

**Information for Exchange - Provision and Quality:  
Research Report of the ESNSurvey 2009**

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## Contents

Introduction .....	Tõrge! Järjehoidjat pole määratletud.
Key Results .....	8
Recommendations .....	Tõrge! Järjehoidjat pole määratletud.
Methodology.....	9
Student characteristics .....	10
Exchange programmes and destinations.....	10
Exchange students' characteristics .....	12
Social background of exchange students .....	14
Information needed - provision and access.....	16
General satisfaction with information provision .....	16
Information sources used before departure to the host country.....	19
Types of information needed before exchange .....	23
Information about university and studying.....	24
Information about housing.....	28
Information concerning visa issues .....	31
Information concerning extracurricular activities .....	33
Students organizations and their help to students .....	36

## **Introduction from the Board**

Dear reader,

We are proud to present you the final report of our research project ESNSurvey 2009: Information on Exchange. The Project is carried out on an annual basis by a wonderful research team: the ESNSurvey Team. It is with the volunteer work of the Team - Emanuel, Ewa, Marge, Tajana, Walter - and the contribution of more than 6000 respondents that the booklet you have in your hands and the important results you will find in it become a reality.

Recalling a Latin expression, “Redibo Plenior”, that can be freely translated as “I will come back enriched and more mature” - originally from Gian Vincenzo Pinelli, mentor of Galileo Galilei and always used by one of my professors when wishing a pleasant stay abroad to the outgoing students - I always think of the importance of student mobility as a unique experience both in terms of academic knowledge and personal development.

To ensure the quality of the exchange, the information provided is of primary importance and this is the topic that this edition of the ESNSurvey will analyse.

Mobility is the core of the Erasmus Student Network; the results we receive through our research projects help us understand the problems related to student mobility, internationalization in the European Higher Education Area, recognition and last, but not least, the cultural impact of studying abroad. We strongly believe that the dissemination of the results of this edition have a global multiplier effect on questions and problems concerning exchanges that are still open.

We wish you a pleasant reading and hope that our findings will help you better understand the problems and necessities an exchange student can experience through the great adventure of studying abroad.

Marco La Rosa

On behalf of the ESN International Board

## Introduction

The fifth edition of the ESNSurvey is dedicated to one of the core challenges of our time: **Provision of Information**. Previous ESNSurveys have shown that information provision is amongst the most problematic issues and substantially affects general satisfaction levels of exchange students. Thus the title of the ESNSurvey 2009 is “**Information on Exchange**”. Once more, students were able to express their opinions, share their concerns and jointly contribute to a gradual improvement of the quality of exchange studies.

The complexity of the modern world in general and the fast changing environment in the field of education in particular, make having the **right information at the right time** an invaluable asset. The final report of this edition helps to determine where the deficiencies lie, which channels students use the most and which types of information they most urgently need. The Survey gives a clear and practical insight on what can be improved, based on students’ actual needs.

If potential exchange students become confused when it comes to obtaining essential information on how to realise an exchange period, they will easily be deprived of their motivation and excitement for actually going abroad. The lower the barriers in terms of time and energy to search for information, the higher the chance that more people can benefit from this enriching experience.

It is the ultimate goal of the Erasmus Student Network to **remove the barriers to participation** and enable everyone the chance to study or work abroad, contributing to an increase in cultural awareness and better mutual understanding in Europe and the world. The following report is another piece in the jigsaw for achieving the aforementioned goals.

Sincerely,

Emanuel Alfranseder

## **Key Results**

### **Respondents' characteristics**

Most students (90 %) study abroad through the Erasmus Programme. On average, they stay abroad for seven months. Spain (11.7 %), Germany (10.8 %), France (10.0 %) and Italy (9.5 %) are the favourite destinations of our respondents. More women study abroad - two thirds of all students are female and only 34.3 % of respondents are male exchange students. The average age of our respondents is 23.3. Business and management students, followed by engineering, language and social science students are the majors that exchange students most often pursue. The majority of exchange students comes from rural areas (79.5 %) and after all 35 % come from a non-academic family background.

### **General satisfaction with information provision**

Students are usually more satisfied with information provision while studying abroad provided by the host university than with the sufficiency of information available from their home university prior to their studies abroad. With some exceptions, if a country is good at information provision it tends to achieve high satisfaction ratings both from the incoming and outgoing students. Turkey is evaluated relatively higher than other countries when it comes to satisfaction with information provision prior to studies abroad from the home university, while Greece, Italy and Spain are evaluated relatively lower. Average satisfaction with information provision during studying abroad from host universities was the highest for Finland, Sweden and Norway and the lowest for Italy, Greece and Spain.

### **Information sources used before departure to the host country**

Students first hear about the exchange possibility mainly from other students at their home university (43.7 %), the International Relations Office at their home university (19.9 %) or from teachers at the home university (15.8 %). Most of them search actively for information about exchange: often on the relevant websites on the Internet (72 %), but they also inquire with other exchange students (40 %) and the administration of the Erasmus Programme at the university. Besides webpages, word of mouth and reports of former exchange students are used. Around 40 % of students do not have any problems when searching for information before going on exchange, others say that information has been hard to find, has been not up-to-date, they have not known where to look for it or it has been missing. Also, language

barriers are an issue and 4.7 % of students notice that information in another language has not been as accurate as information in the local language.

### **Types of information needed before exchange**

Financial conditions and housing provided by the university are the most important factors when it comes to the decision about an exchange destination. The most important types of information needed before leaving are: information about housing and information about the university. Most importantly, people who have lacked information about the university have a lower satisfaction level with respect to their studies than those who have lacked information in other spheres.

### **Information about university and studying**

The most used channels to learn about the host university prior to the exchange period are found within the home university (such as the information on the webpages, information from former exchange students and information provided by the IRO and Erasmus Coordinator). Also before departure, students use webpages of the host university. After arrival, students mostly use host university information sources from administration staff (such as International Relations Officer and Erasmus coordinator). Student organisations (such as ESN) also prove important to students upon their arrival to the host university - about a quarter of students use them as information providers. The most important information for students concerns the courses available at the host university (62 %). In some cases, students lack knowledge about certain aspects of studying at the host university, in particular about the grade system and the way courses are organised at the host university. Moreover, the information that most often appears to be incorrect concerns the courses availability, the content and the way they are organised. 46 % of the respondents know much or very much concerning recognition of their coursework.

### **Information about housing**

Most students (83 %) search for information on housing before their exchange. Over half of the students (54 %) receive this information from the International Office of the hosting university and also former exchange students (11 %) are used to obtain information on housing.

### **Information concerning visa issues**

Most of the students (90 %) do not need a visa to go on exchange. Among Erasmus exchange students, it is mostly Turkish students who need a visa and a permit of stay. The institutions from which they receive information concerning those issues are the embassy of the host country and both the home (more helpful when it comes to visa information) and host institutions (most helpful when it comes to information concerning permit of stay). 23 % of students need a permit of stay. The institutions that provide them with information concerning this issue are the host university and the migration office in the host country.

#### **Information concerning extracurricular activities**

12 % of students work in the host country - with Polish, Romanian and Italian students being amongst those who most often work abroad. The countries in which students most often work are Denmark, Norway and Germany. The most used channels for looking for a job are the International Office at the host university and the internet.

Students rarely do volunteer work in the host country (7.2 %). Most of them look for possibilities of volunteer work after having spent some time in the host country (64.4 %), similar to when searching for work. Most students find volunteer work via the International Office at the host university or through student organisations.

#### **Student organisations' activities and their role**

25.5 % of respondents know about ESN before going on exchange, while another 33.1 % get to know ESN during their exchange period. Corresponding to this, there is an ESN section in 63.3 % of participants' host universities. Students are rather satisfied with ESN activities. They are most satisfied with informal meetings and social activities, trips and visiting tours as well orientation and welcome weeks. Exchange students have asked ESN sections to represent them in front of student related authorities in more than 400 cases and ESN has been able to achieve positive results in more than two thirds of those cases.

A bit more than a half of the exchange students feel the need to be represented at the host university. Currently, students would turn mostly to the International Relations Office if they were in need of someone to represent their rights as an exchange student. The second choice was Erasmus Student Network. Also, student unions and other student organisations prove important in this respect.

## Recommendations

In the light of the goals of the EU 2020 strategy and the Green Paper on Mobility aiming to

- encourage the transnational mobility of young people for learning, employability, social and personal development
- make lifelong learning and mobility a reality (at least 20 % of students graduating in the European Higher Education Area participating to a study or a training period abroad.)

Taking into consideration the target of 3 million Erasmus students by 2012 established for the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, our findings suggest that, to achieve these goals, students are in need of reliable, high quality and easily accessible information. In particular we recommend the following:

- Essential information and support on housing should be provided to incoming exchange students, particularly prior to leaving for their exchange.
- Information on courses such as availability, grading, organisation and content should be up-to-date and accurate.
- A particular focus should be put on university websites as they are by far the most important source of information.
- Reports of former exchange students should be requested and made publicly available among their peers and former exchange students should be encouraged to act as multipliers by promoting exchange.
- Student organisations, such as ESN, that provide services for exchange students, should be put in contact with incoming students before departure and be supported by institutions.
- ESN and other student organisations should promote mobility through informal channels to students at large.

## Acknowledgements

The ESNSurvey 2009: Information for Exchange was open for four months from June till September 2009 and during this period 6.8000 students participated to share their opinions and experiences on studying or working abroad. Such a high number of responses were only possible thanks to the help of all the local sections of the Erasmus Student Network and to the support of many other associations and institutions active in the field of international education. Our thanks goes especially to all the ESNSurvey partners of 2009 - AEGEE, Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), British Council, Centre for International Mobility (CIMO), Coimbra Group, Compostela Group, Erasmus Mundus Association (EMA), European Students Union (ESU), Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA) and European Association International Education (EAIE).

Furthermore, ESN wishes to thank the Erasmus Unit of the European Commission for their kind and highly appreciated support of the ESNSurvey. Our gratitude goes to all the National LLP Agencies and universities that helped us spread the word about the ESNSurvey and reach their students and members.

The ESNSurvey online questionnaire was implemented by Universum, a Swedish research institute. We would like to thank them, in particular Michiel Pool and Meike Büscher, for the smooth cooperation and contribution to the success of the ESNSurvey.

Last but not least, the ESNSurvey is a product of countless days of work of the ESNSurvey team, composed of ESN members from different countries and cultures. It consisted of Emanuel Alfranseder, a PhD student at Lund University, Sweden, Walter Bonifazi, an MA student at the University of Rome, Italy, Ewa Krzaklewska, a PhD student at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, Tajana Nikolic - a student at the University of Padova and a member of the ESN International Board, Marco La Rosa, a member of the ESN International Board and Marge Taivere, an MA student of the University of Tartu, Estonia. It is thanks to their dedication, motivation and enthusiasm that the ESNSurvey continues to be one of the most successful projects of ESN.

## Methodology

The survey was conducted by the ESNSurvey Team consisting of Emanuel Alfranseder, Walter Bonifazi, Ewa Krzaklewska, Tajana Nikolić, Marco La Rosa and Marge Taivere. The topic of this edition is “Information for Exchange”.

The main aim of the ESNSurvey 2009 is to explore what information exchange and international students need, which information they are provided with, by whom and of what quality. We inquired about the accessibility and quality of information that students receive throughout different periods of their stay abroad, meaning before and during their exchange. We asked about the information in the

areas such as university, course recognition, housing, extracurricular activities as well as visa and migration issues.

Besides questions concerning information provision, as in previous editions, some general questions about the experience of studying abroad are included. This way we can observe how the situation of exchange students is changing over the years as well as monitor the development of the Bologna process on topics such as academic recognition and ECTS transfer.

The questionnaire was accessible from May until the end of August 2009 on the ESN website [www.esn.org/survey](http://www.esn.org/survey). For the first time the survey was available in four different languages: English, Italian, Spanish and French. Local branches of the ESN network and other associations in the field of education helped promote the survey. Furthermore, LLP/Erasmus National Agencies and international relations offices of single universities disseminated the information about the project. The result of this extensive promotion is the fact that around 6800 students completed the survey.

## Student characteristics<sup>1</sup>

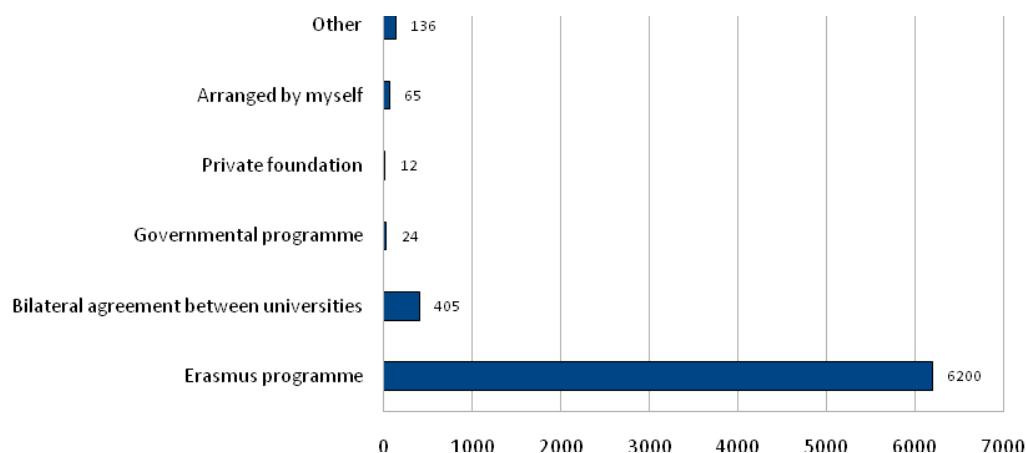
### Exchange programmes and destinations

More than 90 % of all students answering the survey are going abroad via the Erasmus programme. Bilateral agreements facilitate 5.9 % of all exchanges while governmental programmes, private foundations and self-arranged stays account for a minor part of the sample. Nordplus, Erasmus Mundus, ISEP, Campus Europae, and DAAD are among the more frequently named programmes falling into the category “Other”.

**Figure 1. Exchange programmes students go abroad with.**

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1 The main author of the chapter is Emanuel Alfranseder.



The table giving an overview of the most popular host countries students choose reflects to some extent the strength of ESN in the corresponding countries. Spain (11.7 %), Germany (10.8 %), France (10.0 %) and Italy (9.5 %) are the favourite destinations of our respondents. The United Kingdom, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and Belgium are following in the list of favoured destinations. Comparing the figures to the numbers provided by the European Commission shows that certain countries tend to be underrepresented in our survey. Spain and the United Kingdom are to be mentioned in that context. On the contrary, Finland is the most notable example of a country that is overrepresented in the survey. In general, our survey reflects the reality of the distribution of host countries quite well.

**Figure 2. The host countries of ESN survey respondents in comparison to the actual distribution of nationalities among Erasmus students.**

	Country	Number of Respondents*	Percent*	Percentage European Commission**
1	Spain	798	11,7	16,7
2	Germany	739	10,8	11
3	France	686	10,0	12,4
4	Italy	651	9,5	8,8
5	United Kingdom	515	7,5	10,5
6	Finland	480	7,0	3,3
7	Sweden	386	5,6	4,5
8	The Netherlands	305	4,5	4,1
9	Belgium	266	3,9	3,4

10	Denmark	257	3,8	2,8
11	Norway	173	2,5	1,7
12	Czech Republic	171	2,5	2,1
13	Portugal	161	2,4	3,1
14	Austria	148	2,2	2,4
15	Poland	142	2,1	2,5
16	Ireland	141	2,1	2,6
17	Greece	113	1,7	1,4
18	Switzerland	110	1,6	-
19	Hungary	90	1,3	1,2
20	Turkey	65	1,0	1,3
21	Lithuania	62	0,9	0,6
22	United States	52	0,8	-
	Total	6840		

Source: \*ESN Survey (2009), \*\*European Commission (2009)

On average, students stay a little longer than seven months abroad. Most frequently, exchange students are abroad either between four and six months (in total 56.1 %). Alternatively, they stay for nine or ten months (in total 26.4 %). This clearly reflects the fact that students choose to study one or two full semesters abroad. Students taking an entire degree abroad are also included in our survey which results in some respondents staying more than a year (2.0 %).

### Exchange students' characteristics

The average age of our respondents is 23.3<sup>2</sup>. The majority of respondents are between 20 and 26 years old. Almost two thirds of all students are female and only 34.3 % of respondents are male exchange students.

The comprehensive overview of the countries of origin reveals that Germany accounts for almost a quarter of all outgoing exchange students in our survey. Spain (15.5 %), Italy (8.1 %), Poland (7.0 %) and France (6.9 %) are next in the list of the most active countries when it comes to sending students abroad. Comparing our survey respondents to the official figures released by the European Commission shows a remarkable over-representation of Germany and Greece, whereas relatively few students from France have completed our survey.

**Figure 3. Country of origin of ESNSurvey respondents in comparison to the actual distribution of nationalities among the Erasmus students.**

<sup>2</sup> Note that the survey question asks for an indication of below 19 and above 40 which leads to a slight inaccuracy of the average value.

Rank	Country	Number of ESNSurvey respondents*	Percent*	Percentage European Commission**
1	Germany	1624	23,8	14
2	Spain	1054	15,5	13,8
3	Italy	550	8,1	9,8
4	Poland	476	7,0	6,7
5	France	471	6,9	14,2
6	Greece	385	5,6	1,5
7	Netherlands	310	4,5	3,5
8	Romania	240	3,5	1,9
9	Finland	238	3,5	2,2
10	Turkey	219	3,2	3,9
11	Belgium	217	3,2	3
12	Slovakia	105	1,5	1
13	Czech Republic	71	1,0	3
14	Lithuania	70	1,0	1,5
15	United Kingdom	70	1,0	5,5
16	Portugal	69	1,0	2,7
17	Austria	59	0,9	2,5
	Total	6818		

Source: \*ESN Survey (2009), \*\*European Commission (2009)

A little more than half of the students go on exchange during their Master studies, while 47.3 % go already when pursuing their Bachelor degree. A further 1.8 % are in a PhD or doctoral programme. As the majority of overall students are undergraduates, this shows a higher propensity of postgraduate students (MA and PhD) to go on exchange.

**Figure 4. Level of studies of the respondents.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
BA (3-4 years)	3233	47,7
MA (5-6 years)	3426	50,5
PhD, doctoral studies	122	1,8

Business and management studies, engineering and technology, languages and philological studies and social sciences account for the major parts of subjects studied by respondents.

**Figure 5. Majors and areas of studies of the respondents.**

Majors	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Business studies, management sciences	1482	21,7
Engineering, technology	911	13,4
Languages, philological studies	798	11,7
Social sciences	736	10,8
Other subject areas	428	6,3
Humanities	364	5,3
Natural sciences	327	4,8
Medical sciences	323	4,7
Law	284	4,2
Communication and information sciences	236	3,5
Architecture, urban and regional planning	231	3,4
Education, teacher training	228	3,3
Mathematics, information sciences	182	2,7
Art and design	130	1,9
Agricultural sciences	90	1,3

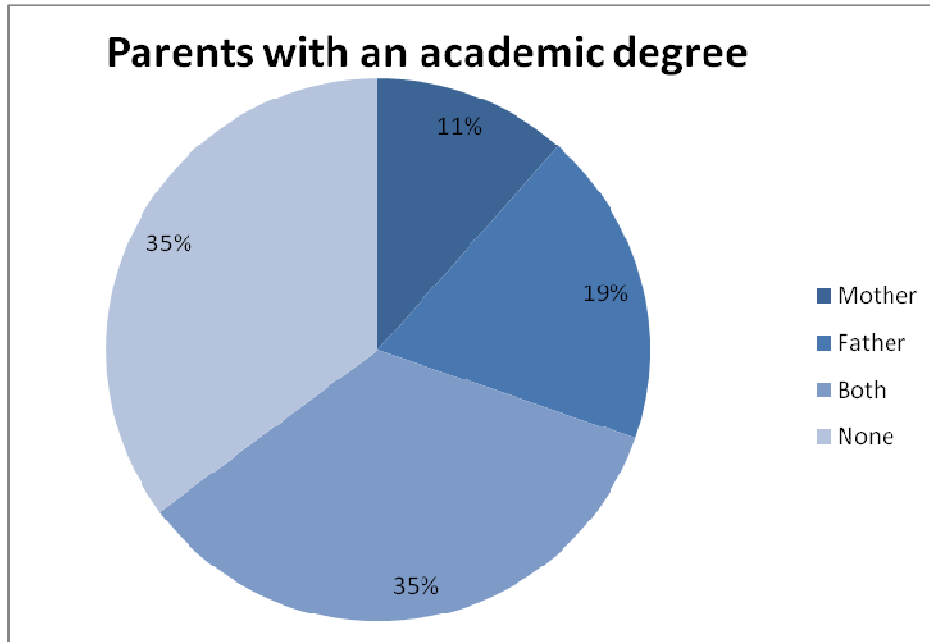
Very few students answering our survey have already graduated and the majority of students are due to graduate in 2009 or the year after. Another 11.3 % are graduating in 2011.

Only 74 students out of the whole sample report a physical or any other type of disability. This amounts to 1.1 % of all exchange students and is a very low figure compared to the total number of people with disabilities.

### **Social background of exchange students**

The educational background of students' parents is often believed to determine their success and partly whether an individual starts higher education at all. While close to two thirds of exchange students come from academic backgrounds, it is striking that 35 % do not have a parent with a higher education degree. Although more thorough investigation would be needed, a tentative conclusion could be made on the grounds of this. In general, higher education degrees are correlated with higher income. The results might suggest that the financial support of the Erasmus programme makes going on an exchange less of a financial issue and therefore a relatively high percentage of students coming from non-academic backgrounds spend a period abroad.

**Figure 6. Who in your family has a higher education degree? - family's educational attainment (n=6808).**



Close to 40 % of exchange students live in big cities and surrounding suburbs and another 40.4 % come from smaller urban areas. Only a little more than 20 % of exchange students come from rural areas such as country villages or countryside farms.

**Figure 7. The areas where the students' families live (n=6815)**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
A big city	1684	24,7
The suburbs of a big city	979	14,4
A town or a small city	2753	40,4
A country village	1161	17
A farm or home in the countryside	238	3,5

When it comes to the financial situation of exchange students' families, 28.8 % of responding students consider themselves coming from an above average income family. 61.7 % indicate that they come from a family with average income. Only 9.6 % say they come from a below average income family which partly invalidates the arguments made above that the financial background plays a lesser role due to the monetary support of the Erasmus programme.

**Figure 8. Income of exchange students' families (n=6798)**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Above my country average	1955	28,8
Average	4191	61,7
Below my country average	652	9,6

## Information needed - provision and access

This chapter deals with the core issue of this year's survey: information provision. The satisfaction of exchange students with information provision is rather low comparing to other areas (see the 2008 edition of the ESNSurvey - [Exchanging cultures](#)). The aim of this chapter is to look deeper into the issue and try to find out how we can improve satisfaction levels when it comes to the provision of information in order to enhance the exchange experience as a whole.

### General satisfaction with information provision<sup>3</sup>

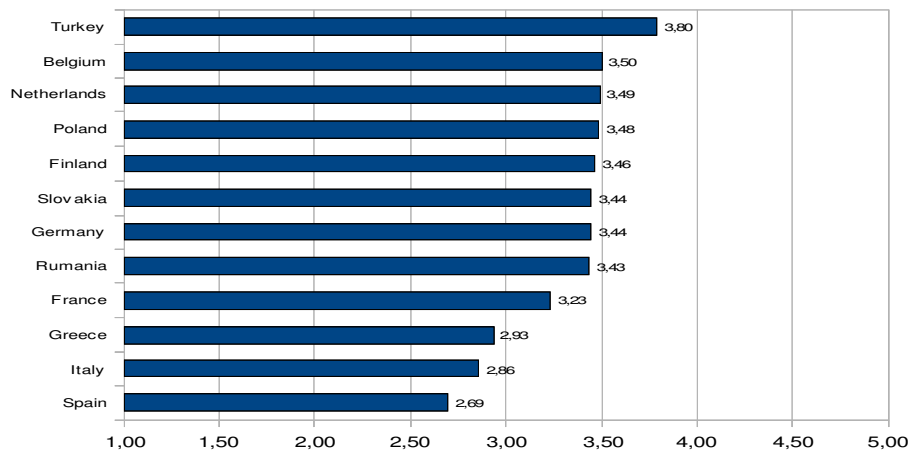
Students evaluate the sufficiency of information available from their home university prior to their studies abroad on average as 3,27<sup>4</sup>. Satisfaction with information provision while studying abroad provided by the host university is on average higher and rated 3,77.

**Figure 9. Average satisfaction with information provision prior to studies abroad from home university (for home countries with more than 100 respondents), on the scale from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied.**

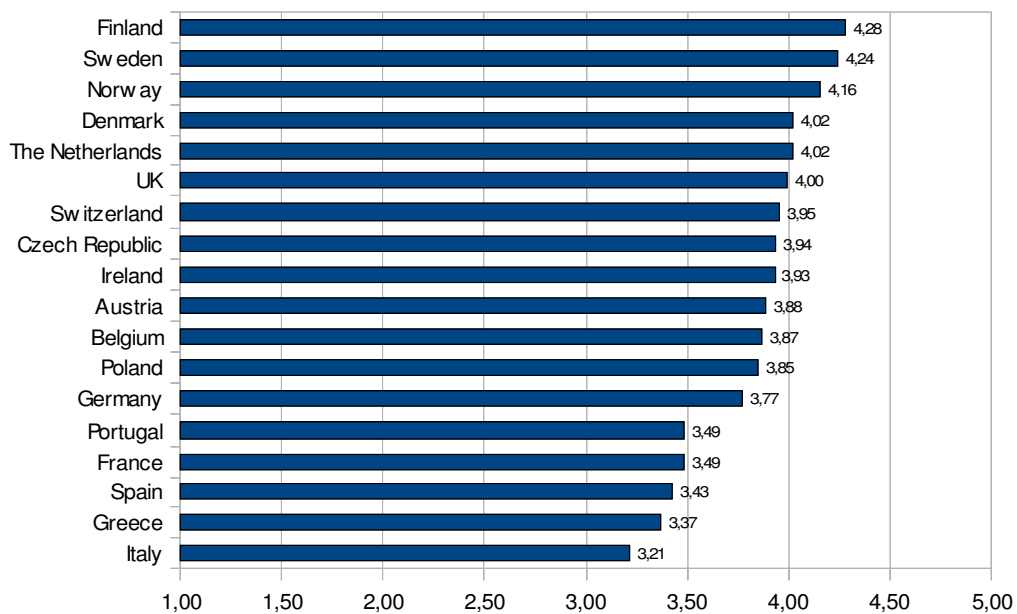
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<sup>3</sup> The main author of the chapter is Ewa Krzaklewska.

<sup>4</sup> On a scale from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied.



**Figure 10. Average satisfaction with information provision during studying abroad from host universities (for host countries with more than 100 respondents), on the scale from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied.**

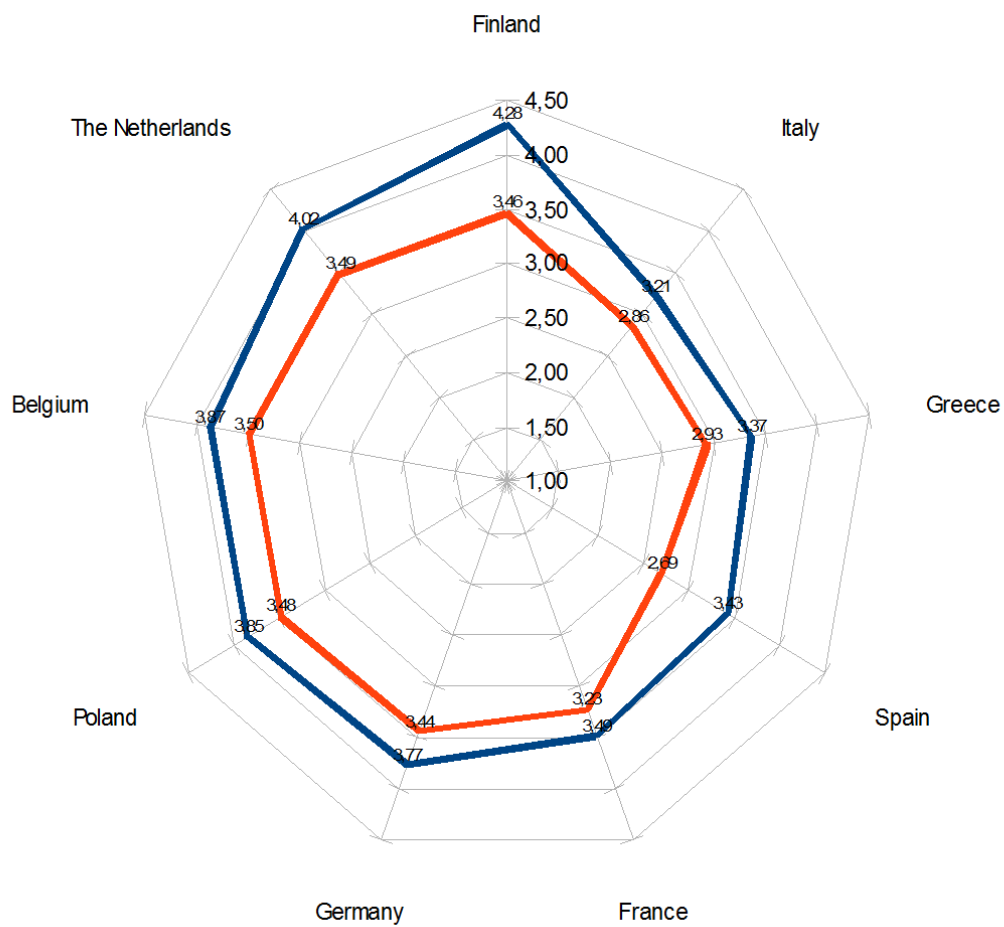


Respondents' ratings of home and host university provision of information correlate positively<sup>5</sup>. The correlation can be observed also for specific countries: if a country is good at information provision it tends to achieve high satisfaction ratings both from the incoming and outgoing students. But also, if a

<sup>5</sup> Pearson's corr=0,435

country fails in providing quality information, both groups of students are dissatisfied. Still, the respondents' satisfaction with a host country's information provision is always higher than with the one of the home country.

**Figure 11. Satisfaction with information provision before and during the exchange between the selected countries<sup>6</sup>.**



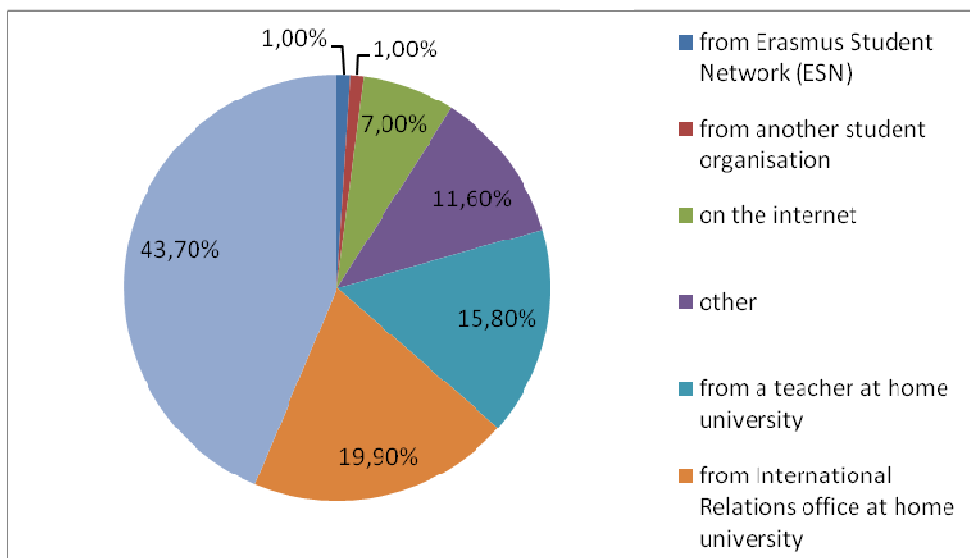
<sup>6</sup> We include only those countries that have received more than 100 responses as a host country and at the same time received more than 100 responses as a home country.

We also know that satisfaction with information provision correlates positively with overall satisfaction, that is to say, students who are more satisfied with the information provided during their studies at the host university, are also more satisfied with their whole stay<sup>7</sup> and studies<sup>8</sup>.

### Information sources used before departure to the host country<sup>9</sup>

The best source of information about an exchange opportunity appear to be peer students: **students first hear about the exchange possibility mainly from other students at their home university** (43.7 %). Moreover, many hear about it from people working in various institutions: the international relations offices at their home universities (19.9 %) or from teachers at the home university (15.8 %). Student organizations (such as ESN) are a source for 2 % of students. 7 % learn about it via the Internet. Quite a lot of students choose the option other (11.6 %) indicating that they have learned about Erasmus mostly from their friends, family, poster advertising and films. Others state that their stay abroad has been an obligatory part of their program. Interestingly, some students say they have always known about the possibility to go abroad, others that they have already heard about it during their high school.

Figure 12. How respondents first hear about the exchange possibility (n=6825)



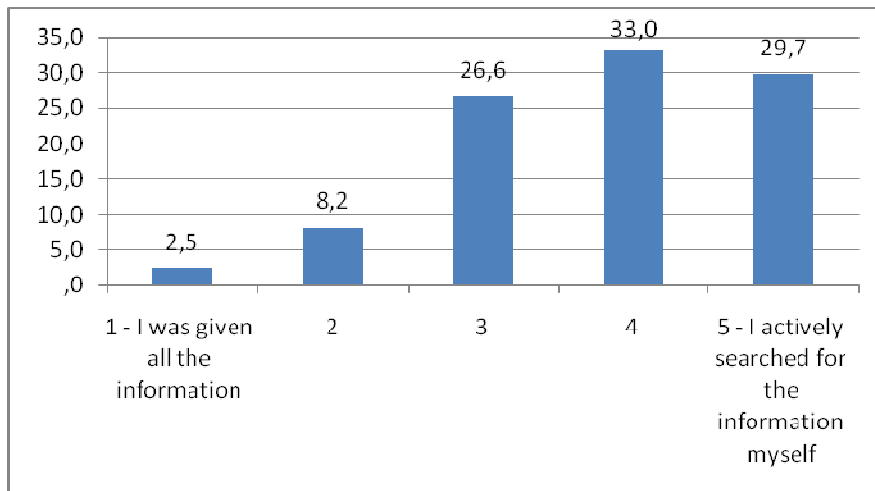
<sup>7</sup> Pearson's corr=0,210

<sup>8</sup> Pearson's corr=0,315

<sup>9</sup> The main author of the chapter is Ewa Krzaklewska.

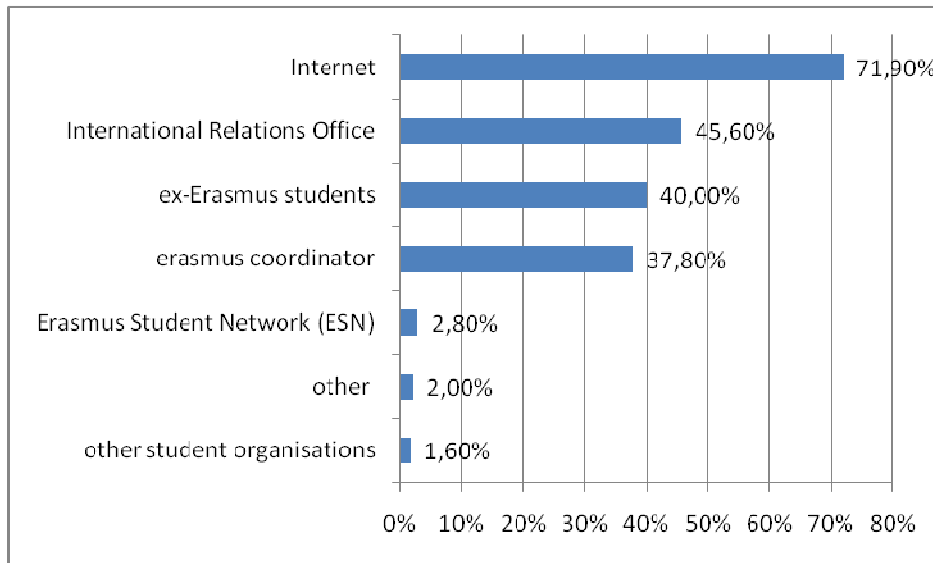
Most of the students, before going on exchange, look actively for information rather than being provided with all the information - 62.7 % of students look very actively or rather actively for necessary information. Only 10.7 % of students are given all or most of the information. Female students declare to be more active in searching for information, as well as students from MA and PhD level studies declare to be more active than BA students.

**Figure 13. Respondents' engagement in information search on the scale from 1- I was given all the information to 5- I actively searched for the information myself (n=6773). (percentage)**



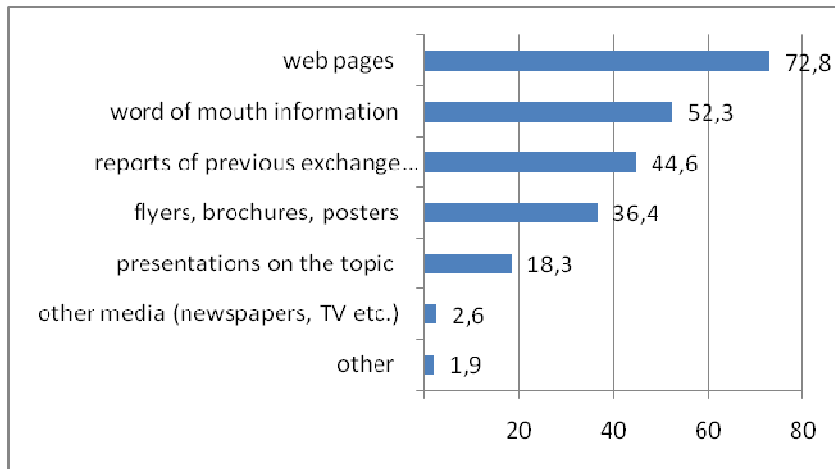
Students were asked to indicate the most important sources of information used. The most popular one is the internet (used by more than 2/3 of exchange students). Almost half of the students contact the International Relation Office and/or the Erasmus coordinator. Additionally, the knowledge of Erasmus alumni seems to be used often - 40 % of exchangees ask for more information from alumni. 2 % of students use services of Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and 1.6 % those of other student organizations. In addition, students ask for more information from their teachers (included in the category 'other').

**Figure 14. Where students look for more information about the exchange. Respondents were asked to mark the most important sources, with maximum of 3 options. (n=6842)**



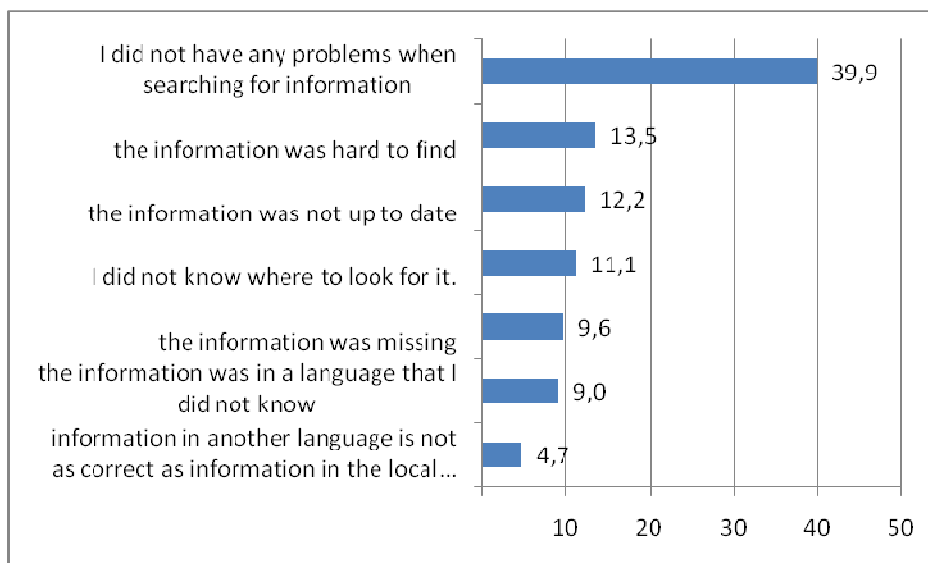
As the most often used source of information is the Internet, it is not surprising that the information is provided to students mostly in the form of webpages. However, as it is shown above, peer students are a very common source of information - this is why half of the students receive information by word of mouth. Very popular also is the information taken from the reports of previous exchange students (44.6 %), as well as flyers, brochures, posters (36.4 %). Quite a lot of students seize the opportunity to listen to presentations on the topic - 18.3 %. Traditional media such as newspapers, TV are not particularly popular (2.6 %).

**Figure 15.** Forms in which information is provided to students. *Respondents could mark all relevant options. (n=6842) (percentage)*



Around 40 % of students say they have not had any problems when searching for information before going on exchange. Others report that they have encountered various problems: some say that information has been hard to find (13.5 %), has been not up to date (12.2 %), they have not known where to look for it (11.1 %), or it has been missing (9.6 %). 9 % stress language issues and the fact that they have not known the local language. Still, 4.7 % notice that information in another language has not been as accurate as information in the local language.

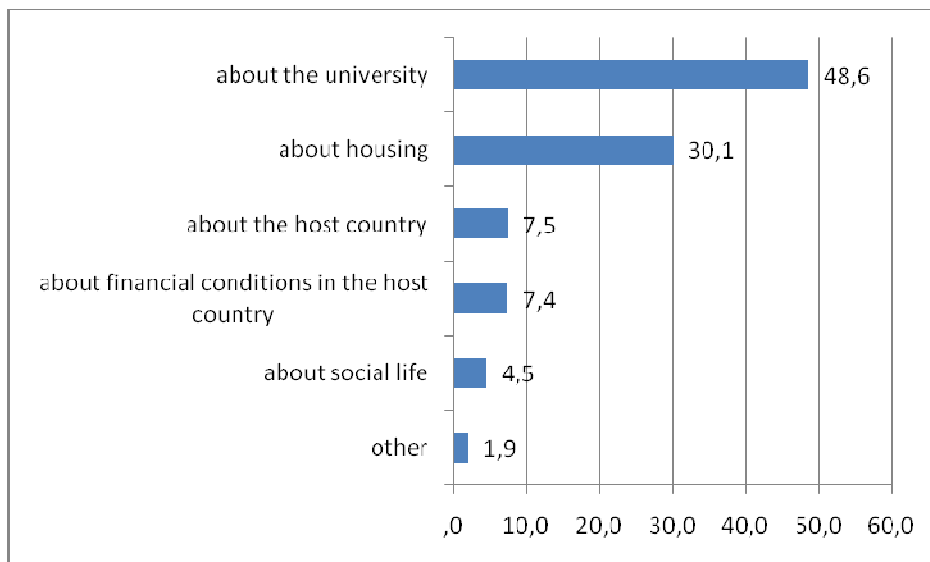
**Figure 16. What was the biggest problem when searching for information about different aspects of exchange? (n=6784)**



## Types of information needed before exchange<sup>10</sup>

Financial conditions and housing provided by the university are the most important factors when it comes to the decision about the exchange destination. Concerning the information important to have before leaving, exchange students judge information about the university and housing as the most crucial. On the contrary, information about housing seems to be particularly important as it has an impact on the choice of destination and is important to have before leaving on exchange. We will see further that it is the information that students most often lack before leaving.

**Figure 17. Types of information that students find the most important to have before leaving for exchange (n=6816)**

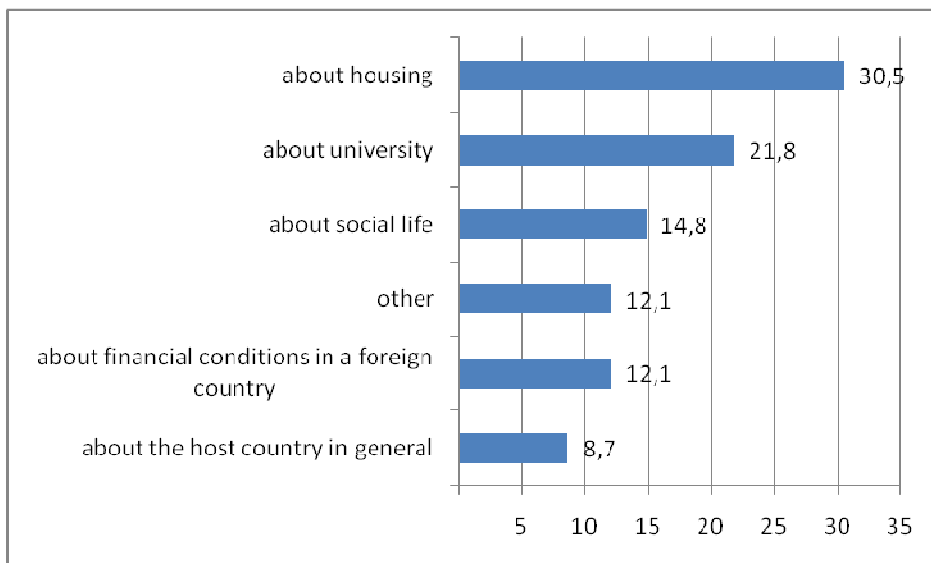


Strikingly enough, the type of information that students consider most important appears to be the very information students lack most often - students would want to have more information about housing (30.5 %), as well about the university (21.8 %). Furthermore, they quite often are short of information about social life and financial conditions in a foreign country even if most of them do not regard them as important.

<sup>10</sup> The main author of the chapter is Ewa Krzaklewska.

Very importantly, people who have lacked information about the university have a lower satisfaction level with respect to their studies than those who have a lack of information in other spheres. We can see that the deficit of this kind of information before going on exchange further affects overall satisfaction with the academic experience.

Figure 18. Kinds of information students lack before going on exchange (n=6488)



### Information about university and studying<sup>11</sup>

Information concerning the university appears crucial for future exchange students. About half of the respondents believe that the information about the university is the most important to have before leaving for exchange. About 22 % say that this is the information they lack before going on exchange. Therefore, this chapter analyses when and where students looked for information about the host university and its facilities, both before and after their arrival.

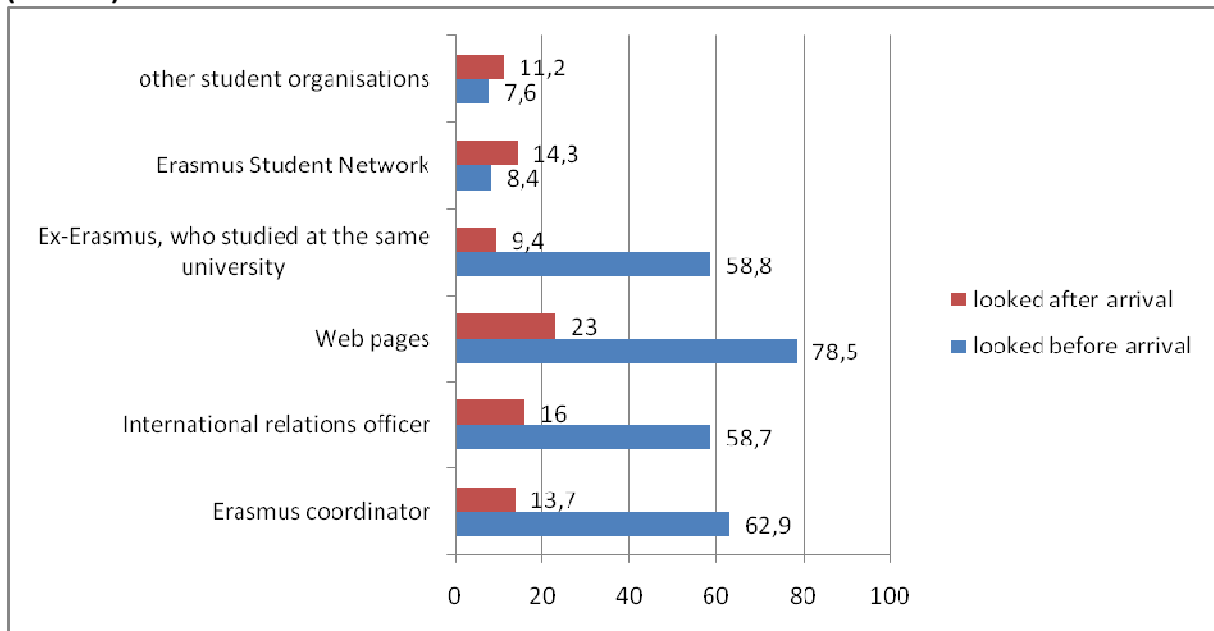
The most used channels to learn about the host university prior to the exchange period are within the home university (with the information on the webpages, information from the

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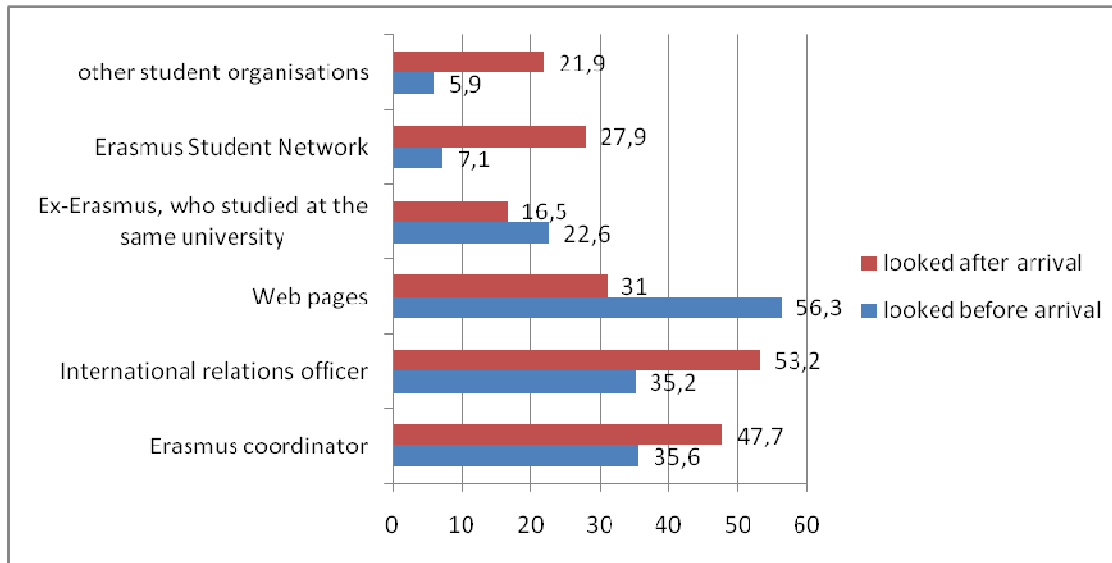
11 The main author of the chapter is Marge Taivere.

Erasmus alumni and the information provided by the university). Also before the departure, students use the webpages of the host university. After the arrival, students mostly use the host university information sources, mostly administration staff (such as International Relations Officer and Erasmus coordinator). Student organisations (such as ESN) also prove important to students upon their arrival to the host university - about a quarter of students use them as information providers.

**Figure 19. Percentage of students who have used various sources of information provided the by the home university about the university before and after the arrival to the host country (n=6842).**



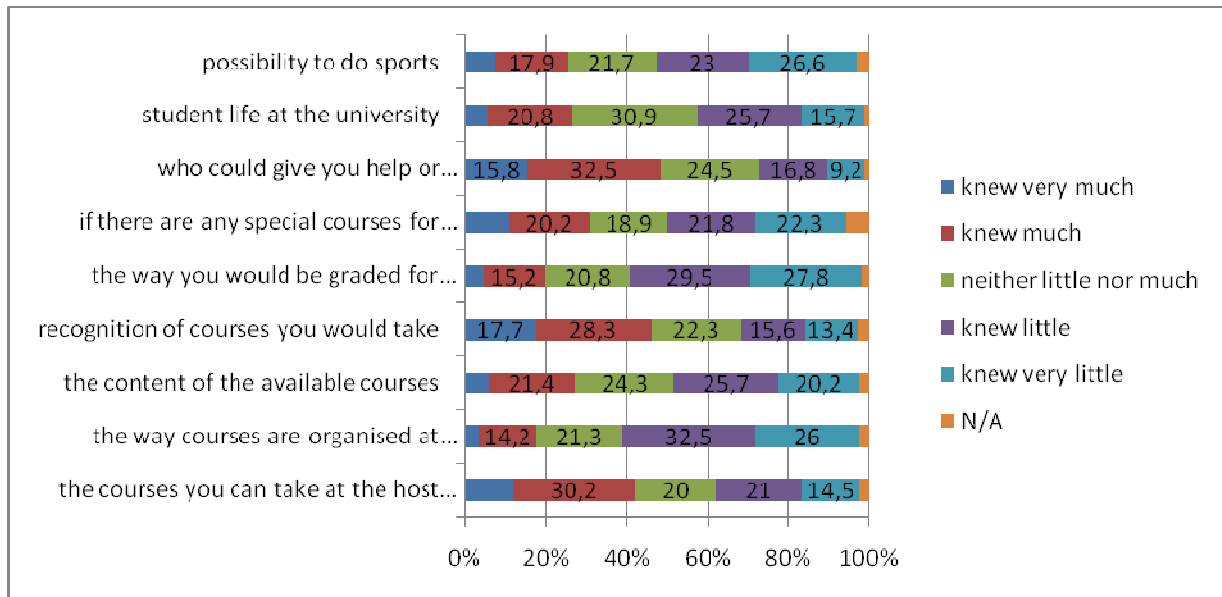
**Figure 20. Percentage of students who have used various sources of information provided the by the host university about the university before and after the arrival to the host country (n=6842)**



The students who participated in the survey find that **the most important information for them concerned the courses available at the host university** (62 %). The second most important issue, but much less often mentioned, is information about housing services offered by the university (14 %). Facilities, social life and language courses at the university are rated to be the most important information by 6-7 % of the students. The extracurricular activities and student organizations rank 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, respectively.

The information that students have received before arriving at the host university varies considerably. The survey shows that 26 % of the students know very little about the way courses are organised at the university, 28 % know little about how they are graded for their work and 20 % know little about the content of the available courses. Almost 60 % of students know either very little or little about „the way courses are organised at the host university” and „the way you would be graded for your work”. On the positive side, more than 40 % of the responding students know very much or much about the courses they can take at the host university (42 %), who could give them help or information concerning the university (59 %) and about the recognition of the courses the students can take (46 %).

**Figure 21. Information level before arriving to the host university on the various aspects connected to studying. Respondents measured it on the scale from 1 – I knew very little to 5 – I knew very much. (n= from 6757 to 6782)**

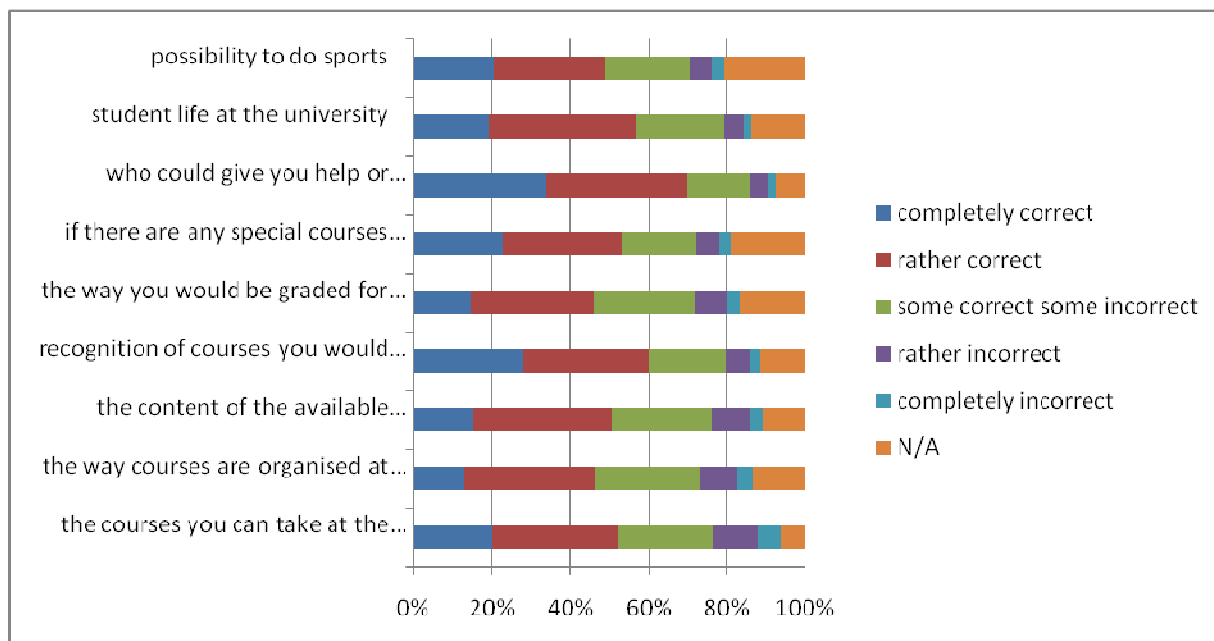


In most cases, the information that students receive before arriving to the host university turns out to be correct at the time of arrival. The most correct information is about who to consult for help or who informs foreign students about university related issues (70 %).

Only two sorts of information out of nine do not appear to be rather correct or completely correct to less than 50 % of our respondents after their arrival to the host country. These categories are: the way courses were organized at the host university (46 %) and the way students would be graded for their work (46 %).

Students most often receive incorrect information about the courses students can take at the host university: 6 % claim it to be completely incorrect and 11 % rather incorrect.

**Figure 22. How correct appeared the previously acquired information after the arrival. Respondents measured it on the scale from 1 – to 5 (n=6689 to 6753)**



90 % of students answer that it has been possible to take a language course of the local language. Most often the information about the course comes from the host university (76 %) and in few cases from the home university (13 %).

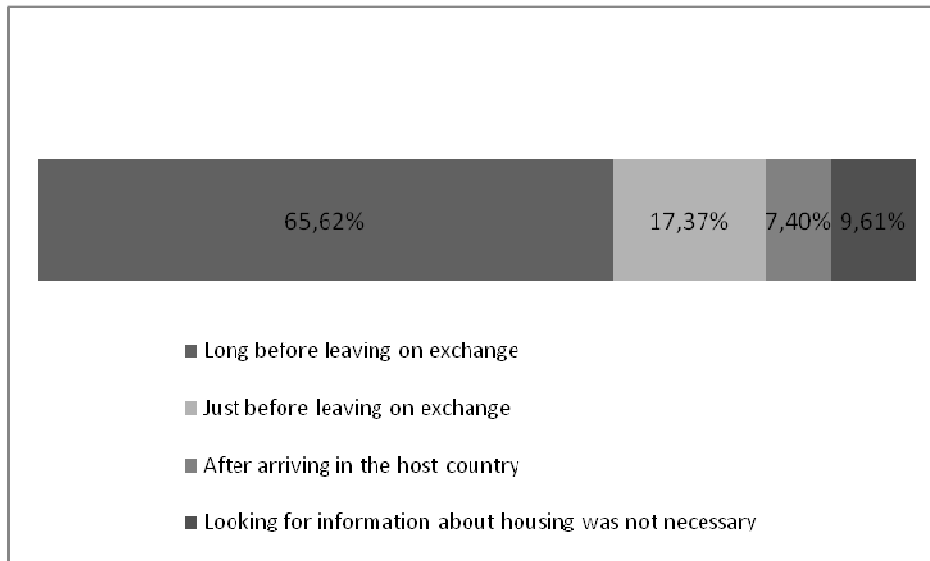
## Information about housing <sup>12</sup>

Most of the students start to look for information about housing very early. 66 % of the respondents begin searching for information about housing long before leaving for their exchange, 17 % just before and 7 % after arriving in the host country. Some respondents (10 %) do not consider it necessary to look for information about housing at all, but in general we can see that most of the students look for the information on the issue before leaving on exchange (83 %).

**Figure 23. Timing of housing information provision (n=6283)**

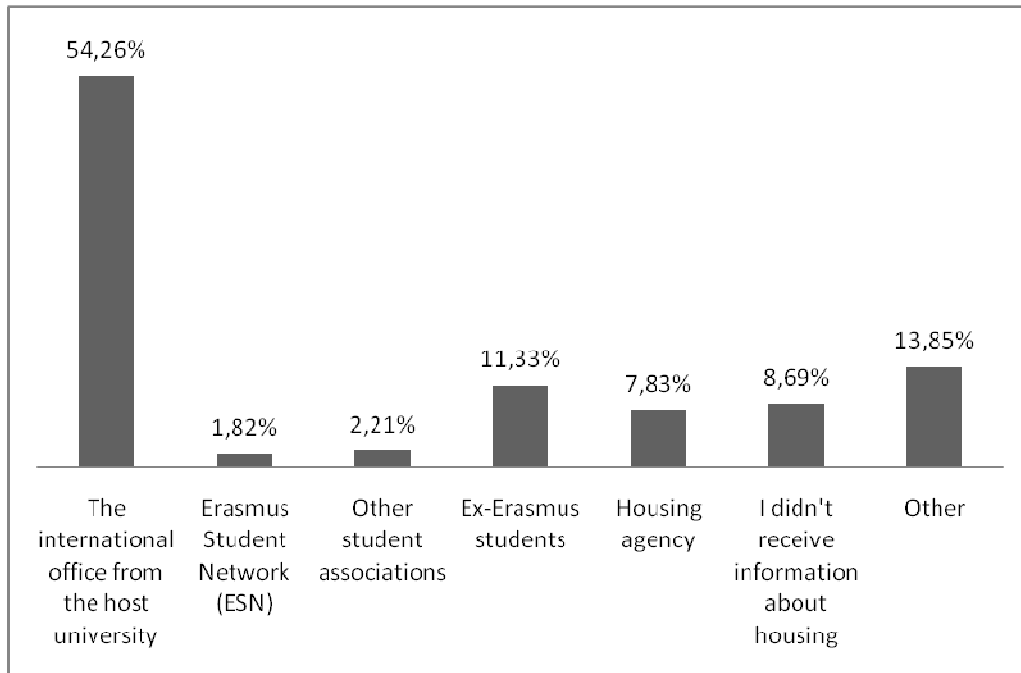
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12 The main author of the chapter is Walter Bonifazi.



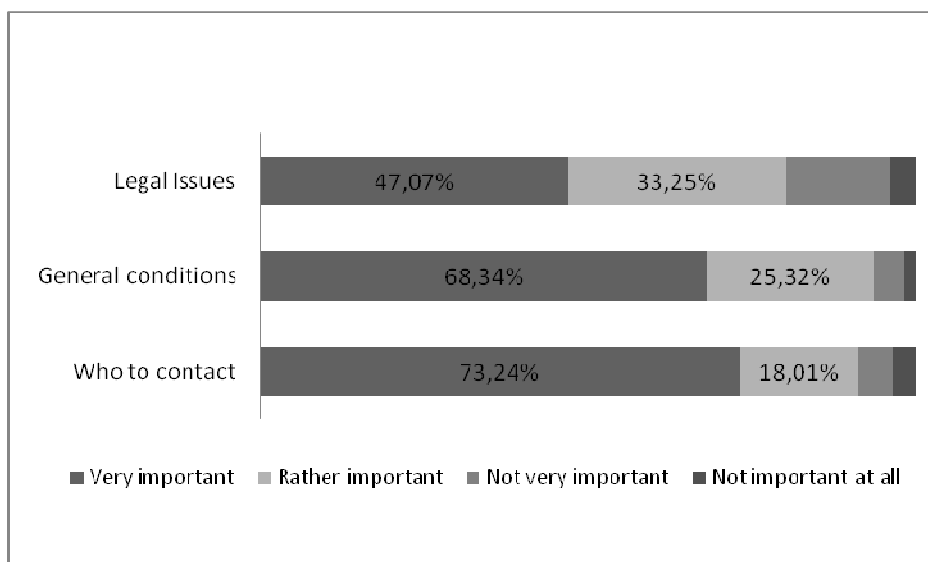
There are a lot of possible sources of information on housing, but in this survey we can see that one is prevalent. 54 % of all respondents recognize the International office of the host university as the principal source. The other main sources of information on housing are ex-Erasmus students (11 %) and housing agencies (8 %). 14 % of respondents choose the category 'other', and mostly indicate websites/internet as well as friends as principal sources of housing information. Student associations reach 4 % of choices, with Erasmus Student Network being used by 2 % of respondents. 9 % of students have not received any information about housing before leaving.

**Figure 24. Principal sources of information on housing (n=6821)**



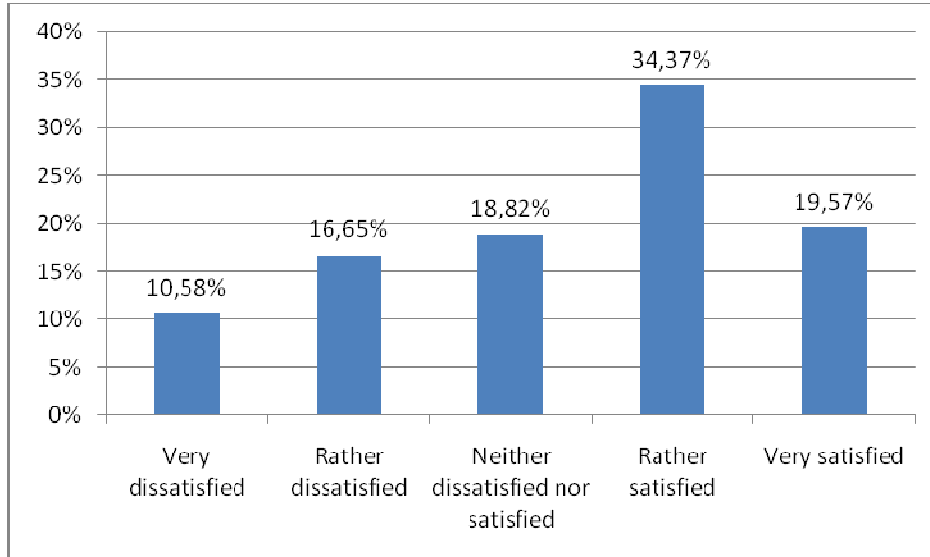
There are some types of information which have shown to be useful for students who are looking for accommodation. Students were mostly interested to know “who to contact to find accommodation” (73 % very important, 18 % rather important), what are the “general conditions (price, deposit, type of a room, etc...)” (68 % and 25 %) and what are the “legal issues” connected to housing (47 % and 33 %).

**Figure 25. Importance of different types of housing information (n=6813)**



Most of the respondents are rather satisfied with the information that they receive on housing. 54 % of students are in general satisfied and 28 % dissatisfied.

**Figure 26. Satisfaction with the information on housing (n=6774)**



### Information concerning visa issues<sup>13</sup>

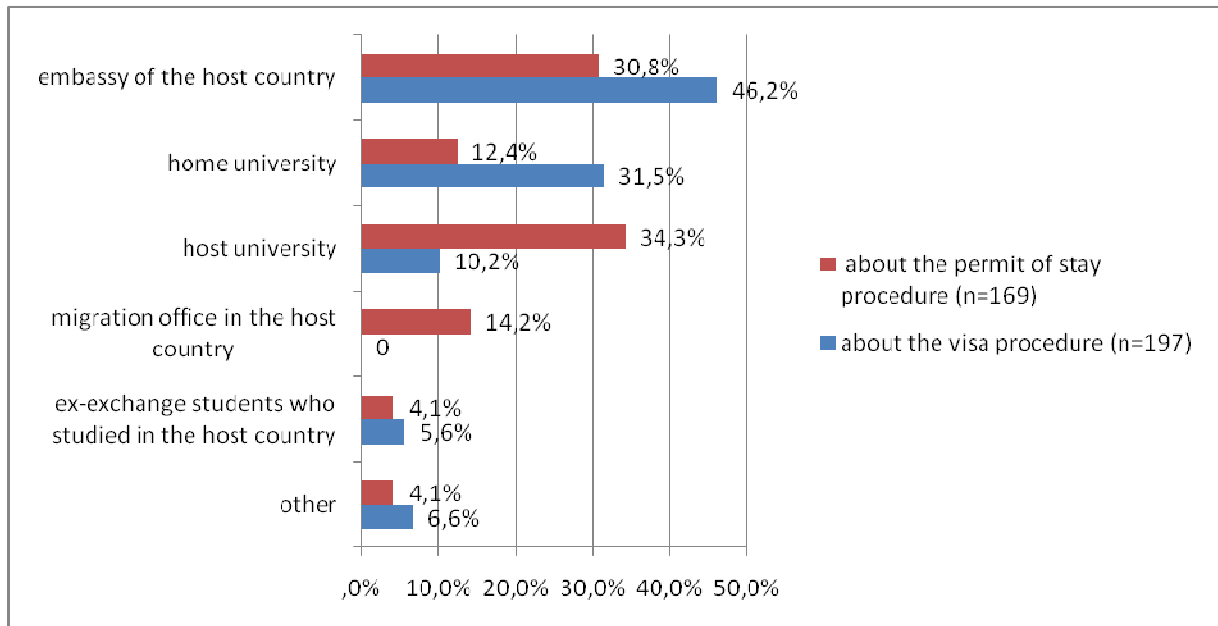
Nowadays, most of the students (90 %) do not need a visa to go for exchange. Still, 10 % of students need a visa, and those students mostly come from countries outside Europe.

Among Erasmus exchange students, it is mostly Turkish students who need a visa (199 respondents). They also need further a permit of stay in the host country (174 answered that they need it). The institutions from which they receive information concerning those issues are the embassy of the host country and both the home (more helpful when it comes to visa information) and host institutions (most helpful when it comes to information concerning permit of stay).

**Figure 27. The sources of information for getting information about visa and permit of stay for Turkish Erasmus students.**

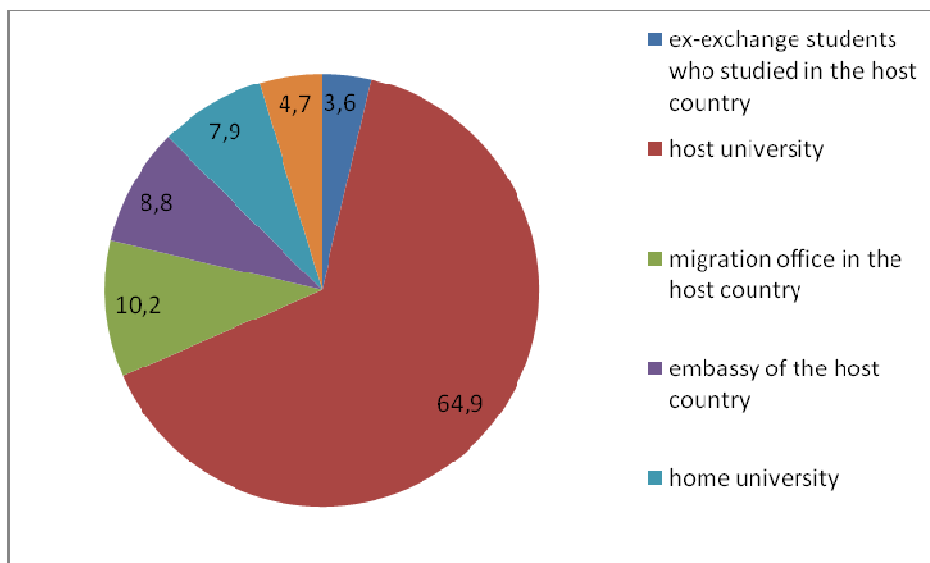
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13 The main author of the chapter is Ewa Krzaklewska.



When it comes to the obligation to have a permit of stay in the host country, 23 % of students actually need it. The institutions that provide them with information concerning this issue are: the host university (69 %) or migration office in the host country (10.2 %). But the embassy of the host country and home university were also helpful.

**Figure 28. Sources of information concerning permit of stay procedure (n=1457)**

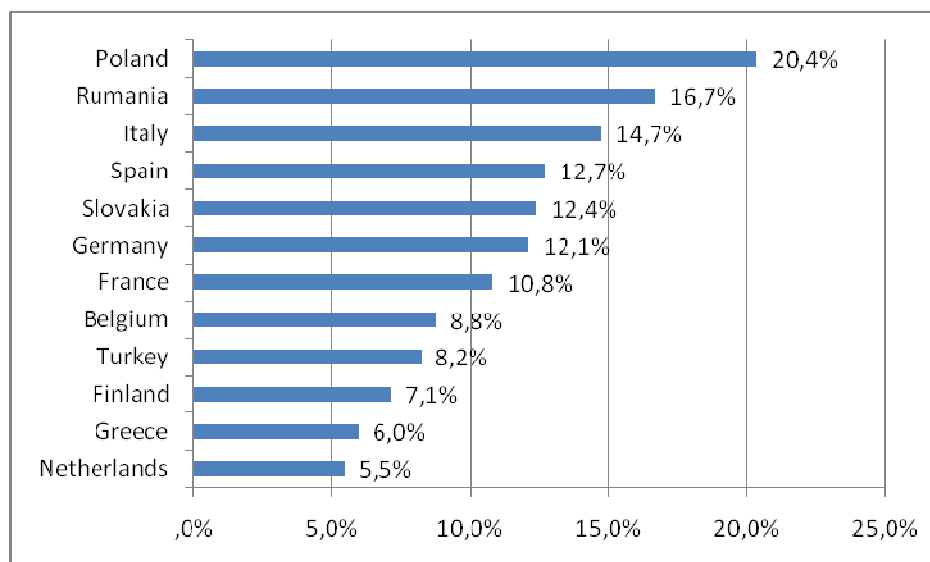


## Information concerning extracurricular activities<sup>14</sup>

During the exchange, 12 % of students work in the host country. Students who describe their income as below the country average work more often than those who describe it as average or above country average (16 % in comparison to 11 % and 12 %).

There are nationalities that are more active when it comes to working abroad - Polish, Romanian and Italian students are among those who most often work abroad. The need to work abroad might be connected to the high cost of living but also to the opportunity for gathering some work experience while studying abroad.

**Figure 29. Percentage of students who work abroad by home country (only for countries with more than 100 respondents).**

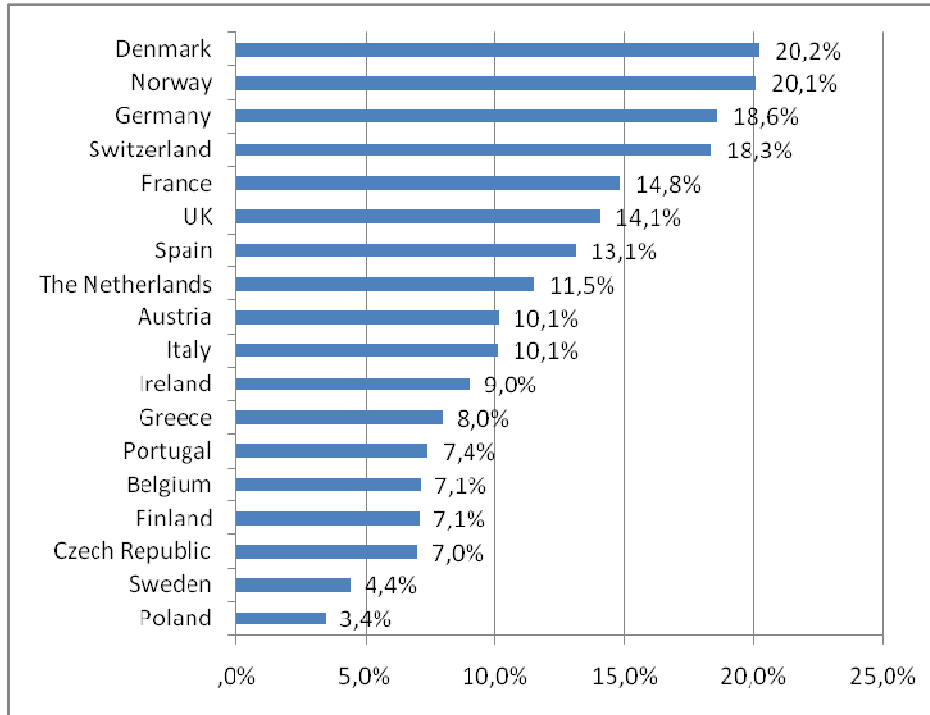


Also the host country seems to influence the fact whether students work abroad. The countries in which students most often work are Denmark, Norway, Germany and Switzerland. The factors that might influence the possibilities of working in a host country can be: availability of jobs for foreign students, language used at work, language abilities of students, but also the cost of living in a certain country. We see that students rarely work in Eastern European countries, where the cost of living is not very high, plus additionally a language barrier exists.

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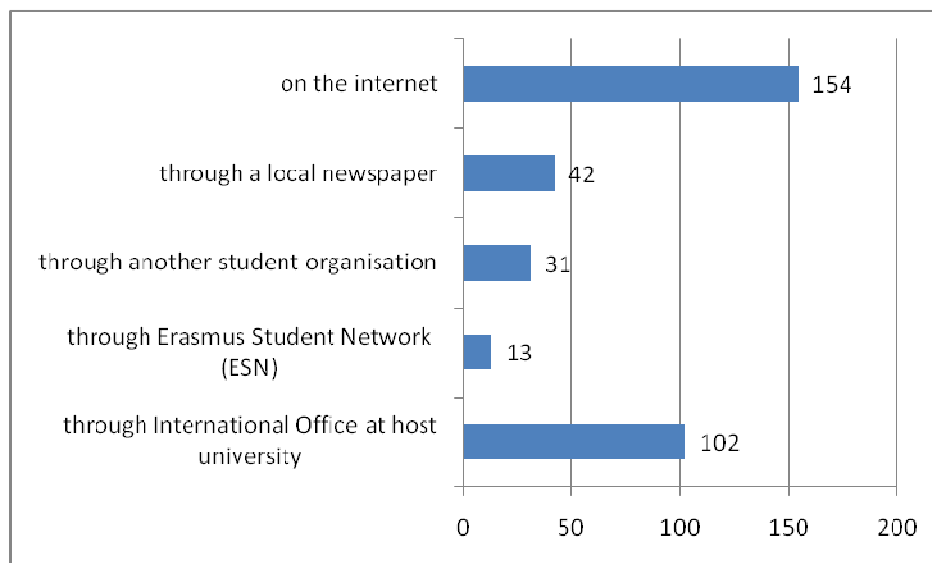
14 The main author of the chapter is Ewa Krzaklewska.

**Figure 30. Percentage of students who work abroad according to their host country (only for countries with more than 100 respondents).**



Most of the working students begin to look for work only after staying some time in the host country (61.6 %). About one quarter (26.3 %) after arrival to the host country. Only 12 % start to look for work before going on exchange. Interestingly, 69 % of them have known before exchange that they would be able to legally work in the host country. 31 % have not known if this would be legal to work in the host country. The most used channels for looking for a job are the International Office at the host university and the internet. The majority of job seekers find their job via other sources which are too fragmented to list here (more than 450 responses).

**Figure 31. How exchange students find work in the host country.**



Students rarely do volunteer work in the host country - the number of those who do, amounts to 7.2 %. When it comes to the level of studies, PhD students less often volunteer compared to BA and MA students. Students from majors such as humanities and education/teacher training are the most active in this respect, while students from mathematics, but also communication sciences and business/managements are the least active. Educational attainment of the parents has clearly an impact - students whose parents both hold higher educational degrees or those with a mother having a higher educational a degree are more active than the rest. When it comes to the income, students with income below country average are more active in volunteering than those from average or well-standing families.

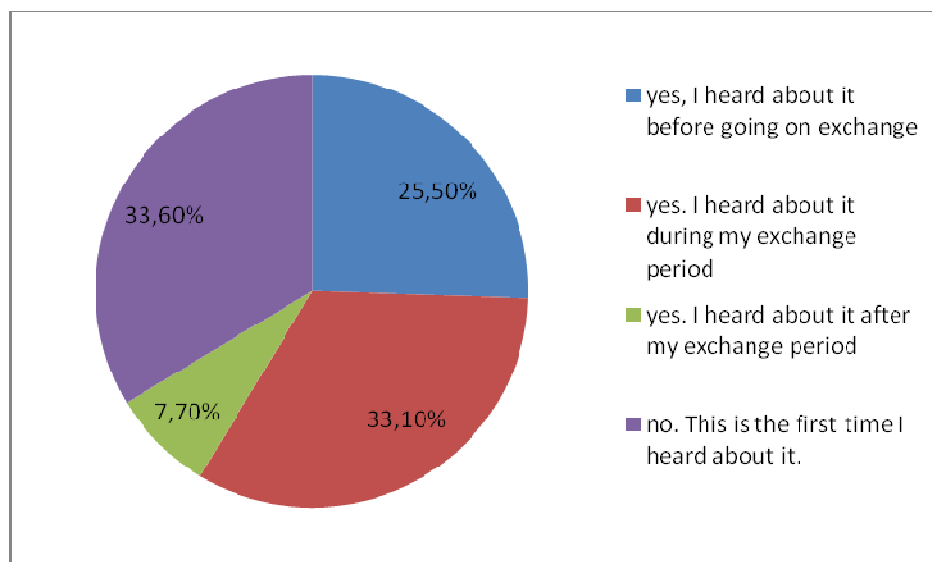
Similar to when searching for work most volunteering students look for possibilities of volunteer work after having spent some time in the host country (64.4 %). 26.3 % look for work after their arrival to the host country, and 9.3 % before going on exchange. Most of them find volunteer work via the International Office (102 respondents) at the host university or through student organisations (129). Again, more than a third of those who have done volunteer work indicate other channels which are not suitable to characterize in a concise manner.

## Students organizations and their help to students<sup>15</sup>

This chapter focuses on three different areas. First, it explores if students have heard about Erasmus Student Network and participated in its activities, as well as if they are satisfied with its work. Secondly, it analyses the engagement of the respondents in the activities of other student organizations. Third, it evaluates exchange students' representation at the host university.

25.5 % of the respondents have known about ESN prior to their departure. However, it is during the study abroad that most of the students (33.1 %) meet ESN for the first time. Few students (7.7 %) hear about ESN only after their study abroad, while a third of all students (33.6 %) have never heard about ESN before completing this survey.

Figure 32. When and if students have heard about ESN (n=6842).

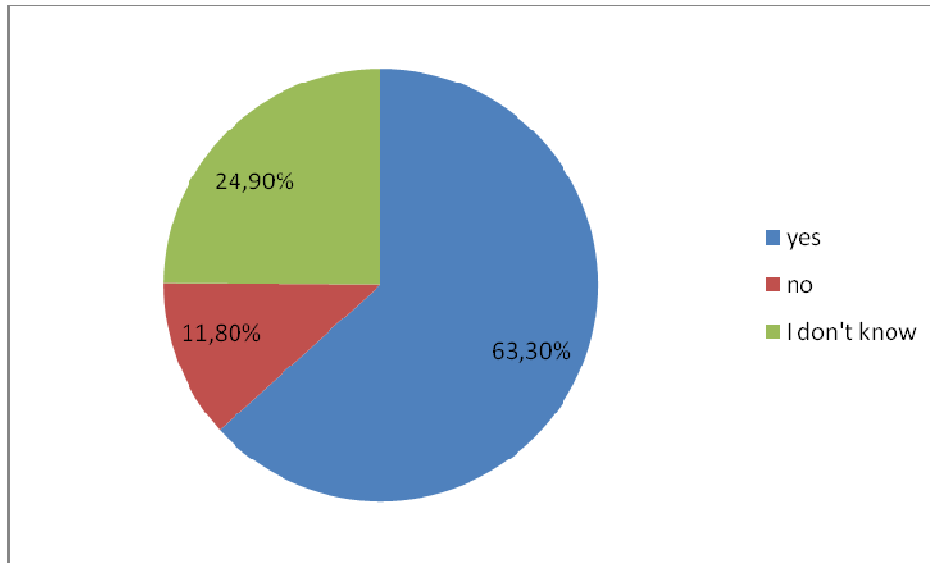


As mentioned previously, most students hear about ESN before or during their study abroad, which is supposedly due to the presence of an ESN section at their host university (valid for 63.3 % of the respondents). Only 11.8 % of the respondents didn't find an ESN section at their host university and 24.9 % don't know if it exists or not. However, some respondents might not be aware that there exists an ESN section at the host university, due to the fact that they might have a different local name (e.g. Erasmus Club or International Students' Organisation).

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15 The main authors of the chapter are Marco La Rosa, Marge Taivere, Emanuel Alfranseder and Ewa Krzaklewska.

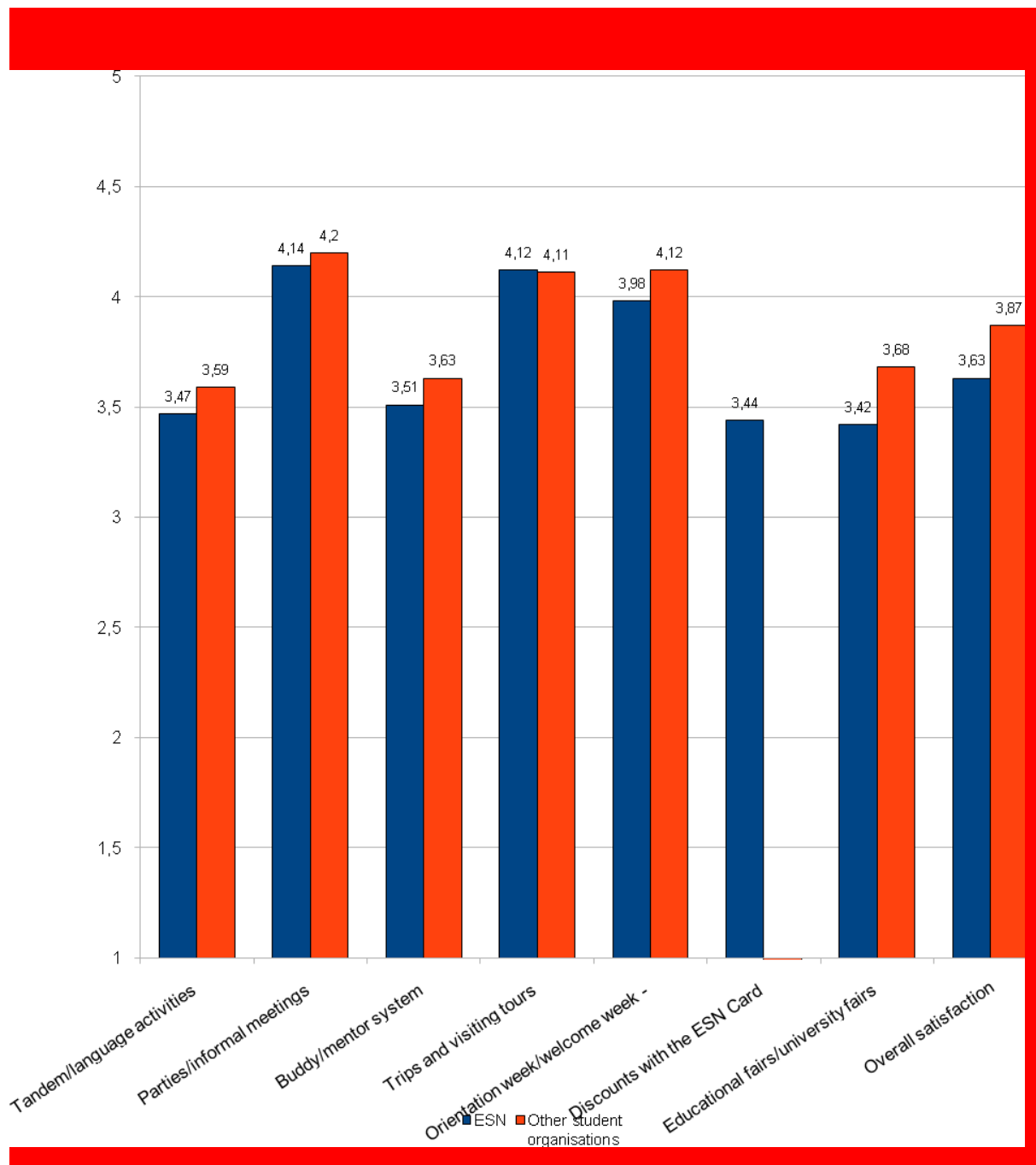
**Figure 33. Existence of an ESN section at the host university (n=4011).**



Students are rather satisfied with ESN activities. When students evaluate ESN activities in different areas using a scale from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied, the overall satisfaction with ESN is 3,63 (Fig). A more detailed evaluation shows that activities such as informal meetings and parties (4,14), trips and visiting tours (4,12), orientation week and welcome week (3,98) receive the highest rating. In addition, other activities such as the buddy or mentor system (3,51), tandem and language activities (3,47), discounts with the ESN Card (3,44), educational or university fairs (3,42) receive positive feedback.

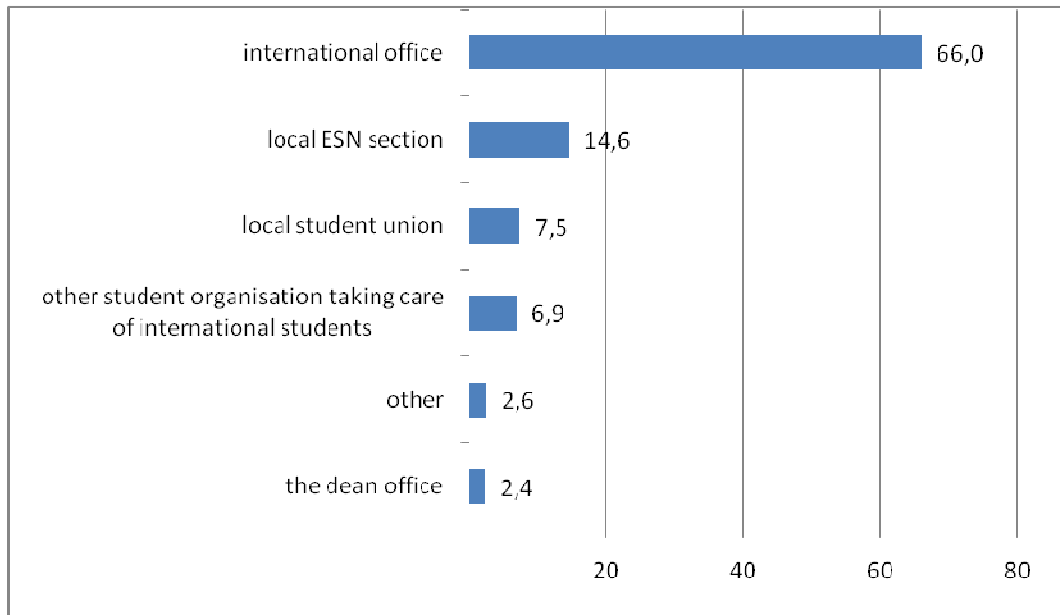
There are also other student organisations which help exchange students with their activities in the hosting university. The most mentioned organisations are AIESEC, AEGEE, Student Union, mentors, ASEE and others, none however got more than 100 respondents. Figure 34 shows the satisfaction level with other student organisations. The evaluation of the ESN activities and other student organisations is very similar.

**Figure 34. Satisfaction with ESN's and other student associations' activities. On the scale from 1 - very satisfied to 5 - very dissatisfied.**



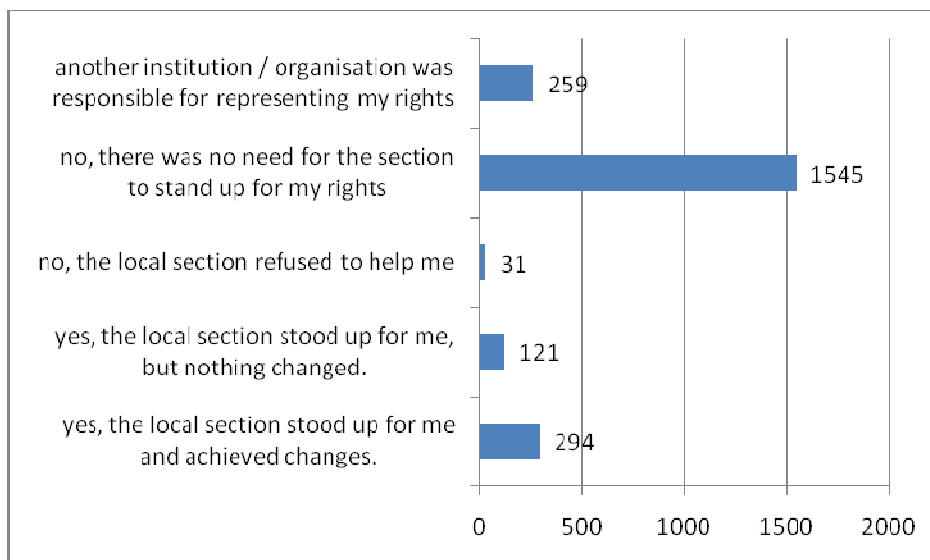
Just over half of the exchange students feel the need to be represented at the host university. Currently, students would turn mostly to the International Relation Office if in need of someone to represent his/her rights as an exchange student. The second choice was Erasmus Student Network. Also, the student union and other student organisations prove important in that respect.

**Figure 35. Where would you turn to if you needed someone to represent your rights as an exchange student? (percentage)**



When it comes to actual representation, more than 400 students said that ESN acted as a representative of their rights as exchange/international students. In about 2/3 of cases, ESN sections managed to achieve the goal, in the others they did not manage. Most of the students do not need the ESN section to stand up for their rights, which is a good sign of the fact that exchange students in most cases believe they are treated fairly.

**Figure 36. Did ESN act as a representative of your rights as an exchange/international student?**



## Annex 1: About ESN

**Erasmus Student Network (ESN)** is the biggest inter-disciplinary European student organisation in the field of mobility. ESN is a non-political, non-profit and non-religious organisation with over **12,000 volunteer members from local student groups (so called sections) in more than 360 Higher Education Institutions in 34 countries**. These are supporting educational, social and cultural integration of exchange students, providing practical information for incoming and outgoing students about the exchange programmes and reintegration and providing intercultural experience to students who cannot access a period abroad (internationalization at home). The vision of ESN is the enrichment of society through international students - thus, ESN works for fostering the mobility of students under the principle of SHS - students helping students. ESN provides its services annually to about **150,000 international students** in Europe and beyond. ESN's activities comprise **hundreds of projects** developed at every different level. The main international projects of Erasmus Student Network are:

**1. ESNSurvey** is a European-wide research on different topics concerning academic and non-academic mobility. It is annually conducted among international students as well as non-mobile students, with average response rate of 8.000 participants. Started in 2005, the ESNSurvey is the biggest regular research prepared and run entirely by students for other students. So far, the ESNSurvey investigated into the following topics - Experience of Studying Abroad (2005), Exchange Students' Rights (2006), Generation Mobility (2007), Exchanging Cultures (2008) and Information for Exchange (2009).

**2. PRIME** (Problems of Recognition in Making Erasmus) is a qualitative research at about 100 European universities on the procedures applied to outgoing Erasmus / Exchange students. According to the results from the ESNSurvey 2006 and 2007, recognition of courses studied abroad represents still a barrier for the mobility of students. The aim is to collect best practices among participating universities and through their dissemination contribute to the improvement of the situation.

**3. ExchangeAbility** - the goal of this project is to allow students with disabilities to be fully involved in the activities of the local sections of ESN. Pilot sections will be encouraged to engage disabled students at their universities in the work for the exchange students. Through participation and involvement in the activities, students with disabilities will be given an opportunity to experience the international and intercultural atmosphere associated with the exchange programmes. The long term goal of the project is to encourage an increasing number of disabled students to go for an exchange.

**4. ESN Galaxy** is a web platform based on the new Web 2.0 technologies. It brings together all the ESN sections, allowing them to communicate and share information in real time. This special system allows international students and ESN members to look for accommodation or to get information on their host country. ESN Galaxy also supports local sections by provision of web-based services.

5. **ESN Newsletter** is an ESN online communication tool, sent twice per month (at the beginning and in the middle of each month) to over 5.000 subscribers informing them about the network, ESN events as well as about other interesting initiatives happening in Europe and beyond.

6. **eXpress, the ESN Magazine** is published three times a year. It is an informative high-quality magazine about issues concerning the ESN, Europe and the EU in particular, exchange and mobility. The articles are written by the ESN volunteers and students from all around Europe.

7. **ESN Events** - the International Board calls for the majority of the ESN international events, taking place every year. The Board assists the organisers, especially with advice and support. These events include Regional Platforms (Central European Platform, Northern European Platform, South Eastern European Platform, South Western European Platform and Western European Platform), National Boards Meeting, Cultural Medley and Annual General Meeting of ESN.

8. **ESN Card** is an ESN membership card, distributed by ESN sections to their members and exchange students. The card offers a number of discounts at local and national level, together with some other advantages. Annually, ESN issues about 70.000 cards.

Erasmus Student Network is a full member of the European Youth Forum since April 2010 and was awarded **participatory status with the Council of Europe** at the end of December 2008. ESN is a **courtesy member of the European Association for International Education**.

#### **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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## **Annex 2: Questionnaire**

**INFORMATION FOR EXCHANGE**  
**ESNSURVEY 2009**

This survey can be filled out by students who were exchange students for at least 3 months in a foreign country.

**PART 1. YOUR STAY ABROAD**

1. Through which programme did you study abroad?  
*(please refer to your most recent exchange)*

- a. Erasmus Programme
- b. Bilateral agreement between universities
- c. Governmental programme
- d. Private foundation
- e. Arranged by myself
- f. 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	Not applicable (N/A)
a) Courses at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Professors	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) University facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) Local language courses at the university	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) Sufficiency of information prior to your studies abroad (from home university)	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) Sufficiency of information while studying abroad (from host university)	1	2	3	4	5	6

g) Help from International Office at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) Financial situation	1	2	3	4	5	6
i) Contacts with local students	1	2	3	4	5	6
j) Contact with the host country's culture	1	2	3	4	5	6
k) Social life	1	2	3	4	5	6
l) The atmosphere of the city and country where the university was located	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. 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

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

Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

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

Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

## PART 2. INFORMATION ABOUT EXCHANGE

11. How did you first hear about the exchange possibility?

- a. from a teacher at my home university
- b. from international relations office at my home university
- c. from other students at home university
- d. from Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- e. from another student organisation
- f. on the internet
- g. other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

12. Where did you look for more information about the exchange?

*Choose the most important sources of information you have used, maximum 3 options*

- on the internet
- An International Relations Office

- erasmus coordinator
- Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- other student organisations
- ex-Erasmus students
- 
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

13. In which form was the information provided to you?  
Please mark all relevant options

- reports of previous exchange students
- flyers, brochures, posters
- web pages
- word to mouth information
- other media (newspapers, TV etc.)
- presentations on the topic
- other , explain \_\_\_\_\_ (blank space) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Did you look for the information yourself?

I was given all the information				I actively searched for the information myself
1	2	3	4	5

15. What factors influenced your choice of destination?  
Please put numbers from 1- the least important factor to 6- the most important factor.

- location of university
- academic offerings of university
- language used at university
- financial conditions
- housing provided by university
- other: please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

16. What was the information you lacked before going on exchange?

- about university
- about housing
- about social life
- about financial conditions in a foreign country
- about the host country in general
- other: please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

17. What was the biggest problem when searching for information about different aspects of exchange?

- a. the information was hard to find
- b. the information was in a language that I did not know
- c. information in another language is not as correct as information in the local language

- d. the information was not up to date
- e. the information was missing
- f. I did not know where to look for it.

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 3. UNIVERSITY**

18. Where did you look for information about the host university?

*Please check the box if applicable*

HOME UNIVERSITY	Looked for information <u>before</u> arrival	Looked for information <u>after</u> arrival
Erasmus coordinator		
International relations officer		
Erasmus Student Network (ESN)		
Other student organisation		
Web pages		
Ex-Erasmus who studied at that university		
Other, explain ( <i>blank space</i> )		

HOST UNIVERSITY	Looked for information <u>before</u> arrival	Looked for information <u>after</u> arrival
Erasmus coordinator		
International relations officer		
Erasmus Student Network (ESN)		
Other student organisation		
Web pages		
Ex-Erasmus who studied at that university		
Other, explain ( <i>blank space</i> )		

19. What information was the most important to you?

- a. About facilities of the university
- b. About courses available
- c. About housing service offered by the university
- d. About social life at the university
- e. About language course at university
- f. About student organisations

g. About extracurricular activities

20. How did you feel about the information you had on following topics, just before you went on the exchange?

	I knew very little		I knew neither little nor much		I knew very much	Not applicable (N/A)
a) the courses you can take at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) the way courses are organised at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) the content of the available courses	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) the way you would be graded for your work	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) if there are any special courses for foreign students	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) who could give you help or information concerning the university	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) student life at the university	1	2	3	4	5	6
h) the possibility to do sports	1	2	3	4	5	6
i) recognition of courses you would take	1	2	3	4	5	6

21. To what degree did your information on following topics appeared to be correct when you arrived to the host university:

	Completely incorrect	Rather incorrect	Some correct, some incorrect	Rather correct	Completely correct	Not applicable (N/A)
a) the courses you can take at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) ) the way courses are organised at the host university	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) the content of the available courses	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) the way you would be graded for you work	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) if there are any special courses for foreign students	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) who could give you help or information concerning the university	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) student life at the university	1	2	3	4	5	6

h) the possibility to do sports	1	2	3	4	5	6
i) recognition of courses you would take	1	2	3	4	5	6

22. During your exchange period was it possible to take a language course to learn the local language?

- Yes
- No

23. [If, **22a YES**] From whom did you receive information about this language course?

- a. host university
- b. home university
- c. Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- d. Other student organisation
- e. commercial company
- f. ex-Erasmus students
- g. I never received information about this
- h. other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

#### PART 4. HOUSING

24. When did you look for the first time for information about **housing** in the host country?

- a. Long before leaving on exchange.
- b. Just before leaving on exchange.
- c. After arriving in the host country.
- d. My accommodation was provided by university.

25. From whom mainly did you receive the information about housing?

- a. the international office from the host university
- b. Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- c. other student associations
- d. ex-Erasmus students
- e. housing agency
- f. I didn't receive information about housing
- g. Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

26. Please indicate how important it was for you to have information about:

	Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Not important at all
a) who to contact to find accommodation	1	2	3	4
b) general conditions (price, deposit for accommodation, type of room, apartment, ...)	1	2	3	4

27. Looking back are you in general satisfied about the information you received for housing?

Very dissatisfied 

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
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 Very satisfied

**PART 5. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ VISA AND MIGRATION ISSUES**

28. During the stay, did you:

	YES	NO
a) work in the host country	1	2
c) act as an active member of a student association	1	2

29. [If, **28a YES**] Concerning the work, how did you find it?

- a. through International Office at host university
- b. through Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- c. through another student organisation
- d. through a local newspaper
- e. on the internet
- f. other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

30. [If, **28a YES**] When did you begin look for work:

- a. before going on exchange
- b. after arrival to the host country
- c. after staying some time in the host country

31. [If, **28a YES**] Before exchange, did you know if you would be able to legally work in the host country?

- a. Yes
- b. No

32. [If, **28b YES**] Concerning your volunteer work, how did you find it?

- a. through International Office at host university
- b. through Erasmus Student Network (ESN)
- c. through another student organisation
- d. through a local newspaper
- e. on the internet
- f. other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

33. [If, **28b YES**] When did you look for possibilities of volunteer work:

- a. before going on exchange
- b. after arrival to the host country
- c. after staying some time in the host country

34. Did you need a visa to go for your exchange?

- a. Yes
- b. No

35. **[If, 34a YES]** From whom from did you receive the information about the visa procedure?

- a. home university
- b. host university
- c. embassy of the host country
- d. ex-exchange students who studied in the host country
- e. other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

36. Did you need a permit of stay in the host country?

- a. Yes
- b. No

37. **[If, 36a YES]** From whom from did you receive the information about the permit of stay procedure?

- a. home university
- b. host university
- c. embassy of the host country
- d. Migration office in the host country
- e. ex-exchange students who studied in the host country
- f. other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

38. Which information did you find the most important to have before leaving for exchange?

- a. about the university
- b. about housing
- c. about social life
- d. about financial conditions in the host country
- e. about the host country
- f. other, please specify.....

## **PART 6. STUDENT ORGANISATIONS**

### PART 6A. ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK (ESN)

39. Have you ever heard about ESN (Erasmus Student Network)?

- a. Yes, I heard about it before going on exchange
- b. Yes. I heard about it during my exchange period
- c. Yes. I heard about it after my exchange period (**go to part 6b**)
- d. No. This is the first time I heard about it. (**go to part 6b**)

40. [If, **39a-b YES**] Was there an ESN section at your host university?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

41. [If, **39a-b YES**] Please evaluate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with the following activities offered by ESN.

*If you haven't participated or these activities were not organised by the ESN section, please choose the "Not applicable" answer.*

Activities	Very dissatisfied	Rather dissatisfied	Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	Rather satisfied	Very satisfied	I did not use (Not applicable)
a) tandem/language activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) parties/informal meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) buddy/mentor system	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) trips and visiting tours	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) orientation week/welcome week	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) offering discounts with ESN Card	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) educational fairs/university fairs	1	2	3	4	5	6

42. [If, **39a-b YES**] What is your overall satisfaction with ESN:

Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

**PART 6B. OTHER STUDENT ORGANISATION**

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

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

- a. Yes: Please specify name of the organisation: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No (**go to part 6c**)
- c. I don't know (**go to part 6c**)

44. [If, **43a YES**] When did you hear about this student organisation?

- a. I heard about it before going on exchange
- b. I heard about it during my exchange period

c. I heard about it after my exchange period (**got to part 6c**)

45. **[If, 44a-b YES]** Please evaluate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with the following activities offered by this student organisation.  
*If you haven't participated or these activities were not organised by the student organisation, please choose the "Not applicable" answer.*

Activities	Very dissatisfied	Rather dissatisfied	Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	Rather satisfied	Very satisfied	I did not use (Not applicable)
a) tandem/language activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) parties/informal meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) buddy/mentor system	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) trips and visiting tours	1	2	3	4	5	6
g) educational fairs/university fairs	1	2	3	4	5	6

46. **[If, 44a-b YES]** What is your overall satisfaction with this student organisation?

Very dissatisfied	rather dissatisfied	neither dissatisfied nor satisfied	rather satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

PART 6C. YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AT HOST UNIVERSITY

47. Do you feel as an exchange student the need to be represented at the host university?

- a. Yes
- b. No (**got to part 7**)

48. **[If, 47a YES]** Where would you turn to if you need someone to represent your rights as an exchange student?

- a. Local ESN section
- b. Other student organisation taking care of international students
- c. Local student union
- d. International Office
- e. The dean office
- f. Other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

49. **[If, 47a YES AND 39a-b]** Did ESN act as a representative of your rights as an exchange/international student?

- a. Yes, the local section stood up for me and achieved changes.
- b. Yes, the local section stood up for me, but nothing changed.
- c. No, the local section refused to help me.
- d. No, there was no need for the section to stand up for my rights.

50. [If, **47a YES AND 44a-b**] Did this student organisation act as a representative of your rights as an exchange/international student?

- a. Yes, the organisation stood up for me and achieved changes.
- b. Yes, the organisation stood up for me, but nothing changed.
- c. No, the organisation refused to help me.
- d. No, there was no need for the organisation to stand up for my rights.

## **PART 7. DEMOGRAPHICS**

51. Age:

Possible choices

*under 19*

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*over 40*

52. Gender:

- a. female
- b. male

53. Country of origin:

54. City/Area of origin:

55. Level/type of studies:

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

56. Major/area of studies:

*Possible Choices:*

*Agricultural sciences*

*Architecture, urban and regional planning*

*Art and design*

*Business studies, management sciences*

*Communication and information sciences*

*Education, teacher training*

*Engineering, technology*

*Geography, geology*

*Humanities*

*Languages, philological studies*

*Law*

*Mathematics, information sciences*

*Medical sciences*

*Natural sciences*

*Social sciences*

*Other subject areas*

57. Year of graduation if already graduated:

*Possible choices*

*before 2004*

*2004*

*2005*

*2006*

*2007*

*2008*

*2009*

*2010*

*2011*

*2012*

*after 2012*

58. Please mark if you have any disability

- a. Physical Disability
- b. Other Disability
- c. I don't have any disability

59. Who in your family has a higher education degree?  
(Such as a university degree)

Mother

Father  
Both  
None

60. 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

61. How would you describe your family's total income?

- a. Above my country average
- b. Average
- c. Below my country average

Thank you for your participation! We appreciate you taking the time for the ESNSurvey. You can download the reports from previous editions of the survey at [www.esn.org/survey](http://www.esn.org/survey).