

Eurostudent 8

Students' views on mobility



Background - why this matters

Background

- Increased attention to internationalisation in higher education across Sweden and the EU
- EU's new goal: **23%** of students in mobility by **2030**.

Sweden's position

- **13.5%** of Swedish graduates (2020/21) had mobility experience.
- Higher than Nordic neighbours, lower than **France, Germany, Netherlands**.
- Outgoing **freemovers down**, **exchange students stable** (7,000/year).

UHR's role

- Supports international cooperation and mobility.
- This analysis uses **Eurostudent 8** data to explore:
 - Students' views on study and internship abroad.
 - Are past mobility barriers still relevant?

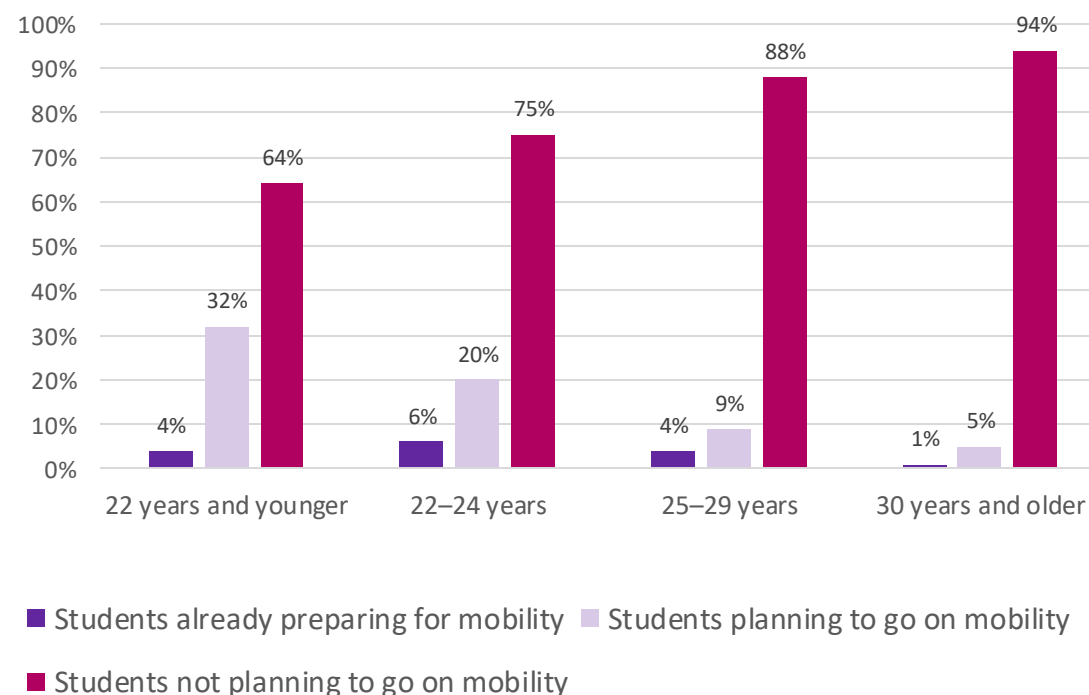


Who wants to go? Differences in student mobility interest

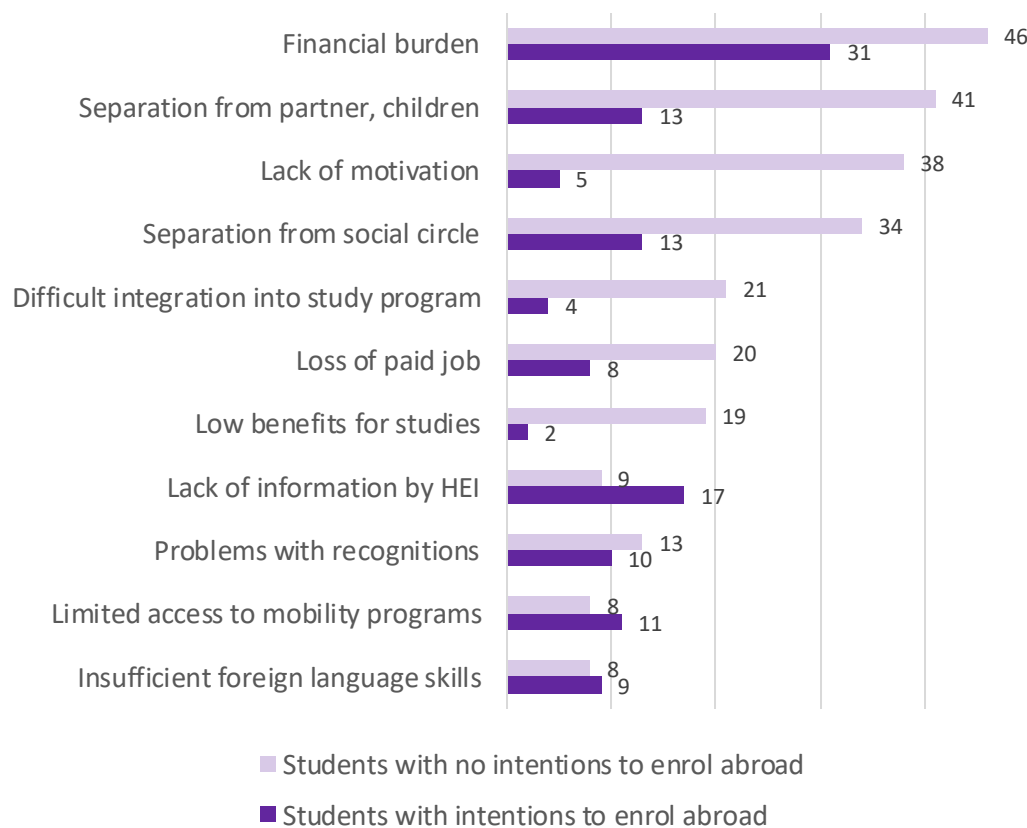
- Eurostudent survey data shows significantly higher interest in mobility than the number who actually go.

By field of study:

- - Highest interest: law (33%), social sciences (30%), languages (28%), engineering (27%)
- - Lowest interest: education (10%), social work (11%), pharmacy (13%)
- Students with disabilities report similar interest levels as others.
- Only 19% of Swedish students plan to study abroad — a decline from 22% (2013–2019).
- Swedish students rank among the least interested in Europe, surpassed only by Finland and Lithuania, while nearly 50% plan for mobility in countries like Germany and Spain.



Barriers to student mobility



• **Financial reasons** are the most common barrier to mobility.

• **Separation from family** has become less of a concern (from 49% in 2016 to 41% in 2022).

• **Lack of motivation** has increased (from 35% to 38%).

• **Lack of information** from HEI is a growing issue (from 15% to 17%).

• Motivated students tend to perceive **clear academic benefits** and **better integration** of mobility into their studies.

• Low motivation may stem from **unclear academic value** or **difficulties fitting mobility into their curriculum**.

• Swedish students report a **lower financial burden** than peers in other countries – but **greater attachment to family**.

Integration of mobility into structure of study programme

Fields with the highest reported difficulties:

Medicine and dentistry – 51%

Education – 39%

Psychology – 36%

Arts

Healthcare – 28%

Teacher education – 26%

Fields with lower reported difficulties:

Welfare – 13%

Social sciences, journalism, law – 14%

Engineering and IT – 15–17%

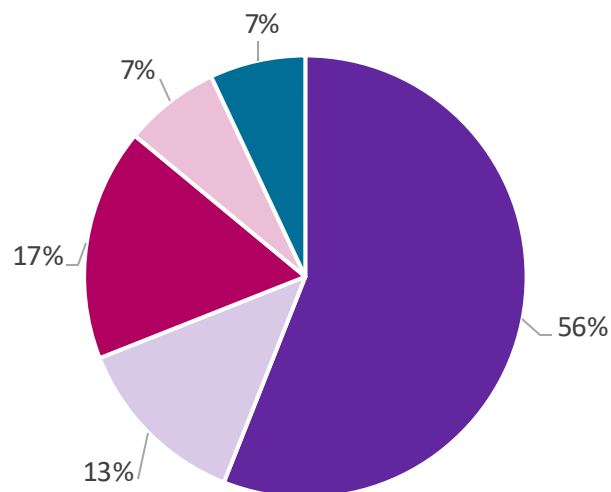
Trends over time:

- Students in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary fields now find it **easier to integrate mobility** than a decade ago.
- Teacher education students report **no change** in difficulty over the same period.

Nordic context:

- In general, students in Sweden and other Nordic countries perceive fewer barriers to integrating mobility into their programmes compared to many other European countries.

Credit recognition: a mobility challenge



- Complete recognition of credits earned abroad
- Partial recognition of credits earned abroad
- No recognition of credits earned abroad
- Did not gain any credits
- Do not know

- 13% avoid mobility due to uncertainty (up from 10% in 2016); 10% of those planning to go abroad share this concern.
- Sweden ranks low in credit recognition.
- Swedish students must apply for credit transfer manually.
- Internships often fall outside formal programs, lowering recognition rates.
- Finding matching courses abroad that fit schedules and meet academic requirements might be a challenge — adds to uncertainty about full credit transfer.

Does international experience matter? Labour market perspective

- Students with abroad experience feel better prepared for international jobs than those without, especially in fields like social sciences, economics, and law.
- However, international experience has limited relevance for their preparedness for the Swedish job market.
- UHR is participating in research project “Campus International 2025”, led by DAAD. The study explores whether mobility helps develop personal traits that are valued in the labour market. It will also look at what motivates students to take part in mobility.

Thank you!
Tack!

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Comparison of E:8 and Sweden's Results



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Types of students' international mobility experience

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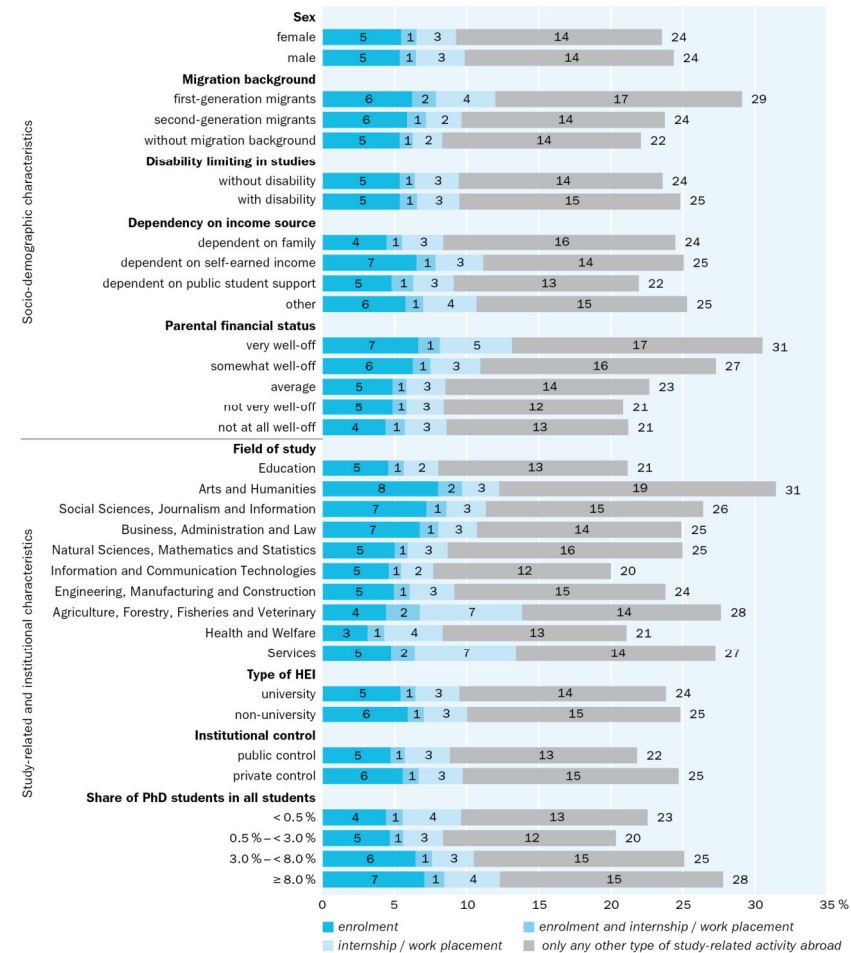


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Figure B10.4

Types of students' international mobility experience by student characteristics

Cross-country averages (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, I.3. No data: DE, ES, GE.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), AT, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 4.18 Have you done any internships (of at least one week, mandatory or voluntary) since you first entered higher education in #country? 5.6 Have you ever taken part in a temporary study period abroad since you first entered higher education in #country (e.g. #semester abroad)? 5.12 Have you ever been abroad for other study-related activities?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, RO.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

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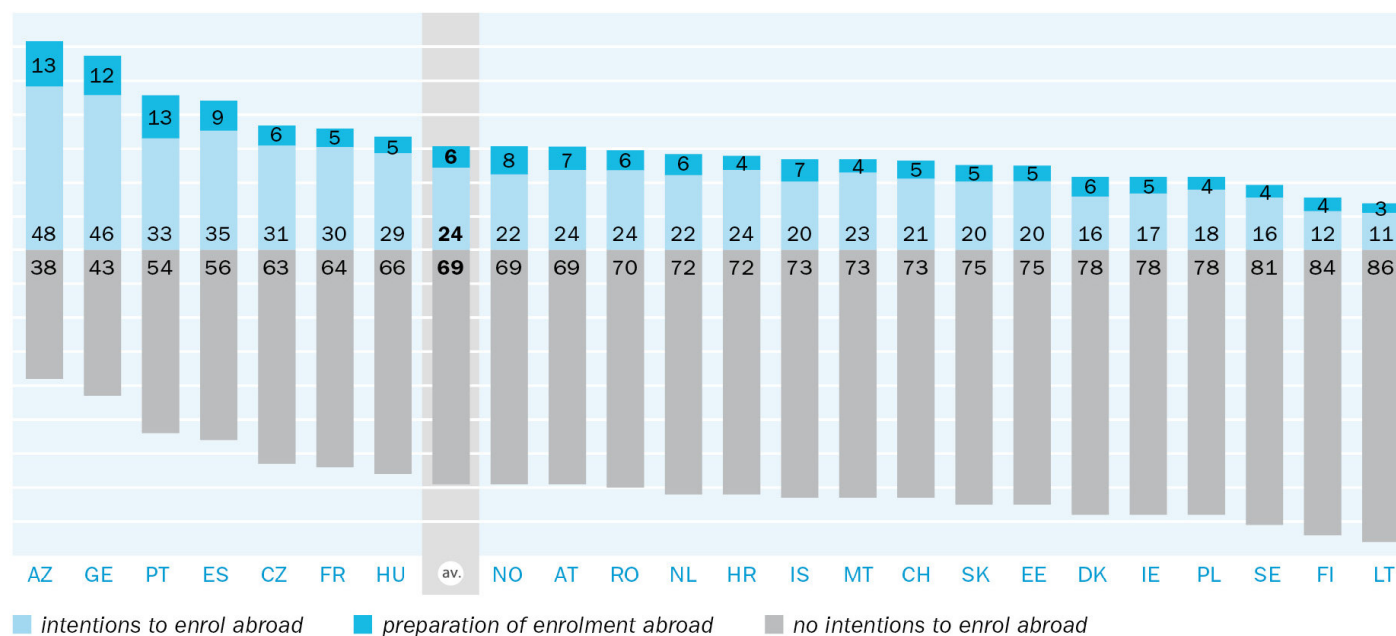
Students' intention to study abroad

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Figure B10.6 [↓](#)

Students' intention to study abroad for limited periods

Share among students without experience of studying abroad temporarily (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, I.10. **No data:** DE, LV.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 5.10 [Only students who have not done a temporary study period abroad yet] Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad: How would you best describe your intentions?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, DK.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

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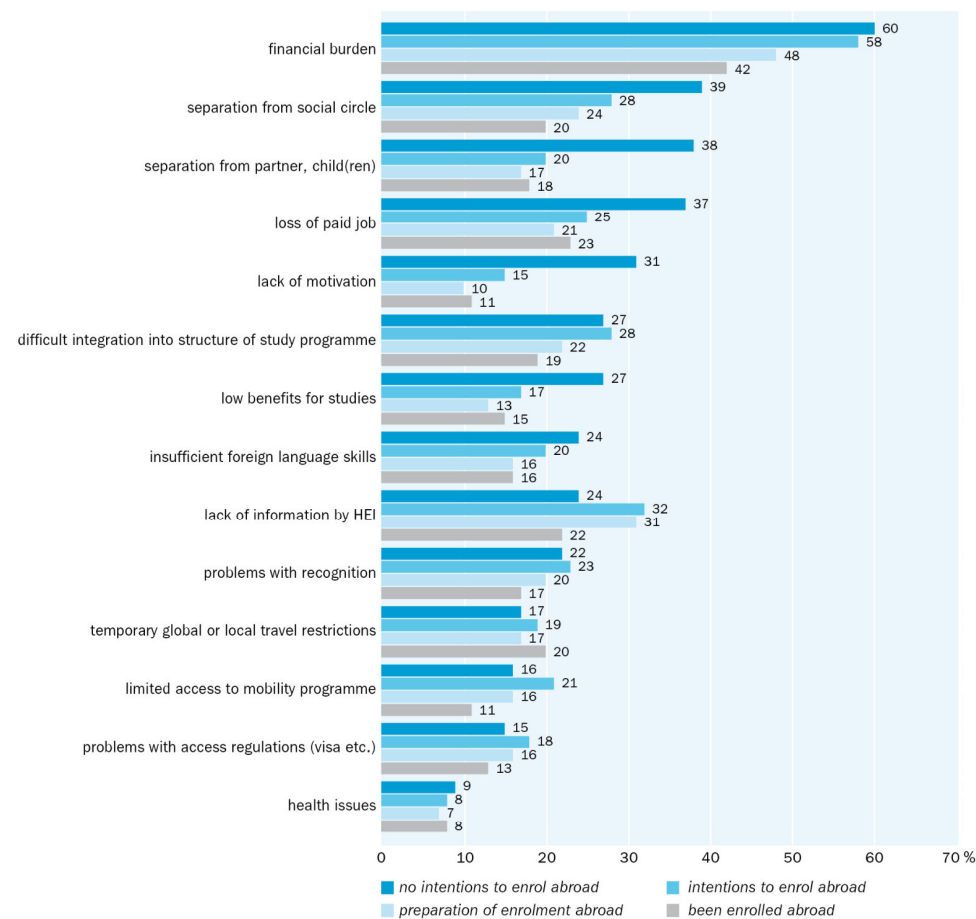
Obstacles to temporary enrolment abroad

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Figure B10.7 [↓](#)

Obstacles to temporary enrolment abroad by status of planning

Cross-country averages (in %), # = rank of obstacle within reference group



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, I.12, I.14, I.16, I.18. No data: DE, LV.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023)

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 5.11 To what extent are or were the following aspects an obstacle to you for enrolment abroad?

Note(s): Shares relate to the percentage within the respective reference group of students (e.g. those without intention to enrol abroad).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, NO.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

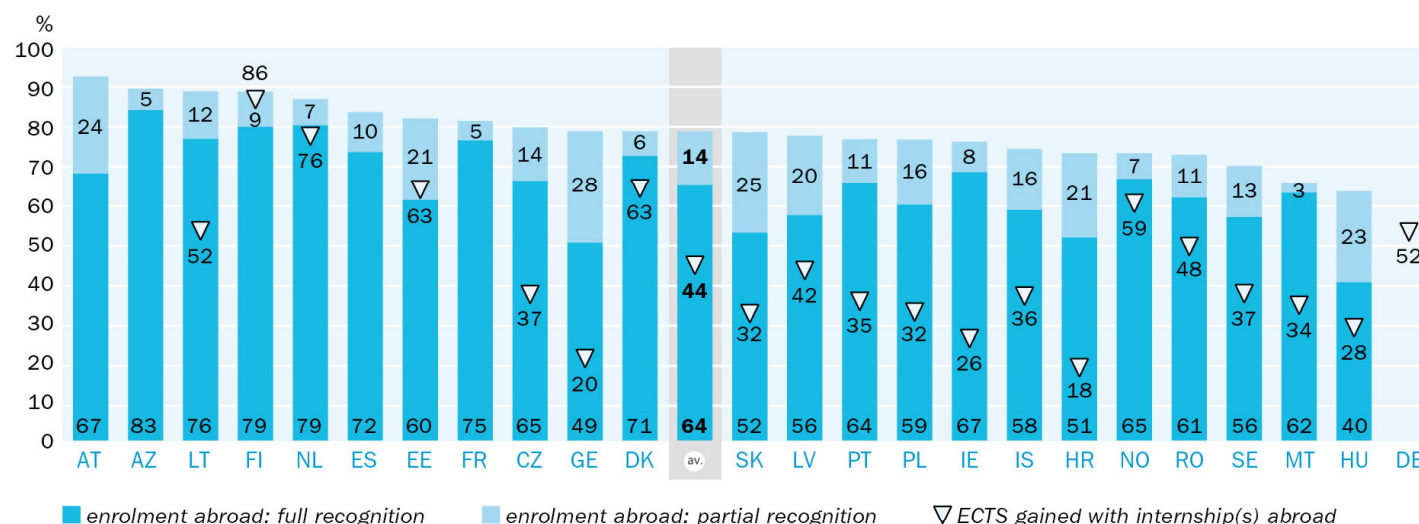
(Partial) Recognition of credits

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Figure B10.11 [↓](#)

(Partial) recognition of credits gained with study-related activity abroad

Share among students who have been abroad for the respective activity (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, I.8, I.25. **No data:** CH; AT, ES, FR (internship abroad); DE (temporary study period abroad). **Too few cases:** AZ (internship abroad)

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except DE (summer 2021), AT, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 5.9 [Only students who did a study period abroad] Were the credits (ECTS, competences, certificates) you gained in your most recent temporary study abroad period recognised towards your study programme in #country? 5.5 [If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18] Was your most recent internship abroad recognised in the form of ECTS towards your study programme in #country?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: SK.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

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The importance of study-related stays abroad in the transformation process of the German economy

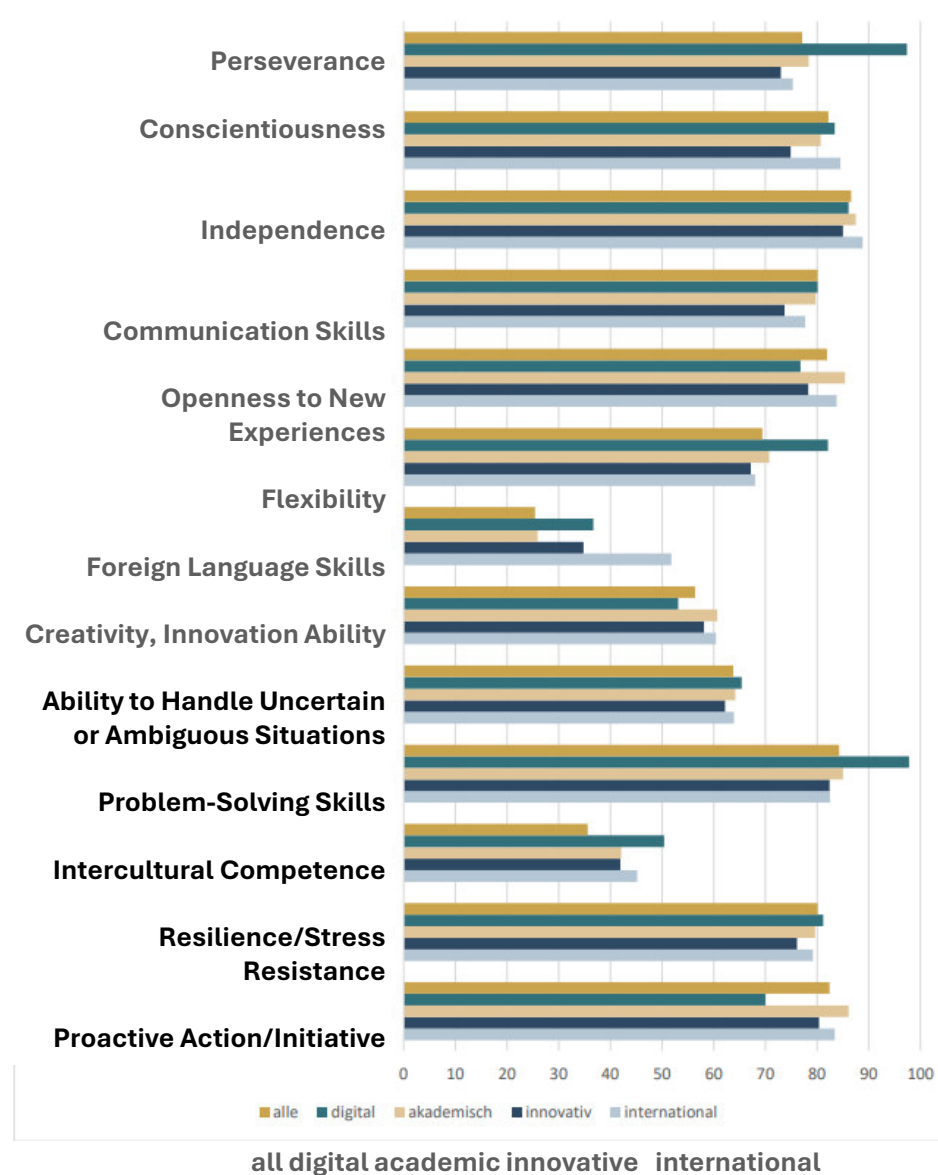
Results of a company survey IW study for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Competency	Literature Reference	Expected Effect
Perseverance	Maharaja, 2018	+
Conscientiousness	Zimmermann et al., 2021a	+
Independence	LSE/CFE, 2014; Potts, 2016	+
Communication Skills	EU, 2019; Farrugia/Sanger, 2017; Potts, 2015, 2016; LSE/CFE, 2014	+
Openness to New Experiences	AIFS, 2018; Farrugia/Sanger, 2017; Richter et al., 2021; Zimmermann/Neyer, 2013; Zimmermann et al., 2021a	+
Flexibility	Maharaja, 2018	+
Foreign Language Skills	Engel et al., 2009; EU, 2019; Farrugia/Sanger, 2017; IU/British Council, 2015; LSE/CFE, 2014; Potts, 2016	+
Creativity, Innovation Ability	Jones, 2012; LSE/CFE, 2014; Maddux et al., 2013; Potts, 2016	+
Ability to Handle Uncertain or Ambiguous Situations	Genkova/Kruse, 2021; Larcombe et al., 2023	+
Problem-Solving Skills	Farrugia/Sanger, 2017; Jones, 2012; LSE/CFE, 2014; Potts, 2015, 2016	+
Intercultural Competence	AIFS, 2018; Engel et al., 2009; EU, 2019; Farrugia/Sanger, 2017; Fisher et al., 2022; Genkova/Kruse, 2021; IU/British Council, 2015; Jones, 2012; LSE/CFE, 2014; Maddux et al., 2013; Maharaja, 2018; Potts, 2016; Zimmermann et al., 2021b	+
Resilience/Stress Resistance	Jones, 2012; LSE/CFE, 2014; Zimmermann/Neyer, 2013	+
Proactive Action/Initiative	Zimmermann et al., 2024a	+

Evaluation of Competencies of Higher Education Graduates by Type of Company

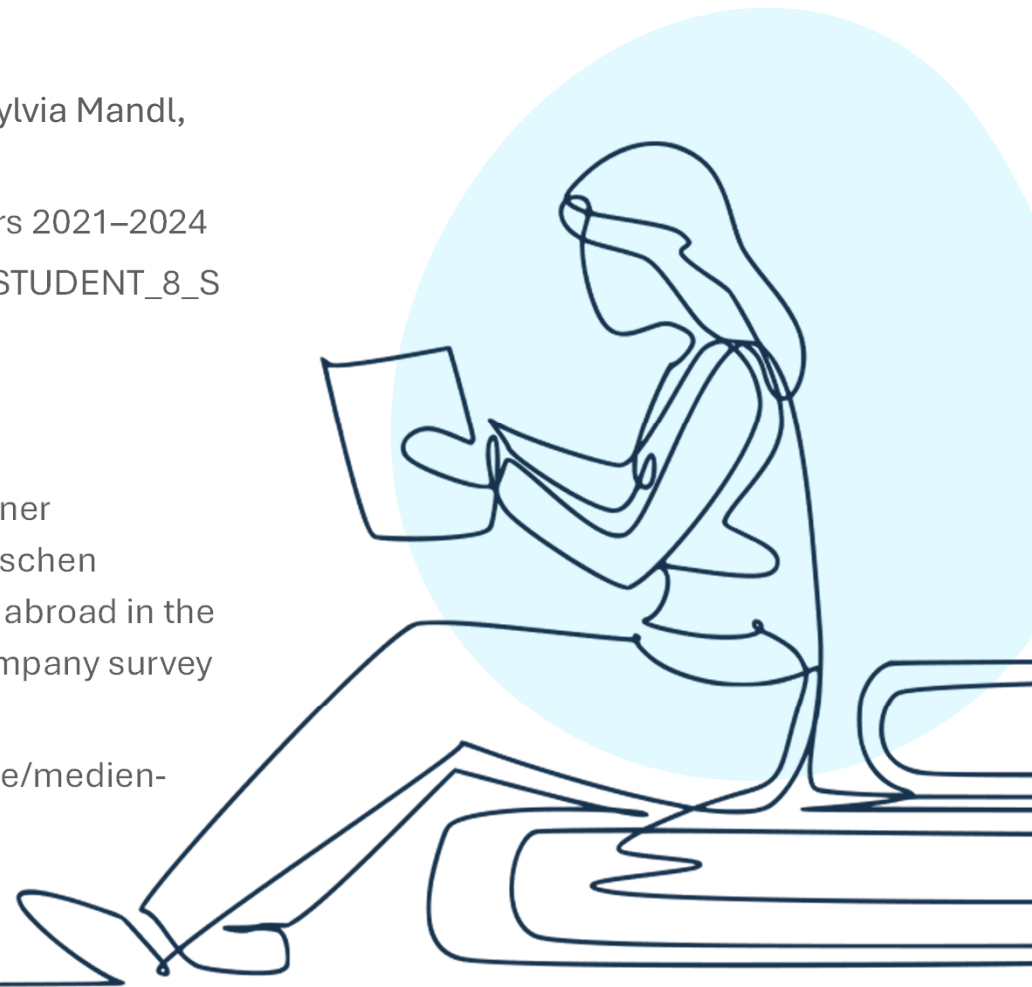
Proportion of companies for which each criterion is particularly important (sum of response options "7 very important" and "6" on a 7-point scale),

Question: "How important are the following competencies for the selection of university graduates in your company?"



Kristina Hauschildt (Ed.), Christoph Gwosć, Hendrik Schirmer, Sylvia Mandl, Cordelia Menz (2024), Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe. EUROSTUDENT 8 Synopsis of Indicators 2021–2024
https://www.eurostudent.eu/download_files/documents/EUROSTUDENT_8_Synopsis_of_Indicators.pdf

Die Bedeutung studienbezogener Auslandsaufenthalte im Transformationsprozess der deutschen Wirtschaft Ergebnisse einer Unternehmensbefragung IW-Studie für den Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienst (DAAD) [The importance of study-related stays abroad in the transformation process of the German economy Results of a company survey IW study for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)]
https://eu.daad.de/medien/eu.daad.de.2016/dokumente/service/medien-und-publikationen/studien-und-abwertungen/unternehmensbefragung_2024_25_daad_iw.pdf



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