

Encouragement of Internationalisation at the Higher Education. International Practice and Milestones for Lithuania

Project financed by Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science
Project implemented by ISM University of Management and Economics
and external experts

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Project tasks

- Analyse foreign practice in internationalisation of higher education;
- Perform analysis of Lithuanian higher education (legal acts, marketing, mobility, cooperation);
- Raise the key problems and identify possible alternatives for development of internationalisation in Lithuanian higher education.

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Contents of the study

- Conception of internationalisation;
- Encouragement of internationalisation at European level;
- Initiatives for internationalisation of higher education;
- Survey of European higher education systems (Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, UK);
- Analysis of Lithuanian legal acts;
- Empiric research;
- Conclusions and recommendations.

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Main documents

- Documents of the Bologna process
- EU initiatives;
- OECD studies;
- EUA documents;
- Lithuanian legal acts concerning higher education;
- Data from Lithuanian Socrates agency and Lithuanian Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

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Empiric research. Participants

- 15 universities;
- 4 colleges with highest student mobility rates (data by Lithuanian Socrates agency).

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Empiric research. Target groups

Questionnaires:

- Students who participated in mobility programmes;
- Students who did not participate in mobility programmes;
- Teachers, administrating staff who participated in mobility programmes;
- Teachers, administrating staff who did not participate in mobility programmes.

Open interview:

- Heads of international relations offices.

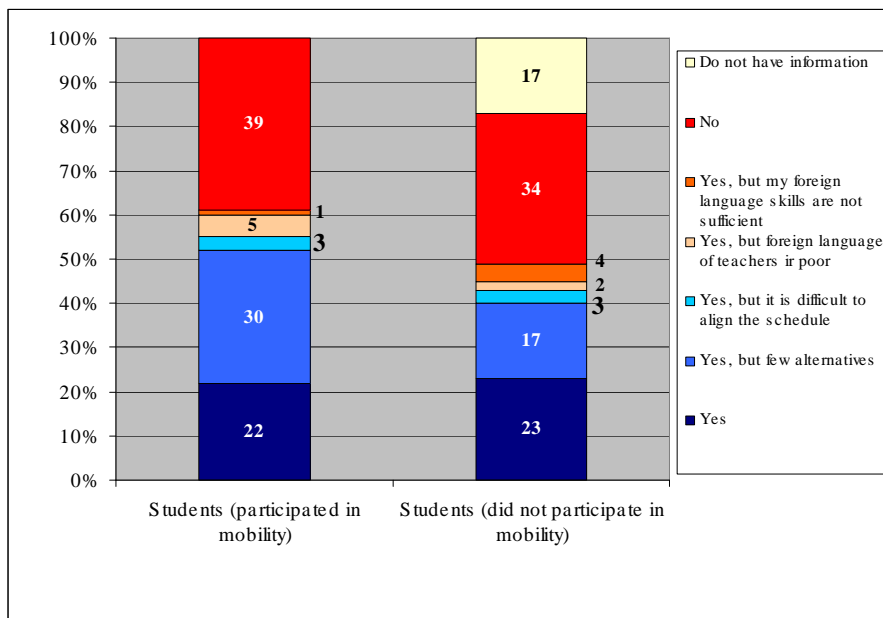
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Tasks of the research

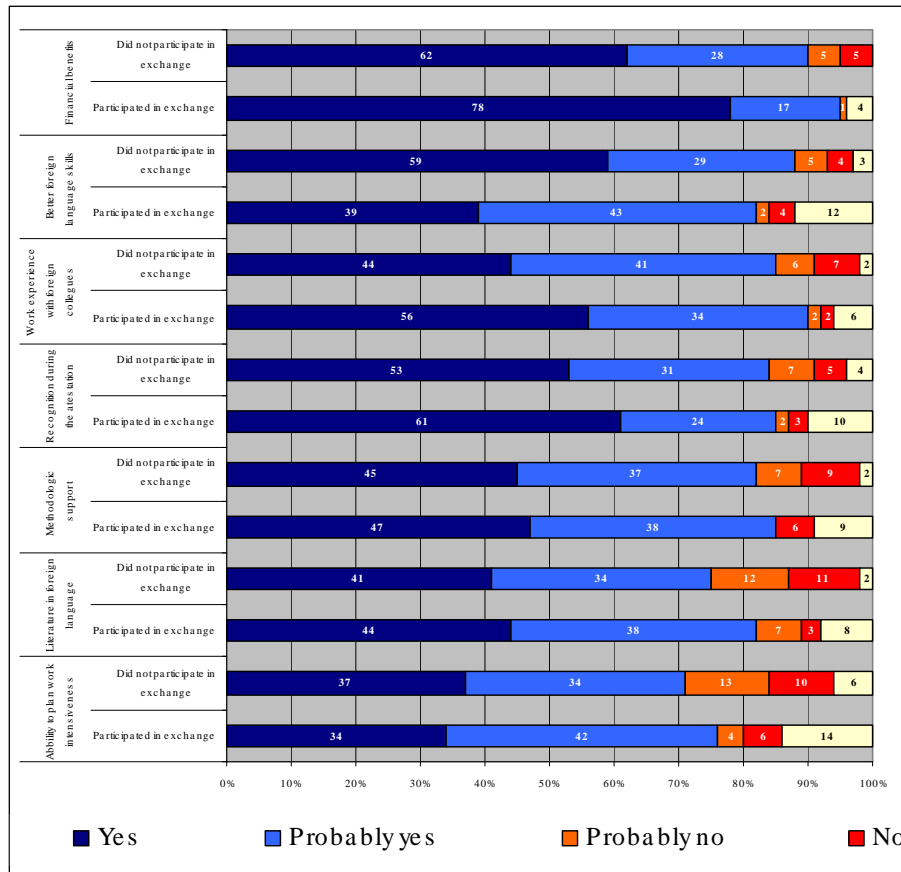
- Identify internationalisation level in higher education institutions;
- Identify main barriers for internationalisation;
- Identify factors that would stimulate internationalisation;
- Priorities and stereotypes of respondents concerning participation in mobility programmes.

Findings: Internationalisation in Lithuanian higher education institutions

Do you have sufficient opportunities to choose subjects in foreign language at your HE institution?

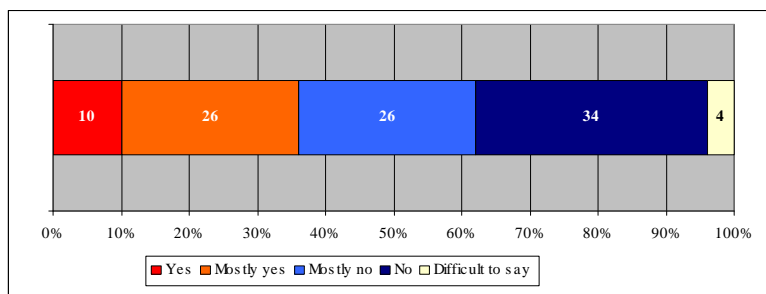


What would encourage you more actively work in foreign language (teachers)?

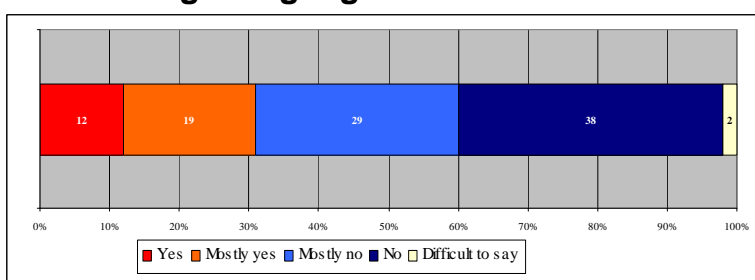


Findings: barriers for internationalisation

Why you do not participate in mobility programmes (students who did not participate)?
Are financial resources provided by mobility programme sufficient?

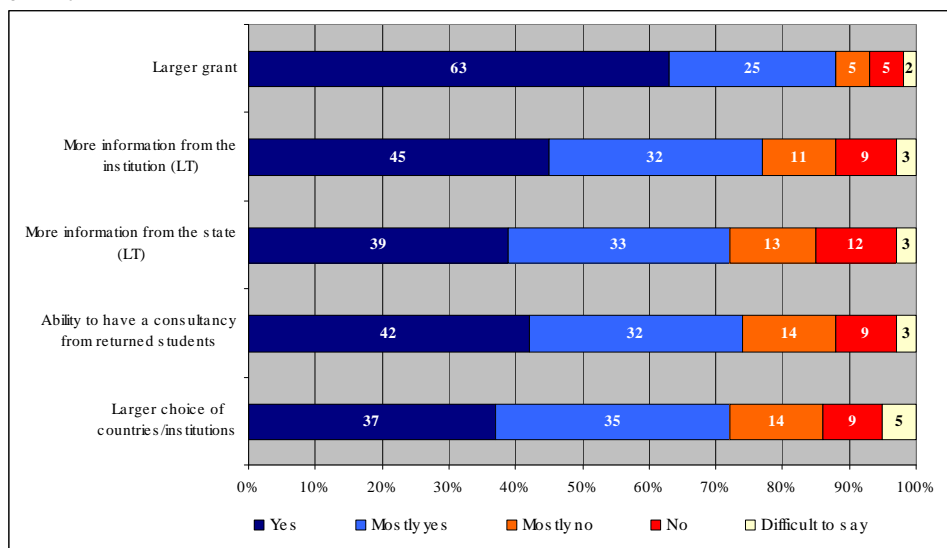


Are your skills of foreign language sufficient?



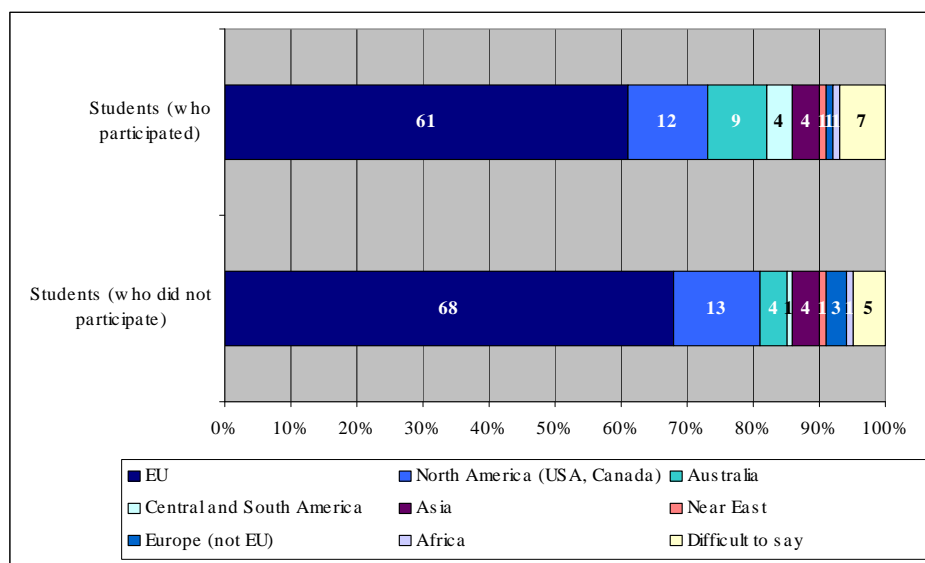
Findings: barriers for internationalisation

What would encourage your participation in mobility programme (students who did not participate)?



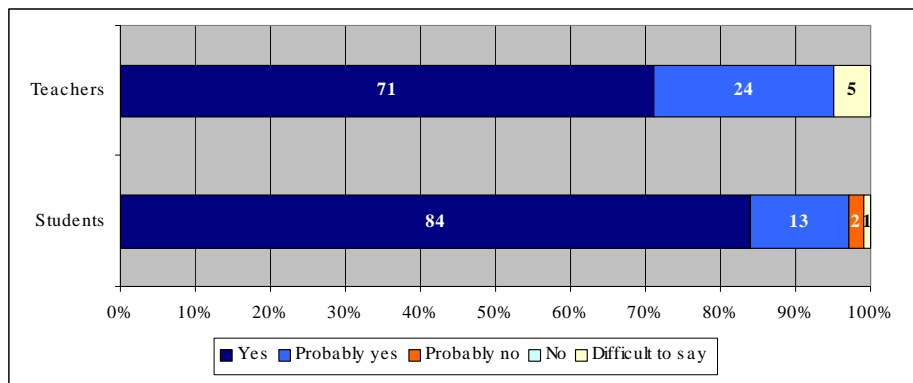
Findings: priorities for mobility destination

What region would you prefer to choose if you had to participate in a mobility programme

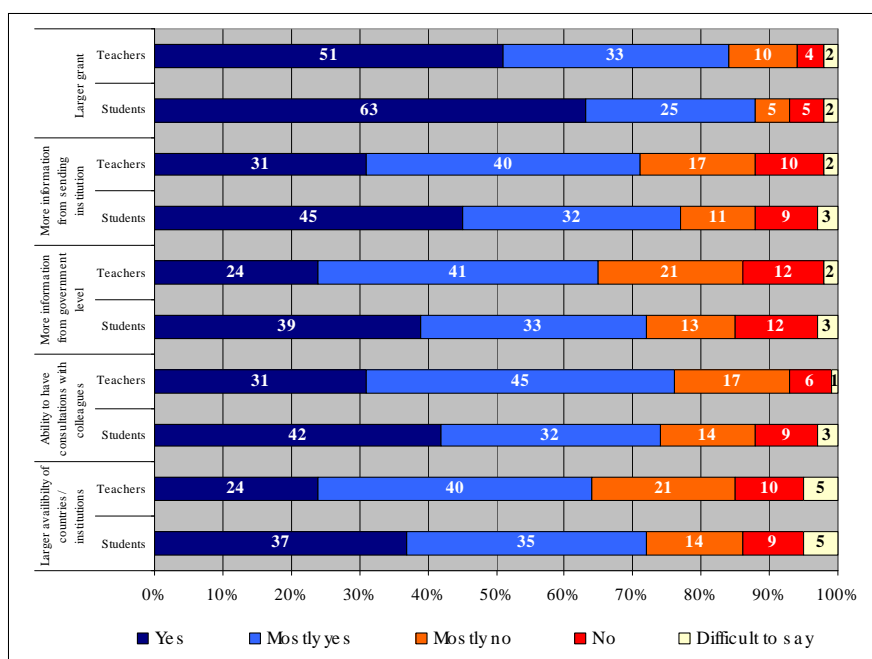


Findings: priorities for mobility destination

Would you like to participate in mobility programme one more time?
(Students and teachers who participated in mobility programme)

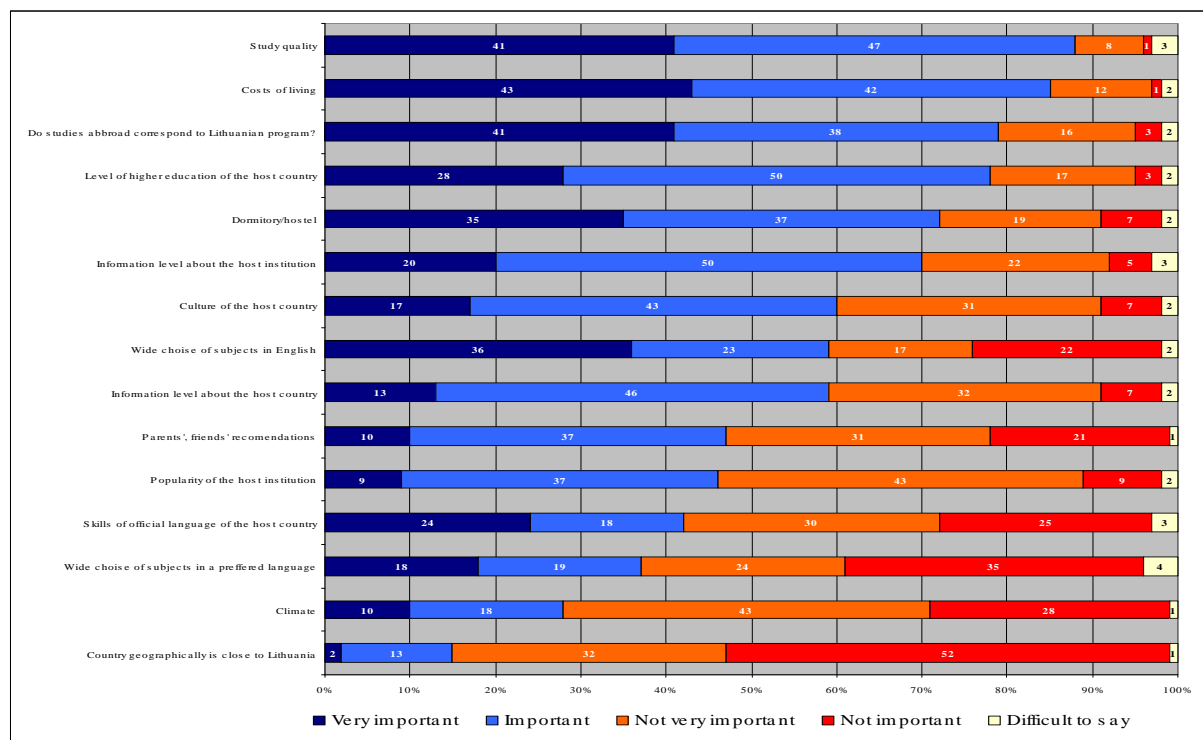


Findings: what actions would encourage mobility? (respondents who did not participate in mobility programmes)



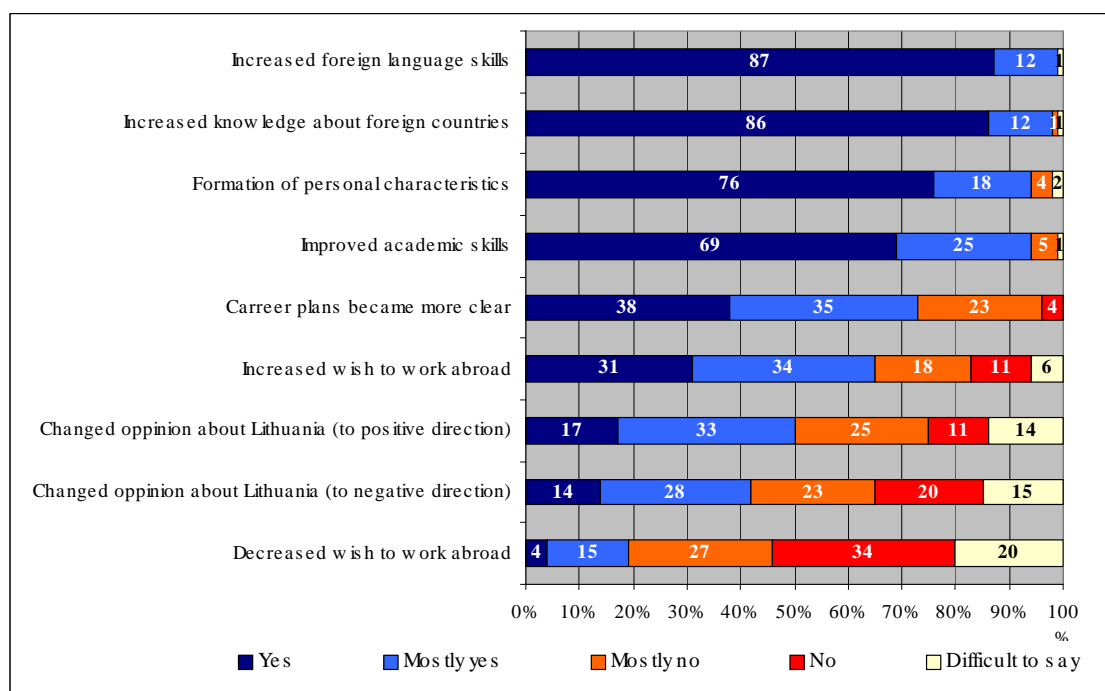
Findings: criteria for a country of destination

(students who participated in mobility programmes)



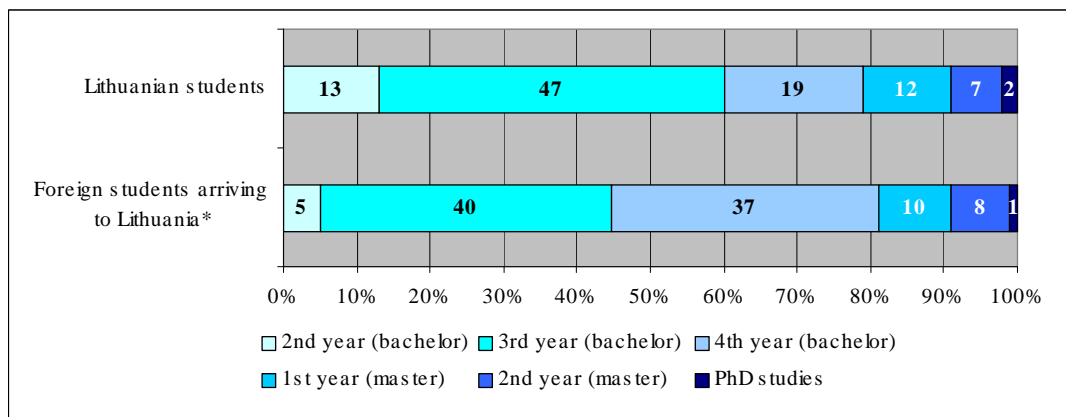
Findings: benefits influenced by mobility

(students who participated in mobility programmes)



Mobility tendencies

In what study year did you participate in the mobility programme?



* Source: Socrates agency

Conclusions

- Lithuania shows quite good numbers of student participation in mobility programmes but the number of arriving foreign students is still too low.
- Such a disproportion in the future may become a barrier for sustainable growth because foreign partners may start limit numbers of Lithuanian students in their institutions.
- Larger number of foreign students in Lithuania would create more international environment for local students.



Conclusions

- Larger amount of arriving foreign students may be seen as good opportunity to tune national study subjects with foreign ones, also have more intensive exchange of teachers.
- The research showed that Lithuanian HE institutions in most cases have cooperation contracts with the EU partners. Unless the EU was identified as preferred region for a mobility period of more than 60% students, still quite a significant number of respondents would like to choose the USA or Australia.

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Conclusions

- As most significant benefits of participation in mobility programme students identify improved skills of foreign language, academic skills and wider outlook.
- The research also showed that an absolute majority of respondents would like to have a work practice during the mobility period as well. Unless from this year Erasmus programme foresees such an opportunity it should be advertised more intensively.
- An important aspect is the recognition of such a practice as a study period.
- Following practice of some European countries, mobility should become an obligatory part of the study period. But also very important step to achieve this is to make an obligation for students to have some subjects in English at Lithuanian higher education institutions.

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Conclusions

- Unless not sufficient financial budget was identified as one of the key barriers for student mobility, only small part of them have enough information about alternative sources of finance as credit loan.
- The research showed that only small number of students would intend to take a loan even if conditions of such an option were more attractive.
- Quite a large number of students who did not participate in mobility programme have an opinion that living cost abroad are much higher then they actually are. Most of students who participated in a mobility programme mentioned that the grant was sufficient or almost sufficient to cover the main expenses like food and hostel.



Conclusions

- General conclusion of the research about student mobility is that closer institutional cooperation (including joint programmes), more effective distribution of information and acceptance of abroad received credits are one of the key factors for successful development of mobility.



Conclusions. International environment

- Higher education should become one of the most important accents representing Lithuania at international arena;
- Representation of Lithuanian HE is too low. More intensive distribution of information and marketing is necessary;
- Support of government for internationalisation processes at institutional level.

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Conclusions. National context

- Update of legal acts is necessary;
- Update of credit system and study periods are important for comparability and recognition purposes at international arena;
- Inter-institutional cooperation and joint-degrees as one of key elements for mobility;

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