

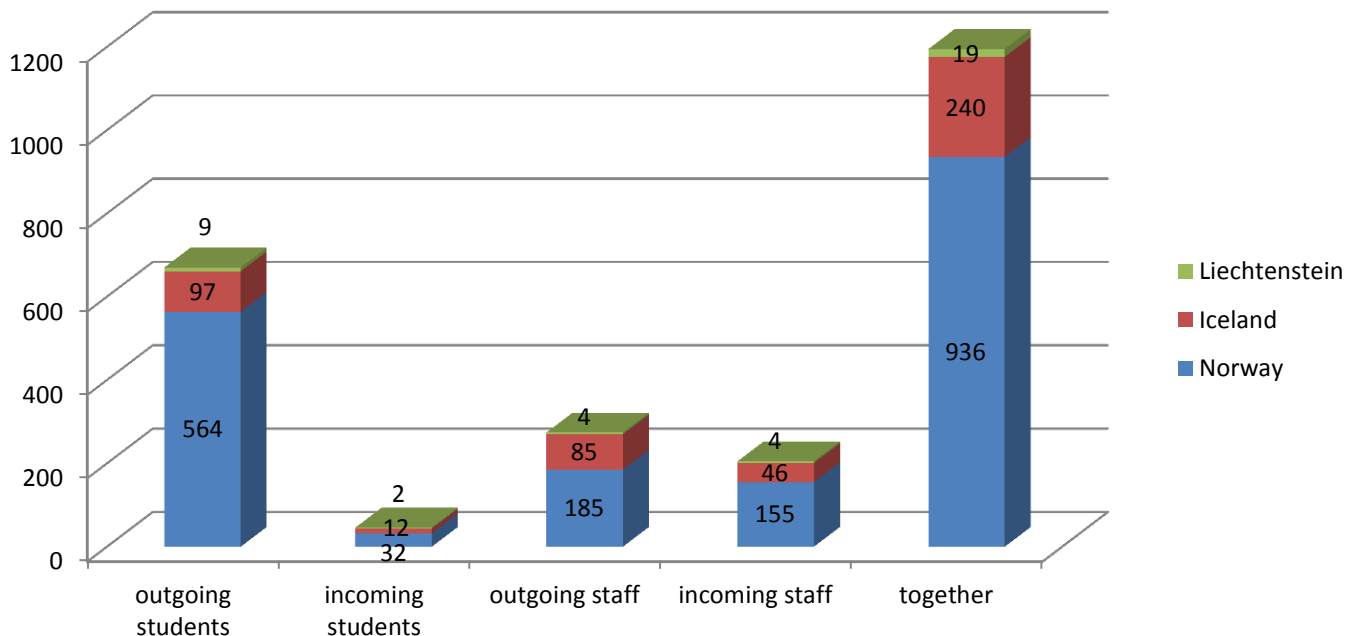
Scholarship and Training Fund Mobility Projects in Higher Education in the opinion of the participants

compiled by Magdalena Gessel

Implementation of Mobility Projects in Higher Education of the second edition of Scholarship and Training Fund was finished in September 2016.

A total of 1195 mobilities between Poland and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein were completed. The graph below presents number of mobilities completed during the second edition of STF (years 2013- 2016), divided into the categories outgoing/incoming students and outgoing/incoming staff.

Number of mobilities implemented in 2013-2016



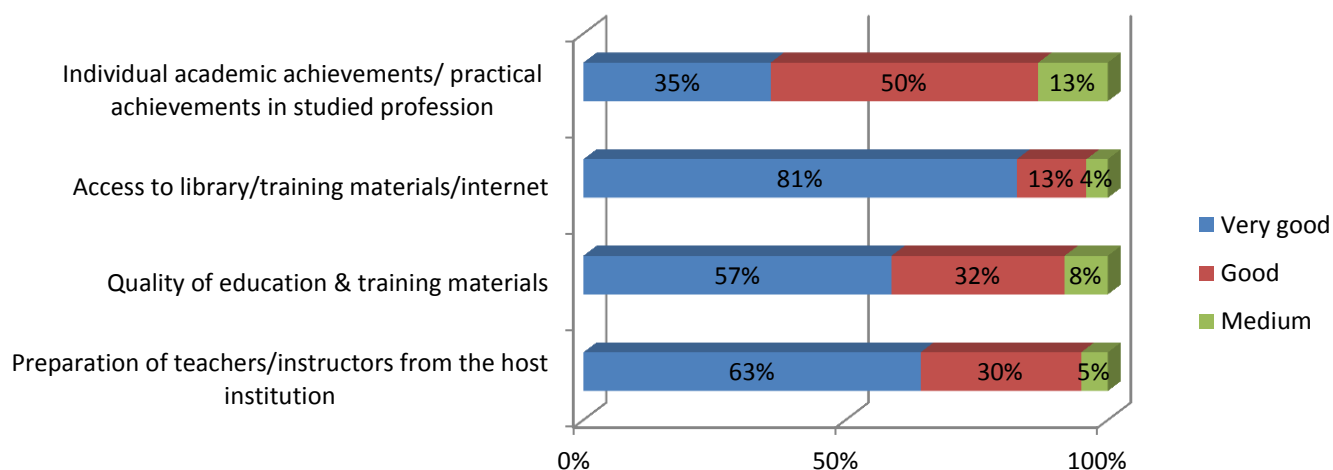
Programme Operator has analysed ex ante and ex post evaluation questionnaires submitted. They allow to summarize and assess the impact of mobilities on the participants and on Polish Higher Education Institutions.

Students, assessment of satisfaction and impact of mobility within STF

Quality of didactic offer

One of the assessed factors was the quality of didactic offer proposed by hosting HEIs from Donor-States. General assessment was very good, which is illustrated on the graph below.

Assessment of quality of education offer*



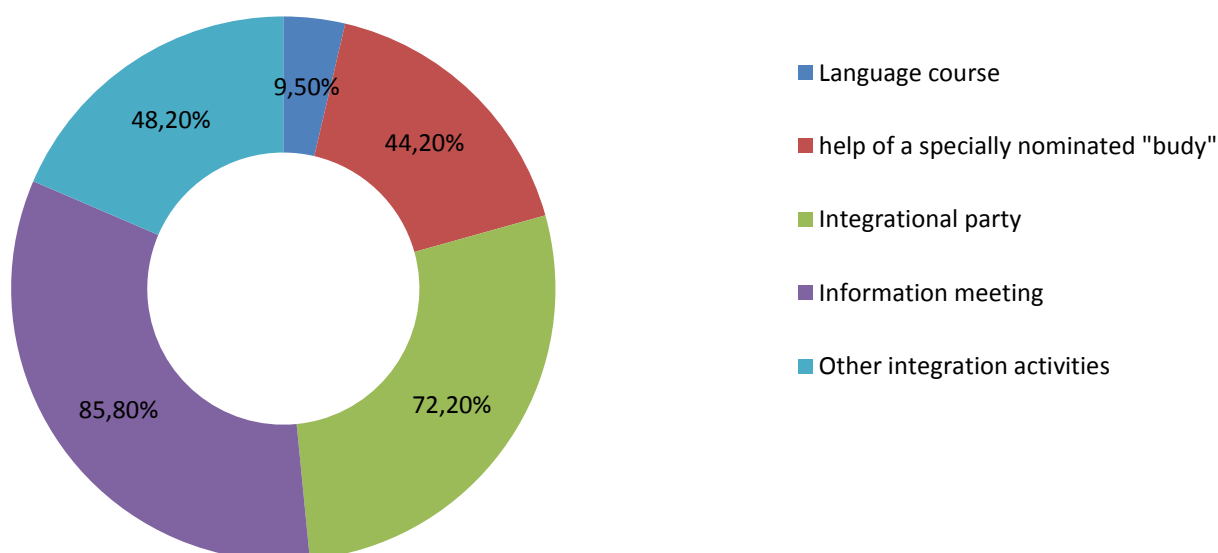
*Ratings "Bad" and "Very bad" of value below 1,5% were omitted

The above table shows that the conditions of acquisition of knowledge consisting of access to libraries, quality of learning materials and preparation of lecturers were assessed good or very good by about 90% of respondents. Poorer rating was given to students' own academic achievements and practical achievements in studied profession.

Integration

Acquisition of knowledge at the new university is quite a challenge. Hosting HEIs propose different forms of integrating activities for incoming students in order to facilitate their adaptation in new environment and enable focusing on gaining new knowledge and skills. Polish students have benefited from the following forms of integration offered by the host HEIs:

Participation of students in intergenerational events



*some students participated in several events

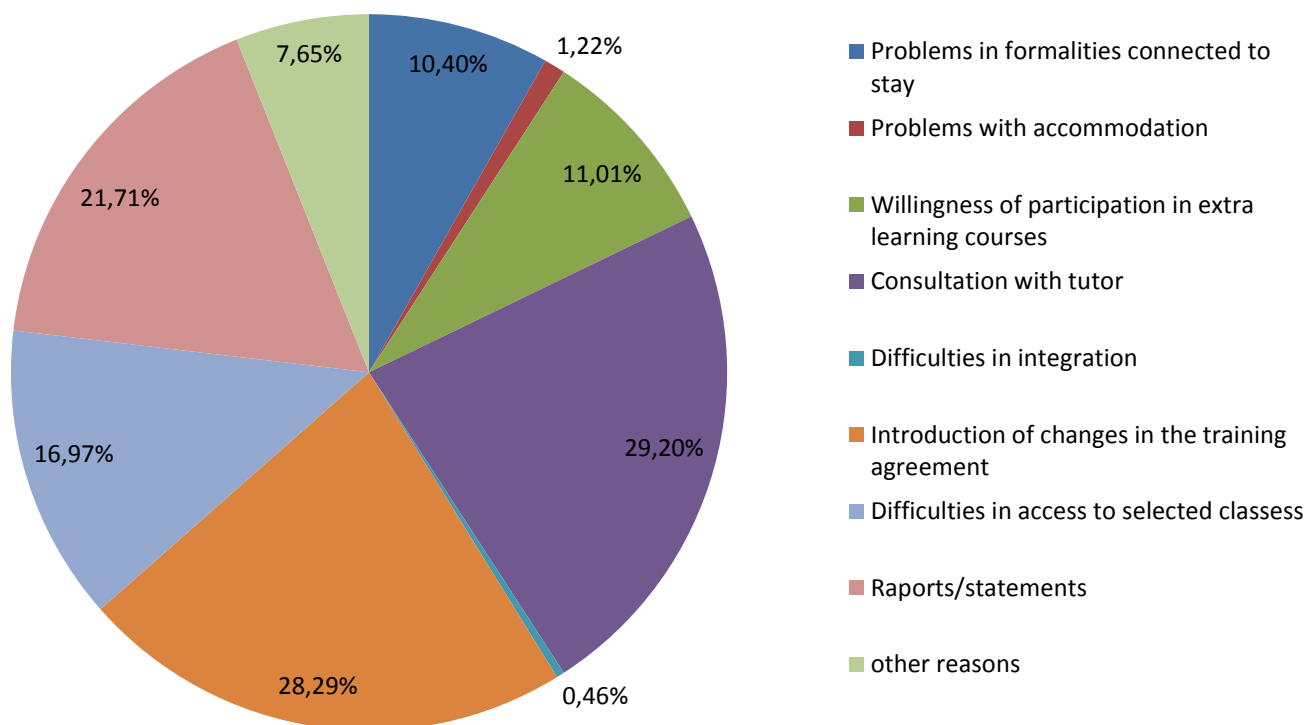
The most popular forms of integration with local and international students staying at the host University at the same time were: meetings, integrational events, help of specially appointed fellow-student.

Other integrational initiatives, in which Polish students participated: touring excursions, sports tournaments, concerts, language courses other than EILC, cooking together, visiting museums, presenting traditions and customs of the country of origin, meetings with representatives of the scientific group.

Contact with home university

Only slightly more than 12% of students did not need to contact their home institution during their stay abroad. 78% of those, who contacted their home HEI did it for the following reasons:

Contact with home university*



*some students contacted their home university more than once

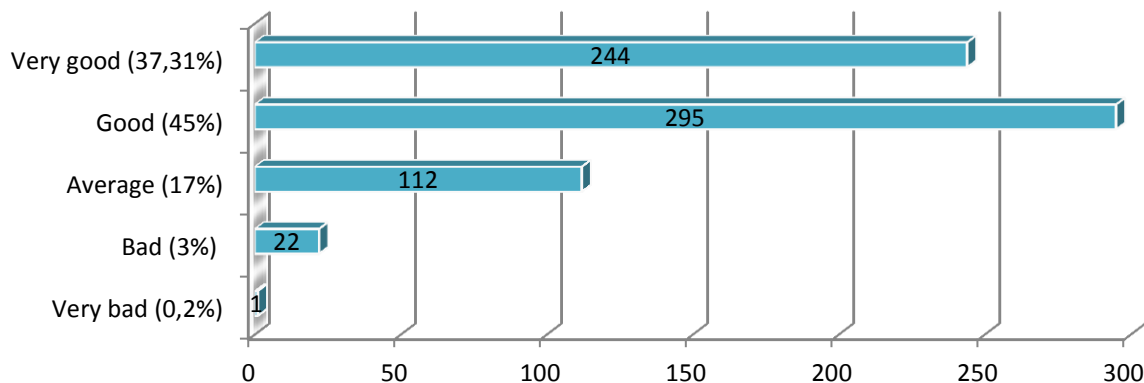
A large number of contacts undertaken with the intention of making changes to the previously agreed learning agreement may on the one side evidence the lack of sufficiently precise information about the educational offer available for incoming students. But on the other side it is a proof of flexibility in creating an individualized curriculum and readiness to respond positively “on the spot”, as well as of the commitment of tutors and administrative staff to adapt the education of students at the foreign university to their needs. Under the heading “other” (7,65%) are hidden among others: financial issues, notifying of absence of changes in the learning agreement and of absence of problems, questions on recognition of courses upon return (programme differences), consultations with tutors in order to discuss additional projects or master- degree seminar, willingness to talk without any particular reason.

Finance

Financial aspect of stay is important because of cost of living which is much higher in Donor- States. Opinions of students on the level of financing presented in the graphs below will be helpful during designing of financial assumptions to be used during the next edition of Scholarship and Training Fund.

The graph below presents assessment of financial conditions offered to outgoing students by STF:

Assessment of financial conditions (€ 800/month + € 500 travel)

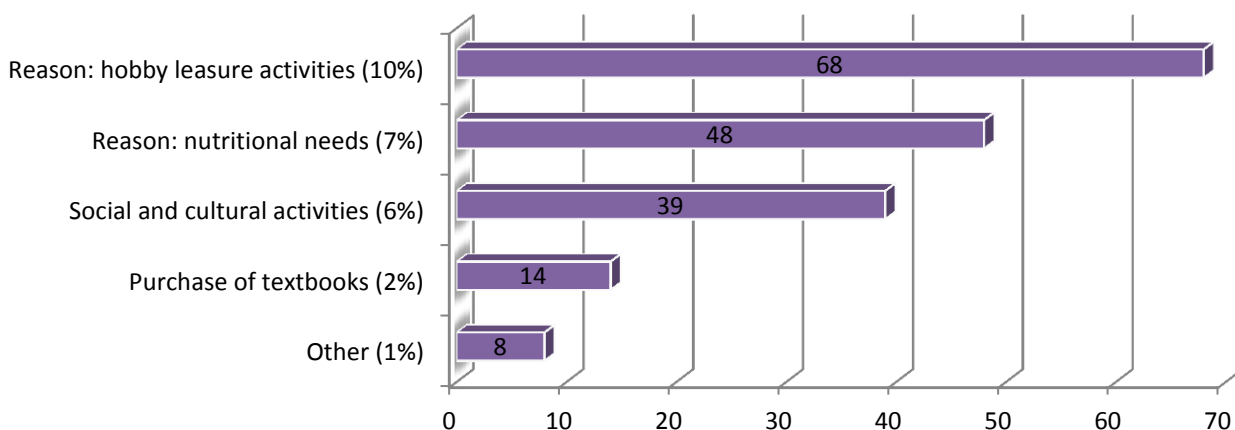


Most of the students (79%) assess financial conditions good and very good. 17% assess it as average and only 3,2% bad or very bad.

Gainful work

14% of students, i.e. 94 people took up paid work. The graph below presents reasons for taking up paid work during study abroad.

Paid employment during mobility*



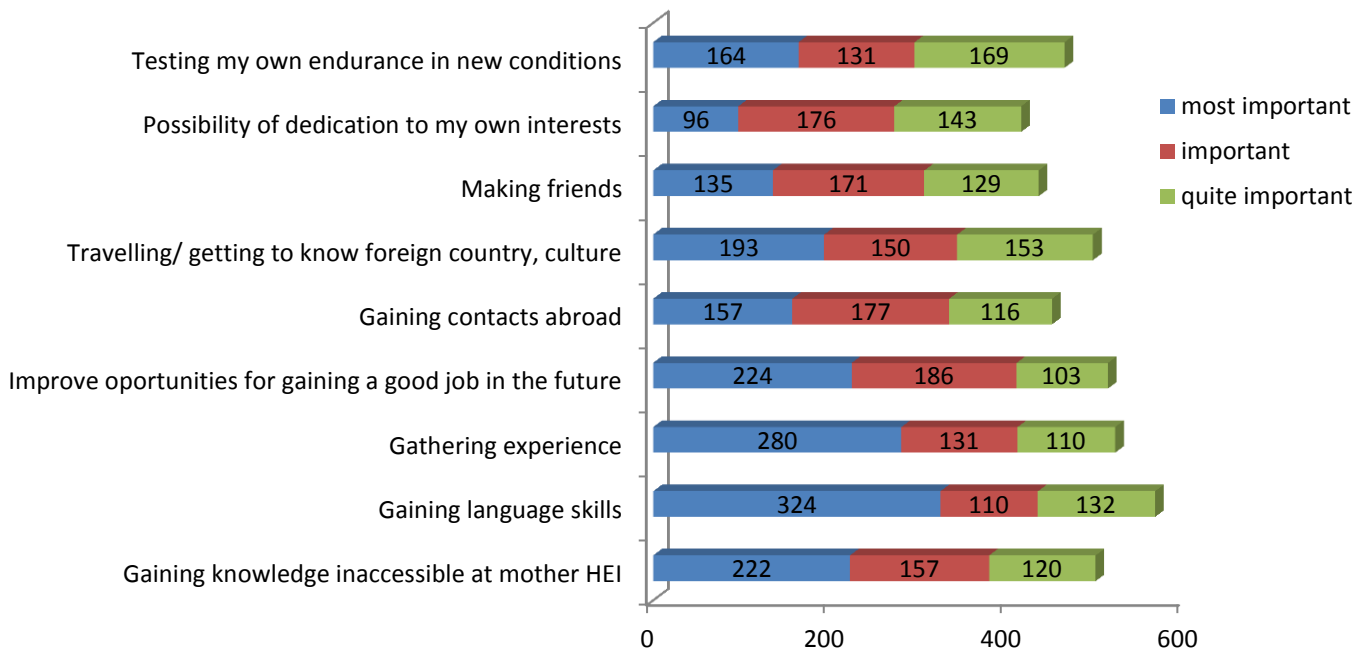
*Students reported more than one reason for taking up a job

„Other” reasons of taking up paid work indicated by 1% of respondents are among others: opportunity to gain experience, willingness of improvement of language skills, desire to meet new people, opportunity to gain new knowledge during work at host university.

Additional benefits

Study at the foreign university it is not only learning of a given field of study. The graph below presents assessment of the additional aspects of mobility. It turns out, that the most important additional aspect was the ability to acquire language skills, gathering experience, improving chances to find a good job in the future and possibility of acquire knowledge not available at the mother HEI. Other, non-academic benefits include possibility of travelling, meeting new people and places and coping with a completely new situation.

Aspects of the mobility most important for you*

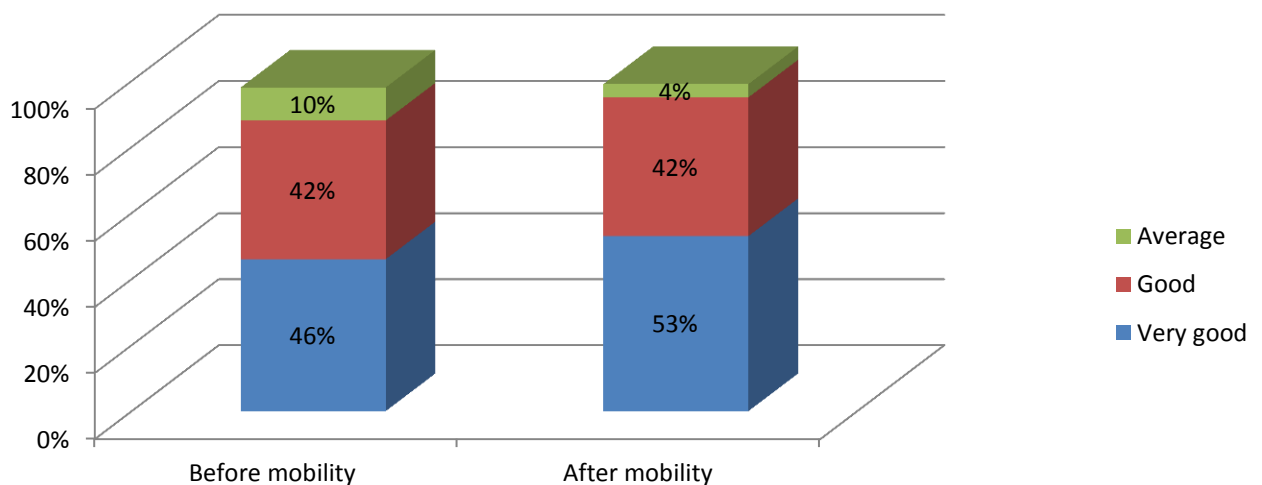


*Students might indicate several aspects

Improvement of language skills

Possibility of improvement of language skills was indicated at the first place among additional benefits brought by mobility. Graphs below present knowledge of English before and after the mobility period in the subjective assessment of students.

Knowledge of English in the subjective assessment of students before and after the mobility*



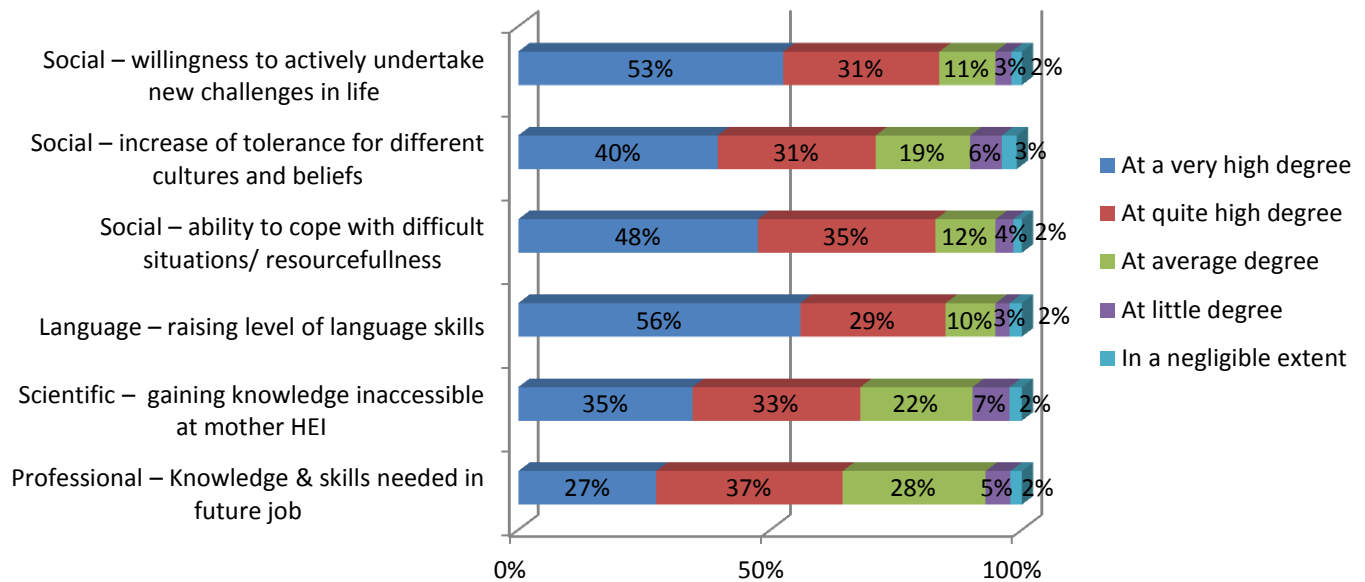
*Values lower than 2% were omitted

A group of students defining their language as “very good” increased by 7%, while the group that defined language skills as “average” decreased by 6%, most likely increasing the groups defining language skills as “good” and “very good”.

Social, professional and scientific development

The impact of mobility on social, professional and scientific development of students presents the graph below.

Individual assessment of impact of mobility

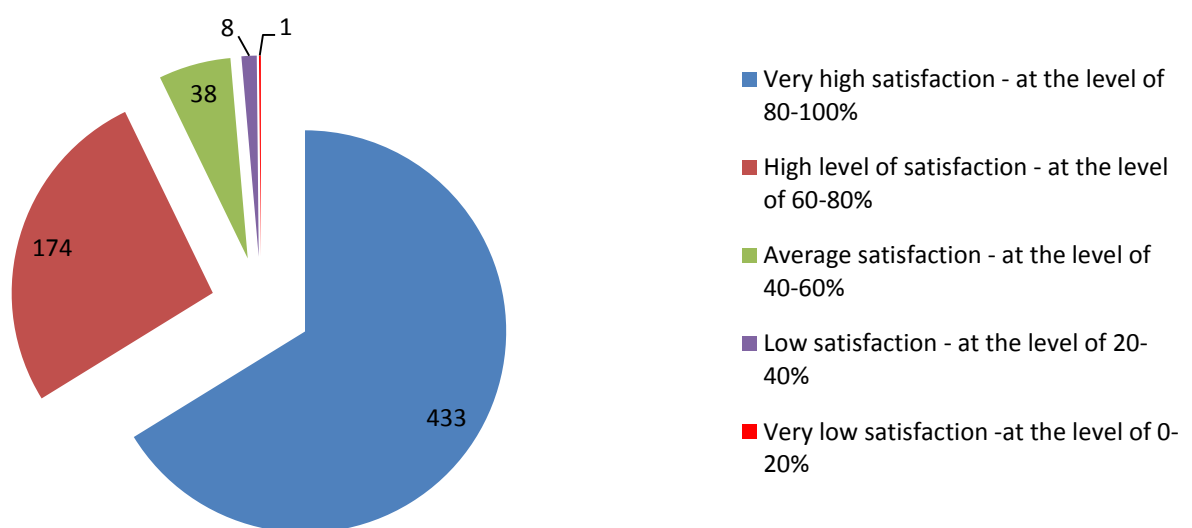


The graph above indicates immense importance of mobility for improving language and social competences, i.e. those that are universal and do not connect with a specific field of study

General satisfaction with mobility

Answers to the question on general satisfaction with the mobility are presented at the graph below.

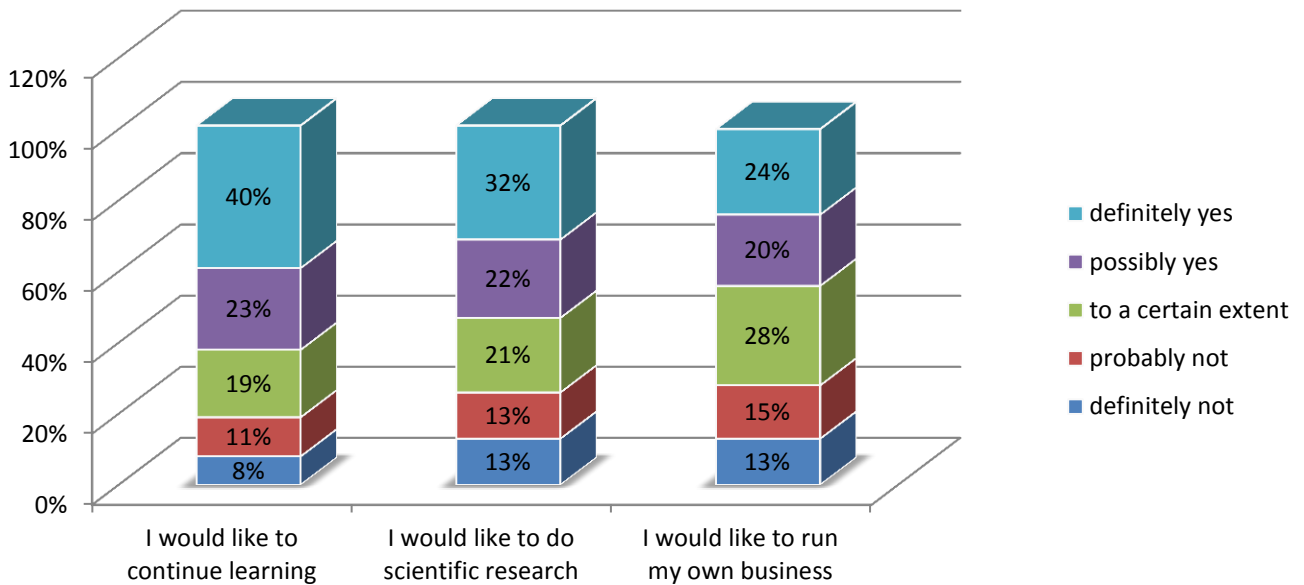
General degree of satisfaction, students



Plans for the future

What are the plans for the future of the mobile students after the end of their studies?

Plans for the future, after finishing study

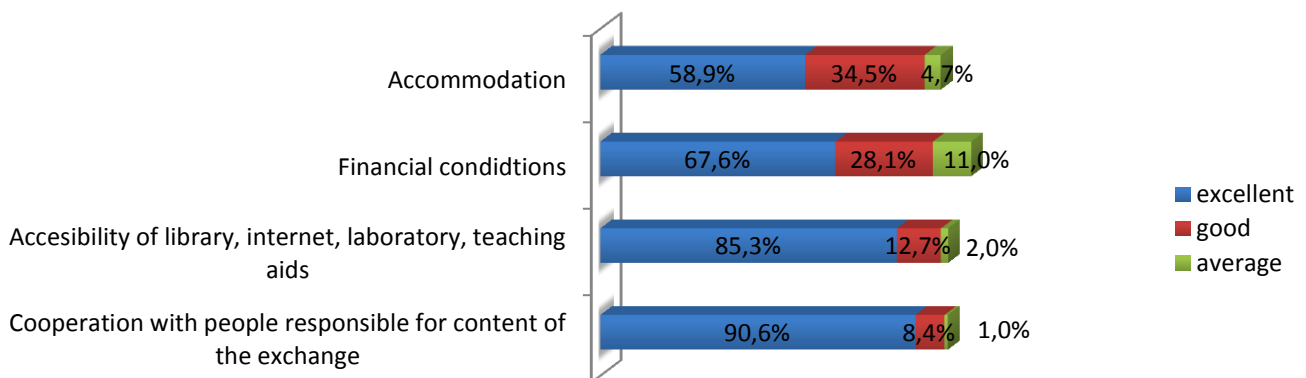


The information in this summary illustrates the complexity of the topics related to the international mobility of students. The opinions quoted show that the implementation of part of studies at a foreign university is a chance for multi-level personal and professional development and brings a number of benefits to its participants.

University staff, assessment of the satisfaction and the impact of mobility implemented within STF

General assessment of financial and content related conditions of mobilities implemented within Mobility Projects in Higher Education of Scholarship and Training Fund is very good, which is illustrated in the graph below.

Assessment of the conditions of mobility*

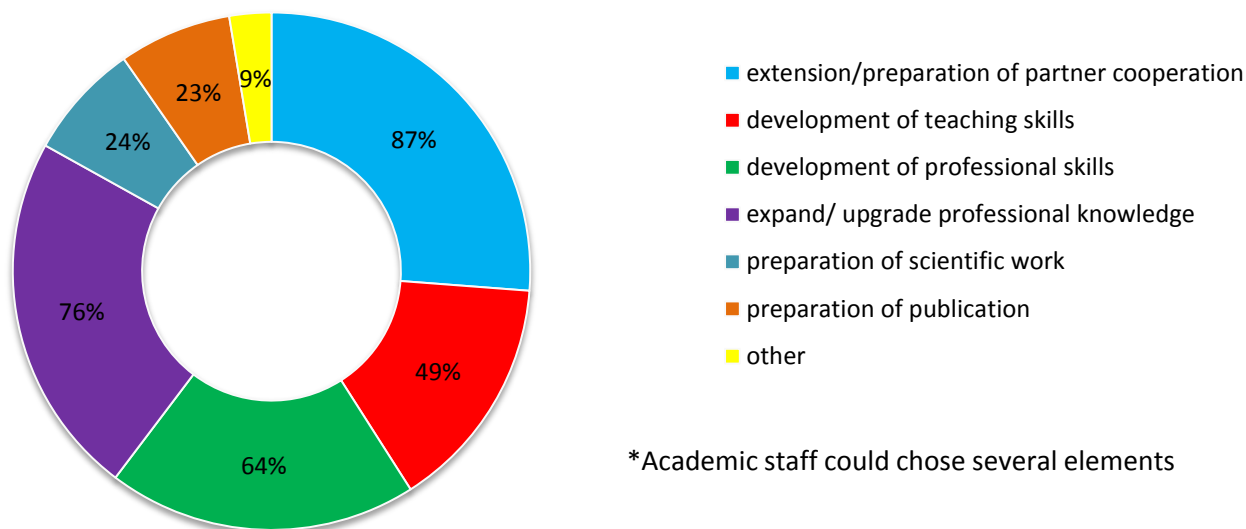


*Values lower than 1% (poor and very poor) were omitted

University staff assess financial and content related conditions of mobility higher than students. As for the category of content related conditions there was neither poor nor very poor ratings. Average rating was given by less than 2% of respondents. As for the financial conditions category, 95% of participants gave rating good and very good. Ratings "poor" and "very poor" represents a total of less than 0,7%.

Mobilities within STF were implemented by administrative, didactic and scientific staff. A variety of goals allows you to draw conclusion that mobilities had an impact on almost every aspect of the functioning of the Universities. The graph below illustrates effects of mobilities implemented by university staff.

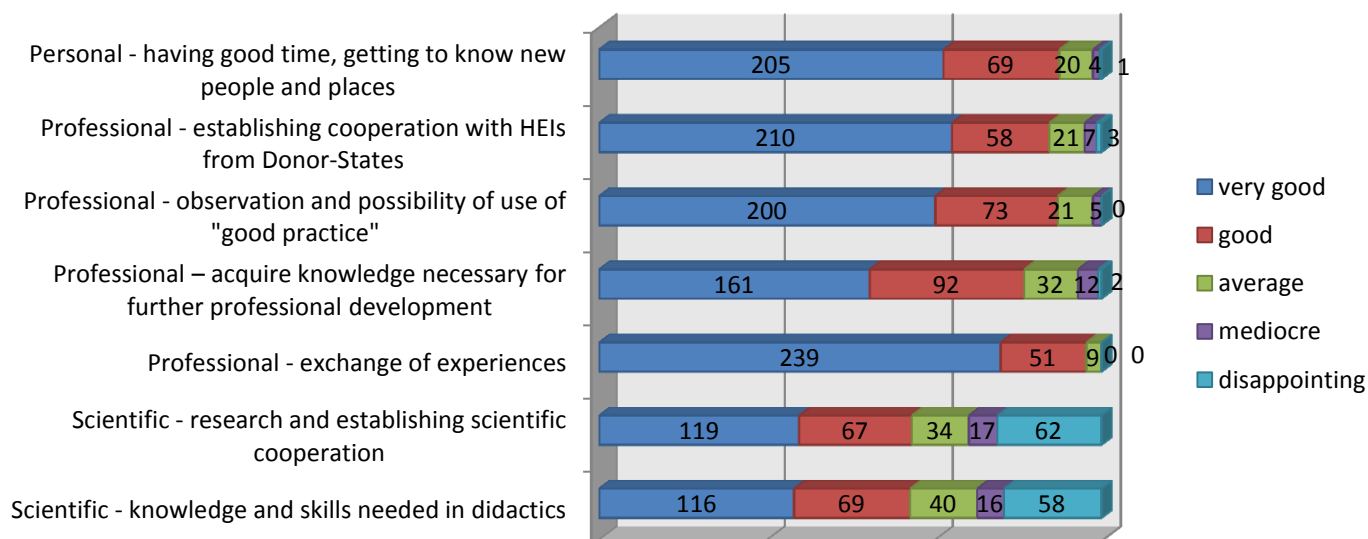
Exchange contributed to*



Other accomplished goals achieved by 9% of respondents include among others: meeting of consortia before the deadline for submitting an application form to Horizon 2020, getting to know the way of working of International Cooperation Unit of University of Liechtenstein, exchange of professional experience, preparation of notes for the new cycle of lectures, comparison of research results, getting acquainted with methods of work of teachers, who work in the similar field, enriching knowledge about ways of creative leading classes using the project method, gathering of many so called “examples of good practices”, field research, monitoring of students, promoting Polish culture through common language analyses and getting to know the specifics of cultural – linguistic research, introduction to ICT technology and distance learning, preparation for launching joint research projects.

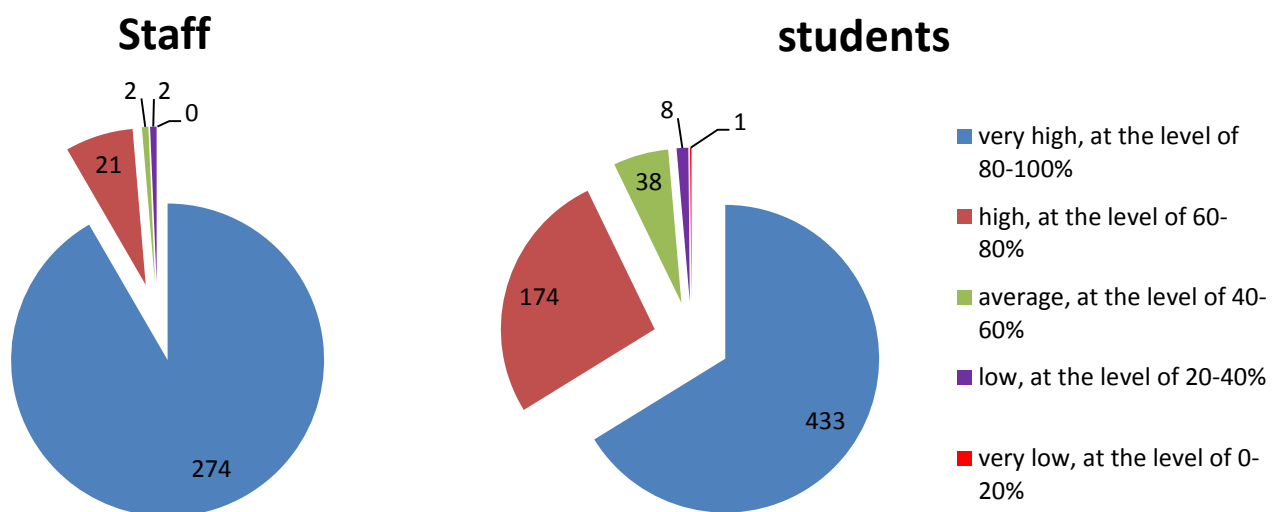
Level of satisfaction with various aspects of mobility is presented at the graph below. It should be analysed having in mind that the type of benefits depends on the goals of the mobility. Administrative staff having establishing a cooperation as a goal of the mobility, will value scientific satisfaction as poor, as it was not a goal of the mobility.

level of satisfaction with various aspects of mobility



Additional benefits, reported by 33% of staff include: broadening the scope of substantive cooperation on new subject area, getting acquainted with the situation of Polish children and young people (children of Polish immigrants of last 20 years), their educational needs, problems and accessibility of Icelandic Universities for them, establishing partnerships in order to implement new research projects, gaining self-confidence in dealing with scientists from abroad and in delivering lectures in English, establishing a scientific team, increase of practical language skills, getting acquainted with "culture of work" in Scandinavian universities, also in the scope of cooperation with other universities, cite: I believe, that it was a very precious aspect of mobility, gaining of such knowledge would not be possible if not personal contacts with representatives of partner HEI", planning of a visit of representatives of partner institution in a home HEI, getting acquainted with methods of promotion of scientific work, ways of organisation and functioning of the university as a factor in the social /architectural space, establishment of collaborative doctoral dissertation, exchange of experiences, getting acquainted with creative methods of teaching, getting acquainted with unusual relation between student and his tutor/lecturer which brings huge benefits for both parties, getting acquainted with ways to raise additional funds, gathering materials indispensable for didactic work. The above list does not exhaust all the additional benefits of mobile university staff

University staff value satisfaction of the accomplished mobility very high and they are more pleased with the mobility than students. Comparison of level of satisfaction of these two groups is presented at the graphs below.



Data relating to benefits achieved thanks to mobility, presented in this summary was obtained from the ex-ante and ex-post questionnaires, which were completed by the individual participants of mobilities directly after returning and before going to foreign partner HEI in order to undertake their stay abroad. In total, 1666 questionnaires were analysed.