

The Students Perspective on Inclusive Mobility

Erasmus Student Network

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Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

Higher education



Maybe it will be different abroad: SIEM Research Report

An extensive **research report** that gathers input of 12.000 students and 750 staff members across Europe and beyond on the inclusion in international student exchanges.

The research report showcases the **14 recommendations** targeting

- European Commission
- National Agencies
- Higher Education institutions
- International student organisations.



Methodology

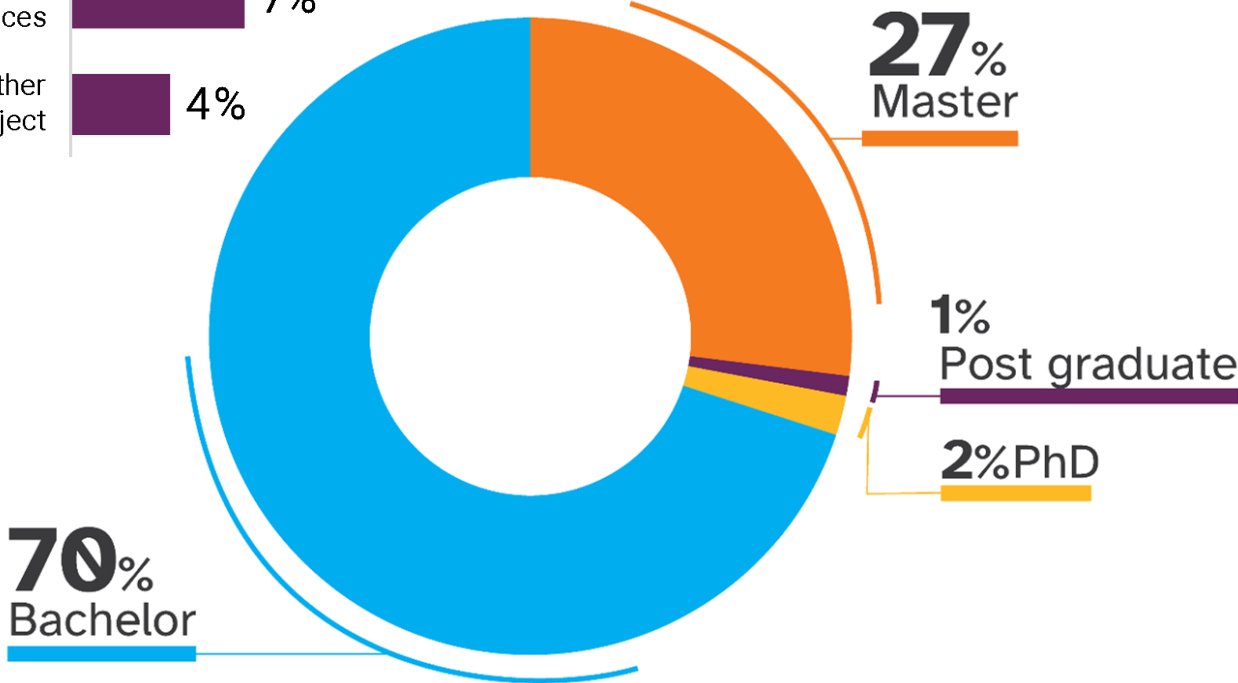
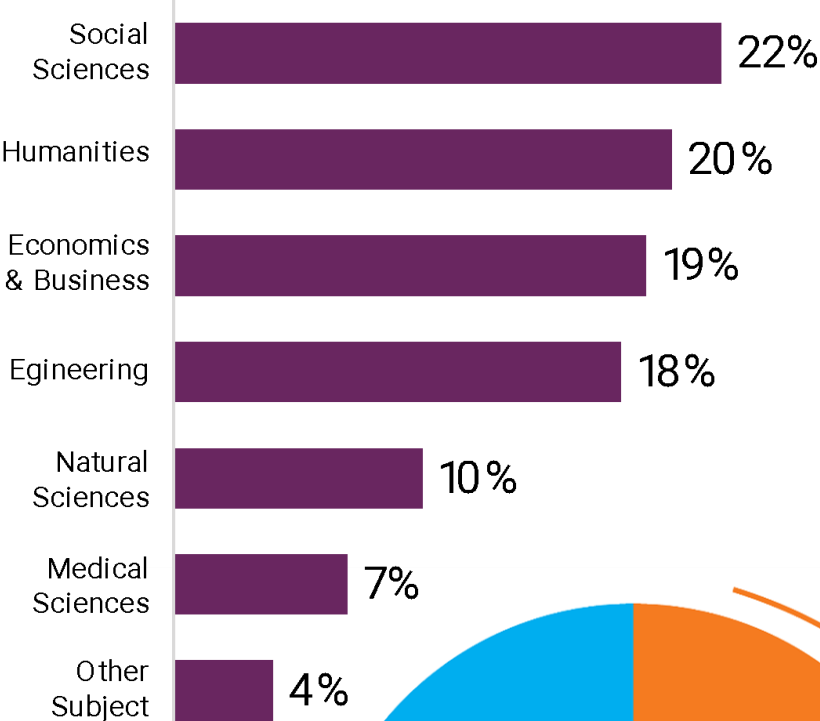
- **Student survey**
(12,820 responses - around 40% non mobile)
- **Staff survey**
(786 responses)
- **Focus Groups**
6 focus groups with 36 students in 4 countries
- **Study visits**
6 institutions

Respondents profile



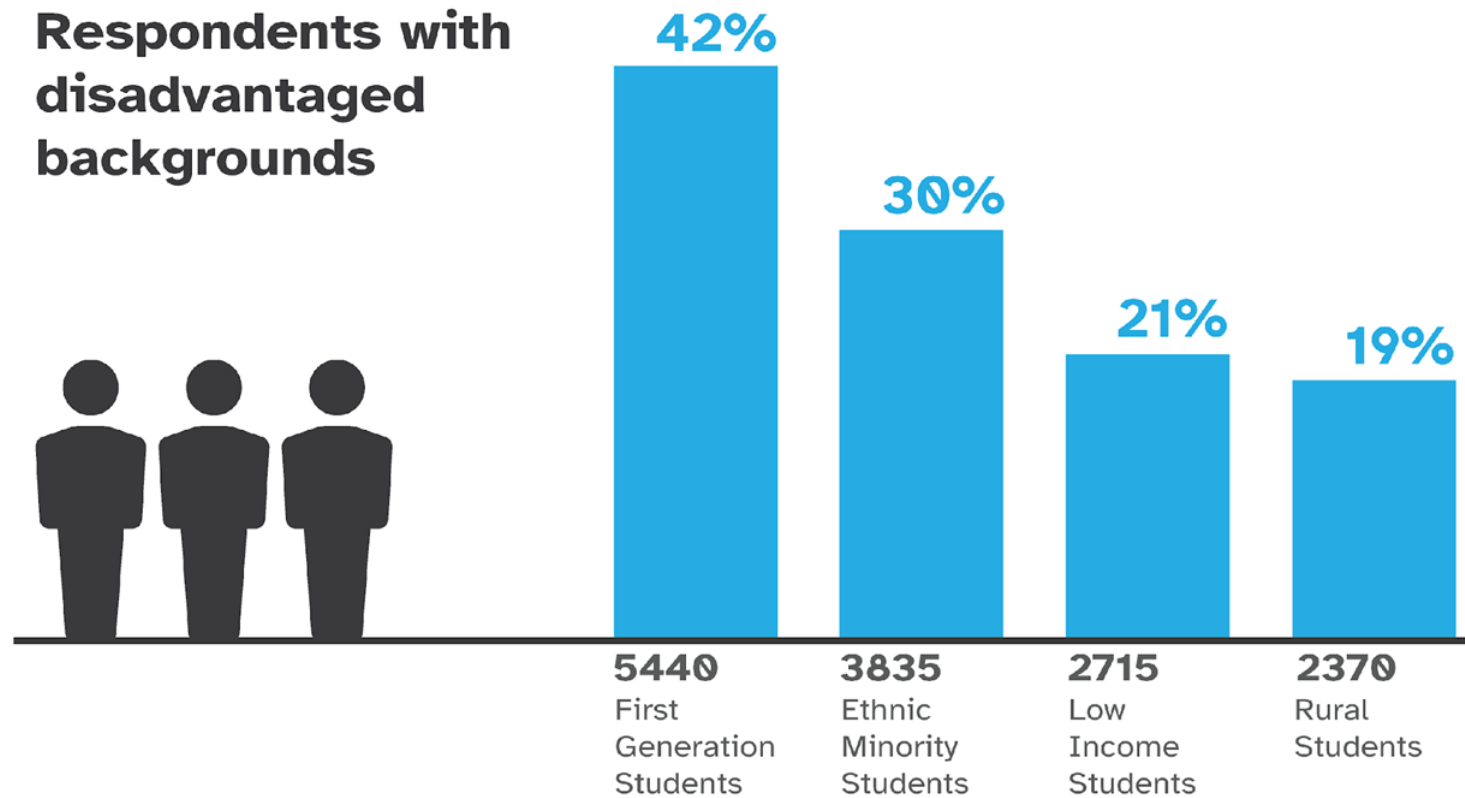
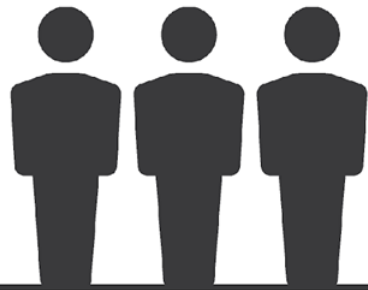
65%
mobile
students

35%
non-mobile
students



Defining students with fewer opportunities

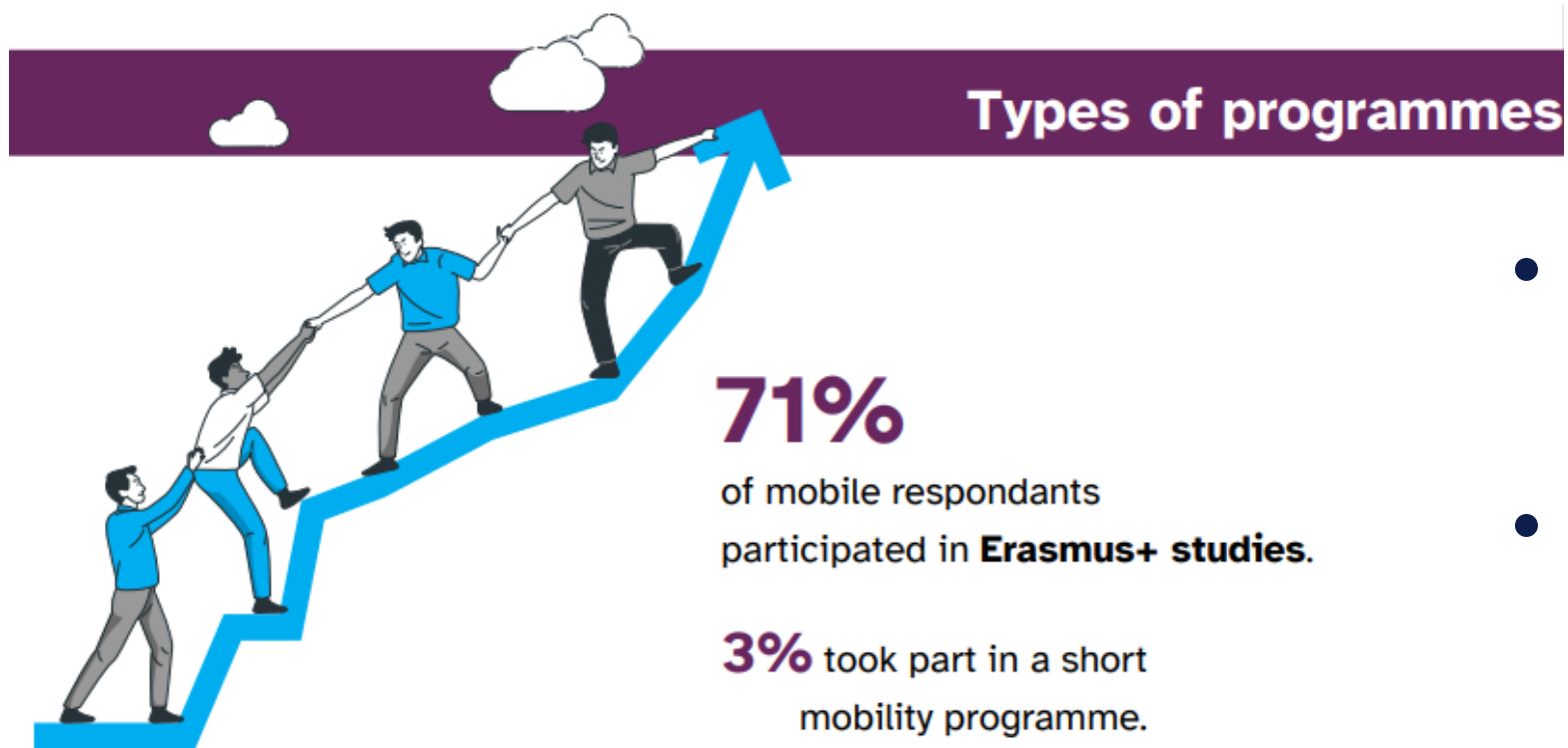
Respondents with disadvantaged backgrounds



Strategy & offer

Findings

Student impressions: mobility programmes

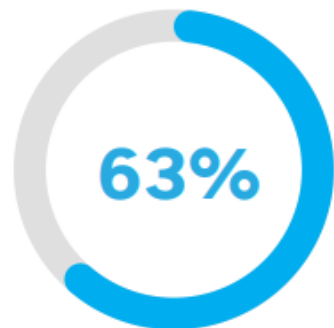


- Short-term mobilities were more popular among students from fewer opportunities background
- 16% of respondents from **ethnic minority backgrounds** and 13% of respondents from **low-income backgrounds** participated in short-term mobilities

Offer different mobility programmes with a variety of durations. Ensure short term mobilities are embedded in the internationalisation strategy.

Student impressions: mobility programmes

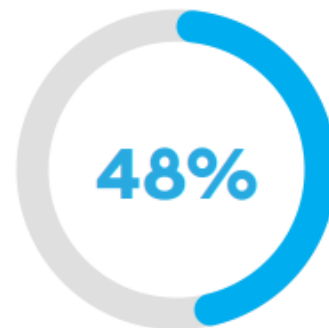
Non-mobile students most interested in participating in:



Erasmus+ studies

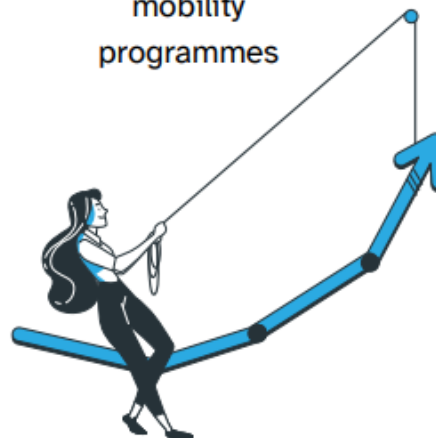


Erasmus+ traineeships or internships



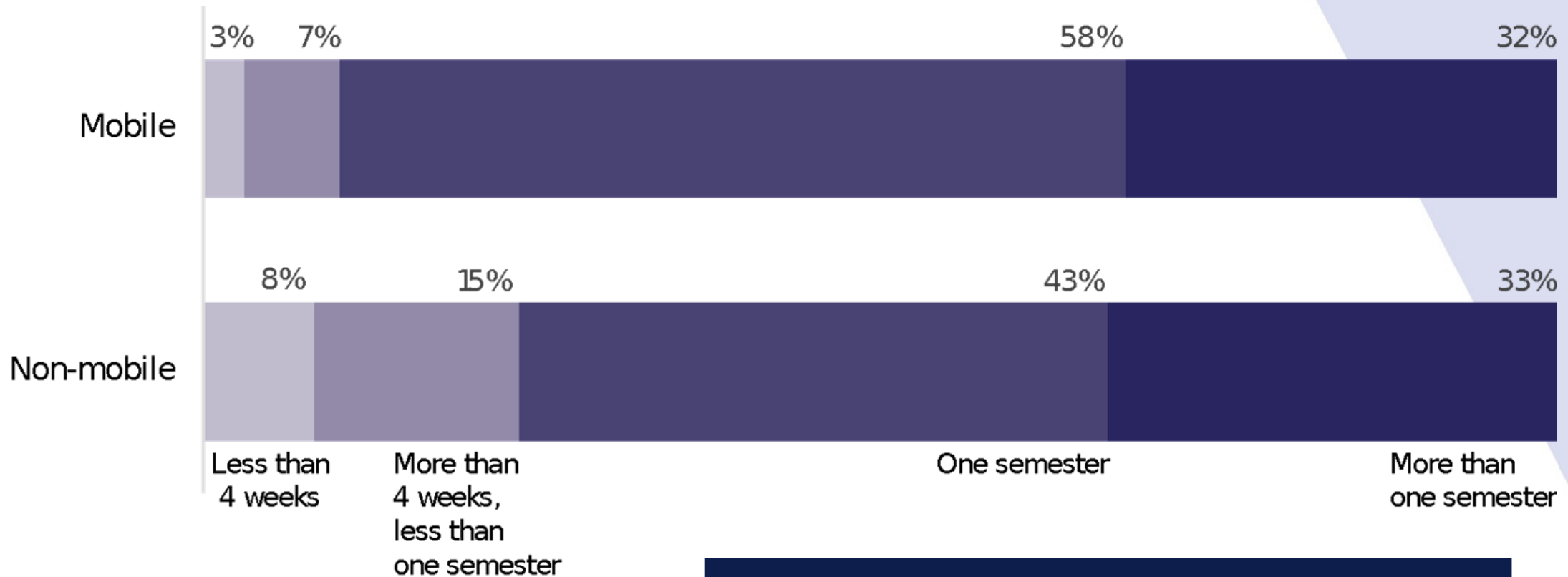
short-term mobility programmes

49%
of respondents to the staff survey
offered short-term mobility
opportunities to students.



Offer different types of mobility programmes across study, work and volunteer opportunities that will appeal to different student groups.

Student impressions: Mobility duration: actual participation versus preference



A variety of mobility formats can help to attract more students and act as a stepping stone towards long-term mobility, which remains more attractive

Barriers to mobility

Findings

3 Barrier types

Institutional

Barriers that **reflect the programmes** that are being offered and the **regulations that coincide** with these programmes that may **impact the access** of specific student groups to mobility opportunities.

Environmental

Environmental and **societal factors** that influence the person's decisions to take part in a mobility.

Access to information as well as **personal backgrounds** impact mobility participation.

Attitudinal

Attitudinal barriers tackle the **belief system and emotions** around the topic of mobility opportunities, to see how they influence their participation rates.

Internalised barriers can severely impact their identification with the opportunity.

Barriers to mobility



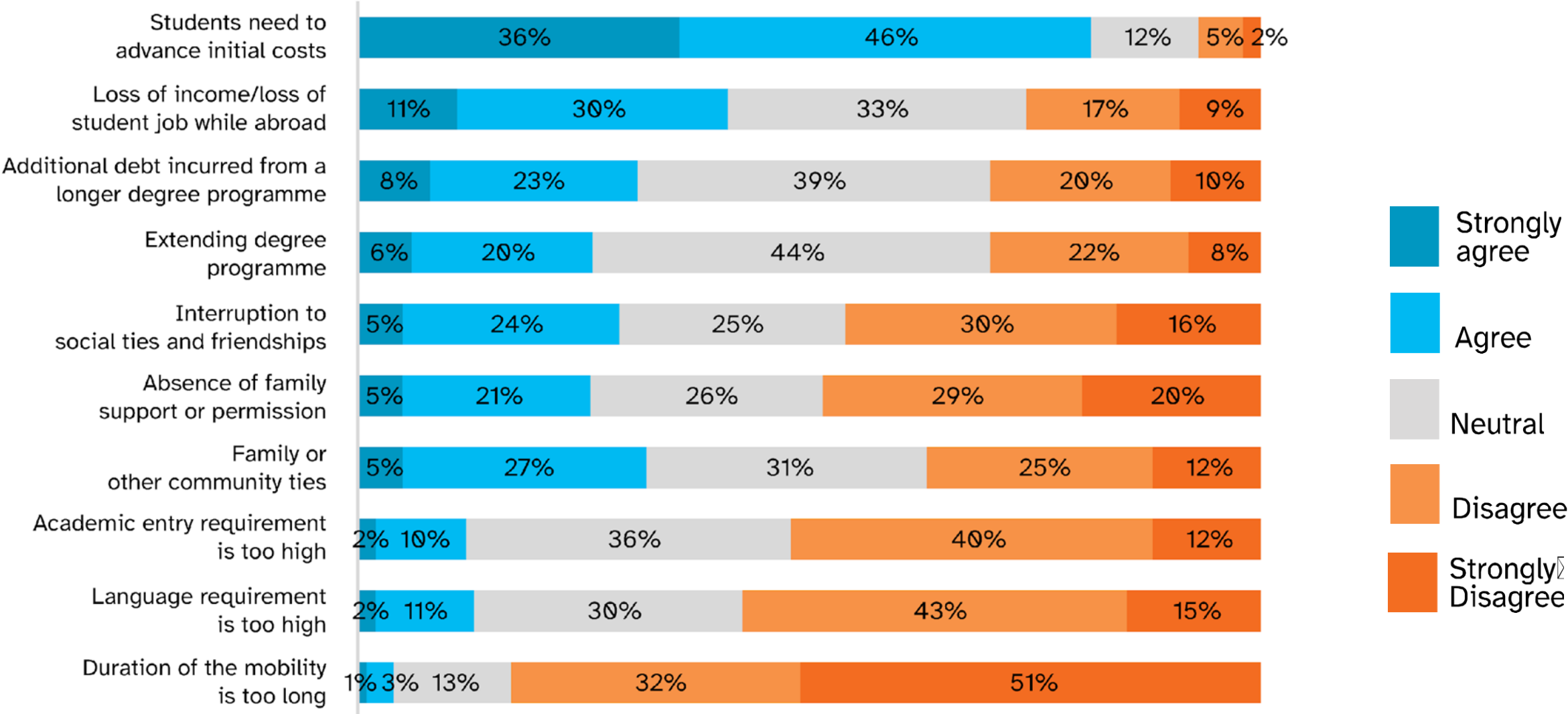
of students reported advancing initial costs to be a barrier to participate in mobility.

“I am someone who has to combine five jobs to pay for my room and studies.”

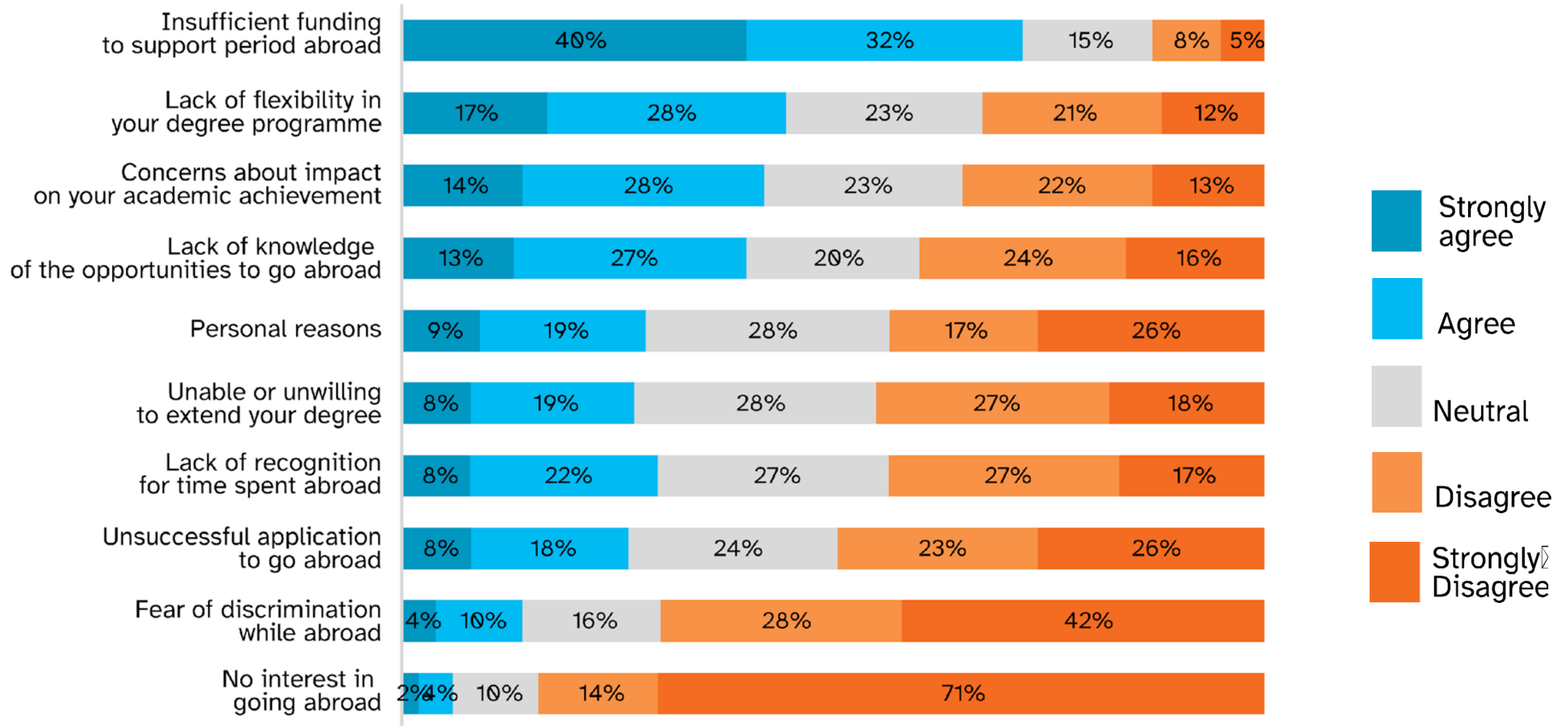
“I have to spend everything I earn immediately. Saving for Erasmus is therefore extremely difficult.”

- student quote

Mobile participants' reported practical barriers to mobility



Non-mobile students' blocking factors to go abroad



Barriers to mobility



17%

of **non-mobile ethnic minority** respondents agreed that **fear of discrimination** while going abroad was a barrier

43%

of respondents from **low-income backgrounds** reported strong concerns related to **upfront costs and loss of job**

49%

of **both mobile and non-mobile respondents** have concerns relating to **finding accommodation abroad**

Create a safe space where students can discuss their fears without judgement, and if needed seek specialist advice to respond to the students' queries.

Pre-departure support for mobile students

67% of Respondents took part in official briefing events with International officers and found them useful.

& would like more support with ...

94%

Information about available funding

88%

Support with application process

86%

Help choosing a host university



56%

Were not offered an activity with fellow students or mobility alumni to discuss mobility

83%

Indicated they would like to discuss with peers in a more social setting

Encouragement for non-mobile students



- **53%** of non-mobile students need **more information on the types of programmes available**
- **47%** felt that **hearing from employers** who value international experiences could be useful
- **47%** of students would like to **hear from their peers** who have been abroad

Ensure that the application process is easy to navigate, and where possible **simplify the process** by removing unnecessary paperwork or steps in the procedure.

Student impressions: Inclusion & Equality of international students



had **positive** experiences while abroad.

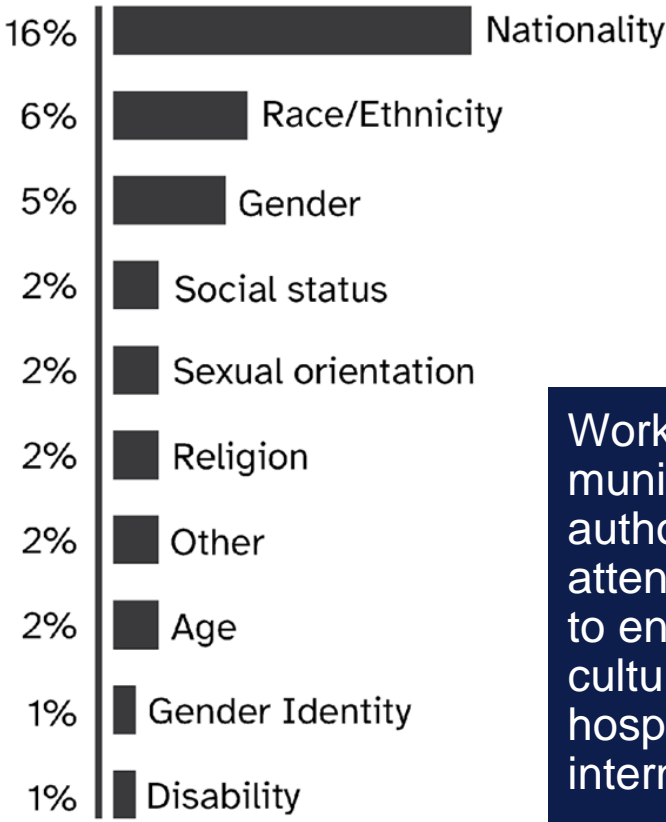
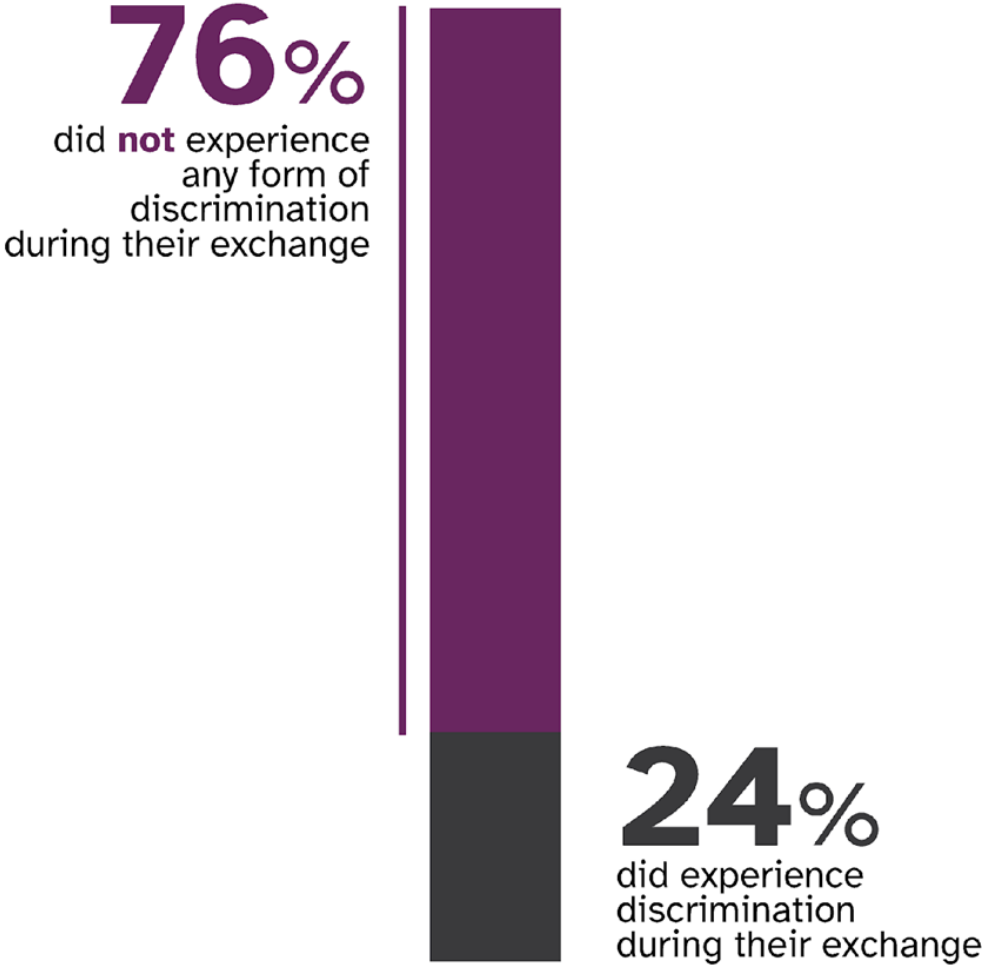
34%

of students felt that they were treated differently or unfairly at their host university

15%

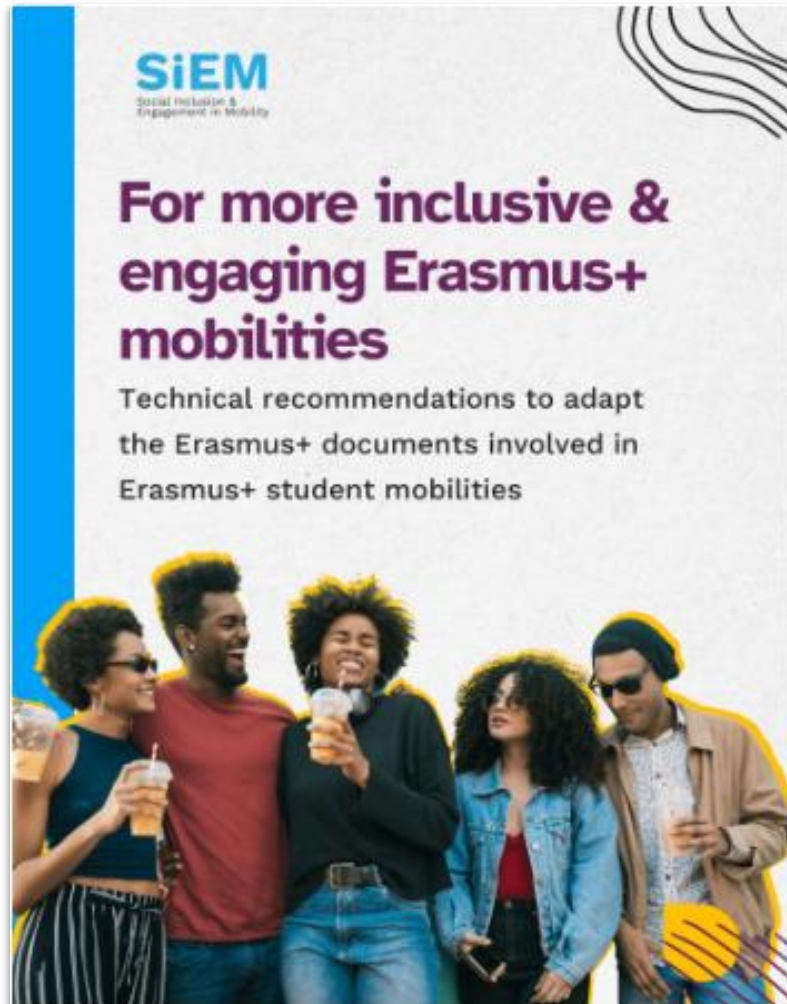
felt that they did not have equal access to resources and opportunities compared to home students.

Student impression: discrimination on exchange



Work together with local municipalities and other local authorities to make them attentive to the role they play to ensure that the broader cultural environment is hospitable towards international students.

Technical recommendations for more inclusive mobility



The SIEM technical recommendations provide an **analysis of possible changes** that could be implemented to the key documents and processes involved in Erasmus+ Higher Education mobilities in order to make them more inclusive.

They target the **European Commission, Erasmus+ National Agencies, Higher Education Institutions** and other policy makers and stakeholders interested in Erasmus+ and mobility programmes.

We closed the SIEM Project in 2022. What new initiatives or projects is ESN bringing

A walk through the XV ESNsurvey preliminary results

What is the ESNsurvey?

- The ESNsurvey is a Europe-wide research project covering different topics concerning mobility and education. **It is the largest project of its kind carried out solely by volunteers.**
- The survey seeks to monitor the implementation of mobility programmes and the experience of international learners abroad, as well as the perceptions of students who have not participated in international student mobility yet.

Where does the analysis come from?



Large scale data collection among recent participants and non-mobile students



Work on the ground and constant feedback from students and our network



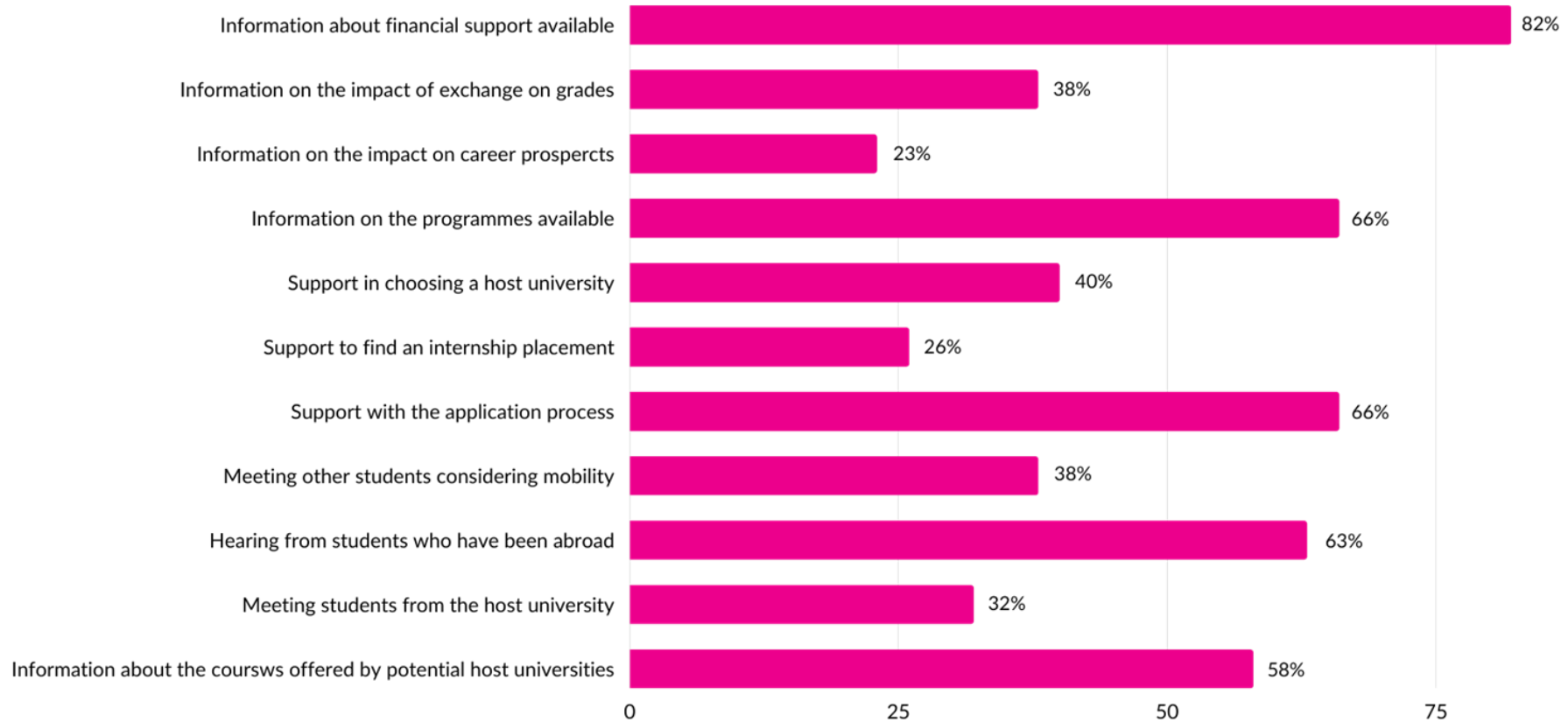
Direct involvement in the programme and work with other stakeholders

Proposals for improvement in the mid-term evaluation of the Programme

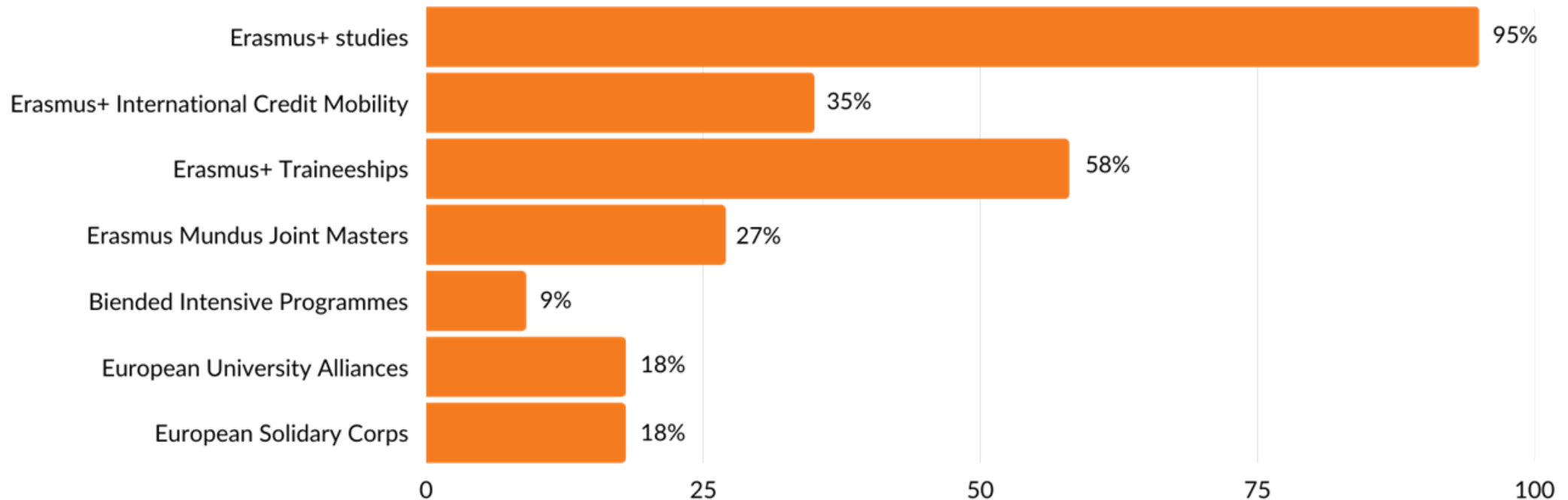
We reached 23k of answers! **Thank you all for the support!**

- **Exchange Students** - 17.855 answers - 78,40%
- **Full-Degree Students** - 1.856 answers - 8,15%
- **Non-mobile Students** - 3.064 answers - 13,45%

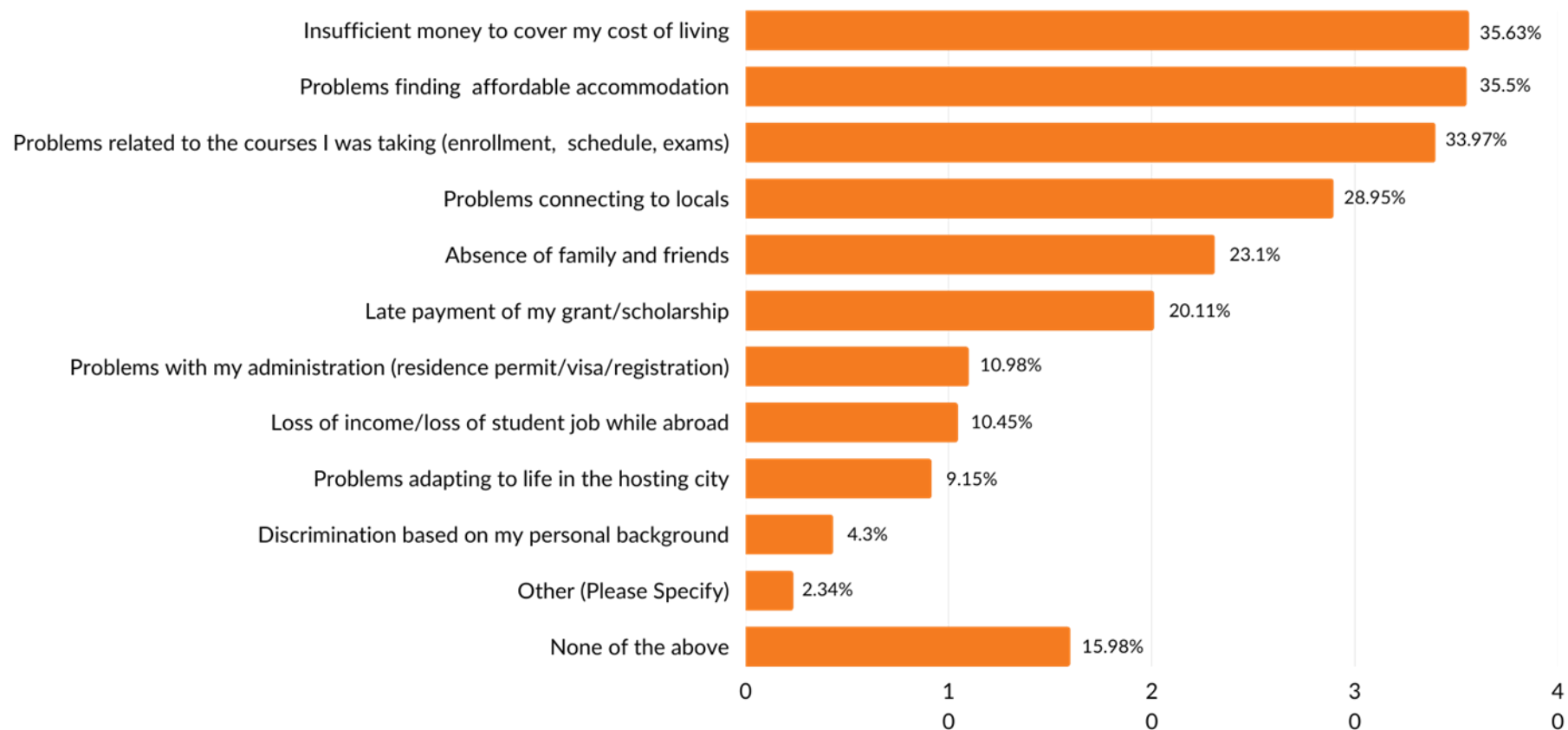
Pre-departure support: Accessibility of information and peer-to-peer support are essential



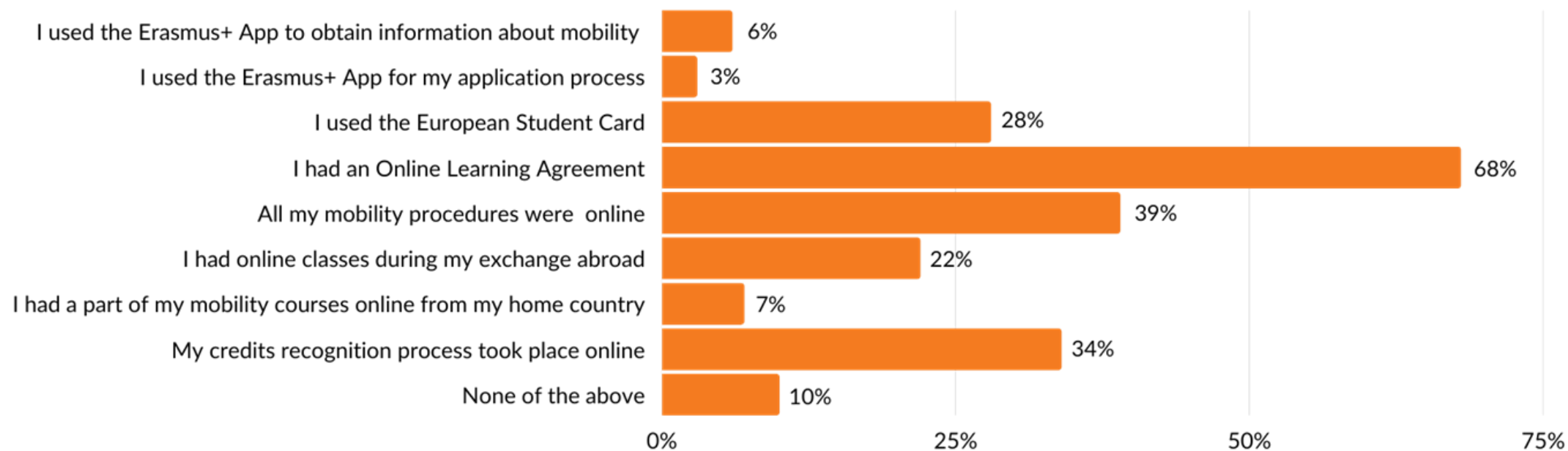
Initiatives from the EU: There are still lack of knowledge of some EU initiatives among non-mobile students



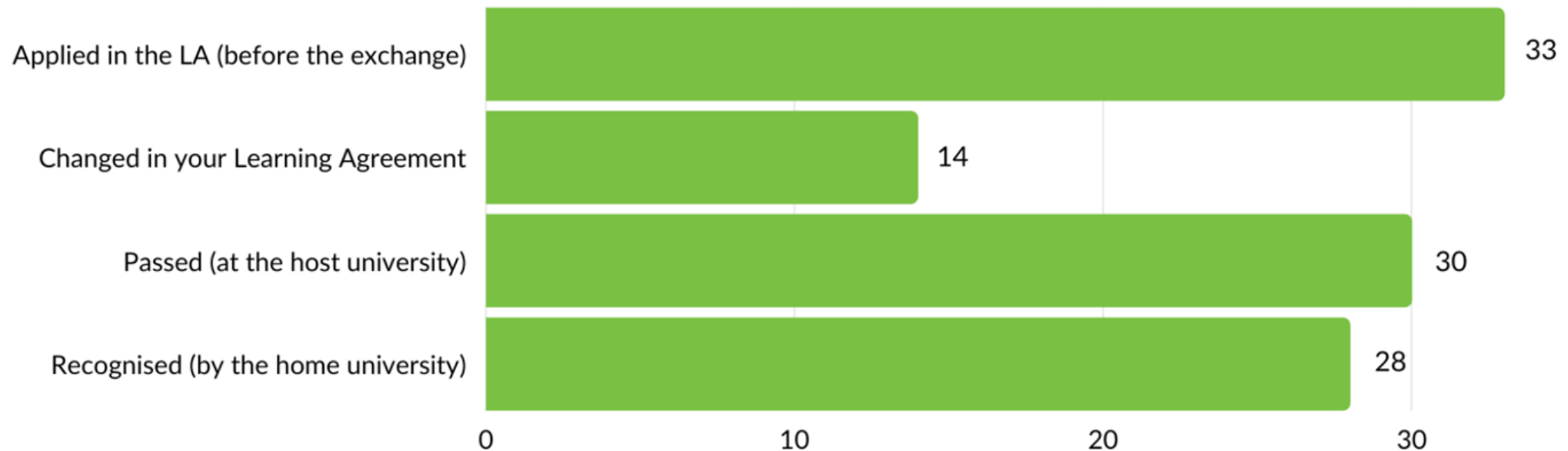
Challenges faced by students: Lack of funding, affordability of accommodation and problems with courses are still the main challenges



Digitalisation: the commitment to digital transformation has the potential to improve the experience of Erasmus+ participants, especially for the ones with fewer opportunities



Recognition of Credits: 42% of the respondents revealed that their courses needed to be changed during exchange



Erasmus+ priorities: Students believe in the programme and consider it lives up to its priorities

82%

Agree (36%) or strongly agree (46%) with **“Erasmus+ is inclusive for students from different background”**

75%

Agree (35%) or strongly agree (40%) with **“Erasmus+ contributes to the acquisition of sustainable skills, habits and behaviours among**

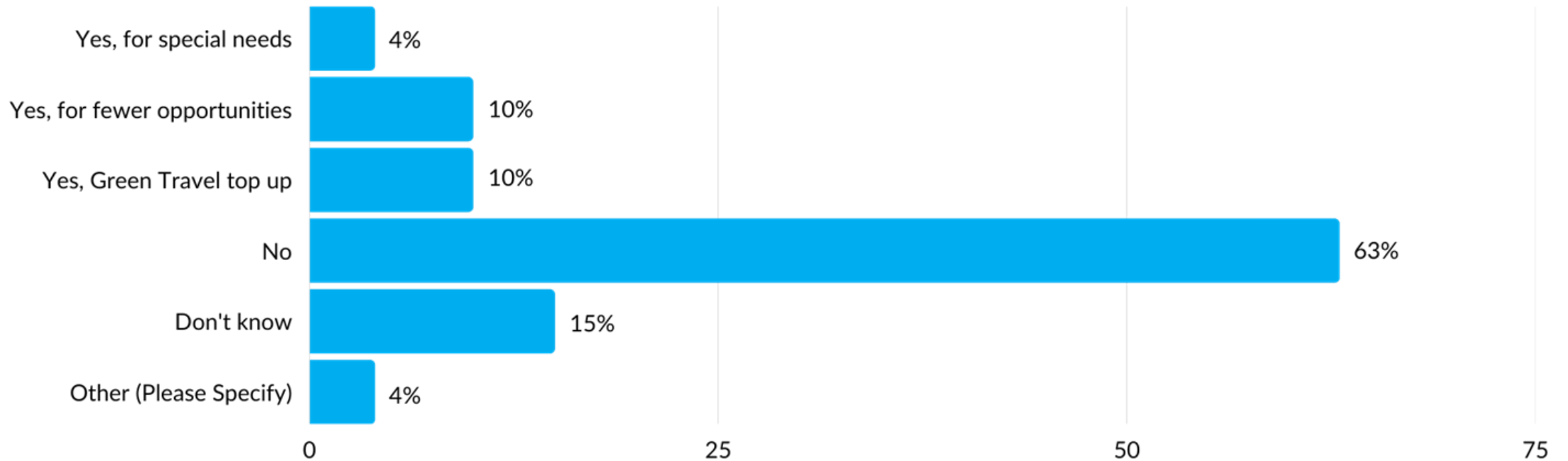
69%

Agree (38%) or strongly agree (31%) with **“Erasmus+ encourages civic engagement during exchanges”**

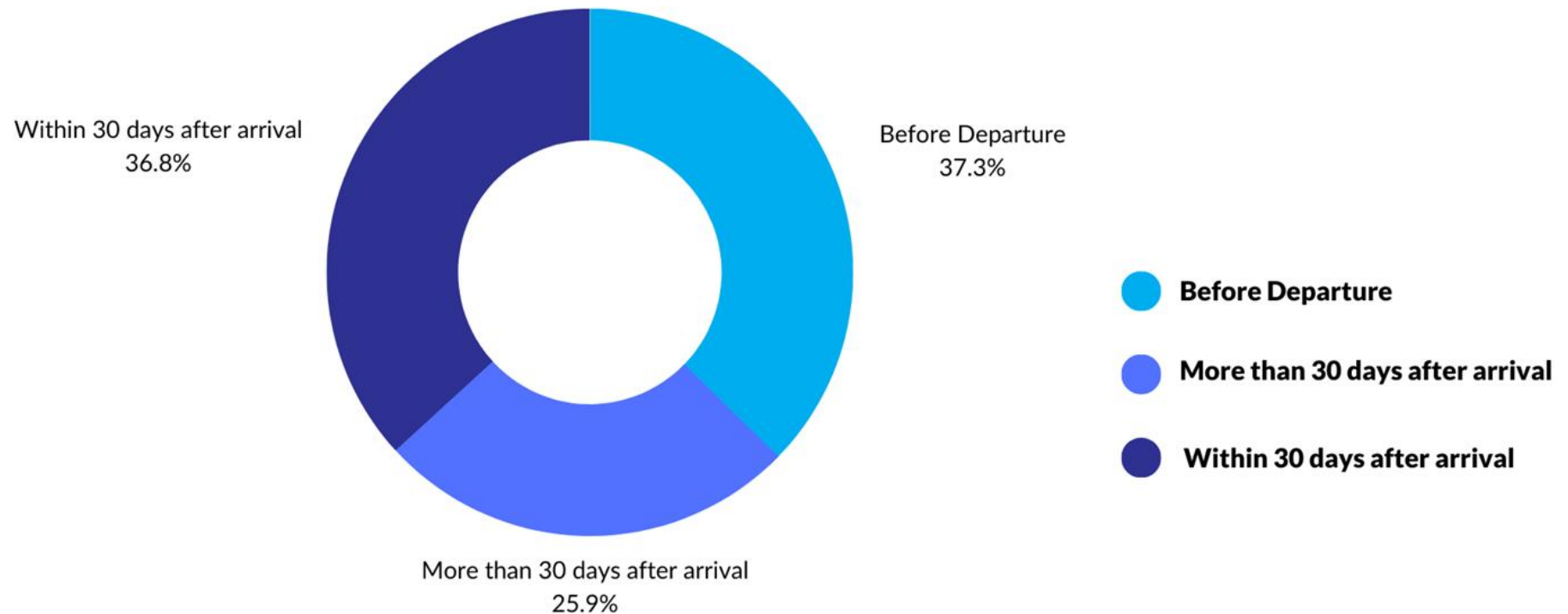
64%

Agree (39%) or strongly agree (25%) with **“Erasmus+ offers digital solutions to facilitate the mobility process”**. Digital skills: 53%

Top-ups: The inclusion top-up was well received by students, showing the positive results of the implementation of the inclusion measures!



Timing of the grants: The efforts are visible, especially regarding students with fewer opportunities but that it's still a long path to walk



ESNsurvey Timeline

- 1. Preliminary Report- September 2023**
- 2. Final Report- February 2024**
- 3. Conference after launch - February/March 2024**

Say Hi to DIEM!

We just got approved a new project on inclusive mobility!

Thank you for your attention!

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*Enriching lives,
opening minds.*

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