



REALISE

Realising the potential
of the international mobility
of staff in higher education



Erasmus+

CONCLUSIONS OF THE POLICY DIALOGUE

OUTPUT 5

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Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, France (project coordinator)
Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany
Linköpings Universitet, Sweden
Middlesex University, United Kingdom
Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal
Università degli studi di Catania, Italy
Universitat de Barcelona, Spain
Universiteit Gent, Belgium
Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia
Uniwersytet Warszawski, Poland

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Disclaimer

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CONCLUSION OF THE POLICY DIALOGUE



*Photo of the REALISE European Seminar “Improving the impact of the Erasmus+ staff mobility programme on individuals and institutions”
May 13th 2019, Brussels*



Preface

The main objectives of this output are to highlight the steps and actions undertaken by the partners to involve the relevant stakeholders and policy-makers in the project and to present the conclusions and recommendations issued from the consultations of stakeholders and policy dialogue with authorities. The partners also adopted some recommendations to enhance staff mobility provided by the Bologna Follow-Up Group Working Group on Mobility and Internationalisation (BFUG MG M&I) in its 2012-2015 report.

The target audience of these **Conclusions of the Policy Dialogue** consists of institutional staff of all partner universities and other institutions, involved in international staff mobility, as well as the representatives of the relevant stakeholders and policy-makers such as representatives from the National Agencies, Ministries of Education, EU Commission, etc.

The output is available on the project website (<https://realise-erasmusplus.fr/>). It will be sent to all actors involved in the policy dialogues, and is available on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform.

In this document, you will find a description of the actions undertaken by the partners to involve the relevant stakeholders and policy-makers in the policy dialogue and the main conclusions and recommendations provided by the actors involved at institutional, national and European level.

Policy dialogue actions

Throughout the project, all partner universities took part in conferences, meetings and other events to organise dialogue with relevant policy-makers and authorities and consultations with stakeholders. The total number of undertaken actions at different levels is 132. These actions reached more than 13000 stakeholders, more than 1500 institutions, about 300 representatives of the relevant authorities and 200 organisations. For more detailed statistics see **Annex 1**.

	Institutional level	National level	European level
Number of actions	65	35	32
Number of persons involved	1959	9092	2156
Number of institutions involved	15	384	1158
Number of representatives of authorities involved (persons)	135	71	127
Number of authorities involved (organisations)	14	60	119

Here are some examples of the actions undertaken at each level.

At institutional level, in the REALISE partner institutions:

- Meetings with Erasmus+ and international mobility coordinators ;
- Meetings with the Heads of Erasmus offices ;
- Mobility fairs ;
- Meeting at International Relations Offices ;
- Meetings at central level, e.g. with the Vice-Rector for Research and International Relations, HR Coordinator, researchers from the Unit for Quality and Evaluation ;
- Meetings with administrative international units ;
- Workshop sessions with HR, financial and IT units ;
- Annual Staff conferences ;
- Presentations and discussions with other universities, for instance with Umeå University and Falun-Borlänge University College in Sweden;
- etc.
-



At national level:

- National seminars organized by each partner university mostly in the form of a one-day conference presenting the project's outcomes and panel discussions ;
- Communication with the National Agencies for Academic Exchange, Erasmus+ National Agencies, Ministries of Higher Education, International Relations Offices Forum (IROs Forum), Fulbright Commission, DAAD. Involvement of the Erasmus+ Agency (Foundation for the Development of the System of Education) and IROs Forum as REALISE stakeholders ;
- Meeting with the Director of the Programme for Scientists at the National Agency for Academic Exchange ;
- National meeting of IROs Forum ;
- Swedish Council for Higher Education in Stockholm, including 10 different Swedish universities and university colleges as well as representatives from the Ministry of Education and some other authorities ;
- etc.

At European level:

- IROICA Conference - International Relations Officers' Network of the Association of European Life Science Universities - with the participation of representatives of many different EU higher education institutions, Wroclaw, 2018 (approx. 50 participants) ;
- EURIE Conference (Eurasia Higher Education Summit), Istanbul, 2019 (approx. 30 participants at the REALISE session, over 2000 participants from all over the world at the Conference) ;
- Presentation and discussion during the CLUSTER meeting at Grenoble Institute of Technology in 2017, among participants were 9 different European universities as well as ESTIEM, a European organisation for students in industrial engineering and management ;
- University Staff Training Weeks. During Ghent university staff training week in 2019 we asked about 100 IROs and Human Resources staff about their wishes to change staff mobility policies. The results are presented in **Annex 2** ;



- International Week, organized in 2019 by one of the associate partners from Poland, University of Applied Sciences in Nysa (approx. 25 participants) ;
- EURASIA E+ KA2 Capacity building ;
- DIRE MED E+ KA2 Strategic partnership ;
- REALISE final event 2019: European seminar “Improving the impact of the Erasmus+ staff mobility programme on individuals and institutions” ;
- etc.

Contribution to the adoption of Bologna Follow-Up Group recommendations

During the project, the recommendations to enhance staff mobility provided by the Bologna Follow-Up Group’s working group on mobility and internationalisation (BFUG MG M&I) in its 2012-2015 report were discussed during the preparation of the REALISE Toolbox. “Tool 2.4: Incoming staff data collection” (as referenced in the REALISE Handbook of Good Practices) was based on the Bologna Follow-Up Group recommendations and was successfully tested at Jagiellonian University (JU – Associate Partner). In January 2018, JU launched a database available on the website http://www.international.iro.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/registration for registering international guests (staff members and PhD students) who visit the university for different purposes, including the Erasmus+ Programme.



Key messages and recommendations

As a result of all actions undertaken for the policy dialogue, the following key messages and recommendations were developed.

Although we may distinguish recommendations made at institutional, national and European-level, the REALISE consortium stresses that a series of actions must be undertaken in a coherent manner between these different levels of decision in order to initiate dynamic initiatives acting in favour of a better recognition of Erasmus+ staff mobility, increase its quality, and thus contribute to the international outreach of the European Higher Education system as a whole.

Key messages and recommendations – at institutional level

- Improve the institutional recognition and encouragement of staff mobility, make it formal:
 - Improve cooperation between the university units and especially with Human Resources offices to raise awareness about the added-value of staff mobility and to increase its recognition;
 - Create a working group on recognition of international staff mobility;
 - Implement staff mobility in the professional career development plan for all staff members;
 - Reward participation in staff mobility.
- Increase funding and restructure it:
 - Increase the amount of grants;
 - Encourage the participants financially, by offering to cover expenses not covered by the Erasmus+ grants for instance;
 - Assign specific funding to cover extra costs;
 - Increase financial support for hosting institutions to improve the welcoming of international staff members;
 - Increase funding for the preparation of outgoing staff as well as for the promotion and the dissemination of the outcomes of staff mobilities;
 - Fund research and conferences.
- Simplify the mobility requirements and application procedures:
 - Promote (more widely) the possibility for teachers-researchers to apply for **combined mobility** in order to reduce the minimum number of hours of teaching required;
 - Allow and encourage mobilities in pairs (including professors/administrative staff pairs);
 - Make the application process paperless.



- Organise data collection of incoming and outgoing staff:
 - Design and implement a special mobility tool to register incoming and outgoing staff;
 - Use eQuATIC tool to determine qualitative partnerships. Every university gathers a lot of data about mobility;
 - analyzing this data can show the quality of your partnerships.
- Develop international mobility – or adopt an institutional internationalization strategy that promotes staff mobility:
 - Transform the way staff mobility is organized into a system based on constructive mobility, organized around a general strategy. This is a deep cultural change in HEIs' culture.
- Strengthen the communication and cooperation between the institutional units concerning staff mobility:
 - In most cases, the International Relations Offices (IROs), HR divisions, IT division, legal affairs and top management/central administrative level can work together to promote staff mobility and improve its recognition.
- Improve staff mobility promotion and dissemination:
 - Run workshops on staff mobility as part of institutional events to reach more target audience. Staff mobility must be presented at institutional events;
 - Invite staff to present their experience by selecting key questions and themes for them to address. These questions help staff understand the added-value of staff mobility;
 - Use the IMotion platform to promote Staff Weeks and Job Shadowing at your institution;
 - Make staff mobility positive and rewarding, by involving staff in sharing their experience, but also by associating the Heads of Offices/Faculties;
 - Organize the dissemination process to collect the feedback from participants and use their personal experience to motivate and prepare other staff members to go abroad.
- Improve the preparation of outgoing staff:
 - Provide staff with practical information, useful tips, language courses, information about the host university;
 - Organize tandems to prepare staff for a mobility.
- Improve welcoming of incoming staff:
 - Ensure that IRO is informed of the staff welcomed in your institution;
 - Organize welcome activities (welcome meeting or welcome meal);
 - Take advantage of the presence of visiting staff to organize an IRO breakfast/event;
 - Provide a small welcome booklet (accommodation, transport, restaurants);
 - Give information on Campus life/Campus activities.

Key messages and recommendations – at national level

Putting together recommendations at national level came with a significant difficulty: national policies and regulations are radically different from country to country.

Thus, general key messages are listed below as they represent, in the REALISE project partners' opinion, good incentives to:

- enhance the recognition of staff mobility at national level;
- improve the quality of mobility activities;
- increase the number of beneficiaries.

Moreover, such incentives can help boost European Higher Education systems' international outreach.

- Launch initiatives that help include international mobility in the career advancement systems in place at national level (for instance through yearly evaluation of university staff, making it mandatory for a tenure position in a Higher Education Institution, etc.);
- Implement national funding or co-funding for international staff mobility activities:
 - Include the internationalization of the national Higher Education system as a strategic aim, and clearly state staff mobility as a lever to enlarge the international outreach of the country;
 - Implement a co-funding system to help Higher Education institutions cover the extra-costs related to staff mobility;
 - Launch a national program as an incentive for Higher Education Institutions to improve the welcoming of international staff and/or to organize events such as Staff Training Weeks, as it can play a key part in the 'internationalization-at-home' process and can enhance the country's international outreach;
- Include international staff mobility as a criterion used for national evaluation campaigns of HEIs.

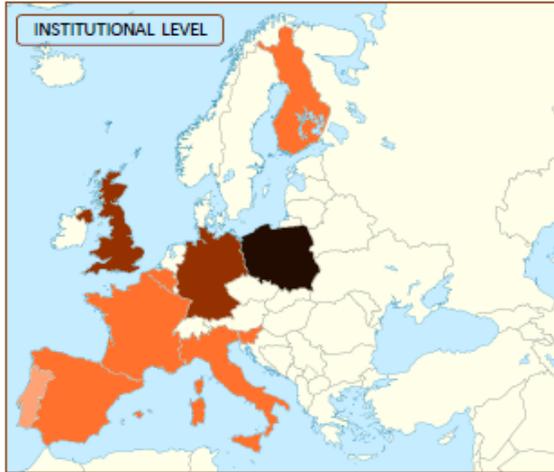
Key messages and recommendations – at European level

Given the significant differences between national regulations and national recognition systems applied to the career advancement of Higher Education Institutions' staff, the European Union is a key actor in the harmonization process of the European Higher Education Area as a whole, and this must fully include staff mobility and career policy.

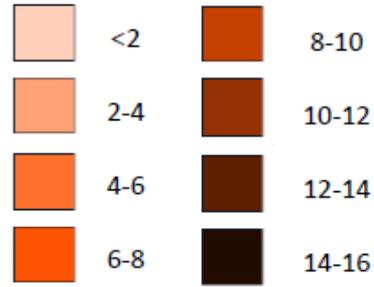
- Although the European Union and the European Commission may not force Governments to include staff mobility recognition in their national policy, it is essential to encourage Member States to improve staff mobility by giving guidelines and incentives, in keeping with what the Bologna Process Follow-Up Group on Mobility and Internationalization (BFUG MG M&I) initiated in its 2012-2015 report.
- It might be worth reconsidering the rules of the Erasmus+ programme that apply to Staff Mobility:
 - Define Training more accurately (for STT mobilities) so that HEIs' HR and top-management can identify more easily the added-value of staff mobility;
 - Give the synergies between teaching and research the importance they deserve: Teaching and Research cannot be differentiated, as most professors in Europe are Researchers and Teachers at the same time, combined mobility should be possible to take this reality into consideration. It can also be a significant added-value to the quality of mobility in HEIs which are by nature institutions of both academia and research;
 - 8 hours of teaching in 2 to 5 days (general duration of an STA mobility for Teaching) is sometimes impossible, this requirement should be reconsidered (and adapted) all the more as "teaching" can take on many different forms;
 - The European Commission could produce leaflets aiming at promoting funding opportunities for final users, hence produce a leaflet for teaching, administrative and technical staff who wish to participate in the Erasmus+ programme (where to find opportunities, funding, etc.);
 - Mobility Tool+ is a great tool for HEIs to manage their outgoing staff mobilities, but it should allow host HEIs to view the flows of incoming staff as they are already registered in the database by the sending HEIs;
 - Information and statistical data about the Participants Reports should be made available earlier than the time of submission of the KA103 Final Reports, so that the HEIs can use the data and implement improvement measures on a timely manner.



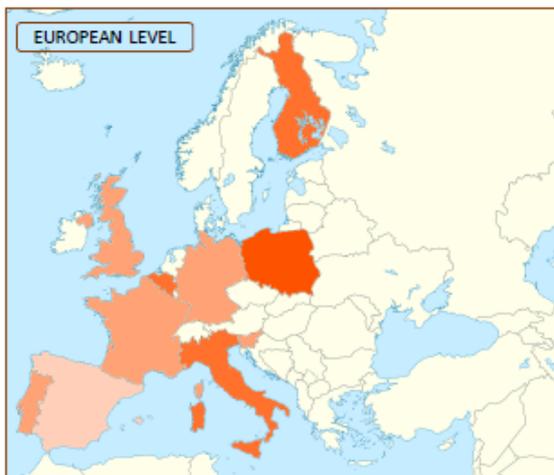
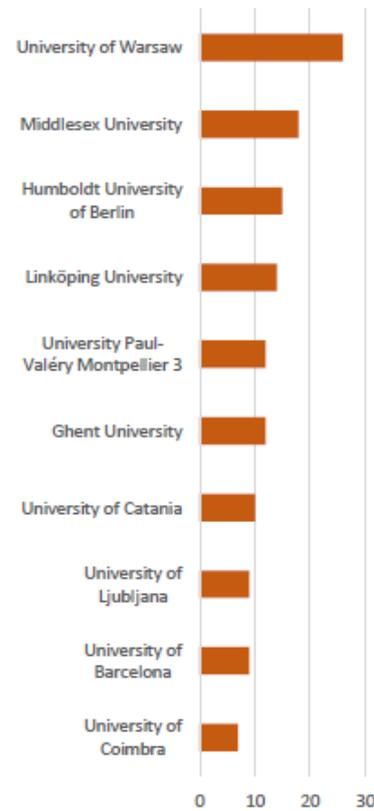
Annex 1 – Mapping of Policy Dialogue actions undertaken by the REALISE Partnership



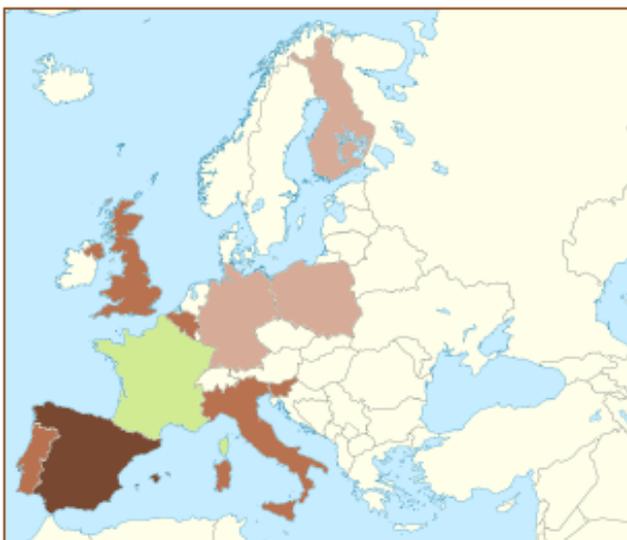
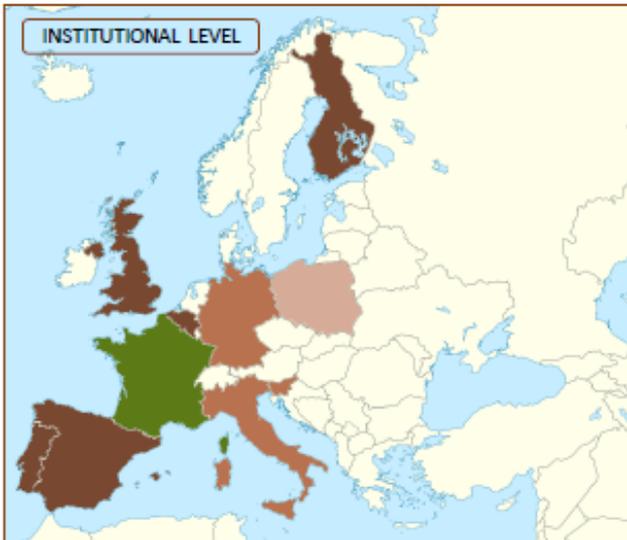
Number of policy dialogue actions*



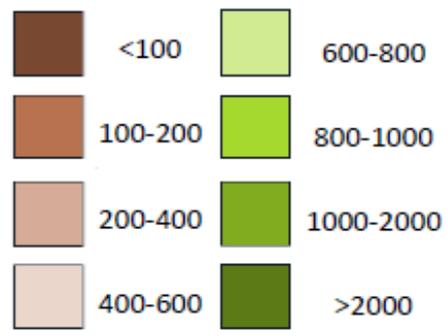
Total number of policy dialogue actions



*during the time of the project 2016-2019, each country represents the university situated in it



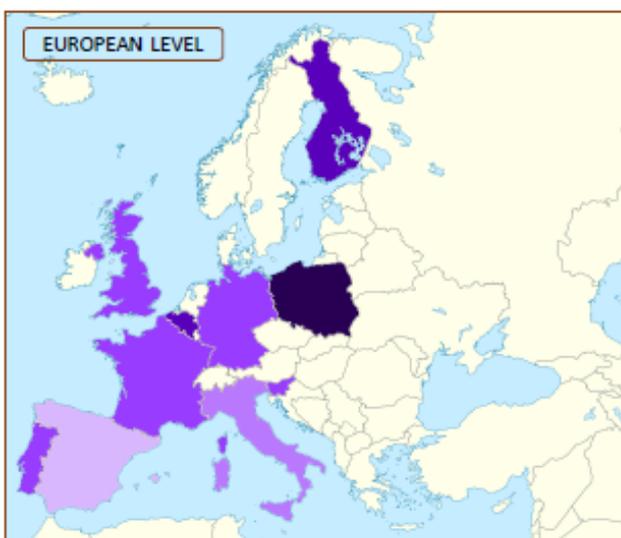
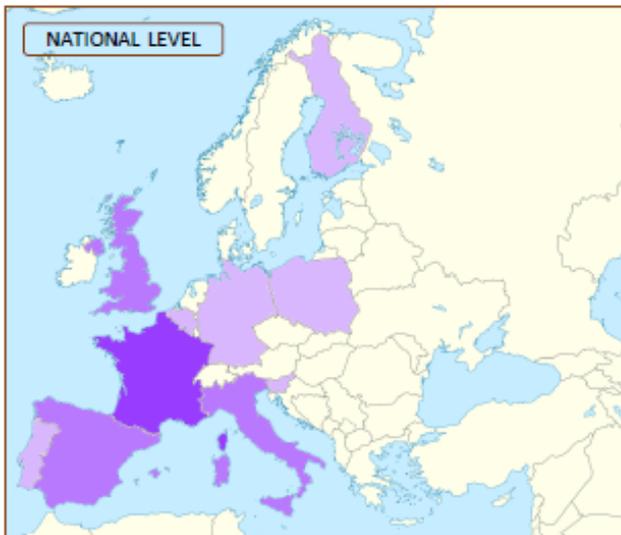
Number number of stakeholders and representatives of authorities involved*



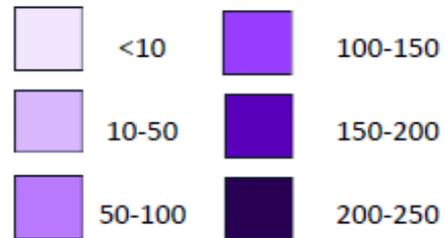
Total number of stakeholders and representatives of authorities involved



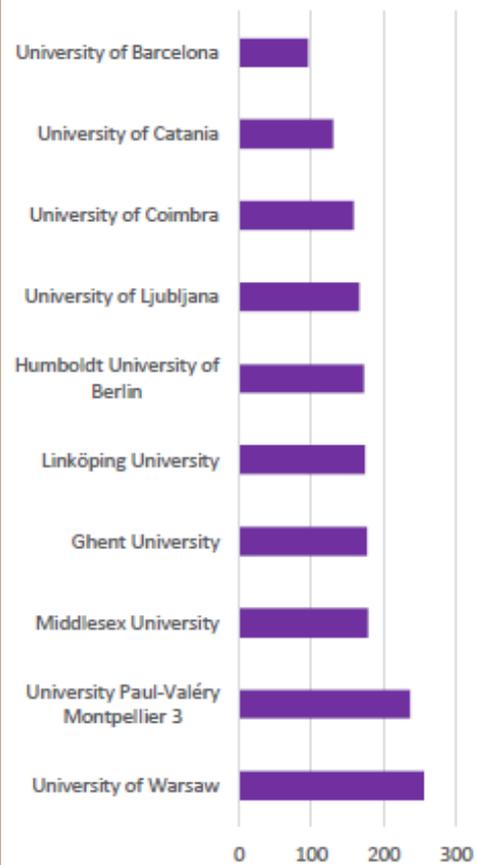
* in policy dialogue actions during the time of the project 2016-2019, each country represents the university situated in it



Number of institutions, authorities and policymakers involved*



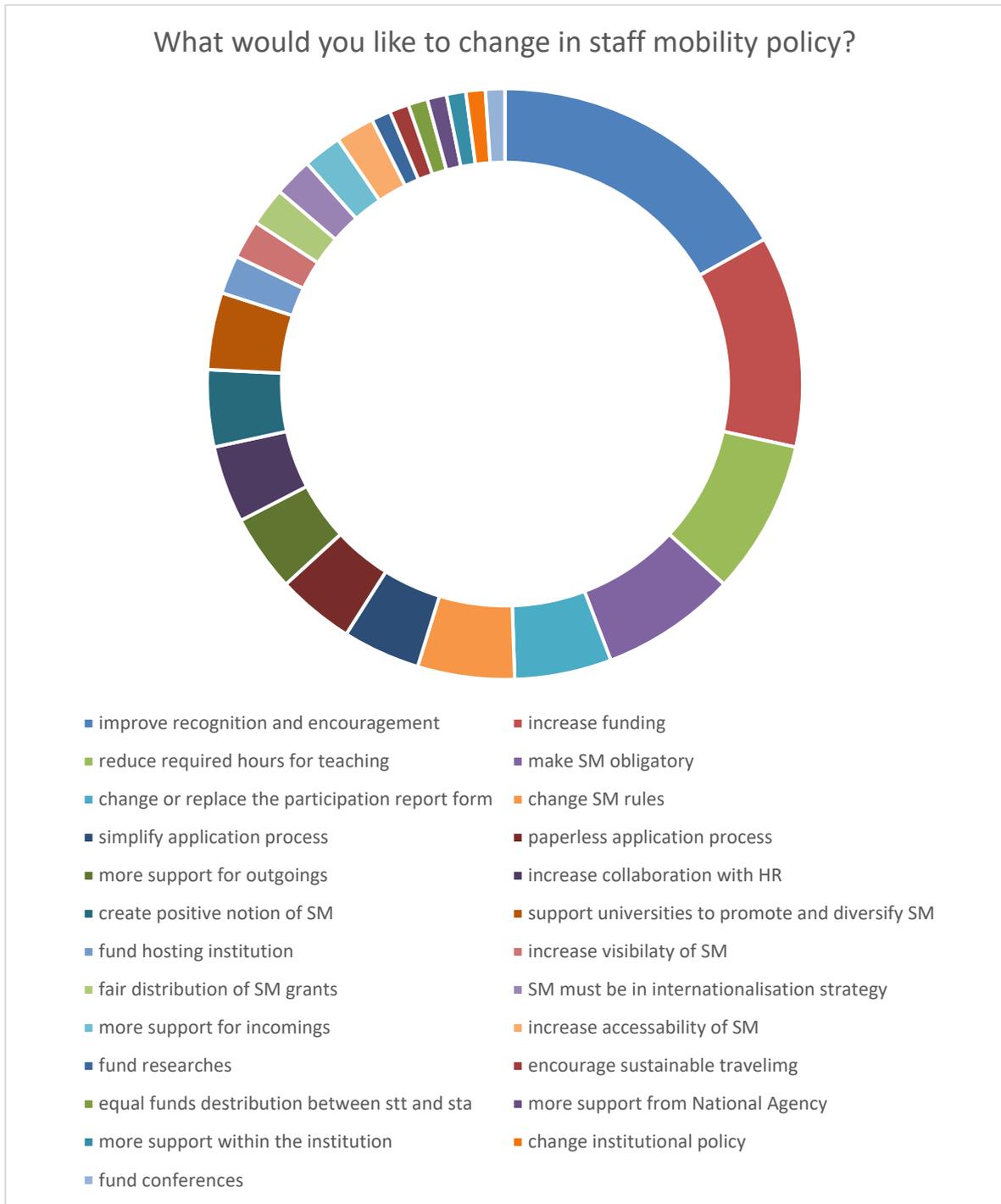
Total number of institutions and authorities and policymakers involved



* in policy dialogue actions during the time of the project 2016-2019, each country represents the university situated in it



Annex 2 - Questioning the IROs during the Ghent University Staff Training Week in May 2019.



98 participants to the Staff Training Week “Staff Mobility in the Spotlight” (trainees and trainers) were questioned, 96 recommendations were collected and analysed.

ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

Belgium :

- ARES – Académie de Recherche de d'Enseignement Supérieur
- FKA – Flanders Knowledge Area

France :

- Université de Bretagne Occidentale
- Université de Cergy-Pontoise
- Université François-Rabelais Tours
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- University of Applied Sciences in Nysa
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