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Results of **ESNSurvey '07**

# Generation Mobility



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Generation Mobility. Results of ESN Survey 2007

By Veerle Boomans, Seweryn Krupnik, Ewa Krzaklewska, Sara Lanzilotta

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## Introduction

Every year ESN launches a survey that explores current issues connected to academic and non-academic mobility. This is one of the biggest and **most successful projects** of ESN International – last year more than 12,000 students responded to the online survey. By gathering together the opinions of students, ESN gets a better insight into the issues and is able to represent students' real needs.

In 2007 the topic of the ESN Survey is **Generation Mobility**<sup>1</sup>. This name was used in 2006, during the Annual General Meeting of ESN, to describe the young dynamic and mobile ESN members as well as exchange students. They are: 'Without roots, without barriers, without prejudices. Mobile, Multilingual, Open and Dynamic'.

Our aim was to understand if the experience of studying abroad has a **deep impact** on the way students think about many important topics like involvement in civic society and politics, religious belief, Europe and European Integration and the use of new technologies. We wanted to see if exchange students differ from those who did not benefit from a longer study period abroad.

Therefore, our analysis included **not only exchange students** in Europe, those who studied abroad through the Erasmus Programme and those who went abroad through other schemes, but also students who have never been abroad.

In the first part of this report we describe the characteristics of the respondents. In the second part we concentrate on the analysis of "Generation Mobility", their values and lifestyles. Finally, the last chapter describes students' satisfaction with their stay in a foreign country and their satisfaction with the support provided by ESN and other student organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> Generation mobility was also the motto of the Erasmus Student Network Annual General Meeting in Krakow in 2006. See: [http://www.esn.org/agm2006/?about\\_motto](http://www.esn.org/agm2006/?about_motto)



## Acknowledgements

Over a period of three months, the ESN Survey about “Generation Mobility” received more than 8000 answers. It is another great success that we have managed to achieve as a network of ESN sections, and by networking with many other educational associations, both student and professional. We would like to thank them all for their collaboration and, in particular, our ESN Survey Partners: AEGEE, CIMO, ESU, ESTIEM and UNICA.

We would also like to thank the Erasmus Unit of European Commission, Margarida Gameiro, Deputy Head of Figel’ Cabinet and Belen Bernaldo De Quiros, the former head of the Erasmus Unit. You have been both a generous and much appreciated supporter of our project. We would also like to express our appreciation to the National LLP Agencies and universities in all countries, to the professional academic organisations, the student organisations and to the other associations and networks that collaborated with us in promoting our questionnaire.

Special thanks go to the whole Erasmus Student Network and all the local sections. We hope to always represent your voice and that of the Erasmus students in particular. In addition, we wish to thank all the Project Team for their initiative, enthusiasm, determination and dedication. Only with your support was it possible to achieve this successful result.

## Key results

**Students' characteristics.** Most of our respondents have enjoyed the experience of studying abroad (89%), but 11% have never studied abroad. Among the respondents who studied abroad, 90% did it through the Erasmus Programme.

The respondents were more often female (64%) and on average 23 years old. They went abroad in the majority of cases (77%) for the first time the most frequent area of study was business and management studies (23%). The students usually stayed abroad for two semesters, on average from 7 to 9 months (56%).

In terms of socio-economic background, 38% of all our respondents declared that none of their parents had a higher education degree. Generally the family financial situation was in line with the country's average (58%). Most respondents came from a town or small city (38%).

**Worldviews.** Results show cohesive preferences among students as far as values are concerned. Friends and family were important for almost all students with leisure time and work featuring as important for the majority whilst politics and religion were important only for some students. 48% of students regard themselves as not being religious, with 34% saying they were and 18% stating that they were atheists.

Most of the students said that protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs. One third of respondents declared a willingness to fight for their country.

Students defined their identity more often in the international context. More students declared their European identity rather than a national one. However, they were interested in politics on a national rather than a European level. Despite the fact that students showed diversity in terms of their political views, they more often declared themselves as being on the left (44%) than the right (23%).

The home country differentiated students as far as values and religiousness are concerned. The results showed the distinctive nature of students from the New Member States (e.g. Romania, Poland, and Lithuania) and Turkey. Students from



those countries placed more value on religion and work. At the same time they said that politics was less important for them.

**Lifestyle.** Students were very mobile: 23% of them have studied abroad more than once and they have visited on average 5 countries in the last 2 years. 35% would prefer to work in a foreign country. Most of our respondents spoke 3 or 4 languages (including their mother tongue).

The symbols of the Generation Mobility were the plane, as the favoured means of transportation, the international sim card and Skype, as tools for international communication. As a result of an exchange, mobile students had many foreign numbers in their mobile phone address book and called abroad more often than non-mobile students. They also possessed a credit card and a laptop more often than non-mobile students.

Interestingly, mobile and non-mobile students did not differ much as far as the possession of a mobile phone, their potential social network measured by the number of contacts in their mobile phones, or by usage of internet were concerned. Moreover, non-mobile students were often active members of online communities.

Unfortunately, mobile students, as well as those who have never studied before, were not very active in organizations of a different kind, and the least in political parties.

**Satisfaction with stay.** With overall satisfaction with their studies and with their stay at 80% and 93% respectively, most of the students gave a positive answer. Students had the highest score of satisfaction with the atmosphere of the city and country where the university is located (mean: 4,41) and the lowest with their finances (mean: 3,23).

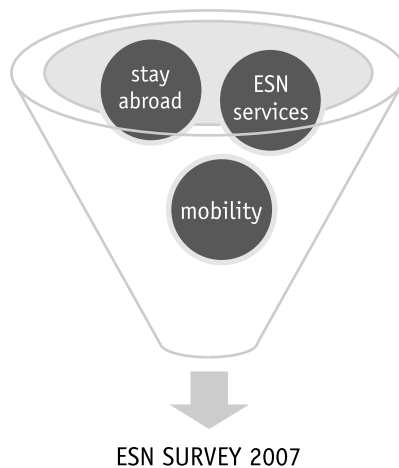
Students got most information before leaving about living conditions in a foreign country and less about studies and universities. Students who had enough information had a higher level of satisfaction with their stay and their study. In terms of recognition of courses taken abroad, 56% had all courses recognised, 6% of the students had no courses recognised.

**Satisfaction with ESN.** 62% of the students had heard of ESN before, and 57% had an ESN section at their host university. Students were most satisfied with ESN for getting in contact with other exchange students and organising parties

and meetings. 70% of the students were satisfied with student organisations at their host university.

## Methodology

The survey was conducted by the ESN Survey team, which was led by Ewa Krzaklewska. The questionnaire was organized around the theme 'Generation Mobility'. The additional questions referred to student's stay abroad and ESN services.



While building the questionnaire, questions from previous editions of ESN survey were taken into account. We also used some questions from the World Values Survey<sup>2</sup> in order to compare Erasmus students with the more general population.

The questionnaire was available online from May to September 2007 on the ESN website at [www.esn.org/survey](http://www.esn.org/survey). The only language version was English. In order to ensure the quality of the study, respondents were supposed to use the code at the beginning of the questionnaire.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>



The information about the survey was disseminated through the local branches of Erasmus Student Network and other associations concerned with educational issues. Moreover, international offices of single universities participated in promoting the research. Students received emails notifying them about the project and were informed about the possibility of winning 5 travel vouchers if they completed the questionnaire. As a result of this intensive dissemination process, more than 8 000 students completed the survey.

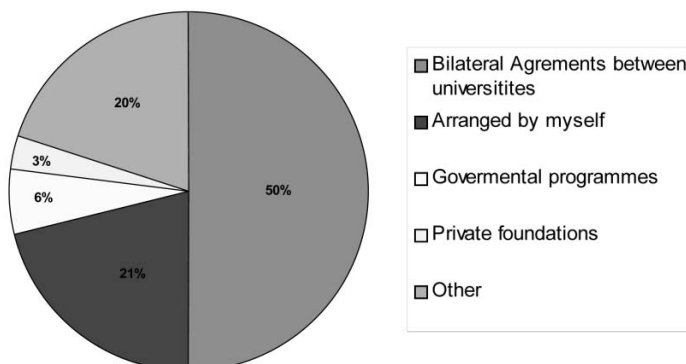
## Students' characteristics

Among the students who answered our questionnaire **78,4% went abroad through the Erasmus Programme**, but there were also other programmes that gave them the opportunity to study in another country (11% of all respondents). Among all our respondents, there was also a group of respondents (10,6%) who have never studied abroad (hereafter called non-mobile).

The respondents that did not choose the Erasmus Programme (hereafter called non-Erasmus students) went abroad:

- through **bilateral agreements between universities** (50%);
- **arranging** their stay **by themselves** (21%);
- with **governmental programmes** (6%);
- with **private foundations** (3%);
- with **other** exchange programmes as Nordplus, CEEPUS, ISEP, Campus Europae and CEMS (20%).

**Figure 1. Other exchange programmes, apart Erasmus, of our respondents (n=878)**





## Demographic profile

70% of our respondents ranged from 21 to 24 years old. The **average age of the respondents was 23**, as in previous editions of ESNSurveys.

Also the **gender** of the respondents was in line with our previous findings since there were more female (64,4%) than male (35,6%) respondents. This difference was lower among non-Erasmus students (female 58% and male 42%) and students that never studied abroad (female 53,4% and male 46,6%). The highest percentage of male students was among the Italian (46,9%), Portuguese (46,9) and Spanish respondents (46,5%) and the lowest among the Austrian (23,7%), Lithuanian (24%) and Romanian (25,6%) respondents.

The main countries where the students' **home university** were located were Poland (17,2%), Spain (8,9%), Turkey (8,1%), Finland (7,4%) and Lithuania (6,6%)<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1. Country of the home university of Erasmus students (n=6 222)**

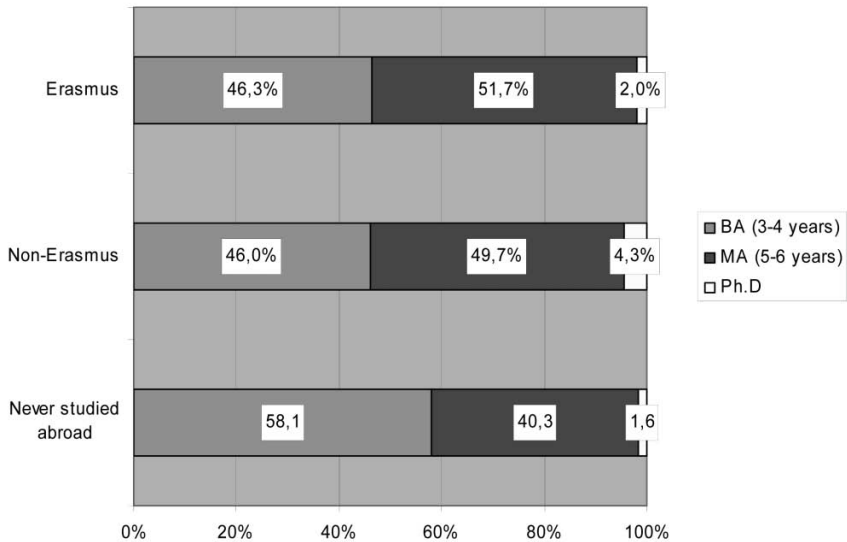
	Country of home university	Percent	Number of responses
1	Poland	17,2 %	1073
2	Spain	8,9 %	553
3	Turkey	8,1 %	502
4	Finland	7,4 %	459
5	Lithuania	7,0 %	433
6	Germany	6,2 %	385
7	France	5,6 %	347
8	The Netherlands	5,0 %	314
9	United Kingdom	4,8 %	297
10	Italy	3,8 %	238

<sup>3</sup> According to the statistics of the European Commission for the year 2005/2006, Germany is the first destination country with 15,44% of all Erasmus students from this year, then Spain (14,82%), France (14,57%), Italy (10,61%) and Poland (6,46%). [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/stat\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/stat_en.html)



Concerning the **level of studies** of our respondents, **Bachelor (BA)** (3-4 years) students constituted 48% of all respondents, **Master (MA)** (5-6 years) students 50%, and **PhD/doctoral** 2%. There were more doctoral students among non-Erasmus students than among Erasmus. Most respondents (66%) graduated in 2007 or will graduate in 2008.

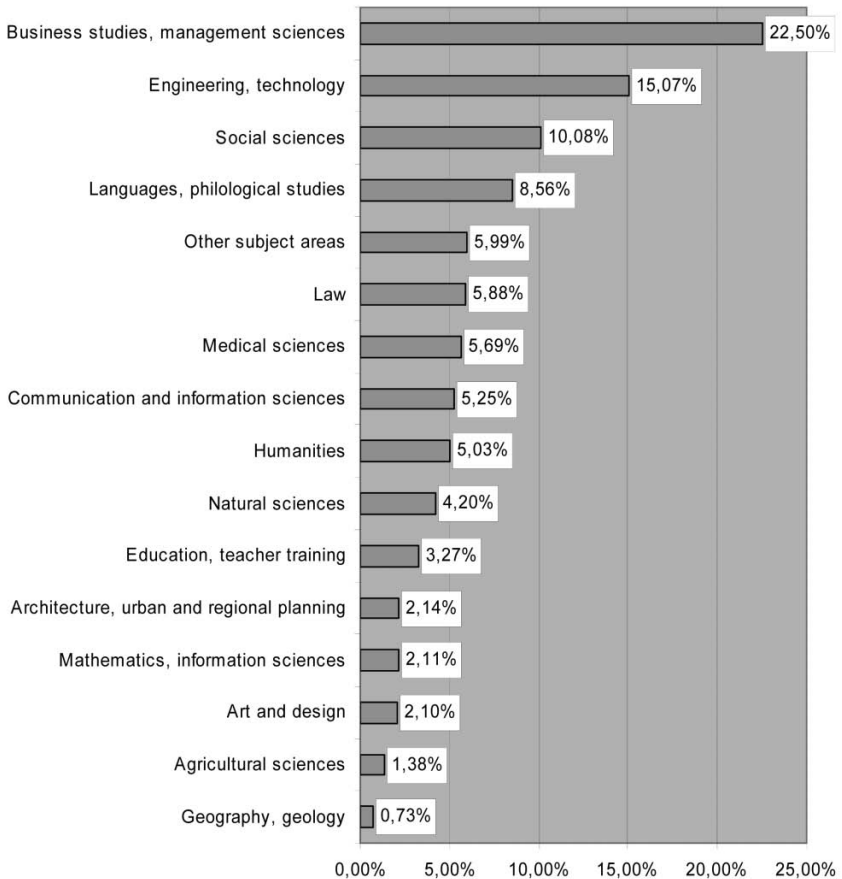
**Figure 2. Level of studies (n=7 869)**



The most popular **areas of studies** of our respondents were business studies, management studies (22,5%) followed by engineering, technology (15,1%), social sciences (10,1%) and languages and philology studies (8,6%). Results are similar to our previous results<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Among all Erasmus students from 2005/2006 the data shows that main majors were: business studies (20,52%), languages and philological sciences (15,18%), social sciences (11,31%) and engineering, technology (10,99%). [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/stat\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/stat_en.html)

**Figure 3. Area of studies (n=7 905)**



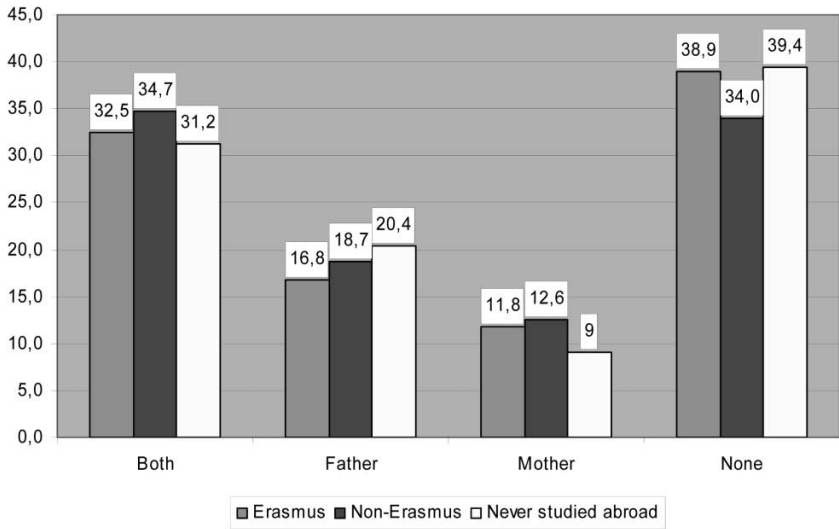
## Socio-economic background of respondents

Analysing **the higher education degree of parents**, 38,4% of all the respondents declared that none of their parents had a higher education degree, 32,6% said that both parents, 17,4% father, 11,6% mother. Among Erasmus students and students who never studied abroad, there were more families in which none of



their parents had a higher education degree (38,9% and 39,4% compared with 34% of non-Erasmus).

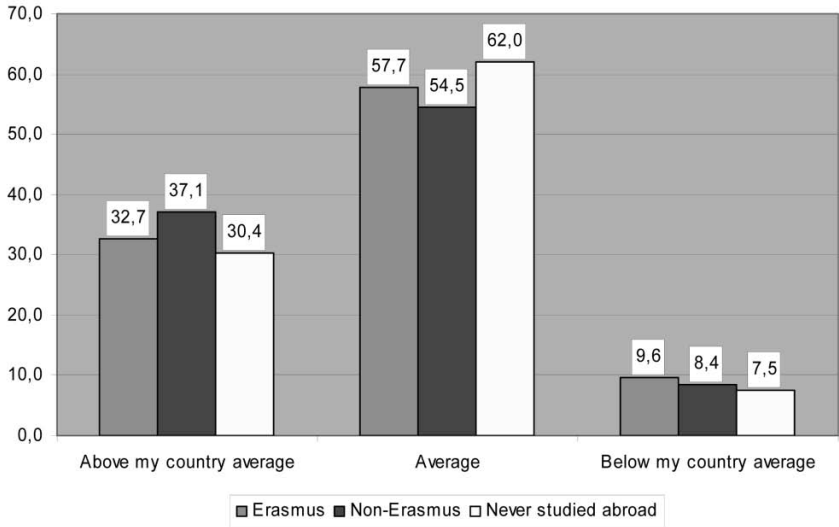
**Figure 4. Parents' educational attainment (%; n=7 921)**



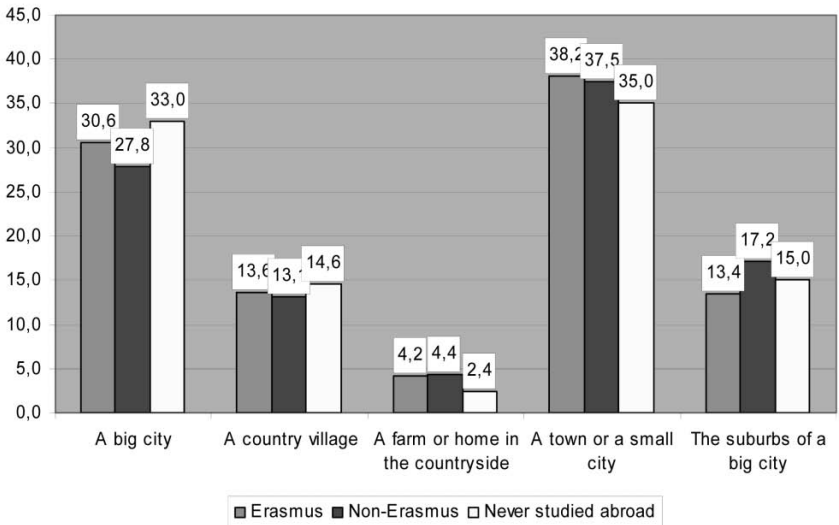
In terms of the **family financial situation**, 9,2% described their family's income as below the country's average, 57,8% as average and 33% above the country's average. The Erasmus respondents who described their family financial situation as being below their country average represented a higher percentage than non-Erasmus or students who had never studied abroad (9,6% against 8,4% of non-Erasmus students and 7,5% of respondents who never studied abroad).

The respondents came from a **town or a small city** (37,8%) or a **big city** (30,5%), then the suburbs of a big city (14%) and a country village (13,7%). Respondents that came from a farm or home in the countryside represent a small minority (4%).

**Figure 5. Family's income (%; n=7 879)**



**Figure 6. Area where family lives (%; n=7 914)**





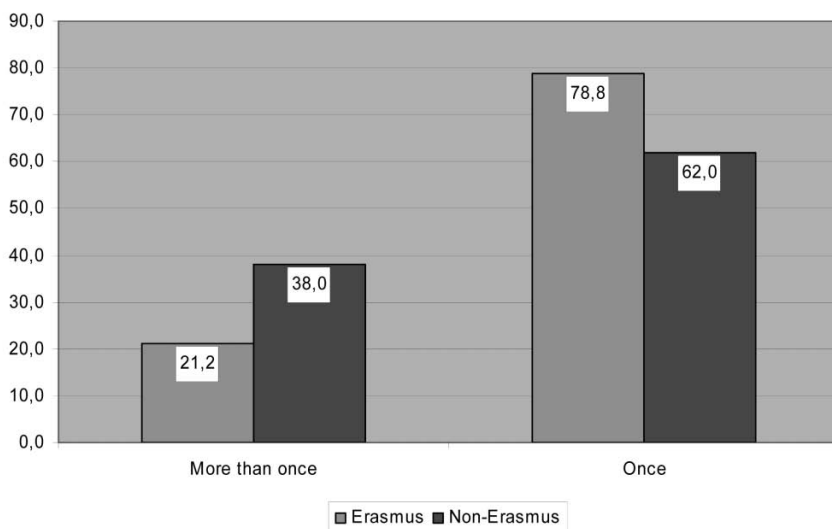
## Exchange destinations

Concerning those students who studied abroad, **their stay abroad began mostly in 2006** (50,3%) and 2007 (33,8%). For the rest of the students, their stay abroad started before 2006.

Most often they **have stayed abroad from 4 to 6 months** (55,9%) representing the typical length of stay for Erasmus students. The length of studies for respondents who had arranged their stay by themselves differed the most among respondents.

Our respondents went abroad in the majority of cases (76,8%) for the first time with this being the case for Erasmus students more often than non-Erasmus ones: 78,8% against 62%.

**Figure 7. Frequency of studying abroad for Erasmus and non-Erasmus respondents (%; n=7 074)**



The countries that our respondents chose most frequently as **exchange destinations** were Germany (11,2%), Spain (9,1%), France (8,8%), Belgium

(7,7%), Sweden (7,6%) Italy (7,4%), the Netherlands (7,2%), Finland (6,9%) United Kingdom (5,3%) and Denmark (3,6%)<sup>5</sup>.

**Table 2. The host countries of Erasmus students (n=6 257)**

	<b>Country of host university</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
1	Germany	11,2 %	698
2	Spain	9,1 %	569
3	France	8,8 %	550
4	Belgium	7,7 %	483
5	Sweden	7,6 %	477
6	Italy	7,4 %	462
7	The Netherlands	7,2 %	448
8	Finland	6,9 %	434
9	United Kingdom	5,3 %	333
10	Denmark	3,6 %	228

According to our results, Sweden, Belgium and Germany were hosting countries<sup>6</sup> while Poland, Turkey and Lithuania were sending countries<sup>7</sup>. These results are not always in line with the ones of the **European Commission** where the United Kingdom, Sweden and Spain were hosting countries and Poland, Germany and Romania were sending countries.

## Disabled students

Disabled students constituted 3% of all the respondents. 67,8% of these studied within the Erasmus programme. The results in general follow the normal trend of other respondents with differences to be found only in their home and host countries. Their home countries were Spain with a sizeable percentage (30%) followed by Poland (13%) and France (8,5%) and, as host countries, they chose Germany (7,7%), Belgium (6%) and Italy (5,6).

<sup>5</sup> For all the Erasmus students in 2005/2006 most popular host country was Spain (17,23%), then France (13,87%), Germany (11,58%), UK 10,61%) and Italy (9,45%). [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/lp/erasmus/stat\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/lp/erasmus/stat_en.html)

<sup>6</sup> Here, hosting countries: incoming students are more than outgoing students.

<sup>7</sup> Here, sending countries: outgoing students are more than incoming students.



## Generation mobility

Nowadays the mobility of people is increasing due to lower costs of transportation, more open borders and a growing tourist industry. Travelling and moving in itself has also become a part of the lifestyle of young people<sup>8</sup>. Generational Mobility is one inclined to constantly change its place in the physical world but also 'move' in virtual space and cross physical borders through virtual communications channels. It is also a Generation than 'moves forward' in their personal development by learning and being active. This Generation shares a certain set of values and norms, as well as a specific lifestyle.

In our report we will see if test this latter claim and analyze the beliefs and values of students. Furthermore, we will describe their habits and ways of living, comparing those students who are mobile, meaning those who went study abroad (90% of respondents), with those who have not done so (10% of respondents, hereafter called non-mobile). Do mobile students differ from those who have not been abroad? Or are these features already characteristics of young people in general?

## Worldview

While asking students about their worldview we researched a) **their value systems** (priorities in life) and more specifically b) **religious denomination** and c) **political identification**.

## Values

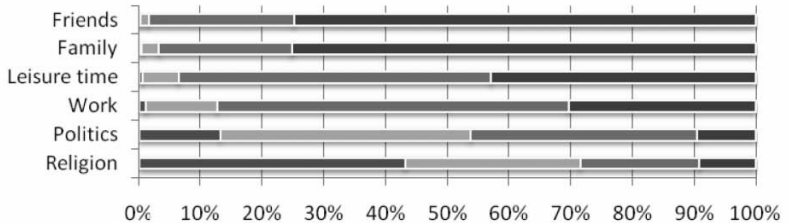
Respondents were asked to evaluate the **importance of six issues in their life**. They were (in order of importance): friends (97,9% rated them as rather important or very important), family (96,5%), leisure time (87,4%), work (87,4%), politics (46,4%) and religion (29,2%). Detailed results are presented in the graph below.

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<sup>8</sup> Jensen M. (2006), Mobility among young urban dwellers, *Young. Nordic Journal of Youth Research*, Vol 14(4): 343–361



**Figure 8. The importance of friends, family, leisure time, work, politics and religion (n= 7 974)**



	Religion	Politics	Work	Leisure time	Family	Friends
■ Not important at all	43,1	13,2	1,1	0,5	0,4	0,2
■ Not very important	28,5	40,5	11,6	6,0	2,9	1,3
■ Rather important	19,2	36,8	57,0	50,7	21,6	23,6
■ Very important	9,2	9,5	30,3	42,8	75,1	74,9

The graph shows three groups of issues, classified by their importance:

- a. friends and family** – important for almost all (97% or more) students;
- b. leisure time and work** – important for the majority (ca. 90%) of students;
- c. politics and religion** - important for some (20-40%) students and unimportant (50- 70%) for other students.

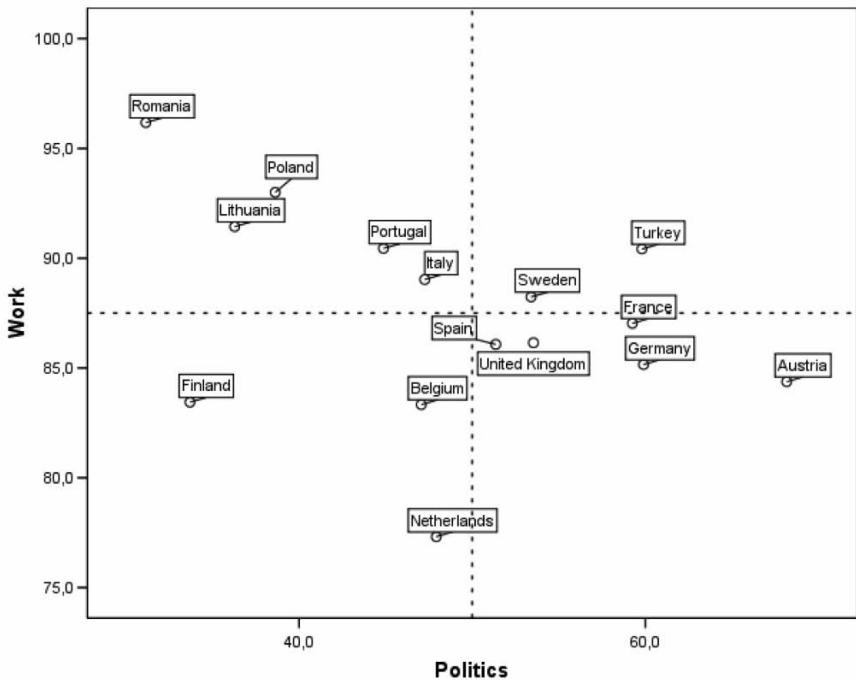
The following students' characteristics had an influence on answers concerning all issues:

- **gender** - all issues but one were slightly more important for females than for males. The exception was politics;
- **age** - work was more important for older students;
- **financial status** - work and religion were more important for students coming from families with a worse financial situation;
- **home country.**



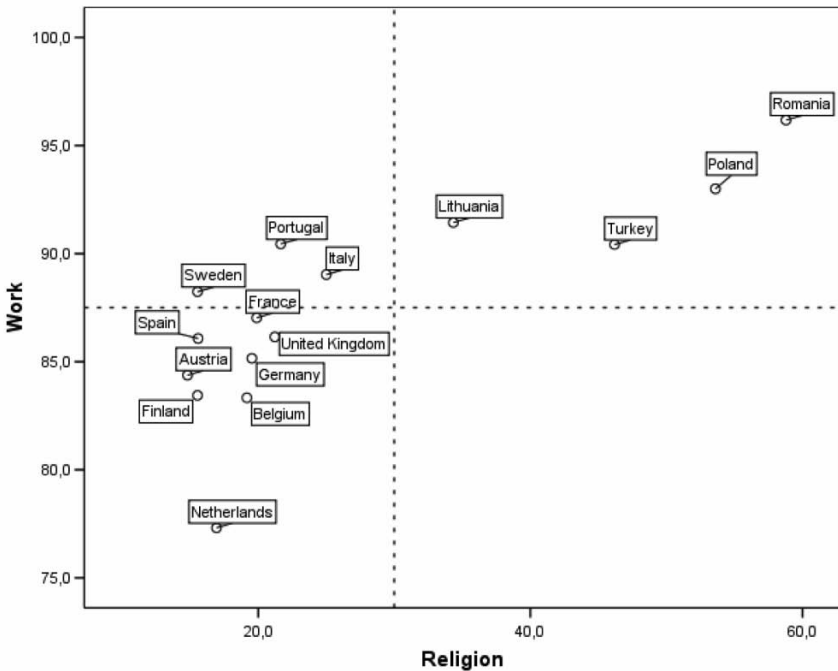
**Home country differentiated students as far as politics, religion and work are concerned.** The proportion of students who indicated the issues as important are presented in the graphs below. The graphs<sup>9</sup> clearly show the distinctive nature of students from the following countries: Romania, Poland, Lithuania and Turkey. Students from those countries valued religion and work more than other countries whilst, at the same time, they said that politics is less important for them. Students from two other countries are also worth mentioning in this context: the ones coming from Finland relatively rarely mentioned politics as important and those from the Netherlands rarely indicated work as important.

Figure 9. The importance of work and politics according to the home country (%; n= 7 222)



<sup>9</sup> Data is presented only for students who went abroad within the Erasmus Programme and countries with more than 100 respondents.

Figure 10. The importance of work and religion according to the home country (%; n = 7 222)



The two graphs below compare our results with the results from the World Values Survey 1999-2000 (for age cohort 15-29 years). The figures compare respondents from Finland, Spain, Netherlands and Poland<sup>10</sup> and the difference between the groups compared is three-fold: our survey was conducted almost ten years later than the WVS, the respondents are in a narrower age group (80% being between 20-25 years) and are much more likely to have been abroad. The graphs relate to the ratio of students who declared family and religion as very important in their lives.

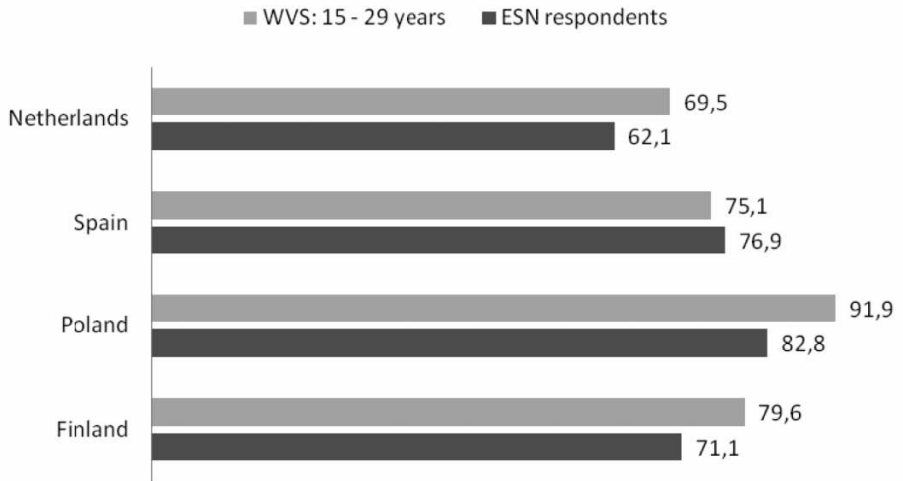
<sup>10</sup> The countries were chosen on the basis of number of students who were coming from the country and differences between countries which are discussed above.



While analyzing the graphs we can conclude the following:

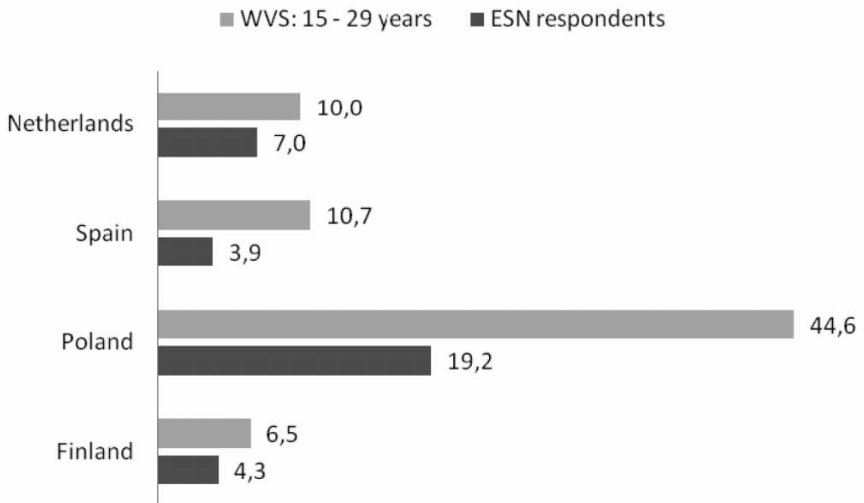
- for most of the countries, ESN respondents returned values as being less important than WVS respondents<sup>11</sup>;
- the only exception are the ESN respondents from Spain who indicated family as being more important than their counterparts from WVS;
- the most substantial difference in importance may be observed for young Poles in terms of religion: respondents from WVS indicated it as being much more important than reported by ESN respondents whilst studies of Polish religiousness seem to suggest that this trend is universal for young Poles.

**Figure 11. Comparing the results of ESN Survey 2007 (n= 3 246) with WVS 1999-2000 (n= 770): ratio of respondents indicating family as very important**



<sup>11</sup> The result may be caused by: a) time difference (7 – 8 years), b) unique characteristics of students taking part in the ESN Survey (e.g. richer parents, living in a bigger city, higher educational level) or c) differently defined age group.

Figure 12. Comparing the results of ESNSurvey 2007 (n= 3 233) with WVS 1999-2000 (n=970): ratio of respondents indicating religion as very important



Summing up, even if it is difficult to decide which characteristics of the two compared groups were critical for the observed differences, **results showed a rather stable influence of the home country on value importance.** In this sense, the comparison confirms that **there are differences between students coming from different countries.**

In addition, two questions concerning values were related to

- a) the choice between protecting the environment and giving priority to economic growth and job creation;
- b) a willingness to fight for one's country.

**Most of the students (83%) said that protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs. 17% said that economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent.**

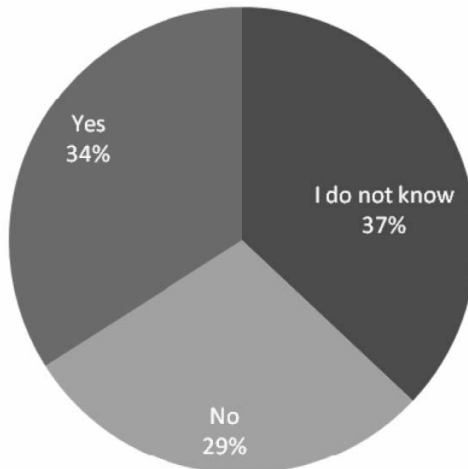


The following groups of students stated that economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority more often than on average:

- males;
- students coming from Poland, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, Turkey;
- with family income above the national average;
- whose family lived in the big city or in the suburbs of the big city;
- those studying business studies or management sciences.
- those declaring their political view as "right".

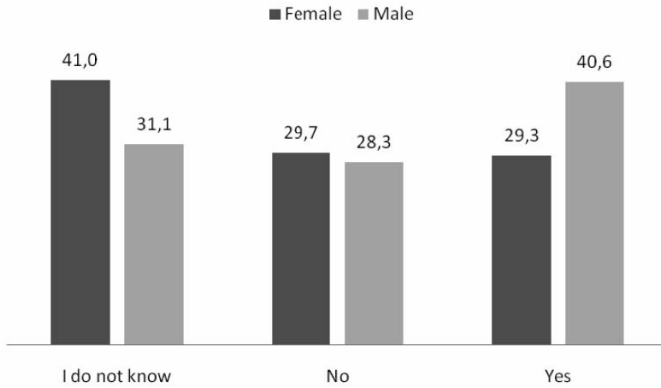
Within our survey we also asked whether respondents have a willingness to fight for their country. Most of the respondents had difficulties with answering the question (37% of them chose *I don't know*). 34% said they would fight and 29% that they would not fight. **The results show a relatively low willingness to fight for one's country.**

**Figure 13. Willingness to fight for one's country (n= 7 948)**



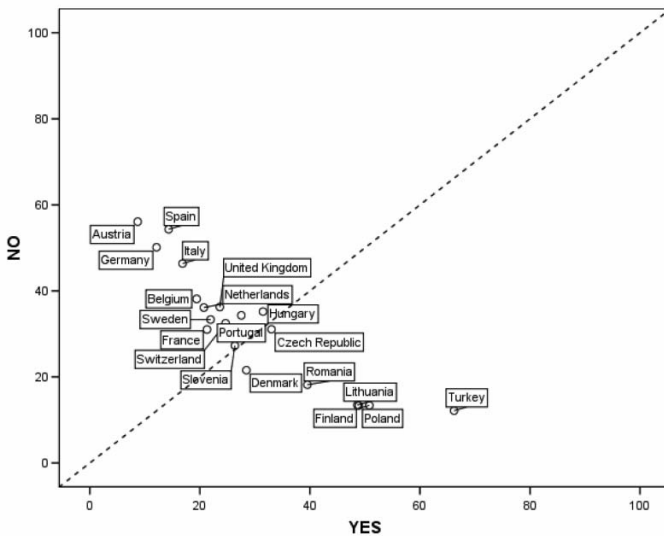
Although we may notice the discrepancy between males and females, its small size may be termed a surprise. Almost the same ratios of both genders responded negatively whilst males said more often they would fight and females that they did not know.

**Figure 14. Willingness to fight for one's country according to gender (%; n=7 916)**



The graph below shows differences between students as far as their home country is concerned. The horizontal axis shows the ratio of students who said they were willing to fight and the vertical line represents the ratio of students who said they were not willing to fight<sup>12</sup>.

**Figure 15. Willingness to fight for one's country according to home country (%; n= 7 236)**



<sup>12</sup> Analysis conducted only for Erasmus students

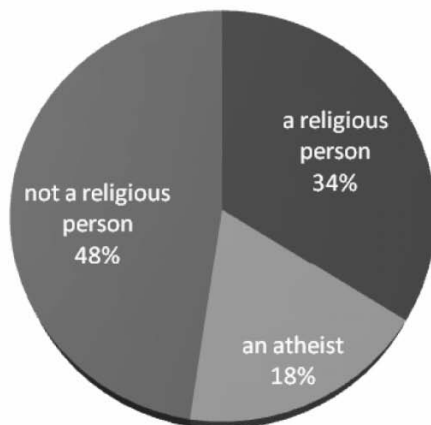


Once again it is easy to differentiate two groups of countries (on the graph the division is marked by the line): those from which students were more likely to be willing to fight (Turkey, Finland, Poland, Lithuania, Romania) and those whose students were not willing to fight (Austria, Spain, Germany, Italy, Belgium, UK, Portugal, Netherlands, France and Sweden).

## Religion

48% of students regard themselves as not being religious, 34% said they were and 18% said they were atheists.

**Figure 16. Religiousness (n=7 975)**



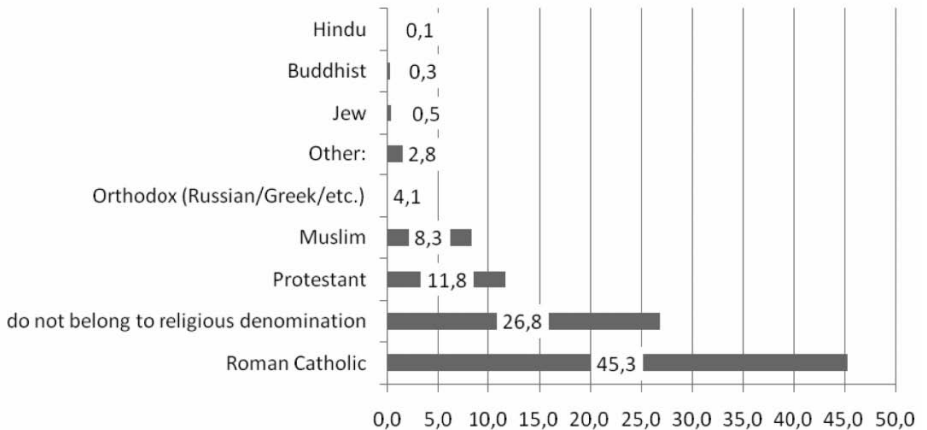
The following students declared themselves as being religious most often:

- coming from Central/Eastern Europe or Turkey;
- females;
- coming from families with income around national average or lower than average;
- coming from the countryside or villages.



When asked about their denomination almost half (45%) of Erasmus students said they were Roman Catholic, 27% did not belong to any religious denomination, 12%, were Protestants, 8,3% Muslims and 4,1% Orthodox. There were also some students declaring themselves to be Jews (0,5%), Buddhists (0,3%) or Hindu (0,1%).

**Figure 17. Students denomination (%; n=5 200)**



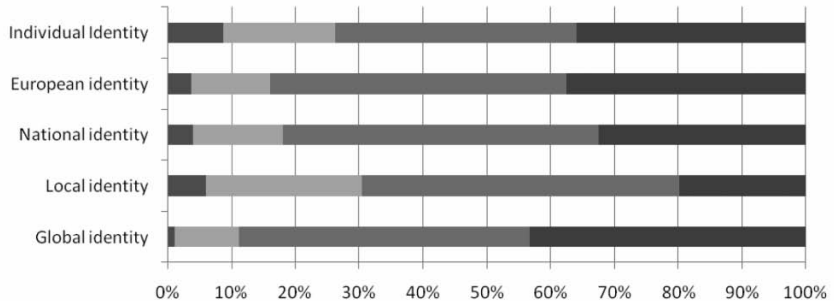
It is very interesting that even though only slightly more than 1/3 of students defined themselves as being religious, almost 75% identified themselves with a specific denomination. Analyzing the relationship between denomination (for the four most populous denominations) and being religious, we may notice that the ratio of defining oneself as religious was the highest for students who described themselves as Orthodox (60%), Roman Catholic and Muslim (51%) and the lowest for Protestants (31,6%).



## Political identification

Students defined their identity as: global (89%), European (84%), national (82%), individual (73%) and local (70%).

Figure 18. Identity (n=7 915)



	Global identity	Local identity	National identity	European identity	Individual Identity
■ Strongly Disagree	1,2	6,0	4,0	3,8	8,7
■ Disagree	10,1	24,5	14,2	12,3	17,6
■ Agree	45,6	49,7	49,3	46,5	37,9
■ Strongly Agree	43,2	19,8	32,4	37,4	35,9

Identity is perceived differently between students coming from different countries<sup>13</sup>. The differences are not high and may be partially caused by the national political situation (national elections etc.). Still, we can notice that there are no big differences between the old and new EU member states. Surprisingly, Poland had the highest ratio of students who identified themselves with Europe<sup>14</sup>. Finland was also an interesting case since students from this country articulated strong individual, local and national identities and relatively weak global and European ones.

<sup>13</sup> ANOVA showed that the influence of home country is the strongest in case of European identity.

<sup>14</sup> Other studies also showed that Polish citizens have the highest identification with EU.

**Table 3. Identity of Erasmus students according to home country (%; n= 7 171). Light gray indicates the countries with highest ratios of students who chose a specific identity, while dark gray the countries with the lowest ratio**

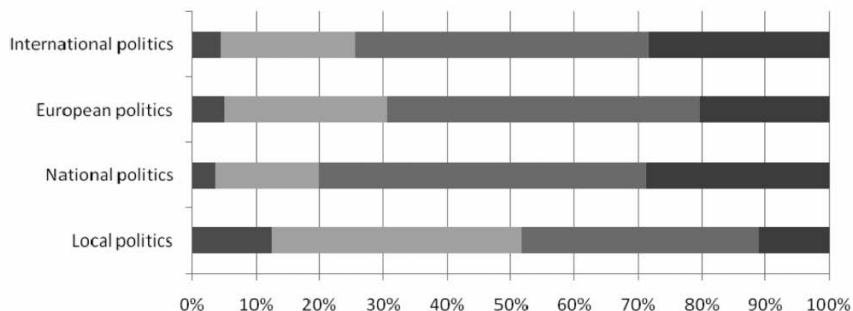
	<b>Global identity</b>	<b>Local identity</b>	<b>National identity</b>	<b>European identity</b>	<b>Individual Identity</b>
<b>Austria</b>	83,9	70,5	66,1	82,5	87,4
<b>Belgium</b>	92,5	65	69,2	85,8	75
<b>Finland</b>	85,6	74,2	93,2	83,6	87,3
<b>France</b>	84,8	59,6	79,2	95,1	68,4
<b>Germany</b>	80,4	67,5	73,7	91,3	77,5
<b>Italy</b>	90,2	61,4	73,8	92,8	64,9
<b>Lithuania</b>	89,6	77,3	89,6	93,5	81,4
<b>Netherlands</b>	91,1	60,9	76,7	76	78,5
<b>Poland</b>	92,3	69	89,1	95,3	75
<b>Portugal</b>	94,3	69,4	86,7	93,7	65,8
<b>Romania</b>	88,5	74,2	87,3	93,4	76,8
<b>Spain</b>	94,5	70,8	71,4	86,4	62,5
<b>Sweden</b>	85,4	72,8	83,5	82,5	75,5
<b>Turkey</b>	90,6	71,3	79,7	65,4	63,6
<b>UK</b>	88,1	67,8	81	82,8	72,7

## Interest in Politics

Students were asked about their interest in politics. Most of them were interested in national (80%), international (74%) and European (69%) politics while far fewer were interested in local politics (47%). The results are similar to the question concerning identity: students were more interested in politics on a national or international level than the local one.



Figure 19. Interest in politics (%; n= 7 960)



	Local politics	National politics	European politics	International politics
■ Not at all interested	12,5	3,7	5,1	4,5
■ Not very interested	39,2	16,3	25,5	21,2
■ Fairly interested	37,2	51,2	48,9	45,9
■ Very interested	11,0	28,8	20,4	28,4

In a similar way to the question of identity, there are differences between countries. Students from Belgium, Netherlands and Romania declared a relatively low interest level on each dimension. Students from Austria, Turkey, Germany and France acknowledged a high level of interest in politics.

The table shows the highest ratio of interest in European and international politics in German-speaking countries (Austria, Germany). A relatively high level of interest in local politics is observed for Portugal, Spain and Turkey.

Table 4. Interest in diverse politics level of Erasmus students according to home country (%; n=7 202). Dark grey indicates the countries with highest ratios of students who chose specific identity, while light grey the countries with lowest ratio

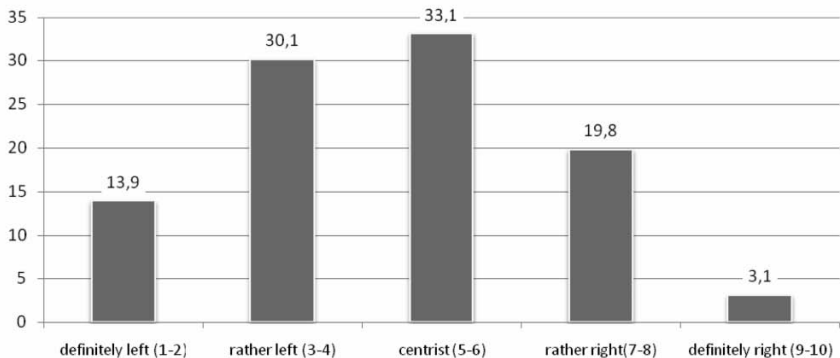
	Local	National	European	International
<b>Austria</b>	48,4	84,8	84,8	87,1
<b>Belgium</b>	48,3	71,7	55	65
<b>Finland</b>	46,6	80,1	62,7	70,8
<b>France</b>	43,9	93,3	80	81,1
<b>Germany</b>	45,1	87,7	83,2	87,5

	Local	National	European	International
<b>Italy</b>	47,9	74,8	69,7	76,8
<b>Lithuania</b>	52,5	69,2	71,8	67,8
<b>Netherlands</b>	27,9	83,1	60,1	73,2
<b>Poland</b>	40,7	78,2	72,2	71,4
<b>Portugal</b>	53,2	81	72,2	65,2
<b>Romania</b>	41	68,9	71	63,9
<b>Spain</b>	60,2	79,2	65,1	70,8
<b>Sweden</b>	39,8	83,5	73,8	81,6
<b>Turkey</b>	69,3	87,1	69,4	77,8
<b>UK</b>	42,4	82,7	77,3	82

Last but not least, respondents were asked to describe their political views on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 indicated “left” and 10 “right” political stance (5,5 would mean a neutral position). 35,1 % of students declared their political views as centrist (answers 5-6), 30,1% as left (3-4), 19,8% as rather right (7-8), 13,9% as definitely left (1-2) and 3,1% as definitely right. Despite students showing diversity in terms of political stance, they more often declared themselves as left (44%) rather than right (23%). The following student groups would more often describe themselves as being right<sup>15</sup>:

- males;
- coming from Romania;
- with higher family income;
- having better educated parents.

**Figure 20. Political views of Erasmus students (%; n=7 437)**



<sup>15</sup> The differences were statistically significant but moderate.



# Life style

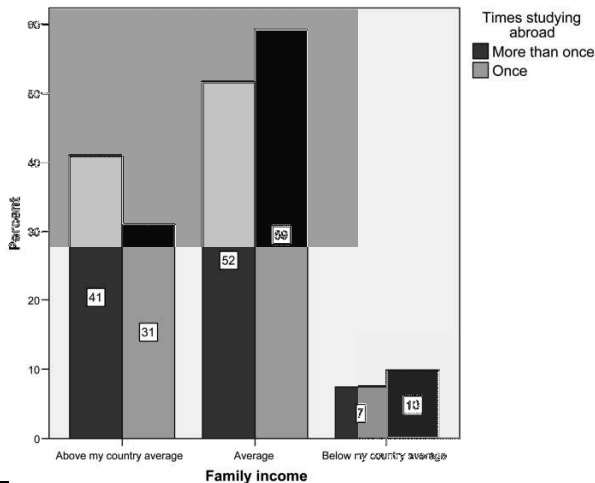
We wished to verify if the prescribed characteristics of a member of Generation Mobility are indeed those which would best describe young exchange students. Those characteristics would be:

- a) mobility (physical, virtual and communicative<sup>16</sup>);
- b) multilingualism;
- c) having a network of friends;
- d) owning 'mobility commodities';
- e) investing in one's personal development.

## Physical mobility

Some say that if a person starts to travel and be mobile, it becomes an addiction and one can never stop. In the ESN Survey 2005, we observed that 80% of exchange students have been abroad prior their exchange period, some of them even for longer periods of time. Among our mobile respondents, 77% were studying abroad for the first time, and 23% of them had already studied abroad before. Those who were older as well as those whose income was above the national average responded more frequently that they had studied abroad more times<sup>17</sup>.

Figure 21. How many times students studied abroad according to family income (n=6 353)

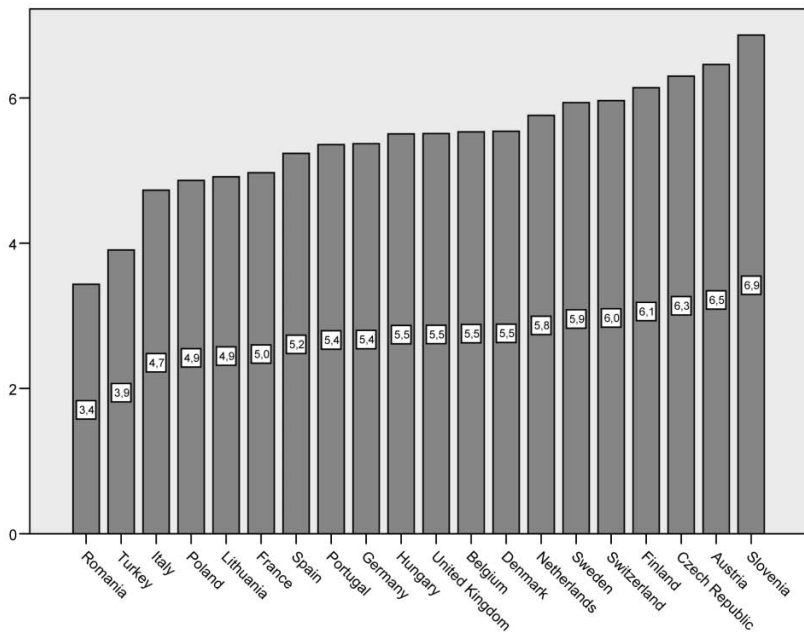


<sup>16</sup> John Urry distinguishes five mobilities: corporeal (travel of persons), physical (travel of objects), imaginative (via television or images), virtual (via internet), communicative (via email, phone).

<sup>17</sup> Differences are statistically significant.

Our respondents had in the last two years **visited on average 5 countries**. Those who went on exchange as Erasmus students visited slightly more than five countries (5,3), non-Erasmus students, 6 countries and non-mobile students, 4 countries. Students from smaller countries (Slovenia, Czech Republic and Austria) visited on average the largest number of countries. Students from a new EU country Romania (3,4) as well those from Turkey visited the lowest number of countries (about 4). Also those with a higher income visited more countries (6 in comparison to 5 countries visited by average and low income students). Interestingly, even if more women study abroad (64%), men have visited more countries in the last two years.

**Figure 22. Mean number of visited foreign countries within the last two years according to the home country, if more than 100 respondents (n= 5 652)**

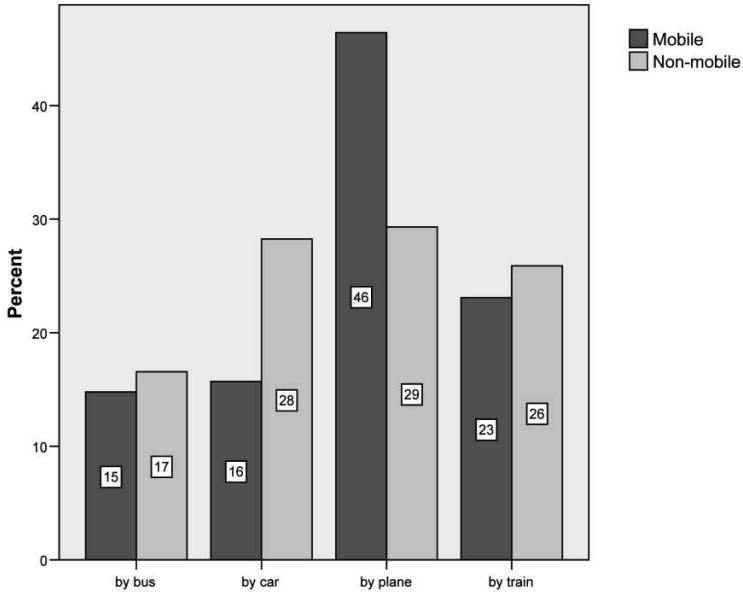


## Preferred means of transportation

Students **preferred means of transportation was the plane**. It was indicated as such by 45% of respondents with 23% of them indicated train, 17% car and 15% bus. Those who went abroad preferred it over those who did not go abroad (it was chosen respectively by 46% and 29% of respondents from these groups). Additionally, students who visited more countries in the last two years chose plane over other means.



Figure 23. The most popular way of travelling for mobile and non-mobile students (n=7 120)



According to their home country, students indicated using certain means of transportation more often (see table 5). Male students chose the car more often than females as the preferred means and females chose the bus more often than males. People with higher incomes chose only slightly more often the plane or the train. As the difference is not big, this might show the **democratization of the formerly elitist flying**.

Table 5. The most popular mean of transportation for students according to their home country

Mean of transportation	Plane	Train	Car	Bus
Home country	Denmark Italy Sweden	Switzerland The Netherlands Germany Austria	Slovenia Portugal Romania	Turkey Czech Republic Lithuania Poland

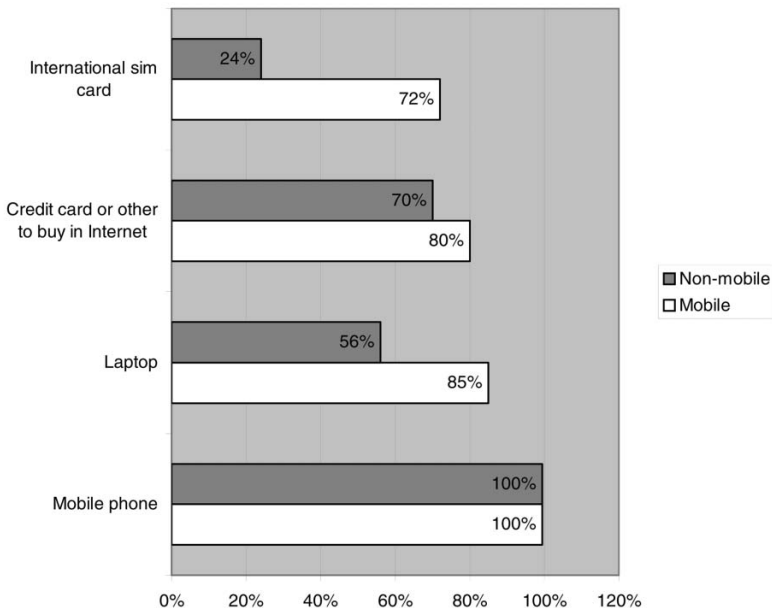


## Mobility commodities

What could certainly facilitate mobility and communication is the possession of some **commodities** characteristic for mobile individuals (a mobile phone, a laptop, a credit card and an international sim card).

As our research reveals, a **mobile phone** was possessed by practically all the respondents (99,7%). Similarly, 80% of mobile students, in comparison with 70% of non-mobile students had a **credit card** or other card with which one can purchase things on the internet. Differently, mobile students were more often found to be owners of a **laptop** (85% had one) than those who have never studied abroad (56%). Of course, the fact of mobility in this case is not the only determinant. What also had an impact on whether a person had a laptop or a credit card was the family income of a student (students with lower family income were less likely to have a laptop) as well as the country of origin. For example, in Romania 45% of students had a laptop and 68% in Hungary and Spain whilst, at the same time, almost all respondents in Denmark (99%) and more than 90% in Switzerland, Austria and Germany had a portable computer.

**Figure 24. Possession of the mobility commodities by mobile and non-mobile students**



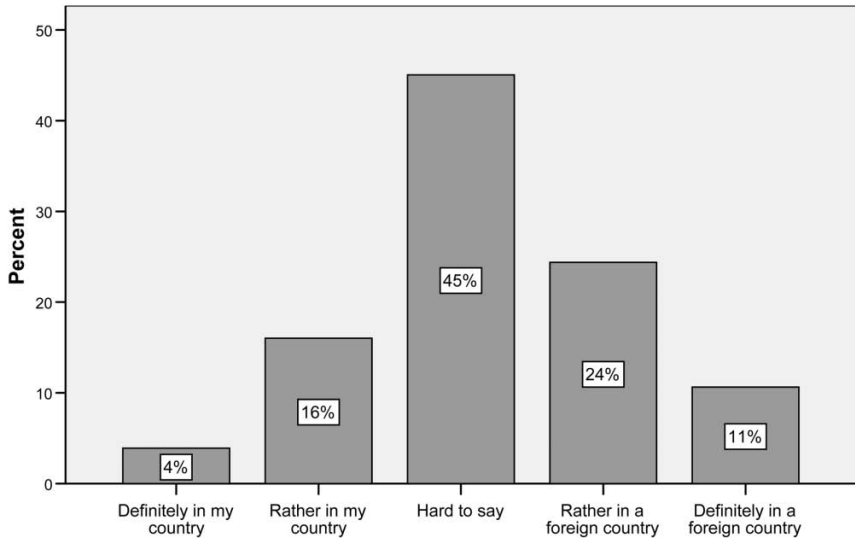


Taking into account the differences of income between countries as well as the fact that in our survey those who studied abroad were older than those who had not yet studied abroad, it seems that there was only one symbol of studying abroad which was not determined by the financial situation of a students. It was an **international sim card** for the mobile phone<sup>18</sup>. As we can see 72% of exchange students were owners of an international sim card compared to 24% of those who had never studied abroad.

## Willingness to work in a foreign country

Among the respondents, **most of them answered that it is hard to say if they would prefer to work in their own country or in a foreign country (45%)**. 11% said they would definitely want to work in a foreign country and 24% that they would rather work in a foreign country. Some students (4%) definitely preferred to work in their own country or rather in their own country (16%).

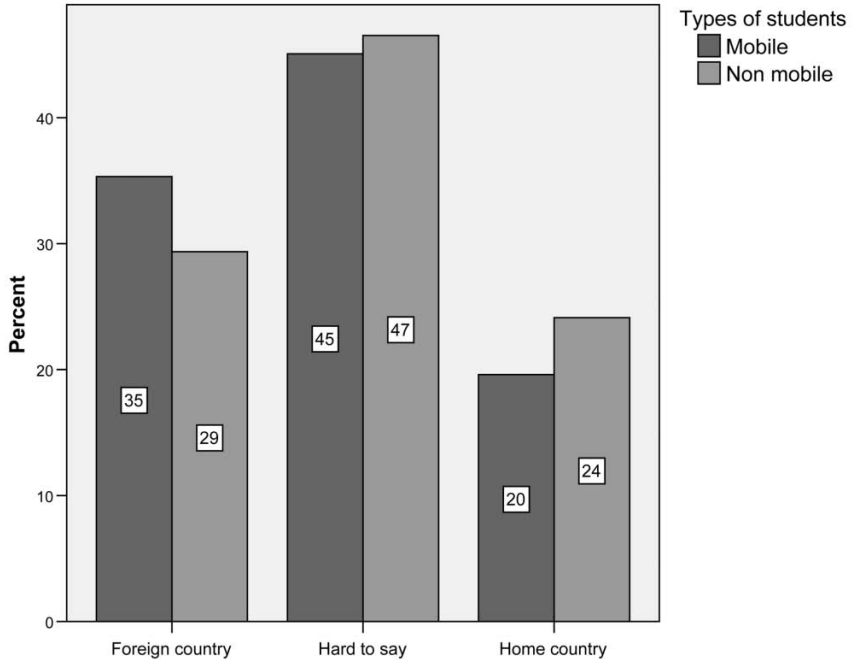
Figure 25. Preference to work at home or in a foreign country (n=7 957)



<sup>18</sup> It is used to have a local mobile number of a host country. It costs not much or it is even given gratis.

One of the factors that influenced the preference of working in a foreign country was the number of languages spoken. Those who spoke more languages were more willing to go and work abroad.

Figure 26. Work place preference<sup>19</sup> for mobile and non-mobile students (n=7155)



## Virtual mobility

The development of technology gives students opportunities to cross borders in the virtual world as well as communicate and share information with people all around the world. Several tools are available to ease and speed up communication.

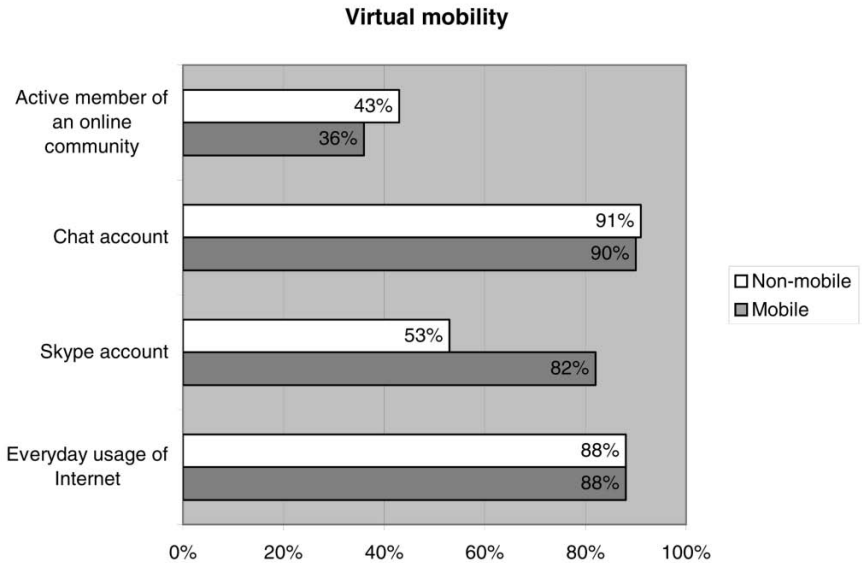
Our respondents **used internet everyday (88%)** or several times during the week (10%). Those with higher income and males used it just a bit more frequently. There was no difference in **Internet use** between mobile and non-mobile

<sup>19</sup> Category 'foreign country' includes categories 'definitely in a foreign country' and 'rather in a foreign country'. Category 'home country' includes categories 'definitely in a home country' and 'rather in a home country'.



students. Similarly, **chat** was a tool known equally to both groups of students: around 90% of respondents from each of the groups had a chat account. **Skype** (an Internet phone used for cheap international calling) was used more often by exchange students. 82% of them had a Skype account compared to 53% of non-mobile students. In contrast, non-mobile students were more often members of **online communities** (43%) in comparison with 36% of mobile students.

Figure 27. Virtual mobility for mobile and non-mobile students



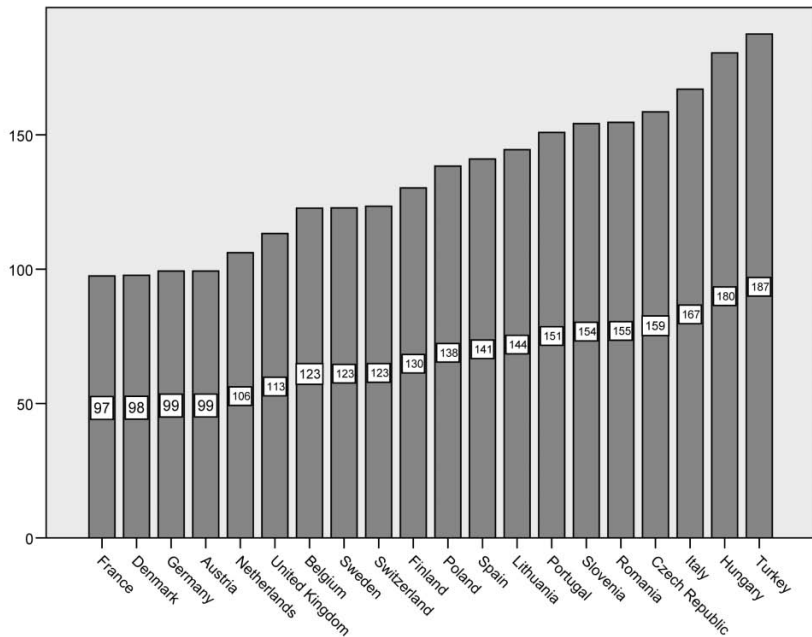
## Communicative mobility

Almost all of the students had a mobile phone. **On average they had 134 phone numbers in their mobile phone address books**<sup>20</sup>. Mobile and non-mobile students did not differ in the amount of contacts. Groups of students that declared that they had more contacts were those with an income above the national average and those who said that friends were an important or very important value in their lives. Similarly, students from Turkey and Hungary

<sup>20</sup> There were some respondents who answered 'a lot' or 'any'. But the number of those responses was very low (about 0,05%).

had the biggest number of contacts in their mobile phones (187 and 180 respectively).

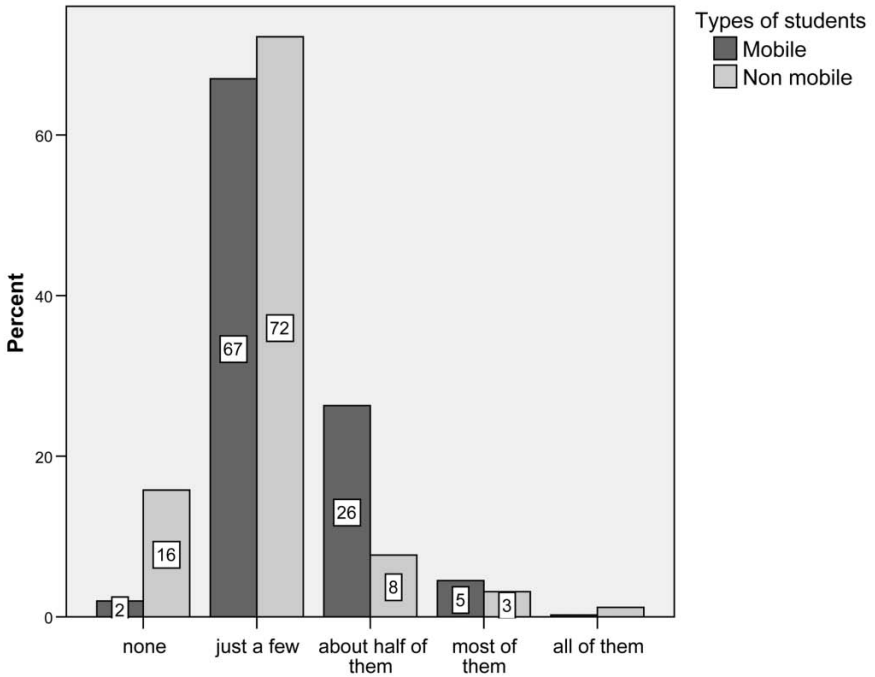
**Figure 28. Mean number of phone numbers in one's mobile phone contact book (n=6 869)**



Generally, most of the numbers were local ones. **67% of respondents said that just a few numbers from their mobile phone address books belonged to people from another country.** But we observed a much higher ratio of international phone numbers among ex-exchange students. 26% of them said that about half of them were not local numbers (compared to 8% of non-mobile ones). Among the latter, 16% said they had no foreign numbers in their phones (compared to 2% for mobile students).

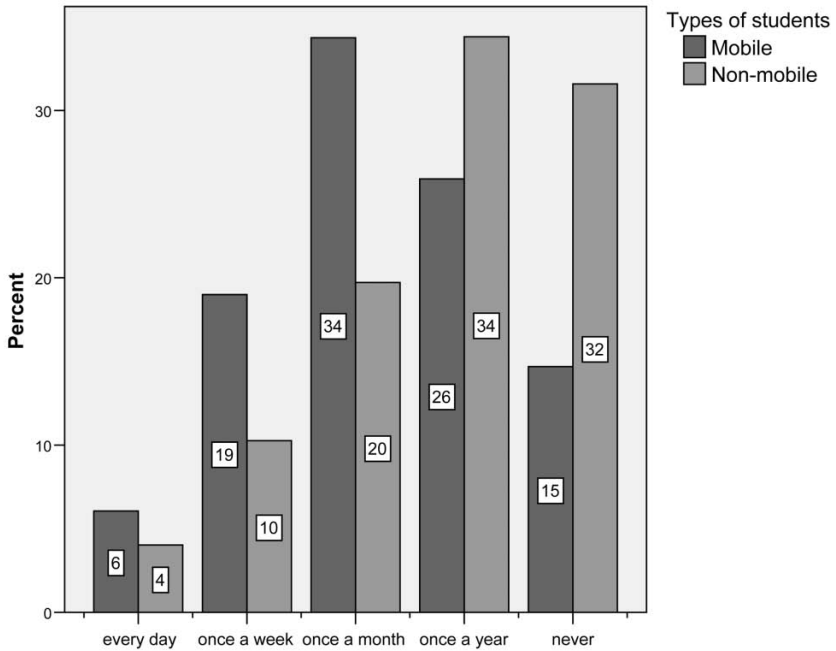


Figure 29. Ratio of phone numbers coming from other countries for mobile and non-mobile students in their mobile phone contacts books (n=5 862)



Students differed as far as the frequency of calling abroad is concerned: **those who went on exchange called abroad more often** than those who did not. Among non-mobile students 32% never called abroad and among ex-exchange students this number equalled 15%. Most of the mobile students called once a month (34%) with once a year (26%) or once a week (19%) also featuring.

Figure 30. Frequency of calling abroad for mobile and non-mobile students (n=5 862)



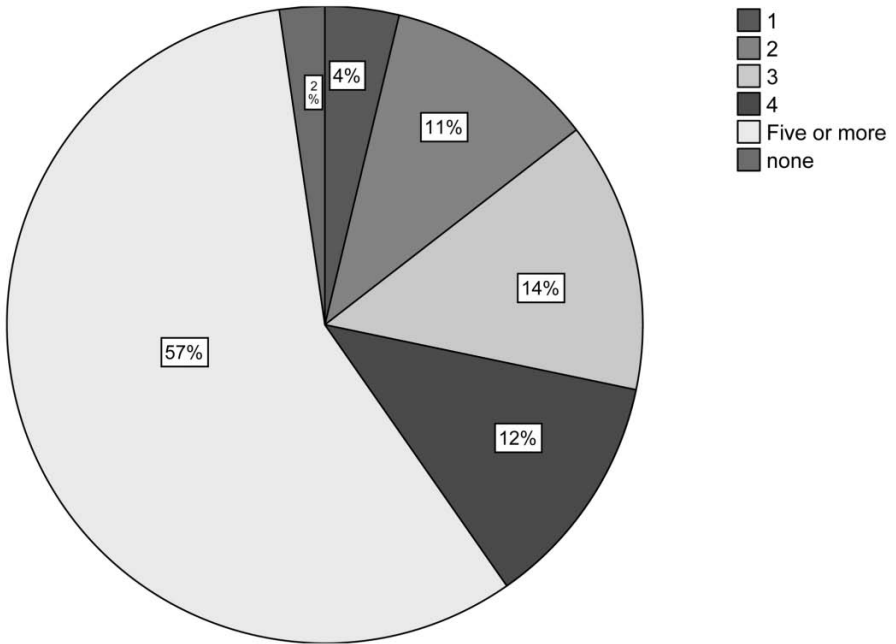
## Friends' networks

As ESNSurvey2005 showed, meeting new friends, building networks and learning how to communicate and with people of different backgrounds was one of the most important outcomes of the exchange stay abroad. In fact, among those who finished their exchange **91% of the students stayed in touch with foreign friends** whom they met while being on exchange. Most of them stayed in touch with 5 or more friends (57%). **34,5% of students have visited their friends** when the scholarship was over.

Students most often kept in contact with their exchange friends or visited them if they described their identity as European or Global. Also those who would like to work in a foreign country, those who were active members of the Erasmus Student Network and those who were satisfied with their stay more often stayed in contact with their friends from exchange.



Figure 31. Number of friends with whom one stayed in touch after exchange (n=5 446)



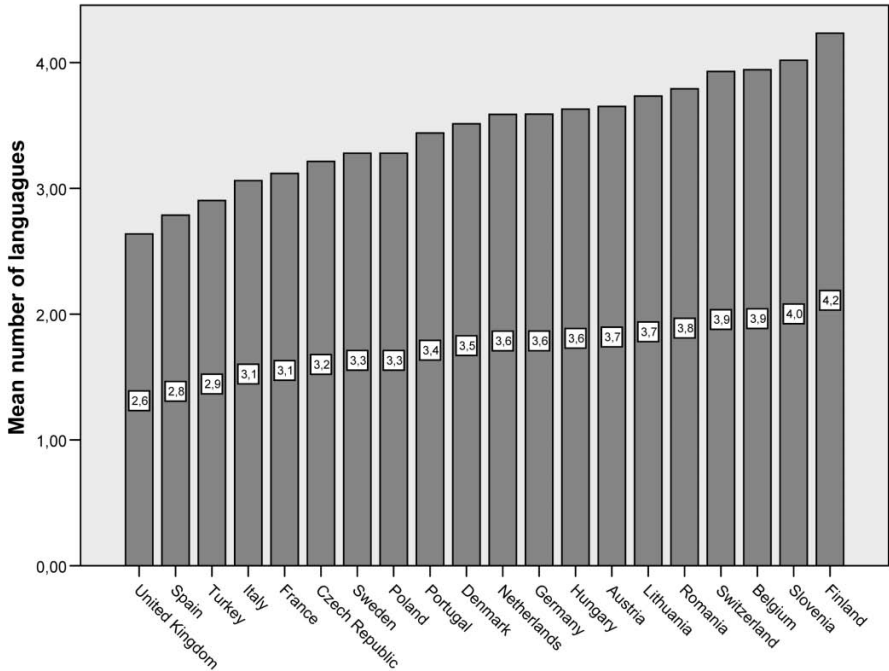
## Multilingualism

As our research report of Survey 2005 showed, 73% of students attended a language course during their stay and improved their knowledge of foreign languages while on an exchange. In effect, **most of the students spoke 3 languages (40%) or 4 languages (26%)**. 18% of respondents spoke 2 languages and 11% – 5 languages.

When it comes to the country of their origin, the most multilingual were students from countries where more than one language is an official one, so from **Finland, Slovenia, Belgium and Switzerland: they spoke on average 4 languages**. However, respondents from Romania, and Lithuania spoke almost 4 languages. The least multilingual were students from UK (2,6), Spain (2,8), Turkey (2,9) and Italy (3,1).



Figure 32. Mean number of languages spoken according to the home country, if more than 100 respondents (n=7191)



**Mobile students spoke on average more foreign languages (3,4) than those who have never studied abroad (2,9).** We of course cannot judge on how well they communicate in it, but we might suspect that mobile students would be more fluent at least in the language of their exchange country. Last but not least, students who went abroad, on average more than once, spoke more languages than those who studied only once (3,6 and 3,3 respectively).

## Personal development

We chose two indicators of a willingness to invest in one's personal development:

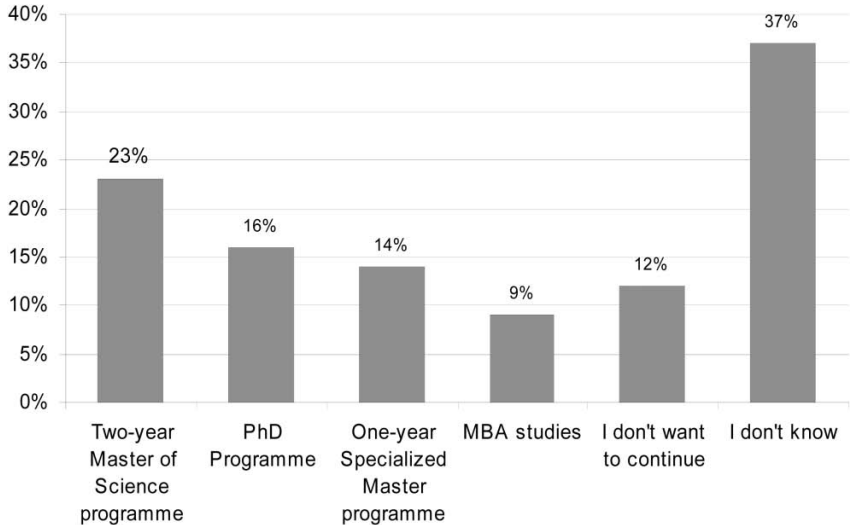
- a) plans to continue university education;
- b) informal learning through engagement in extracurricular activities.

Concerning the **plans of continuing university education**, more than 37% of our respondents did not know yet if they wanted to continue studies and



12% had decided not to. 23% of them decided to follow a two-year Master of Science programme, 16% a PhD programme, 14% a one-year Specialized Master programme and 9% MBA studies.

**Figure 33. Plans of continuing university education. Respondents could choose up to 3 answers**

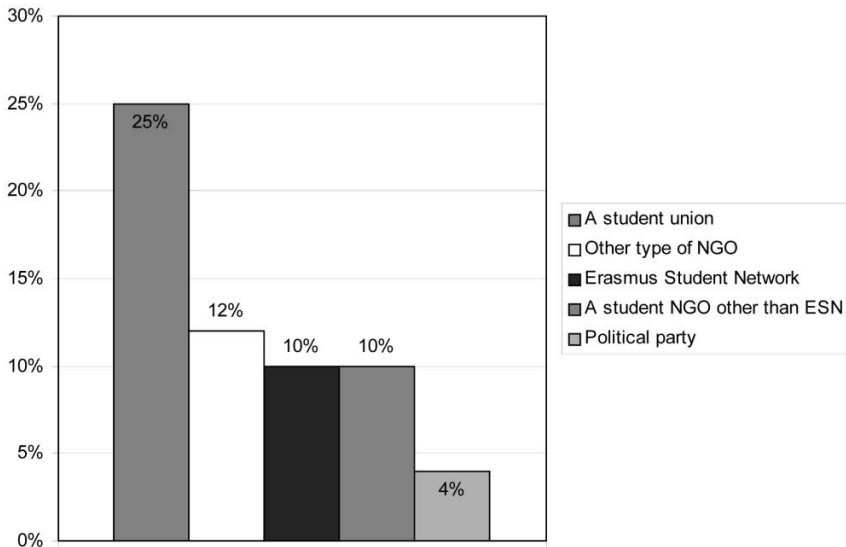


## Activism

**Our respondents were quite active in student unions (25%), and in different NGOs:** in the Erasmus Student Network<sup>21</sup> (10%), a student NGO other than ESN (10%), other type of NGO (12%). The smallest percentage of students was those who were a member of a **political party – only 4%**. Activism in those bodies did not depend on the fact that a student had been an exchange student.

<sup>21</sup> As the survey was an initiative of ESN and it was promoted through its channels the number of ESN members was very high compared to the overall population of students.

Figure 34. Activism of students



## Satisfaction with stay abroad

Students' satisfaction with their stay abroad was measured on a five point scale from 1 to 5 (respectively from very dissatisfied to very satisfied) by the use of three categories of questions concerning:

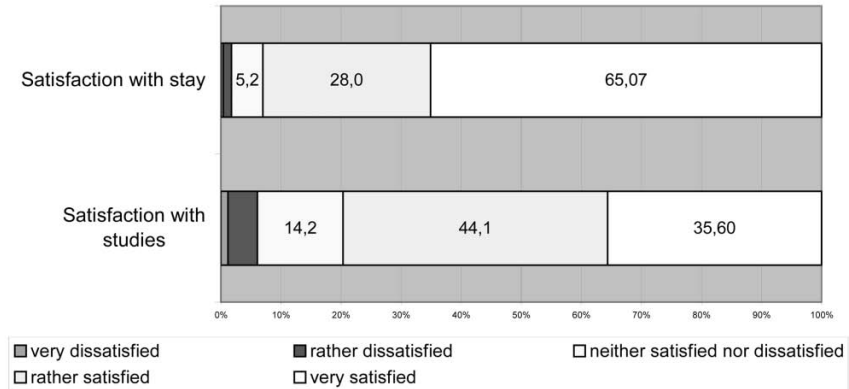
- overall satisfaction with stay;
- overall satisfaction with studies;
- satisfaction with twelve different aspects of stay.

For the overall **satisfaction with studies**, 80% of the students gave a positive answer ('very satisfied' and 'rather satisfied') and for the overall **satisfaction with stay** 93% of the students gave a positive answer ('very satisfied' and 'rather satisfied'). Only 6% of the students gave a negative answer ('rather dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied') for the overall satisfaction with studies, and 1% of the students gave a negative answer ('rather dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied') for the overall satisfaction with stay. As previous ESNSurvey studies showed,



students were more satisfied with their stay abroad than with their studies abroad<sup>22</sup>.

Figure 35. Students' overall satisfaction with stay and with studies (n=7 065)



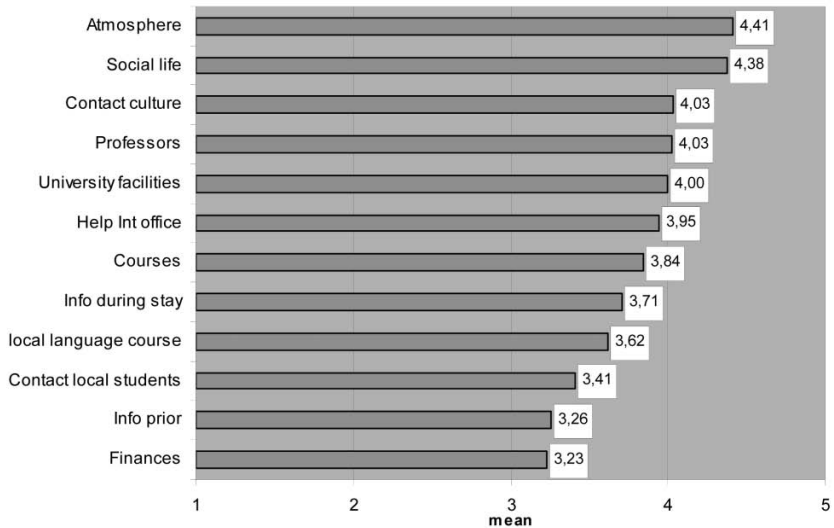
Students additionally indicated their level of satisfaction with twelve different aspects of staying abroad (see question 7 in the questionnaire, Annex 1).

Students had the highest mean score of **satisfaction with atmosphere of the city and country where the university was located** (4,41) and the lowest mean score with their **financial situation** (3,23). The results are similar to the results of the ESN Survey 2006.

The three elements that achieved the highest level of student satisfaction were: 1) the atmosphere of the city and country where the university is located; 2) social life; 3) contact with the host country's culture and with professors. Last year students chose the same top three factors but the difference is in their satisfaction with professors (last year it occupied the 5<sup>th</sup> position). At the same time, students are least satisfied with: 1) finances; 2) sufficiency of information prior to the studies abroad; 3) contact with local students. These results are identical to the results of the ESN Survey 2006.

<sup>22</sup> The Paired-Samples T-Test shows that the differences are statistically significant.

Figure 36. Students' satisfaction with different aspects of stay (n=6 719)



## Provision of information

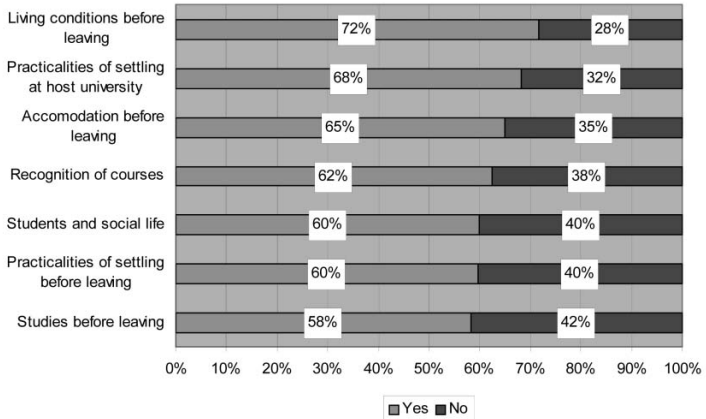
As the satisfaction with the sufficiency of information prior to the studies abroad appeared low in our previous studies as well as this year, students were asked to answer with “yes” or “no” to the question if they got enough information:

- about studies and university before leaving;
- about accommodation before leaving;
- about living conditions in a foreign country before leaving;
- about recognition of courses from home university;
- about student and social life at host university;
- about all the practicalities of settling in a new country before leaving;
- about all the practicalities of settling in a new country at host university.

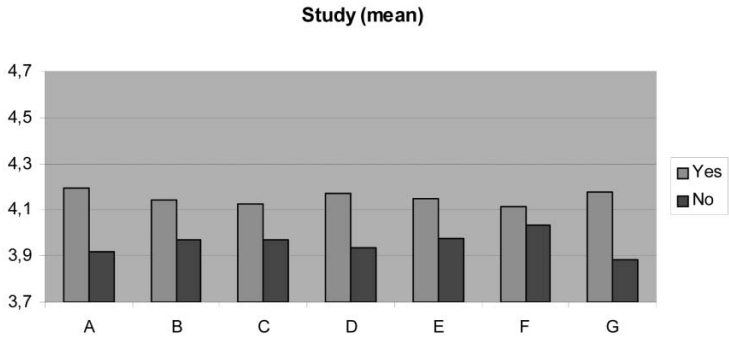
The highest percentage of students received **enough information about the living conditions in a foreign country before leaving** (72%), while the lowest percentage of students got enough information about studies and the university before leaving (58%). For all questions more than half of the students answered “yes” (>50%). This percentage could explain the low satisfaction with the sufficiency of information which has appeared before.



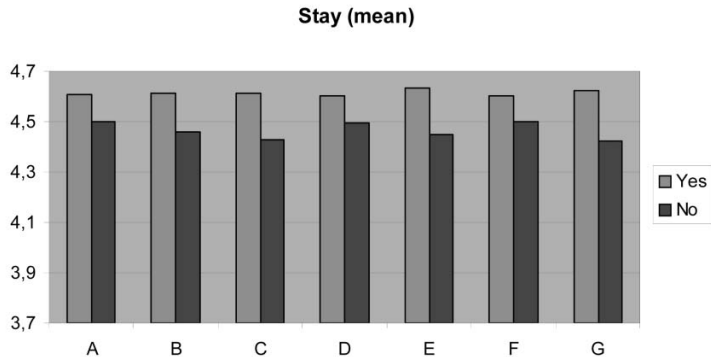
**Figure 37. Amount of information about different aspects (n=6 992)**



**Figure 38. Information received and overall satisfaction with study**

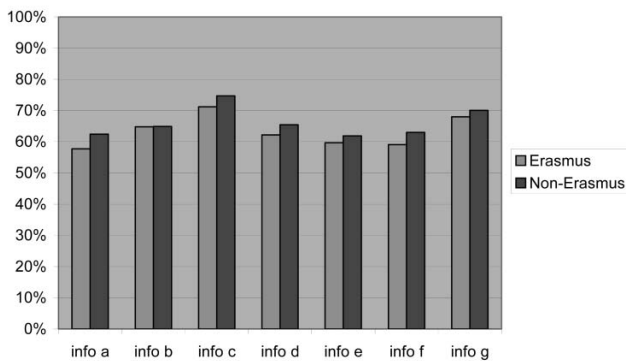


**Figure 39. Information received and overall satisfaction with study**



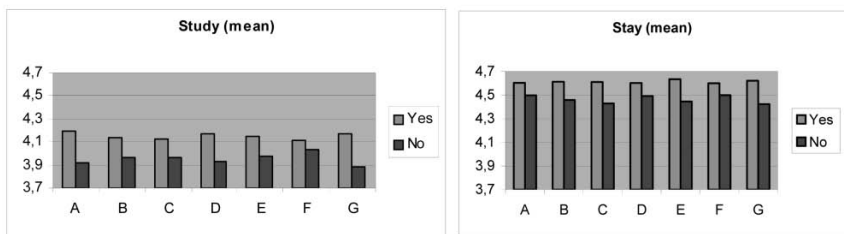
Generally, students staying abroad with the **Erasmus programme** got **less information** than non-Erasmus students. Statistically the difference between students staying abroad with the Erasmus programme and students staying abroad with other exchange programmes are significant only for question A and F, respectively ‘information about studies and university before leaving’, and ‘information about all the practicalities of settling in a new country before leaving’. In both cases, Erasmus students did not get enough information.

**Figure 40. Information received for students with Erasmus programme or other for those who answered ‘yes’ (n=6 965)**



The fact whether or not students got enough information influences their level of **satisfaction with stay and studies**. We observed that students who got enough information of each kind had higher mean scores concerning both aspects<sup>23</sup>. The difference between the mean scores of satisfaction was bigger for the satisfaction with study than for satisfaction with stay<sup>24</sup>.

**Figure 41. Information received and overall satisfaction with study (n=6 949) and with stay (n=6 959)**



<sup>23</sup> Differences were statistically significant for all questions.

<sup>24</sup> Differences were statistically significant for all questions.



Further research is required to be able to improve the amount of information students can get, because sufficiency of information is a factor that can improve satisfaction. In the future, we would need to understand better what the diverse sources of information are.

## Recognition courses taken abroad

During their stay abroad almost all students took courses and participated in the curricula of the host university (according to ESNSurvey 2005, 94% of the students took courses at a host university). Since a stay abroad should be a part of their regular study course, **the recognition of academic achievements** obtained is crucial. But as results in 2006 showed, the recognition of courses taken abroad is poor. When comparing this year results to the 2006 results (52% of the students had full recognition of their courses taken abroad) we can see that some progress has been made.

More than half of the students (58%) had all of their courses recognized by their home university after coming back from abroad. This year 6,0% of the students did not even have one course which they took abroad recognized by their home university (6,73% in 2006).

**Figure 42. Recognition of courses taken abroad (n=7 023)**

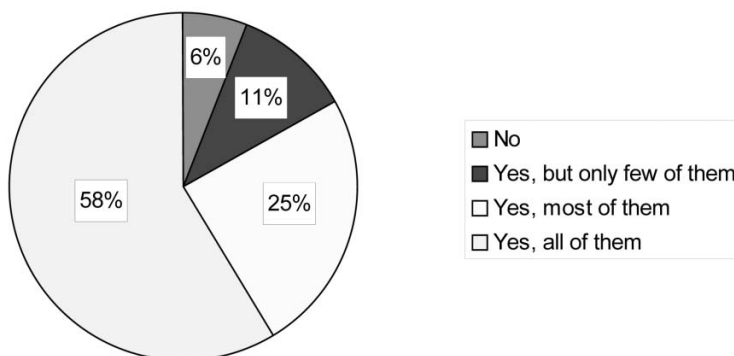
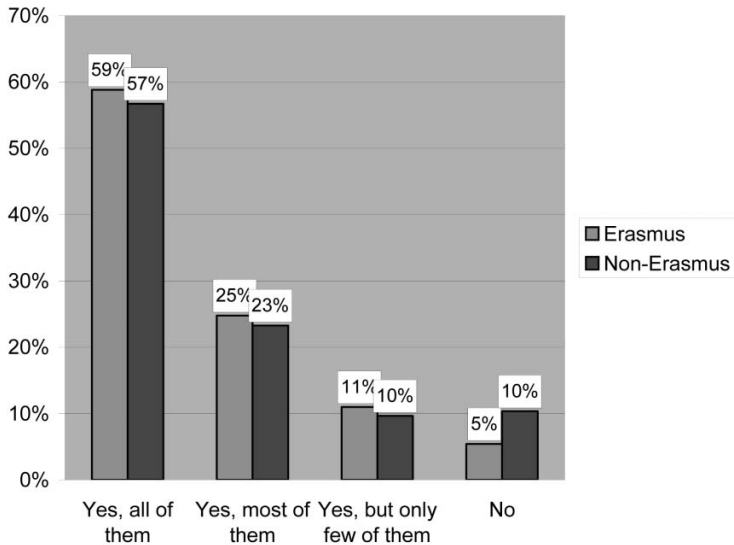




Figure 43. Recognition of courses abroad for Erasmus and non-Erasmus students (n=6 998)



Similarly to last years results, Erasmus students had more recognition of their courses than students staying abroad with another exchange programme<sup>25</sup>. 59% of the students staying abroad with the Erasmus programme had full recognition of their courses, compared to 57% of non-Erasmus students whilst 5% of Erasmus students had no recognition at all compared to 10% of non-Erasmus students.

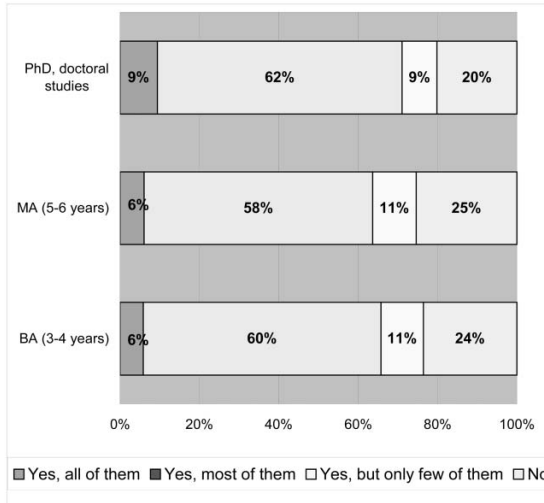
**Recognition differs for different levels or types of studies.** The percentage of having no courses recognized is the lowest for PhD students and the highest for Master students. The figure shows that the differences are small<sup>26</sup>, but favour PhD students.

<sup>25</sup> Differences are statistically significant.

<sup>26</sup> The differences are not statistically significant



**Figure 44. Recognition of courses abroad for type of studies (n=6 939)**



## Satisfaction with student organisations

More than half of the students have heard about the **Erasmus Student Network (ESN)**. 62% of the students, in answering the question *'Have you ever heard of ESN?'*, said "yes", and 38% of the students said "no". Only 57% of the students answered that there was an **ESN section at their host university**. 14% of the students answered that there was no ESN section at their host university, and 29% of the students did not know whether there was an ESN section or not.

**Figure 45. Percentage of students knowing ESN (n=7142)**

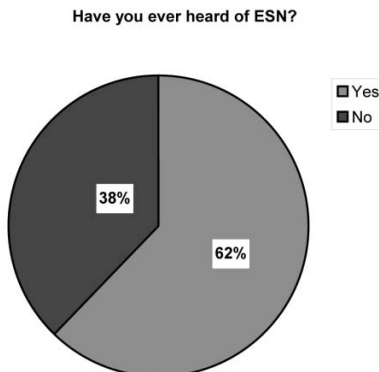
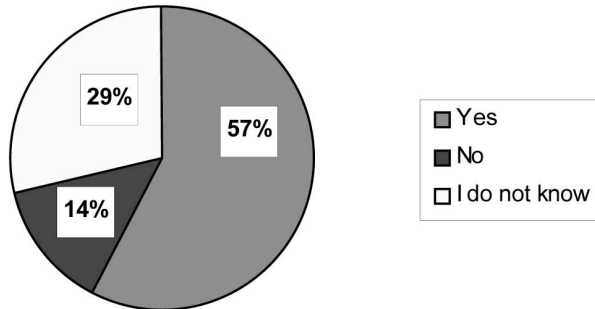


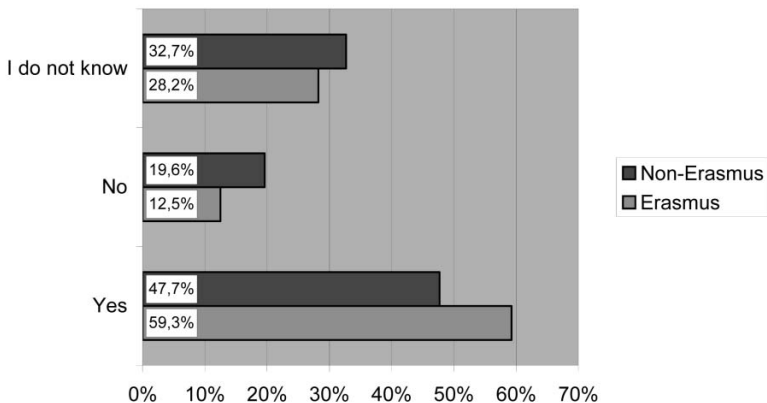
Figure 46. Percentage of students knowing that there was an ESN section at the host university (n=4672)

Is there an ESN section at your host university?



When we compare **students staying abroad with the Erasmus programme and students staying abroad with another exchange programmes** we see that more students from the Erasmus Programme had an ESN section at their host university (59%) than students staying abroad with another exchange programme (48%). Possibly, the non-Erasmus students were not informed about the existence of an ESN section at the host university.

Figure 47. ESN at host university for Erasmus students and other exchange students (n=4 658)



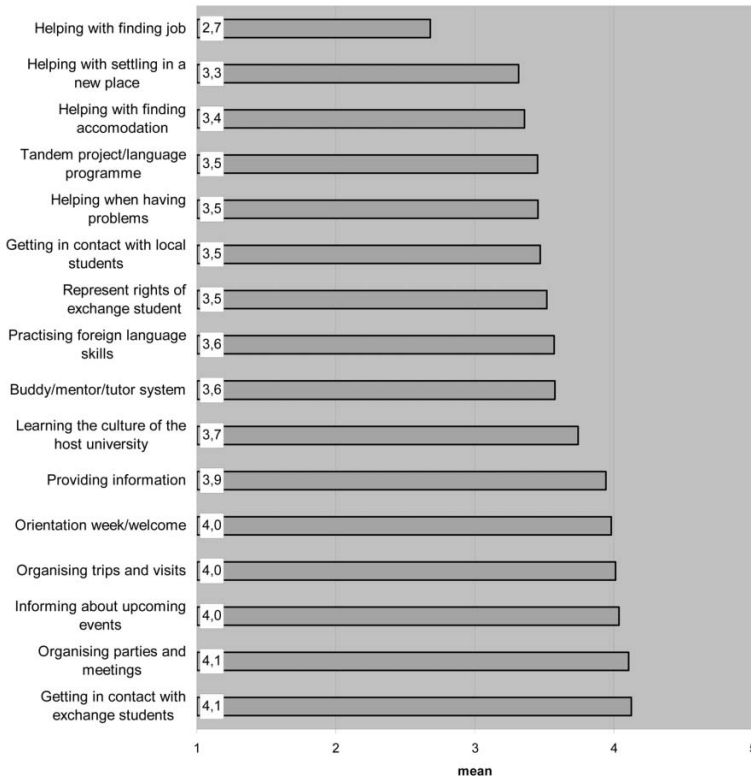
Students<sup>27</sup> were asked about their **satisfaction with ESN**, and **16 different elements of ESN service**. All the questions were measured on a five point scale

<sup>27</sup> Only students who answered that they heard from ESN and had an ESN section in their host university are considered.



from 1 to 5 (respectively from very dissatisfied to very satisfied) and they had an extra option that they could choose 'NA' (I did not use/Not Applicable) (see question 15 in the questionnaire, annex 1).

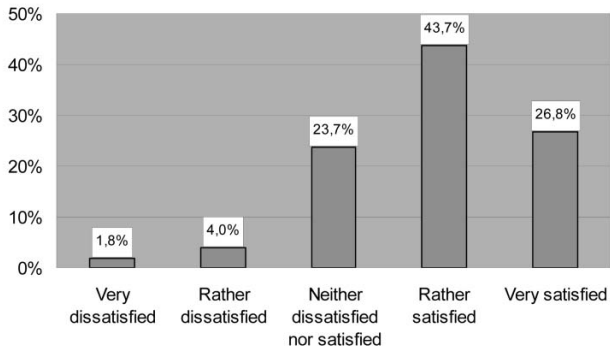
Figure 48. Mean students' satisfaction with elements of ESN service (n=726)



Students were least satisfied with the help they got from ESN for finding a job (mean=2,7) and were **most satisfied with the opportunity ESN gave them by getting in contact with other exchange students** and with the parties and meetings ESN organised (mean=4,1). As discussed before, information is important for students staying abroad, as it influences their overall satisfaction with studies and stay abroad. The figure shows that students are quite **satisfied with the provision of information by ESN** (mean=3,9).

**70,5% of the students gave a positive answer ('very satisfied' and 'rather satisfied') for their overall satisfaction with ESN.** Only 5% of students were rather or very dissatisfied.

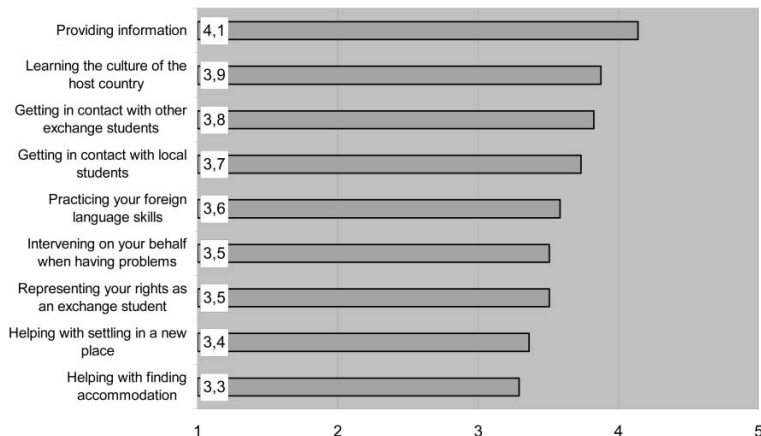
**Figure 49. Overall satisfaction with ESN (n=2 829)**



**ESN is not the only student organisation students can find at their host university** and 24,5% of the students had another student organisation present at their host university. The students who had **another student organisation** at their host university were asked about their overall satisfaction with the other student organisation and were asked about their satisfaction with the services of that student organisation.

**The satisfaction is the highest for providing information** (mean 4,1) and learning the culture of the host country (mean 3,9), and the **lowest for helping with finding accommodation** (mean 3,3) and helping with settling in a new place (mean 3,4). When we look at the results for the satisfaction with elements of ESN services, we see the same results for lowest and highest scores of satisfaction.

**Figure 50. Students' satisfaction with elements of other student organisations' services (n=860)**





There are no big differences<sup>28</sup> for the overall satisfaction with ESN and the overall satisfaction with another student organisation. Students were rather satisfied than dissatisfied about the student organisation at their host university.

72% of the students gave a positive answer ('very satisfied' and 'rather satisfied') for their overall satisfaction with another student organisation. The results are **again similar to the results of satisfaction with ESN.**

Figure 51. Overall satisfaction with other student organisation (n=1 921)

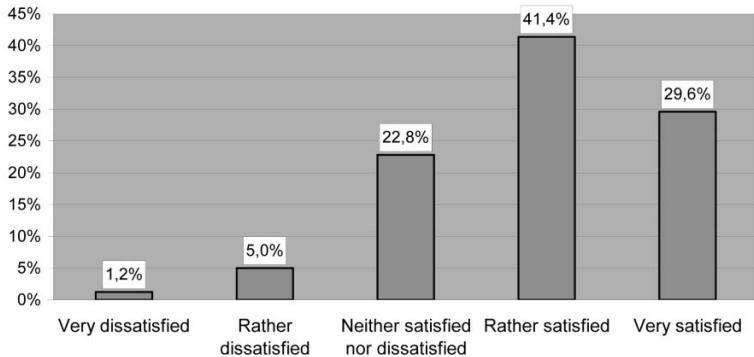
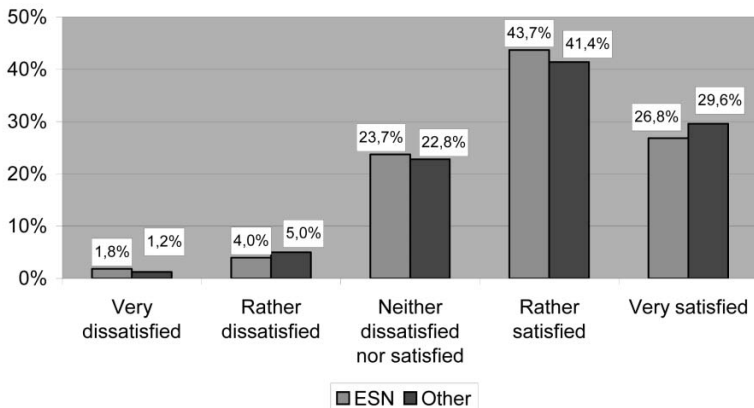


Figure 52. Comparing overall satisfaction with ESN and other student organisation (n=606)



<sup>28</sup> The differences are statistically significant.

## Recommendations

The European student environment is undergoing radical change. More and more students go to study abroad and these experiences – as they declare it – change their lives. Still, these individual experiences should have a global impact.

The stay abroad should not only be a way to gather skills but also to build a better society. Members of the Generation Mobility travel often, they are multilingual and have big networks of acquaintances. But what is needed to see real changes happen is their engagement in universities, local communities, countries and institutions.

Those who went abroad are equipped with new ideas, tools, and visions: intercultural knowledge and competences, new technologies, new communication tools, ease of travel, but also the urge of adventure. They do not want to follow standard routes, but many of them need some space to create and invent.

We suggest more information and promotion of Erasmus in order to see more students going abroad. Also, students' initiatives and activism at any level should be stressed and strengthened so that students can appreciate their experience abroad and learn more from it. The Erasmus Programme also needs to focus on bringing students closer to Europe. It is not enough to make them 'feel' European; it is important to make them 'act' for Europe.

### Information and promotion

1. Students need more practical information in all spheres concerning exchange, but the most information is needed about studies and university-life as well as all practicalities of settling in a new country. This information should be provided to them before they go on exchange.
2. Alumni of the programmes as well as student organisations should be involved in providing information about university courses as well as information about the informal part of the stay for future exchange students.
3. Since internet is a tool used practically by all students, we recommend to use it to improve the quality of provided information. More interactive



tools than simple stable websites should be used in order to satisfy the students' need for specific information and encourage students to study abroad (online communities, interactive presentation, film material etc).

4. Erasmus students should plan their stay abroad properly. Orientation courses on cultural learning and personal development could be organised for students, in this way giving them information and allowing them to use their time abroad effectively.

### **Students' initiative**

1. Erasmus students should be encouraged to engage in projects in the local host community, to work as volunteers in local organisations or companies. There should be ECTS credits given for this type of work.
2. Special grants should be given to fund self-designed follow-up projects after coming back from Erasmus, allowing students to benefit from their competences acquired abroad and maintain contact with their host country.
3. Students, whether mobile or not, are not very active in organisations and even less in politics. The Erasmus Programme should find a way to encourage students to get politically engaged at the national and European level.

### **European Integration**

1. Erasmus students declared relatively low interest in European politics compared to their identification with Europe. The idea of the European Union as a political entity should be promoted more effectively among students.
2. Work mobility preferences are higher for those students who went on exchange abroad. Therefore, to strengthen the European labor market we need to encourage students to travel and go abroad during their time at university but also at the high school level (even for shorter periods of time).
3. As the ability to speak foreign languages has an influence on the preference to move and work in a foreign country, more attention should be given to teaching the language(s) of the host country to the incoming students. Students should be encouraged to go abroad even without knowing the local language, but they should be given an opportunity to learn it during the exchange.



# ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Erasmus generation  
ESNSurvey 2007

## PART 1. YOUR STAY AS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT

1. Through which programme did you study/are you studying abroad?  
*(please refer to your most recent exchange or the one you are completing now)*

- a) Erasmus Programme
- b) CEEPUS
- c) Bilateral agreement between universities
- d) Governmental programme
- e) Private foundation
- f) Arranged by myself
- g) Never studied abroad
- h) Other:

2. Country where you studied in as an exchange student? \_\_\_\_\_

3. City where you studied in as an exchange student? \_\_\_\_\_

4 . The university you studied at as an exchange student?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. When did you start your stay abroad? Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How long was the period of your stay there? \_\_\_\_\_ Months



7. Please evaluate the following aspects of your stay abroad

	Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied
a) Courses at the host university	1	2	3	4	5
b) Professors	1	2	3	4	5
c) University facilities	1	2	3	4	5
d) Local language courses at the university	1	2	3	4	5
e) Sufficiency of information prior to your studies abroad (from home university)	1	2	3	4	5
f) Sufficiency of information while studying abroad (from host university)	1	2	3	4	5
g) Help from International Office at the host university	1	2	3	4	5
h) Financial situation	1	2	3	4	5
i) Contacts with local students	1	2	3	4	5
j) Contact with the host country's culture	1	2	3	4	5
k) Social life	1	2	3	4	5
l) The atmosphere of the city and country where the university was located	1	2	3	4	5

8. Did you get enough information...		
a) about studies and university before leaving	1.yes	2. no
b) about accommodation before leaving	1.yes	2. no

c) about living conditions in a foreign country before leaving	1.yes	2. no
d) about recognition of courses from home university	1.yes	2. no
e) about student and social life at host university	1.yes	2. no
f) about all the practicalities of settling in a new country before leaving	1.yes	2. no
g) about all the practicalities of settling in a new country at host university	1.yes	2. no

9. Were the courses you took abroad recognised by your local university?

- a) yes, all of them
- b) yes, most of them
- c) yes, but only few of them
- d) no

10. What is your overall level of satisfaction with your studies as an exchange student?

Very dissatisfied    

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
----	----	----	----	----

    Very satisfied

11. What is your overall level of satisfaction with your stay abroad as an exchange student?

Very dissatisfied    

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
----	----	----	----	----

    Very satisfied

## PART 2. ABOUT ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK (ESN)

12. Have you ever heard of Erasmus Student Network?

- a) Yes
- b) No ⇒ Go to question 17

13. Is there an ESN section at your host university?

- a) Yes
- b) No ⇒ Go to question 17
- c) I don't know ⇒ Go to question 17



14. Please evaluate the help of ESN in the following areas

	very dissatisfied	Rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied	I did not use (not applicable)
a) providing information	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b) helping with finding accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c) helping with settling in a new place (visa, banking)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d) intervening on your behalf when having problems	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e) getting in contact with local students	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f) getting in contact with other exchange students	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g) learning the culture of the host country	1	2	3	4	5	NA
h) practicing your foreign language skills	1	2	3	4	5	NA
i) representing my rights as an exchange student	1	2	3	4	5	NA

15. Please evaluate the services of ESN

	Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied not satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied	I did not use (not applicable)
a) Buddy/mentor/tutor system	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b) Tandem project/language exchange programme	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c) Orientation week/welcome days	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d) Organising trips and visiting tours	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e) Organising parties and informal meetings	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f) Informing about upcoming events	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g) Helping with finding a job	1	2	3	4	5	NA

16. What is your overall level of satisfaction with the help provided by the Erasmus Student Network?

Very dissatisfied 

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
----	----	----	----	----

 Very satisfied

17. Was there any other than ESN student organisation at your host university helping exchange students?

*(please refer to the one that helped you most)*

- a) Yes – name of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) No ⇒ go to question 20
- c) I don't know ⇒ go to question 20



18. Please evaluate the help of this organisation in the following areas:

	Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied not satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied	I did not use (not applicable)
a) providing information	1	2	3	4	5	NA
b) helping with finding accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
c) helping with settling in a new place (visa, banking)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
d) intervening on your behalf when having problems	1	2	3	4	5	NA
e) getting in contact with local students	1	2	3	4	5	NA
f) getting in contact with other exchange students	1	2	3	4	5	NA
g) learning the culture of the host country	1	2	3	4	5	NA
h) practicing your foreign language skills	1	2	3	4	5	NA
i) representing your rights as an exchange student	1	2	3	4	5	NA

19. What is your overall level of satisfaction with the help provided by this student organisation?

Very dissatisfied 

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
----	----	----	----	----

 Very satisfied

**PART 3. ERASMUS GENERATION**

20. For each of the following, please indicate how important it is in your life. Would you say it is very important, rather important, not very important or not at all important?

	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Rather important</b>	<b>Not very important</b>	<b>Not at all important</b>
a) Family	1	2	3	4
b) Friends	1	2	3	4
c) Leisure time	1	2	3	4
d) Politics	1	2	3	4
e) Work	1	2	3	4
f) Religion	1	2	3	4

21. Of course, we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that, would you be willing to fight for your country?

- a) yes
- b) no
- c) I do not know

22. Would you say you are

- a) a religious person
- b) not a religious person
- c) an atheist

23. Do you belong to religious denomination? If yes, which one?

- a) do not belong to religious denomination
- b) Protestant
- c) Roman Catholic
- d) Orthodox (Russian/Greek/etc.)
- e) Jew
- f) Muslim
- g) Hindu
- h) Buddhist
- i) Other \_\_\_\_\_



24. Here are two statements people sometimes make when discussing the environment and economic growth, Which of them comes closer to your own point of view?

- b) Protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth and some loss of jobs;
- c) Economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent;

25. People have different views about themselves and how they relate to the world. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about how you see yourself?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I see myself as a world citizen	1	2	3	4
b) I see myself as a part of my local community	1	2	3	4
c) I see myself as a part of my nation	1	2	3	4
d) I see myself as part of the European community	1	2	3	4
e) I see myself as an autonomous individual	1	2	3	4

26. How interested are you in politics: Are you very interested, fairly interested, not very interested or not at all interested?

- Very interested \_\_\_\_\_ 1
- Fairly interested \_\_\_\_\_ 2
- Not very interested \_\_\_\_\_ 3
- Not at all interested \_\_\_\_\_ 4



27. People’s interest sometimes varies across different areas of politics. Are you personally very interested, fairly interested, not very interested or not at all interested in ?

	<b>Very interested</b>	<b>Fairly interested</b>	<b>Not very interested</b>	<b>Not at all interested</b>	<b>(dk/ar)</b>
1) Local politics	1	2	3	4	77
2) National politics	1	2	3	4	77
3) European politics	1	2	3	4	77
4) International politics	1	2	3	4	77

28. In political matters, people talk of “the left” and “the right”. Generally speaking, how would you place your views on the scale, where 1 means left and 10 means right?

Left	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Right
------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	-------

29. Are you an active member of		
a) a political party	1.yes	2. no
b) Erasmus Student Network (ESN)	1.yes	2. no
c) a student NGO, other than ESN	1.yes	2. no
d) other type of NGO	1.yes	2. no
e) a student union	1.yes	2. no
f) an online community	1.yes	2. no

30. How often do you use the internet, the World Wide Web or e-mail – whether at home or at work – for your personal use?

- a) no access at home or work
- b) never use
- c) less than once a month



- d) once a month
- e) several times a month
- f) once a week
- g) several times a week
- h) every day

31. How many phone numbers do you have in your mobile phone's address book? (*please make an estimation*)

---

32. How many of them belong to the people from country other than your own?

- a) none
- b) just a few
- c) about half of them
- d) most of them
- e) all of them

33. Do you still staying abroad as an exchange student or have you finished your study abroad?

- a) still saying abroad ⇒ go to question 39
- b) finished studies abroad ⇒ go to question 34

34. Do stay in touch with foreign students, whom you met while being on Erasmus?

- a) Yes ⇒ go to question 35
- b) No ⇒ go to question 37

35. With how many of them do you stay in touch?

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4
- e) Five or more

36. Have you visited any of them in their host country when Erasmus scholarship was over?

- a) yes
- b) no

37. Altogether, how many foreign countries have you visited in the last 2 years? (*please make an estimation*)

38. How often do you call abroad?

- a) every day
- b) once a week
- c) once a month
- d) once a year
- e) never

38. How many times during your lifetime have you been abroad for at least 3 months or longer?

---

39. How many languages do you speak (including your first one)?

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 \_\_\_\_\_

more than ten



40. How do you travel most often?

- a) by plane
- b) by train
- c) by bus
- d) by car

41. Do you have...		
a) a laptop	1.yes	2. no
b) a credit card or other card with which you can purchase things on the internet	1.yes	2. no
c) a mobile phone	1.yes	2. no
d) an international sim card	1.yes	2. no
e) Skype Account	1.yes	2. no
f) chat account (such as googletalk, MSN)	1.yes	2. no

42. Would you prefer to work in your country or in a foreign country?

- a) Definitely in my country
- b) Rather in my country
- c) Hard to say
- d) Rather in a foreign country
- e) Definitely in a foreign country

#### **PART 4. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

43. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

44. Gender:

- a) female
- b) male

45. Country where your home university is located:

\_\_\_\_\_

46. City where your home university is located: \_\_\_\_\_

47. Home university: \_\_\_\_\_

48. Level/type of studies:

- a) BA (3-4 years)
- b) MA (5-6 years)
- c) PhD, doctoral studies

49. Major/area of studies: \_\_\_\_\_

50. Year of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

51. Do you plan to continue your university education?

*(please choose up to 2 answers)*

- a) Yes, at two-year Master of Science programme
- b) Yes, at one-year Specialized master programme
- c) yes, at PhD programme/doctoral studies
- d) yes, at MBA studies
- e) No
- f) I do not know yet

52. Are you a disabled student?

- a) Yes
- b) No

53. Who in your family has a higher education degree?

*(such as a university degree)*

- a) Mother
- b) Father
- c) Both
- d) None



54. Which phrase below best describes the area where your family lives?
- a) A big city
  - b) The suburbs of a big city
  - c) A town or a small city
  - d) A country village
  - e) A farm or home in the countryside
55. How would you describe your family's income?
- a) Above my country average
  - b) Average
  - c) Below my country average
56. How many times in your lifetime have you being studying abroad?
- a) once
  - b) more than once

THANK YOU FOR FILLING OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE!!!

## ANNEX 2: ABOUT ESN

**Erasmus Student Network** is a young, dynamic and independent organisation, aimed at supporting and developing student mobility in Europe and beyond. ESN was founded in 1990 and now we are present in **over 270 local sections** at Higher Education Institutions in **34 countries** (including all of the countries of the EU, except Luxembourg and Bulgaria, complemented by the Swiss Confederation, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, Morocco, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Azerbaijan) that support the social and cultural integration of exchange students as well as providing practical information for incoming and outgoing students. Our **Mission** is to foster student mobility in Higher Education under the principle of SHS – Students Helping Students and we represent the interests of over **150,000 exchange students** on a local, national and international level. We also work for the creation of a **more mobile and flexible educational environment** by supporting and developing the student exchange at different levels, and providing an intercultural experience as well to those students who cannot access a period abroad (“**internationalisation at home**”).

ESN's activities comprise of **hundreds of projects** developed at every different level. The main international projects of Erasmus Student Network are:

**1) ESN Survey** is a European-wide research programme among exchange students. Every year we handle a different topic: quality of studies abroad (2005 edition) and rights as an exchange student (2006 edition).

**2) Celebrations for the '20 Years of Erasmus' programme** - this was the main project for the year 2007. On 18<sup>th</sup> of January, the opening conference took place at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels. From May until June the Erasmus Van travelled around Europe to visit 50 local Erasmus Days in order to promote exchanges amongst local high schools and university students. Still now, page [www.20erasmus.eu](http://www.20erasmus.eu) collects detailed individual Erasmus testimonies.

**3) ESN Card** is a membership card, distributed by ESN sections to their members and exchange students, which offers a number of discounts at a local and European level as well as other advantages available at our website.

**4) ESN Bocconi Fundraising Conference** – training organised in cooperation with Università Bocconi in Milan, aiming to develop ESN members' skills and knowledge in finance, management and human resources.

**5) ESN Galaxy** is a web platform based on the new WEB 2.0 technology that brings together all the sections in the network allowing them to communicate and share information in real time. News from local sections are automatically collected from local websites and displayed on the central one. In this way exchange students can immediately have an overview of what is going on in the network and, for example, can look for accommodation or get information on their host country. ESN Galaxy also supports local sections by provision of web-based services.

**6) ESN Newsletter** is sent monthly to all subscribers informing them about the network, ESN events as well as on other interesting initiatives happening in Europe and beyond.

**7) ESN Events** – The International Board takes care of the international events which happen every year, such as: Regional Platforms, Cultural Medley and Annual General Meeting of ESN.

**8) ESN Satellite** is an easy downloadable website template for local sections of ESN providing services and a gateway to the ESN Galaxy. This website is very easy to update and maintain and can also be managed by people who don't have much of an IT background.



**9) ESN Identity** is a centralized management system for sections and members. ESN Identity is a high quality information platform making use of Web 2.0 technology. It creates a powerful social network easing the contacts between people overcoming the problem of distance and travel. With this platform people can work and meet at distance and will enhance the possibility to reach people with fewer opportunities, encouraging them to participate and be more active.

**10) ESN Magazine** – Three times a year ESN publishes an informative magazine about issues concerning exchange and mobility. The articles are gathered from volunteers all over Europe. ESN Magazine is distributed to local ESN sections and universities.

**11) ESN Healthy Erasmus** – ESN, in cooperation with EMSA – European Medical Students' Association, and EPSA - European Pharmaceutical Students' Association, is currently developing a project meant to provide exchange students useful medical information about a healthy lifestyle, nutrition, prevention and diseases.

**12) ESN European Voluntary Service** – ESN AISBL is a hosting and coordinating association for the project of the European Commission European Voluntary Service (EVS).

**Contact:**

If you have any questions or would like to know more about ESN, please contact us directly at [secretariat@esn.org](mailto:secretariat@esn.org)

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