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ERASMUS MUNDUS

Graduate Impact Survey 2017



Erasmus
Mundus
Association

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I INTRODUCTION

In a world where international experience grows ever more important, the chance to be mobile during one's higher education degree offers students the unique opportunity to gain this experience in a global context.

The Erasmus Mundus programme is a mobility programme of the European Commission. The joint programme offers full degree scholarships to the best Master's students worldwide. It is part of Erasmus+, which is the European Commission's programme for education, training, youth and sport, which combines all former mobility and cooperation programmes for students and staff of the European Union. All integrated programmes are designed to improve participants' competencies and employability.

Erasmus Mundus' specific focus is on postgraduate students in higher education¹. Its main objective is to promote quality and excellence through highly integrated study programmes at Master's level. Further, it is designed to enhance the quality of European higher education and to promote the dialogue and understanding between people and cultures. In the light of the integration of all Erasmus programmes to Erasmus+ in 2014, stronger emphasis has been placed on the employability after their higher education and the inclusion of young people in the labour market as well as on circumventing brain drain of students and alumni benefitting from the Erasmus Mundus Programme. Further, the programme's main target group goes beyond the borders of the European Union and focuses on students from third party countries, particularly from Africa and the Western Balkans². By this, the programme enables the development of human resources and international cooperation capacity around the world. It further aims at fostering excellence and internationalisation in higher education institutions, increasing the quality and the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and supporting the European Union's external action in the higher education field.

Due to the programme's scope and scholarships, students from all over the world are provided with the opportunity to study their Master's degree in the European Union and get to know Europe, its culture and its citizens. By offering this opportunity, the programme has the potential to enhance the position of the European Union as a centre of excellence in the world and keep some of the sharpest minds in the Union. At the same time, students are given the chance to learn in an international environment and develop crucial competencies for their future career and personal life.

In order to reveal the long-term effects of participating in the Erasmus Mundus programme, not only for career development but also for personal growth, an annual online survey is conducted. The survey is carried out via the alumni association of the programme, EMA (Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association) and targets students and graduates of the Erasmus Mundus Master's programmes³.

You will find the results of the survey in this report.

1) While the programmes of Erasmus Mundus also include doctorate courses, this survey only focuses on the students and graduates of the Master's programmes.

2) Students and graduates from third party countries were also the focus of this survey, hence the reported results on the impact will primarily represent this student and graduate group as well.

3) Until 2014: EMMC (Erasmus Mundus Masters Course); since 2014: EMJMD: (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree)

II METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the Graduate Impact Survey is to examine the effects of the Erasmus Mundus Master's programmes on graduates and students and to detect factors contributing to the personal and professional development of the graduates – from both a cross-sectional and a longitudinal angle. The survey uses a quantitative approach and is carried out online (in this year from 2 October 2017 to 29 October 2017).

1 Questionnaire

This year's questionnaire consisted of more than 70 different questions. Some of these questions were filtered according to previous answers. This is especially true for the two target groups, students and graduates, who often received different questions. For instance, large parts of the chapter "Career" are - for obvious reasons - only addressed at graduates, while students were occasionally asked what they expected after their graduation.

The answering options varied from rating scales⁴ to categorical questions, from which the participants could choose up to three answers. Some questions also contained open-ended parts ("others") in order to give the participants the possibility to specify an answer outside the offered scale.

2 Participants

As was the case in previous years, both students and graduates of the Erasmus Mundus Master's programmes were invited to participate in the survey. Wherever sensible and possible, the report focuses on the longitudinal aspects⁵ and developments over the years. Therefore, the information on the participants is twofold: Below you will find a description of the new data (this year's sample), followed by an analysis of the entirety of the existing data (the joined samples of all students and graduates that have participated in the surveys between 2012 and 2017).

Only completed questionnaires and only valid percentages⁶ are reported. Due to item non-response there will be a slightly varying number of respondents per question.

4) The questionnaire uses 4-point, 5-point and 7-point (ordinal) rating scales.

5) Scientifically speaking, the present study is not a longitudinal study as it does not rely on a panel of participants and the data in each survey year is collected from a different sample. The terms used for study designs like the one present vary: "Time-lag study" (e.g., Kirk 2013) or "cross-sectional longitudinal design" (Gravetter & Forzano 2012) are used. To keep things simple, this report classifies developments over time as "longitudinal aspects".

6) Due to rounding errors, percentages may not always add up to 100%.

2.1 Analysis of the 2017 sample

In 2017, 1,740 participants completed the questionnaire. 1,248 (71.7%) participants had already graduated, while 492 (28.3%) participants were still students. The link to the online survey was distributed via social media, and the EMA website, online community and newsletter⁷. Interested students were able to participate in a prize draw if they had completed their questionnaire⁸.

A brief overview of the socio-demographics of the 2017 sample is given in Table 1, while information on the nationality of the participants can be obtained from Figure 1.

Table 1: Socio-demographic data of survey participants in 2017

	N	Average age	Gender		Region of origin	
			Male	Female	EU	Non-EU
Students	492	26.81	49.1%	50.9%	25.1%	74.9%
Graduates	1,248	31.73	55.8%	44.2%	19.9%	80.1%
All participants	1,740	30.34	53.9%	46.1%	21.4%	78.6%

Nationality of the participants in 2017

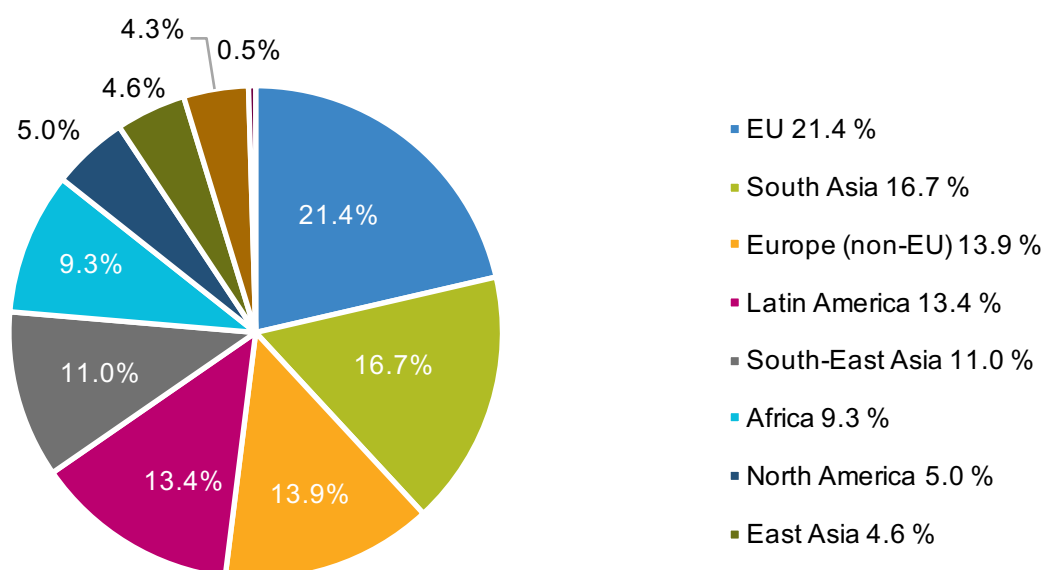


Figure 1: Nationality of the participants in 2017
(n=1,716)

7) Since the survey link was not only distributed by email but also via social media, the response rate is not known.

8) The prizes included an iPad Mini, 10 Amazon vouchers worth 75 € each and three spots at an EMA strategy meeting.

2.2 Analysis of joined survey samples (2012-2017)

In order to support a longitudinal approach, the following analysis incorporates the data⁹ from all surveys between 2012 and 2017. The data is differentiated by years after graduation, cohorts (year of start) and by the time the survey was undertaken. Only completed questionnaires are taken into account. In order to outline developments over time for selected questions these will be crossed by one of the aforementioned variables:

- **Years that have passed since graduating from the programme:** The time-lag approach will be used whenever changes in the participating individuals are analysed (e.g., Will participants have a more favourable opinion on the programme years after their graduation than immediately after?)
- **Year of starting EMJMD/EMMC:** The cohort approach will be used wherever the posed question refers to a certain point in time (e.g., How did the participants find out about Erasmus Mundus?)
- **Year the survey was conducted:** The cross-sectional approach will be used whenever the answers to the question are dependent upon the time in which the survey took place (e.g., How well known is Erasmus Mundus in 2017 compared to the years before?).

9) In order to avoid distortions (e.g., cohort effects), subsamples of the data will be considered wherever appropriate.

Table 2a: Survey data from 2012–2017: time lag approach

Survey data from 2012–2017					
Time lag approach for selected questions					
Years after graduation	N	Male	Female	EU	Non-EU
0	634	55.1%	44.9%	19.4%	80.6%
1	1,653	53.9%	46.1%	27.6%	72.4%
2	1,461	51.8%	48.2%	28.0%	72.0%
3	988	50.8%	49.2%	27.6%	72.4%
4	793	54.0%	46.0%	23.6%	76.4%
5	711	56.1%	43.9%	20.4%	79.6%
6	583	54.6%	45.4%	15.9%	84.1%
> 6 years	1,597	61.3%	38.7%	11.8%	88.2%

Table 2b: Survey data from 2012–2017: cohort approach

Cohort approach for selected questions					
Year of start	N	Male	Female	EU	Non-EU
2017	218	42.4%	57.6%	23.8%	76.2%
2016	300	54.5%	45.5%	27.1%	72.9%
2015	489	54.5%	45.5%	23.3%	76.7%
2014	864	51.9%	48.1%	22.4%	77.6%
2013	881	54.9%	45.1%	23.1%	76.9%
2012	1,377	50.7%	49.3%	31.6%	68.4%
2011	1,027	54.1%	45.9%	26.8%	73.2%
< 2011	3,264	58.7%	41.3%	15.9%	84.1%

Table 2c: Survey data from 2012–2017: cross-sectional approach

Cross-sectional approach for selected questions					
Survey year	N	Male	Female	EU	Non-EU
2017	1,740	53.9%	46.1%	21.4%	78.6%
2016	1,595	53.1%	46.9%	21.2%	78.8%
2015	1,458	53.2%	46.8%	23.0%	77.0%
2014	1,615	58.2%	41.8%	22.7%	77.3%
2013	1,544	55.7%	44.3%	22.2%	77.8%
2012	1,340	56.1%	43.9%	18.8%	81.2%

III EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The participating Erasmus Mundus students and graduates of 2017 were once again highly satisfied with their Erasmus Mundus experience. This is especially true for the programme as a whole. The levels of satisfaction with the quality of the courses, with various aspects thereof and with various joint aspects of Erasmus Mundus, were marginally lower but still high.

Erasmus Mundus continues to influence its graduates on various levels. According to the graduates, the programme has its greatest impact on their “intercultural competencies”. “Knowledge and understanding of international differences in culture and society” was also the skill graduates found their EMJMD/EMMC¹⁰ had contributed to the most. In contrast, while the interviewed students also expected a big impact on their intercultural competencies, they expected an even greater impact on their career. Over the years that pass after graduation, the graduates’ perceived impact on the attitude towards Europe and the EU increases significantly, while the impact on other aspects stays stable or decreases.

The majority of Erasmus Mundus students enter the programme with prior work experience: 61.3% of the respondents stated that they had had a professional job¹¹ before starting their course. After their graduation, most Erasmus Mundus participants either (re-)entered the job market successfully or pursued further studies. Of the latter group, the great majority chose a PhD programme over another Master’s programme.

The job search of Erasmus Mundus graduates is usually very successful. The majority of successful job-seekers found a job in one of their three preferred job locations (89.2%) and within six months after graduation (79.3%). Typically, graduates planned on returning to their home country or remain in the EU to (re-)start a job after graduation and this plan tended to work out: 57.7% of the graduates that had eventually found a job as a result of this search took on a job in their home country while 29.7% took on a job in the EU.

Of the few graduates that remained unemployed after their initial job search, every second named visa or work permit issues as one of the main reasons for not having found a job. Most other mentions involved issues of supply and demand on the labour market. 15.9% of the graduates also claimed that their Erasmus Mundus degree was not recognized. However, since this percentage (15.9%) represents only 13 graduates, drawing conclusions based on this figure alone is not recommended. Instead, the issue should be reanalysed when sufficient data has been collected.

Graduates generally felt that their EMJMD/EMMC had prepared them well for the labour market. 66.8% of the graduates claimed that their Master’s programme had prepared them very well or well while only 8.4% thought they had been prepared poorly or very poorly. Graduates felt prepared for the labour market across all fields of study. Graduates who successfully became employed after graduation especially perceived their academic experience, foreign language proficiency, and practical experience to be important employability factors in the eyes of their employers.

When considering areas to improve the graduates’ preparation for the labour market, the focus of graduates was especially on organisational and practical aspects like missing opportunities to network and gain work experience. A large percentage also found the provision of career mentoring to be lacking. Specific skills (e.g., soft or technical skills) were mentioned less frequently. Overall, however, it is important to say that Erasmus Mundus graduates were mostly successful on the labour market: Among all graduates, the percentage of those unemployed and seeking a job was as low as 5.4%.

Studying an Erasmus Mundus Master seems to offer sufficient opportunities to develop methodical skills that are required in the work place (e.g., team working abilities, leadership abilities, presentation techniques, problem solving). On average, the extent to which the programme had contributed to these competencies was evaluated as at least fair by the participants. Similarly, the graduates evaluated the improvement of their language skills positively: 61.4% rated

10) Until 2014: EMMC (Erasmus Mundus Masters Course); since 2014: EMJMD: (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree)

11) The term “professional job” was used throughout the questionnaire and explicitly defined as “a job from which you can make a living”.

the increase as “rather high” or “very high”. Correspondingly, after their graduation from Erasmus Mundus, graduates mostly took on jobs with a high level of internationality.

The two main reasons why participants had chosen to study an EMJMD/EMMC were the scholarship and the possibility to live and study in Europe. However, these reasons have become comparably less important in recent graduation years, whereas the reputation of Erasmus Mundus as a reason for taking an EMJMD/EMMC has gained significantly in importance, which is especially pleasant to report. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the students who began their Master in 2017 stated the reputation of Erasmus Mundus was one of the three most important reasons for taking an EMJMD/EMMC, while the same was stated by only 12% of the students who had begun before 2011. Because the reputation of Erasmus Mundus is becoming an increasingly important reason for taking the programme, the reputation of the programme, itself, is most likely also increasing.

The level of awareness¹² of Erasmus Mundus in the home countries of the participants is moderately high and has increased compared to 2016 after a continuous decrease in previous survey years. Furthermore, the level of awareness was evaluated very differently in the different regions of the world and especially low in Oceania, the Americas and the EU.

The European Union remains an attractive place to work, study and live in for graduates from outside the EU. If graduates return to their home region they mostly do so for personal reasons. The graduates that stay in the EU do so because of better job opportunities and better working and living conditions.

12) The level of awareness was assessed by the participants, who were asked: “How well known is Erasmus Mundus in your home country?”

IV RESULTS

1 Satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus

This chapter focuses on the participants' level of overall satisfaction with the Erasmus Mundus programme, their satisfaction with the quality of the courses and with a number of more specific aspects of Erasmus Mundus. Since the level of satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus is an important indicator of the programme's quality, the report goes into further detail by sorting the data by field of study.

Figure 2 depicts this year's participants' overall satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus. The majority of participants¹³ were mostly satisfied (51.6%), and another 25.2% were completely satisfied. A total of 92.6% were at least somewhat satisfied with the programme. In contrast, only 0.3% were completely and 1.2% were mostly dissatisfied.

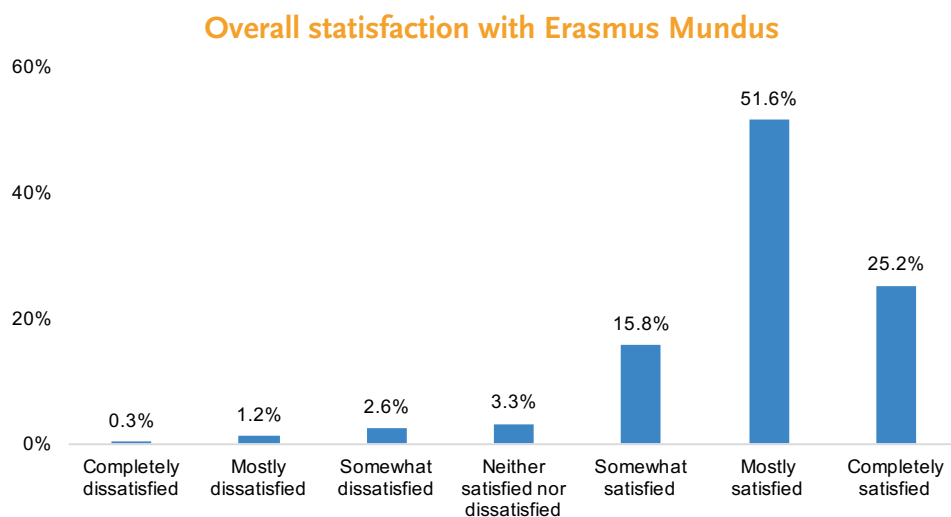


Figure 2: Overall satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=888)

The level of overall satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus is equally high across the different fields of study (shown in Figure 3). The field "Health and Welfare" is comparably least satisfied ($M = 5.65$), while the mean satisfaction of the field "Agriculture and Veterinary" ($M = 6.07$) is the highest of all fields. The existing differences of overall satisfaction between the different fields of study are not statistically significant¹⁴.

¹³) To avoid possible distortions through memory effects, only students and graduates of recent graduation years (2016 and 2017) are taken into account.

¹⁴) While the overall analysis of variances (ANOVA) is statistically significant (Welch's $F=2.413$, $df_1=5$, $df_2=283.341$, $p=0.016$), all the post-hoc tests between the individual fields are not significant. Thus, no relevant difference can be assumed.

How satisfied are/were you overall with your EMJMD/EMMC studies?

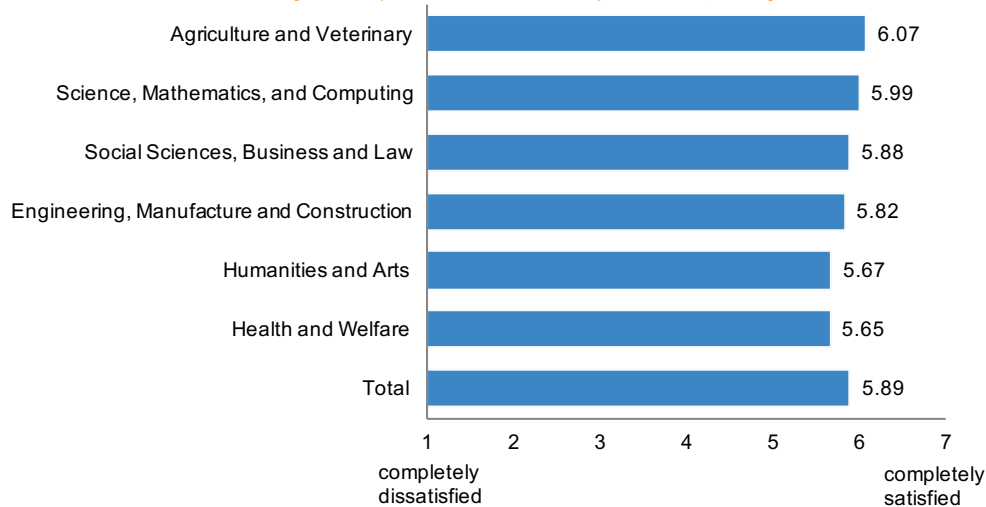


Figure 3: Overall satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus by field of study
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=886)

As Figure 4 depicts, the satisfaction with the quality of the courses was comparably high: 80.7% are very or rather satisfied, which means that there is a marginally lower level of satisfaction with the quality of the courses than with the programme on the whole. However, it has to be kept in mind that the scales used to assess the two satisfaction levels are not identical (5-point vs. 7-point scale) and are therefore not perfectly suitable for a one-to-one comparison.

How satisfied are you with the quality of courses at your Erasmus Mundus host universities?

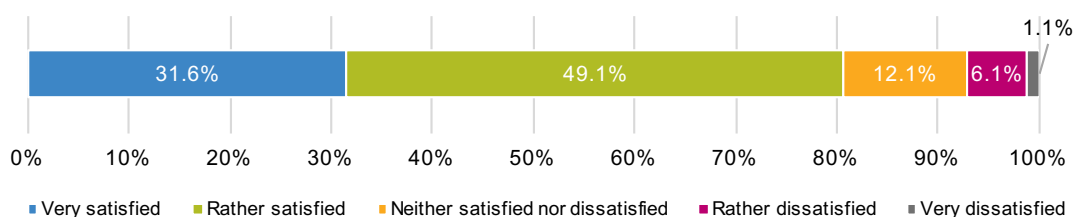


Figure 4: Satisfaction with quality of the courses
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=890)

Looking at the mean satisfaction with the quality of the courses sorted by field of study, the following varying levels of satisfaction can be seen: the students in the field “Science, Mathematics and Computing” were the most satisfied with the quality of courses (M = 4.14) and students in the field “Humanities and Arts” were the least satisfied (however, viewed on their own, still very satisfied M = 3.87). These differences, however, are not statistically significant.

How satisfied are you with the quality of courses at your Erasmus Mundus host universities?

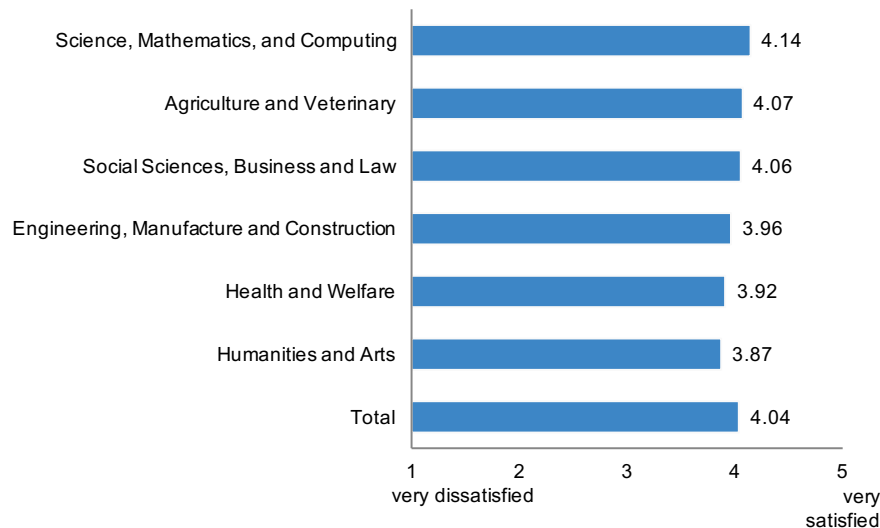


Figure 5: Satisfaction with quality of the courses by field of study
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=888)

Breaking down the satisfaction with Erasmus Mundus into different aspects of the programme, a comparably (rather) high level of satisfaction emerges (see Figure 6). The respondents of 2017 were especially satisfied with the programme's attitude towards international students ($M = 3.97$), while they were, in comparison, the least satisfied with their extracurricular activities ($M = 3.38$).

Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of your EMJMD/EMMC studies

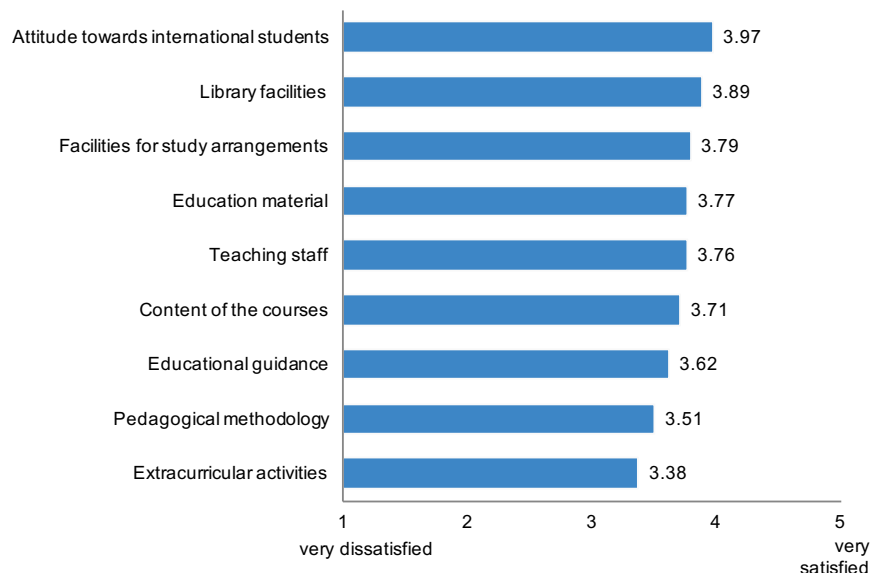


Figure 6: Satisfaction with different aspects of Erasmus Mundus
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=889)

This year, a new question was added to the survey, which asked about the participants' satisfaction with the joint aspects of Erasmus Mundus. The results are shown in Figure 7. The graduates and students were most satisfied with the award of the degree (joint or multiple; $M = 3.86$), while they were comparatively less satisfied with the jointness of teaching methods (however, they were still satisfied with this aspect: $M = 3.51$). On average, most respondents were satisfied with all of the named aspects.

Overall, the participants of the survey were highly satisfied with all aspects of their Master's programme, especially with the programme as a whole and the quality of the courses.

Please rate your satisfaction with the joint aspects of your EMJMD/EMMC studies

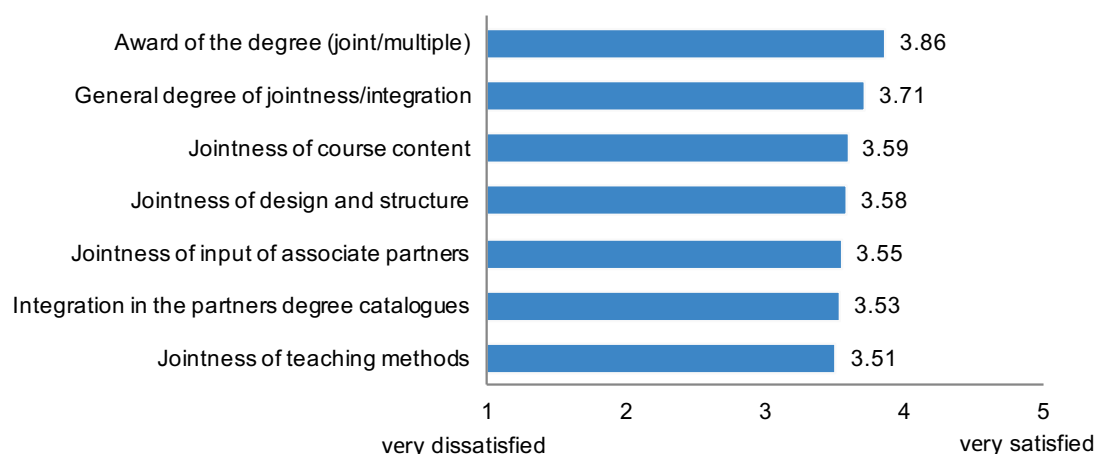


Figure 7: Satisfaction with joint aspects of Erasmus Mundus
Graduates and students; data from 2017 ($n=1,734$)

2 Impact of Erasmus Mundus

The impact of Erasmus Mundus on both the students' personal and professional life is of central importance for the evaluation of the EMJMD/EMMC programmes. Therefore, this section will analyse all relevant aspects where Erasmus Mundus may or may not have had an influence on the students in detail.¹⁵

2.1 General impact

As can be seen in Figure 8, "intercultural competencies" was mentioned most frequently by graduates (58.7%) when they were asked in which two areas Erasmus Mundus had impacted them the most. Another 40.1% of the graduates believed that studying an Erasmus Mundus programme had a great effect on their "career" and 33.3% thought one of the greatest gains was that of "subject related expertise". More than a quarter of the graduates (29.7%) thought one of the greatest impacts of Erasmus Mundus was on their "personality", while about every fifth graduate saw an effect on his or her "attitude towards Europe and the EU" (20.6%). Comparably few graduates considered their "private life" to be affected by Erasmus Mundus (10.5%).

Where do you personally see the greatest impact of Erasmus Mundus?

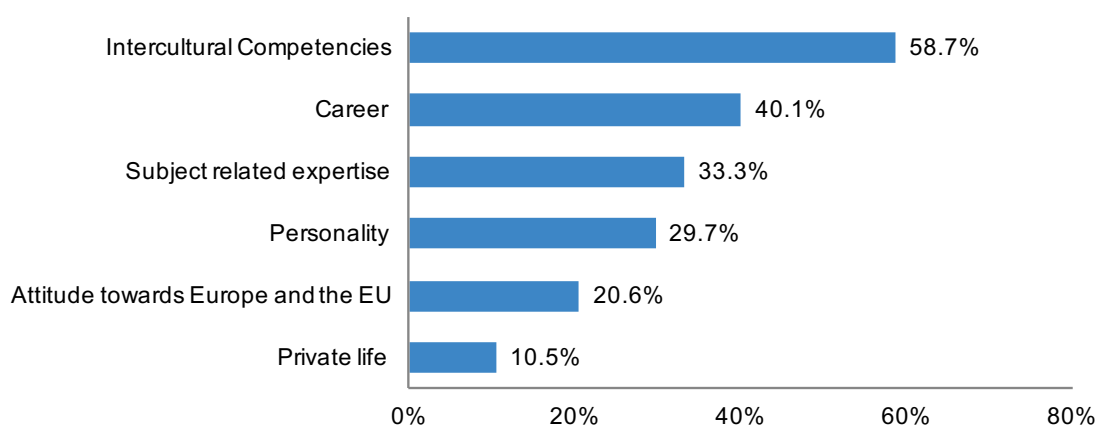


Figure 8: Perceived impact of Erasmus Mundus
All graduates; up to two answers; data from 2012-2017 (n=6,324)

If the answers to this question are related to the number of years that have passed between graduation and participation in the survey, observations can be made with regard to how the perception of the graduates changed over time and intra-individual developments can be extracted. Figure 9 shows how the perceived impact on the different aspects develops after graduating from the programme. Due to the possibility of external effects like general changes in the programme and the courses or political and social developments, minor changes over time must not be over-interpreted. Instead, one should focus on the general trends: The perceived impacts on "intercultural competencies", "career", "private life" and "subject related expertise" remain more or less stable over time. The only aspect that significantly increases in relevance over the years after graduation is the attitude towards Europe and the EU (Spearman's $\rho=0.077$; $p<0.001$; $N=6,307$). Accordingly, it may be concluded that Erasmus Mundus has a sustainable and even increasing impact – whether positive or negative - on the graduates' view of Europe. "Personality", on the other side, is the only domain on which the perceived impact decreases significantly (Spearman's $\rho=-0.045$; $p<0.001$; $N=6,307$).

¹⁵) Last year's report contained a section on the personal life of the graduates, i.e., first and foremost on the romantic relationships they had engaged in (see section 2.6 in http://www.em-a.eu/fileadmin/content/GIS/Summary_GIS-2016.pdf). Because the findings of last year's report are corroborated by the data that was collected in 2017, this part was substituted and made room for new questions in other sections.

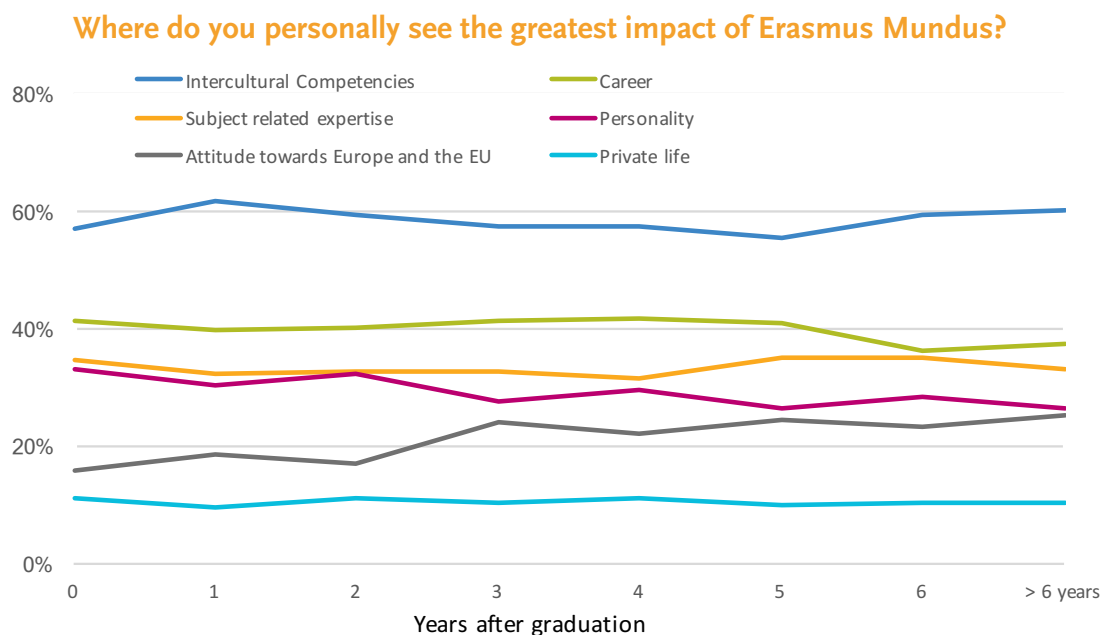


Figure 9: Perceived impact by years after graduation
All graduates (n=6,307)

The analysis of graduates' perceptions can be expanded by a comparison with **students'** expectations: Figure 10 shows where students expected the greatest impact and compares these results to the answers of the graduates.

Where do you personally see [expect] the greatest impact of Erasmus Mundus?

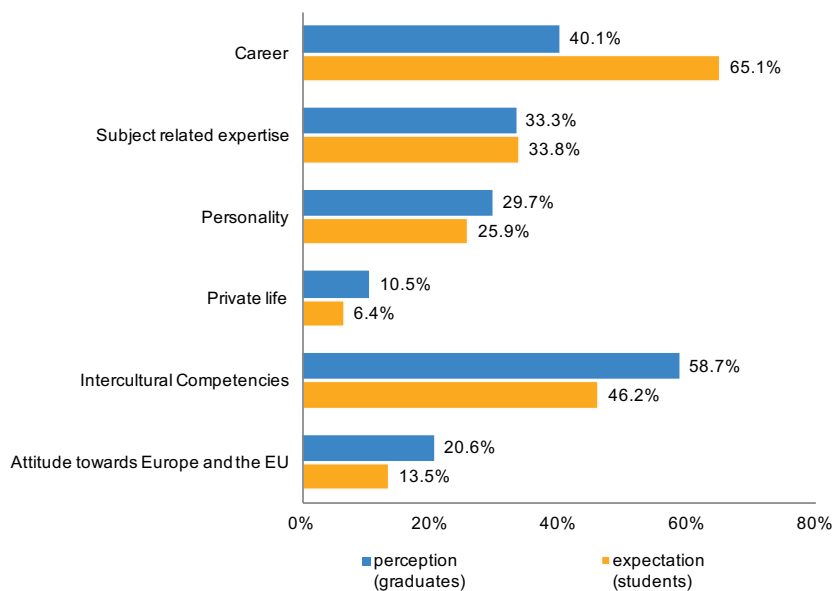


Figure 10: Perceived impact (graduates) vs. expected impact (students)
Graduates (n=6,324) and students (n=2,966)

While the graduates most frequently evaluated “intercultural competencies” as one of the two most impacted aspects (58.7%), this was expected by 46.2% of the students. A possible explanation for this difference may be that students underestimate the intercultural obstacles they come across during their studies abroad and their activities after their graduation, miscalculating the skills needed to overcome these – at least to a certain extent. In contrast, graduates may have already encountered these obstacles and consider themselves more competent in intercultural contexts as a result of their Erasmus Mundus experience. Although the difference between expectation and perception is comparably big, it should be noted that many students do already expect an impact in this area.

Students’ expectations also differ from graduates’ perception with regards to the programme’s impact on their “career”. Almost two-thirds of the students (65.1%) expected a strong impact on their career, while this was perceived by only 40.1% of the graduates.

Generally, it seems that students underestimate the impact of Erasmus Mundus on their personal development, while overestimating its impact on their career. Considering the aforementioned high levels of overall satisfaction with the programme (by students and graduates) and importance placed on career development, conclusions should be inferred with caution. Instead of concluding that the programme’s impact on career is much lower than expected, it is more likely that the other aspects were initially overlooked by students. This finding can help to promote Erasmus Mundus: Students should and can expect more outcome than they actually do, especially in terms of their development of intercultural skills and their personal development. Further, the finding that career development is very important to students should be kept in mind when looking at the programme’s impact on their professional life in the following sections.

In summary, graduates rated the impact on “intercultural competencies”, the “attitude towards Europe and the EU”, “private life” and “personality” higher than students expected it to be. The differences in all of the aforementioned areas are significant: “intercultural competencies” ($\chi^2=128.49$; $df=1$; $N=9,290$; $p<0.001$), “attitude towards Europe and the EU” ($\chi^2=67.49$; $df=1$; $N=9,290$; $p<0.001$), “private life” ($\chi^2=40.42$; $df=1$; $N=9,290$; $p<0.001$), “personality” ($\chi^2=14.52$; $df=1$; $N=9,290$; $p<0.001$). Only with regards to their career, students expected a far higher impact than graduates had experienced. The difference in this area is the greatest ($\chi^2=502.93$; $df=1$; $N=9,290$; $p<0.001$). The difference between students’ expectations and graduates’ evaluations of the impact on “subject related expertise” is not significant.

2.2 Preparation for labour market

In the previous chapter it was observed that students of Erasmus Mundus expect the programme to have a big impact on their career. In the following, it will be determined whether the programme has equipped the graduates adequately to overcome the obstacles of the labour market and helped them start a successful career. To guarantee a certain degree of actuality the report focuses on graduates from 2011-2017.

Figure 11 shows that the graduates generally felt positive about the way Erasmus Mundus had prepared them for the labour market. More than two thirds of the graduates (66.8%) felt well or very well prepared, while only 8.4% claimed they had been poorly or very poorly prepared for the labour market.

How well has your Erasmus Mundus study programme prepared you for the labour market?

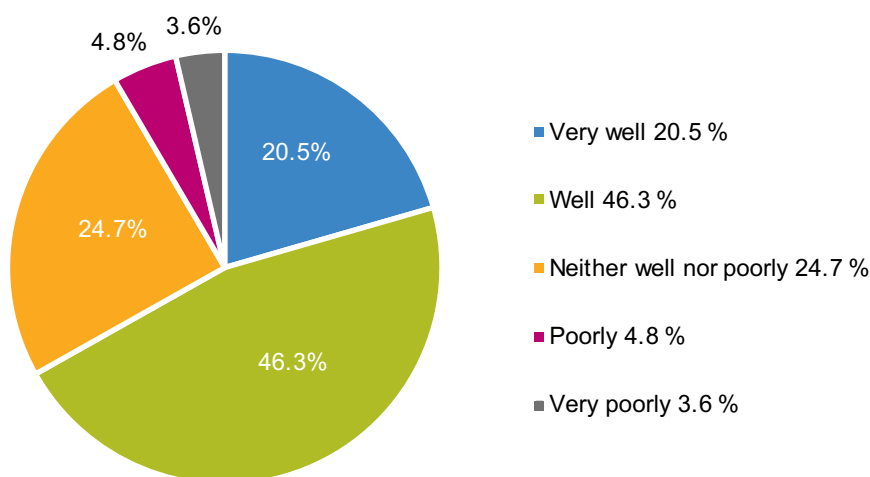


Figure 11: Preparedness for the labour market
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=935)

When these answers are related to the different fields of study, only slight (but significant) differences emerge¹⁶. On average, the graduates in all fields of study thought they had been prepared rather well than poorly for the labour market (Figure 12).

How well has your Erasmus Mundus study programme prepared you for the labour market?

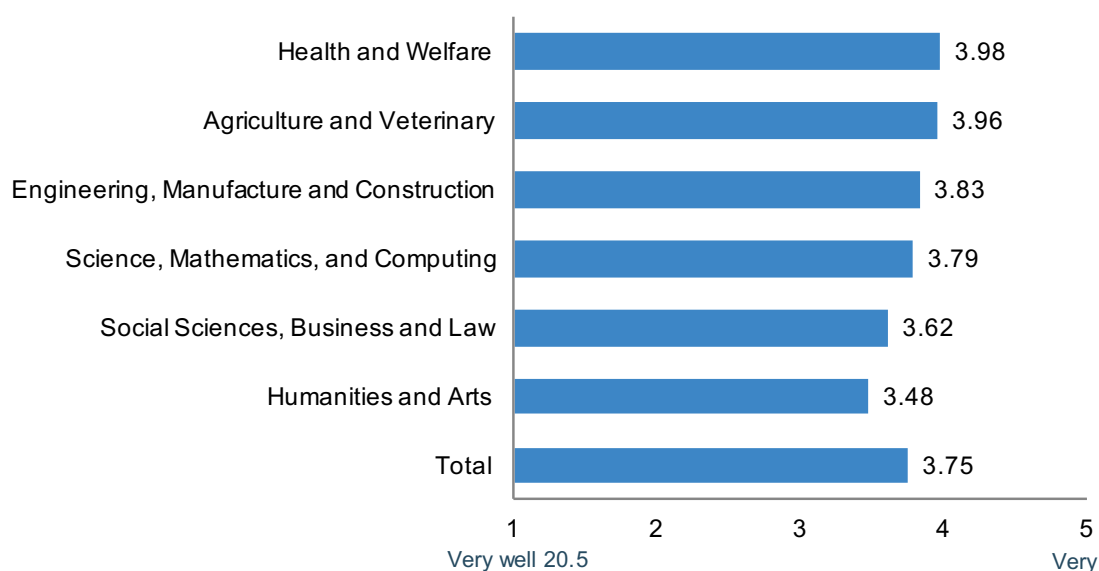


Figure 12: Preparedness for the labour market by field of study
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=933)

16) The overall analysis of variances (ANOVA) is statistically significant (Welch's $F=4.315$, $df1=5$, $df2=264.353$, $p<0.01$). This is mainly due to the significant difference between "Agriculture and Veterinary" on the upper and "Humanities and Arts" on the lower end indicated by the post-hoc test.

In order to determine where further improvements can be achieved, the graduates of Erasmus Mundus were asked what their study programme had lacked in terms of preparation for the labour market. As can be seen in Figure 13, the aspects graduates identified as lacking the most were “contacts to potential employers” (56.9%), “career mentoring” (49.2%) and “practical experiences” (30.6%). Other frequent mentions included “networking activities” (24.1%), “time to dedicate to career development” (23.2%) and “entrepreneurial learning” (21.3%). In contrast, relevant skills such as technical skills (12.9%), soft skills (8.7%) or subject-specific skills (5.4%) were less often seen to be lacking. Hence, it can be summarised that graduates rather observed they had shortcomings in organisational or practical aspects (e.g., establishing contacts and work experience) than lacking relevant skills. Moreover, every second graduate stated that programme provided no (or not sufficient) career mentoring.

What did your study programme lack in terms of preparation for the labour market?

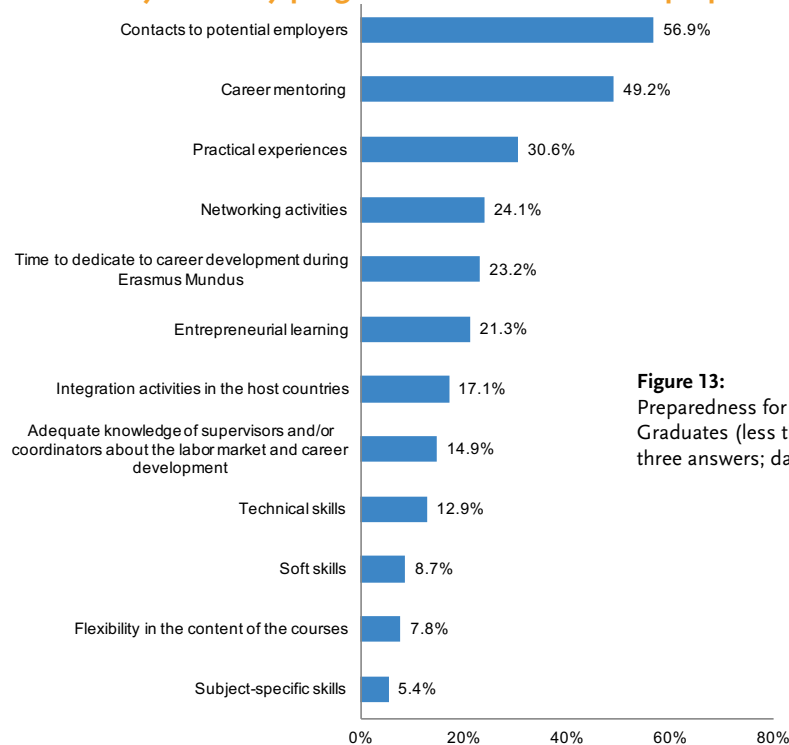


Figure 13:
Preparedness for the labour market (lacking elements)
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation); up to
three answers; data from 2017 (n=905)

2.3 First six months after graduation

The following section analyses what graduates did immediately, that is within the first six months, after their graduation. Answers from participants who had recently graduated (more precisely, who had graduated in 2017) are excluded in these statistics in order to receive an unaltered picture.¹⁷ In the survey, whenever a question referred to the job of the participants, the term “professional job” was used and this was explicitly defined as “a job from which you can make a living”. Therefore, in this context, a “professional job” comprises both full-time and part-time jobs, permanent and non-permanent jobs, and jobs which may or may not be in any way related to the graduates’ fields of study.

Figure 14 shows that 68.9% of graduates entered professional life immediately after graduation in some way or the other (i.e., answering either of the following: “I looked for a professional job”, “I started working in a professional job [...]”, “I returned to the professional job I had [...]”, “I took or applied for a traineeship/internship” or “I set up my own business”). Additionally, more than a quarter of graduates (27.3%) had continued or applied for further studies as an alternative to (re-)entering the labour market.

¹⁷ In this section, the graduates were asked what they did in the first months after their graduation. For the graduates of 2017 this period might not be over yet and their answers concerning, for instance, their success on the labour market might be misleading because they are still in the process of looking for a job. Consequently, the graduates of 2017 were excluded from this part of the questionnaire.

In the first six months after your Erasmus Mundus graduation, what did you do?

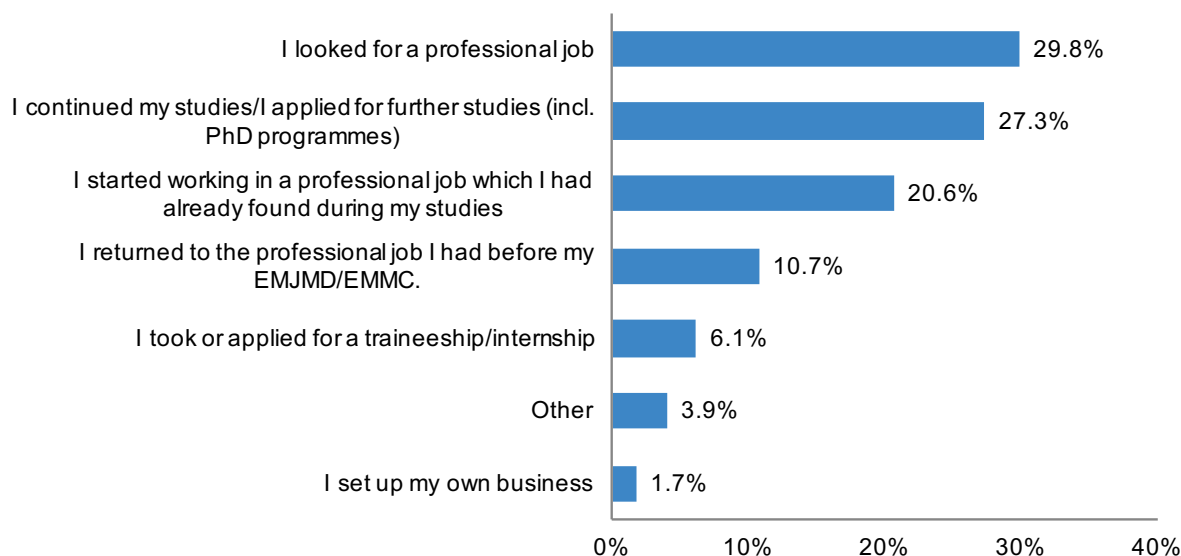


Figure 14: First six months after graduation
Graduates (at least one year after graduation); data from 2017 (n=1,020)

Figure 15 looks at what students plan on doing right after their graduation and reveals a similar picture. While 74.4% plan to (re-)enter professional life after their graduation in one way or another, 23.5% intend to continue their studies. According to this, slightly more graduates (27.3%) eventually continue their studies, than students plan on doing.

What are your plans after graduating with an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree?

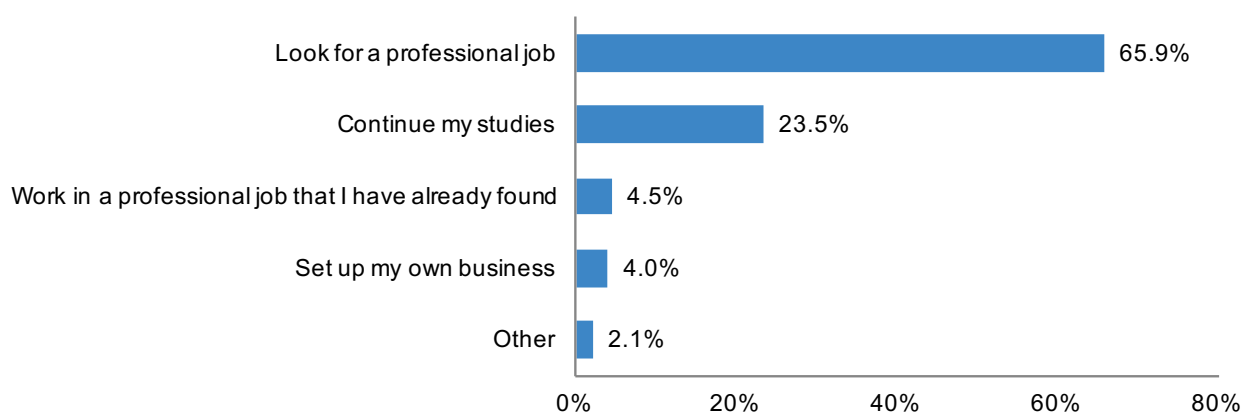


Figure 15: Plans after graduation
Students; data from 2017 (n=422)

18) Graduates that had stated one of the following (see Figure 14): "I looked for a professional job", "I started working in a professional job [...]", "I returned to the professional job I had before my EMJMD/EMMC" or "I set up my own business"

Figure 16 shows the types of further studies that graduates had pursued after graduating from Erasmus Mundus. The great majority of graduates that continued (or applied for) further studies after their graduation chose a PhD programme over another Master's programme (88.7%). More specifically, three quarters of this group said they had enrolled in (or applied for) a "PhD programme (not funded by EU)", another 13.7% stated they had enrolled in (or applied for) a European Joint Doctorate (either Erasmus Mundus or Marie Skłodowska Curie), while only 6.7% stated they had studied (or applied for) another Master's programme.

What kind of further studies did you pursue?

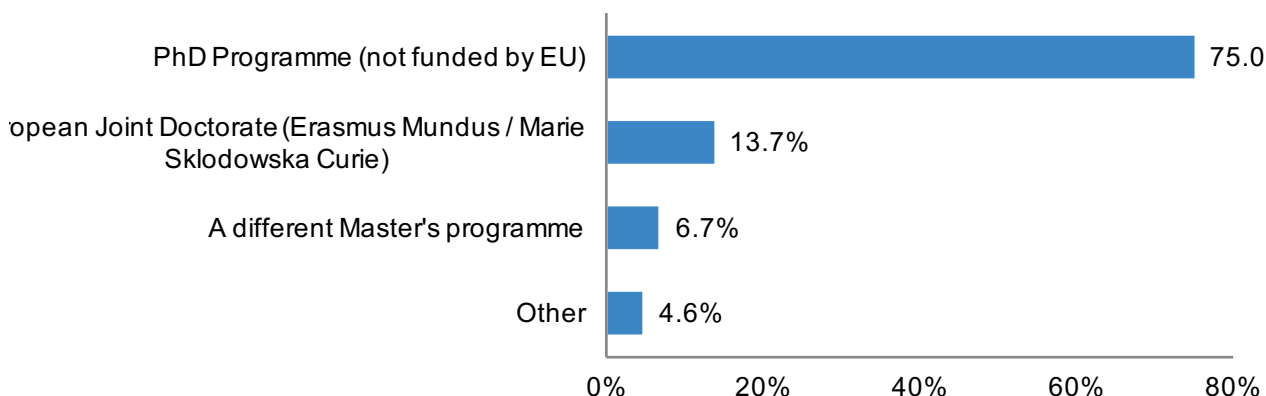


Figure 16: Further studies after Erasmus Mundus
Graduates (at least one year after graduation); data from 2016 and 2017 (n=520)

Figure 17 shows a statistic of those graduates that took up or applied for a job in the first six months after their graduation¹⁸. Of those graduates that planned to enter professional life after graduating, 87.2% became employed or set up their own business while 12.8% remained unemployed. In the subsequent analyses, this latter group will be referred to as "unsuccessful job-seekers". It is important to note that this number only refers to unsuccessful job-seekers immediately after graduation and does not represent the percentage of graduates that are currently unemployed. Among all respondents in 2017, the percentage of graduates who were currently unemployed and seeking a job was 5.4% (see section 2.5).

Employment status after first job search

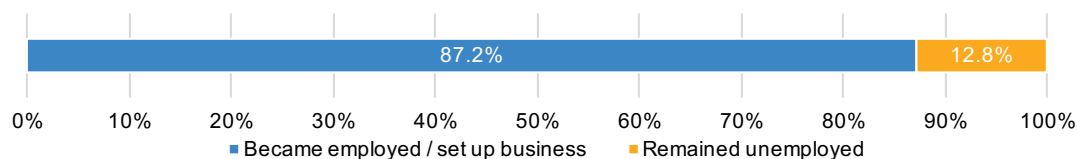


Figure 17: Employment status after first job search
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) entering labour market in the first six months after graduation; data from 2017 (n=640)

Figure 18 shows how much time the unsuccessful job-seekers¹⁹ had spent looking for a job. A lot of the unsuccessful job-seekers stayed on the labour market for a long time. The vast majority (70.5%) spent more than six months looking for a job.

How much time did you spend searching for a professional job?

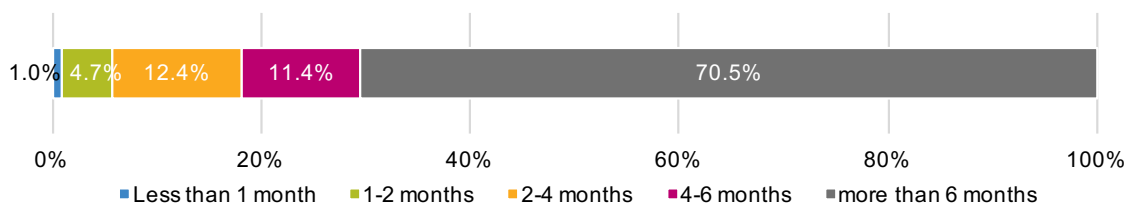


Figure 18: Time spent searching for a job (unsuccessful job-seekers)

Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who remained unemployed after their initial job search; data from 2016 and 2017 (n=193)

The unsuccessful job-seekers were asked about the three most important reasons for not having found a job. Their responses are shown in Figure 19. The examined subsample of this group of participants is small (n=82) and their responses therefore not perfectly conclusive, however, it is possible to distinguish the more important from the less important reasons. The three most frequently stated reasons were “visa/work permit issues” (50%), finding “no suitable job on the market” (37.8%) and experiencing “too much competition” (35.4%). 25.6% also identified a lack of relevant skills or experiences as having been detrimental in their search for a job. Considering the observation in section 2.2 (graduates rather thought to be lacking practical experience than technical skills), the above-mentioned 25.6% most likely refer, for the most part, to relevant practical experiences. Another 15.9% of the graduates identified the problem that their Erasmus Mundus degree was not recognized as a relevant factor. However, these 15.9% represent only 13 graduates and drawing implications for all graduates is not advised.

What do you think are the reasons for not having found a professional job after Erasmus Mundus?

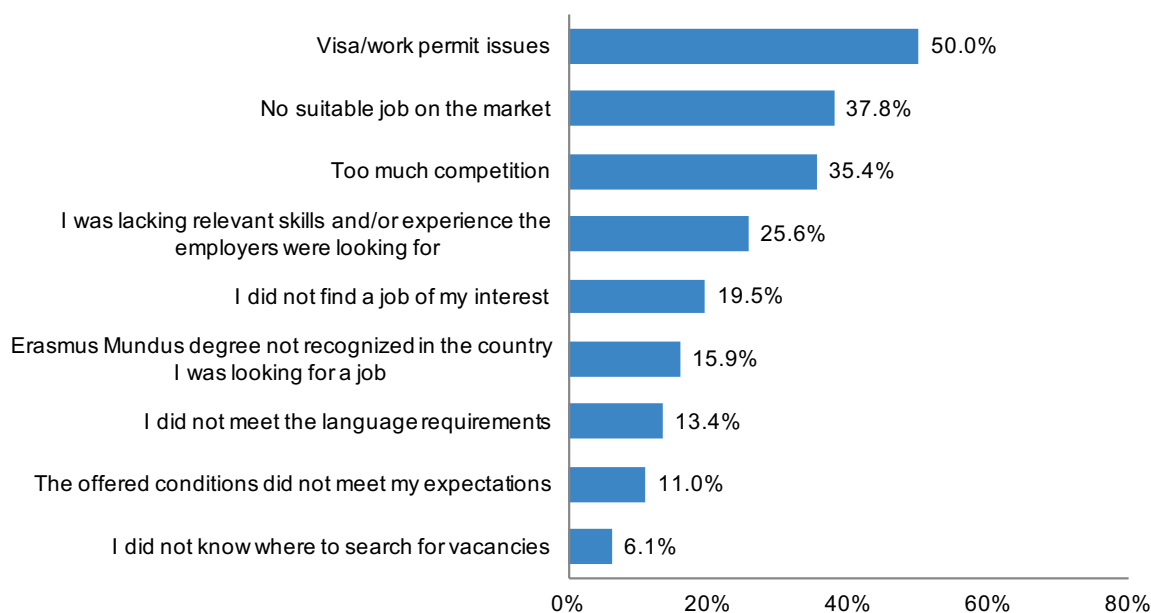


Figure 19: Reasons for not having found a professional job Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who remained unemployed after their initial job search; up to three answers; data from 2017 (n=82)

19) For the time being, the analyses of the group of unsuccessful job-seekers are bound by the limited sample size and thus not perfectly conclusive. With the coming survey years this sample will increase and it will eventually become possible to make closer examinations of this group.

Figure 20 shows how much time **the successful job-seekers** had spent searching for the job they took on after their graduation. It can be seen that more than half of the graduates (57.2%) had found their job in the first four months while more than three quarters of the graduates (79.3%) had found their job in the first six months.

How much time did you spend searching for this job?

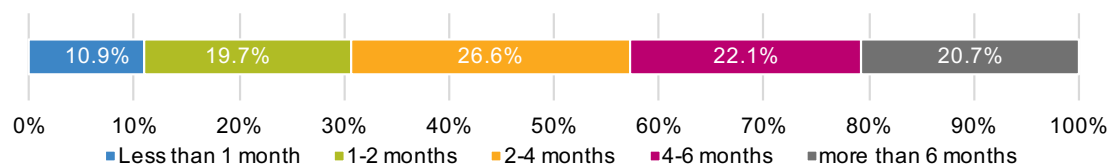


Figure 20: Time spent searching for a job (successful job-seekers)
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who found a job as a result of their initial job search; data from 2016 and 2017 (n=552)

The graduates who stated they had looked for a job right after their graduation were also asked in which countries they had searched (three options were possible). Figure 21 shows the top ten choices of the graduates. Unsurprisingly, most of the participants (62.5%) mentioned their home country, while Germany, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Italy, the United States and Sweden were also among the top ten preferred job locations. In summary, aside from their home country, graduates were mostly looking for a job in EU countries while a smaller portion also searched for a job in the United States (5.6%).

In which country [in which countries] were you mainly looking for a professional job?

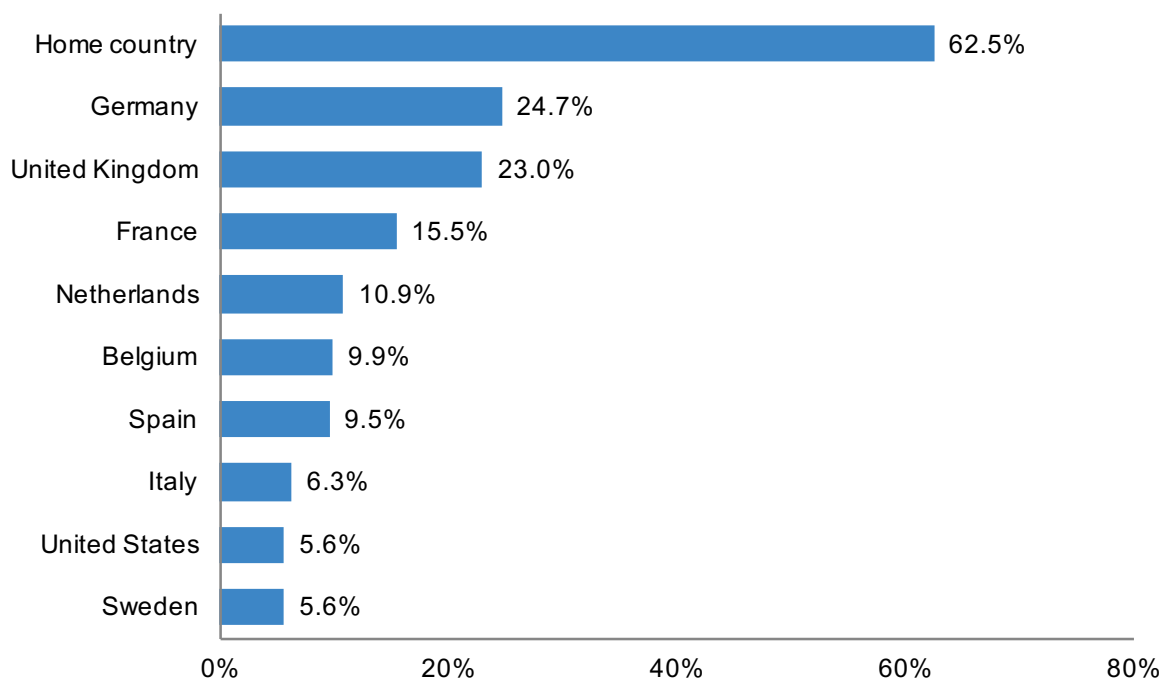


Figure 21: Preferred location of first job, top ten
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who looked for a job after their graduation; up to three answers; data from 2017 (n=304)

The reasons for the graduates' choices are depicted in Figure 22. The three most frequently mentioned reasons were "better job / career opportunities" (53.5%), "I like the work and living environment" (46.9%) and "family reasons / private life" (43.2%).

Why were you looking in this country [these countries] specifically?

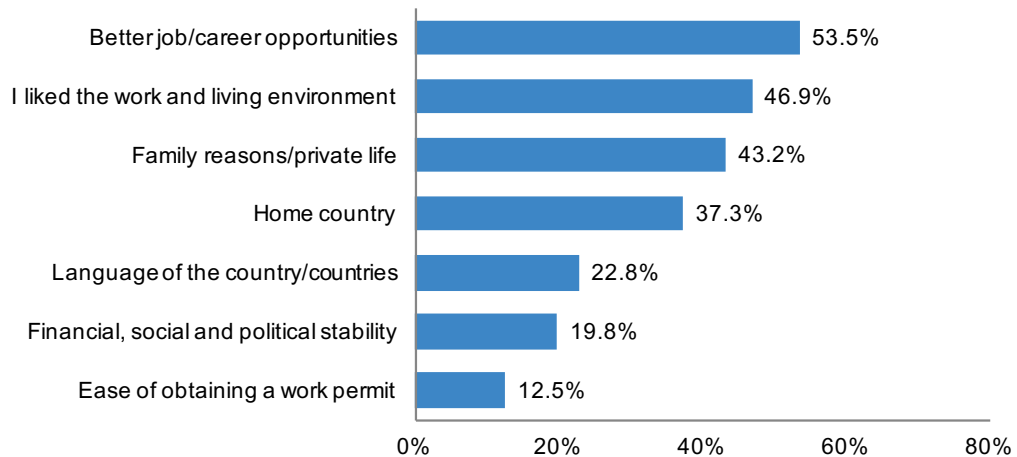


Figure 22: Reasons for preferred job location
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who looked for a job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=303)

2.4 First job after graduation

To learn more about the career of Erasmus Mundus graduates, those that became employed immediately after graduating were asked a series of follow-up questions about this job (e.g., its location). As Figure 23 shows, in more than half of the cases (57.7%) this was their home country. The remaining graduates had found a professional job outside their home countries - the United Kingdom (6.3%) and Germany (6.3%) being the most frequently mentioned locations. Nearly a third of the graduates, who did not return to their home country, became employed in the EU (29.7% - not shown in any figure).

In which country did you eventually find your professional job?

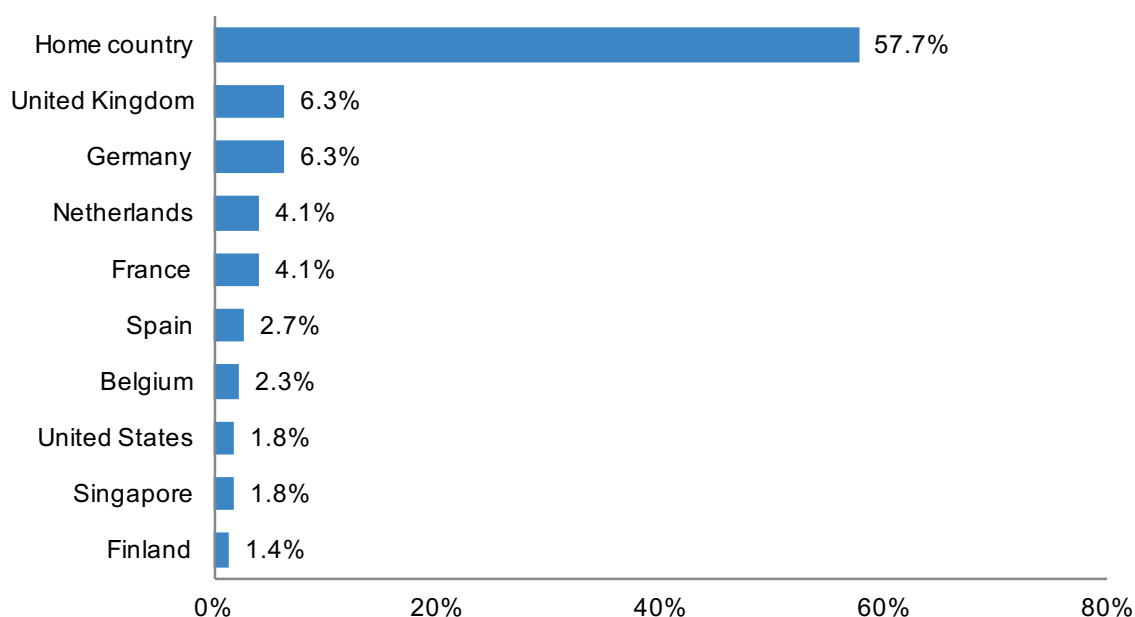


Figure 23: Location of first professional job, top ten Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who looked for a job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=222)

Figure 24 reveals whether graduates actually found their job in the location where they had predominantly looked for one. As can be seen, the majority of graduates (60.4%) were able to find a job in their most preferred job locations. Furthermore, 89.2% found their job in one of their first three locations of choice while only 10.8% took on a job elsewhere. From these figures, it can be concluded that graduates mostly find their jobs in their preferred job locations.

In which country did you eventually find your professional job? (preferences)

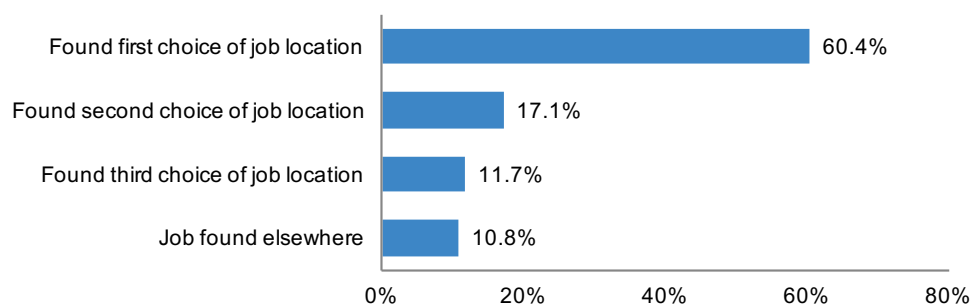


Figure 24: Location of first professional job (preferences met) Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who looked for a job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=222)

The survey also investigated the extent to which the new job of the graduates was related to their field of study. Figure 25 shows that the jobs graduates started after Erasmus Mundus were strongly related to their field of study during Erasmus Mundus: While 87.9% stated that their job was at least “somewhat related” to their field of study, 69.6% stated their job was at least “mostly related” and 45.8% thought that their job was even “highly related” to their field of study. Where do you personally see the greatest impact of Erasmus Mundus?

To what extent was the field of study of your EMJMD/EMMC related to your first professional job after graduating from Erasmus Mundus?

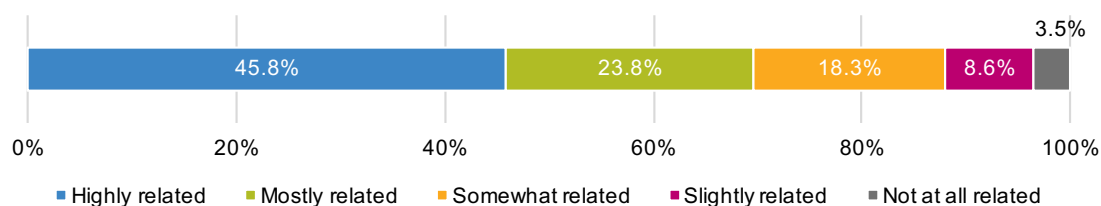


Figure 25: Relatedness of job and Erasmus studies

Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who started a professional job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=432)

Furthermore, the graduates were asked to name the three most important reasons for their employers to hire them. Their answers are shown in Figure 26.

Which of the following factors do you think were the most important for your first employer (after your graduation)?

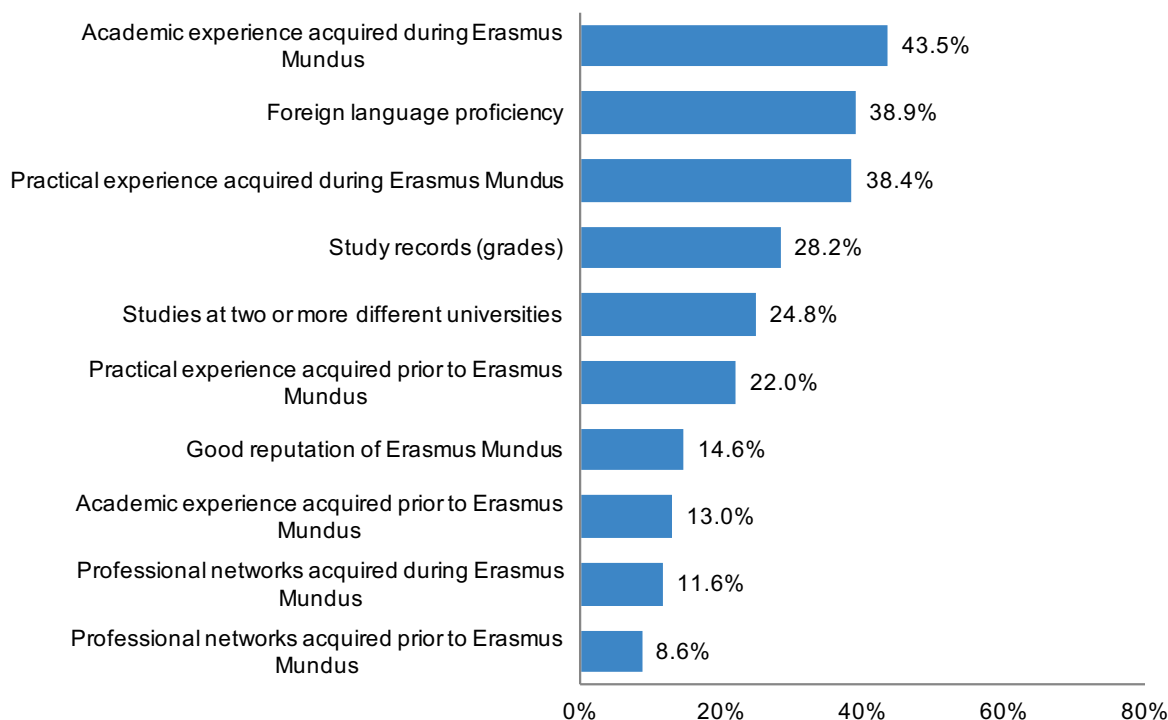


Figure 26: Employability factors

Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who started a professional job after their graduation; up to three answers; data from 2017 (n=432)

43.5% thought the “academic experience acquired during Erasmus Mundus” was one of the three most important reasons why they had been hired. 38.9% thought this to be the case for their “foreign language proficiency”. A large percentage of graduates also stated that “practical experience acquired during Erasmus Mundus” was an important employment criterion (38.4%).

The importance of foreign language proficiency is further supported by the fact that the professional jobs of graduates usually have an international dimension (see Figure 27). As can be seen, the level of internationalisation regarding both the contact with customers as well as the collaboration with colleagues was considered high. 80% of the graduates who had taken on a professional job following their graduation stated this job had been at least somewhat international when it came to dealing with customers. The collaboration with colleagues was evaluated similarly: 79.8% of the graduates said that their job was at least somewhat international in this regard.

How international was the job in terms of contact with customers [collaboration with colleagues]?

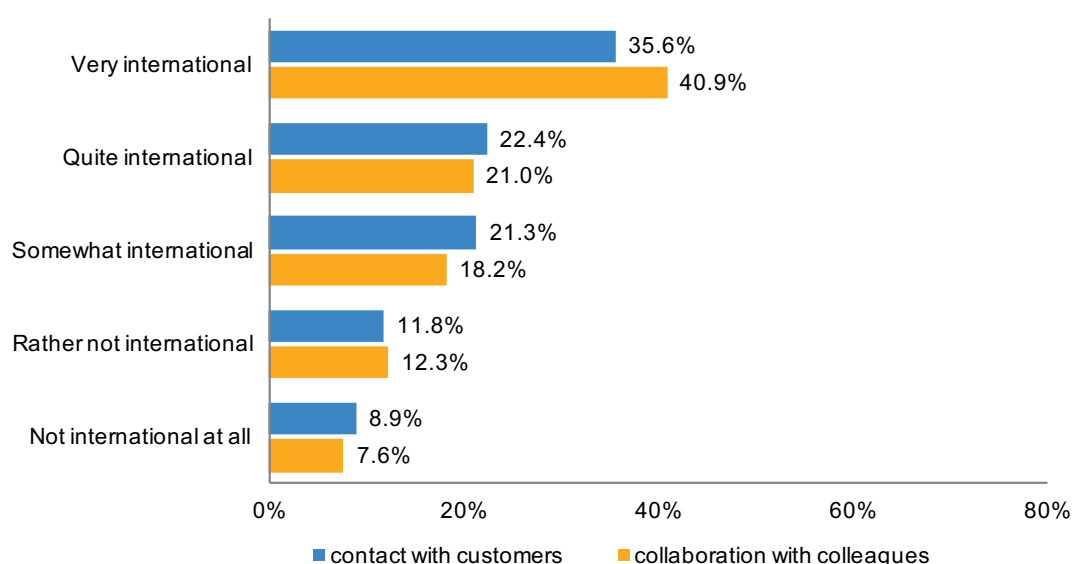


Figure 27: Internationality of the job
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who started or came back to a professional job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=431)

2.5 Current occupation

Figure 28 shows the occupation of the graduates at the time of the survey. As can be seen, most graduates (60.2%) were employed. In accordance with the observation that many graduates of Erasmus Mundus chose to pursue further studies after their graduation, 23.9% of the graduates stated they were taking part in a PhD or Master's programme at the time of the survey. The number of EMJMD/EMMC graduates who were unemployed and looking for a job is low (5.4%).

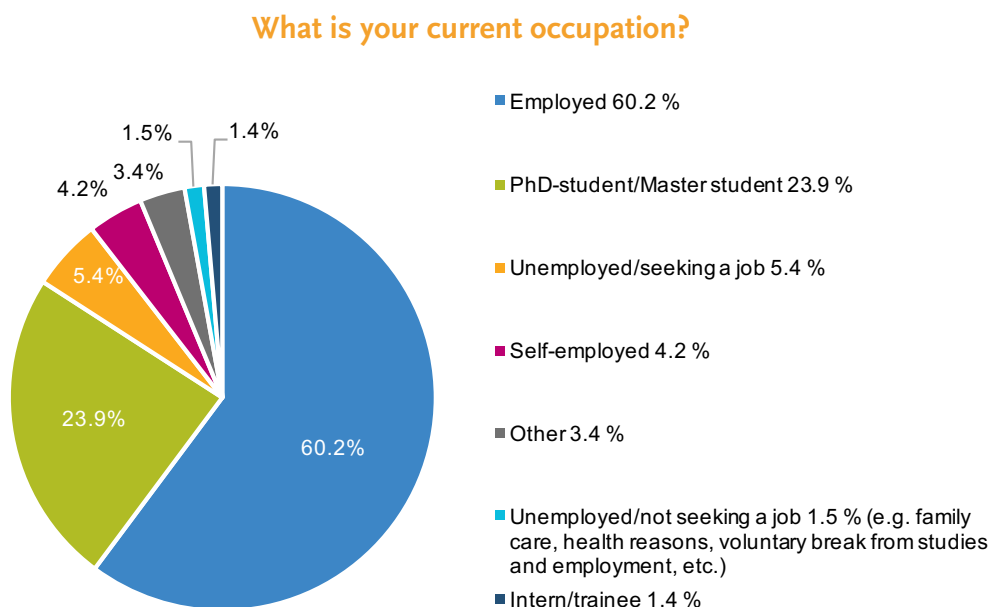


Figure 28: Current occupation

Graduates (at least one year after graduation); data from 2017 (n=1,020)

The employed (or self-employed) graduates were asked how satisfied they were with their current occupation. As can be seen in Figure 29, almost all of the graduates (95.3%) were at least "somewhat satisfied" with their occupation. 81.7% were at least "fairly satisfied" and 42.4% were "very satisfied". Only 4.6% of the graduates who were employed or self-employed at the time of the survey stated they were "not satisfied" with their current occupation.

How satisfied are you with your current occupation?

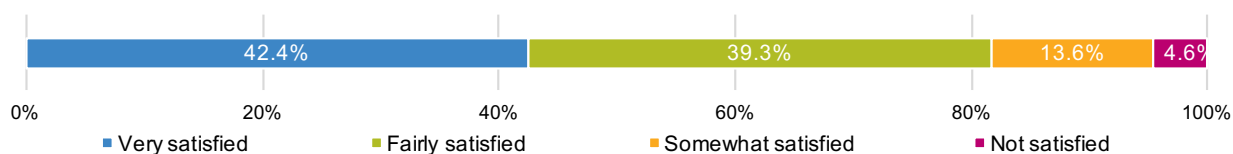


Figure 29: Satisfaction with current occupation

Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who were employed or self-employed; data from 2017 (n=947)

2.6 Competencies

In order to evaluate whether the EMMC/EMMJD focuses on teaching students practically relevant competencies, the following analysis was conducted. Graduates were asked to assess to what extent a certain competency was required in their first professional job after graduating and to what extent their EMMC/EMMJD contributed to the development of this competency. The competencies are sorted in descending order of the respective mean differences: Competencies which were required to a higher extent than the Master's programme contributed are listed on the top. Competencies to which the Master's programme has – in the opinion of the graduates - more than sufficiently contributed are listed at the bottom.

Required / contributed competencies:

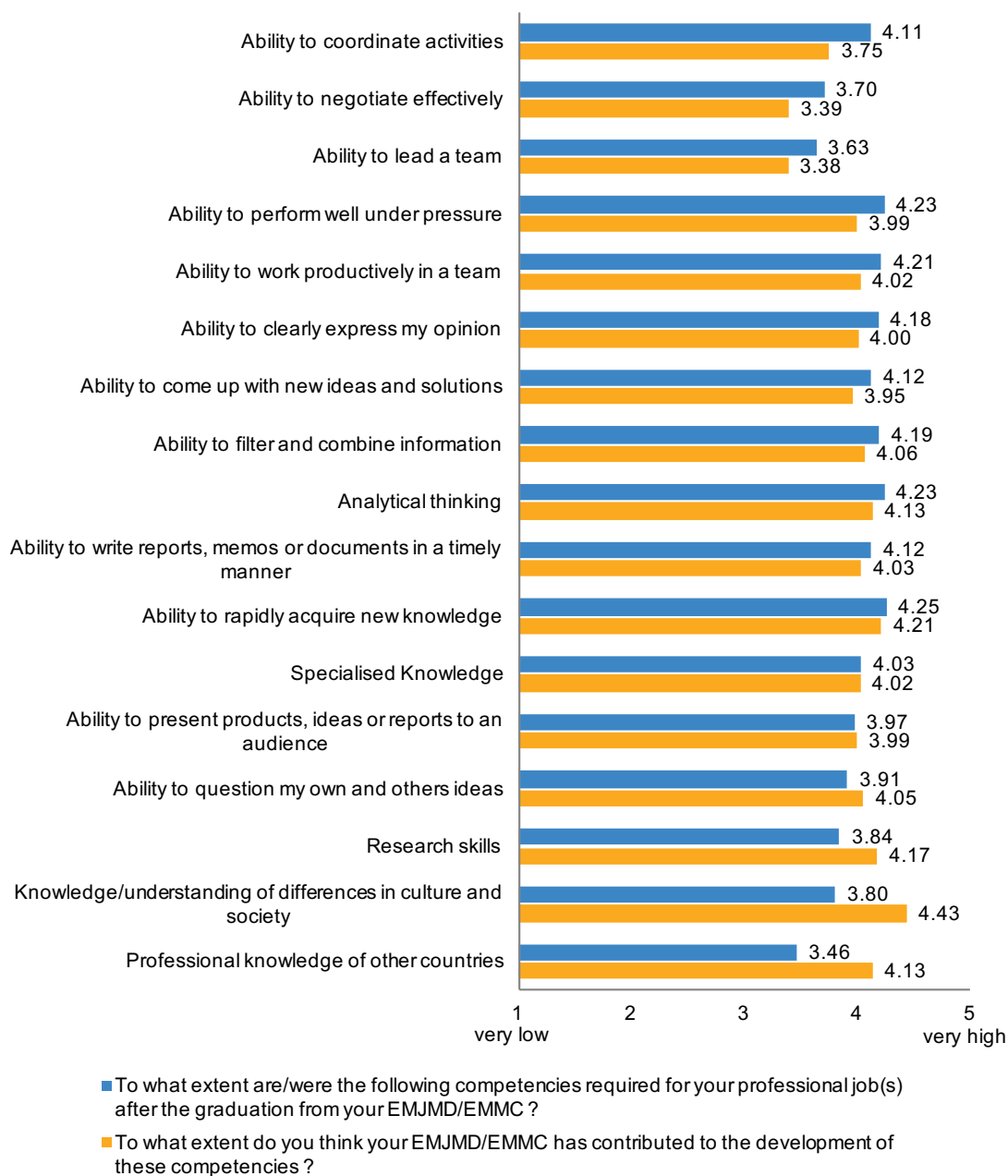


Figure 30: Required competencies vs. contribution by Erasmus Mundus
Graduates (at least one year after graduation) who started a professional job after their graduation; data from 2017 (n=432)

All in all, the graduates mostly rated the requirements of the competencies as slightly higher than the respective contributions, but these differences cannot be considered remarkable. However, the students considered the contribution to all competencies more than fair (1=very low, 3=fair, 5=very high), hence, there is no immediate need for improvement.

In relative terms, the graduates saw a high contribution of their EMJMD/EMMC to their “professional knowledge of other countries”, their “knowledge/understanding of international differences in culture and society” and their “research skills” while, at the same time, deeming these rather less important for their job in comparison to other competencies. Their “ability to coordinate activities”, “[...] to negotiate effectively” and “[...] to lead a team”, however, was not sufficiently developed according to the graduates.

In absolute terms, the contribution of the programmes to “knowledge/understanding of international differences in culture and society” (M = 4.43), the “ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge” (M = 4.21) and “research skills” (M = 4.17) was the highest according to the graduates.

Figure 31 clarifies whether the Erasmus Mundus students perceived any shortcomings in the area of language acquisition during their programme. All in all, 90.7% of the students and the graduates of 2017 rated the increase in their foreign language skills due to their Master’s programme as at least fair and still 61.4% rated the increase as “rather high” or “very high”. In section 2.4 it was observed that foreign language skills are an important factor for the employability of the Erasmus Mundus graduates. Hence, it can be concluded that Erasmus Mundus prepares the majority of graduates adequately for the labour market in this domain²⁰

How do you rate the improvement in your non-native language skills due to your EMJMD/EMMC?

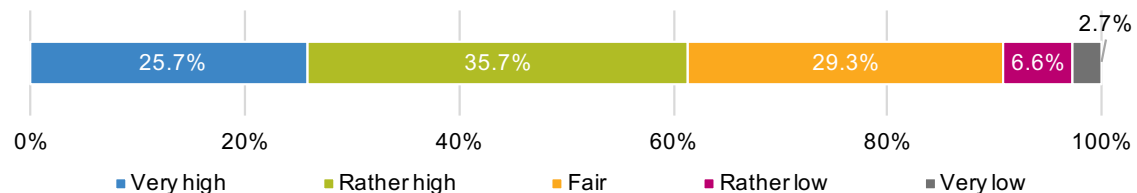


Figure 31: Improvement in non-native language skills
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); data from 2017 (n=863)

2.7 Professional life before Erasmus Mundus

The survey also asked about the employment status of the participants prior to their EMJMD/EMMC. As Figure 32 shows, the majority of students and graduates had been employed: 61.3% had already had a job which was suitable to make a living from before they entered the Erasmus Mundus programme.

Did you have a professional job before starting your EMJMD/EMMC?

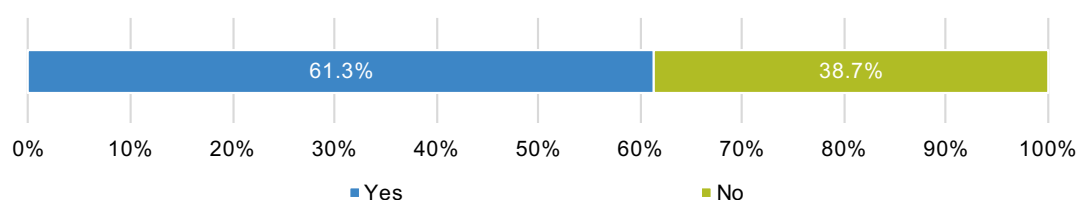


Figure 32: Professional life before Erasmus Mundus
Students and graduates; data from 2017 (n=1,740)

20) This conclusion only holds if the foreign language skills in which students improve during their programme are the same as those needed on the respective labour market.

3 Profile of Erasmus Mundus

One of the three objectives of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to “increase the quality and the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)” (Erasmus+ Programme Guide, 2017). In order to provide evidence whether this objective is being achieved, the following chapter will focus on the following two topics: The reasons for students to choose Erasmus Mundus as a Master’s programme and the visibility of Erasmus Mundus.

3.1 Reasons for taking an EMJMD/EMMC

Students and graduates that had recently graduated were asked what had convinced them to choose Erasmus Mundus as a Master’s programme. To gain a more differentiated view, the participants could choose up to three answers to this question. As can be seen in Figure 33²¹, the strongest argument for the participants in 2016 and 2017 was the Erasmus Mundus scholarship. More than half of the participants (59.1%) named the “scholarship” as one of the three most important reasons for beginning an EMJMD/EMMC. The second and third most frequently mentioned aspects were “the possibility to live and study in Europe” (49.6%) and “the academic level of Erasmus Mundus universities” (37.5%).

What convinced you to choose Erasmus Mundus as a master's programme?

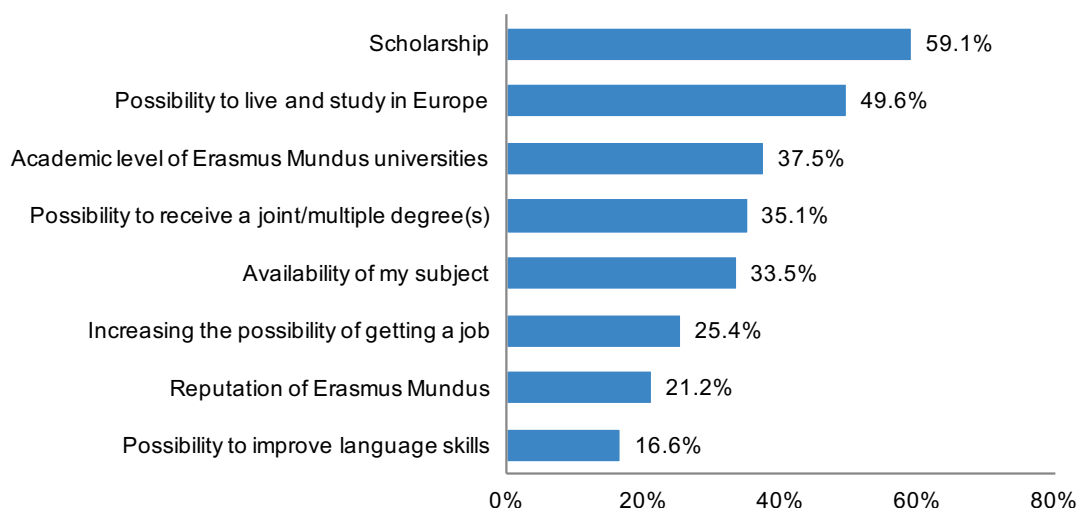


Figure 33: Reasons for choosing Erasmus Mundus as a Master’s programme
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); up to three answers; data from 2016 and 2017 (n=1,564)

21) In order to guarantee a certain degree of actuality, only the graduates of the recent years are accounted for in this chart.

Figure 34 depicts the reasons for choosing an EMJMD/EMMC sorted by cohorts (starting year). This analysis also includes older cohorts in order to determine whether the reasons for choosing Erasmus Mundus change over time. The motivational aspects that did not show any noteworthy developments (“availability of my subject”, “possibility to receive a joint/multiple degree(s)”) were omitted in this chart in favour of those aspects that did change.

What convinced you to choose Erasmus Mundus as a Master's programme?

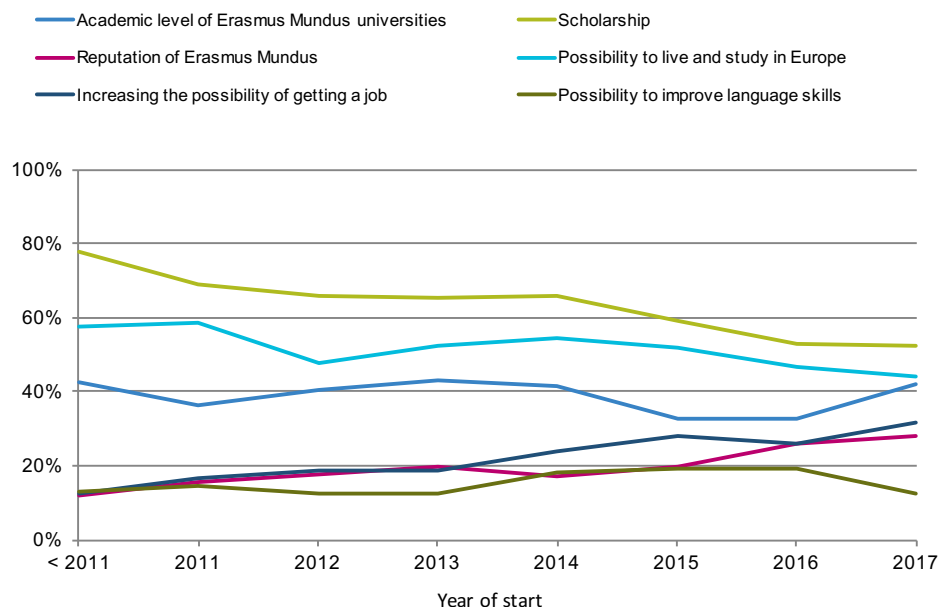


Figure 34: Reasons for choosing Erasmus Mundus as a Master's programme by cohorts
Students and graduates; data from 2016 and 2017 (n=3,315)

Comparing the statements of the participants who started the programme in its earlier years to the statements of the participants who recently enrolled, it can be seen that although the order of relevance of the different motivational aspects has only marginally changed, there are remarkable differences in the percentages. While the scholarship has been the single most relevant reason for studying an EMJMD/EMMC for the graduates from all cohorts, the percentage of students mentioning it has decreased significantly (Spearman's $\rho = -0.186$; $p < 0.001$; $N = 3,332$). The importance of the possibility of living and studying in Europe has also reduced significantly (Spearman's $\rho = -0.077$; $p < 0.001$; $N = 3,332$) as has the importance of the academic level of Erasmus Mundus universities (Spearman's $\rho = -0.048$; $p < 0.005$; $N = 3,332$).

The analysis further suggests that the reputation of the Erasmus Mundus programme increasingly became a more important reason to choose an Erasmus Mundus Master's programme. Additionally, improved job opportunities and the possibility to improve language skills have gained importance as reasons to take part in the Erasmus Mundus programme. These effects were all found to be significant: “increasing the possibility of getting a job” (Spearman's $\rho = 0.155$; $p < 0.001$; $N = 3,332$), the “reputation of Erasmus Mundus” (Spearman's $\rho = 0.124$; $p < 0.001$; $N = 3,332$) and the “possibility to improve language skills” (Spearman's $\rho = 0.048$; $p < 0.005$; $N = 3,332$).

3.2 Visibility of Erasmus Mundus

In order to assess the visibility of the Erasmus Mundus programme in the world, this chapter will investigate how well Erasmus Mundus was known in the respective home countries and how the participants found out about the programme.

Figure 35 shows how well known Erasmus Mundus was according to the survey participants of 2017 in their respective home countries. All in all, more participants rated the programme as well-known than as unknown. However, the distribution of mentions is fairly even, so that it can neither be concluded that the awareness of the programme is especially high nor especially low.

How well known is Erasmus Mundus in your home country?

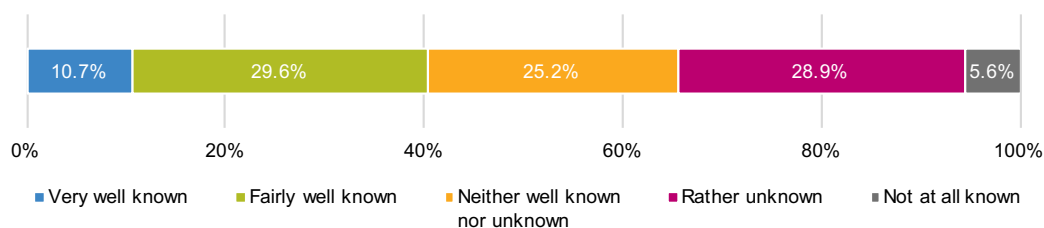


Figure 35: Awareness of Erasmus Mundus in 2017
Students and graduates; data from 2017 (n=1,740)

The level of awareness of Erasmus Mundus that was assessed in 2017 has slightly (but not significantly) increased compared to the level of awareness that was assessed in 2016 (see Figure 36). This is an especially positive result considering the continuous and significant decrease of awareness in recent survey years (2013-2017)²²: Spearman's- ρ =-0.029; p =0.01; N =7,926).

How well known is Erasmus Mundus in your home country?

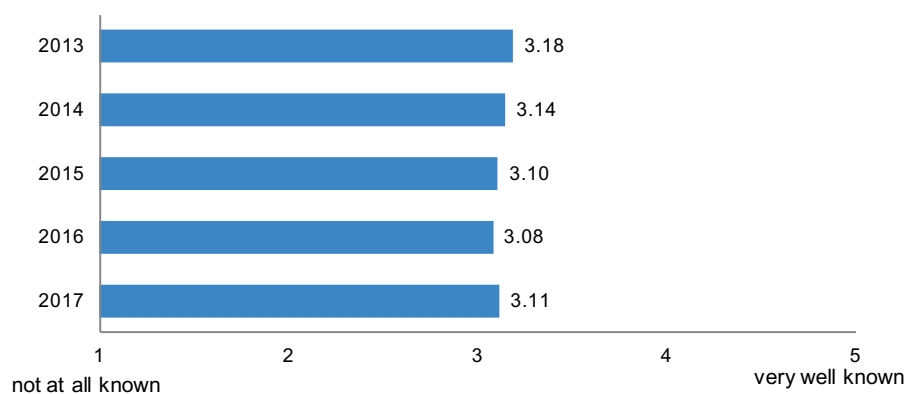


Figure 36: Awareness by survey years
Students and graduates; survey years 2013 - 2017 (n=7,926)

²²) This decrease is still significant if the varying composition of participants in the different survey years is taken into account (e.g., the increasing percentage of graduates and students coming from the EU – a region in which the awareness of Erasmus Mundus is quite low, see Figure 37)

Figure 37 shows how well known the Erasmus Mundus programme was in the different home regions according to the participants of the 2017 survey. As can be seen, there are regions where Erasmus Mundus is considered rather well known (foremost on the Asian and African continent) and regions where Erasmus Mundus is considered rather unknown (in Oceania, the Americas and the EU). According to the participants, the level of awareness in non-EU European countries is moderate.

How well known is Erasmus Mundus in your home country?

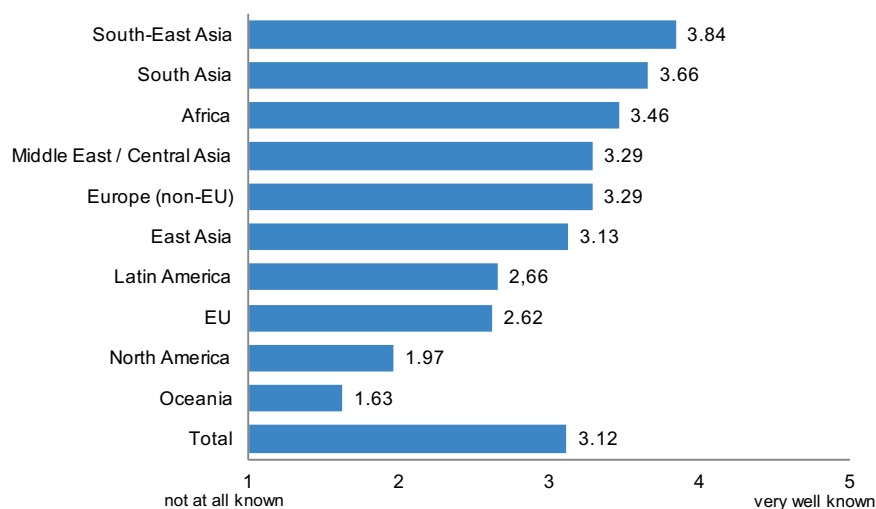


Figure 37: Awareness by region of origin
Students and graduates; data from 2017 (n=1,716)

The internet appears to be the single most important source to find out about Erasmus Mundus, while word of mouth and participants' home university are of somewhat lower but still notable importance. Figure 38 provides more information on the channels through which students learned about the programme. As can be seen, most students (52.9%) found out about Erasmus Mundus on the internet. Their friends (18%) were the second most important source of information, followed by their home university (11.5%) and other Erasmus Mundus students or alumni (11.2%).

How did you find out about the Erasmus Mundus Programme?

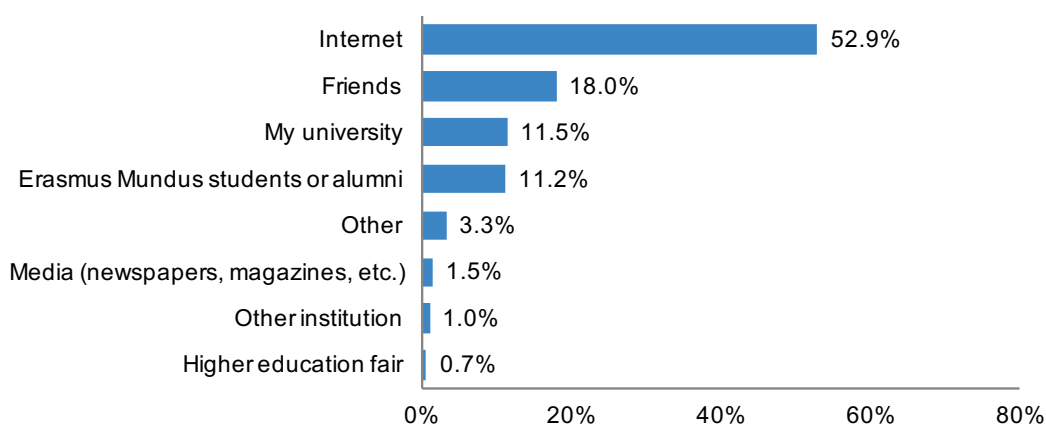


Figure 38: Initial sources of information
Students and graduates (less than two years after graduation); single choice; data from 2017 (n=890)

In summary, the level of awareness of Erasmus Mundus in the home countries of the participants is moderately high and has increased compared to 2016. However, taking into account all survey years (from 2013 to 2017), the awareness has decreased. Furthermore, the level of awareness was evaluated very differently in the different regions of the world. Students mostly found out about the Erasmus Mundus programme on the internet, but also quite often by word of mouth and/or at their home university. The reputation of the programme, on the other hand, is continuously increasing. Efforts to promote Erasmus Mundus even further are therefore likely to be successful.

23) Based on the present data, it cannot be determined whether students who returned to their region of origin actually returned to their home country.

4 Places of residence and mobility

As students from all over the world apply for Erasmus Mundus, it is of particular interest to explore how many graduates stay in the EU after their graduation. Since Erasmus Mundus students get to know the EU through their studies, the number of graduates remaining in the EU may serve as an indicator for the EU's attractiveness as a place to work and study. The following chart (Figure 39) shows where the graduates (who were not originally from the EU) lived at the time of the survey. It is structured by region of origin and shows that at least 23.7% (originally from North America) to at most 58% (originally from Africa) of graduates stayed in the EU after their graduation. The majority of graduates (originally not from the EU) were living in the EU (47.3%) while 39.3% were living in their region of origin²³.

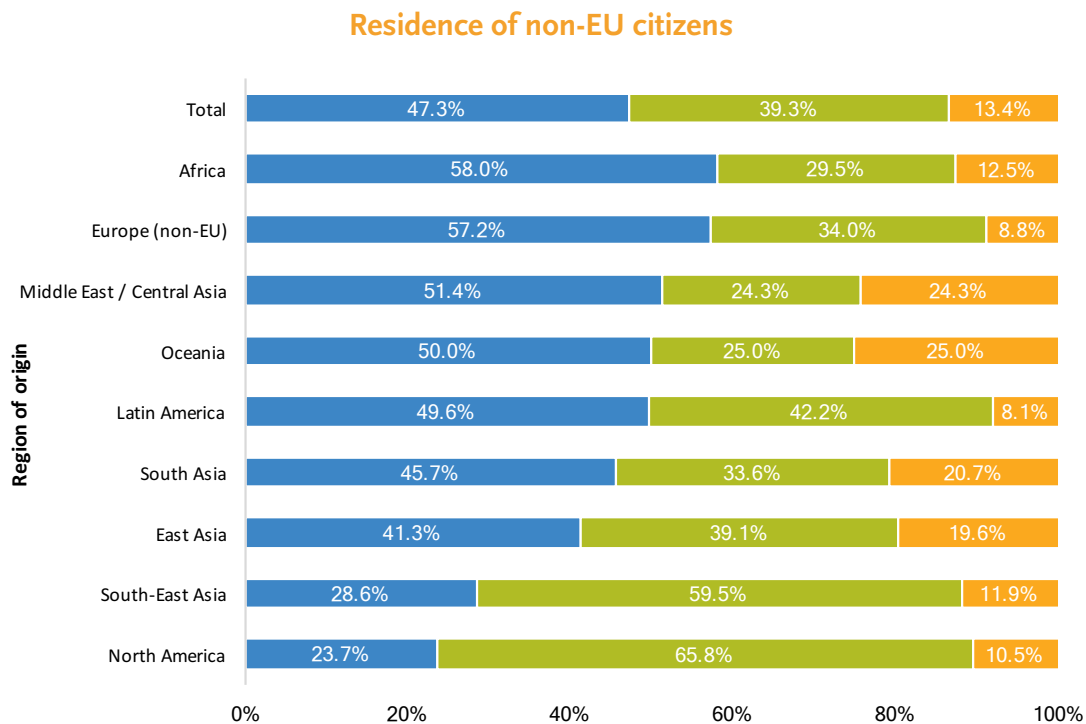


Figure 39: Place of residence of graduates (not from EU) by region of origin
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation) from outside the EU; data from 2017 (n=731)

As a further step, it was investigated where the 13.4% non-EU graduates decided to live, who neither returned to their region of origin nor stayed in the EU. As can be seen in figure 40, the most attractive alternative was North America (37.8%), followed by European countries outside the EU with 25.5%.

Where else do the non-EU graduates live if not in the EU or their home region?

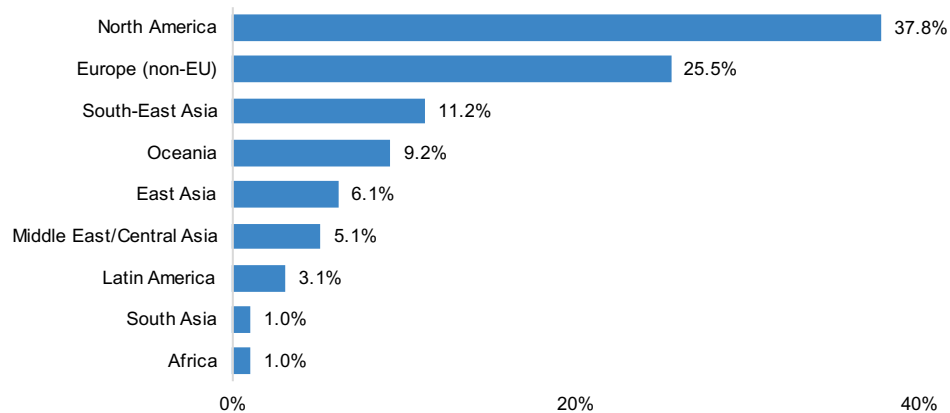


Figure 40: Place of residence of non-EU graduates (outside EU and home region)
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation) from outside the EU; data from 2017 (n=98)

When asked for the reasons for choosing their place of residence, the following picture emerges (Figure 41): Graduates living outside the EU tended to name reasons regarding family and attachment to home as main motives, while graduates living inside the EU mainly named job-related reasons.

In more detail, the graduates living in the EU stated the “better job/career opportunities” (72.3%), “the work and living environment” (53.8%) and “financial, social and political stability” (35.5%) as the three major reasons for living in the EU. In contrast, graduates living outside the EU named “family issues/private life” (48.8%) as the primary reason, however the factors “better job/career opportunities” (36.1%) and attachment to their home (“It is my home, I grew up there”; 35.3%) were also frequently mentioned.

What are the reasons for your choice of place of residence?

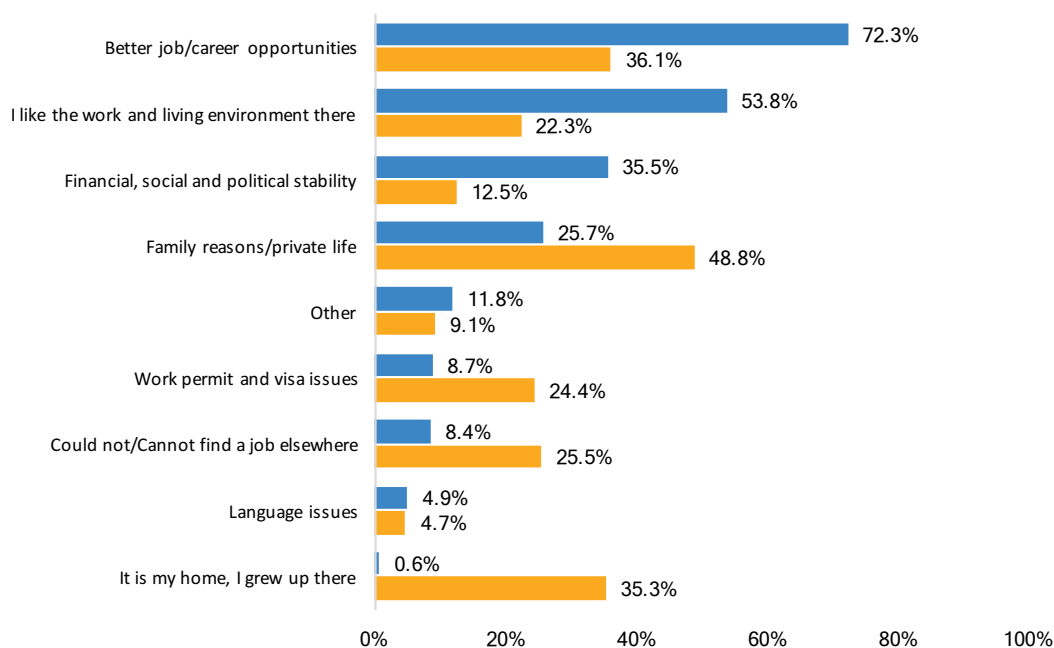


Figure 41: Reasons for choice of place of residence
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation) from outside the EU; up to three answers, data from 2017 (n=731)

To differentiate this topic further, the place of residence (living inside or outside EU) was analysed by field of study (Figure 42). The ratios of living inside or outside the EU significantly differ between the different fields of study ($\chi^2 = 20.7$; $p = 0.001$; $df = 5$; $N = 730$). While 56.2% of the graduates in Science, Mathematics, Computing and 56% of Agriculture and Veterinary Master's programmes stayed in the EU after graduation, the majority (53% - 73.9%) of the graduates in the remaining Master's programmes lived outside the EU.

Into which field does/did your EMJMD/EMMC fall?

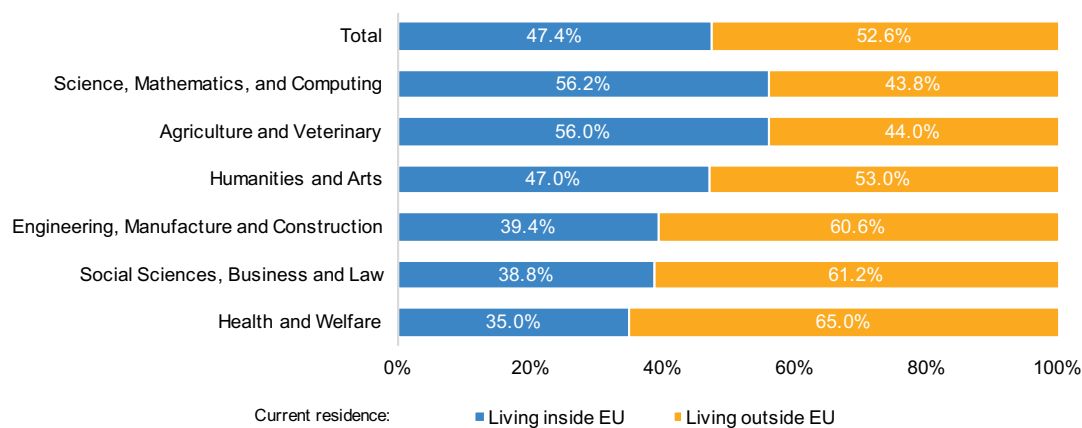


Figure 42: Place of residence (inside/outside EU) by field of study
Graduates (less than seven years after graduation) from outside the EU; data from 2017 (n=730)

In summary, the reported numbers show that the EU remains an attractive place to work, study and live in for graduates from outside the EU. The graduates that returned to their home regions, did so mostly because of their attachment to home (family or other personal reasons).

V OUTLOOK

This year's findings corroborate the main statements of last year's report:

- The level of satisfaction among Erasmus Mundus students and graduates remains high.
- The impact of the programme on its participants is strong, especially on intercultural competencies.
- Students are, so far, adequately prepared for their endeavours on the labour market. Areas to improve this preparation even more were identified.
- The awareness of Erasmus Mundus in the home countries of the participants is generally moderate and in certain regions of the world particularly low, while the reputation of the programme, on the other hand, is continuously increasing.
- The EU remains an attractive place to work, study and live in for the participants after their graduation.

Despite the overall positive findings of the survey regarding satisfaction of graduates and students, impact on career and competencies and attitude towards Europe, certain areas were identified that can be further improved and developed. The following recommendations especially focus on increasing the employability and skill development of graduates and the visibility of the programme across the world.

Overall, the impact of Erasmus Mundus on graduates' career was evaluated positively. As a major challenge, every second graduate that had been unsuccessful in his or her search for a job stated this had been - at least partly - due to visa or work permit issues. Potentially, (more) organised assistance – for example through the alumni associations - can help to improve this issue. Another major challenge appears to be the limited connections of the academic programme to the non-academic work environment. While participants do gain sufficient technical skills and competencies, they seem to have too little opportunities to transfer them in form of practical work experience (e.g., graduates point towards a lack of career mentoring during the programme or name too little practical experience as a reason why their job search was unsuccessful). Even though the mentioned problems are certainly commonplace issues on a tight labour market and cannot be entirely solved, an extended offer of (mandatory) internships and networking opportunities with enterprises and potential employers may well improve the chances of Erasmus Mundus graduates on the labour market. Internships will allow the students to gain practical, on-the-job experiences while at the same time establishing ties to future employers and thereby expanding their professional network.

Graduates further identified certain skills as being required to a greater extent than Erasmus Mundus had contributed to (e.g., the “ability to coordinate activities” or the “ability to perform well under pressure”). These can probably only be adequately developed through a greater volume of practical experience which the programme itself may not be able to offer (apart from the suggested internships). However, some deficits can possibly be addressed: Management and negotiation seminars might be one way to counter the deficits that were observed regarding, for instance, the “ability to negotiate effectively”, the “ability to lead a team” or the “ability to work productively in a team”.

With regards to the worldwide visibility of Erasmus Mundus, the participants evaluated the awareness of their respective home countries as moderate. It did, however, improve compared to the level of awareness that was assessed in 2016. Hence, any efforts that have been undertaken to improve the awareness of the programme recently, should be considered successful. Keeping in mind that there is still room for improvement, further promotion of Erasmus Mundus is still advised, especially considering the high and increasing reputation of the programme which should facilitate any efforts in this area.

VI LITERATURE

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