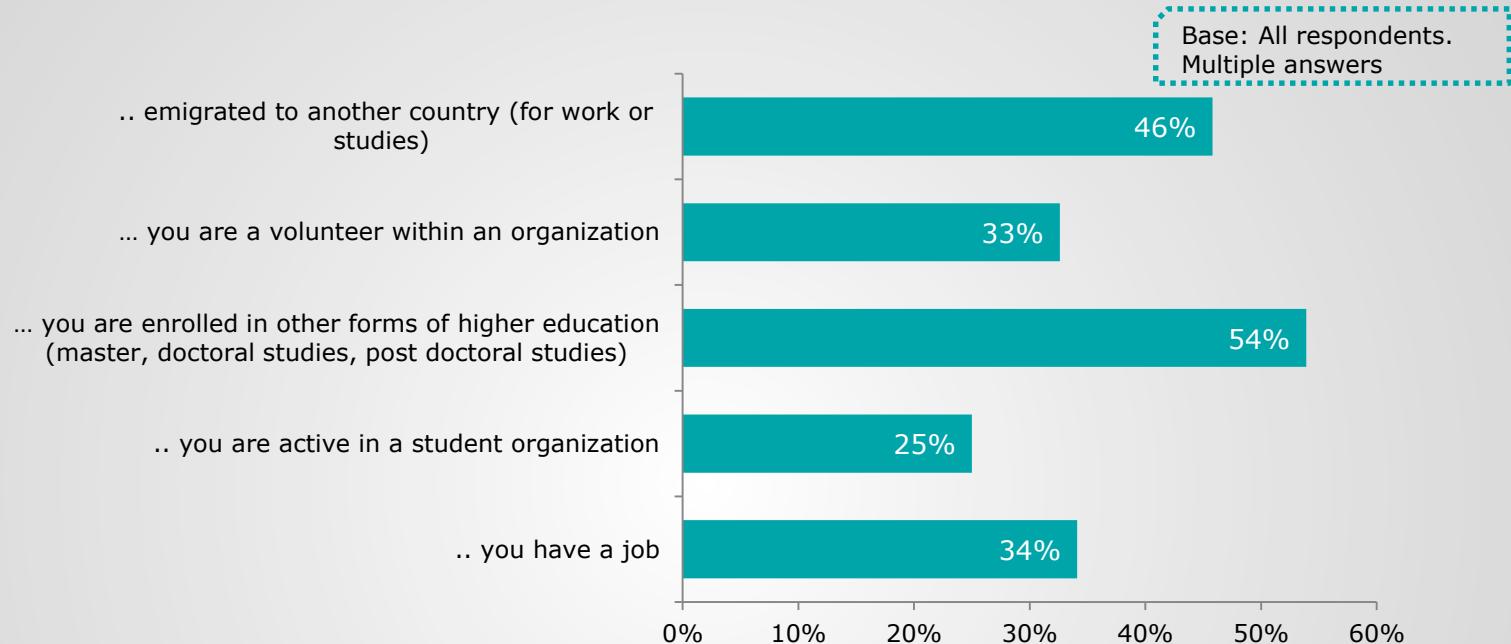
## In general, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you had during University to study abroad?



■ Highly satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ So and so ■ Dissatisfied ■ Highly dissatisfied

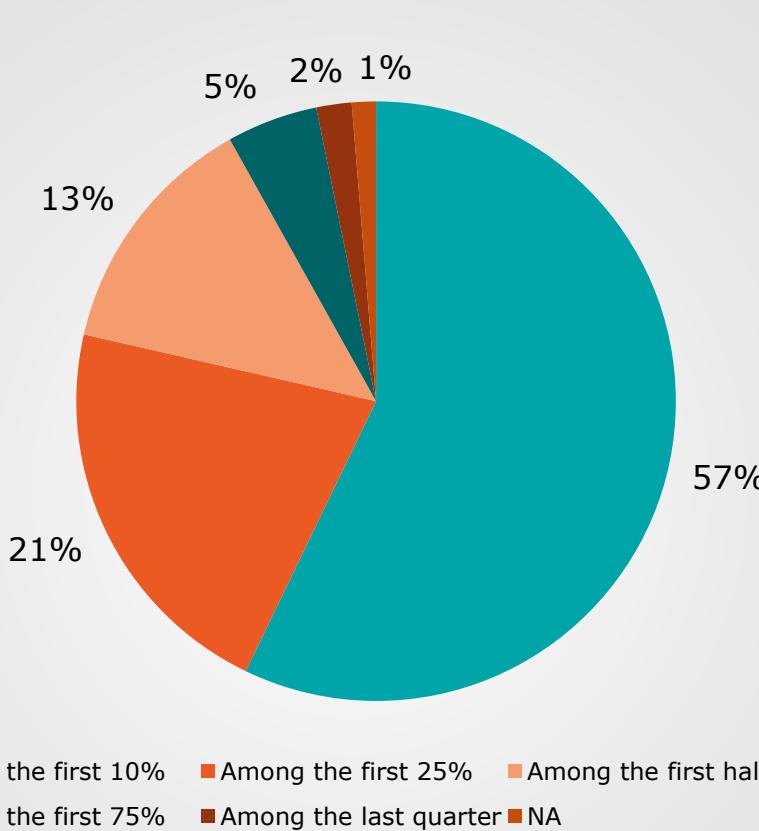
Beneficiaries of ERASMUS+ scholarships consider themselves highly satisfied with the mobility opportunities they had during University. The share of the satisfied and highly satisfied is 90%, with only 8% being dissatisfied with the possibility of studying abroad.

## At present..?



More than half of the mobility beneficiaries are still studying (natural aspect, given that two thirds come from recent generations of beneficiaries). One third work as volunteers and another third have a job. The high share of those currently in another country, for work or studies, is also explained by the large number of respondents who benefitted of an ERASMUS+ scholarship in 2018.

## When you applied for the ERASMUS+ scholarship, if you compare to your colleagues, where did you place yourself, in terms of exam grades?

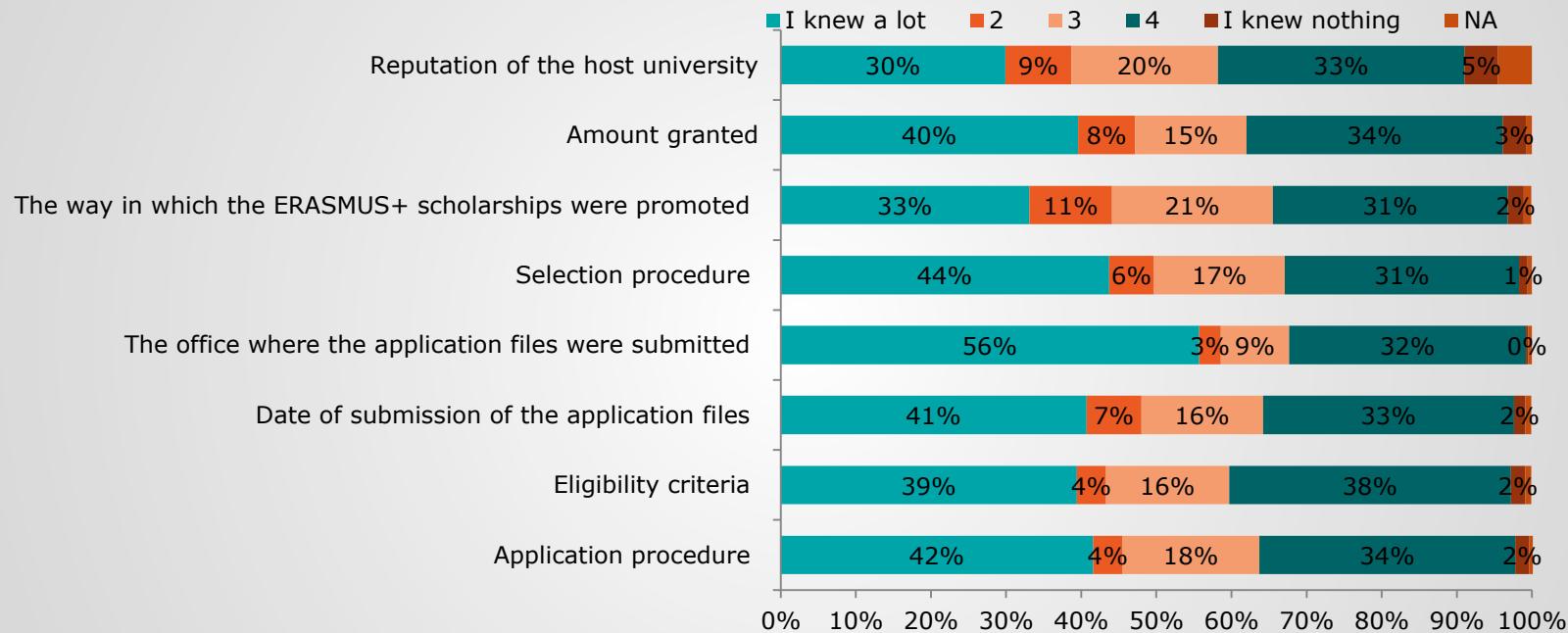


Base: All respondents

Who are the beneficiaries of ERASMUS+ scholarships? Over half of them are among the top students (first 10%) of the study year. Another 34% are placed in the first half of the hierarchy and only 7% are placed in the lower half. Clearly, the accessibility of mobility scholarships is higher for students with good results, but it is a real one for all students in the first half of the hierarchy.

# How informed were you about the following aspects, when you applied for the ERASMUS+ scholarship?

Base: All respondents



 The level of information on the main aspects related to the ERASMUS+ scholarships, at the time of application, was not very high. Over a third of the beneficiaries admit that they knew very little about all these. On the other hand, the share of those who knew a lot is higher, ranging from 43% to 59%. Thus, there is a higher share of those who planned to apply for a scholarship, provided that there is also a significant share (about a third) of "opportunistic applications", those who acted quasi-spontaneously. The most known aspects were the place of file submission, the selection method and the amount granted.

# How satisfied were you with the way in which the following institutions have been involved in promoting the ERASMUS+ scholarships?

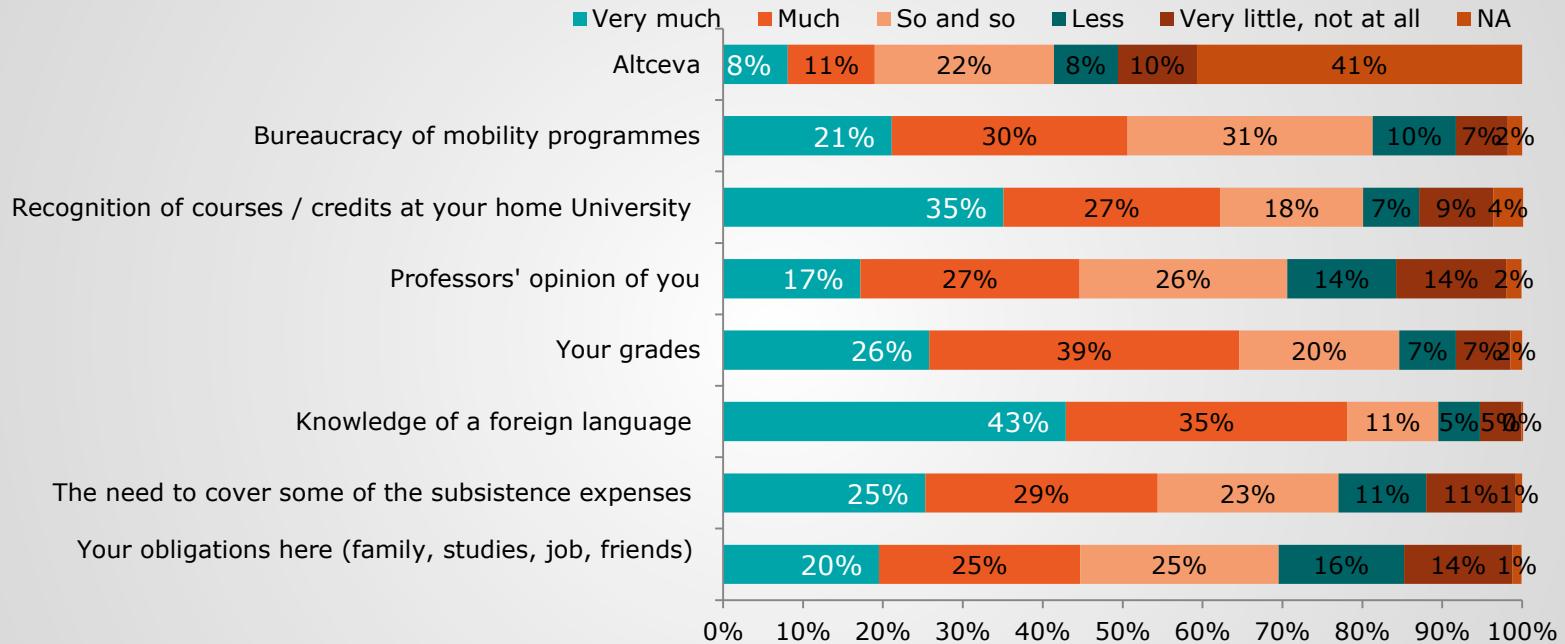
Base: All respondents



The satisfaction rate with the main actors involved in promoting the ERASMUS+ scholarships is a more nuanced one. ERASMUS+ offices, professors and deans' offices are regarded with the highest degree of satisfaction. The Rectorates and in particular the student organizations carried out an activity regarded with a lower level of satisfaction.

## To what extent the following aspects mattered when you took the decision to apply for the ERASMUS+ grant?

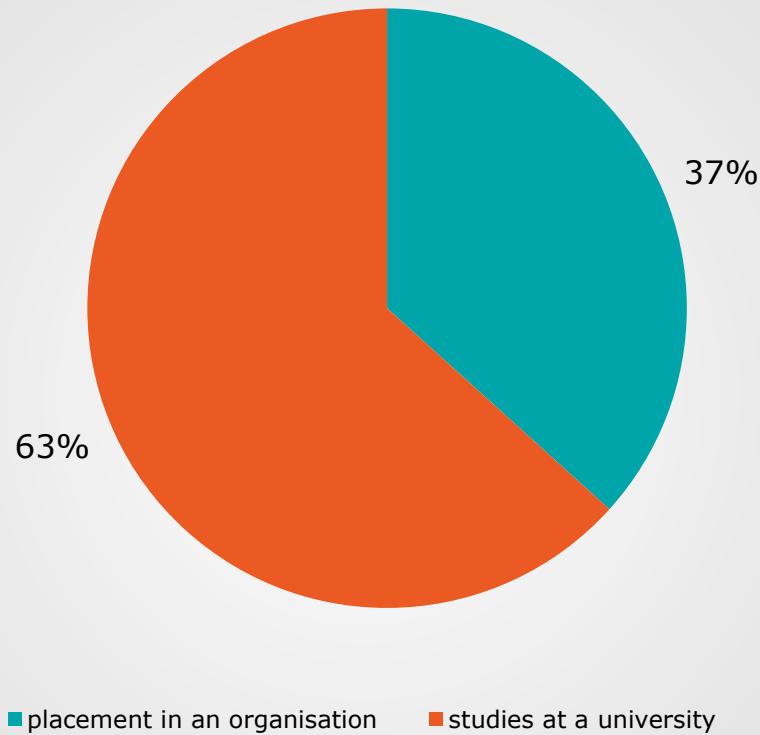
Base: All respondents



Knowledge of a foreign language, then the recognition of the courses at the University of origin and the grades obtained in the exams represented the main reasons in the decision to apply. The need to cover part of the expenses and the bureaucracy of the programme, as well as the existing obligations at the time of application were considered secondary aspects in the decision to apply.

## The ERASMUS+ mobility scholarship was for...?

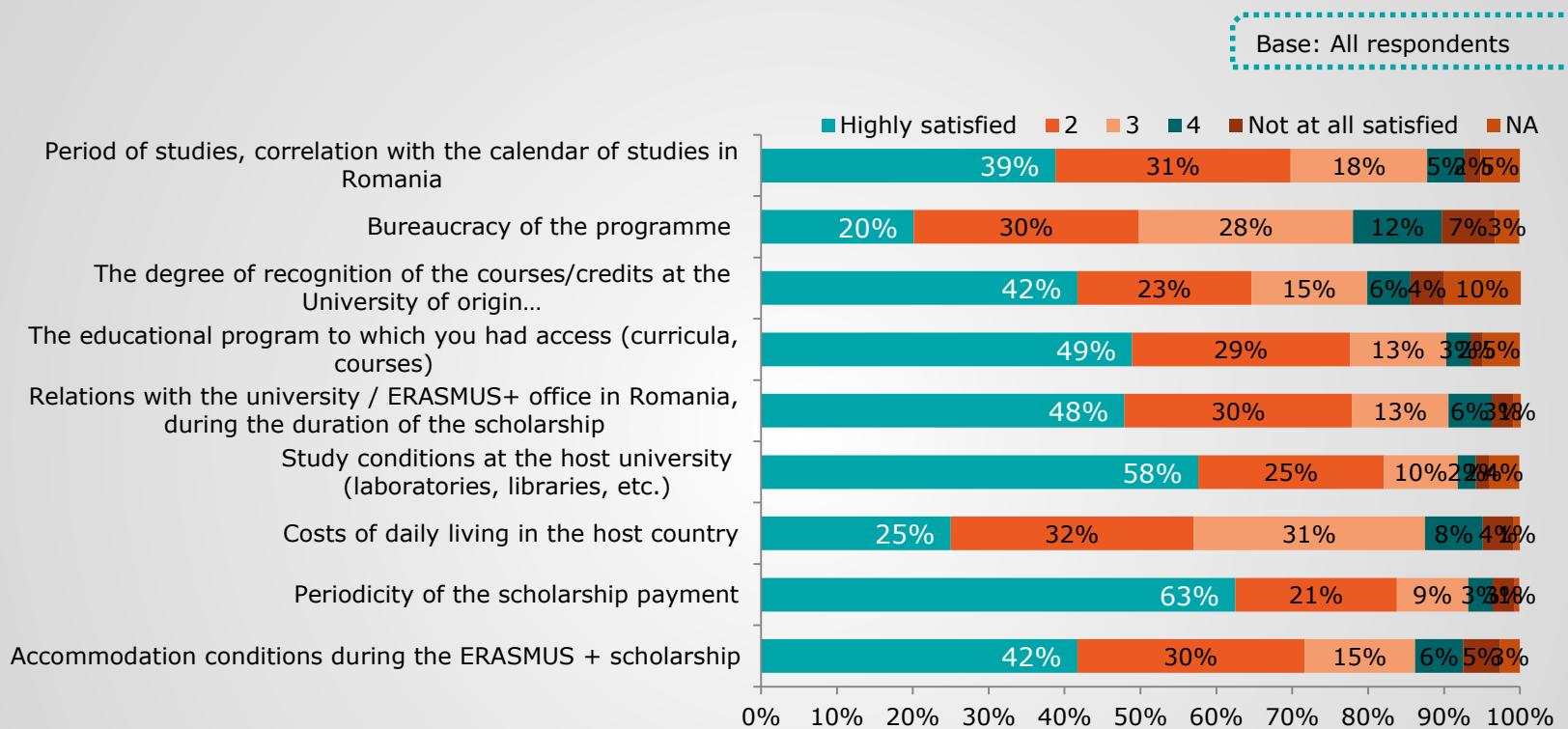
Base: All respondents



Almost two-thirds of candidates applied for a scholarship at a university, while over one-third applied for an internship in an organization.

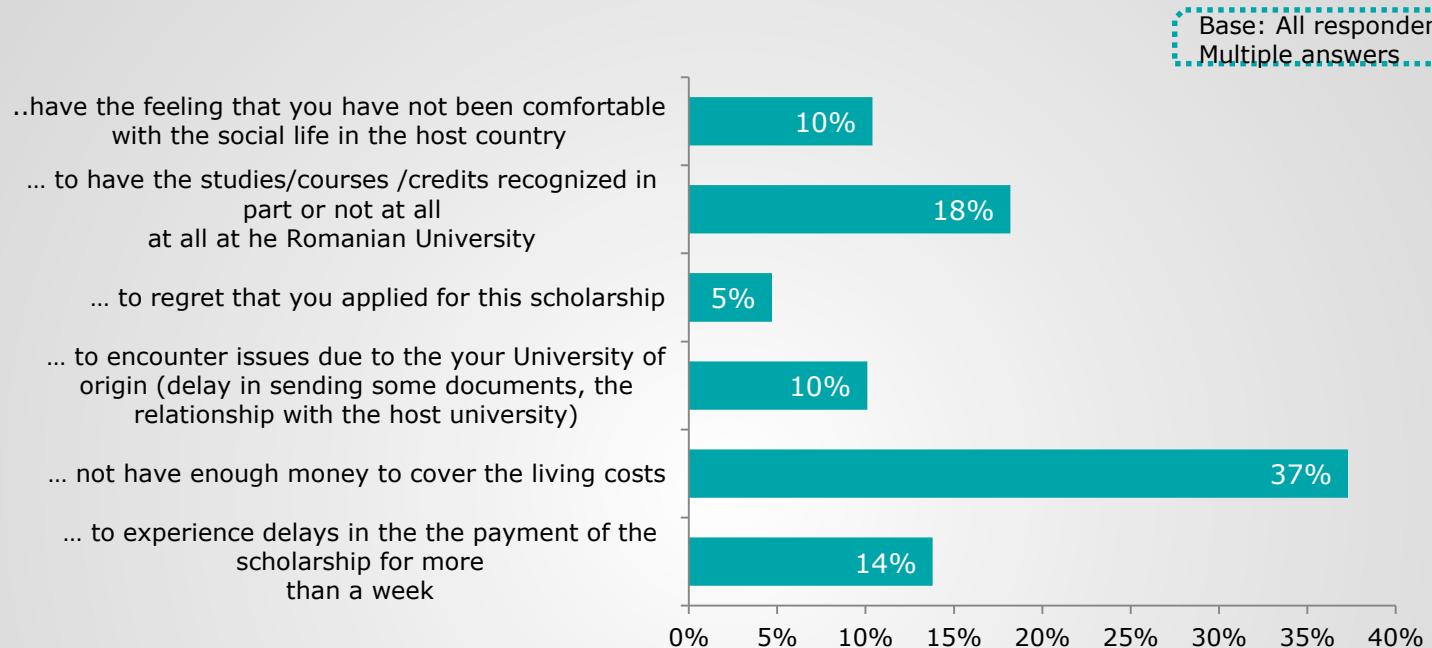
## How satisfied were you with...?

Rate from 1 to 5, where 1 means that they were not at all satisfied, and 5 means they were satisfied.



The level of satisfaction with the main issues during the scholarship period is quite high. There are several aspects to which the level of satisfaction is lower: the bureaucracy of the programme and the costs of living.

## During the period when you received the ERASMUS + scholarship, did it happen to... ?



The main issue mentioned by the beneficiaries of the ERASMUS+ scholarships is the temporary lack of money (37%). Another 18% mentioned issues with the recognition of studies/courses/credits in Romania and another 14% mentioned delays in receiving the scholarship of more than one week. Integration represented an issue for about 10% of the beneficiaries and another 10% mentioned issues with the transfer of documents from the Romanian university to the host university/organization.

## Disadvantages perceived by beneficiaries - interviews

*I think they are decent, but depending on the mobility and destination, scholarships should be higher.*

*The scholarship did not cover my expenses in Berlin. I had to make about 300 euros a month, that's in Berlin. In Lithuania I received 450 for study, there it was quite ok with the money because I stayed at the student residence and I had a pretty small rent, almost like in Romania.*

*The main disadvantage is the amount of money given to the departing student only cover half of the expense. Honestly, it is not enough in any country, but especially in the country where I was, the UK, I had to add more than half out of my own resources. In Cardiff, the costs of daily life are three times higher than in Romania. And public transportation was very expensive. We couldn't afford paying a taxi, for example... I took it only the first day because I didn't know how to get there, but after I only afforded the bus. And a bus ticket was the equivalent of 10 Romanian Lei. A lot!*

*There it is more difficult to interact with the Professors than it is at our University. For example, Professors there are not allowed to provide their phone number. You have a lot of specialization there, you can't find classes, there are complicated codes. It was difficult to synchronize, we sent e-mails, but it happened that we were not answered in time and that we would not synchronize with our Professors for meetings. Sure, at first. I personally found a very precarious "welcome of the exchange student", however, it should be emphasized on this, on the tutoring part or on a training, on a more organized welcome when you arrive there. How do you look after the fellow who came? How do you integrate him? There is a lack of support.*

*Regarding the level of teaching and the requirements, I also met Professors with higher demands than at my University of origin, but also some others with a lower standards. And it seems to me that some of the respective Professors need more openness to the exchange students, there is a cultural difference and if the Professor does not know how to manage it, then problems arise.*

## Disadvantages perceived by beneficiaries - interviews

*The period of time until the files are submitted is somewhat problematic, at the university I did not know things very clearly. I wanted to leave for the first semester of the second year, but because the schedule for submitting the application was not very clear, I could only leave in the second semester.*

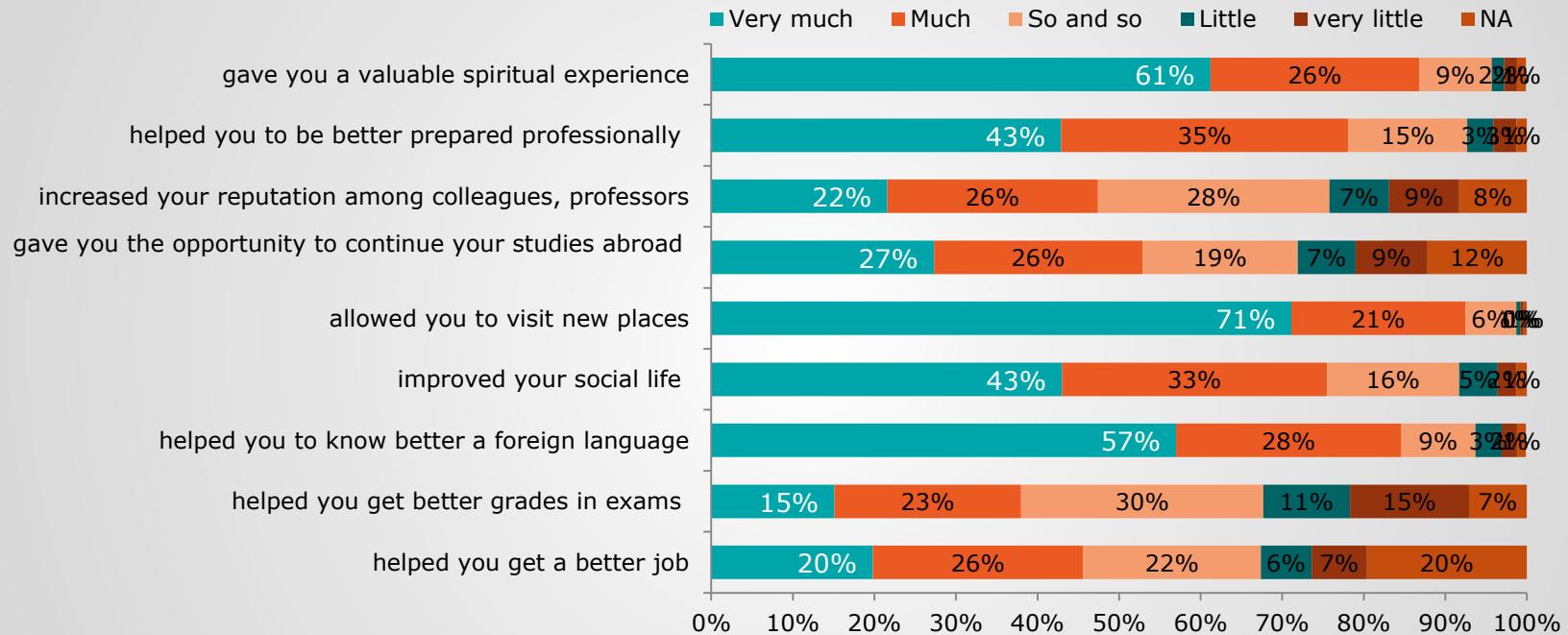
*The mobilities in which you receive a place in the student residence are very ok. In the case of placements, it is difficult to rent on your own, especially in the most expensive cities. I was lucky that someone accepted me after a discussion on skype, otherwise I would have stayed in a hostel until I found something. At the beginning there were several courses only for Erasmus students and that was great because they helped us to consolidate as a group, being quite a lot of Erasmus students, we already had a socializing group, that was helpful. This was the biggest plus that brought us together. After that, the students were very open, the professors knew English, it helped me that I also knew Russian, and it helped me that a professor accepted me to his Lithuanian class. So speaking the language of the host country is a huge plus.*

*If necessary I can show all the expenses and why I needed more money. I would have preferred that money was enough and not have to borrow.*

*The main dissatisfaction is with how they welcomed me there, I was expecting better communication at first, not to have to push them all the time. Okay, I did ok, but I think it was the duty of the people there to help us a little to integrate, not leave us completely on our own. So I felt neglected. And the second negative aspect, money. But I made the effort and it worked out. The scholarship should be doubled.*

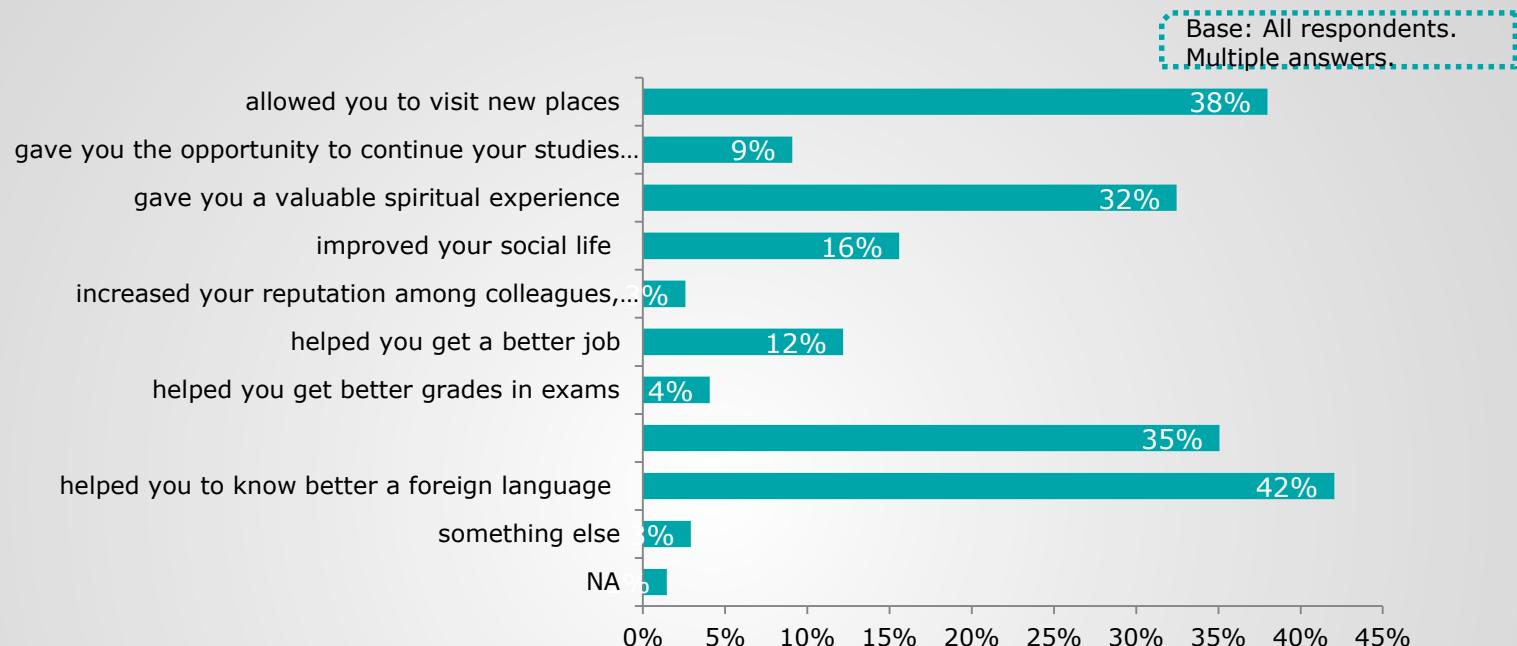
## In general, to what extent do you consider that the Erasmus+ scholarship...?

Base: All respondents



The main benefits of the ERASMUS+ scholarship are, first and foremost, the opportunity to visit new places, a valuable spiritual experience and better knowledge of a foreign language. In the second place, it is mentioned the added value in the professional training and the enrichment of the social life. Indirect benefits, such as performing better in exams, prestige among colleagues and professors, and getting a better job are benefits that are less appreciated by the ERASMUS+ beneficiaries

## Of all these, what would be the main advantage derived from your scholarship abroad...?



When they choose the main advantages, the ERASMUS+ beneficiaries opt for:

- Better knowledge of a foreign language
- Visiting new places
- Better professional training
- A valuable spiritual experience.

## Benefits of the mobility experience – interviews

*Possibility to know another education system, another culture. The social added value is the most important, I benefited from a study period in Vilnius and a placement in Berlin. I noticed a different attitude of people.*

*Extraordinary experience, I met new people but also a new education system. Opportunities for personal discovery and development in different cultural environments.*

*Observe and learn the traditions and customs of the country in which the mobility takes place.*

*Getting to know and working with different types of people and personalities from all over the world.*

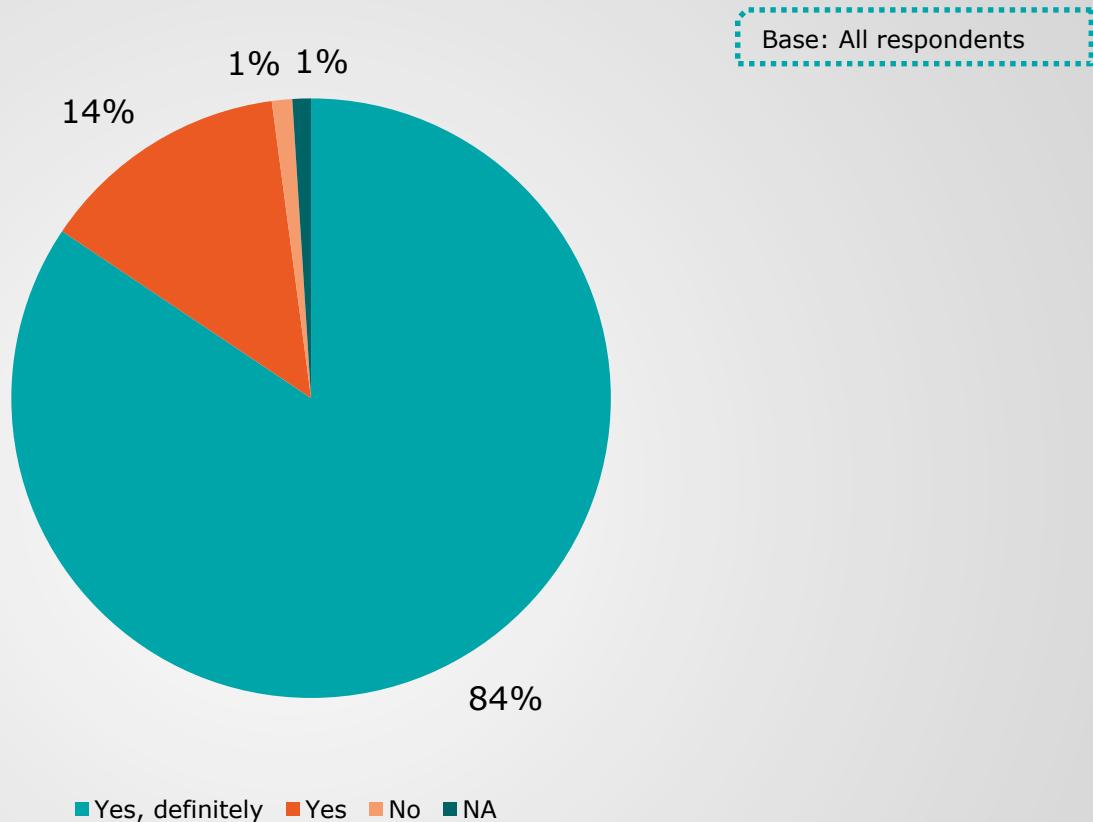
*The multitude of options in traveling across Europe. I started thinking differently, outside of the box.*

*Improving the level of the language, you can travel, you can diversify social relations and a much richer spiritual baggage. So the main advantages would be personal and spiritual, then socially and then professionally. Professionally you do not know where your life can take you, but personally you are definitely getting rich from an Erasmus experience.*

*I saw other ways of working, it helped me see another perspective on things. Developed from the spiritual, personal and social point of view and I think that what I learned professionally,  
Has improved my career perspective.*

*Erasmus is one of the best things that ever happened in Europe.*

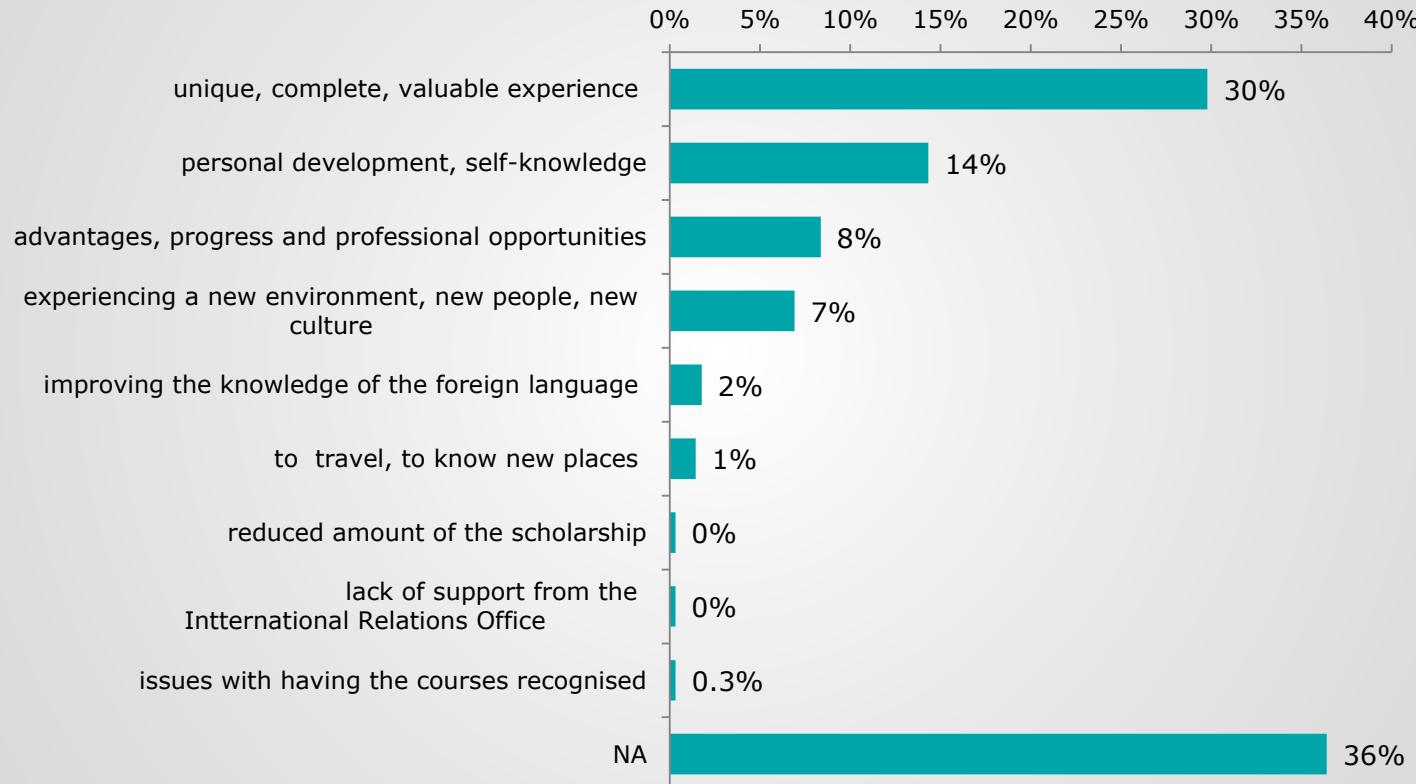
## At present, would you recommend ERASMUS + to other students?



84% of the beneficiaries would definitely recommend the ERASMUS+ scholarships to other students. Only 1% would not recommend them.

## What is the reason for this option?

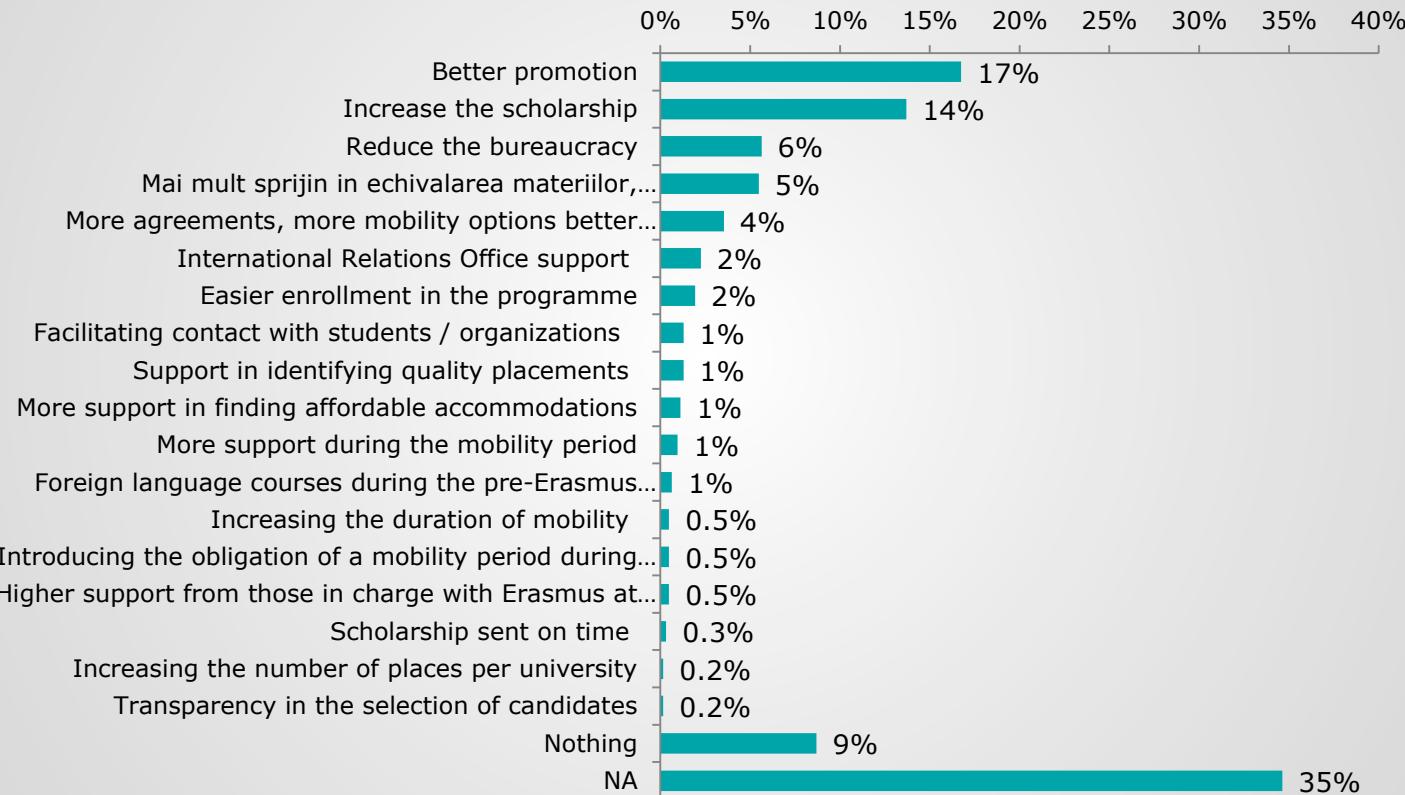
Base: All respondents



The main reasons why the beneficiaries recommend the ERASMUS+ programme are the valuable experience, the possibility of personal development and the advantages, the professional opportunities.

## What would you change to the ERASMUS+ programme so that it would attract more students?

Base: All respondents



What would the ERASMUS+ beneficiaries change to this programme? First, better promotion, then the amount of scholarships, the reduction of bureaucracy and support in the recognition of the courses.

## Obstacles towards the decision to access an Erasmus+study scholarship or placement – perception of the beneficiaries during interviews

- - **Insufficient sources of income** – "a programme like Erasmus also means the risk that the money will not be enough"; "I think the main obstacle is the money, that stops many"
  - **Another important obstacle would be the foreign language:** "many do not know a foreign language at a level at which to be able to write an essay or a report"
  - **Difficulties related to accommodation and fear of the unknown :** "I think it would be the fact that you go alone and some are not ready to leave home home, to go alone: fear of the unknown, fear of leaving the country, lack of your own home comfort, fear of leaving the comfort zone"
  - **For some of them** - family duties, including a place of work they do not want to lose

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



**Increase the scholarship**, especially in the Western European countries so that to match the level of living in the respective countries or facilitating better accommodation options for those leaving on scholarships or placements. Respondents stressed that the scholarship would be more attractive if it gave the students confidence that they cover all the basic costs of mobility..

*The funds, the money are not enough and getting a job there is out of question. Many don't apply, as they do not afford it.*

*I would increase the scholarships. There are places in Europe where it is very difficult to survive with 500 euro: London.*

*I would increase the scholarships a little or try to get students to have preferential prices at the students residences.*

*The value of the scholarship is small in some countries, where accommodation costs 400 euros, in Poland / Czech Republic the accommodation is about 200 euros.*

*An increased scholarship would encourage more students, the lack of money would not discourage so many students.*

# SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



## **2. More promotion, both as a whole and specifically on the following dimensions:**

Direct, interactive presentations in classrooms

More information, more prompt and better distributed

More online promotion

Better promotion of programme's benefits, emphasis on explaining the benefits of a scholarship

Easier access to students who participated in the programme; a better use of their experience in information campaigns;

More intense promotion at the faculty level

Promotion of the programme in high-schools

An electronic catalogue describing the Erasmus+ available places, participants' narrative, useful information

# SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



**3. More mobility options, especially at smaller universities: students would like more opportunities at universities in Europe but also outside Europe.** Within the small universities there were several issues related to mobility possibilities: few partnerships, their limited variety, less available to be able to go several times in mobility (although some students would like this, the University doesn't allow it, so that to offer opportunities to other students, too); due to the small number of students in some specializations where there are 7-8 students in total, the Erasmus+ mobilities can generate some "depopulation", as such, the management there does not necessarily encourage long term mobilities (eg. two semesters).

*To be able to do several placements, with more universities in Europe.*

*Several application sessions; as all the available places have been quickly filled from the first session. Here being a small college, we can only go for one semester.*

*The Erasmus coordinator always has the door open and gave me all the necessary information. The only negative aspect I see at the university here is the small number of external partners. That's because I know other universities that have more external partners (UBB, Politehnica). For placement I searched for a company. Regarding the scholarships in Lithuania, even if there are few partners, there is quality.*

*It would be great to be able to benefit from several placements, this way we could do every year. So more placements.*

*We have been asked to talk to students about our experiences in the first year. It would be great to have more funding for these scholarships. Now in February there was an application session and after the selection many students were left out. There are a lot of students who wanted to go abroad and didn't have the opportunity because there were not enough places or funds for everyone. So look, maybe this would be an improvement – to have more places.*

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



### **4. Reduction of bureaucracy was mentioned by some respondents, while others did not consider this to be a problem. It was requested to simplify the procedures in general, especially in the post-mobility period.**

*I would cut from the bureaucracy of the programme, which can sometimes become overwhelming.*

*The least bureaucracy, ie. everything transferred to an online system that is accessible to all universities.*

*Less bureaucracy, better preparation of faculties on foreign language (English, German), I would decrease the number of documents and grant health insurance.*

*Less bureaucracy. Greater transparency in the selection of candidates and granting scholarships*

*The bureaucracy at my university after my return.*

*Filling in the documents is difficult and the terms should be explained more clearly.*

*Less bureaucracy. Longer dead-lines in case of mandatory documents.*

# SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



**5. More support for students during the pre-Erasmus period, especially regarding the application file, information on the steps to be followed during the mobility period, identification of placement opportunities, identification of suitable accommodation places in those cases where no student residences are available; also, for the pre-mobility stage, the respondents suggest possible measures to insist more on preparing the students in the foreign language in which they will study in mobility.**

*It is difficult to find an organization abroad. Support in this regard would be useful. I would offer alternatives for internships within those organisations that had a positive feedback.*

*The possibility to choose a place for the internships, for example as a result of the collaboration between the university and a private clinic.*

*It would be useful to have an online platform that can help you in finding more easily a host organization. I would support them more in finding a lease in the host country, I would encourage them to trust the students.*

*I would help the students with the accommodation.*

*Offering free accommodation to students in the countries in which they go.*

*Accommodation provided during the summer internships.*

*Also offer hotel accommodation options.*

*I think that a student who is on the first mobility should be helped more in finding accommodation, where there are no student residences available. In fact we were offered some places in their private student residences, but the prices there were much higher than a regular market rent. And then, I searched for myself.*

# SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



## **6. More support in the the recognition of courses and credits:**

*To recognise the credits, not the courses considering that, some countries there are 6-7 courses/semester.*

*The way in which the recognition is made in Romania is problematic. The obligation to recognize the courses and the grades according to a grid is not respected.*

*The most important thing: the support from the home University regarding recognition.*

*Recognition is impossible without 1-3 personal visits to EACH Profesor!*

*To have a similar curriculum in Romania with the one abroad for easier recognition.*

*The courses taken in Erasmus are not 100% similar with those at home, so there are many exams to take.*

*The recognition of the course must be clearer, not to find out after we return that we must take additional exams.*

*Improvement of the system of credit / grade recognition.*

*Flexibility of universities in the recognition of courses.*

*Recognition of grades should be easier, less bureaucracy, offering a higher amount of money. In general, Professors should be more supportive of Erasmus students and recognition.*

*The process of courses recognition that are largely not recognised. Credits are useless. There should be no Issues with the exams' recognition. The Romanian professors refuse to recognise the exams.*

*Those in charge with the ecognition should be more open when it comes to the recognition of course in the host country.*

*The recognition of the exams and credits should be supported by each University, not only by the Erasmus regulations.*

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME – perceptions beneficiaries - interviews



**7. More support during the mobility period - some students suggest the optimization of the welcome procedures in certain universities, the setting up of committees in charge with welcoming the exchange students, mentors, tutors during the mobility period. According to other students, precisely these difficulties encountered are those developing their ability to adapt and to increase the satisfaction in the end: part of the mentioned benefits is due to the fact that the student surpasses such barriers, the seeks solutions to adapt, develops personally and gets mature.**

*I would also intervene during the mobility, I would check if the students were able to get comfortable at the workplace, if there really is a mentor out there who can really help you not feel weird and alone in your day-to-day activities.*

*To deal more with the conditions offered to students during mobility.*

*Universities should be more involved in providing accommodation during mobility*

*I would also change the curriculum of the University where you go to study, so that to provide courses in English, because I also heard from colleagues that in other countries, for example Lithuania, where they were supposed to study in English, but there were courses not taught in English, but only in Lithuanian and they had to drop those courses, although they were included in the Erasmus students program. So a disadvantage in countries where English is not spoken.*

**8. Introducing a compulsory period of mobility during the University and opening the mobility for the first year of study, at least for placements that are of shorter duration**

*It would be good to have a compulsory mobility period, then everyone would have the opportunity to spend at least a month in another country and that would help.*

## ONCLUSIONS

ERASMUS+ beneficiaries are in most cases students of the top 10%, and about a third are placed in the first half of the school performance hierarchy, meaning that there are chances of being granted a scholarship to good students, not only to the top 10%.

When applying for an ERASMUS+ scholarship, almost a third of the beneficiaries were not informed in regard to the majority of aspects, which means a quasi-spontaneous decision. In making the decision, it mattered the knowledge of the foreign language, the possibility of having the studies/courses/credits recognised and the level of school performance.

The contribution of the ERASMUS+ Office, of the Professors and of the deans is highly appreciated, and to a lesser degree the way in which the student organizations have promoted the programme. Professors, departments should be active agents in promoting the programme even among the good students, who are not in the top 10%.

In general, the beneficiaries are satisfied with the way their scholarship period and the way in which those in charge performed. There are significant dissatisfactions with the bureaucracy of the programme, the costs of living in the host countries and some difficulties indicated in regard to the credit recognition. Moreover, the lack of sufficient income is the main problem mentioned.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main benefits of the ERASMUS+ scholarship are, first and foremost, the opportunity to visit new places, a valuable spiritual experience and a better knowledge of a foreign language. In the second place, it is mentioned the added value in the professional training and the enrichment of the social life.

In general, the appreciation of the benefits concerns the general aspects (spiritual experience, language knowledge, visiting new places) and less specific aspects (professional development).

Most beneficiaries would definitely recommend the ERASMUS+ scholarships, especially for the value of the experience and the possibility of professional development. Only 1% of respondents would not recommend them.

What would change the beneficiaries in the ERASMUS+ programme? Firstly a better promotion, then increasing the amount of the scholarship, optimizing and simplifying the processes, ie. reducing the bureaucracy and solving the issues of studies/courses/credits recognition.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON INCREASING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME



## Conclusions and recommendations of interviews with representatives of Erasmus+offices, professors and non-participating students

Almost half (46%) of the students who were not in international mobility programs state that they would be interested in accessing in the future a scholarship abroad and 50% a placement in an organization. The interest in finding a job at home is much higher: **82% of students are interested in finding a job in Romania in the next two years.** Regarding the interest for study mobility, it is higher for small and medium sized universities than for students from large universities (those with more than 20,000 students).

The attractiveness of a scholarship abroad is expressed by the students especially through the possibility of visiting new places and a better knowledge of the foreign language. These dominant elements exclude the professional dimension as the main opportunity gained through mobility, as this is mentioned only on the second place. The possibility to be better prepared at school, to continue the studies abroad, but also to improve the social life or obtain a better job represent secondary plan aspects, which can be offered by a scholarship abroad. The prestige among colleagues and professors, as well as the possibility of obtaining higher grades in exams, are also considered less important aspects.

What benefits do students expect from the international mobility scholarship? First of all, they expect that, by using this experience, they will be able to considerably improve their knowledge of a foreign language (54%), increase their chances of getting a job (51%) and visit new places (31%).

## Conclusions and recommendations of interviews with representatives of Erasmus+offices, professors and non-participating students

The main obstacles to accessing a scholarship abroad are the need to cover some of the expenses and already existing obligations (family, job, studies). Also, the bureaucracy of the mobility programmes and the recognition of courses at the University of origin represent other factors that could impede the access to a scholarship.

The reputation of the ERASMUS+ reputation is very high. Basically, only one student out of 11 did not hear about this program, since we are talking about a student board that did not participate in the program. Among those who know the program, the visibility of promoting ERASMUS + is great, 70% of the students seeing a poster about Erasmus + and 65% have discussed in the last year with colleagues friends about an Erasmus + scholarship. However, when it comes to action, concrete steps, the number of students who have done something in this regard is a relatively small one, compared to the total. There are also 9% of students who have not heard of Erasmus + at all.

Regarding the attractiveness of the programme, the most appreciated elements refer to the fact that it offers the possibility of a good study period, that it is relatively well promoted and that the scholarships are awarded based on merit. At the same time, the least appreciated elements of the programme refer to the scholarship amount and the fact that the scholarships are not obtained very easily. Students would choose an Erasmus+ scholarship also due to the confidence in the programme, due to the good recommendations received from the beneficiaries and the opportunities that this programme offers.

## Conclusions and recommendations of interviews with representatives of Erasmus+offices, professors and non-participating students

Interviews gave us the opportunity to make an inventory of the reasons for which students hesitate in accessing the mobility scholarships, among others: difficulties in using the language at a conversational level and taking exams in the foreign language, the fact that the involvement in the programme may generate immediate obstacles related to the school performance at the home university (generated either by getting lower grades during mobility or by being necessary to take additional exams on return or by the fact that on return, being up to date in certain fields of studies could become difficult); credit recognition and harmonization in certain fields and subjects; the value-the amount of the scholarships. It is important to note that we deal here with perceptions, statements, and the image that of the programme created according to different degrees of information (higher or lower, more objective or biased) about the programme.

In addition to the reasons related to the characteristics of the programme and how they are perceived by the students, in the chapter on mobility obstacles, representatives of the Erasmus+ offices and professors also mention: **factors related to "competition" on the market for study mobility** offers in universities abroad, but also factors related to increased mobility and travel opportunities in general; **factors related to the motivation of some students and the general attitude towards education**, a certain attitude of apathy - an attitude that requires a greater effort to motivate them not only for mobility programmes but also in any school and extracurricular activity; **factors related to the socio-economic context especially of the labour market, of the employers from different areas of the country** - especially in the large cities - who have become competitors not only through the jobs offered, but also through the internship programs available to students; **factors related to the promotion of the programme**, in the sense that the traditional means of information must be supplemented with promotion on social media, with the need to move from a general information to a specific and applied one.

## Conclusions and recommendations of interviews with representatives of Erasmus+offices, professors and non-participating students

**The main recommendations regarding an increased awareness of the programme**, expressed by the representatives of the Erasmus+ offices, referred to the promotion of the programme during final years of high-school; personalizing the communication, so that it is not limited only to mass information and to be more adapted to the different groups, categories of students, field of studies, specialisations, etc.; innovating the way in which students are informed about the programme, implementing measures aimed allowing students to make informed decisions.

Regarding the **increased attractiveness of the programme** or measures that would increase the interest of the students in accessing the programme: some of the representatives of the Erasmus+ offices and of the professors recommended an increased scholarship amount, especially in the countries where the standard of living is high, more flexibility of the duration of the study mobility and of the placements, assisting the students in identifying the organizations/companies for placements, curricular optimization so that the compatibility of the courses is as high as possible.

Last but not least, non-participating students in mobility programmes would like more information about the expectations of the professors from the host universities, so that their image of what happens during the mobility is as realistic as possible.

## Conclusions and recommendations of interviews with representatives of Erasmus+offices, professors and non-participating students

**The main recommendations regarding an increased awareness of the program expressed by the Erasmus+** beneficiaries refer to better promotion, an increased scholarship amount, optimizing and simplifying the processes, ie. reducing bureaucracy and solving the issues of recognition of studies/courses/credits.

**Regarding the promotion, Erasmus+ beneficiaries considered that it should be insisted on:** direct, interactive presentations in classrooms; more prompt and better distributed information; more use of online area and social media; better promotion of the benefits of the programme, emphasis on explaining the benefits of the scholarship; facilitating the contact between the beneficiaries of the programme and the other students; better exploitation of mobility experiences in information campaigns; promotion of the program in high-schools, more support and communication from the faculty members.

One of the suggestions offered by some Erasmus+ beneficiaries, which is in line with the recommendations made by the representatives of the Erasmus+ offices, refers to the introduction of a compulsory international mobility experience in the curriculum (for shorter periods), due to the multiple benefits of personal and professional development that they generate.