



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 22 September 2014

Erasmus Impact Study confirms EU student exchange scheme boosts employability and job mobility

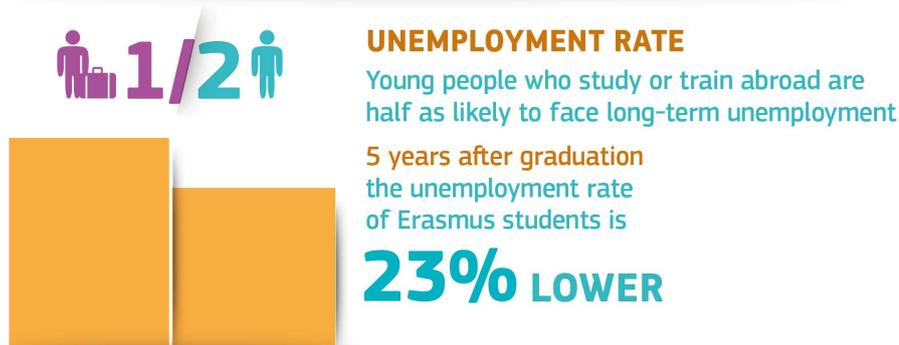
Young people who study or train abroad not only gain knowledge in specific disciplines, but also strengthen key transversal skills which are highly valued by employers. [A new study](#) on the impact of the European Union's Erasmus student exchange programme shows that graduates with international experience fare much better on the job market. They are half as likely to experience long-term unemployment compared with those who have not studied or trained abroad and, five years after graduation, their unemployment rate is 23% lower. The study, compiled by independent experts, is the largest of its kind and received feedback from nearly 80 000 respondents including students and businesses.

EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

ERASMUS STUDENTS



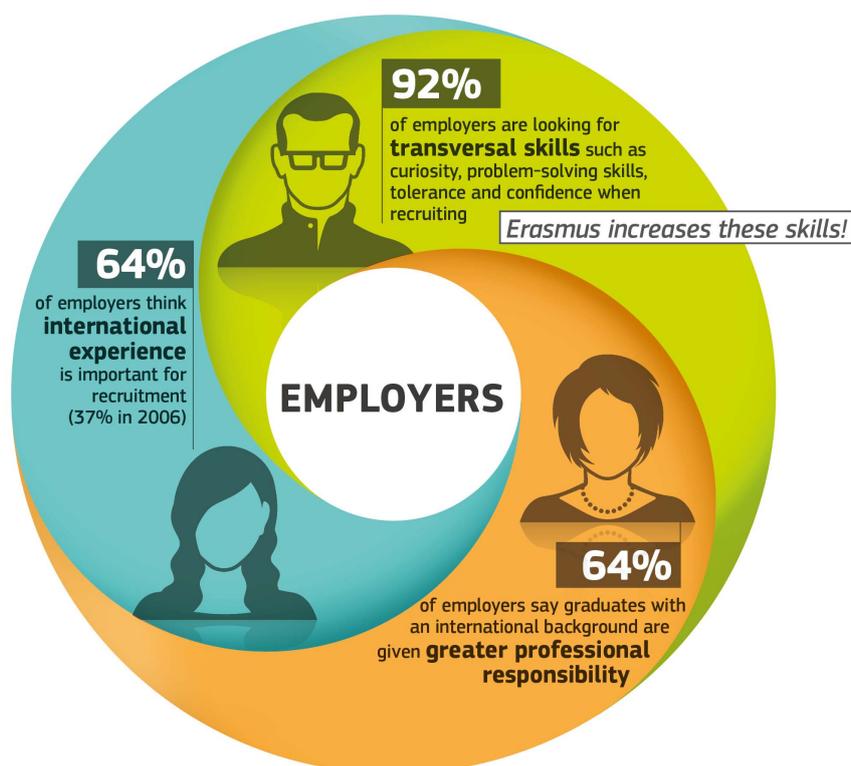
of Erasmus students study or train abroad to enhance their employability abroad



"The findings of the Erasmus Impact study are extremely significant, given the context of unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment in the EU. The message is clear: if you study or train abroad, you are more likely to increase your job prospects. The new Erasmus+ programme will offer EU grants to four million people between 2014 and 2020, allowing them to experience life in another country through studies, training, teaching or

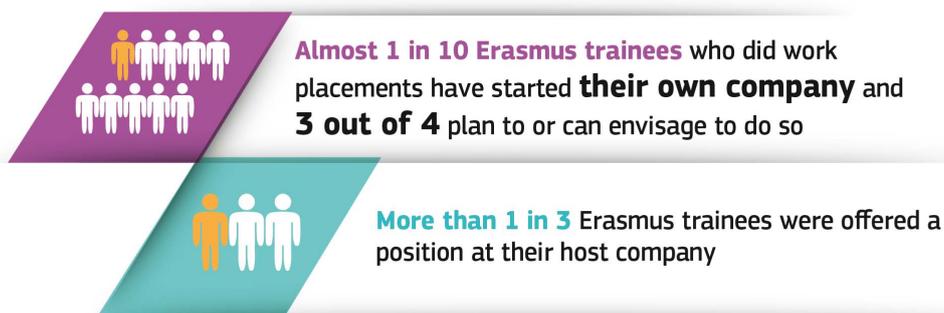
volunteering," said Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth.

EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



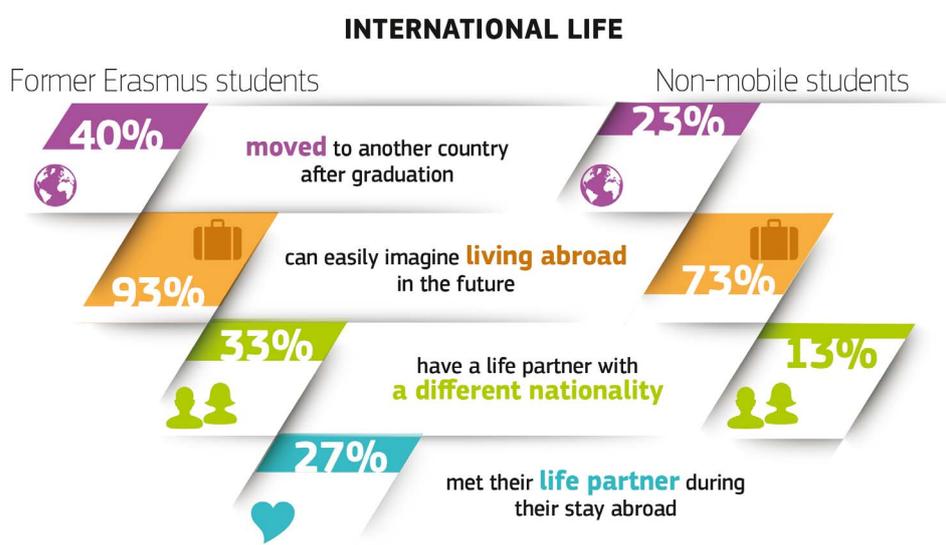
The new study shows that 92% of employers are looking for personality traits boosted by the programme such as tolerance, confidence, problem-solving skills, curiosity, knowing one's strengths/weaknesses, and decisiveness when making a recruitment decision. Tests before and after exchange periods abroad reveal that Erasmus students show higher values for these personality traits, even before their exchange starts; by the time they come back, the difference in these values increases by 42% on average, compared with other students.

WORK PLACEMENT



Students benefitting from Erasmus funding can choose to study or take up a traineeship abroad. The report reveals that more than one in three Erasmus trainees is offered a position at the enterprise where they do their traineeship. Erasmus trainees are also more entrepreneurial than their stay-at-home counterparts: 1 in 10 has started their own company and more than 3 out of 4 plan to, or can imagine doing so. They can also expect faster career advancement; staff with international experience are given greater professional responsibility according to 64% of employers.

Erasmus not only improves career prospects, it also offers students broader horizons and social links. 40% have changed their country of residence or work at least once since graduation, almost double the number of those who were not mobile during studies. While 93% of students with international experience can imagine living abroad in the future, this is the case for only 73% of those who stay in the same country during their studies.



Former Erasmus students are also more likely to have transnational relationships: 33% of former Erasmus students have a partner of a different nationality, compared with 13% of those who stay home during their studies; 27% of Erasmus students meet their long-term partner while on Erasmus. On this basis, the Commission estimates that around one million babies are likely to have been born to Erasmus couples since 1987.

The new Erasmus+ programme will provide opportunities to go abroad for 4 million people, including 2 million higher education students and 300 000 higher education staff in the next seven years (2014-2020). In addition, the programme will fund 135 000 student and staff exchanges involving non-European partner countries. Erasmus+ will be even more accessible thanks to increased linguistic support, more flexible rules and additional support for people with special needs, from disadvantaged backgrounds or from remote areas.

Background

In its [strategy on the modernisation of higher education](#), the Commission highlighted the need to provide more opportunities for students to gain skills through study or training abroad. The EU target for overall student mobility is at least 20% by the end of the decade. Currently, around 10% of EU students study or train abroad with the support of

public and private means. Around 5% receive an Erasmus grant. (This figure is based on latest available data from Eurostat for 2011-12, which shows the number of graduates was over 5.35 million in the Erasmus participating countries and the number of Erasmus students was nearly 253 000).

The study combines both quantitative and qualitative research. Online surveys covered 34 countries (EU Member States, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey) and analysed responses from over 75 000 students and alumni, including over 55 000 who studied or trained abroad. In addition, 5,000 staff, 1 000 higher education institutions and 650 employers (55% SMEs) participated in online surveys. The qualitative study focuses on eight countries, diverse in terms of size and location: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain and the UK. It included site visits, interviews, focus groups and institutional workshops.

The Erasmus Impact Study was conducted by an independent consortium of experts led by Berlin-based specialists CHE Consult, together with Brussels Education Services, the Compostela Group of Universities and the Erasmus Student Network.

Erasmus+, the new programme for education, training, youth and sport was launched in January 2014, with a total budget of nearly €15 billion for the next seven year - 40% higher than the previous level.

For more information

[MEMO/14/534](#) Erasmus Impact Study: Key findings

European Commission: [Erasmus+ programme](#)

[Androulla Vassiliou's website](#)

Follow Androulla Vassiliou on Twitter [@VassiliouEU](#)

[Final report: Erasmus Impact Study](#)

[Well-known Erasmus alumni – inspiring careers](#)

[Erasmus+ film](#)

Contacts :

[Dennis Abbott](#) (+32 2 295 92 58)

[Dina Avraam](#) (+32 2 295 96 67)

For the public: **Europe Direct** by phone **00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11** or by [e-mail](#)