

Preliminary results of a TCA study
“Institutional impact of Erasmus+ staff mobility”

OeAD Bologna-Tag 2023

16 March 2023



Academic Cooperation Association

- Brussels-based membership association of internationalisation funding bodies
- International higher education think tank

ACA
ACADEMIC
COOPERATION
ASSOCIATION



FULL MEMBERS

 Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD)	 Vluhr International	 Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP)	 Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS)
 Education and Youth Board of Estonia (HARNO)	 Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI)	 German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)	 State Scholarships Foundation (IKY)
 Tempus Public Foundation (TPF)	 The Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannis)	 Uni-Italia - Academic promotion center for study orientation in Italy	 Nuffic - The Dutch Organisation for Internationalisation in Education
 Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-Dir)	 Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA)	 Erasmus + Portuguese National Agency, Education and Training (A.N E+EF)	 Slovak Academic Information Agency (SAIA, n.o.)
 Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes (CMEPIUS)	 Spanish Service for the Internationalization of Education (SEPIE)	 Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR)	 Movetia - The Swiss National Agency for Exchange and Mobility
			 Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (swissuniversities)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

 The International Education Center (IEC)	 ETS Global	 The Institute of International Education (IIE)
--	---	---

Focus

- State of play, prior research, and rationale
- Study methodology and sample
- Preliminary findings:
 - Motivation, barriers to staff mobility
 - Dissemination practices
 - Institutional approaches to promotion and recognition
- Conclusions
- Next steps



State of play

- Significant prior research on **individual benefits** of staff mobility
- Proven impact of staff mobility on internationalisation and teaching
- Lack of evidence on the **transfer of individual benefits** to institutional level



Prior analysis: 2020-2021 ACA study

- Focus - links b/n motivation, impact, recognition, satisfaction & internationalisation
- High satisfaction with Erasmus+ staff mobility experiences
- Positive impact on internationalisation (institutions & individuals), cooperation with civil society and labour market
- Importance of recognition



Erasmus+ staff mobility comparative data analysis

An exploratory study of the participants' motivation, perceived impact, recognition and satisfaction

Queenie K.H. Lam, ACA
Irina Ferencz, ACA

January 2021

ACA
ACADEMIC
COOPERATION
ASSOCIATION



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ACA
ACADEMIC
COOPERATION
ASSOCIATION



New ACA study: institutional impact of staff mobility

Q1: Where does the impact of staff mobility manifest itself at the institutional level?

Q2: How is the impact enabled by the individual?

Q3: How is the impact enabled by the institution?



Study partners

- Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD)
- Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS)
- Tempus Public Foundation (TPF)
- The Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís)
- The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP)
- The Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes (CMEPIUS)



Research scope

- Mobile **academic** staff from 6 countries
- **Physical** mobility
- Mobility duration: 2 days – 2 months
- Impact on **home** institution
(programme, department, entire institution)



Research design

1. Pre-participation survey

- Key questions from the Erasmus+ Participant Survey

2. Focus groups & interviews

- Mobile academic staff - completed
- IRO staff engaged in 'impact enabling' - planned
- Non-mobile staff (control group) - planned



Selection criteria – mobile staff

- **Mobility experience**
- **Career stage (first-stage vs advanced)**
- **Mobility duration**
- **Mobility purpose (teaching vs training)**
- Position or institutional role
- Satisfaction with one's mobility
- Discipline
- Gender
- Origin (domestic vs foreign)

Key
criteria



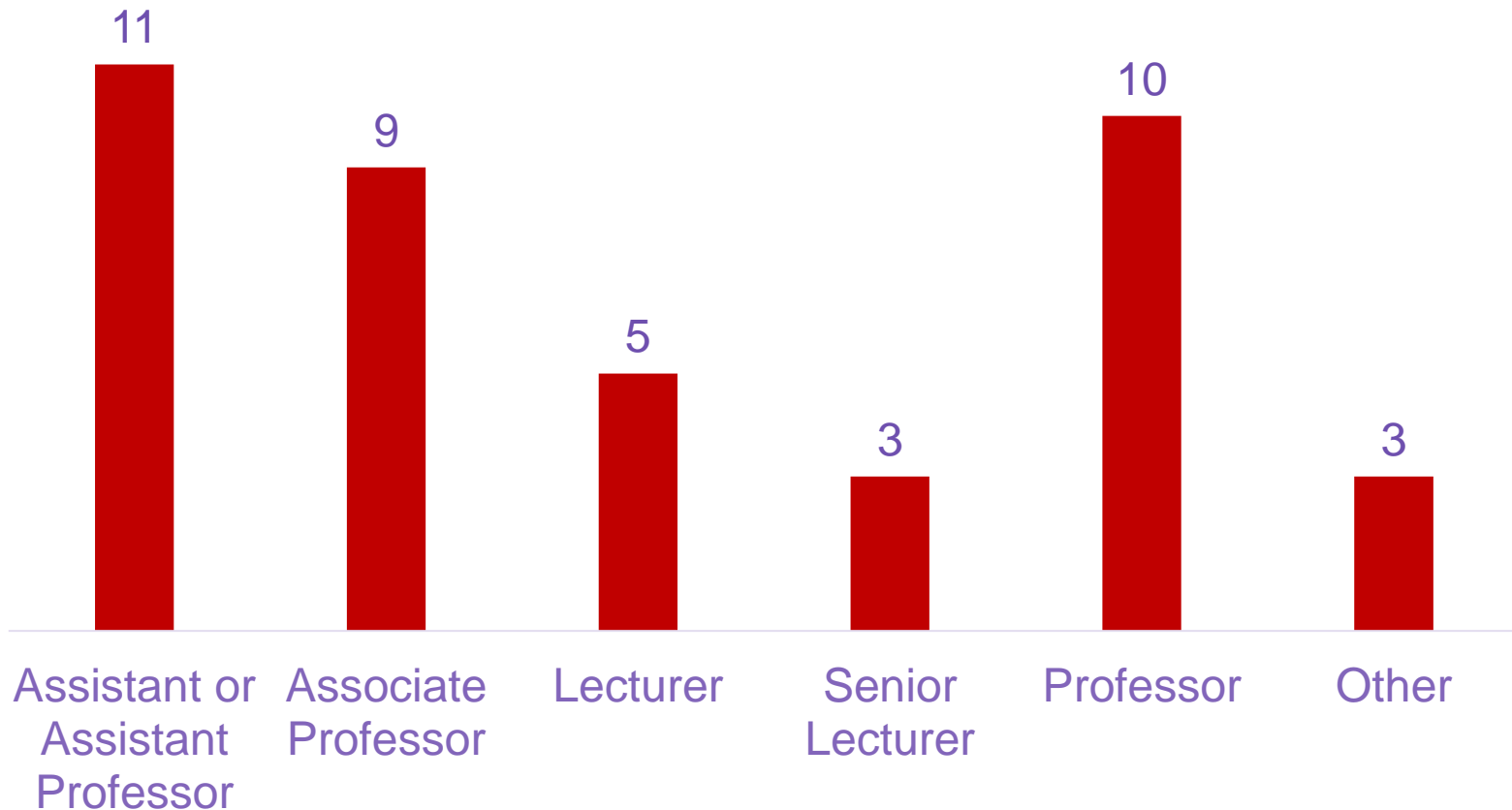
Sample: ca. 60 academics from 13 HEIs

Country	Institution	N
AT	University of Applied Sciences - Upper Austria	6
	University of Vienna	4
CZ	Masaryk University	6
	Palacký University Olomouc	4
	University of Hradec Králové	5
HR	Algebra University College	6
	University of Zadar	6
HU	University of Szeged	7
	Óbuda University	3
IS	University of Iceland	5
	University of Akureyri	2
SI	University of Ljubljana	6
	<i>University of Maribor</i>	<i>Planned</i>



Participant sample (survey)

Position (n=41)

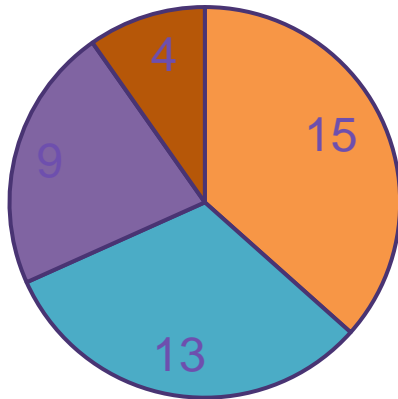


Incl. 5 heads of departments, 3 heads of study programmes & 5 international coordinators



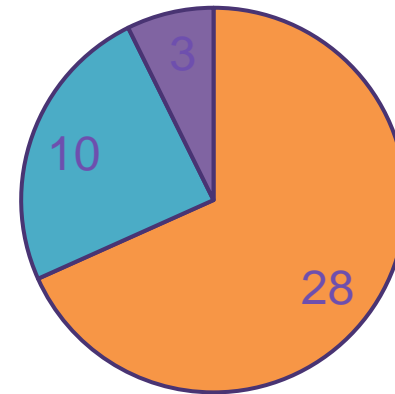
Participant sample (II) (survey)

Mobility experience (n=41)



- 2-5 times
- 6-10 times
- More than 10 times
- Only once

Type of activity (n=41)



- Staff mobility for teaching
- Combined staff mobility for teaching and training
- Staff mobility for training

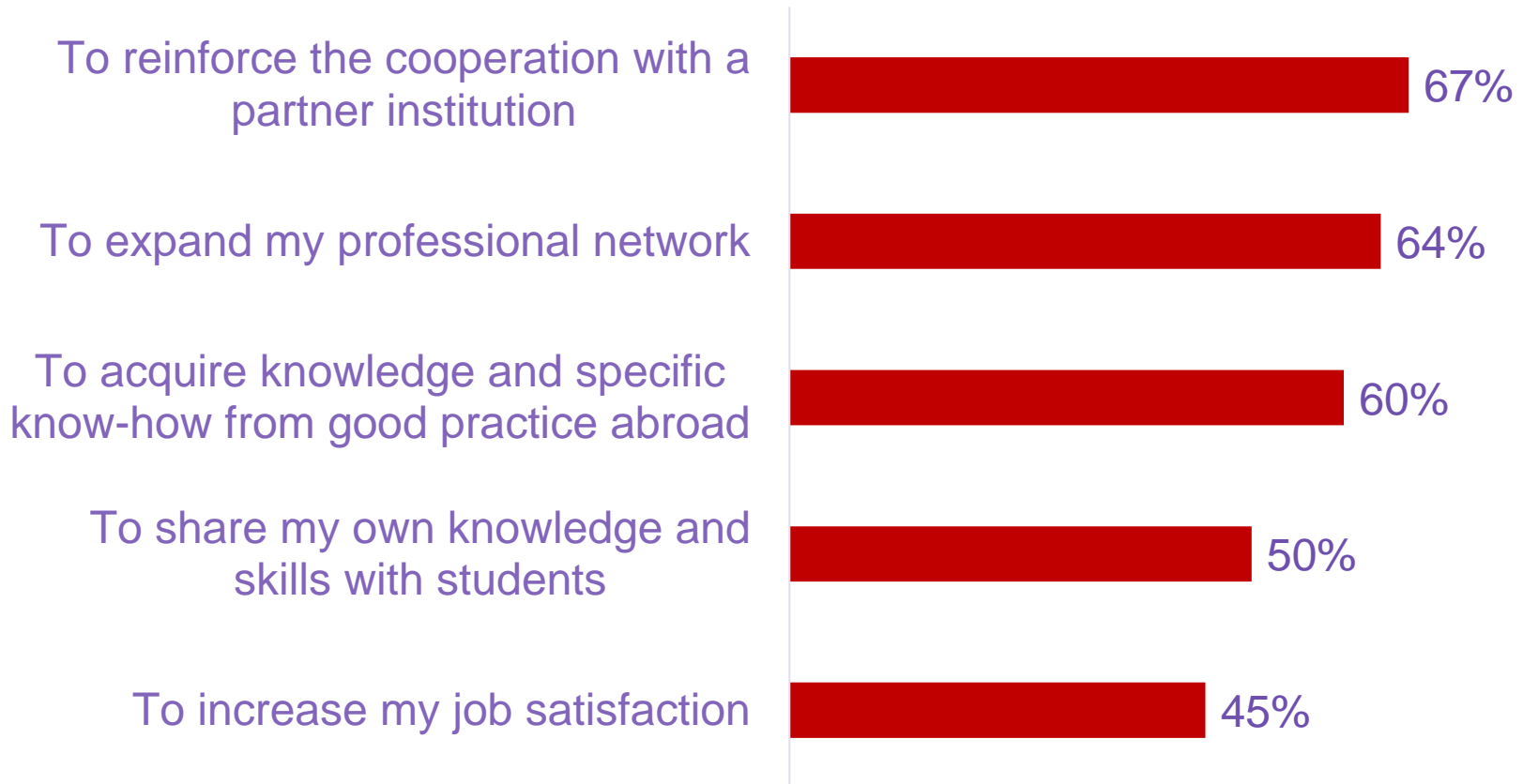


Preliminary findings: mobility attitudes

- **Varied interest** in staff mobility across different institutions, disciplines, and departments
- Mobility benefits are largely associated with **individual** outcomes (both by academics and their institutions).
- Institutional benefits are often not fully articulated.
- Outgoing staff mobility is often perceived as a 'reward' in itself by academics & institutions.



Top 5 motivation factors (survey)



Perceived benefits (focus groups)

Mobility is considered beneficial both professionally & personally

Professional growth	Personal growth
Improve one's carrier, especially among early-stage academics	Improve one's language skills
Acquire or share specific knowledge	Get exposure to other cultures/travel



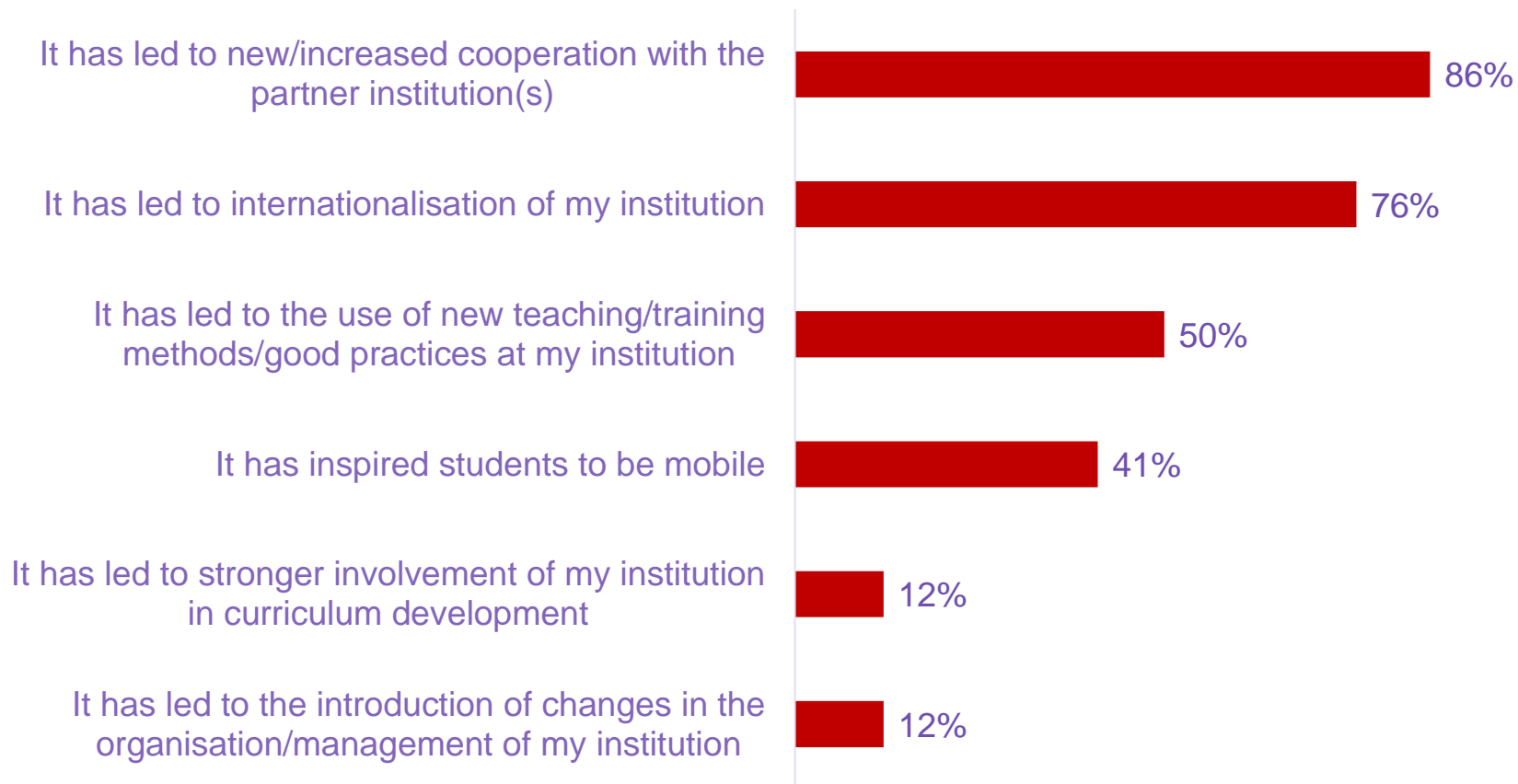
Barriers to mobility (focus groups)

- Lack of connections abroad
 - Teaching obligations at home
 - Rigid timeframe
 - Extra workload
 - Language skills & mindset
 - Family obligations
- ⇒ Esp. difficult for early-stage researchers/lecturers
- ⇒ Mobility to a neighboring country

Overcome
by the FG
participants



Top 5 institutional impact areas (survey)



Examples of positive impact at individual level (focus groups)

- Improved pedagogical skills and teaching style
- Improved language skills
- Networking / new connections at the department level
- Reputation, visibility and career building
- Etc.



Examples of positive impact at institutional level (focus groups)

- Curriculum improvement (continuous / incremental / large-scale)
- New research (projects, joint articles, book reviews, links to teaching)
- New study programmes (e.g., BIPs, joint programmes)
- Exposure to other institution's governance, processes & culture

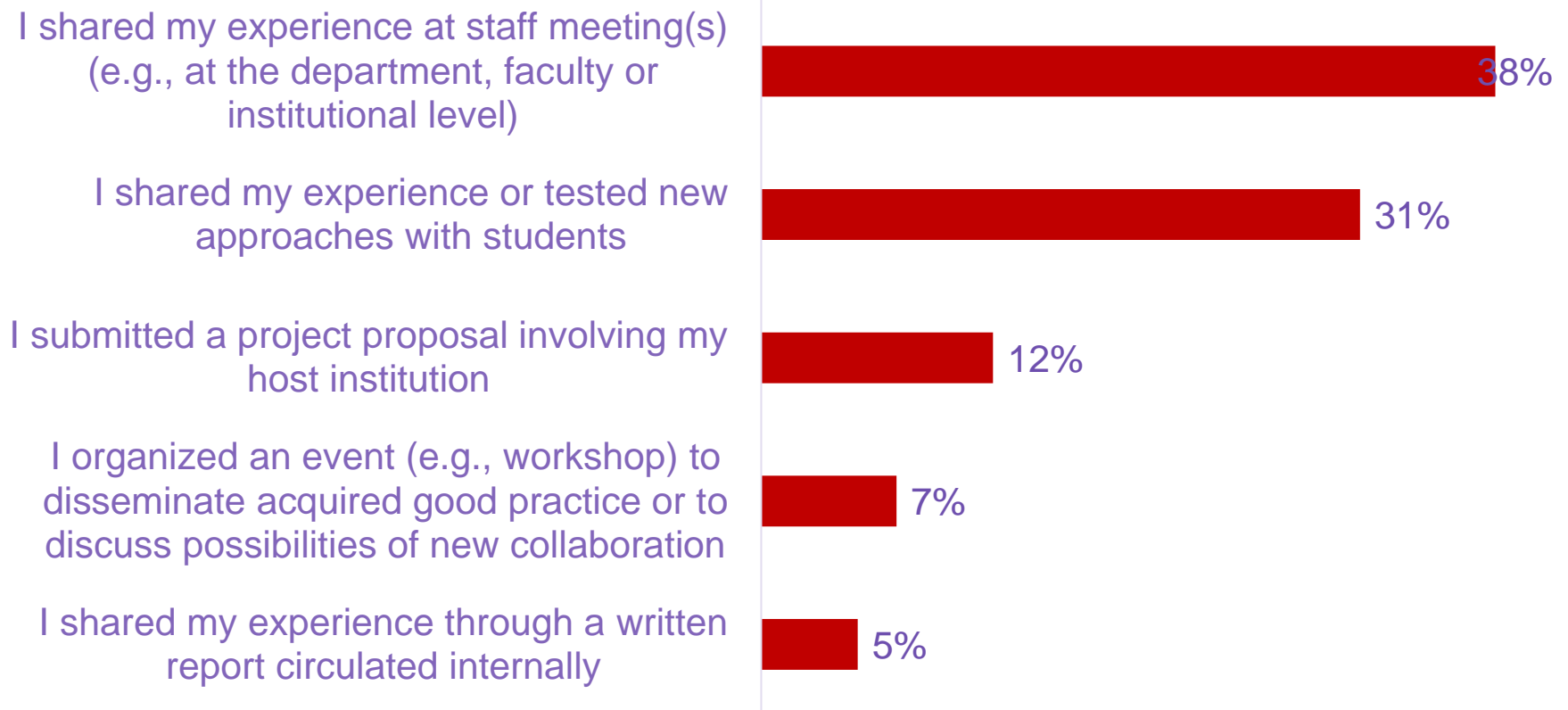


Examples of positive impact on students & staff (focus groups)

- Sharing of personal mobility experience in student mobility advice & counseling => impact on student motivation to go abroad
- Impact on staff exchange (incoming staff mobility/guest lectures)
- Unclear impact on interest in staff mobility among other staff at home institution



Top 5 dissemination practices (survey)



Examples of dissemination practices (focus groups)

Formal – limited obligations	Semi-formal	Informal – most typical
Reporting required by the programme	Get-togethers at the faculty or institutional level	Informal exchanges at the department or field level (cross-institutional)
Reporting at the department level (e.g., staff meetings)	Sharing of experience with students	
	Reporting on Intranet or social media	



Experience sharing observations

- Predominance of informal sharing of staff mobility experience
- Lack of interest in more proactive sharing
 - Academics: Doubts about overall value (e.g., too small achievements, too many peers mobile, too personal/hardly transferrable outcomes)
 - Institutions: Lack of awareness/appreciation of broader mobility outcomes



Institutional approaches to staff mobility promotion (survey)



Institutional approaches to recognition (survey)



NB: More than one-fifth of respondents are not satisfied with this level of recognition



Observations on recognition (focus groups)

- Lack of recognition for the additional effort
- Recognition based on the 'reward' attitude
- Suggestions for improvement:
consideration as part of the contractual
teaching workload



Preliminary conclusions

- High level of satisfaction with staff mobility
- High level of satisfaction with admin support to staff mobility
- High impact on internationalisation & quality of teaching
- Need for more strategic approaches
 - Greater attention to post-mobility phase (dissemination & experience sharing)
 - More formalised & coherent approaches to recognition based on clear expectations
 - More synergies with student mobility & research



Next steps

- Peer learning seminars with institutional Erasmus+ coordinators from the participating institutions (20 March 2023)
- Final report (summer 2023)
- Staff mobility event (summer 2024)
- A series of training activities to foster more strategic approaches to staff mobility (2025-2026)

Stay tuned via ACA Newsletter!

