

Student and Staff Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion in student exchanges

SIEM report launch



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

SIEM Project

More opportunities in life for young people from disadvantaged background by increasing their participation in the Erasmus+ programme.



Widening participation of less advantaged and underrepresented groups



Increase the **interaction** between International students and **local communities of underrepresented groups** in order to increase intercultural exchange and visibility of international student mobility.

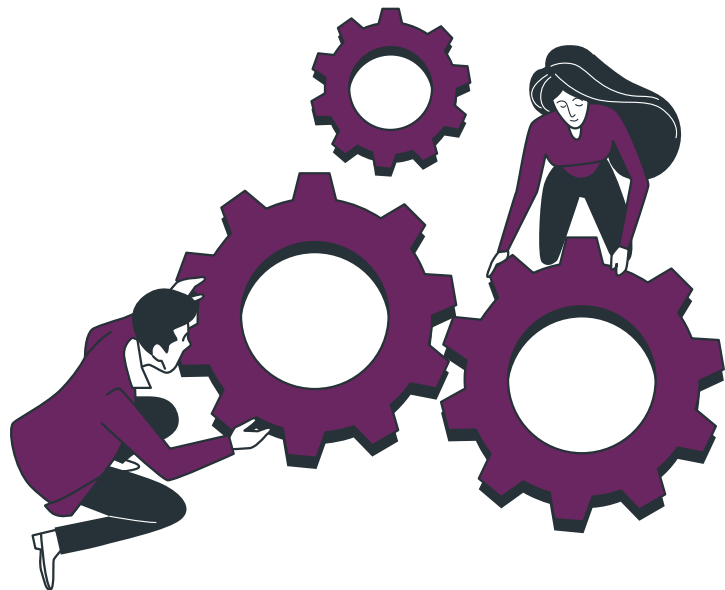


Making the Erasmus+ programme more **inclusive**



Co-funded by the
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SiEM Project partners



**Diverse
partnership**

European networks, &
Universities, National
Student Organisations

**Cross sectoral
collaboration**

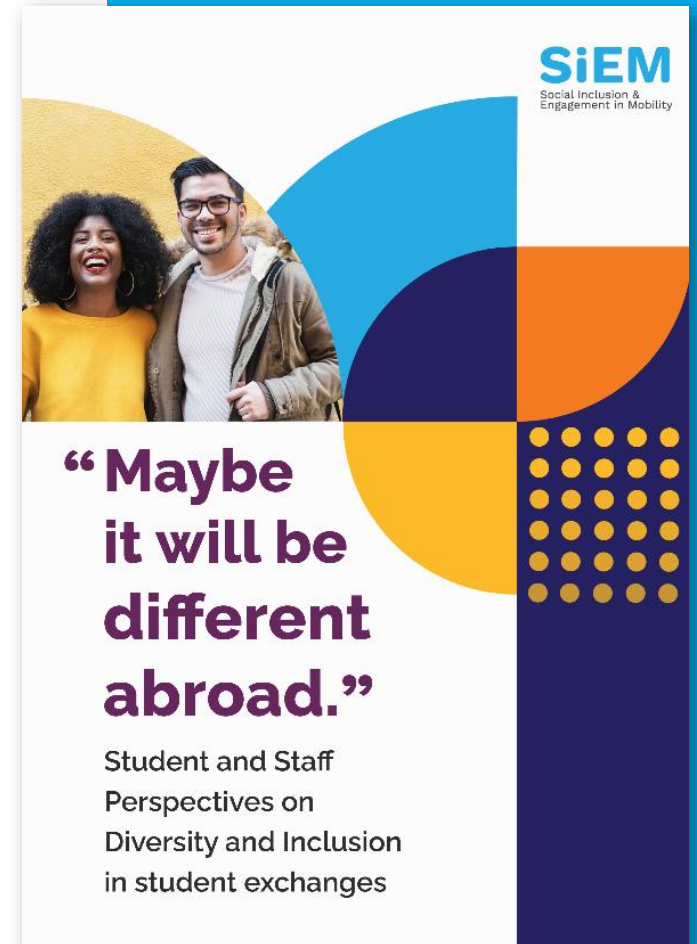
higher education,
inclusion organisations
& youth work



“Maybe it will be different abroad”

Key results of the research report

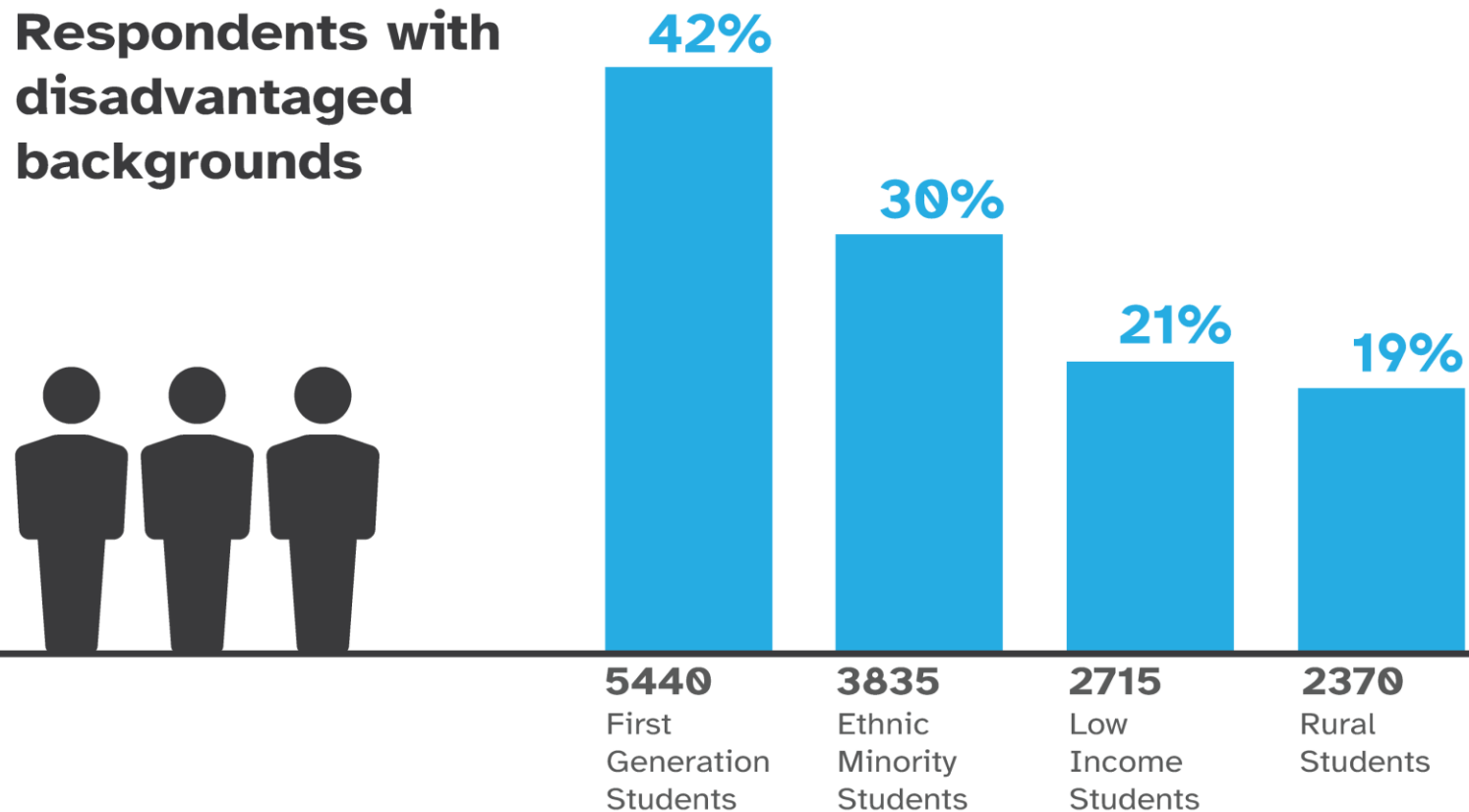
Student and Staff Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion in student exchanges



“Maybe
it will be
different
abroad.”

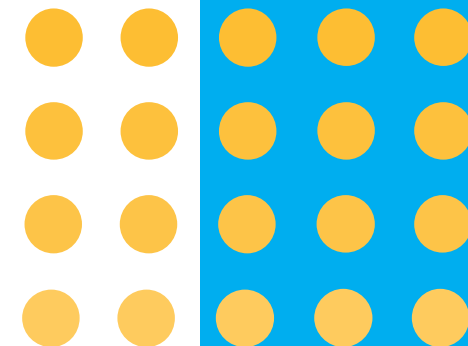
Student and Staff
Perspectives on
Diversity and Inclusion
in student exchanges

Defining students with fewer opportunities



Key Findings & Recommendations

1. **Strategy & offer**
2. **Barriers to mobility**
3. **Costs of living & financial support**
4. **Student support**
5. **Experiences: Challenges & Impact**



Mobility strategy

93%

Outgoing mobility is included in **93%** of staff survey respondents' institutions' **strategic plans**

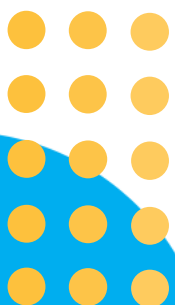
67% have Inclusion & Diversity strategies.

A third of respondents include reference to **disadvantaged groups** in their mobility strategy.

Staff results: Students groups with fewer opportunities

Q. Which students would be classified as less advantaged or underrepresented groups at your institution?

Student Group	All	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Students from low-income households	71%	81%	70%	66%
Students from rural areas	25%	29%	19%	31%
Students from minority ethnic groups or with a migration background	47%	67%	50%	32%
Students from Roma and Traveller communities	26%	49%	26%	33%
Students who are first in family to go to university, pioneer students	27%	65%	27%	8%
Students living with disabilities	61%	71%	63%	57%
Students who are care providers, students with dependants, including student parents	40%	68%	41%	36%
Students with religious beliefs	7%	14%	6%	9%
LGBT+ students	17%	32%	14%	18%
Mature students, life-long learners	24%	56%	22%	20%
None of the above	7%	5%	6%	11%
Total	765	65	500	105



Mobility programmes

Mobility for studies at a different mobility remains the most popular mobility type to take part in. 85% of mobile respondents went on a study exchange.

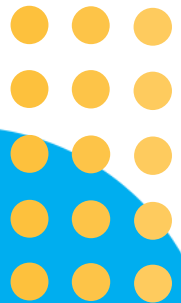
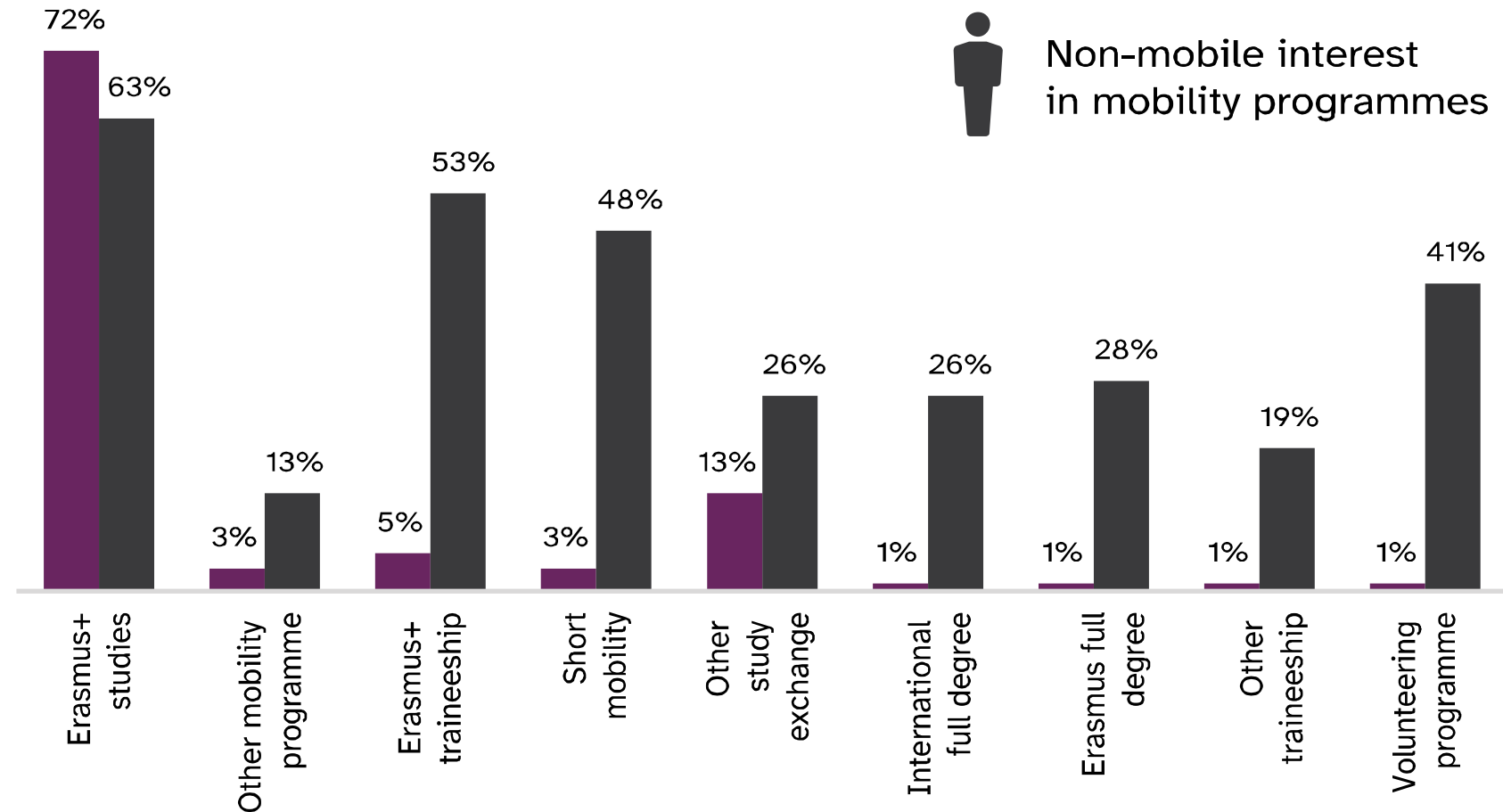
But other types of mobility, carry a lot of interest, such as internships (53%) short term mobility (48%) and volunteering programmes (41%).



mobility programme of mobile participants



Non-mobile interest in mobility programmes



Barriers to Mobility

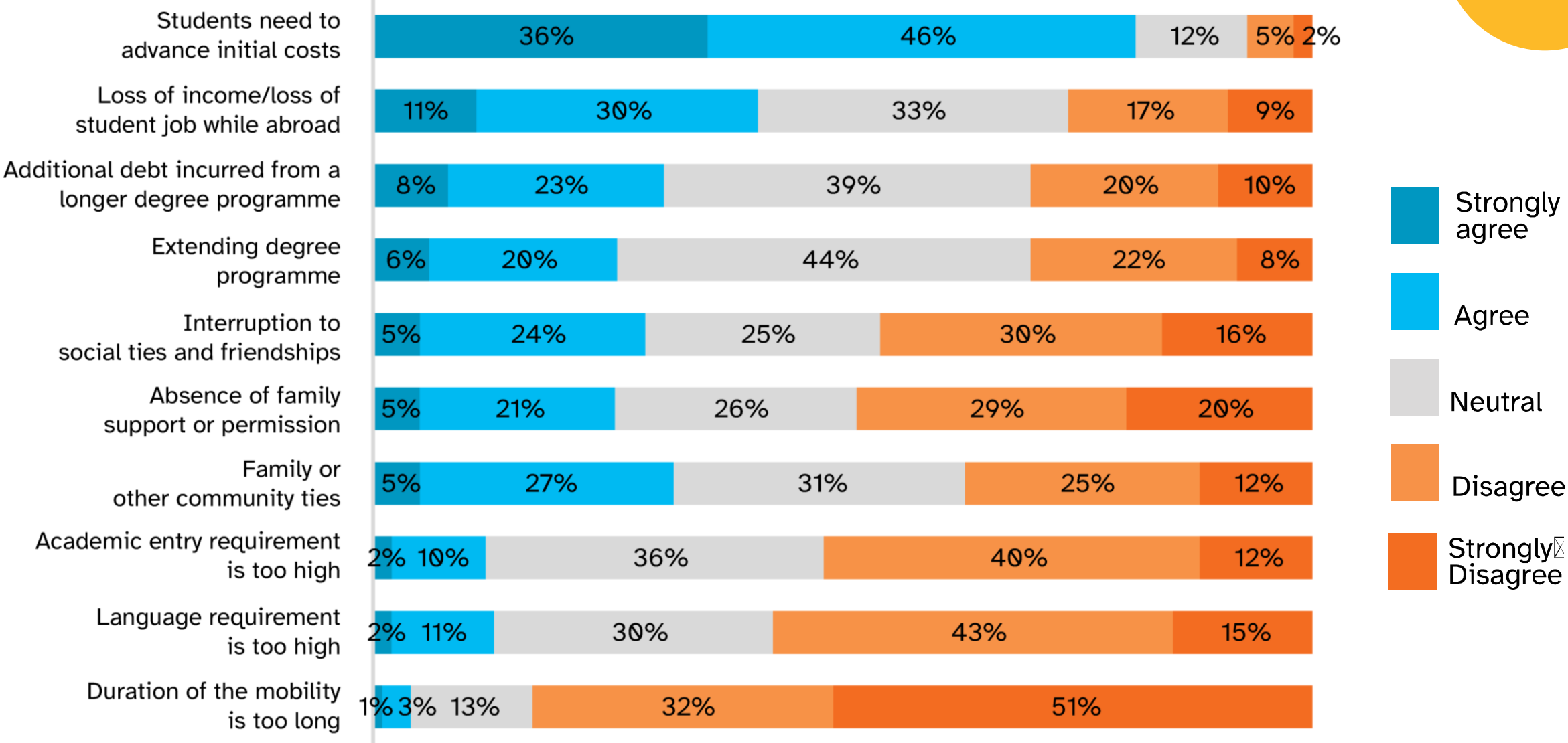
“The bureaucracy:
the pile of information raises
even more questions.”

“Lots of forms and papers to
fill, the information was
structured badly...”

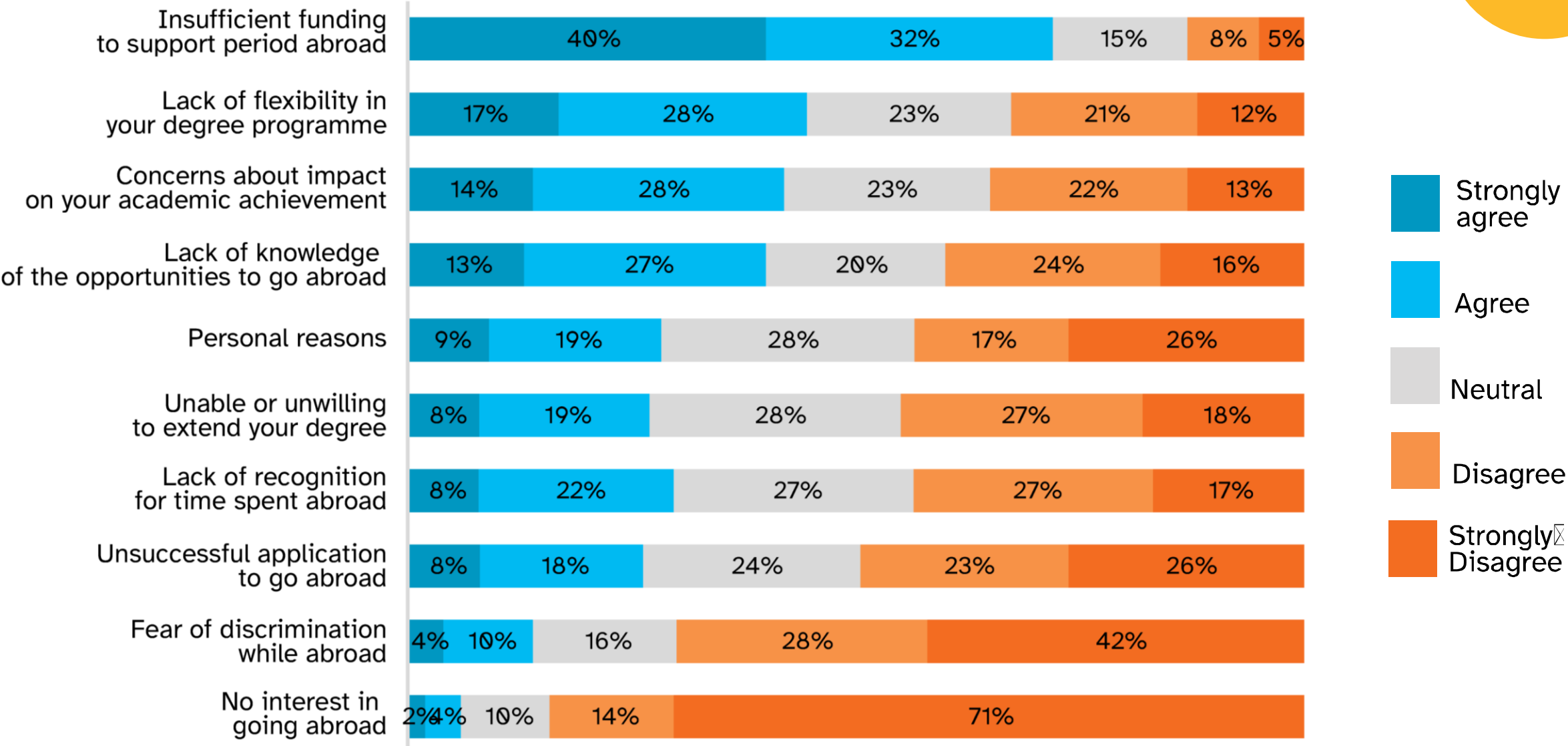
- student quote



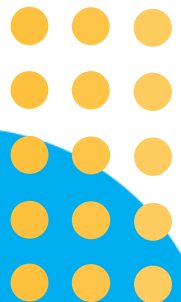
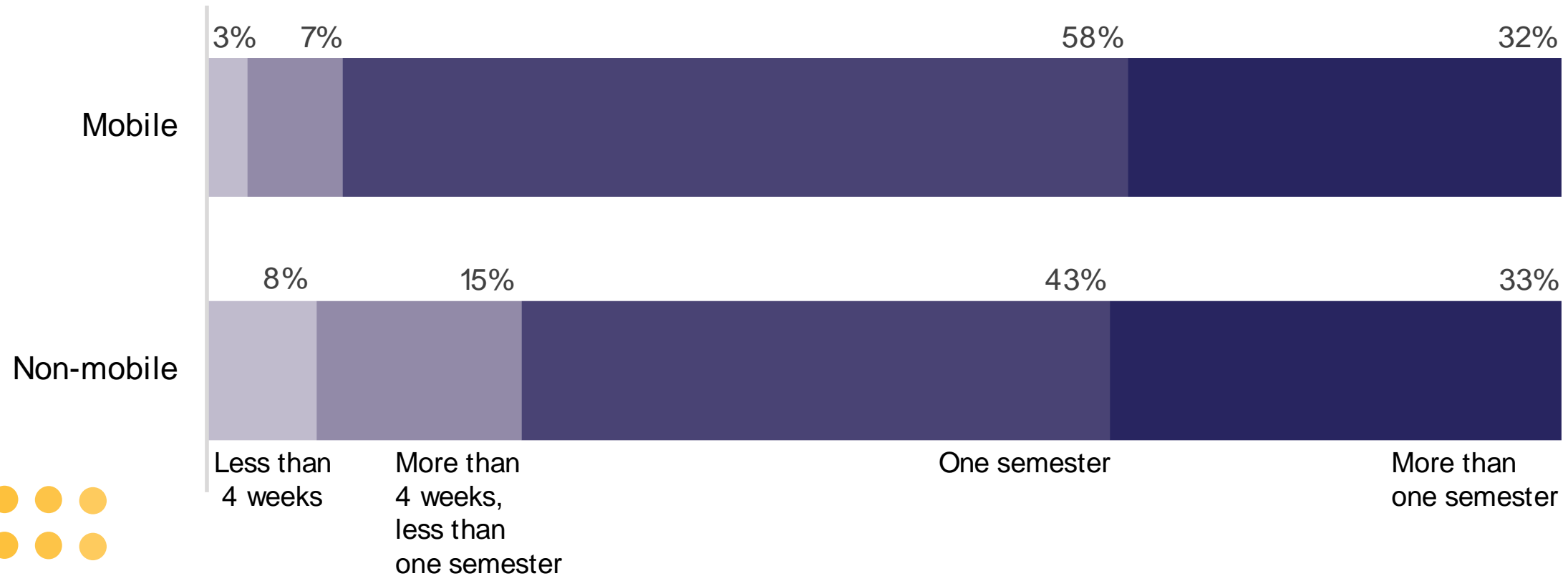
Mobile participants' reported practical barriers to mobility



Non-mobile students' blocking factors to go abroad



Student impressions: Mobility duration: actual participation versus preference



Pre-departure support

What did mobile students find useful when preparing for their mobility?

94%

information about
available funding

88%

support with the
application process

86%

help choosing
a host university



Just over half of mobile respondents found meetings with international officers (55%), group information sessions (53%), and briefing events (53%) useful.

Pre-departure support

What did mobile students find useful when preparing for their mobility?

94%

information about
available funding

88%

support with the
application process

86%

help choosing
a host university



56%

Was not offered an activity with fellow students or mobility alumni to discuss mobility

83%

Indicated they would like to discuss with peers in a more social setting



Access to Financial support



of students reported advancing initial costs to be a **barrier** to participate in mobility.

“I am someone who has to combine five jobs to pay for my room and studies.”

“I have to spend everything I earn immediately. Saving for Erasmus is therefore extremely difficult.”

- student quote

67%

of students reported a monthly living cost **over 501 EUR.**

73%

of staff reported a monthly living cost **over 501 EUR.**



Cost of living per month reported by mobile students

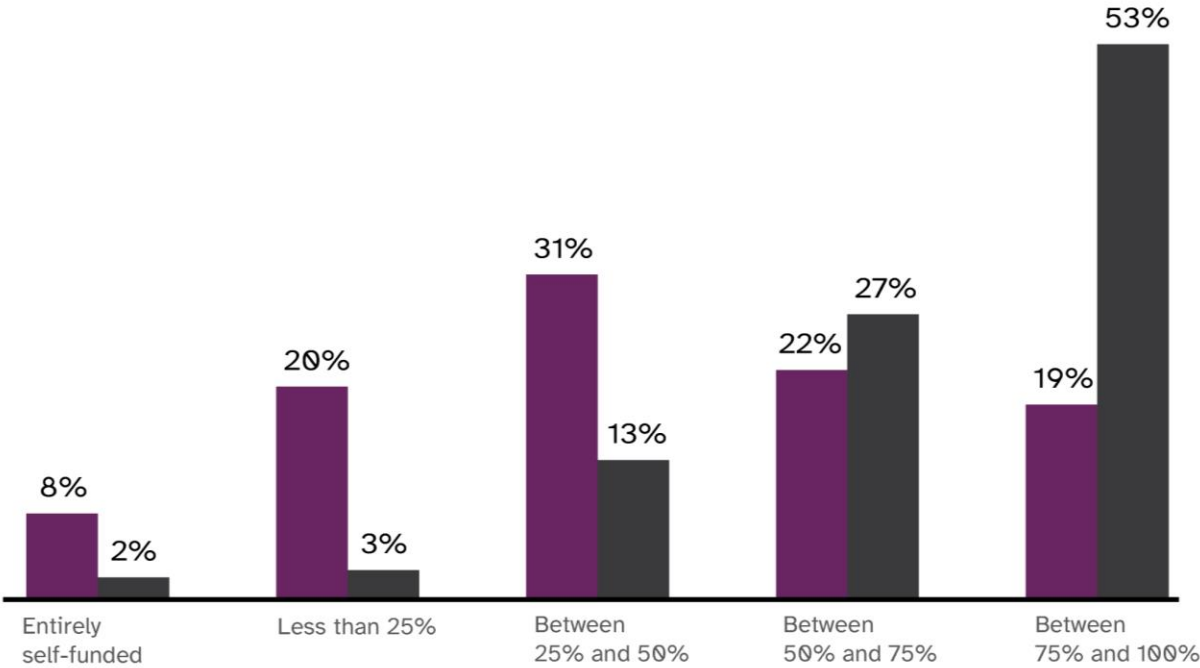


Financial support offered versus needed

59%
received less than 50% financial support

80%
indicated they would need more than 50% financial support

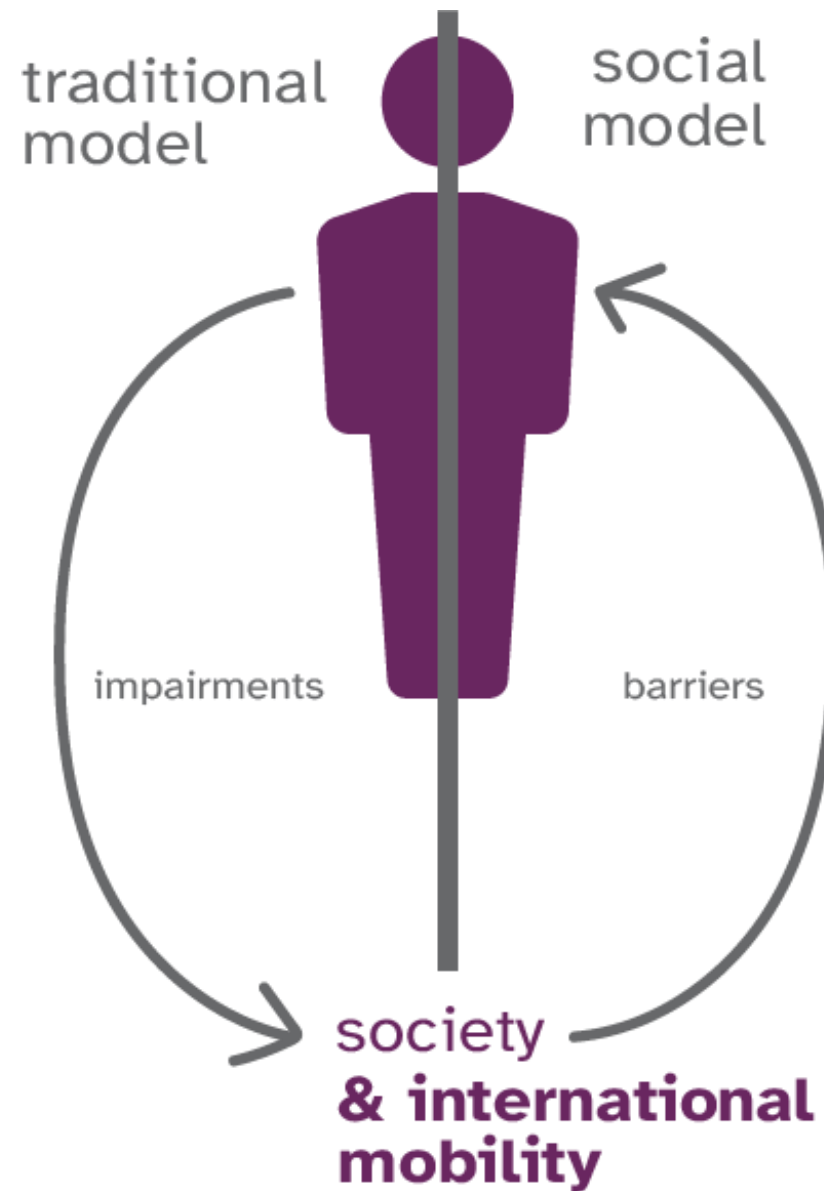
-  Actual grant coverage by mobile respondents
-  Needed grant coverage by non-mobile respondents



Inequality will always be present in society, the goal is to organize it in such a way that includes all people

The Social Model to Inclusion applied to mobility

Applied from the Social Model to disability (Oliver, 1983)



Applied from the Social Model to disability (Oliver, 1983)

3 Barrier types



Institutional

barriers that **reflect the programmes** that are being offered and the **regulations that coincide** with these programmes that may **impact the access** of specific student groups to mobility opportunities.

Environmental

Environmental and **societal factors** that influence the person's decisions to take part in a mobility.

access to information as well as **personal backgrounds** impact mobility participation.

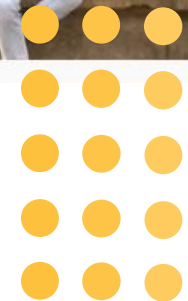
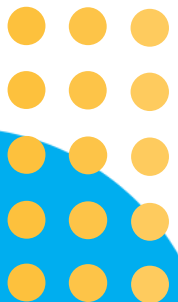
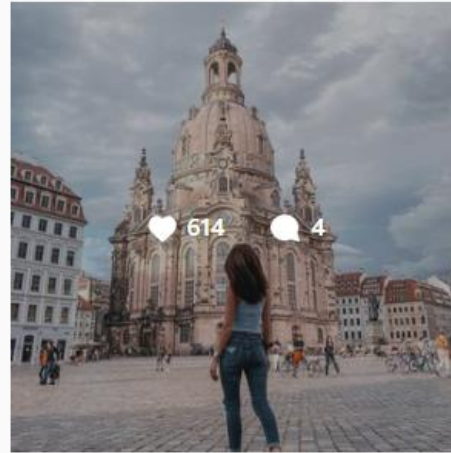
Attitudinal

Attitudinal barriers tackle the **belief system and emotions** around the topic of mobility opportunities, to see how they influence their participation rates.

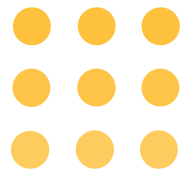
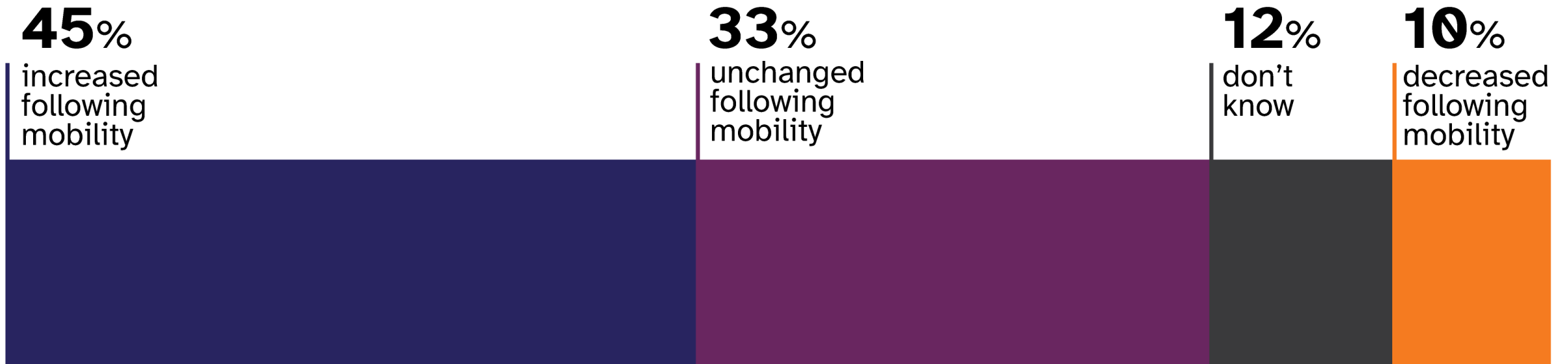
internalised barriers can severely impact their identification with the opportunity.

But, It's not all bad!

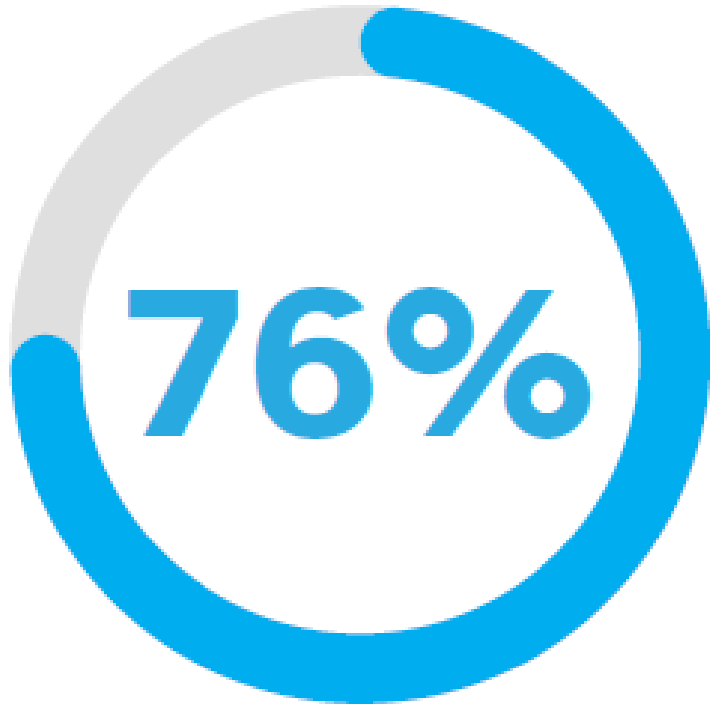
Students with fewer opportunities report a more positive impact of mobility on their personal development.



Student impression: impact on academic achievement



Student impressions: Inclusion & Equality of international students



had **positive** experiences while abroad.

34%

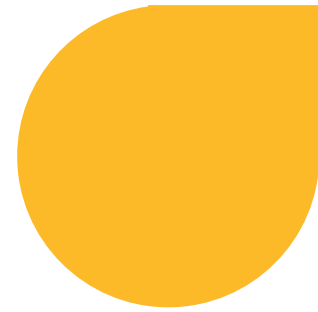
of students felt that they were treated differently or unfairly at their host university

15%

felt that they did not have equal access to resources and opportunities compared to home students.

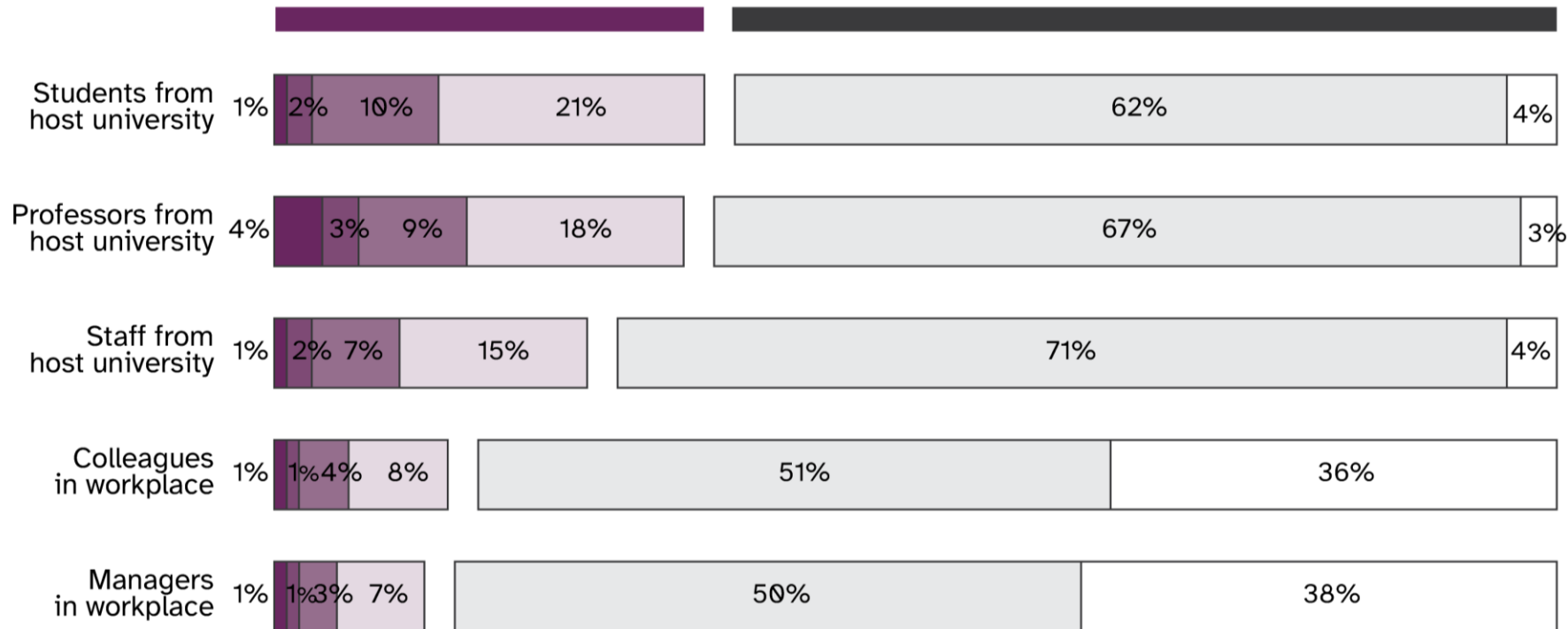


Student impression: treatment by members of the host society

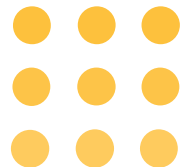


34% felt treated unfairly or negatively at some point during their exchange

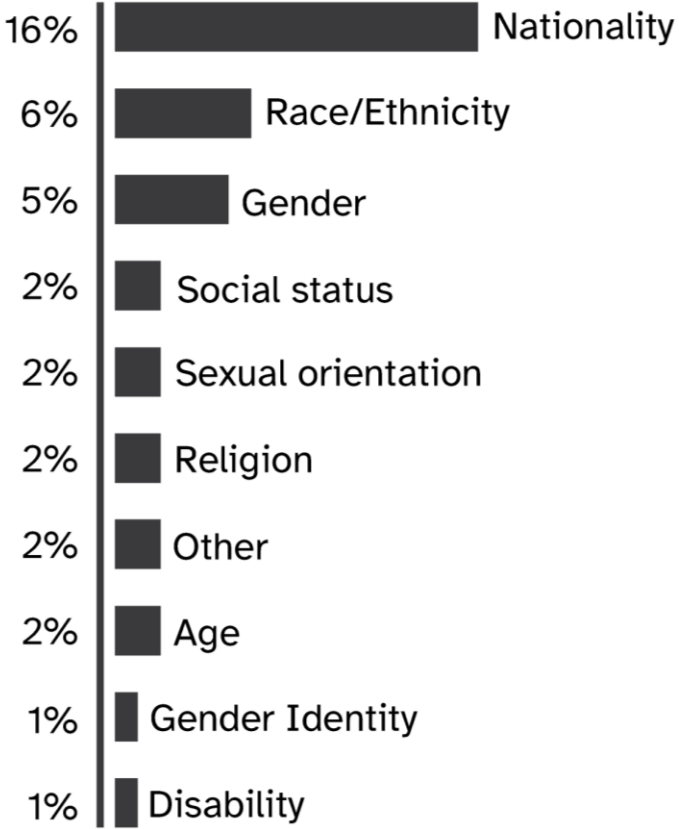
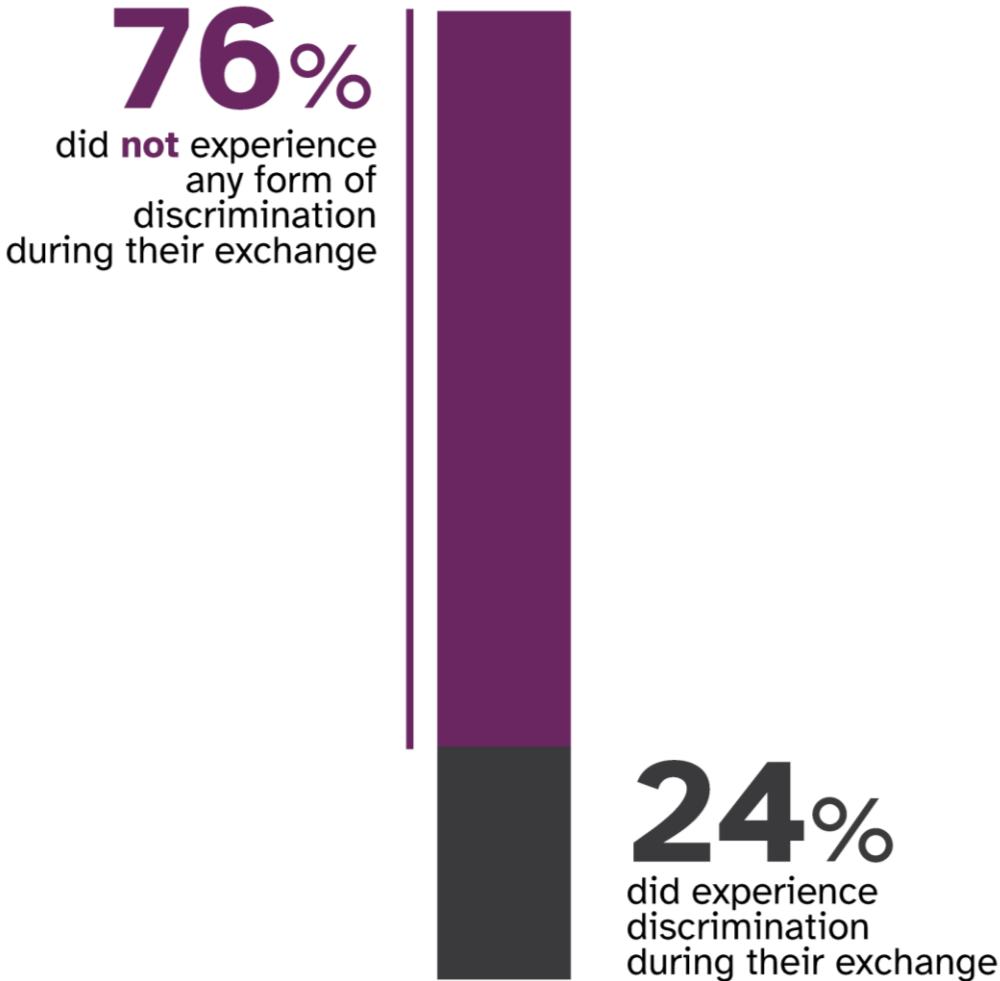
66% never felt treated unfairly or negatively during their exchange



Very often
 Often
 Sometimes
 Rarely
 Never
 Not applicable



Student impression: discrimination on exchange



Students from an
**ethnic minority
group**

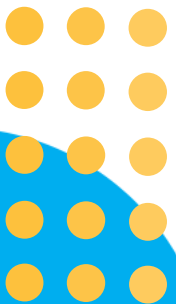
10x

More likely to be
discriminated on **exchange**
then their peers

Students from with
lgbtqi+ background

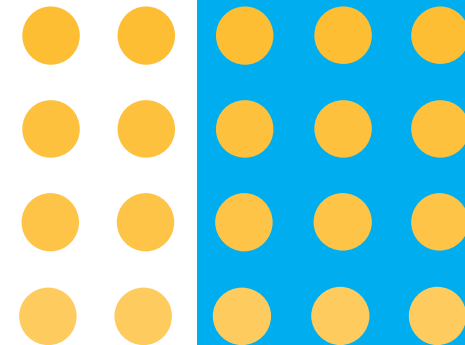
15x

**Student impression:
discrimination on exchange**



Recommendations

Highlighted key recommendations for institutions.



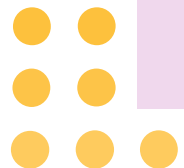
Define 'fewer opportunities'



How to define which students within the local reality of your institution. **Discuss** them with your **National Agency** for the definitions in **National Action** plans.

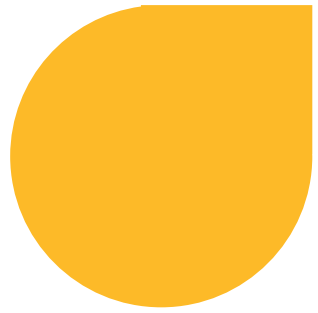
Higher Education Institutions & International Student Organisations

- Is there local research available that analyses local realities? Check with the local city's youth department.
- Check with the registration / student services department; they might know the profiles better.
- Discuss with students directly : engage your local student councils / organize focus groups



Diversify programme offer

Offer different types of mobility programmes across study, work and volunteer opportunities that will appeal to different student groups.



European Commission

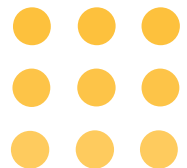
- Ensure short term mobilities are embedded in the internationalisation strategy.

National Agencies

- Ensure short term mobilities are embedded in the internationalisation strategy

Higher Education Institutions

- Offer different mobility programmes with a variety of durations.



Encourage student engagement



Collect student input

Collaborate with student groups at your institution, as well as mobility alumni to improve the programmes on offer.

- Include students in the strategy development
- Structural support for students

peer to peer initiatives

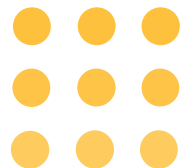
Connect mobile students with local students to help students navigate the new institution or organisation, as well as the local area.

- Support peer to peer initiatives
 - Organise buddy and ambassador systems
 - Organise community engagement initiatives

Safe space to signal concerns

Create a safe space where the student can discuss their fears without judgement, and if needed seek specialist advice to respond to the students' queries.

- Clear com. channels and reference persons
- Organise feedback sessions



Provide support for students



Contacts

Assign students a key contact, both at the home institution and the host institution. Any support given to students should be provided in English or a shared language.

- Ensure that services are accessible and equal treatment is guaranteed.

Finances

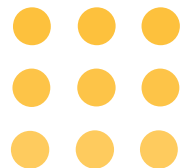
provide structured funding in the form of grants and scholarships to support study, work or volunteering abroad opportunities.

- Ensure transparent procedures
- Apply top-up for fewer opportunity students

Develop Crisis plan

Prepare to support students in an emergency, signpost transparent procedures and contact points in case negative experiences do happen.

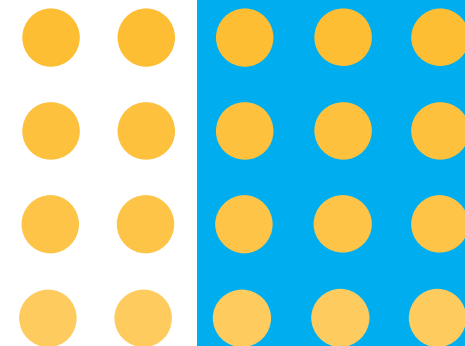
- Ensure crisis plans take into account internationals
- Signpost procedures and contact point





Points of attention on Inclusion in the new Erasmus+ Programme

**From disadvantaged students to students with
fewer opportunities**



Inclusion in Erasmus+ 2021-2027

Inclusion as a KEY transversal principle in the programme

- **Inclusion Framework:** translating the legal base into a framework of instruments that are measurable.
- **Inclusion and Diversity strategy:**
 - Unified strategy that aims to create a shared structure for implementation across the Erasmus+ programme.
- **National Inclusion Action Plans**
 - Each National Agency will have to create a National Action plan
 - These will be yearly updated and monitored by the EC
 - First elaborate version expected by end of 2021
- **Central in Projects & Monitoring**

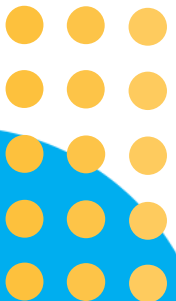
Changing narratives

Programme 2014 - 2020

- Social Inclusion
- Disadvantaged students
- 7 categories

Programme 2021-2027

- Inclusion & Diversity
- Students with fewer opportunities
- 8 barriers highlighted



8 potential barriers that impact opportunities

- **disabilities** (i.e. participants with special needs): people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory, or other disabilities.
- **Barriers linked to education and training systems:** young people with learning difficulties; early school-leavers; low qualified adults; young people with poor school performance.
- **economic barriers:** people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on the social welfare system or homeless; young people in long-term unemployment or poverty; people in debt or with financial problems.
- **cultural differences:** immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families; people belonging to a national or ethnic minority; people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties.
- **barriers linked to discrimination:** people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.;
- **social barriers:** people with limited social skills or people in a precarious social situation; (ex-) offenders, (ex-) drug or alcohol abusers; young and/or single parents; orphans.
- **geographical barriers:** people from remote or rural areas; people living in small islands or in peripheral regions; people from urban problem zones; people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities).
- **health problems:** people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses, or psychiatric conditions.

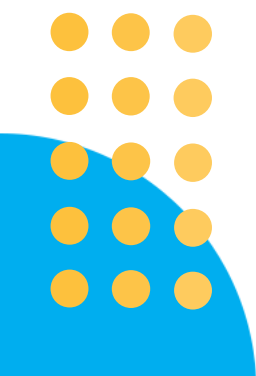


Points of attention for National action plans

Mandatory implementation of financial support:
250 EUR for students with fewer opportunity
E+14-20: 100 to 200 EUR and not mandatory

Students and recent graduates with fewer opportunities - top-up amount to the individual support

Students and recent graduates with fewer opportunities receive a top-up amount to the individual support of their EU Erasmus+ grant with an amount of 250 EUR per month. The criteria to be applied are defined at national level by the National Agencies in agreement with National Authorities.



Discuss with your **National Agencies** which **barriers** are considered for support and HOW documentation towards this will be checked.

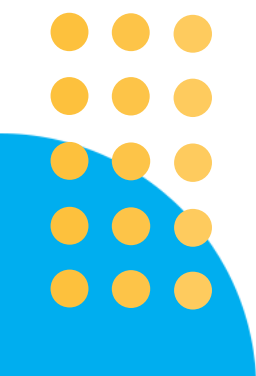
Points of attention for National action plans

Organisational support:

Up to the 100th participant: 400 EUR per participant, and beyond the 100th participant: 230 EUR per additional participant

Inclusion Support:

- 100 EUR per participant
- 100% eligibility of costs for special needs



Discuss with your **National Agencies** and HEI on how support can be given across the board : attention to **peer to peer support** and **experiences students have**.

Points of attention for National action plans

The EU Erasmus+ individual support grant provided to students will depend on their mobility flow between the sending and receiving countries of the student, as follows:

- mobility towards a country with similar living costs: students will receive the medium range EU grant;
- mobility towards a country with higher living costs: students will receive the higher range EU grant;
- mobility towards a country with lower living costs: students will receive the lower range EU grant.

The amounts defined by National Agencies will be set within the following minimum and maximum ranges:

- **Medium range EU grant:** a medium range, between 260 and 540 EUR per month, will apply to mobility activities towards a country of similar living costs: a) from Group 1 to Group 1, b) from Group 2 to Group 2 and c) from Group 3 to Group 3.
- **Higher range EU grant:** corresponds to the medium range applied by the National Agency plus at least 50 EUR and between 310 and 600 EUR per month. It applies to mobility activities towards a country of higher living costs: a) from Group 2 to Group 1 countries and b) from Group 3 to Group 1 and 2 countries.
- **Lower range EU grant:** corresponds to the medium range applied by the National Agency minus at least 50 EUR and between 200 and 490 EUR per month. It applies to mobility activities towards a country of lower living costs: a) Group 1 to Group 2 and 3 countries and b) from Group 2 to Group 3.

Discuss with your **National Agencies** and **HEI** on the level of the Grants selected + Transparently publishing this info.



Research Report

An extensive **research report** that gathers input of 12.000 students and 750 staff members across Europe and beyond on the inclusion in international student exchanges.

The research report showcases the **14 recommendations** targeting

- European Commission
- National Agencies
- Higher Education institutions
- International student organisations.

Guidelines for Inclusive Mobility Promotion

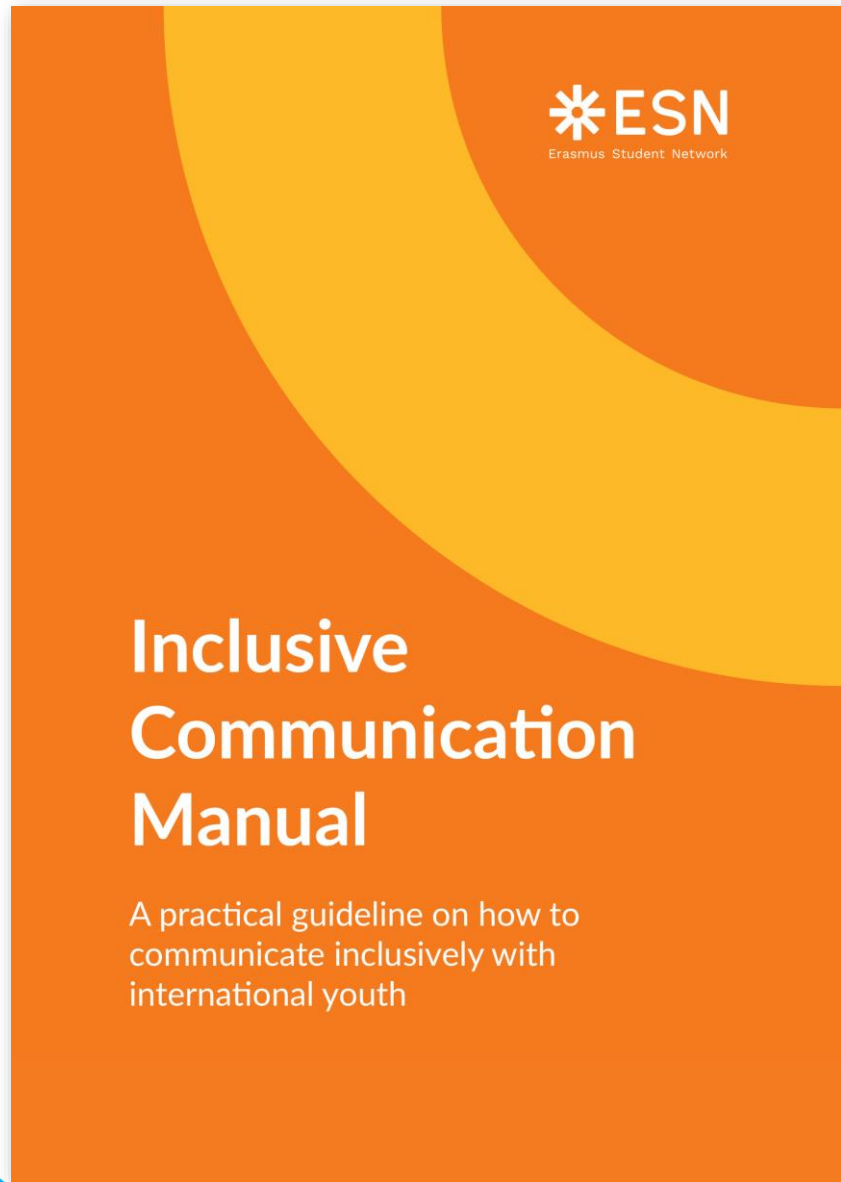
Supporting in- and outbound
student mobility



Guidelines for Inclusive Mobility Promotion

Handbook developed for International Relations Offices working with in- and outbound student mobility, primarily within the Erasmus+ programme.

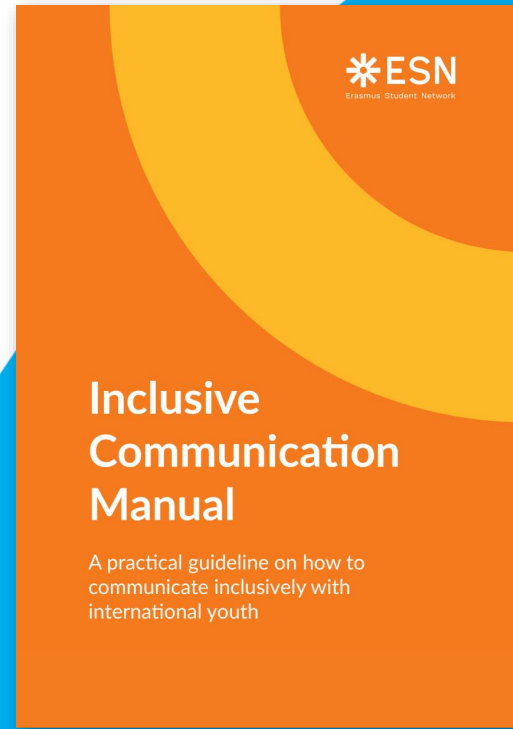
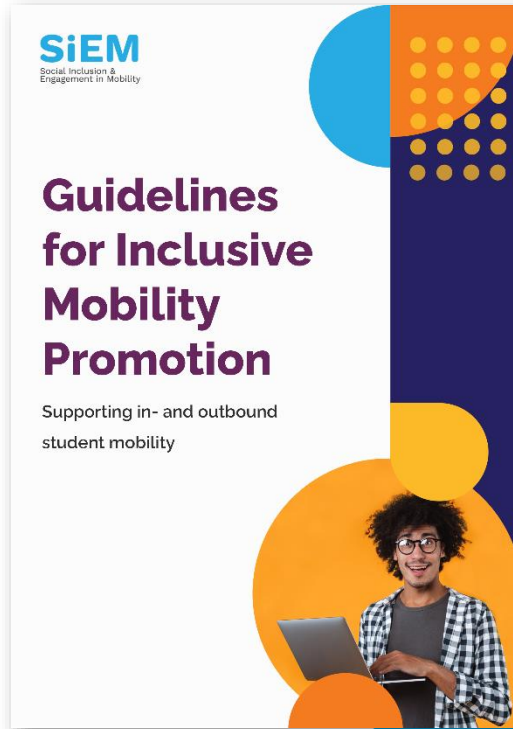
The Guidelines focus on how to make your **mobility promotion** more **inclusive** and **reach more students**.



Inclusive Communication Manual

A practical guideline on how to communicate inclusively with international youth for written, spoken and visual communication.

This manual focus on how to make general **communication** more **inclusive**.

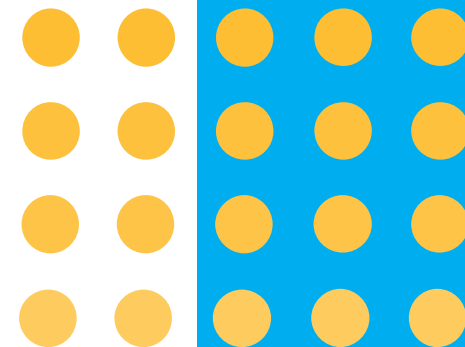


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Please refer to the research report as:

Allinson K., Gabriels W.,(2021). Maybe it will be different abroad; student and staff perspectives on diversity and inclusion in student exchanges. SIEM Research Report, siem-project.eu

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