



WORKSHOP ON ACADEMIC RECOGNITION
BETWEEN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA:
OLD PROBLEMS, NEW SOLUTIONS

16TH OF APRIL 2016 • FORTALEZA

El reconocimiento académico con países asociados: Proyecto BABEL (*Building Academic Bonds between Europe and Latin America*)

Jornadas de Movilidad Erasmus+ de Educación Superior
entre Países del Programa y Asociados (KA107)
SEPIE - Universidad Pública de Navarra
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With support from the European Commission

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EMA2 – STRAND 1 main goals **are:**

- to promote **the** European Higher Education;
- to encourage **the** reinforcement **and** improvement **of** students' career perspectives;
- to favour **the** intercultural understanding through **the** cooperation **with** third countries, in harmony with **the** EU external policy objectives, in order to contribute to the sustainable development of the third countries' Higher Education.

The BABEL Project

The project comprises 20 partner European and several Latin American countries' Higher Education Institutions and 34 associate institutions, and is implemented within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus, Action 2 – STRAND 1, Lot 12, Latin America.

Among this initiative's main goals, one can point out:

- the mutual enrichment **and** a better understanding **between** Europe and Latin America, through the exchange of people, knowledge and skills at Higher Education level;
- the increase of international cooperation **between** European and Latin American Countries' HEIs, thus contributing to foster the socio-economical development of this region;
- the promotion **of** transparency and recognition of studies and qualifications at an international level. (150 mobility flows.)



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Welcoming words: Brian Holmes, Director EACEA

The relevance of the topic of Academic
Recognition for internationalisation

Bárbara Costa
Director of the International Office
Universidade do Porto



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BABEL

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Why Academic Recognition is important



Mobility plays a
key role



Expected impact of Mobility :

Modernization of
curricula
Multidisciplinary

Development of
students'
intercultural and
"soft skills"

New teaching
methods inspired by
internationalization

Driver of
transparency and
better
understanding



BABEL

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Academic Recognition

Commitment at
the highest
level

Practical
implementation

U.PORTO



With support from the European Commission

Challenges

Lack of
knowledge

Different HE Systems
ECTS
vs.
no Credit System or different Systems

Credit transfer

Non-matching
programmes

Diverse
grading
systems



Academic Recognition

- **Mandatory for Credit Mobility**

“Full academic recognition will be given by the home HEI for the study period (including examinations or other forms of assessment) spent in the host HEI(s)”

(EM Programme Guide, page 56)



Objectives

Build a relationship of trust among the partners

Allow a more in-depth mutual knowledge

Adopt mechanisms to ensure full transparency and ease the conversion of grades and qualifications

Encourage the mobility of students



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The Erasmus Mundus Programme and the BABEL Project

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Erasmus Mundus

A Cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education funded by the European Commission for:

- enhancement of **quality** in European higher education;
- promotion of the European Union as a **centre of excellence** in learning around the world;
- promotion of **intercultural understanding** through cooperation with non-EU Countries.



BABEL

A project implemented by Latin American and European institutions aimed at:

- mutual enrichment and **better understanding** through the exchange of people, knowledge and skills at Higher Education level;
- increase of **international cooperation**, thus contributing to foster socio-economical development of Latin America;
- promotion of **transparency and recognition of studies and qualifications** at international level



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Analysis of the questionnaire's outcomes

Ricardo Manfredi Naveiro (LA perspective)
Juan Carlos Duque Ametzazurra (EU perspective)

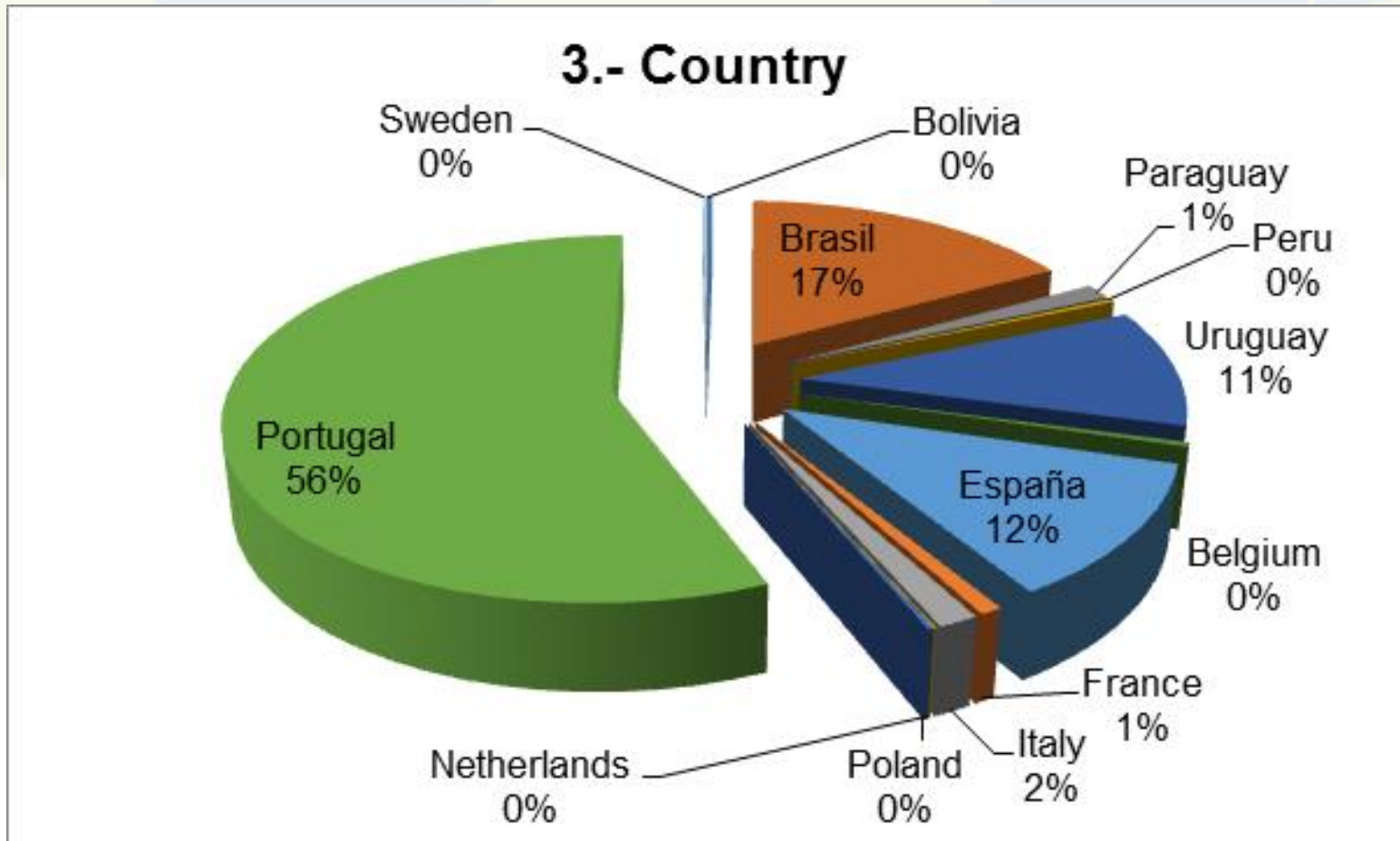
U.PORTO



With support from the European Commission

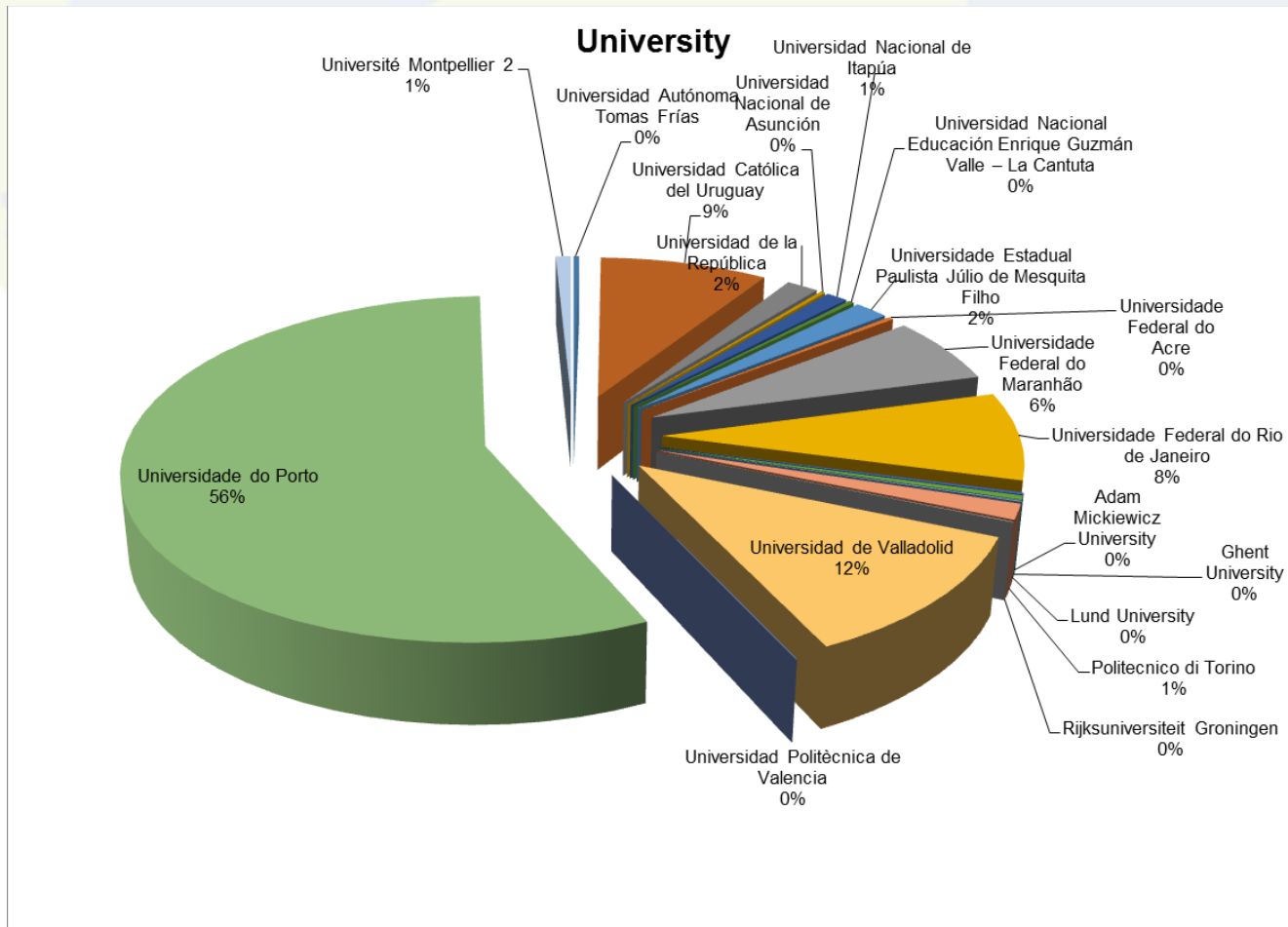
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Participation in the survey



Note: 0% = less than 1%

Participation in the survey

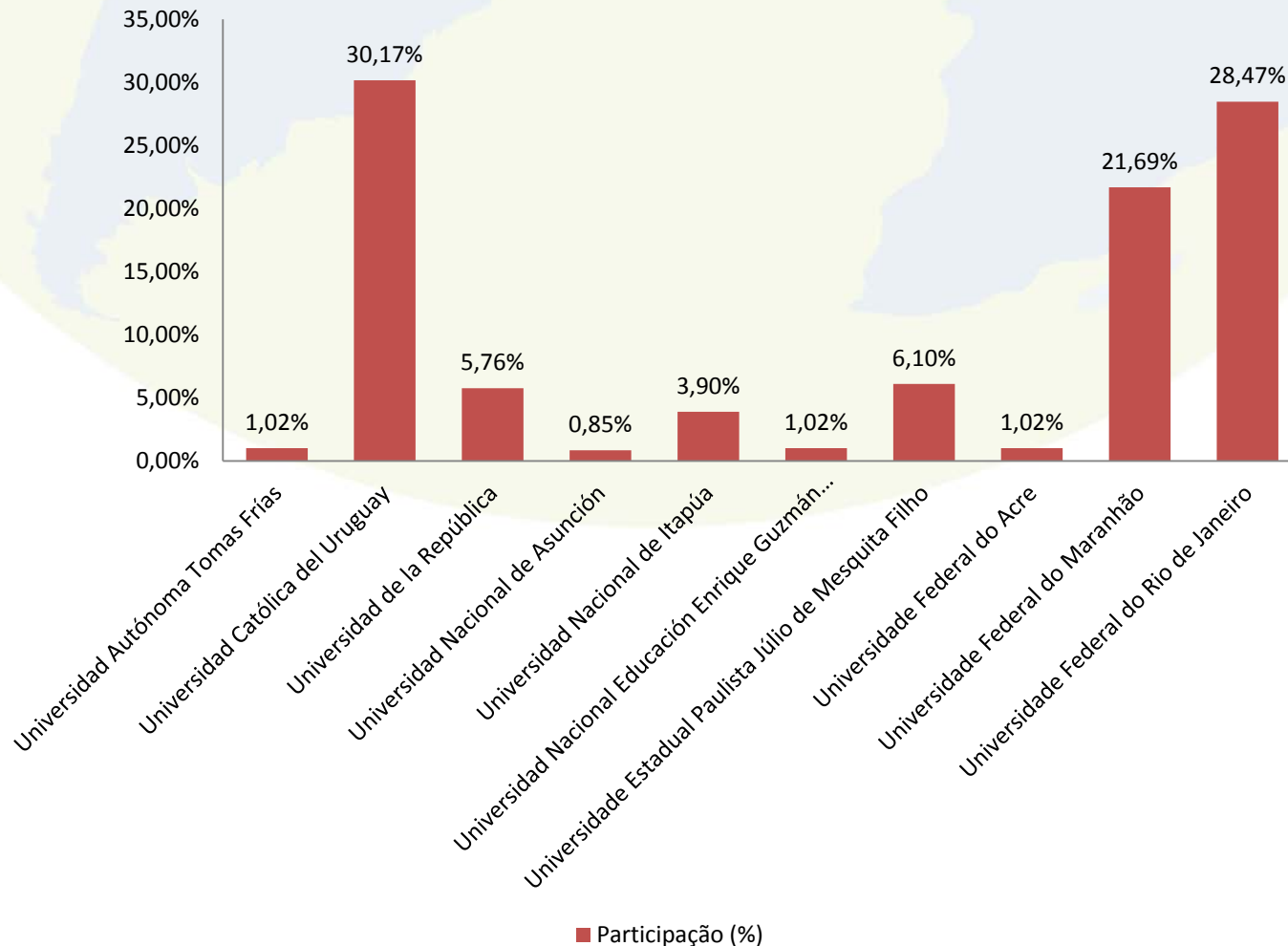


Note: 0% = less than 1%

Results: Latin America Universities

University	Answers	Participation (%)
Universidad Autónoma Tomas Frías	6	1,02%
Universidad Católica del Uruguay	178	30,17%
Universidad de la República	34	5,76%
Universidad Nacional de Asunción	5	0,85%
Universidad Nacional de Itapúa	23	3,90%
Universidad Nacional Educación Enrique Guzmán Valle	6	1,02%
Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho	36	6,10%
Universidade Federal do Acre	6	1,02%
Universidade Federal do Maranhão	128	21,69%
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro	168	28,47%

Results: Latin America Universities



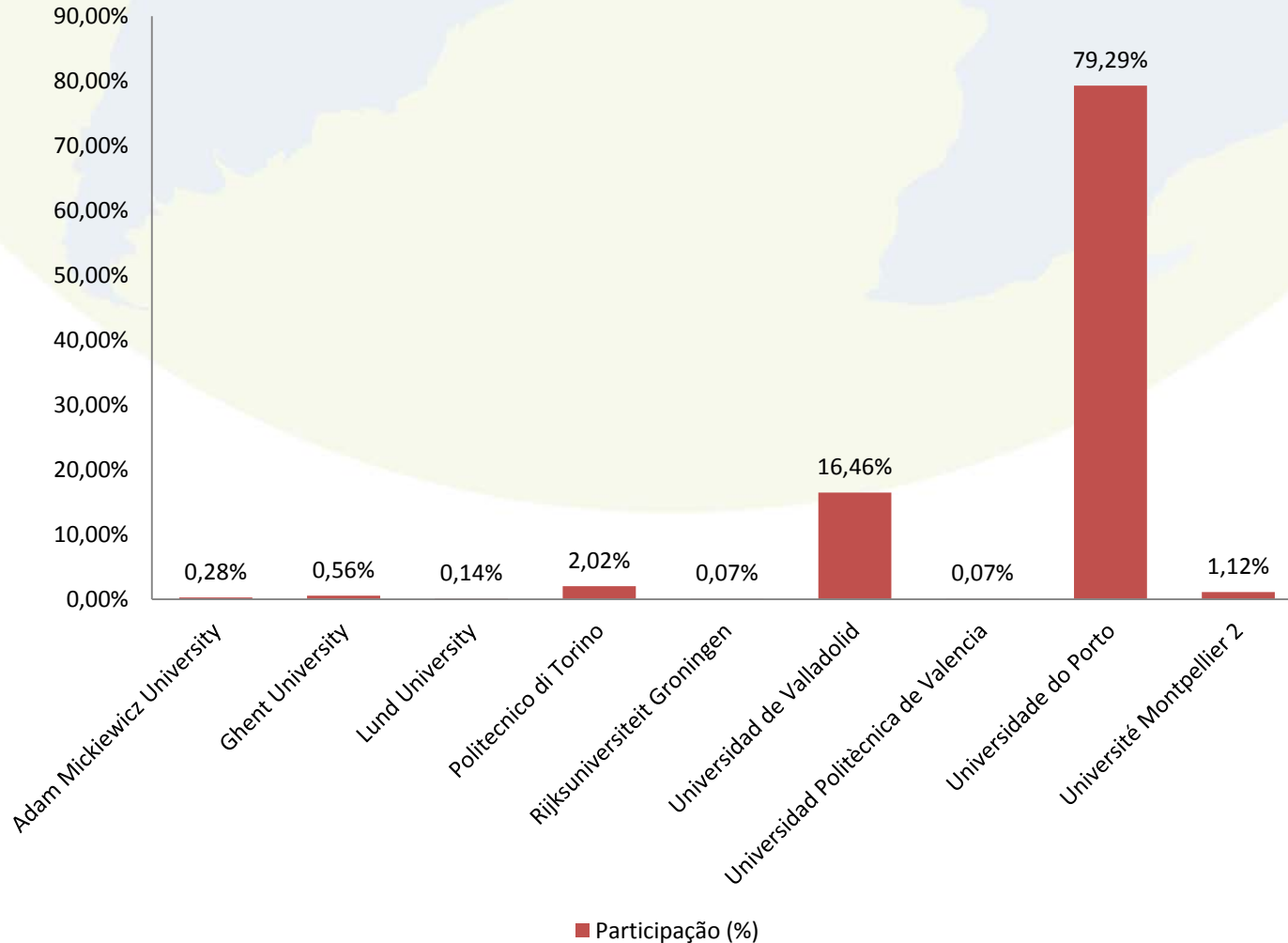
Results: Latin American Universities

- **Brazil: 57,28%**
 - UFRJ – 28,47% (55.887 students)
 - UFM – 21,69%
 - UNESP – 6,10% (46.234 students)
- **Uruguay: 35,93%**
 - **Universidad Catolica del Uruguay: 30,17% (2.143 students)**
 - Universidad de la Republica: 5,76%
- **Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay: 6,79%**

Results: European Universities

University	Answers	Participation (%)
Adam Mickiewicz University	4	0,28%
Ghent University	8	0,56%
Lund University	2	0,14%
Politecnico di Torino	29	2,02%
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	1	0,07%
Universidad de Valladolid	236	16,46%
Universidad Politècnica de Valencia	1	0,07%
Universidade do Porto	1137	79,29%
Université Montpellier 2	16	1,12%

Results: European Universities



Results: European Universities

- Universidade do Porto: 79,29%
- Universidad de Valladolid: 16,46%
- **UP + UVA = 95,75% !!**

Participation in the survey

University			Country		
Universidad Autónoma Tomas Frías	6	0,30	Bolivia	6	0,30
Universidad Católica del Uruguay	178	8,79	Brasil	338	16,70
Universidad de la República	34	1,68	Paraguay	28	1,38
Universidad Nacional de Asunción	5	0,25	Peru	6	0,30
Universidad Nacional de Itapúa	23	1,14	Uruguay	212	10,47
Guzmán Valle – La Cantuta	6	0,30	Belgium	8	0,40
Mesquita Filho	36	1,78	España	237	11,71
Universidade Federal do Acre	6	0,30	France	16	0,79
Universidade Federal do Maranhão	128	6,32	Italy	29	1,43
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro	168	8,30	Netherlands	1	0,05
Adam Mickiewicz University	4	0,20	Poland	4	0,20
Ghent University	8	0,40	Portugal	1.137	56,18
Lund University	2	0,10	Sweden	2	0,10
Politecnico di Torino	29	1,43		2.024	100,00
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	1	0,05			
Universidad de Valladolid	236	11,66			
Universidad Politècnica de Valencia	1	0,05			
Universidade do Porto	1.137	56,18			
Université Montpellier 2	16	0,79			
	2.024	100,00			

One institution from Ecuador withdrew the survey

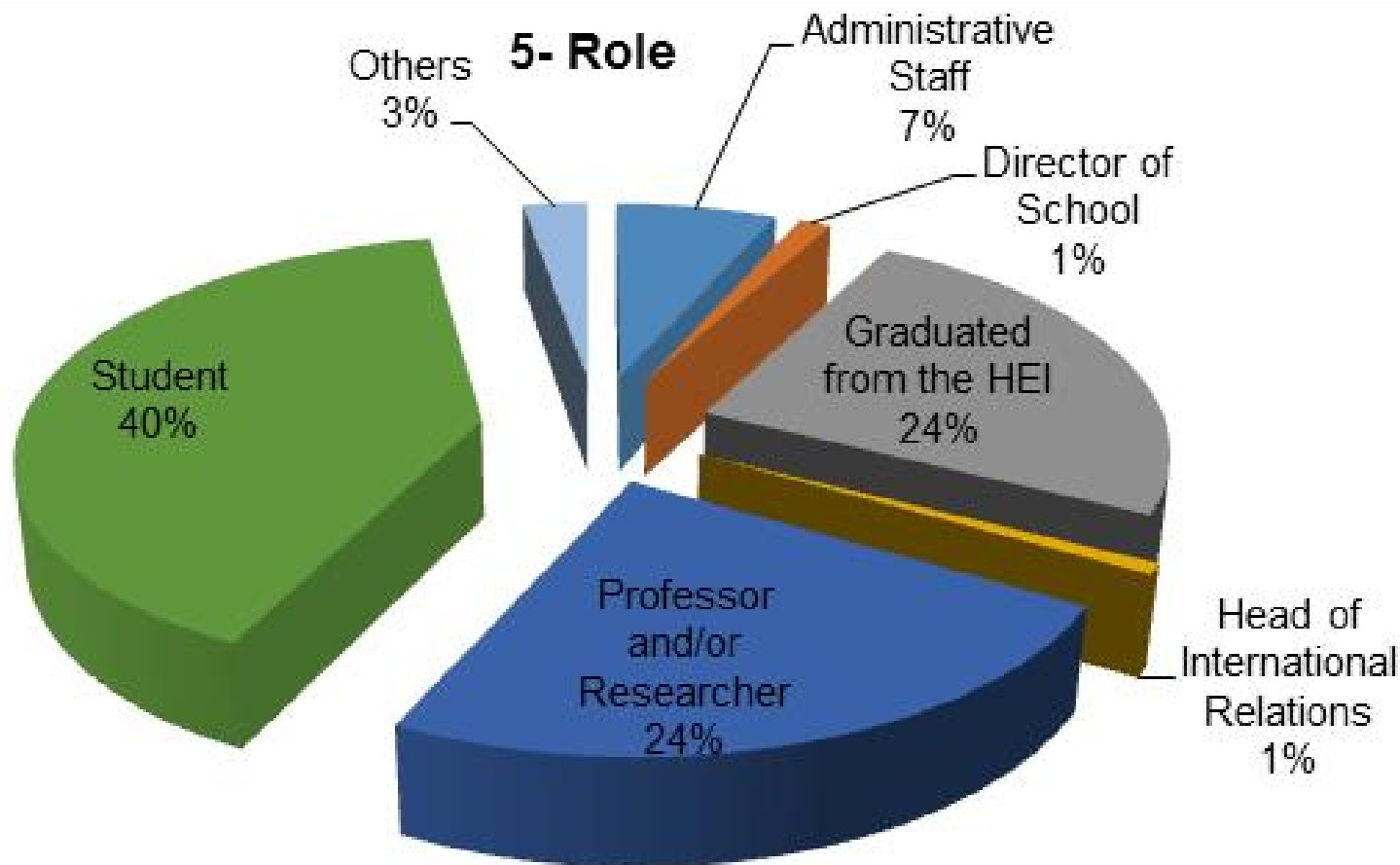
Participation in the survey

University				
Universidad Autónoma Te				
Universidad Católi	6	0,30		
Universid	3	16,70		
Un		1,38		
		0,30		
M		0,47		
Un		40		
Unive		71		
Adam				
Ghent				
Lund Un				
Politecnic		0,05		
Rijksuniver				
Universidad	4	0,20		
Universidad P			Portugal	1.137 56,18
Universidade o			Sweden	2 0,10
Université Mont	16	0,79		
	2.024	100,00		2.024 100,00

WARNING
 5 / 19 institutions (26,32%): 91,25% of results
 4 / 13 countries (30,77%): 95,06% of results

... institution from Ecuador withdrew the survey

Participation in the survey



Participation in the survey

Role		
Administrative Staff	135	6,67
Director of School	27	1,33
Graduated from the HEI	496	24,51
Head of International Relations	16	0,79
Professor and/or Researcher	482	23,81
Student	814	40,22
Others	54	2,67
	2.024	100,00

Participation in the Survey

Role		
Administrative	5	6,67
Director		1,33
Graduate		24,51
Head of		0,79
Professor		3,81
Student		40,22
Others	54	2,67
	2.024	100,00

INTERESTING
 Students (present or former): 64,72%
 University staff (academics +
 administratives): 32,61%
 (Comment: Student centered process)

Participation x Status

- Latin America

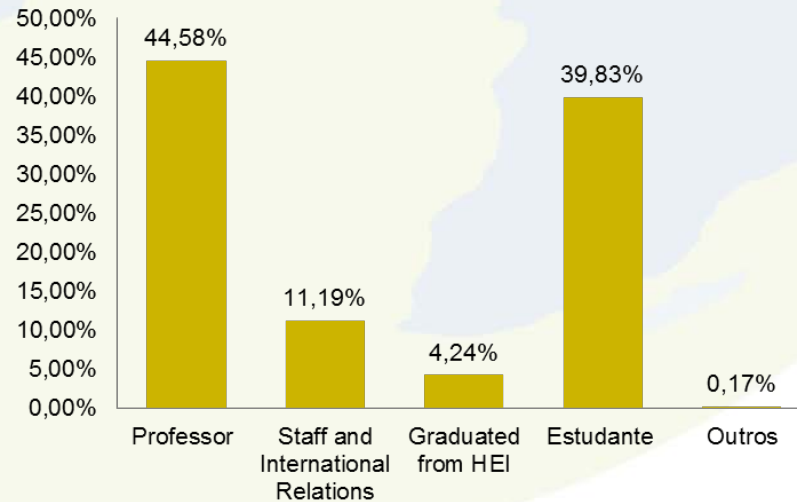
Category	Quantity	Participation (%)
Professor	267	44,58%
Staff and International Relations	102	11,19%
Graduated from HEI	475	4,24%
Student	584	39,83%
Others	6	0,17%

- Europe

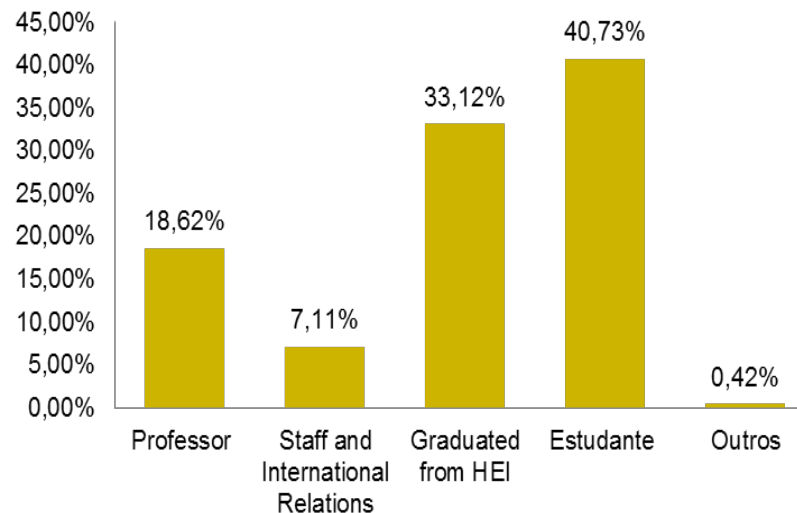
Category	Quantity	Participation (%)
Professor	267	18,62%
Staff and International Relations	102	7,11%
Graduated from HEI	475	33,12%
Student	584	40,73%
Others	6	0,42%

Participation x Status

- Latin America



- Europe

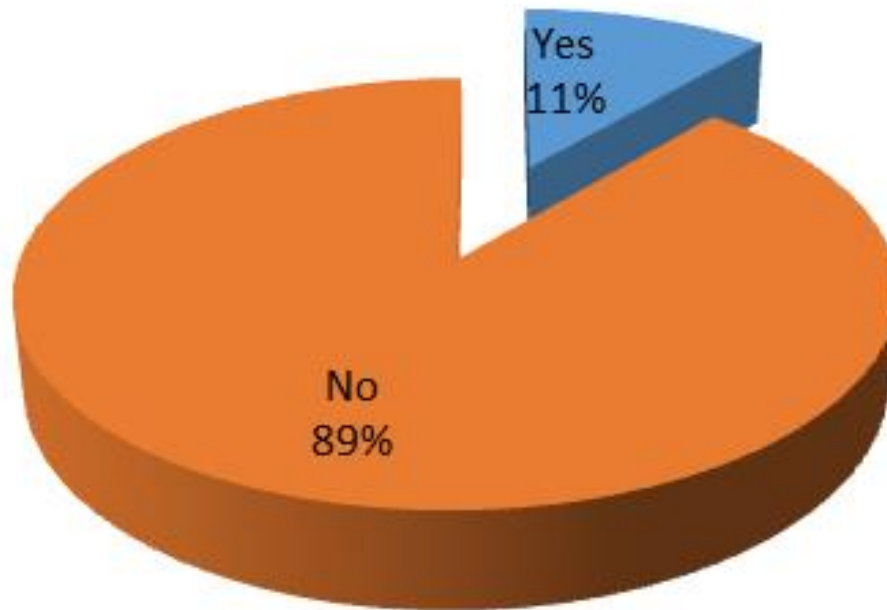


Comparison Latin America x Europe

- A great deal of professors answered the survey in Latin America.
- Expressive number of “Graduated from HEI” in Europe
 - *Best alumni organization in Europe !*
 - *Lack of alumni organization and participation in Brazil*
- Huge participation of students and alumni in Europe survey (73,85%).

Participation in the survey

4.- Have you been involved in the **BABEL** Project of the Erasmus Mundus Programme?





Analysis of the survey

- 1. Internationalization policy**
- 2. Credit recognition**
- 3. Mobility**

1. Internationalization policy

- a. The importance of the establishment of an internationalization policy in the participating institutions towards the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
- b. The impact of an internationalization policy in the quality of the teaching and learning processes.
- c. The correlation between the existence of clear priorities for internationalization and the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
- d. The actual panorama in the involved institutions.
- e. The way in which the results demonstrate awareness for the relevance of the topic.
- f. The existence of an internationalization policy and whether it is already in place, or if it is prepared but not put in place yet.

1. Internationalization policy

The European experience

ERASMUS (1987 - 1999)

(Bologna Process 1999 - 2010)

KEY WORDS

Transparency

Mutual Trust

Agreement

Recognition

Flexibility

Mobility

**Institutional
commitment**

**International Policy
Statement**

Implementation of common tools

1. Internationalization policy

Institutional commitment International Policy Statement

“We are responsible for our voluntary actions” (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Book III, Aristotle)

- **Implication** of the whole institution (From the rectoral team to the maintenance staff)
- **Implementation** of internal mechanisms for student and staff mobility: information, reception, hosting, sending, follow-up, academic recognition mechanisms, ensure equal academic treatment and services for home students and staff and incoming mobile participants, integrate incoming mobile participants into the Institution’s everyday life, mentoring and support arrangements for mobile participants, etc.
- **Nomination and training** of academic and administrative staff in charge of the implementation of the internationalization process

1. Internationalization policy

Data from **The Erasmus Impact Study**. (September 2014)

4.3. How does mobility influence teaching methods, curricula and research?

More than 70%
of mobile staff
observed a gain
in knowledge of
good practice
and new skills

81% of mobile
academic staff
observed an
improvement in
the quality of
teaching

92% of HEIs regarded staff
mobility as effective for
International cooperation,
81% for quality of teaching
and multidisciplinary and
crossorganisational
cooperation

*“Erasmus mobility has created an opportunity
to develop new cases and to apply them at our
home institutions.” (Staff, LT)*

1. Internationalization policy

Data from **The Erasmus Impact Study**. (September 2014)

Significance of student and staff mobility

Student and staff mobility has been **growing in scale and significance** alongside the developments in the Bologna Process and the integration of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) over the last decades. **Between** the start of the Erasmus programme in **1987** and the academic year **2012-13**, over **3 million students** had participated in the Erasmus mobility programme as have **more than 300,000 lecturers and other staff** in higher education since 1997. More than **4,000 higher education institutions** in **34 countries** already participated, and more are keen to join in (European Commission 2012a).

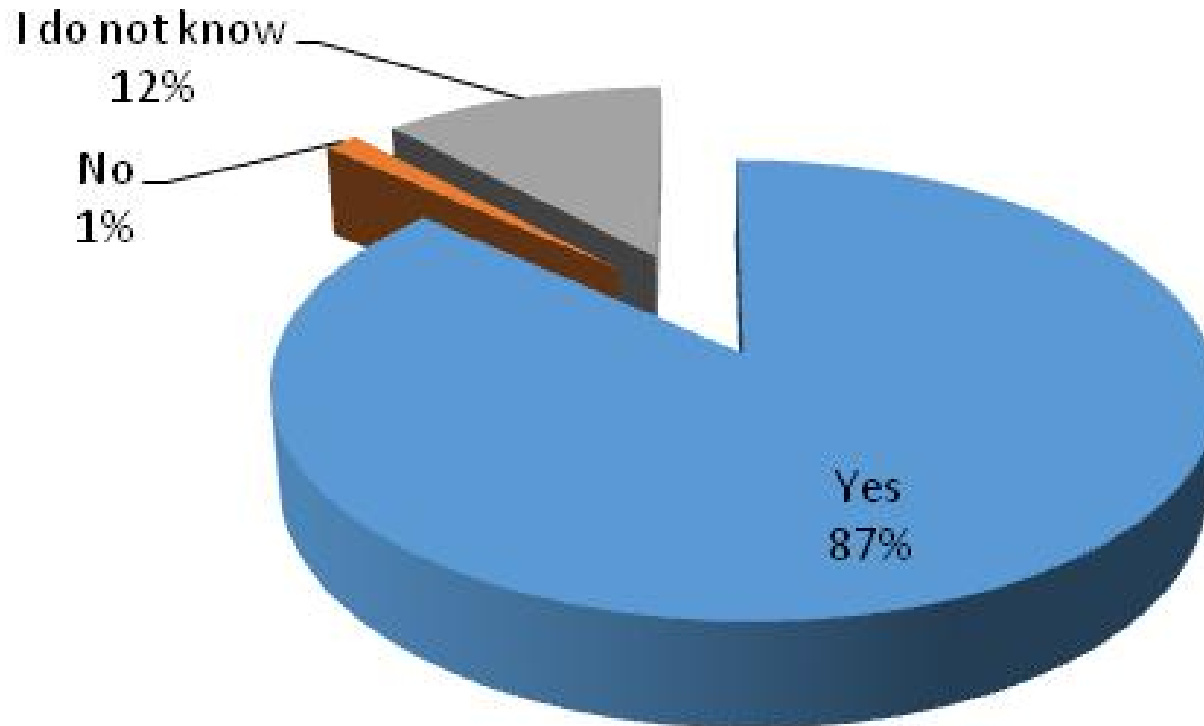
Recent studies showed that **experience abroad** not only **enriched students' professional and academic lives**, but could also **promote openness, adaptability and flexibility**, or **enhance language learning, intercultural skills, self-reliance and self-awareness**. **Staff mobility** or exchanges were also regarded as having **similar positive effects both for the individuals** involved and for **the home and host institutions**.

1. Internationalization policy

- a. The importance of the establishment of an internationalization policy in the participating institutions towards the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
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- c. The correlation between the existence of clear priorities for internationalization and the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
- d. The actual panorama in the involved institutions.
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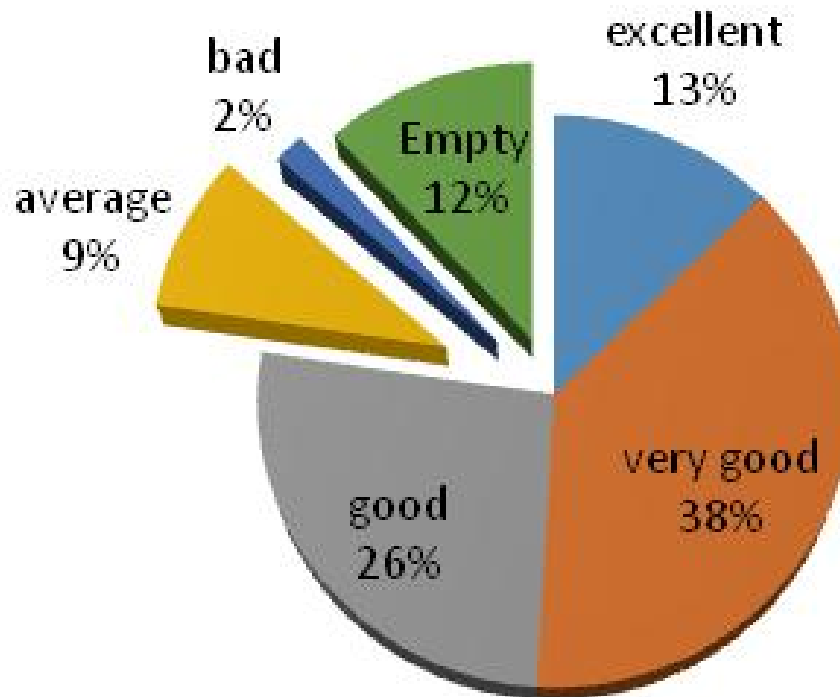
1. Internationalization policy

6.- Does your institution have an internationalization policy?



1. Internationalization policy

7.- If yes, how do you rate it?



77,37%

1. Internationalization policy

- a. The importance of the establishment of an internationalization policy in the participating institutions towards the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
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1. Internationalization policy

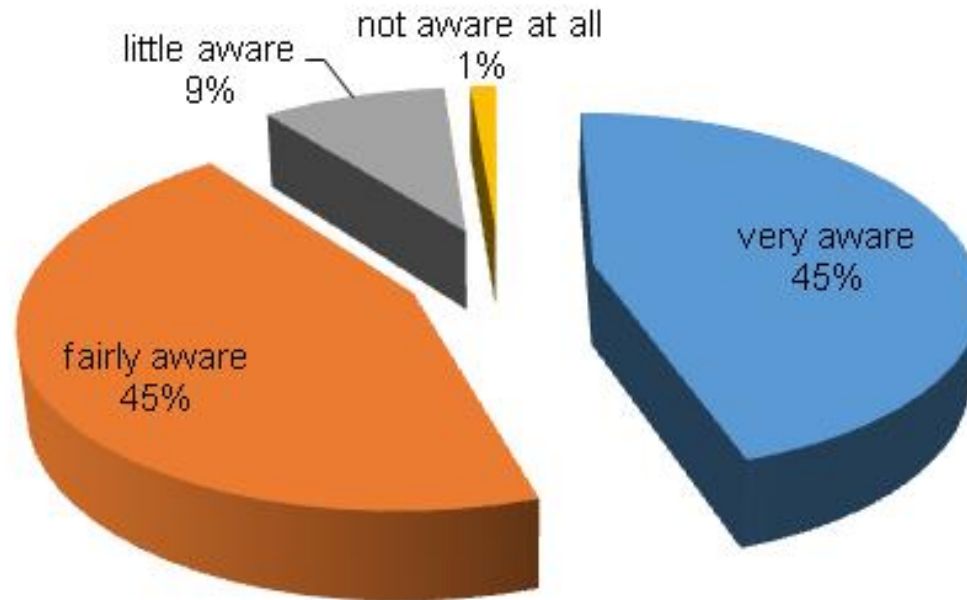
8.- In your opinion, what should be the main priority of the internationalization policy?

improve the HEI's position in the international rankings		266	13,14
increase the HEI's participation in international cooperation programmes		462	22,83
increase the number of international agreements and partnerships		525	25,94
increase the number of students, teachers, researchers and technical staff members' mobility flows (IN and OUT)		771	38,09
		2.024	100,00

58	9,83	208	14,50
138	23,39	324	22,59
92	15,59	433	30,20
302	51,19	469	32,71
590	100,00	1.434,00	100,00

1. Internationalization policy

9.- How aware is your HEI of the importance of studying abroad for the students?

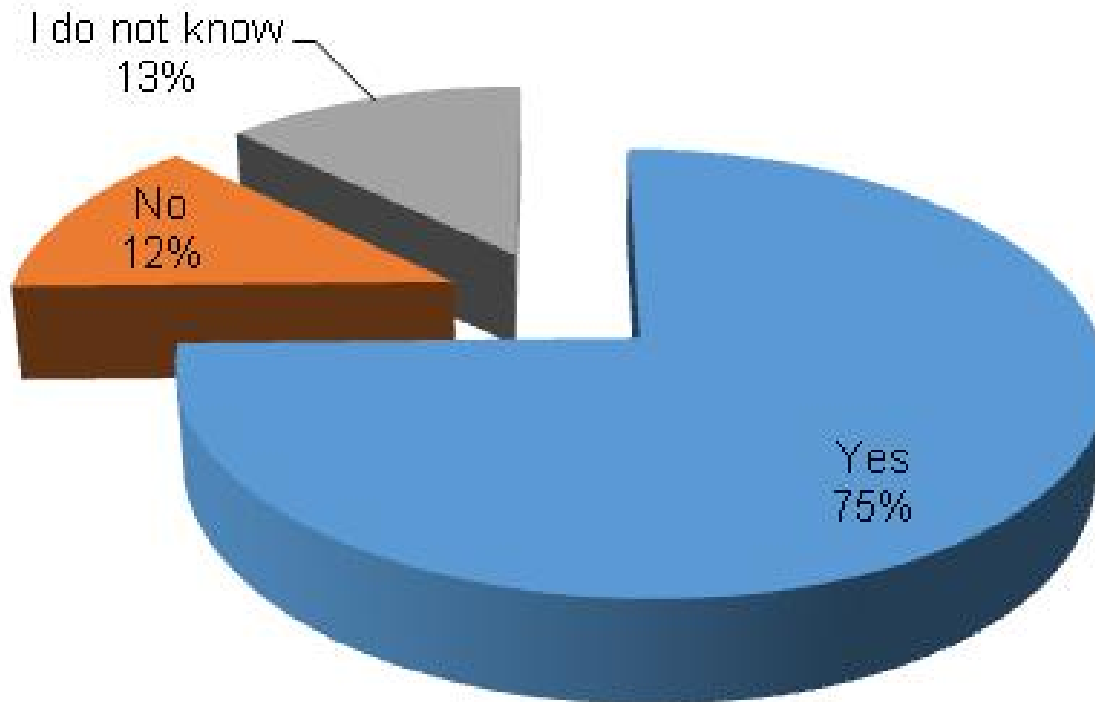


1. Internationalization policy

10.- How aware is your HEI of the importance of credit recognition to the process of internationalization?						
very aware	1410	69,66	145	24,58	1265	88,21
fairly aware	288	14,23	288	48,81	0	0,00
little aware	280	13,83	137	23,22	143	9,97
not aware at all	46	2,27	20	3,39	26	1,81
	2.024	100,00	590	100,00	1.434	100,00

1. Internationalization policy

11.- Does your HEI encourage the students to undertake a mobility period abroad?



1. Internationalization policy

- a. The importance of the establishment of an internationalization policy in the participating institutions towards the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
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- c. The correlation between the existence of clear priorities for internationalization and the establishment of an effective academic recognition process.
- d. The actual panorama in the involved institutions.
- e. The way in which the results demonstrate awareness for the relevance of the topic.
- f. The existence of an internationalization policy and whether it is already in place, or if it is prepared but not put in place yet.

1. Internationalization policy

From the survey:

- Open process with different levels of implication and implementation
- Students and academics: High perception of institutional active involvement
- Clear commitment for internationalization

2. Credit recognition

- National regulation vs institutional autonomy
 - **Specific institutional rules should be developed:** Within the national framework, explore the ways to incorporate international mobility (including full academic recognition) [the European experience – pre Bologna: different levels of institutional autonomy, different HE Systems, different credit systems. ECTS as a tool for student mobility]
- **Tools:**
 - Course / Information Catalogue (transparency)
 - Learning Agreement (commitment)
 - Transcript of Records (commitment)

2. Credit recognition

Transparency and reliability (cfr. ECTS user's guide)

- The **Course Catalogue** should provide **reliable, up-to-date and quality assured information** on degree programmes, as well as on single educational components. It should provide an accurate description of the degree programme, including all details: structure, components, learning outcomes, workload, learning/teaching approaches, assessment methods, assessment criteria, and progression rules.
- The **Learning Agreement**. In order to facilitate the organisation of credit mobility and its recognition, **the three parties** involved – the student, the sending institution and the receiving institution (...) – should **agree on the programme abroad**. They should formalise this in a Learning Agreement, to be signed by the three parties **before the start of the mobility period**. The Learning Agreement is intended to **give the student the confirmation that the credits** he/she successfully achieves during the mobility period **will be recognised**.

2. Credit recognition

Transparency and reliability (cfr. ECTS user's guide)

➤ The **Transcript of Records** provides an up-to-date record of students' progress in their studies: the educational components they have taken, the number of (...) credits they have achieved, and the grades they have been awarded.

(...) In mobility for studies, it is recommended to include the components that have been replaced in the student's home degree, the number of credits that they represent and, when applicable, the translation of the grades received by the student abroad.

2. Credit recognition

- a. Reflection on how much of the academic recognition process is in the hands of the Institution and how much in the hands of the Higher Education System.
- b. The importance of smooth mechanisms/tools for credit transfer.
- c. The most critical hindrances recognized by the respondents.
- d. The reasons why these hindrances happen in your view.
- e. The relevance of the existence of a sufficiently clear legal frame in each HEI regarding credit transfer.
- f. The aspects that should be regulated by this legal frame.
- g. Other aspects that are essential in the process of academic recognition.
- h. The way to initiate the process/make it evolve positively.
- i. The persons/stakeholders that should be involved.
- j. The tools that have to be used/created.
- k. The way to put it in motion.
- l. The activities that should be undertaken.

2. Credit recognition

13.- Does your HEI have any regulation regarding credit recognition?

Yes	No	In progress	I do not know	
1.009	76	106	833	2.024
49,85	3,75	5,24	41,16	100,00
247	39	73	231	590
41,86	6,61	12,37	39,15	100,00
762	37	33	602	1.434
53,14	2,58	2,30	41,98	100,00

2. Credit recognition

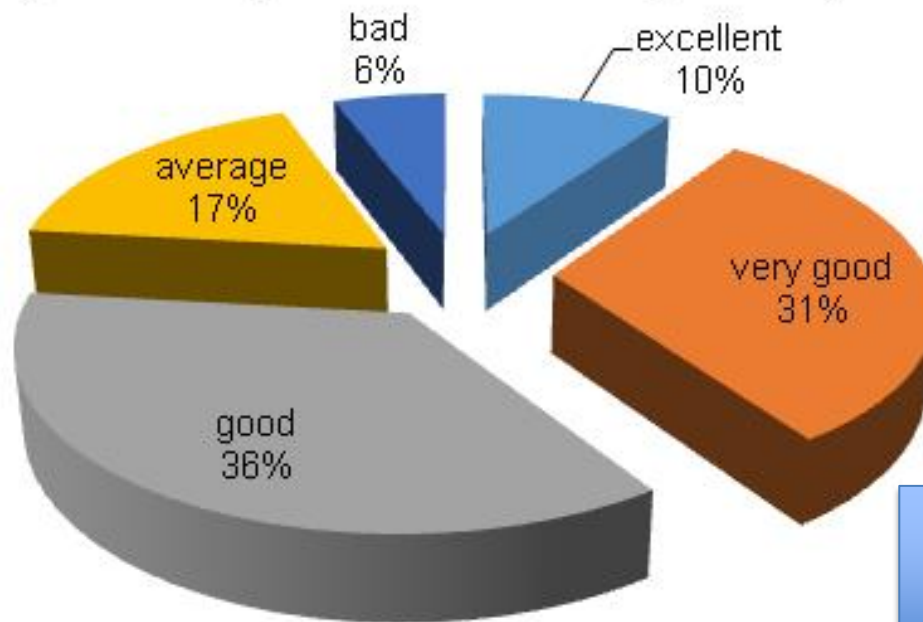
1	Lack of information on the content of the courses taken abroad by the student.
2	Lack of institutional regulation concerning credit recognition.
3	Lack of knowledge about the correspondence between different grading system
4	Lack of knowledge by the academic and/or administrative staff
5	Resistence by the academic and/or administrative staff
6	Other

14.- What is the main obstacle to credit recognition in your HEI?

	2.024	1.434	590	
	28,46	31,45	21,19	1
	9,49	7,46	14,41	2
	21,29	23,08	16,95	3
	12,60	10,11	18,64	4
	13,59	12,55	16,10	5
	85,42	84,66	87,29	
	14,58	15,34	12,71	6
	100,00	100,00	100,00	

2. Credit recognition

12.- Considering the level of information and the standard procedures available to the students when they return from their mobility abroad, how would you rate the process of credit recognition in your HEI?



76,78%

2. Credit recognition

Institutional commitment (cfr. ECTS user's guide)

Specific institutional rules should be developed to deal with the **recognition** of other learning experiences, to allow for **credit accumulation** and **transfer** through various types of mobility (...)

The institution should **clearly define responsibilities** for **implementing** and **monitoring** credit mobility and ensure that **application procedures** and **selection criteria** for credit mobility are **transparent and fair**, and that an **appeal mechanism** is in place. A **staff member** should be **appointed** in each department or subject area and formally **authorised to discuss** the programme of study abroad with the student and to approve **and sign** the Learning Agreement on behalf of the sending institution, **before the start** of the mobility period **and the Transcript of Records after the mobility period**. Individuals should not be asked to negotiate academic recognition with staff members who are not authorised to do so or with a committee, before or after their study abroad period, neither should the student be asked to sit for any other examinations or have to do extra work after having returned.

2. Credit recognition

Institutional commitment (cfr. Erasmus Charter for Higher Education)

- **Publish** and regularly **update** the **course catalogue** on the website of the Institution well in advance of the mobility periods, so as to be transparent to all parties and allow mobile students to make well-informed choices about the courses they will follow.
- Carry out mobility **only within the framework of prior agreements** between institutions. These agreements establish the respective roles and responsibilities of the different parties, as well as their commitment to shared quality criteria in the selection, preparation, reception and integration of mobile participants.
- **Ensure** that **outgoing mobile participants are well prepared** for the mobility, including having attained the necessary level of linguistic proficiency.
- **Ensure** that student and staff **mobility for education or training** purposes is **based on a learning agreement** for students **and a mobility agreement for staff validated in advance** between the home and host institutions or enterprises and the mobile participants.

2. Credit recognition

Institutional commitment (cfr. Erasmus Charter for Higher Education)

- **Provide assistance** related to obtaining visas, when required, for incoming and outgoing mobile participants.
- **Provide assistance** related to obtaining insurance, when required, for incoming and outgoing mobile participants.
- **Provide guidance** to incoming mobile participants in finding accommodation.

3. Mobility

More than 90% of the mobile students go abroad to live abroad, to improve their language skills, to form new relationships and to develop skills such as adaptability
(The Erasmus Impact Study)

It's a **MUST** for the institutions to make sure the mobility flows and the academic recognition follow high quality standards: a benefit for the students, the staff and the institution.

Presentations

1. Academic Recognition: International Academic Activity (AAI).
Federal University of Lavras - Minas Gerais Brazil
2. New approach to recognition Universidad Católica del Uruguay
3. Good practices in Academic Recognition: Procedures and Tools in UPorto. The relevance of both for the efficiency of the process
4. Credit Recognition at UNESP (Universidad Estatal Paulista, Sao Paulo, Brazil)
5. EGRACONS (Ghent University): resolvendo o desafio da justa conversão de notas
6. National University of Itapúa (UNI), Encarnación - Paraguay

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- Instituto Minerva: www.iminerva.com.br

Some publications and links

- **The Erasmus Impact Study.** Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education Institutions, European Commission, Education and Culture, September 2014
- Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education-2014-2020_en
- **ECTS User's guide 2015**, European Commission, 2015
- Tuning project: **Europe:** <http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/>; **Latin America:** <http://www.tuningal.org/>

Thank you!