
PROMOTING POST- GRADUATE MOBILITY

A French National Case
study - EUGRAD project
2009

By CAP ULYSSE



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Introduction

This case study is part of the EUGRAD project launched on October 2011 supported by the Life Long Learning programme in the frame of the Erasmus Cooperation between Higher Institutions & Enterprises action.

The purpose of this case study is to identify the existing trends of international mobility in France, paying particular attention to “working” & “learning” postgraduate students, to highlight remaining barriers to this mobility and to propose relevant solutions to allow any postgraduate, to study in any country and work in any company.

The first section of this report will be focused on the methodology introducing the French national group, the theoretical approach and the ground approach we’ve implemented.

The second section will be structured around both foreign incoming and French outgoing student trends, according to statistics and relevant reports written on the past seven years.

Section three will highlight the barriers thanks to the ground approach we’ve implemented among 10 French companies and Universities.

Finally section four will draw out recommendations to overcome remaining barriers and introduce good practice at European and national level.

We hope this case study will contribute to a reflexion at national and European level, in order to target a common final issue: “any post graduate in any country in any company”.

Section 1 - Case study Methodology

At present, the results of this case study provide a theoretical approach completed by ground work, in order to detect the trend of mobility and resolve the barriers and challenges to mobility.

The theoretical approach aims to catalogue all the documentation regarding student mobility, specifically those proposing solutions to already identified issues. Because this work has been quite time consuming Cap Ulysse has decided to create a work group with 4 members who are aware about student and post graduates mobility (two Cap Ulysse staff members in charge of mobility and two English postgraduates doing an internship at Cap Ulysse). These members met once a week for six months to introduce and summarise the main ideas in French and European mobility literature, while always outlining the main trends in France. Approximately 42 documents have been examined during these meeting. A selection of 23 reports published by European & French official institutions or student mobility organisations has been considered and has influenced the first part this case study¹.

At the same time, a ground approach has been taken expanding the national work group to a larger one composed of 10 companies and 10 HEI universities² (cf. annexe :composition of the French National Work Group-FNWG), all of which answered a questionnaire³ created by the consortium in order to identify mobility barriers, relating to companies and universities, for post graduates.

The choice of companies was made easily as Cap Ulysse has worked on mobility issues for more than 10 years. We decided to reduce the number of companies in order to carry out more in-depth interviews and get qualitative information. We also chose companies who already welcome European trainees through the Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus placement or even Erasmus for young entrepreneurs programs. As a matter of fact this sample is characterised by two main aspects:

- A local aspect, since our work is mainly located in Bordeaux & its suburbs.
- A size aspect, most of the companies we have in our network are SME.

These choices helped us to get some qualitative information, since all the companies have had to cope with mobility issues and they were therefore open to this initiative. Each company's questionnaire has been completed through face to face interviews (8) or even telephone interviews (1) and emails (1) in order to get a quantitative view of the trends and qualitative information.

The selection process of HEI (mainly Universities) was different; we selected the main universities in charge of Erasmus placements in order to assure that there will be "working mobility" events. Two Consortiums agreed to participate (Blaise Pascal/Clermond II Consortium & Université de Lille I Consortium). We also wanted to work with universities who have experiences in other mobility projects in order to identify and transfer best practices such as French universities in charge of young graduates in the labour market mobility (Université de Lyon III and Université du littoral). We have been collaborating with a local university (Bordeaux III) on our ground approach. Mainly because they are considering implementing an undergraduate training programme with a mobility dimension. This will be interesting for the second part of this EUGRAD project. Each university questionnaire has been completed through telephone interviews, emails or even face to face interviews (Lyon 3) in order to get a quantitative view of the trends and qualitative information.

Finally all those universities and companies were invited to our national seminar on 7th July 2011, in Bordeaux, to debate issues and propose solutions. This seminar brought about the completion of this report with relevant information but also sanctioned an online community and established multilateral relations.

¹ Ref Bibliographie

²Annex1 : Companies & Higher Educational members of the French National Work group
Sample more than 97 000 students & 1 600 foreign students for the 2009/2010,academic year.

³ Annex1 : Companies & Universities questionnaire

Section 2 – Identifying French mobility trends

Despite the homogenization of international indicators, the data provided by UNESCO, French Ministry of Higher Education or EUROSTAT is far from effective. A lot of bias remains making comparisons difficult. Fortunately, they allow for the identification of major trends.

According to OCDE, in 2009, student mobility grosses €3 million over the world which means that 2% of world students were participating in a mobility programme that year. In this case study we considered that there were two types of mobility:⁴

- “Organized mobility”, for instance Erasmus mobility where students find different kinds of support.
- “Spontaneous mobility”, due to personal initiatives, without public support.

According to the background paper presented, in January 2010, by ESU to the Bologna Follow-up Group working on mobility is always part of a project with three main characteristics⁵ :

- Diploma mobility: completing an entire education programme in a different country
- Credit mobility: doing some modules in a different country within the frame of the home university programme
- Short term mobility: going abroad during a higher education programme for an activity relevant to studies (language course, internship, etc.)

We on this case study will consider 2 different kinds of postgraduate mobility from the incoming and outgoing point of view:

- Studying mobility characterized by the three situations previously identified
- Placement mobility related to students internships and placements.

⁴ 2010, Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, “*Student Mobility : between myth and reality*”, Laura Endrizzi

⁵ 2010, ESU, « *Bologna at the finish line: An Account of Ten years of European Higher Education Reform* » Kristine Bak Nielsen, Daniela Bartolo, Christian Hemmestad Bjerke...

Incoming mobility - Learning and working mobility

Questioning the appeal of higher education has allowed the implementation of indicators in order to measure and analyse incoming student mobility. In consequence, it is quite easy to find information related to incoming learning mobility in France.

Incoming learning mobility

According to data collected on global mobility between 1999 and 2006⁶, France attracts the third largest number of international students in the world after the United States and Great Britain. It has recently overtaken Germany reaching 265,710 foreign students out of 1,923,426 in 2006. This represents almost 13% of the number of incoming foreign students (11.5 % in 1999). There has been a constant increase in the number foreign students but it is linked to the increase in all subscriptions to higher education institutions (HEI) (+4.8% of foreign subscriptions and +3.7% total subscriptions in 2009).⁷

These figures have allowed our universities to accept 215,034 foreign students in 2009-10, a not insignificant increase of 14.88% (1998:7%). But we have to take into consideration that those figures also include foreign students living permanently in France who are not in a mobility trend. Also, these figures concern only public universities and affiliated institutions (73.3% in 2009) it is difficult to calculate the figures for private schools.

It is interesting to note the origin of all foreign students, since France has a peculiarity. In England or Germany the main foreign nationality is Chinese, whereas African students represent more than 47% of foreign students in France, coming mainly from North African countries like Morocco and Algeria. However, mobility from other African countries like Senegal, Cameroon or Lebanon remains a historical phenomenon. Asia is in second position with an ever increasing 22.31% of foreign students⁷.

In the academic year 2009-10, 44.4%, of the 215,034 foreign students in Public French Universities were undergraduates, 43.2% were postgraduates, and 12.4% were PhD students.

The areas of their studies were:

- Social sciences and languages, with 67,000 students,
- Sciences, with 52,000 students,
- Economics and management with an important increase during the 10 last years, with 48,000 students,
- Health, with 25,000 students,
- Law & political sciences, with 22,000 students.

Maghreb countries follow more scientific or health related studies whereas USA students are more likely to follow literature subjects.

Incoming working mobility

It is quite difficult to get information regarding this incoming work mobility, mainly because there is no centralisation of the data at either the university level or the governmental level.

None of the most important global statistic organisations like Eurodyssey, Eurosurvey, UNESCO and MESR are able to give even an approximate figure for the number of foreign students welcomed in France to do an internship, except the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme. This new programme is a European business exchange programme which aims to provide practical and financial assistance to newly established or would-be entrepreneurs wishing to spend some time abroad with a confirmed host entrepreneur. From its

⁶ 2006, Source : UNESCO - CampusFrance, "Les étudiants internationaux : chiffres clés"

⁷ 2010, 35 sources ?, "L'état de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche en France", Rédactrice en chef : Marie-Hélène Prieur, Auteurs : Magali Badonnel, Marc Bideault, Nicolas Bignon + 38 others

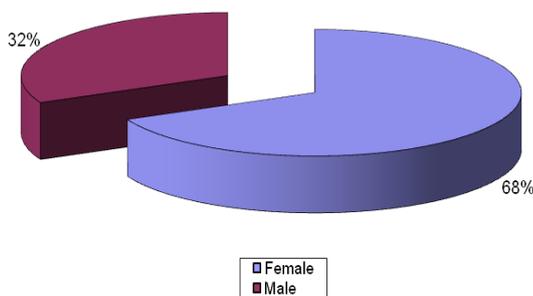
launch 2009, 22 new entrepreneurs had been welcomed in France mainly from Spain and Italy. Besides the fact that these figures are almost negligible, it is too early to have a clear idea about this new mobility programme and its trends.

Since it is hard to have a clear idea of the number of “Erasmus Placement” students welcomed in France, we decided to include, in this section, the trends of the incoming mobility of two other European mobility programmes aimed at young graduates in the labour market, mainly because they concern postgraduates also:

- The EURODYSEY programme settled by the Assembly of European Regions (AER) with a sample of 344 incoming mobility students.
- The LEONARDO DA VINCI programme at Aquitania regional level with a sample of 539 youth graduates followed by intermediary organisations. Those figures have been provided by the “Aquitaine Cap Mobilité”⁸ Platform supported by Regional funds.

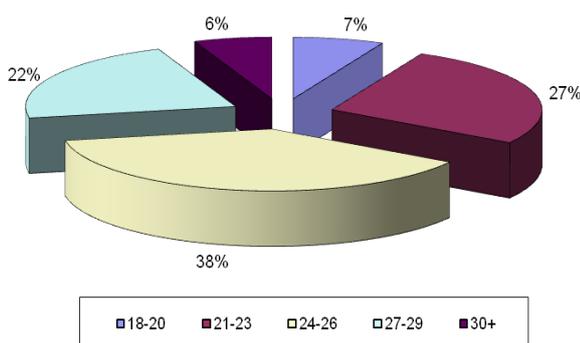
Here are some of the major trends when gathering data:

Gender



The Eurodysey & Leonardo da Vinci programmes show that women are much more present in mobility programmes. It would be interesting to compare these figures with other countries to understand if it's a matter of destination or if it is a general trend due to the fact that they are generally more affected by unemployment.

Ages

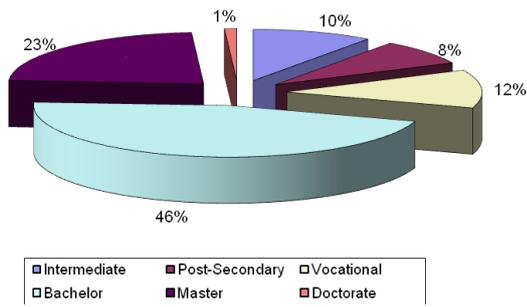


38% of the beneficiaries of those programmes are between 24 and 26 years old, clearly the predominant age group. We should remember that these programmes are dedicated to people in the labour market⁹.

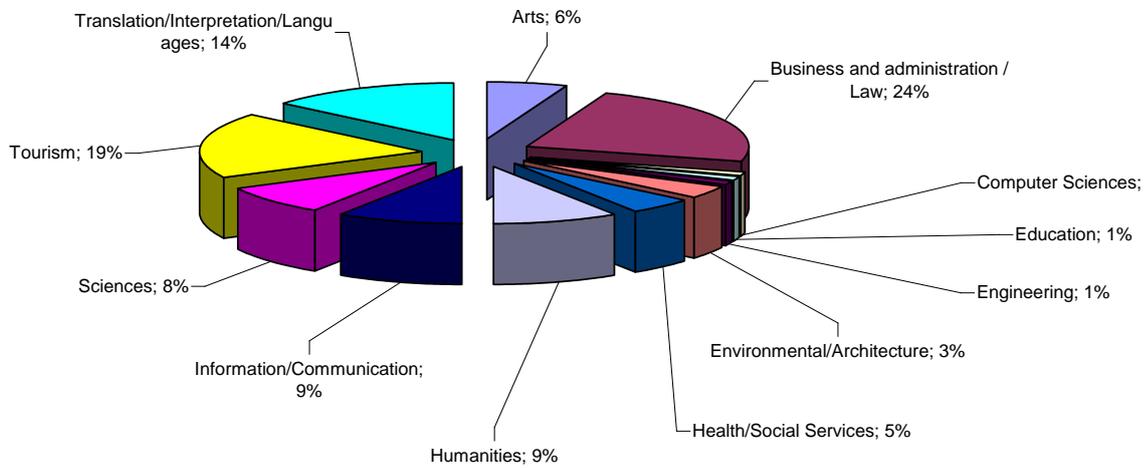
⁸ <http://cap-mobilite.aquitaine.fr/>

⁹ 2007, The National Unions of Students in Europe - “Promoting mobility a study on the obstacles to student mobility”

Level of Study



Generally speaking mobility is more accessible to those with a high level of education. These two programmes follow this trend with 69% of participants being either graduates or post graduates.



Regarding the academic background most of the trainees received are from Business administration, 22%, then Tourism and Art (14%) disciplines. The academic background is comparable to other programmes both incoming or outgoing, meaning that this aspect is a major factor in mobility.

Outgoing Learning & Working Mobility

Outgoing learning mobility

We've seen before that the French Higher Education System has been studied for more than 15 years and many reports have been published¹⁰. What about our students? How are they linked to this global trend? When our students are mobile it might be on a personal initiative or through bilateral contracts between universities. In the case of personal initiatives it is difficult to find statistics, since there is no registration in a French institution.

At a European level, in 2008, Eurostat evaluated that around 550,000 students from EU universities were studying abroad, every year. Only 160,000 were encouraged by a European initiative corresponding to around 1/3 of outgoing students. These two schemes of mobility are available for working mobility.

This European trend is the same in France even if figures might be different according to sources. For instance, Eurostat: in 2009 counted 76,971 French students studying abroad, including 22,981 Erasmus students. According to UNESCO, who have different ways of calculating and do not consider working mobility, 51,288 French students went abroad, in the same year. As a matter of fact those figures are quite different but show that outgoing mobility:

- is much less important than incoming mobility,
- concerns **less than 2,4% of French students**

The French score is average on a global level if we compare it with outgoing American students (0.3%) or even UK students (0.9). French students are quite mobile compared North America & Western countries, but compared to Central and Eastern Europe French students appeared to be less mobile.

Main outgoing countries regarding students abroad

Chinese students are the most important number but not the more mobile with only 1.7% of Chinese studying abroad.

Country	N° of students studyng abroad	% of the students
Austria	11 516	** 3.7
Belgium	10 234	** 2.4
Cyprus	24 610	** 79.4
France	51 288	** 2.4
Germany (m)	91 928	** ...
Greece	29 072	** 5.3
Ireland	18 304	** 10.0
Israel	13 388	** 3.9
Italy	39 820	** 1.8
Liechtenstein	897	** 119.0
Malta	1 158	** 10.8
Norway	12 281	** 5.6
Portugal	12 414	** 3.3
Spain	22 114	** 1.2
Sweden	14 662	** 3.5
Switzerland	10 997	** 4.7
United Kingdom	22 829	** 0.9
United States of America	53 251	** 0.3
China	/	1.7

¹⁰ 2011, French Embassy, "Aiming for Excellence: A Reform of Higher Education and Research in France and in Europe, The PRES Consortium"

2007, Communiqué de la Conférence des Ministres européens chargés de l'Enseignement Supérieur, « Vers l'Espace Européen de l'Enseignement Supérieur : Répondre aux défis de la Mondialisation »

2005 Conseil national pour le développement de la mobilité internationale des étudiants

« Stratégies de développement de la mobilité internationale des étudiants et attractivité de l'enseignement supérieur français »

French gross & destination

Gross outbound enrolment ratio (%)	Top five of hosting countries for French outgoing students & figures
1.3	U.K. (13,089), U.S.A. (7,299), Germany (5,711), Belgium (5,651), Switzerland (5,413)

If we consider the UK & USA as the preferred destination countries for organised and spontaneous mobility of French students then the remaining countries are border countries like Belgium, Germany, Switzerland (around 15%) & Spain.

Outgoing working mobility

If we had no difficulties in finding statistics about learning outgoing mobility then we have to say that the only official sources we found about working outgoing mobility is the "ERASMUS placement" figures¹¹ and the recent European initiative called "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs"

According to the 2010 annual report "L'Etat de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche", published by the Higher Education and Research Minister (MESR), an enquiry on 24,727 postgraduate students reveals that 16% of the students questioned had the opportunity to go abroad for their third level studies. This study confirms the fact that only 1/3 have been mobile through an "organised mobility" program with financial support. This enquiry focused on **postgraduate students** reveals the purpose of those exchanges:

- 53.7% for a learning mobility,
- **36.8% for a working mobility (work or internship),**
- 34.9% for other reasons: foreign language courses, Summer University, study visit.

Erasmus placement initiative

From 2007 the launch of the Integrated Lifelong Learning Program, students have had the opportunity to take part in a business placement in one of the 31 countries participating in the programme. This opportunity is currently available from their first year of higher studies; the duration must last between 3 and 12 months. The Erasmus Programme allows students to receive an Erasmus bursary which comprises of a contribution to travelling costs, related to living costs between their country of origin and the welcoming country. In 2007/2008, the monthly level of contracting between the Europe-Education-Formation France Agency and the HEIs was €438.73 for mobile interns. We will see next that these complements to this allocation can be brought by the home institution, the supervision ministers and the participating territories.

In the academic year of 2006/2007, €5,451,147 was given to **3,389 students** who went abroad for an average duration of 3.67 months. In 2009/2010, **5,787 students** went abroad. This means that there has been a **large increase** of working mobility by more **than 50%**. We have to wonder ourselves if this increase is also applicable to spontaneous mobility. *****

In the academic year of 2006/2007 the number of participants of both genders was quite equal.

Their academic backgrounds were:

- Business administration (37.18%)
- Engineering (26.67%),
- Sciences (more than 19%)

It is interesting to see that learning mobility profiles are different from working profiles. Learning mobility is more concerned about "languages and literature" or "law and economics" whilst working mobility is focused on "business administration" (1,260 students) or "Engineering" profiles (904 students).

Out of the 31 eligible countries, there is no surprise that trends are quite heavy for UK with more than 27.5 % of French students, then Spain with 20.6%, Germany (13.8%), Belgium (7.8%) visiting there.

Almost 20% come from universities in the Paris region, then others from Rhône-Alpes, Pays de la Loire & Nord Pas de Calais Universities. In order to facilitate the implementation of the project the national agency encouraged universities to create consortiums about their sectors of activity or catchment area.

¹¹ 2009, Agence Europe-Education-Formation France, « *Données statistiques ERASMUS* »

Erasmus for young entrepreneurs initiative

This new generation of program launched in 2009 is a European business exchange programme aims to provide practical and financial assistance to newly established or would-be entrepreneurs wishing to spend some time abroad with an experienced host entrepreneur.

On August 2011 only 43 young French entrepreneurs in the 617 (completed motilities) went abroad mainly in Spain and Italy.

At a European level 5 sectors are more represented than others:

- Advertising, promotion, printing media & related services
- IT, office and communication equipment, services and supplies
- Tourism Hotel, restaurant; tourism, travel & wellness services
- Legal, fiscal and other consultancy services
- Architectural, construction, engineering and inspection service

Direct Public Financing for the European Youth Mobility in France in 2007¹²

	EU	French State	Regions	Departments	Total
Erasmus mobility	44,5				44.5
Erasmus for young entrepreneurs (outgoing & incoming)	N/A				N/A
Leonardo da Vinci	18,6				18.6
Marie Curie	45				45
Higher education Ministry		31			31
Foreign Ministry (outgoing)		4			4
Social Grants		14			14
Local Collections			60	6,5	66.5
Combined Masters		1,2			1.2
Franco-German Universities		5			5
Franco-Italian Universities		0,1			0.1
International Voluntary Enterprise			10		10

Public Support for International Mobility of Students or Interns

The MESR support

The MESR predicts a budget of €31.89 million as an aid to mobility to the PLF 2009 which corresponds to around 26,500 quarterly grants. It is allocated to the HEIs engaged in the contracting quadrennial procedure an annual support contingency for international mobility, and specifies the terms of allocation. The aids are then distributed by the HEIs according to criteria defined by the institution. The international mobility grants can be distributed to students who wish to follow a higher education abroad through an exchange program or by taking part in an international placement. This training or placement must be registered through the course of studies, for a period of between two and nine months. The students awarded under social criteria can receive an aid to international mobility. The monthly allowance can reach €400. Students not awarded under social criteria; but where the family means are not up to the tax revenue, they can benefit from a grant for international mobility allocated on the same modalities, on condition of having submitted a social student dossier. The international mobility grants of the MESR for doctoral students can reach €1.1 million, or €4500 for a joint supervision thesis and €1500 to €3000 for mobility through a “cultural sphere” programme. The Minister awards around 30 research bursaries for international cooperation, for a total of around €20,000 a year for 3 years.

University Support

The universities award grants mainly on social criteria by the MESR but also takes into account the fact that the internship abroad is compulsory. They award an additional grant to students who obtain an Erasmus grant (€192 monthly). The amount varies between universities and destinations from 70 to 120 euro approximately.

Other public grants

There are other ministers who also allocate international mobility grants. The Foreign and European Affairs Minister (MAEE) in particular has a budget totalling around €4 million for outgoing students. Students preparing for a doctorate can obtain mobility grants from research organisations, where the total varies according to the function and the duration of study.

¹² Sources : « Le financement public de a mobilité européenne des jeunes : le cas de la France, Amélie Barbier Gauchard
Autres sources : UE, MAE, MEN-MESR, MJS, ARF, ADF, CCRE, calculs du Centre d'analyse stratégique

Local authorities Grants

Local authorities have become, over the years, important financiers of outgoing mobility. The majority of regions have put in place support programmes for international student mobility and grants which can enhance an Erasmus grant. The grants are generally awarded for unlimited mobility to member states in the EU, after examining the application, to students preparing for a recognised state degree, and warranting an inscription to a foreign education. Their total varies between €300 and €500 a month for a period of two to nine months. The annual budgets are variable according to the region: they reach more than €17 million for the Rhone-Alps region, €7.7 million for the Ile-de-France region in 2008 (for around 3000 grants), €3.3 million for the Provence-Alps-Cote d'Azur region (for around 2150 grants), €2.4 million in 2008 for the Franche Comté region (for 1345 grants). Some general councils are also invested in international mobility and award grants.

Student Loans

MESR has just put in place a student loan accessible to every student, without condition of resources, without deposits, and with differed repayment. This system should allow students in the middle classes, who were, until now, excluded from the social security system to benefit from a grant to finance their studies and notably international mobility. These loans, awarded by the banks, are reserved to students younger than 28 and are for a maximum of €15,000 for a duration of 2 years. They can be reimbursed until 10 years after their subscription.

Supports from the European Union

The Erasmus Programme – Created in 1987, it is part of the community lifelong learning programme (EFTLV). It supports student and teacher mobility for studies periods and work placements. The participation of the HEI in the program is conditional on the granting of an Erasmus Charter. The period of studies spent in another member state is recognised by the sending university. This system is aided by the ECTS. The global budget allocated by the EU to the Erasmus programme for the period of 2007-2013 rises to €3.1 billion euro. In 2007, almost 3,150 European institutions were beneficiaries of the Erasmus charter of which 679 HEI were French. Over the years, the Erasmus programme was consolidated to evolve the instrument of structuring and the support of reform for the European higher education space (Bologna Process). The new style of programme aims to attain three million beneficiaries by 2012.

The Erasmus Programme for young Entrepreneurs – Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a new cross-border exchange programme launched in 2009 which gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other European Union countries, implementing a mobility experience.

The Marie Curie Program – The Marie Curie Actions are a coherent set of actions addressing researchers at all stages of their careers, in the public and private sectors, from initial research training, specifically intended for researchers at the early stages of their career, to life-long learning and career development, as well as for knowledge transfer between sectors and with the rest of the world. They are funded through the PEOPLE Specific Programme of the 7th Framework Programme (2007 to 2013) whose overall strategic objective is to make Europe more attractive for researchers. The PEOPLE Specific Programme has an overall budget of over €4.7 billion over the seven years

General observations regarding mobility trends

There is a real need to improve the availability of data on STUDENTS MOBILITY by collecting statistic to develop comparable & reliable indicators especially WORKING MOBILITY

It is clear that the Academic Profile has a large influence on student mobility, we need to look at ways to make mobility accessible to all types of Academic Profile

Information and funding about MOBILITY is quite spread out among different public and private bodies; therefore it is necessary to gather this information under one place/body.

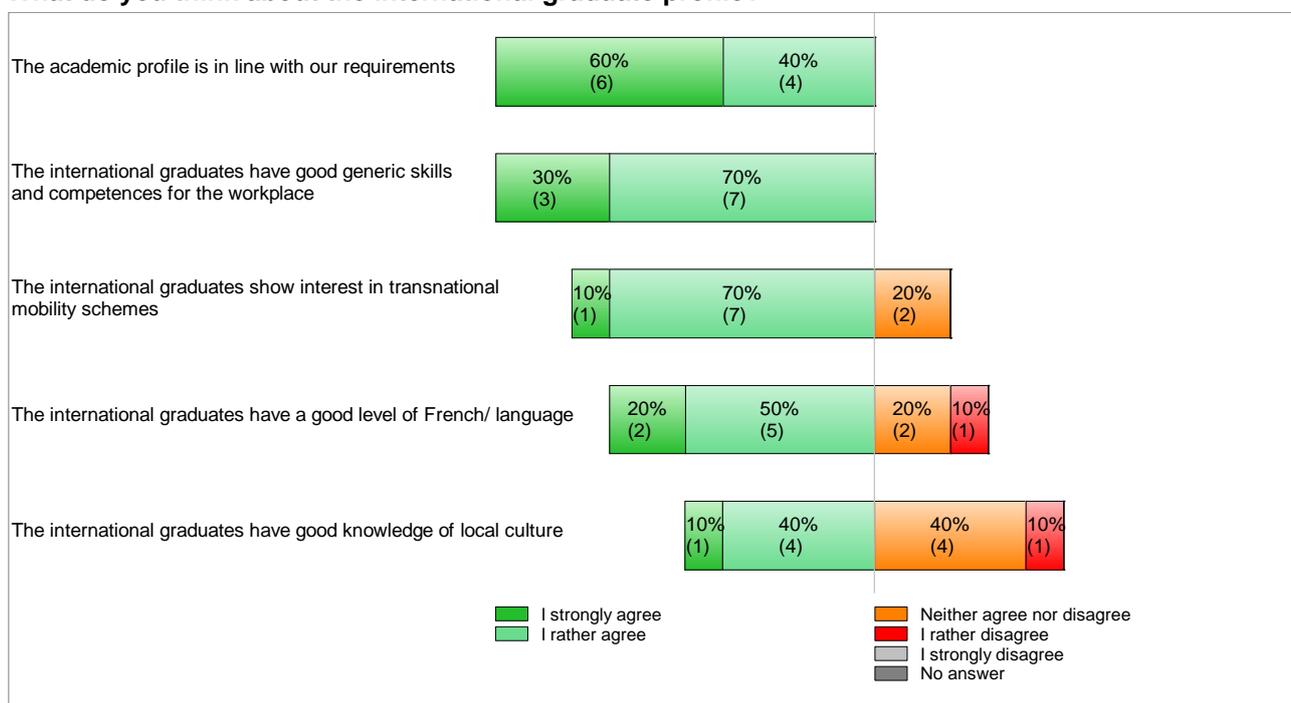
Section 3 – Identifying French mobility barriers

This section is the result of two different questionnaires aimed at SME and HEI in order to define mobility barriers and best practices. The questionnaires have been completed through in-depth interviews allowing us to interpret their answers.

From companies point of view

The questions asked were concerned about the graduate profile, financial, higher educational and legal and administrative issues. Every company's answers are based on previous experiences since all the companies who answered the questionnaire already received at least one foreign student for internship.

What do you think about the international graduate profile?



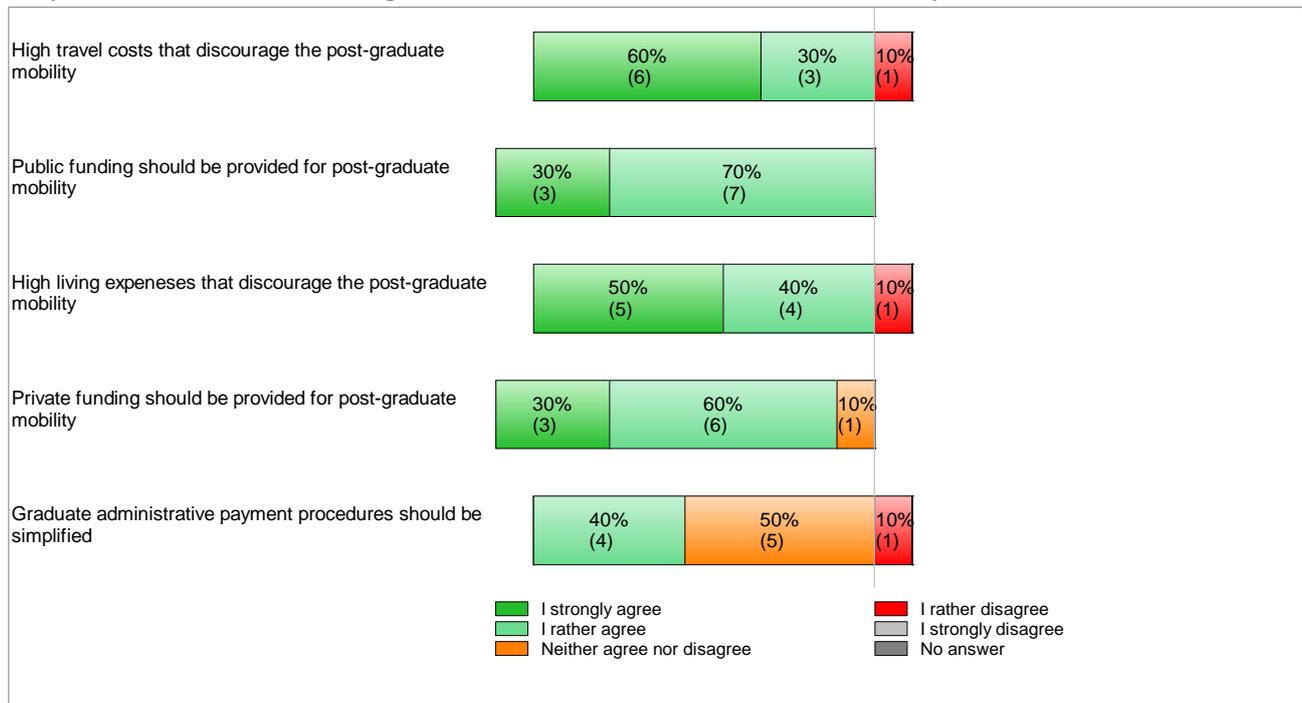
Regarding graduate profiles we can see that the most important factor according to the companies' answers is that the **academic profile is in line** with their requirements; companies might expect the students to have a theoretical background in order to make them effective in a short time.

70% of the companies' answers agree that international graduates have **good generic skills and competences** for the workplace and the other 30% are strongly of this opinion. This might mean that it is not only a matter of theoretical knowledge but also a matter of knowledge of "soft skills"; such as ability to adapt to a work environment, to solve problems, to be organized, work in team or even be autonomous.

70% agree or rather agree that international graduates have **a good level of French**. During our interviews it appears that, depending on the tasks entrusted to the students, the level of French is more or less important. The more technical the discipline the less language skills are required. As a matter of English as potential common language, only 3 companies accepted to fill in the English version of the questionnaire. And from our experience with companies, most of the time good knowledge of French is required. This might be emphasised by the fact that companies who answer were SME.

In comparison with this 70% that speak French only 50% have a good **knowledge of local culture**. This shows us that generally the companies are not requiring a specific knowledge of local culture except in specific roles (e.g. tourism guide). 80% of companies believe that international graduates show interest in **trans-national mobility** schemes.

Do you think that the following issues constitute a barrier to total mobility?



If we take an overall look at the question first of all we can see that companies believe that there are 2 main barriers to total mobility:

- **The high travel costs &**
- **High living costs.**

Public funding appears to be the most important factor to improve mobility, just before private funding. The least important factor affecting mobility seems to be the graduate administrative payment procedures.

Now examining each of these factors more closely we can see firstly that 90% of the companies asked strongly believe or rather believe that **high travel costs** discourage postgraduate mobility. This is easily understandable when postgraduate students come from far away (e.g. Asia, America, and Africa) but regarding European students this won't be the major barrier (10% rather disagree).

90% of companies strongly agree or agree that high **living expenses** discourage post-graduate mobility. This is interesting to see that if we consider all incoming nationalities we can say that the landscape is marked by **polarities** in France¹³. More than 44% of incoming students in France are from North Africa, then from Asia. The cost of life in these regions is much lower. This phenomenon is more marked for working mobility (migrants). Beside this, we cannot forget that the target group is made of students who have no income apart from private or public funds and no time to have a part time job during their internship.

Unanimously, all of the companies agree or strongly agree that **public funding** should be provided for postgraduate mobility as a way to cope with the travel & living expenses. It is clear that the companies consider that public funding is an important factor in enhancing total mobility and that it is the responsibility of one of public institutions to support student's mobility.

However, public funds shouldn't be the only financial support, since a large majority also believe that **private funding** should be provided for post-graduate mobility, with 30% of companies in strong agreement with this and a further 60% also agreeing.

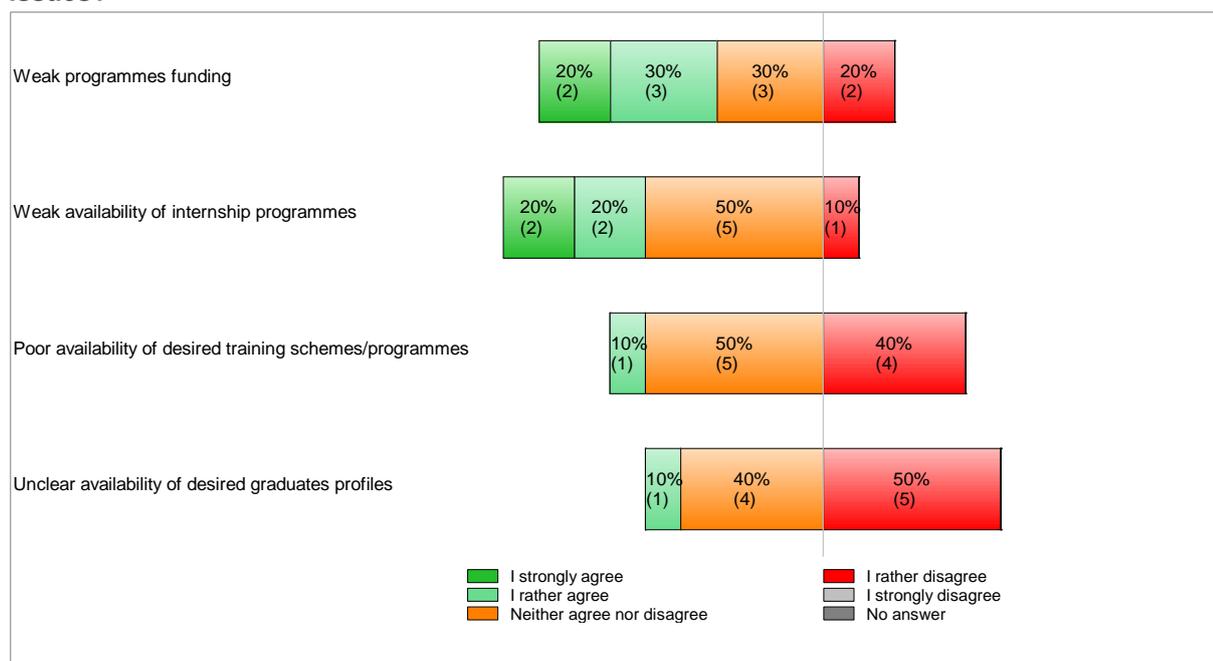
¹³ 2010, Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, "Student Mobility : between myth and reality", Laura Endrizzi

We can consider 4 different kinds of private funding:

- Companies' satisfaction: our sample, made up of SME, is not always able to satisfy their students, despite the fact that, since January 2010 French law requires companies to provide a minimum satisfaction in the internships of a duration of more than two months. This has led some companies to have higher requirements. As a result, some companies ask for an internship with a maximum duration of two months or a minimum duration of six months in order to have return on their investment.
- Private sector funding for excellence, like the Copernicus bursary (private and public funding), is quite rare. Another probable reason for the 10% who does not agree might be because companies are aware that private funding programmes are difficult to gain and have very specific criteria to be met.
- Bank loans: companies are not really aware of or concerned by proposed systems and programmes in each country of origin.
- Family support: According to "Eurosurvey 2009 statistics"¹⁴, in most countries, students from highly educated backgrounds are more likely to have experienced a study-related stay abroad. In some countries, mobility is more than three times higher for students from highly educated backgrounds than for students from lowly educated families. We have found the answers from our sample to be controversial.

40% believe that **graduate administrative payment** procedures should be simplified. 50% are unsure and 10% disagree. The most likely reason for a somewhat negative or unclear answer is because often companies participating in the mobility programmes would not be aware of the graduate administrative payment procedures that are in place as they do not directly affect them.

Do you think that higher education institutions create a barrier to total mobility regarding the following issues?



The opinion on this question is quite diverse and unclear. When answering this question 50% of companies answers strongly agree or agree that **weak programme funding** creates a barrier to total-mobility and 30% are unsure. 20% disagree with this statement. Regarding this 20% some companies mention the fact that the evolution of programme funding is clearly positive and compared to 30 years ago the situation is more favourable.

For the next statement 50% are unsure regarding **poor availability of internship programmes** thus creating a barrier to mobility. 40% think that there is a poor availability of internship programs. Actually companies and SME know more about studying mobility programmes than internship mobility programs. This is linked to the fact that from an historical point of view, mobility first appears at academic level.

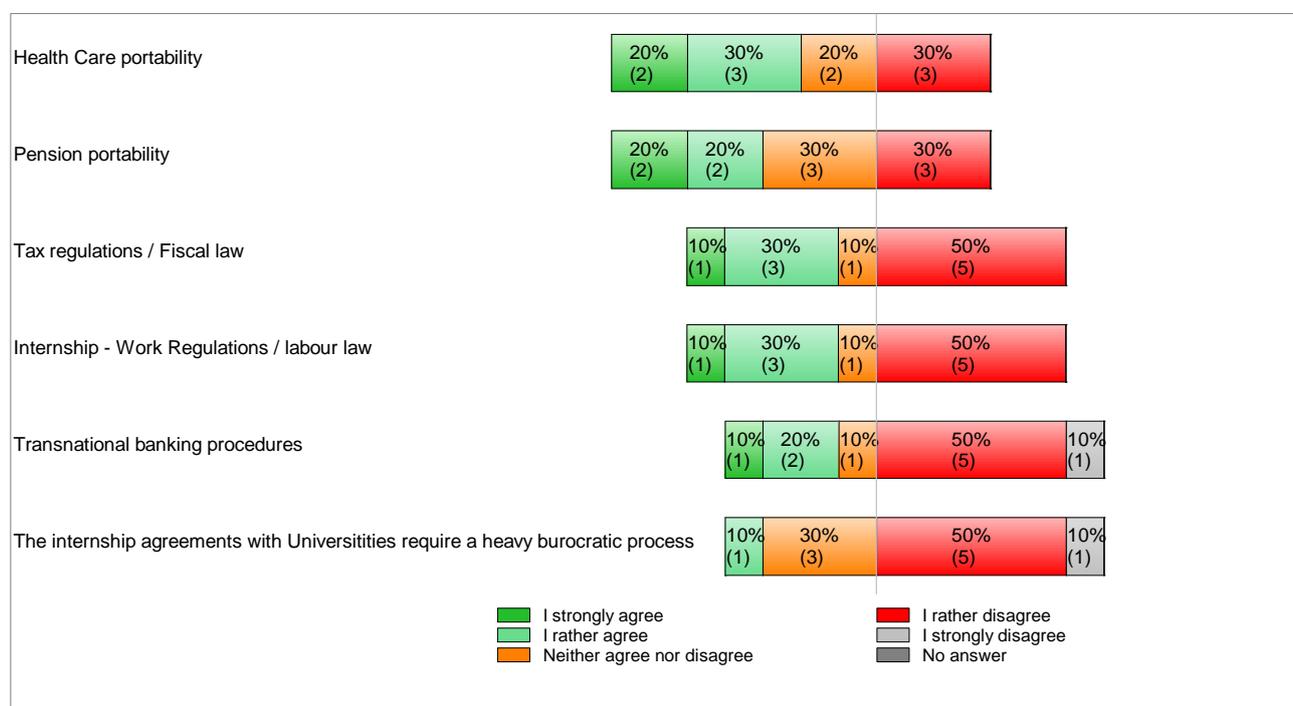
¹⁴ 23)2009, Erstudent
 "The Bologna Process in HigherEducation in Europe- Key indicators on the social dimension and mobility"

50% of the companies who filled out the questionnaire are also unsure about **poor availability of desired training schemes** creating a barrier to mobility. But 40% disagree with the fact that there is **poor availability of desired training schemes**. This shows that generally the companies believe that the training schemes that are in place are desirable and accessible.

The same position regarding **unclear availability of desired graduates** is observed. 50% disagree with the fact that there is an unclear availability of desired graduates. Only 10% mention it as a barrier to mobility. But considering those who volunteered an opinion it appears that generally the companies we asked believe that the information concerning their desired graduate profiles has been quite clearly communicated and only a small minority believes that some improvements still remain to be made.

We have to be careful with the interpretation of these two final questions, since 50% and 40% neither agree neither disagree. We may not be able to strongly rely on these responses. It is also possible that companies may not actually know the responses to these questions as they mostly affect the sending institutions and not the companies themselves.

Do you think that the following legal and administrative issues are a strong barrier to post-graduate mobility?



In this range of questions the responses are quite diverse most of the time. As a matter of result we hardly can propose clear solutions. Again it is possible that some of the SME are not always aware of what factors create barriers to mobility as they do not directly deal with the applications and the following of these programmes.

50% of the companies asked strongly agreed and agree that **health care portability** was a barrier to post-graduate mobility. 20% are unclear and the remaining 30% disagree with this. When interviewing companies; it appears that when students get ill, even European citizens in possession of the European health card, they have to advance the funds and get reimbursed, unless they go to a hospital which is not the normal procedure in France when someone is ill.

Knowing that funding issues appear to be the most important barrier to mobility then we can consider them to be improved in the future. Regarding the 30% who disagree we can imagine that they are referring to European students for whom the system is functioning quite well.

The answer is almost the same for **pension portability** even if it concerns only students who get more satisfaction out of their placement than is required by French government. 40% strongly agreed and agree that pension portability is a barrier to non-European citizens, since it depends only on eventual bilateral agreements between governments.

These responses seem to suggest that health care and pensions can have an effect on mobility according to the nationality of the student. It would have been interesting in this questionnaire to compare the results for both cases European and non-European citizens.

Regarding tax regulations and fiscal law companies answers are quite divided. 50% disagree with the fact that tax regulations and fiscal law are strong barriers to mobility. This is mainly because students rarely pay taxes in France because of their low incomes and because internships in France lasting longer than six months are not subjected to taxation. But 40% agree or strongly agree which makes this interpretation quite unclear.

The response is exactly the same for **work regulations and labour law**. For instance, the maximum number of hours an intern works each week depends on the sector of activity but the average is 35 hours. To date this hasn't been identified, by students and graduates, as a problem.

60% of companies answers disagree that **trans-national banking procedures** are a barrier to mobility, 30% agree. Concerning European students banking processes are quite simple and manageable. Regarding non-European citizens it is better and much less expensive for them to open an account in France, especially if the internship is of a longer duration.

60% of companies don't agree that internships where universities require a **heavy bureaucratic process** are a barrier to mobility. 30% are unsure and only 10% agree. We can consider this as the result of the Bologna process.

General observation from the companies'/SME's point of view

We can say that the most important factors when welcoming a student for an internship are the Academic Profile and general skills.

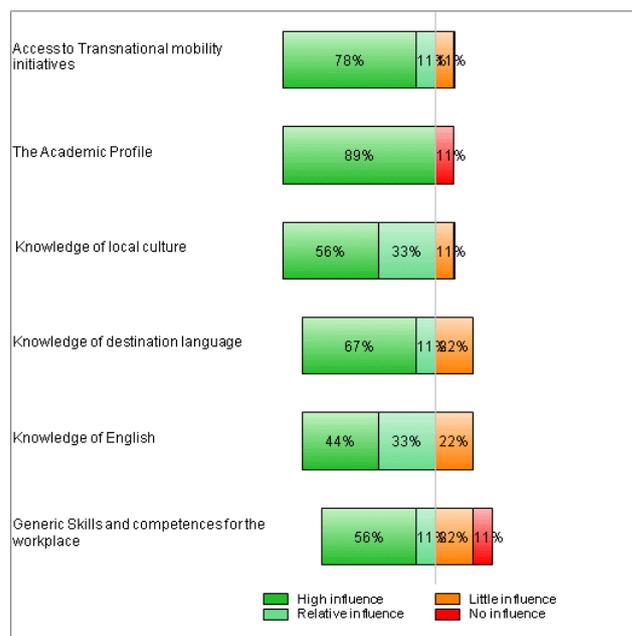
Concerning financial issues, companies consider that public and private funding are the main drivers to cope with living and travel costs.

Regarding training, legal & administrative issues, the answers are quite diverse with a high level of "neither agree nor disagree" answers which might show:

- **SME do not deal with these issues**
- **The nationality of the incoming/outgoing students may affect the answer. (EU citizen or non-EU citizen)**

From Higher Education Institutions point of view

When sending graduates, what is the influence of each post graduate profile item regarding mobility?



If we first look at the opinion of the institutions when sending graduates on mobility placements we can see that the two most important factors influencing mobility are the **access to trans-national mobility initiatives** and the **academic profile**.

Access to mobility initiatives appears to have a considerable influence on mobility with 78% of Universities believing that it has a high influence and 11% believing that it has a relative influence. It is important to highlight the fact that there is a lack of information concerning mobility opportunities that undermines the access to transnational mobility and this problem affects, in particular, HEI when sending and outgoing students¹⁵.

Actually, access to trans-national mobility initiatives seems relevant for students from low income backgrounds, who are underrepresented in mobility schemes. Even if universities believe that access to transnational mobility initiatives is a driver to promote student mobility, we know that non-organized mobility represents more than 2/3 of students on mobility programmes. **The access to trans-national mobility initiatives** has to be improved in order to make mobility more accessible for all students. Regions and local authorities have to continue to improve their involvement in these initiatives.

When considering the **academic profile** it is possible to see that 89% believe that the academic profile is very influential on mobility. However, the only 11% believe that it has no importance at all. Indeed, the subject studied at university has a clear impact on student mobility. If we take a look at the report given by the Eurodysses Programme, ERASMUS placement¹⁶ or ERASMUS for young entrepreneurs¹⁷, we can see that this may be a relevant factor. It is clear that graduates who studied business and administration, law, or tourism are the most mobile (totalling 51% of all participants); whereas graduates who studied computer sciences or education are not very mobile.

Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the existence of Inter-University Cooperation Programmes (ICP) that could have an impact on the Academic Profile. A study on the obstacles to student mobility published in 2007 by The National Union of Students in Europe¹⁸ shows that students from study fields with fewer cooperation

¹⁵ According to the French national agency in charge of the LLL programme, every year all the grants are not allocated by universities to students

¹⁶ 2009, Agence Europe-Education-Formation France, « *Données statistiques ERASMUS placement* »

¹⁷ -*Communiqué de Presse téléchargé sur le site officiel du programme ERASMUS for Young Entrepreneurs* - www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu

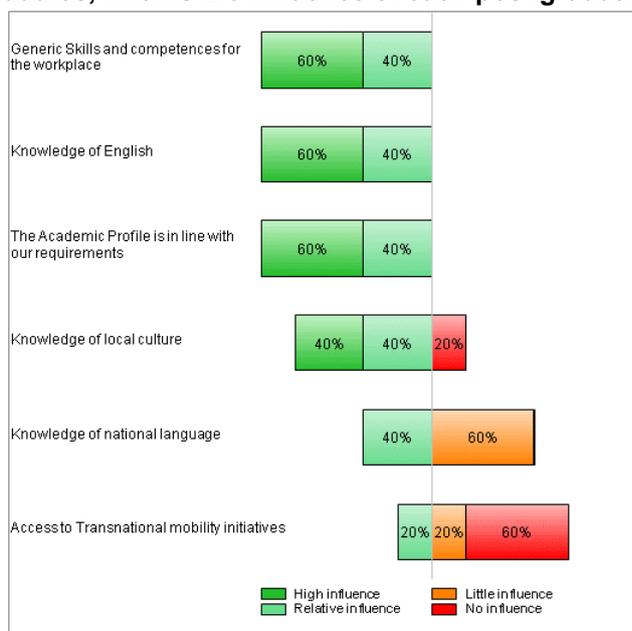
¹⁸ 2010, ESU, « *Bologna at the finish line: An Account of Ten years of European Higher Education Reform* » Kristine Bak Nielsen, Daniela Bartolo, Christian Hemmestad Bjerke...

programmes are faced with more challenges concerning available mobility grants, cooperating institutions, information or recognition.

If we now take a look at the next factor listed in the table above, we can see that 56% of the sending universities believe that the knowledge of the destination culture of country has a high influence on graduate mobility. Actually universities answers consider **knowledge of the destination language** is more important (67% high influence) than **the knowledge of local culture** (56% high influence). This seems logical because except for Scandinavian countries and other countries with a less popular native language, courses will be in the national language. This is the reason why 44% believe that **knowledge of English** is important. Generally speaking institutions attach importance to the knowledge of languages when sending students abroad. It could be assumed that if the student has a good level of the destination language they will be more confident and be equipped for studies or placement.

For the last factor that we consider that there is a bit of disagreement between the institutions concerning **generic skills and competences for the workplace**. 56% believe that these generic skills have a high importance, 11% a moderate influence whilst 33% believe that they have little or no importance regarding mobility. This leads us to believe that while having generic skills would be useful it is probable that the graduate would develop these skills during a work placement.

When receiving graduates, what is the influence of each post graduate profile item regarding mobility?



Now looking at universities answers, when receiving students, it is important to notice first of all that the top three factors, all having the exact same results, are the **generic skills and competences for the workplace, knowledge of English and an Academic Profile in line with the universities requirements**; 60% believe that these are highly important and the remaining 40% believe that they are moderately important.

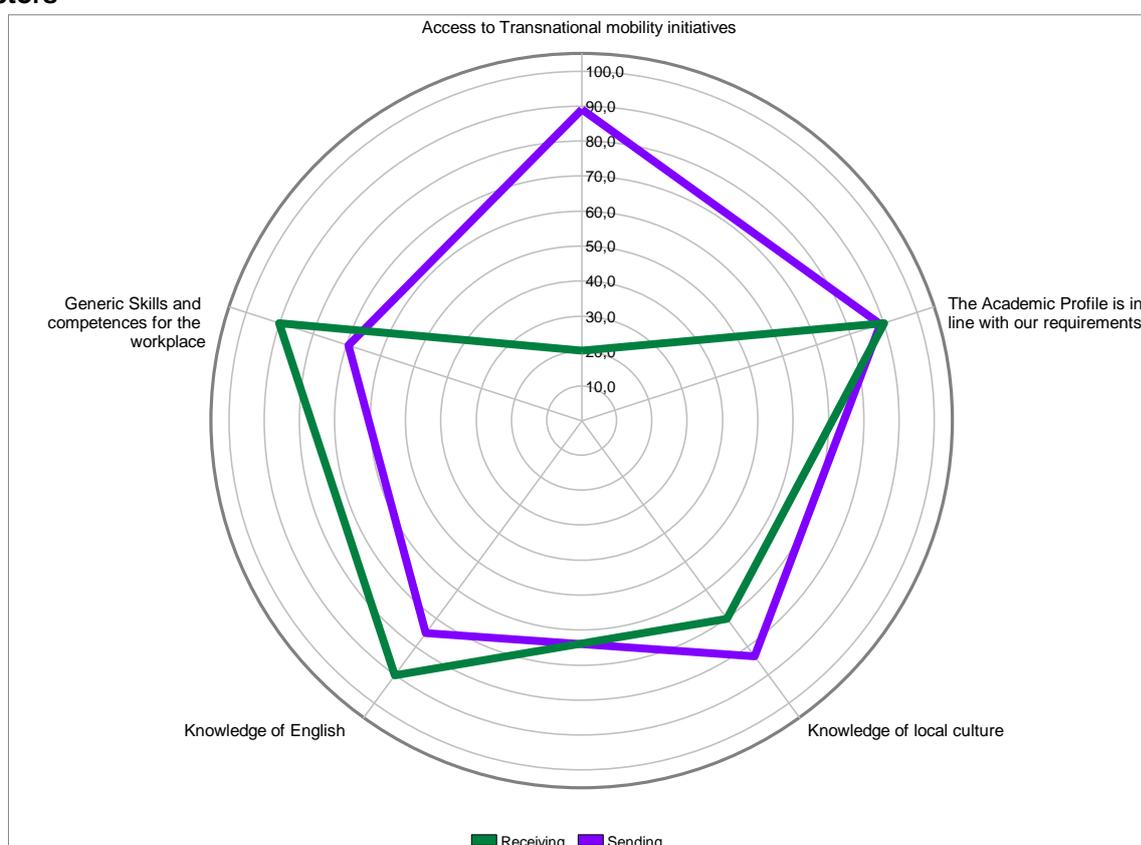
Firstly this shows that when a University receives graduates who wish to do placements they find it easier to find placements for the graduate if he/she already has the generic skills required for the work place. Secondly it shows us that the academic profile is an affecting factor when receiving students. For each student a program is defined before that student's arrival (learning agreement) according to the training offer of the receiving organisation. So if we want to improve students' recognition and accreditation, then the academic profile of the incoming student must be in line with the universities' requirements. Thirdly, it means that **English** is considered a real alternative for non-French speakers.

40% of HEI answers believe that **knowledge of local culture** is highly important, with the dissenting 20% believing that it has no importance at all. This shows us that it is helpful to have knowledge of the local culture to fit in well in the country and workplace and also to have a successful placement but it is not a major barrier.

It is surprising to note that 60% of the universities' answers believe that **knowledge of the national language** has little influence when receiving students. No one believes that knowledge of the local language is highly important. The knowledge of English appears to be more important. If universities would decide to welcome only foreign students with good French skill, then France would be a restricted destination. So the reason for this is probably related to fact that foreign students have easy access to French language courses at University (e.g. summer courses etc.) before and during their studies and that more and more courses are taught in English. Despite this data in the Eurostudent survey suggests that there is a close link between language proficiency and student mobility.¹⁹

Finally, 80% of the Universities believe that access to trans-national initiatives has little or no importance for them concerning mobility. This might be because most of transnational mobility initiatives are accessible for outgoing students. Once they are abroad students have little access to mobility initiatives expect for some regions in France who might support mobility (e.g. Bourse Explora)

Comparison between sending and receiving institutions opinions on the influence of the following factors



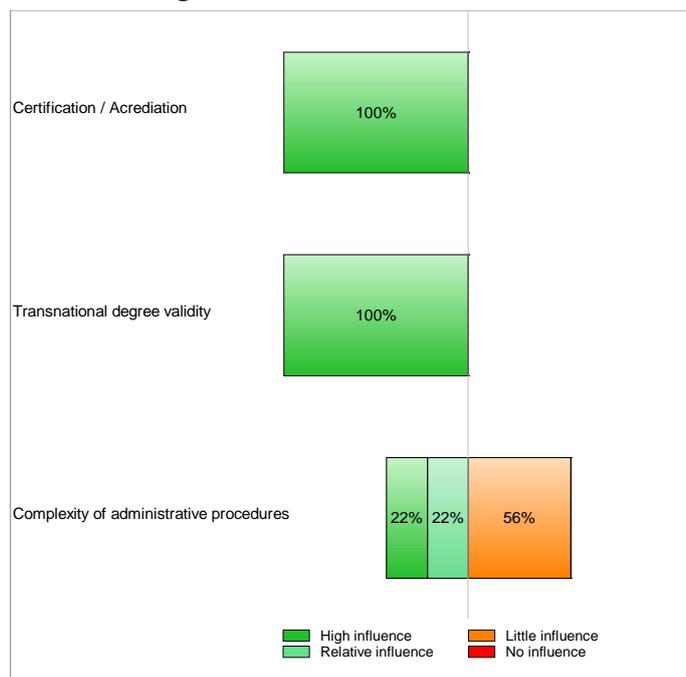
When we compare the answer provided by French Universities when sending and receiving foreign students we can see that the most influential and important factors do not always correspond: for the sending universities access to trans-national mobility initiatives is one of the most important factor; however it is the least important factor for when receiving graduates & postgraduates.

Therefore, HEI when sending or receiving agree that the academic profile is an important factor.

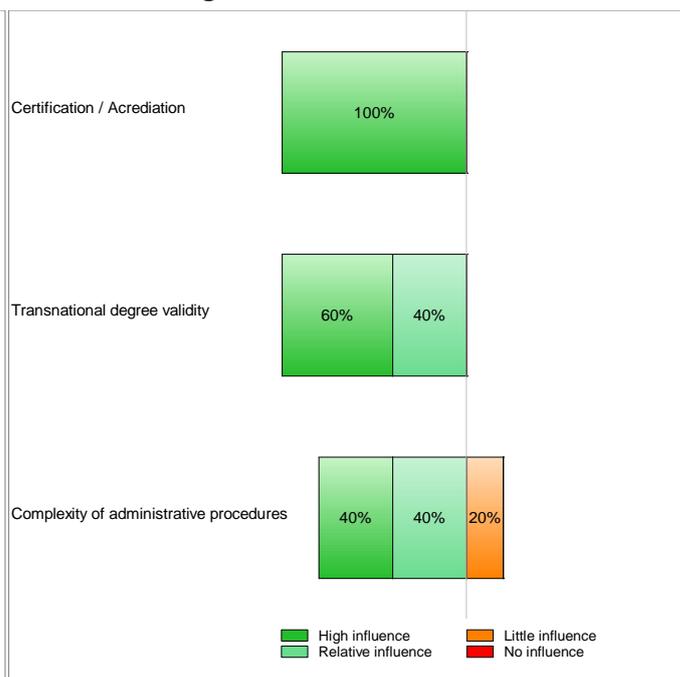
¹⁹ 2007, The National Unions of Students in Europe - "Promoting mobility a study on the obstacles to student mobility"

When sending or receiving graduates, do you think that the qualification recognition items identified are determining for mobility?

When sending



When Receiving



HEI are unanimous in their belief that the **certification/accreditation and the trans-national degree validity** are determining factors on mobility when sending and receiving students.

But the lack of recognition remains even in the European Higher Educational Area. According to an Erasmus Student Network Report²⁰ only 66% of the ERASMUS students receive full recognition of their studies abroad. The problem of recognition persists in spite of the introduction of the European Credit Transfer System and the introduction of the Three Cycle degree structure. But several countries implement ECTS without linking properly to cycle description and this must be improved. This recognition is even less apparent if we consider “working mobility” in a non-ERASMUS scheme, since there are no training institutions abroad to check that students assimilated specific skills/credits.

²⁰ 2009, Erasmus Students Network
 « PRIME: Problems of recognition in making Erasmus », Madara Apsalone, Tomas Bort, Stefan Fiedrich...

When sending graduates, do you think that funding issues are determining for mobility?



When sending graduates abroad, universities consider that the most important factor is **public funding**. Unanimously, 100% of the institutions believe that this highly influences student mobility.

Mobility flows are heavily dependent on the financial support assistance in place for students in the sending and receiving institutions. The study published by ESU in 2010 shows that portability of grants and loans are the only concrete ministerial commitment in the field of financing mobility and the answers given by the Universities demonstrates that this is true.

The second biggest factor is **private funding** with 80% believing that it is highly influential. The point is that two out of three mobile students have to self-finance their mobility and even those who are able to obtain a grant will have to finance part of the costs. So private funding still has a high influence on mobility.

Another important factor is the financing of student mobility **living expenses**. All of the universities asked believe that this has at least some influence with 56% of the sending institutions believing that it is highly important and 44% believing that it is relatively important. This is related to the previous two responses. If students are not funded they will need to work out how to cope with the living expenses of the destination country.

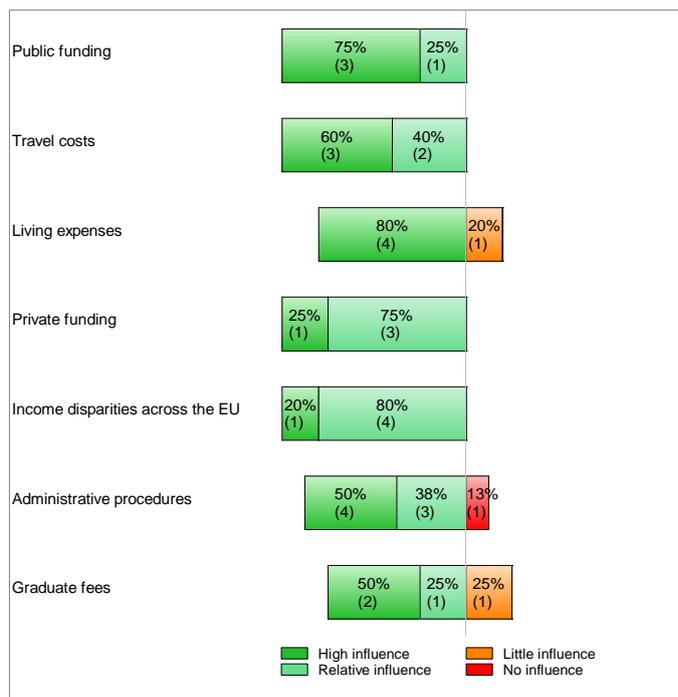
The majority of the sending institutions believe that the **income disparity across the EU** has a relative influence on mobility. It might be due to the fact that at a European level French incomes are quite average. The 11% who answered that it has a high influence might refer to other regions of origin like North Africa for instance.

Concerning **travel costs** answers are far from unanimous. 44% believe that these costs are highly influential on mobility while an equal 44% believe that it has no influence.

Administrative procedures can have a high influence on mobility according to 50% of sending institutions. Another 38% believe that administrative procedures are relatively influential with the remaining 13% believing that they have no influence. This leads us to believe that there needs to be sufficient help in place and uncomplicated procedures to help foreign students participate in mobility programmes.

When we look at **graduate fees**, it would appear that this is one of the factors the institutions feel has little or no effect on student mobility, with 80% of them of that opinion. This might be due to the fact that students from the EHEA don't have to pay for tuitions on the welcoming country if they are registered in another university country.

When receiving graduates, do you think that funding issues are determining for mobility?



When receiving students HEI have slightly different priorities.

Living expenses are considered to be the most important with 80% believing that this is highly influential on mobility but 20% believing that it has little influence.

Also there is a little bit less importance placed **on public funding** when receiving. Instead of 100% believing that it is highly influential 75% believe that it is and the other 25% believe that it is relatively important. The possible reason for this slightly less positive response is probably because funding is normally allocated by the sending institution or country and is therefore not always a consideration of the receiving institution.

The next important factor seems to be **travel costs**, which ranked quite lowly on the scale of the Universities when receiving. For the receiving institutions 60% believe that it is highly influential on mobility and 40% believe that it is moderately influential. This is easily understandable when postgraduate students come from far away (e.g. Asia, America, Africa) but regarding European students this won't be a barrier.

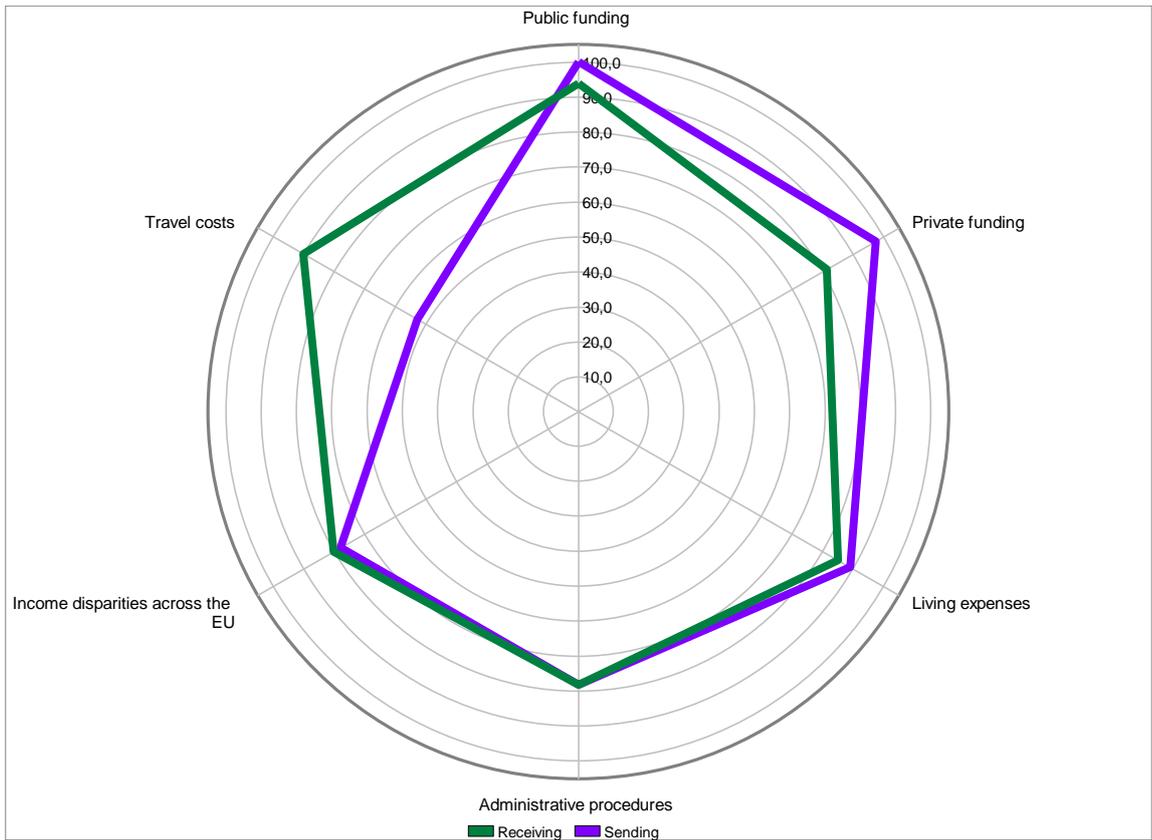
Private funding has less importance for HEI when receiving. In fact, the majority (75%) believe that it is only relatively influential on mobility. This is probably because private funding is almost exclusively reserved for students meeting highly specific criteria.

The **income disparity** is fairly similar to that of the sending institutions, with 80% believing that it is quite influential on mobility. We've seen with the companies' answers that if we consider all incoming nationalities in France we can say that the landscape is marked **by polarities**²¹. More than 44% of incoming students in France are from North Africa, then from Asia. The leaving cost of life on those regions is much lower.

Regarding **administrative procedure**, It is interesting to note that the when receiving universities have the same position as when sending. 88% believe that it has either a high or relative influence with only 13% believing that it has no influence at all.

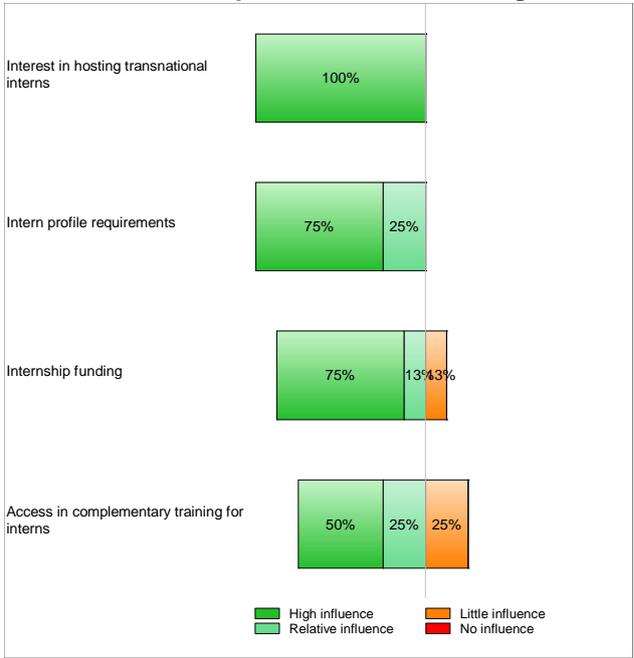
Lastly, **graduate fees** are given more influence in the eyes of universities when receiving with 75% believe that it has high or moderate influence and only 25% believing that it has little influence. But no one believes that fees have no influence on mobility.

²¹ 2010, Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, "Student Mobility : between myth and reality", Laura Endrizzi



Funding issues are a determining factor for mobility

When searching for national host companies, what is the degree of influence for the following issues?



When searching for the national host companies the opinion is unanimous even if most of universities don't organise work placements except for students that are registried to the university. During the interviews, this appears to be a major barrier since most of working mobility participants are spontaneous and not part of any existing program. This means students can only ask for the support of their own university which considerably reduces their chance to find a company.

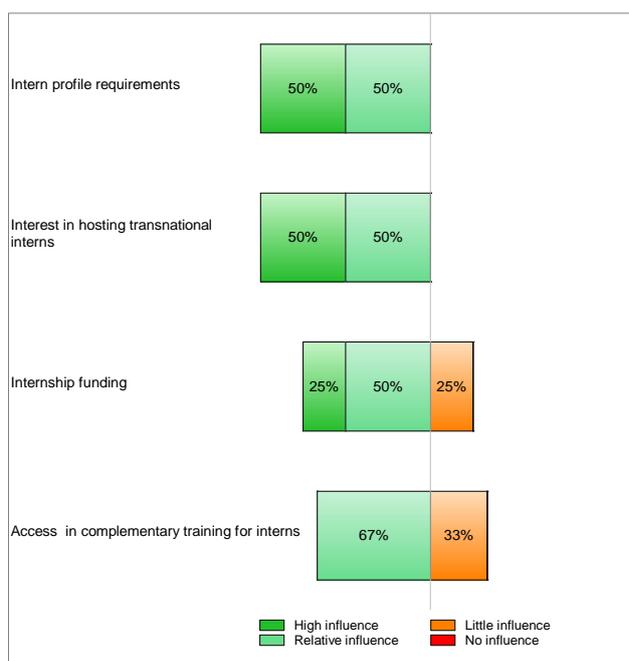
It is very clear that one of the criteria when looking for a national host is the supposed **interest of the company in hosting trans-national interns**.

Around 75% of the institutions believe that the **intern profile requirements** are highly influential and the remaining 25% believe that they are relatively influential when organising internship for foreign students. This factor is also considerable for national students. This is an important factor as placements, and therefore the programme’s viability, are dependent on being able to find students/graduates who meet the intern profile requirements.

In addition, 75% of universities when seeking national host companies for foreign students believe that **internship funding** is highly influential. It is clear that this is an important factor because, in some cases, if the foreign students do not receive enough public funding then private funding will allow them to cope with mobility costs.

Lastly, 50% of those searching for national host companies believe that **access to complementary training for interns** is highly influential on graduate mobility while the other 50% believe that there is relative or little influence. It is possible that the reason for this unclear response is that a lot of participants may already possess the skills and knowledge needed for the placement and for them the training may not be very important; however for others the training may be vitally important. This response is also dependant on the sector of work as in some sectors the work does not vary much between countries and in other sectors the work can vary greatly from company to company.

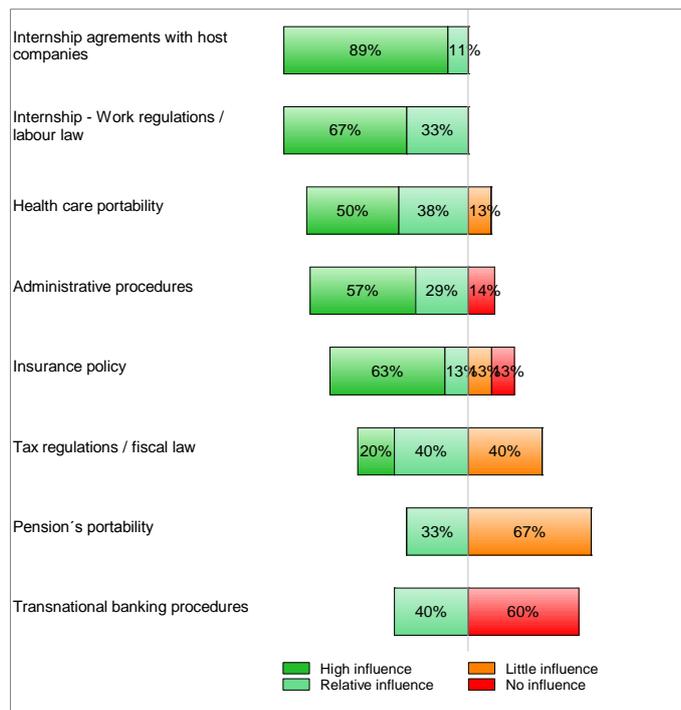
When searching for host companies (abroad) for internship placements, what is the degree of influence for the following issues?



When a HEI is searching for foreign host companies the responses are slightly less affirmative. **Intern profile requirements** and **interest in hosting trans-national interns** gather 50% of Universities’ opinions with a high influence. When other 50% believe that this has a relative influence. **For internship funding** the majority believe that it has relative influence with 25% believing that it has a high influence and 25% believing that it has little influence.

Finally, for **access to complementary training** for interns 67% believe that there is relative influence and the remaining 33% believe that there is little influence. Overall these results are very similar to those for the sending institutions; the responses are just a little less definitive.

When sending graduates, do you think that the legal, fiscal and administrative issues have an impact on post-graduates?



HEI when sending believe that **internship agreements** with host companies are very important with 89% believing that they are highly influential and 11% believing that they are relatively influential. It is essential that all parties involved are fully aware of their own responsibilities and those of the other parties.

Work regulations and labour laws are seen as being quite important when sending students abroad with 67% HEI believing that they are highly influential on mobility and 33% believing that they are relatively important. This is also important because the sending institutions need to be aware of and need to inform interns of what is expected of them and what is acceptable in the workplace country.

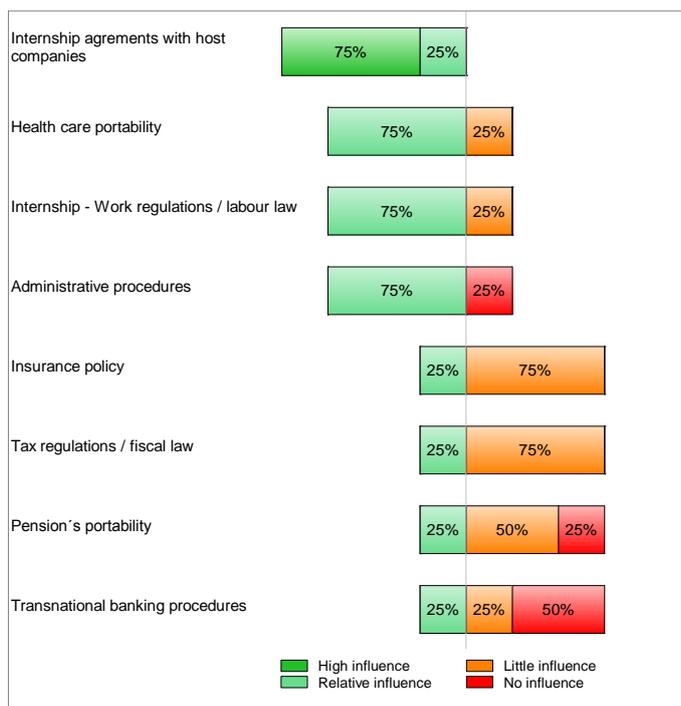
Health care portability is seen as a highly influential factor on mobility by 50% of the sending institutions, relatively influential by 38% and not very influential by 13%. It is important that people are aware of the health care system in the destination country but also are able to access health care with little more difficulty that they would encounter in their home country.

Administrative procedures can be highly influential to mobility according to 57% of the sending institutions, 29% agree with this in part but say that it is merely relatively influential; however 14% think that they have no influence at all.

Around 76% of HEI when sending students believe that the **insurance policy** is either highly or relatively influential on graduate mobility. With the rest believing that it has little or no importance. It is important for all parties involved that they are covered for any accidents or problems that may arise that could be of significant detriment to the student/graduate, HEI or the hosting company. 60% believe that tax regulations are important, either highly or relatively.

Unsurprisingly 67% of the HEI when sending believe that **pension portability** is not very influential on mobility. This is most likely because most mobile students/ graduates have not yet started their careers and are not thinking of their pension and also because the mobility period is not permanently or of a considerable duration. 60% of the institutions believe that trans-national banking procedures have no effect on graduate mobility.

When receiving graduates, do you think that the legal, fiscal and administrative issues have an impact on post-graduates?



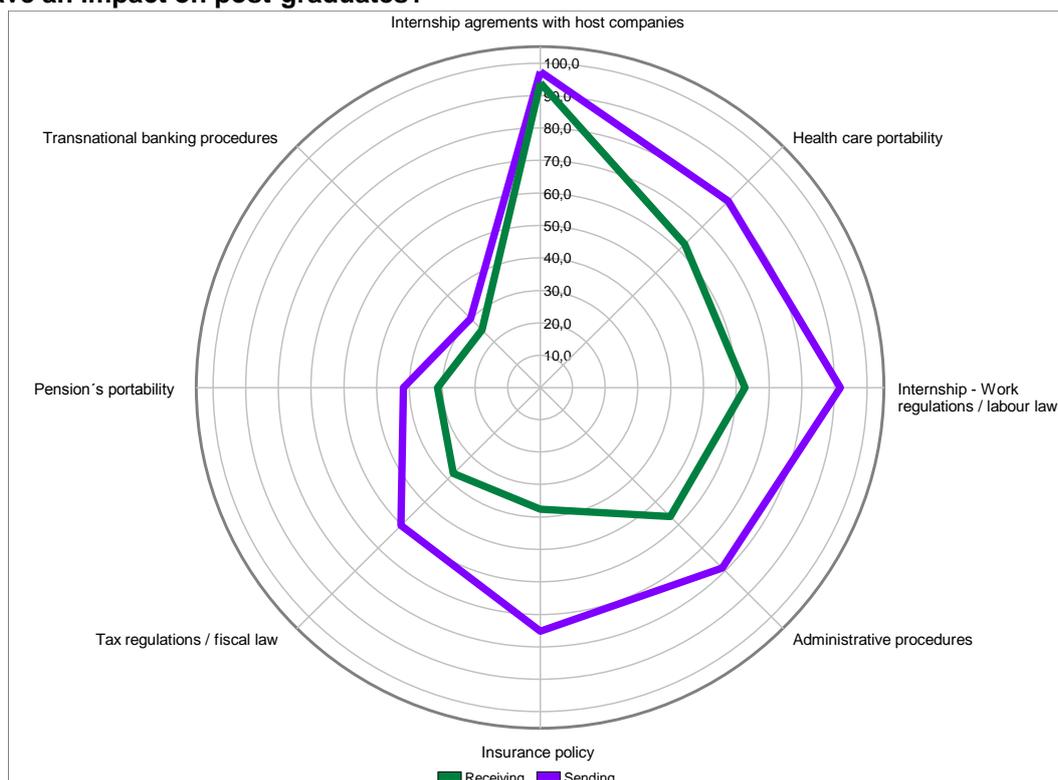
The opinions of the HEI when receiving students are mostly the same with only a few noteworthy differences. Again the most important legal, fiscal or administrative issue is that of **internship agreements** with the host companies. However a fewer 75% believe that it is highly influential and 25% believe that it is relatively influential.

Next, **health care portability** is seen as being more important for the HEI when receiving with 75% believing that it is relatively important and 25% saying that it is little importance. The work regulations and labour law concerning the interns is seen as being relatively influential on mobility by 75% of the receiving institutions with 25% believing that it is not very important.

Administrative procedures are equally important for HEI when receiving & sending with 75% believing that they have relative influence.

It is interesting to note that HEI when receiving do not feel that the insurance policy has much influence, with 75% believing that it has little influence and only 25% believing that it has relative influence. HEI when receiving also attach the same level of importance to tax regulations and fiscal law. Like HEI when sending the HEI when receiving do not believe that the pension portability is influential on mobility. 25% believe that it has no importance, 50% believe that it only has a little importance and the remaining 25% believe that it has relative importance. The opinion on trans-national banking procedures is very similar to that of the sending institutions. 50% believe that it has no influence, 25% believe that it has little influence and 25% believe that it has relative influence.

When sending or receiving graduates, do you think that the legal, fiscal and administrative issues have an impact on post-graduates?



As we can see from this diagram, overall, the HEI when sending, seem to notices barriers to mobility much easier than when receiving.

This is most likely because the sending institutions will be able to quickly recognise difficulties that students/graduates will face; whereas the receiving companies, who are used to their local administrative systems and laws, may not be as able to spot these difficulties. This diagram illustrates this well because we can see that both lines correspond almost exactly. The main difference being that the sending institutions' line is much larger, showing us that the impact these issues have is larger in their opinion.

General observation from the Higher Institutions' point of view

HEI share the same position as SME, regarding the influence of academic profiles.

When sending graduates abroad. They also believe that access to transnational mobility initiatives is highly influential.

When receiving students the knowledge of French does not appear to be a major barrier.

When sending and receiving students, the institutions are unanimous in their belief that the certification/accreditation and the trans-national degree validity are determining factors on mobility.

When sending and receiving students, HEI share companies/SME's point of view; public & private funding are the main drivers to cope with living & travel costs.

Most HEI are not responsible for searching companies for international students

Intern profile requirement & interest in hosting transnational interns are highly influential factors when searching for a company abroad and locally.

Internship agreement has a high impact on students' mobility and it still need to be improved.

Section 4 – Identifying drivers for mobility in the future

We are far from reaching the aims of the Bologna Process, i.e. the goal of reaching 20% mobility in 2020. Sections 2 & 3 helped us to understand the reasons for this long process mainly with the French trends as reference. Now this section aims to define recommendations in order to increase and improve postgraduate students' mobility.

Allowing the introduction of quantitative data on mobility

The European commission recognises the need to improve the availability of data on mobility across all countries participating in the Bologna Process. We therefore ask the European Commission (Eurostat), in conjunction with other official organisations in charge of collecting statistics, to develop comparable and reliable indicators and data to measure progress towards the overall objective for student mobility in all Bologna countries.

We propose:

- An international dialogue between data collection bodies
- A definition of the methodology of common counting so as to compare the data
- An inventory of systems, notably those concerning students participating in an internship in all Bologna countries

Lowering financial barriers

Encourage public & private bodies to support mobility

Increasing public funds available for postgraduate mobility students

It's the EU that must organise the general framework of free movement of people and workers. However, it falls to the state to apply the Community's regulations.

- Predict that more funds will be available for student mobility between 2013-2017
- Encourage regions to participate more and more in financing mobility

Increasing private funds available for mobility

- Spread the obligation for satisfaction of national and foreign interns by proposing a reduction of fees if an enterprise welcomes a European intern.
- Study companies who get the most value from welcoming foreign students on a placement.
- Increase the number of companies who offer internships to foreign students
- Increase the OSEO budget designated to student mobility loans
- Extend this system to all banks in granting them public guarantees (these guarantees could be granted to the European Investment Bank).

Reducing the living costs abroad

The flow of mobility depends on the available financial support. Especially for destinations with higher living costs such as the Scandinavian countries or even the UK (the preferred destination for French students). It is even more important for students who come from modest backgrounds when we recall that organised mobility rarely provides support for fees acquired and that spontaneous mobility students (around 2/3 of mobile students) are funded by their own money or private funding.

The essence of living costs is made up of accommodation and transport costs. There are two clear ways to act on this:

- Increase the financial capacity of mobility students
- Propose a preferential fees on railway & airway tickets, negotiated with the recipient of the concerned services.

Helping with access to and reducing the cost of accommodation

The role of PRES, in collaboration with CROUS, could be to guarantee places in university residences to students who have come to take part in an organised or non-organised internship. For example, in Aix Marseille University were all foreign students were supported thanks to co-financing from the Région PACA. Rennes University made “welcoming monitors” available thanks to a grant from member establishments in the region. We could imagine the introduction of mobility cheques allowing them to benefit from these services

Private residences should not be overlooked. This means to offer rental guarantees to owners or private tenants²².

Even if the accommodation offer proposed by the host universities is sometimes lacking, it is non-existent if the students complete their placement abroad without being linked to any university. Also, for the foreign students doing an internship we propose that they benefit from the same advantages as students studying abroad. They could be linked to a local university and benefit from a “membership card” giving them access to the same advantages as registered students (access to accommodation, university restaurants etc.)

We recommend introducing a “mobility card” allowing students to benefit from reductions and other advantages, notably in youth hostels.

We also recommend constructing accommodation designated to incoming foreign students (e.g. Cité internationale de Paris).

Reducing Transport costs

- Enlarge the range of public support for mobility programmes by proposing alternatives such as:
 - o The introduction of mobility cheques, similar to restaurant cheques, for the students preparing for departure
 - o The introduction of a mobility card on the same principal as a “youth card” with financial support for concerned (transport or accommodation) beneficiary systems
- Spread the availability of student mobility loans by increasing the current budget designated to finance the education of all students without mobility appearing like a priority.
- Guarantee that a part of these funds will be allocated to mobility projects.
- Organise exchange grants allowing students from one university to exchange places with another from another university, aiding accommodation availability etc.
- The multiplication of support is such that it is difficult, today, to see clearly and we recommend, for the period 2013 2017, more funds be made available for students and educational staff in mobility and to entrust their management to the national and, then, regional levels.

Centralising the information concerning systems aiding organised mobility and simplify the administrative procedures

- Financial issues were clearly mentioned as the major barrier according HEI & Universities so we recommend than more funds be made available for students and educational staff in mobility
- The multiplication of support is such that it is difficult, today, to see clearly. We recommend to entrust the following procedures to bodies at the national and regional levels recognized by a unique certification (EURAXESS). The financial tool Aquimob²³, a system put in place by the Bordeaux PRES and the Aquitaine region, allow student to apply for grants at European, national & regional levels is. This is a good practice that we suggest as an example.

²² The Aquitaine Region has put in place a review committee to complete an inventory of needs so as to put in place rental guarantees for the public and private sector

²³ www.aquimob.fr/

- It seems essential to harmonise the student intern status abroad (in Europe) regarding social security, taxes, pension, and the right to work
- Create a service for postgraduate students that is as accessible on the European level as Euraxess
- Support students who undertake in a sending mobility project
- Create an online portal, in every country in the EU, like Campus France with tools for researching education (ONISEP), internships, visa regulations, jobs, accommodation, language classes, and other questions about student life
- Put in place a one stop service for newly arriving students and for outgoing students
- Lift the requirement of a tri-party convention should the foreign internships and the host countries not recognise the type of convention, which is the case in various international organisations.

Helping postgraduates find an internship abroad

Over the course of in-depth interviews brought by the universities it appears that finding an internship abroad is a known difficulty for a number of students. There are several ways to overcome this:

- Give companies fiscal benefits for welcoming foreign students (excuse them from employers' fees, if they wish to compensate their interns beyond the necessary level)
- Allow companies that welcome foreign students to partake in a regional co-financing in the frame of competence attractiveness policies (such as volunteering in a company which allows companies to send one of their employees abroad to develop a subsidiary).
- Promote partner companies/universities through existing networks; PRES etc.
- Support intermediary systems whose responsibility it is to welcome, place and follow international interns

Enhancing and promote mobility and notably its effects on employment

- Register incoming and outgoing mobility under a credit allocation system for universities revising the San Remo criteria, for example.
- Encourage mobility for teachers and other administrative personnel.
- Set up and promote alumni networks and also mobility networks using tools such as Facebook etc.

Encouraging learning the language of the host country before departure

- Allow outgoing students to take part in a language course to help them prepare for their departure (from a week to three months)
- Allow students to organise their language courses before their arrival (suggestion given by student associations, external providers (EGIDE) or even PRES)
- Create an exchange for welcoming students with those who have already carried out a placement abroad: airport welcome official, social integration leader etc.
- Promote the introduction of English courses for French students
- Award supplementary aids to students who wish to go to a country whose languages is less popular
- Create optional preparation modules for intercultural training ("Learn to be a foreigner")

Promoting Recognition and Certification

"Students travel but diplomas don't"; without ad hoc bilateral agreement the university only has to validate the training received to validate the diploma. More than 1/3 of students (organized or spontaneous) have their courses partially or even not at all recognized because of failed negotiations between the parties or reticence from the original university. (Fiedrich et al, 2009)

Even organised mobility is affected by this, since according to the Erasmus Student Network PRIME 2009, only 66% receive full recognition of their studies abroad. We suggest that:

- Universities should be prompted to introduce double diplomas, double courses etc. by constructing courses with a bilateral approach
- Universities should recognise credits obtained outside organised mobility
- Mobility should be made obligatory for master's students, as is the case in Sweden

- The systematisation of a “European Credit System for Vocational Education & Training- ECVET inspired by European Credits Transfer System-ECTS

Accessing rights/services in the host country

- To have a good understanding of the obligations and rights which prove to be a real headache for students who arrive abroad.
- Some universities have put in place a one stop service to welcome students. We propose to implement a widespread system of one stop services for mobility students.

Supporting students who need access to the social security system

Student mobility:

- Students who have lived away from home for more than a year (without returning home for weekends and holidays) are no longer covered by French system, they depend on their host country’s system
- If the student works he/she could partake in a local working hour regulation, which is defined by every country.
- When he/she returns to his/her country (holiday or work) he/she should request an EHIC card for the host country.
- The duration of the internship is limited to 6 months, renewals included unless they are taking part in a teaching course.

Intern mobility

- Help students who start an internship to easily understand their cover concerning social security
- Students who receive from their company a higher bonus than that predicted by the French social security should be covered by their home university. They are transferred to the welcoming company’s system. But in Europe, no homogenisation is predicted and some countries don’t require the company to support their interns with the same conditions
- When the bonus is higher than the level fixed by the social security so the student is no longer dependent on the university regarding social security without having the possibility to check the company’s contributions for the student at the same time. In the case of an accident this can prove to be problematic

Lowering language barriers after arriving in the destination country

- Allow students coming to do a placement to benefit from the same access to language courses as students coming to study

Helping integrate students on internship programmes

The lack of motivation appears in some cases to be a barrier to mobility. It would be interesting to reflect more on this. The fear of the unknown probably constitutes one of the factors of mobility. Generally, students on study programmes are linked by the same sociocultural activities allowing them to break their isolation and become more integrated. This is not the case for students on internship programmes. As seen by the in-depth interviews carried out in this case study, isolation of students on internship programmes can constitute a barrier. We ask that students doing an internship abroad be linked to a university and benefit from a “membership card” allowing them to access the same services as students studying abroad.

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Ideas and Good Practices

Incoming Mobility & Existing Initiatives in France

Political “openness” is important in order to attract foreign students and workers. A country can demonstrate this in a number of ways: by the contact it has with other countries (via exchanges / sending its own students and workers abroad etc.), the way the country welcomes foreigners, institutions belonging to international networks, and the existence of international relations offices.

The PRES - Pôle de Recherche et d’Enseignement Supérieur

In France, institutions fulfil all or most of the above. In terms of support for foreign students, there are “**Pôle de Recherche et d’Enseignement Supérieur**”, **PRES** centres (multidisciplinary research and education organisations). Created in 2006, PRES centres bring together a number of independent Higher Education establishments in one place; these establishments can be universities, research organisations, private companies or associations. There are currently 21 PRES centres in France bringing together almost 60 universities as well as several other establishments (engineering schools, business schools, hospital centres, major research institutes, etc.).²⁴ Having such centres allows each area to have a unique structure, drawing in all education and research activities and facilitating the construction of international partnerships.

Thanks to these centres, foreign students and researchers who registered to a HEI are able to access and receive support from several different services allowing them to better integrate into French society before the arrival:

- Subscription & courses
- Accommodation
- Financial & fiscal systems

Once the students arrive information can be gathered on:

- French Foreign Language lessons
- Social & cultural life
- Work integration & activities

Several of the PRES centres are also more actively involved, for example, in 2010, 8 of the PRES centres offered the possibility of reserving and guaranteeing a place in the University halls of residence, 11 offered specific integration systems involving weekend outings, days devoted to discovering the region, cultural schedules, intercultural events and evening meetings for researchers or foreign students and 4 welcomed the international students at the airport.²⁵

Regarding those seeking some form of work experience in France, there are also websites which provide information on steps towards finding work in France not necessarily connected with PRES such as “Service-Public.fr” and organisations which help students find internships in business environments such as AFIJ and APEC.

CAMPUS FRANCE

Campus France was created by the minister for national education in 2003 and is in favour of encouraging and welcoming foreign students into the French Higher Education system. It is in favour of encouraging and welcoming foreign students into the French Higher Education system by promoting the French HEI abroad.

²⁴ 2011, Ministère de L’Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche,

²⁵ 2010, CampusFrance, “*L’accueil des étudiants étrangers : une enquête auprès des PRES*”

In 2003, a national council was created in France for the development of student international mobility; producing a platform for discussion on strategies to facilitate mobility and enhance the appeal of the French Higher Education system.

Established in the very heart of the PRES in France, Campus France benefits from having nearly 100 representatives in various different countries, thanks to the help French ambassadors and French cultural centres.

This initiative seems interesting, particularly, for its borderless stronghold.

EURAXESS

This case study brings to light a clear shortcoming regarding welcoming students on internships abroad if they are not registered to a French HEI. It is therefore an urgent necessity to help the welcome and introduction of these working students who are often isolated.

To satisfy oneself with financial support doesn't seem to be enough, a systematic and structured support improving the practical aspects of mobility must occur if we wish to make mobility a rule rather than the exception.

In this capacity, we have distinguished several devices which would be interesting to implement a pilot project to scale of our partnership, first.

In 2005, the Kasler foundation with the support of the European Commission introduced, in 38 countries, a foreign researchers' welcoming network, inspired by the FnAK in France in 1992. From 2004, this network constituted a centre for mobility in the European ERA-MORE network (Euraxess), stretching over 200 centres in 35 countries. It helps foreign researchers and their families answer all their questions related to their professional and personal life (recognition of qualifications, legal questions, visas, health, accommodation, taxes, daily life etc.)

In addition Euraxess centres created a unique internet portal at the European level to support researcher mobility.

We propose the introduction of a similar system designed for postgraduate students wishing to carry out an internship in Europe.

The financing of this system can be done thanks to the support of:

- French Ministry of Higher Education and Research
- French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
- The regions

The management can be conferred to:

- PRES
- Existing bodies working in this area, which must unite under the same guardianship and a quality seal

Conclusion

There are continuous efforts being made to improve and facilitate international mobility into and out of France.

However, without the availability of data on mobility across all the countries participating in the Bologna Process it is quite difficult to settle policies at a large scale.

This case study taught us that it is essential to facilitate the access to public and private funding. It was a recurrent point mentioned both by companies & HEI.

This case study also highlights the isolated situation of students when doing an internship abroad, within both situations: organized or spontaneous mobility. If we want to increase the figures of postgraduate students doing internship in the Bologna area then we have to offer those students an access to the same facilities both before their departure and once they arrived. An extra effort when looking for a hosting company has to be provided to students. This should be done regardless of whether the students are registered in a local university or not.

Regarding incoming and outgoing mobility the recent creation of PRES & the Campus France network has been an innovative idea as a matter of provided information for students who want to take part in a learning mobility programme abroad. We need to continue improving the current system by providing more centralised administration, synchronising academic calendars and increasing the general amount of support available.

The EURAXESS services accessible to researcher is also highly interesting as it allowed:

- **Concentration of the mobility** information,
- **Easy recognition of its logo/title**
- All on a much **larger geographical scale**.

Three main ingredients to make mobility accessible.

Glossaire

CROUS-	Centre Régional Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires
ECS –	European Credit Transfer Système
ECVET-	European Credit System for Vocational Educational & Training
EHEA –	European Higher Education Area
HEI –	Higher Education Institutions
MESR –	Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche
MAEE –	Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européenne
PRES-	Pôle de Recherche de l'Enseignement Supérieur

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