

D4.7 RUN-EU EUROPEAN MOBILITY INNOVATION CENTRE (EMIC) MONITOR REPORT

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NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Table of Images	2
Table of Tables	3
Executive summary	4
2. RUN-EU mobility driven strategies.....	5
3. EMIC general introduction	6
4. Key figures	7
4.1. Introduction	7
4.2. Future Advanced Skills Academies.....	7
4.3. RUN-EU Discovery Programme	8
4.4. Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs).....	9
4.5. Collaborative European Degrees.....	11
4.7. Administrative and Project Management.....	12
5. Evaluation of RUN-EU mobilities and participants' perceptions.....	13
5.1. Mobility Survey Programme – students (Short Advanced Programs / EMIC weeks / Student weeks / GEMs).....	13
5.2. Mobility Survey Programme – staff (GEMs / Research Missions).....	17
5.3. Main notable differences – Staff / Student Mobility	20
6. Future outlook and recommendations	22
6.1. Innovative opportunities to improve the RUN-EU mobility strategy.....	22
6.2. Green mobility.....	22
6.3. Reflection on previous recommendations by EMIC in the deliverable report D4.1 ...	23
6.4. Recommendations	24
Appendices	26
Appendix 1. EMIC Live Weeks	26
Appendix 2. Recommendations for improving the Mobility Survey	27

Table of Images

Figure 1 – Run-EU team member perception	7
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Figure 2 - Type of mobility program RUN-EU students took part from Sep 2021-May 2022 (51 students)	14
Figure 3 - Average overall satisfaction score of RUN-EU students	14
Figure 4 - Areas of personal development for RUN-EU students	15
Figure 5 - Main mode of transport used by RUN-EU students to reach their host institution	16
Figure 6 - Needs to consider other modes of travel for RUN-EU students.....	16
Figure 7 - Percentage of RUN-EU grants received by students.....	17
Figure 8 - Role of staff members participating in RUN-EU mobilities from Sep 2021-May 2022 (130 respondents)	18
Figure 9 - Average overall satisfaction score of RUN-EU staff members.....	18
Figure 10 - Areas of personal development for RUN-EU staff members	19
Figure 11 - Main mode of transport used by staff members to reach their host institution	20
Figure 12 - Needs to consider other modes of travel for RUN-EU staff.....	20

Table of Tables

Table 1 - Superweeks and Design Factory Bootcamps.....	7
Table 2 - Breakdown of mobility applications by RUN-EU Partner to date	8
Table 3 - Breakdown of mobilities taken place to date and have yet to take place.....	8
Table 4 - Short term mobilities funded through the RUN-EU alliance.....	9
Table 5- Short term mobilities funded through other budget	10
Table 6 - Total Short term mobilities for students and staff.....	10
Table 7 - General Exploratory Missions	11

Executive summary

The present report was produced by the European Mobility Innovation Center (EMIC). EMIC acts as RUN-EU's International Office and as a Center of Expertise in relation to European mobility innovation. EMIC is also tasked with the responsibility to deliver an annual update on the current state of affairs of mobility within RUN-EU, and as such, EMIC as an entity delivered this report. This report contains an overview of RUN-EU Mobility Driven Strategies (Chapter 2), an introduction to and overview of the activities employed by EMIC (Chapter 3), key figures on mobility (Chapter 4) and a chapter on the evaluation of mobility actions within RUN-EU based on participants' perceptions of the quality of RUN-EU mobility actions (Chapter 5).

All RUN-EU partners contributed to this report, including the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), the Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (IPCA), the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (IPL), Széchenyi István University (SZE), Häme University of applied sciences (HAMK), FH Vorarlberg – University of Applied Sciences (FH Vorarlberg), and NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences (NHL Stenden). NHL Stenden is the leading institution in work package (WP4) responsible for EMIC, with FH Vorarlberg acting as co-lead. Important Mobility Driven Strategies as part of RUN-EU's Mission and Vision are: 1) the creation of EMIC, 2) the establishment of 3 European Innovation Hubs; 3) the establishment of 1 central Future and Advanced Skills Academy (FASA) and 7 institutional FASAs; 4) the RUN-EU Discovery Programme; 5) Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs); 6) 27 RUN-EU collaborative European degrees; 7) the Annual Student Week (organized during the RUN-EU General Assembly); and 8) Administrative and Project Management activities.

Mobility figures in RUN-EU are going up substantially following the Covid-19 pandemic as the alliance becomes increasingly known across the partner institutions and initiatives come to fruition. Overall satisfaction with RUN-EU mobility is high, both from the perspective of students as well as staff/ researchers.

Important areas for improvement and recommendations include identifying ways of further boosting mobility across the RUN-EU alliance and measuring impact of these mobility activities as well as increased promotion and facilitation of green mobility options. Increasing the number of survey respondents is equally important to ensure the representativeness of results.

1. RUN-EU mobility driven strategies

The RUN-EU Mission and Vision contains a number of mobility driven strategies, such as the foundation of the European Mobility Innovation Center (EMIC). Other mobility driven strategies include:

- The establishment of 3 European Innovation Hubs which have started in an online format but which will instigate more and more concrete mobilities as RUN-EU progresses;
- 1 central Future and Advanced Skills Academy (FASA) and 7 institutional FASAs, which organise staff development programmes and design thinking bootcamps (totalling 120 mobility actions during the run-time of the first 3 years of RUN-EU as funded under the European University Initiative (2020-2023))
- The RUN-EU Discovery Programme; comprising an internship programme for the mobility of research students and staff (totalling 72 students and 96 research staff mobility activities during the run-time of the first 3 years of RUN-EU.
- 80 Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs); involving more than 1.100 students and 160 academic staff mobility activities during the run-time of the first 3 years of RUN-EU.
- RUN-EU collaborative European degrees; including a projected number of 24 double degrees and 3 joint degrees and 128 student mobility grants and 152 staff mobility for teaching and exploratory missions;
- The annual student week (organized during the RUN- EU General Assembly); including 120 students from the eight HEIs in each of the three years of the project – total 315 student mobility activities;
- Administrative and Project Management involving 158 staff mobility activities.

All combined, this should lead to 1.615 students and 686 academic and administrative staff members being engaged in some form of international mobility during the initial 3 years of RUN-EU as funded under the European University Initiative. The Covid-19 pandemic had a negative impact on RUN-EU's ability to execute a number of the projected mobilities, but RUN-EU intends to compensate for the lower than expected mobility numbers as much as possible during the final year of the project (which ends in October 2023).

2. EMIC general introduction

In February 2022, EMIC was founded. EMIC functions as a Centre of Expertise in the area of innovative European mobility with the aim to support international competence development and act as the RUN-EU International Office. EMIC is not a stand-alone legal entity, but rather a partnership between the RUN-EU partner institutions. EMIC is funded by an in-kind investment of all RUN-EU partners, in the form of working days invested by international mobility experts, EMIC Supportive Group and the EMIC Chair, NHL Stenden.

The main aim of EMIC is to facilitate and increase student and staff mobility at all levels between the RUN-EU partners by combining traditional approaches to mobility with new, innovative, and more sustainable forms of mobility. The RUN-EU mobilities allow equal, flexible, and accessible opportunities for all students as fully recognised part of their studies and professional competence development possibilities for staff members. To achieve this, EMIC brings together the international mobility experts of all alliance members, with a mission to design joint mobility processes and share expertise in innovative international student and staff mobility in European higher education.

The mobility experts aim to boost international mobilities as part of competence development, to develop and monitor the quality of the mobility activities enabling the achievement of the alliance goals and to develop services of guidance to mobility for students and staff. The mobility experts work in four thematic Expert Teams who meet bi-annually during so-called EMIC Live Weeks (as described in Appendix 1). The Expert Teams are supported by the EMIC Supportive Group which consists of the Heads (or similar) of the International Offices of the RUN-EU partner HEIs.

3. Key figures

3.1. Introduction

As described above, the RUN-EU Mission and Vision contain a number of mobility driven strategies, resulting in concrete mobility activities. Not only have these activities strengthened the collaboration and contacts between RUN-EU partners and with local/international partners, but they have also facilitated knowledge transfer and innovative idea generation within the alliance.

3.2. Future Advanced Skills Academies

As described above, RUN-EU has created 1 central Future and Advanced Skills Academy (FASA) and 7 institutional FASAs, which organise staff development programmes and design thinking bootcamps (totalling 120 mobility actions during the first 3 years of RUN-EU as funded under the European University Initiative (2020-2023)). These numbers are expected to increase during the final year of the initial 3-year funding period of RUN-EU.



Figure 1 – Run-EU team member perception

Table 1 - Superweeks and Design Factory Bootcamps

Event name	Organiser	Time period (excluding travel days)	Number of participants
Design Factory Bootcamp	HAMK	25.10.2021 - 29.10.2021	29 teachers/staff (+2 HAMK)
Super Week	HAMK	16.05.2021 - 20.05.2021	16 teachers/staff (+11 HAMK)
Design Factory Bootcamp	HAMK	20.09.2022 - 30.09.2022	13 teachers/staff (+2 HAMK)

Table 1 shows the number of participants for all Super Weeks and bootcamps that took between October 2021 – September 2022.

3.3. RUN-EU Discovery Programme

Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview of the mobilities that have taken place as part of RUN-EU Discovery Programme. These numbers are expected to go up during the final year of the initial 3-year run-time of RUN-EU.

Table 2 - Breakdown of mobility applications by RUN-EU Partner to date

Partner	Number of student applications received	Number of students successfully offered	Number of staff applications received	Number of staff successfully offered
TUS	11	11	5	5
FHV	0	0	4	4
SZE	0	0	0	0
IPL	10	5	9	3
HAMK	0	0	4	4
NHL Stenden	0	0	0	0
IPCA	0	0	0	0

Table 3 - Breakdown of mobilities taken place to date and have yet to take place

Partner	Number of student mobilities taken place to date	Number of student mobilities yet to happen	Number of staff mobilities taken place to date	Number of staff mobilities yet to happen
TUS	8	3	4	1
FHV	0	0	0	4
SZE	0	0	0	0
IPL	0	5	0	3
HAMK	0	0	0	4
NHL Stenden	0	0	0	0
IPCA	0	0	0	0

Table 3 shows that not all mobility applications resulted in actual mobilities for both student and staff. This may be due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but could also be related to differences in procedures to promote and facilitate this type of mobility. These activities have taken place through different research cluster topics; namely:

- Food & Biotechnology
- Smart, Sustainable and Advanced Manufacturing
- Education & Social Sciences
- Tourism
- Climate Change, Circular-Economy & Decarbonization
- IOT & Cybersecurity
- Education & Social Sciences
- Climate Change – Circular Economy & Decarbonization

With the Covid-19 related travel restrictions easing, participation in these mobility activities is expected to grow. In addition, RUN-EU partners are piloting new ways to encourage students and staff to take part in these mobility activities.

3.4. Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs)

Table 4 below compares the number of short-term mobilities funded through the RUN-EU alliance in the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 respectively. It is important to note that during the academic year 2020-2021, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were very much prevalent which affected the type and number of mobilities that could take place. The table also shows that 19 times more short cycle mobility activities took place in the 2021-2022 academic year. Most of those activities were offered in a blended setting in 2021-2022, which can be explained by the blended format of Short Advanced Programs (main short cycle activity) whereas the most short-cycle activities for the period of 2020-2021 were offered in a physical setting.

Table 4 - Short term mobilities funded through the RUN-EU alliance

Academic Year	2020-2021	2020-2021	2020-2021	2021-2022	2021-2022	2021-2022
Type of Mobility	Physical	Virtual	Blended	Physical	Virtual	Blended
Bachelor				7		14
Master		12		6	1	
Doctorate				1		

Short Cycle	8	2		58	39	103
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Table 5 compares the number of short-term mobilities funded through other budget between the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. This table highlights that no short-cycle activities were funded by the other budget in either of the periods. These results are consistent with findings in Chapter 4, illustrating that students were not able to receive other grants, other than the RUN-EU grant for their short-term mobility experiences.

Table 5- Short term mobilities funded through other budget

Academic Year	2020-2021	2020-2021	2020-2021	2021-2022	2021-2022	2021-2022
Type of Mobility	Physical	Virtual	Blended	Physical	Virtual	Blended
Bachelor	16			27		
Master	1			1		
Doctorate						
Short Cycle						

In Table 6, the total number of short term mobilities for both students and staff between the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years is compared. The amount of staff that takes part in short-term mobility activities is double that of students in both academic years. In addition, it is clear that the total number of short-term mobility activities for both students and staff has significantly increased from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, reflecting developments within the RUN-EU alliance and the increased implementation of activities across the alliance.

Table 6 - Total Short term mobilities for students and staff

Academic Year	2020-2021	2021-2022
Total number of <u>mobile students within the alliance</u> at all cycle levels, including physical, virtual and blended mobility	39	257
Total number of <u>mobile staff (including researchers, academic and non-academic staff)</u> within the alliance, including physical, virtual and blended mobility	69	464

3.5. Collaborative European Degrees

Table 8 illustrates the number of General Exploratory Missions (GEMs) that took place within RUN-EU for the academic year 2022-2023 for each of the major subject areas identified by RUN-EU partner institutions. The objective of these GEMs was to identify areas of collaboration with a specific emphasis on starting the process of developing double and joint degree programmes.

Table 7 - General Exploratory Missions

Subject Area	Organiser	Time period (excluding travel days)	Number of participants
Art & Design	TUS Midwest	26.04.2022 - 27.04.2022	52
Built Environment	TUS Midwest	20.09.2022 - 21.09.2022	55
Hospitality & Tourism	NHL Stenden	22.03.2022 - 23.03.2022	24
Business & Management	HAMK	05.04.2022 - 07.04.2022	38
Engineering	FHV	08.03.2022 - 10.03.2022	30
Health & Sport	TUS Midlands	08.06.2022 - 09.06.2022	18
Information Technology	IPCA	13.09.2022 - 15.09.2022	34
Life & Physical Science	TUS Midlands	08.06.2022 - 09.06.2022	21
Social Science & Education	IPL	10.05.2022 - 12.05.2022	18
Agriculture & Food	SZE	05.04.2022 - 07.04.2022	15

The GEMs created opportunities for teaching staff and researchers to become familiarised with the RUN-EU partners, RUN-EU colleagues and to identify and outline initial ideas for cooperation.

3.6. Annual Student Week

The first annual student week was organised at TUS Midlands in November 2021 and coincided with the alliance's inaugural General Assembly. Students from each partner institution, particularly members of the respective institutional Student Advisory Boards participated. In total, 77 RUN-EU students signed up and participated in this event, which was divided into four

challenges divided in three different Irish cities Athlone (Bioplastics Challenge & Eco-Innovate Challenge), Limerick (Food Challenge) and Thurles (Social Enterprise Challenge).

The upcoming second annual student week will take place in November 2022 at HAMK in Finland. This event will also coincide with the next edition of the General Assembly. At present (October 2022), 105 students have registered for SAP challenges from the different RUN-EU partner universities.

Although the number of annual student week participants has increased from 2021 to 2022 by 36%, it is worth noting that this number could have been higher due to high student interest. However, to ensure that the SAPs can take place in a way that involves all students with enough staff power, a fixed number of spots was offered. This meant that the RUN-EU partners had to implement a specific selection procedure to identify which students would be able to attend.

3.7. Administrative and Project Management

The key focus of the RUN-EU project is to create and develop a Regional University Network which focuses on securing a sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental growth in the region of its members. Various online and face-to-face meetings have taken place throughout the implementation of the project among the different RUN-EU partners to review performance and future decisions:

- 6 meetings regarding administrative and financial matters
- 5 steering group meetings to kick start the RUN-EU project in September/October 2020
- Kick-off RUN-EU Meeting in Portugal in November 2020 (online)
- 18 Management committee meetings (16 online and 2 in-person) starting November 2020, continuing 2-3 times per month
- 70 online bilateral meetings with work packages or financial managers
- Monthly meetings with presidents, rectors or partner university CEOs
- General Assembly meeting in November 2020 with the management committee, associate partner advisory board and the student advisory board with 224 attendees

4. Evaluation of RUN-EU mobilities and participants' perceptions

To assess the existing mobility programs and models for students and staff, a quantitative analysis was carried out among the RUN-EU partners. These include for students: Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs), EMIC Live Weeks, Annual Student Weeks and for staff: GEMs and research missions. These evaluations took place through an extensive and detailed survey program addressing students from distinct groups (different cycles, student-workers, Life Long Learning), and staff containing questions with a 5-scale Likert relating to overall satisfaction concerning the mobility experience, personal development, travel and accommodation, sustainability, funding and suggestions for future improvement. The data were analysed in Excel, and the findings and conclusions are presented below.

4.1. Mobility Survey Programme – students (Short Advanced Programs / EMIC weeks / Student weeks / GEMs)

The student mobility survey was distributed via an online link to all RUN-EU students that took part in the various SAPs, GEMs, Annual Student Week, EMIC Live Weeks across the alliance in the period of March 2021 to May 2022. In total, 51 students responded to the survey and their responses are therefore used for this analysis. It should be noted that the data obtained is not representative of the total population (257 students) that took part in RUN-EU mobility activities in that period.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the diverse types of mobility activities that took place within the alliance for the studied period. SAPs represented the main mobility activity for students (94%). Only 2% took part in "other" mobility activities, in this case being an EMIC Live Week. The remaining 4% participated in Annual Student Weeks and GEMs.

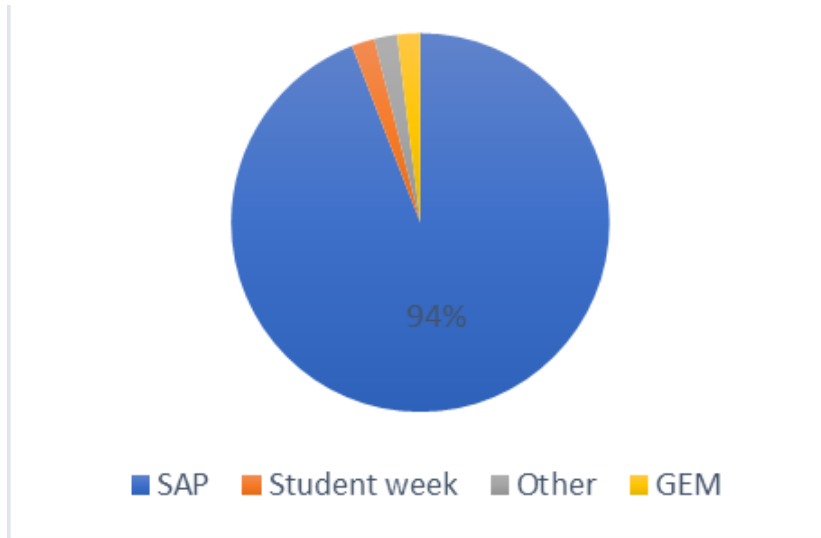


Figure 2 - Type of mobility program RUN-EU students took part from Sep 2021-May 2022 (51 students)

The level of overall satisfaction of students with the mobility activities in which they participated is shown in Figure 3. Results show that students were very satisfied with the welcome they received at the host institution (4.9) while the support offered by their home institution was rated 4.5. The overall satisfaction is above 4 for all the aspects measures, which suggests a positive experience for the students overall.

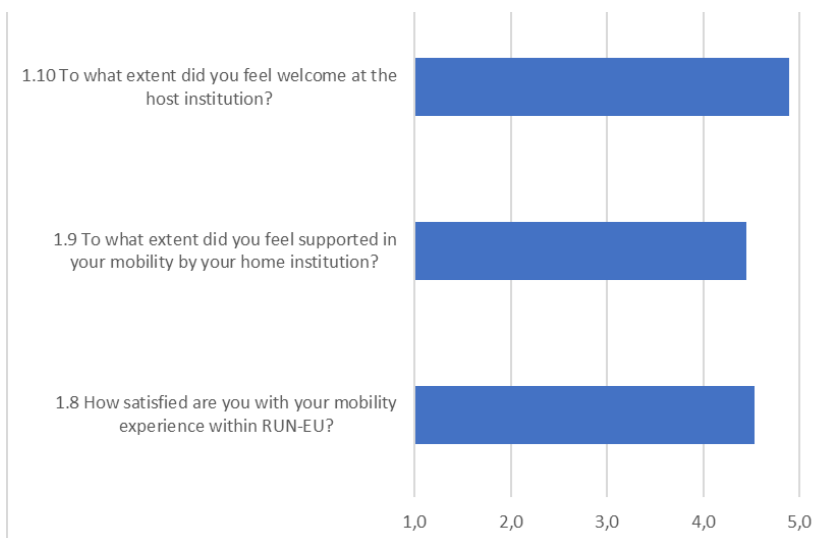


Figure 3 - Average overall satisfaction score of RUN-EU students

In terms of their personal development, as seen in Figure 4, students found that they improved on various aspects because of their mobility experience. The experience was most beneficial

for the development of collaboration skills and open-mindedness (4.5), closely followed by development of sector specific skills and self-confidence (4.2). The lowest rated personal development area related to “feeling more European” (3.8).

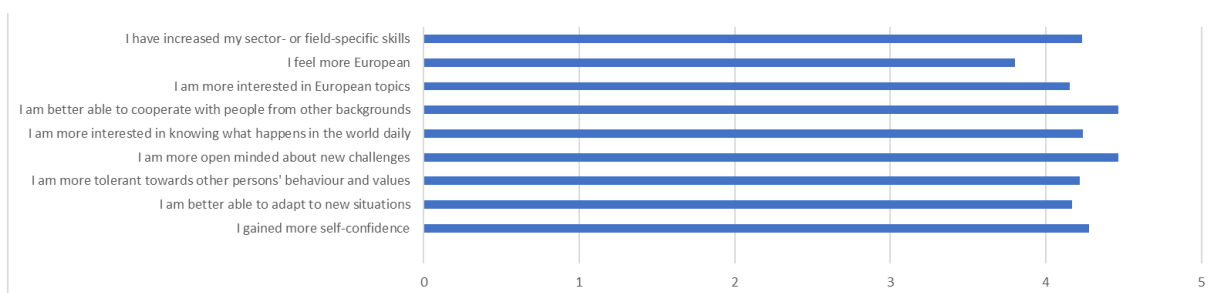


Figure 4 - Areas of personal development for RUN-EU students

To identify areas of improvement for innovative mobility, students were also asked if they would consider having a virtual mobility experience instead of a blended experience. The majority (60%) indicated being positive about a fully virtual mobility experience if they would have high interest in the topic offered or if they would have a lack of financial resources. The other 40% did not agree and left a comment claiming that a live experience could help better build relationships and learn about cultural differences.

Figure 5 illustrates the main modes of transport students used to reach the host destination of their mobility activity. Most students (55%) traveled by plane. The train was another popular choice for students, accounting for 16 percent of all travel movements. A total of 13 percent travelled by car to the host of the mobility activity. The "other" category consists of modes such as taxi, metro or cases in which no transport was required. The survey did not give the choice for students to specify if they had opted for ride-sharing options when they travelled by car.

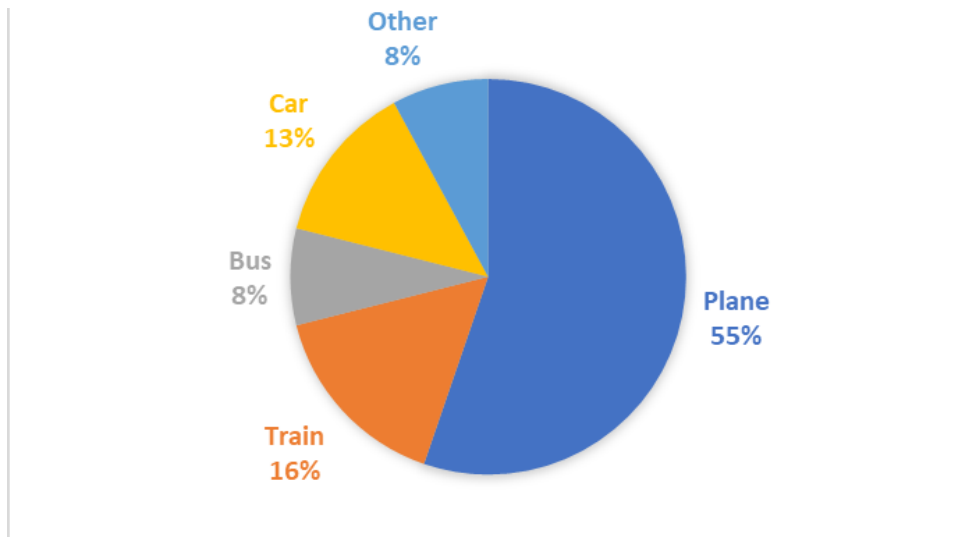


Figure 5 - Main mode of transport used by RUN-EU students to reach their host institution

In Figure 6, the main needs for students to consider other modes of travel were more funding (59%) and more support to arrange the travel activities (22%). The survey did not consider the greener choices that the students were confronted with.

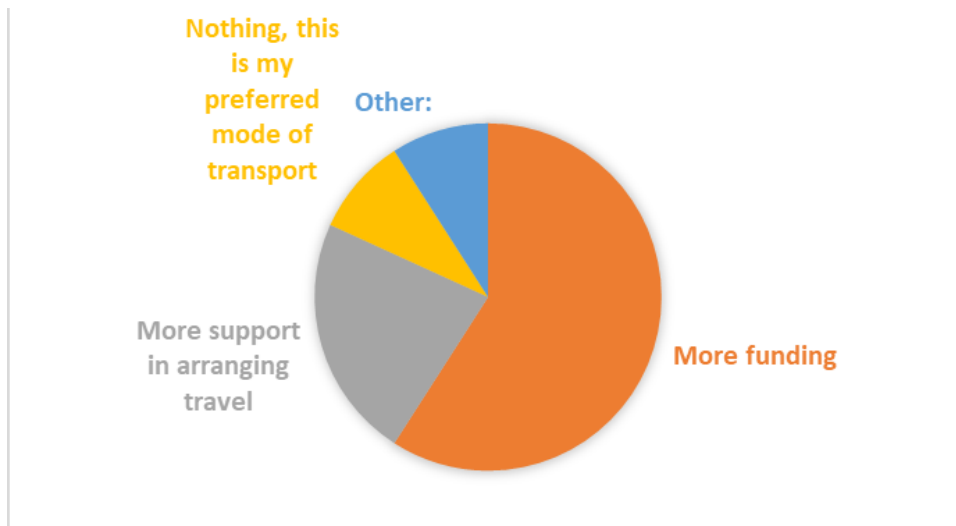


Figure 6 - Needs to consider other modes of travel for RUN-EU students

Three-quarters of all respondents (74%) had confirmed receiving a RUN-EU mobility grant. As shown in Figure 7, 26% of respondents were unsure whether they had received funding which

was surprising. The reason, for this uncertainty was not evaluated. Students may have received the grant after the survey.

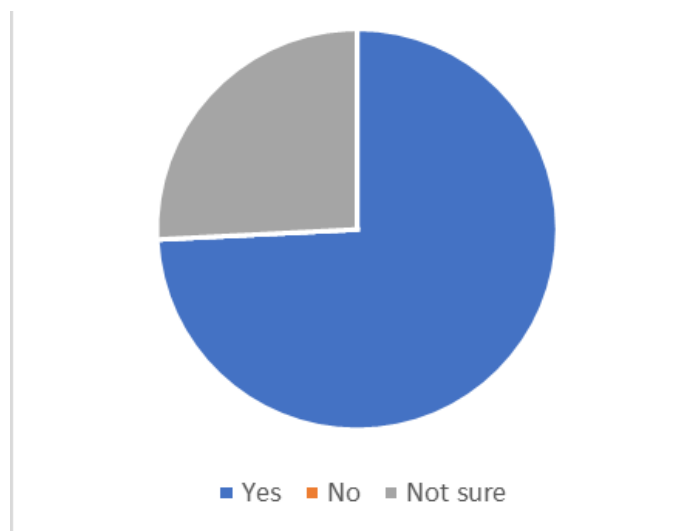


Figure 7 - Percentage of RUN-EU grants received by students

4.2. *Mobility Survey Programme – staff (GEMs / Research Missions)*

The staff mobility survey was distributed via an online link to all staff that took part in the various mobility activities across the alliance between the period of March 2021 to May 2022. These evaluations took place through an extensive and detailed survey program addressing staff members with 5-scale Likert questions relating to the overall satisfaction concerning the mobility experience, personal development, travel and accommodation, sustainability, funding and suggestions for future improvement.

As illustrated by Figure 8, most staff members taking part in mobility activities were lecturers (38%) and management level staff (38%). "Other" staff often included support staff or other management level employees. In total, 130 staff members responded out of a total population of 464.

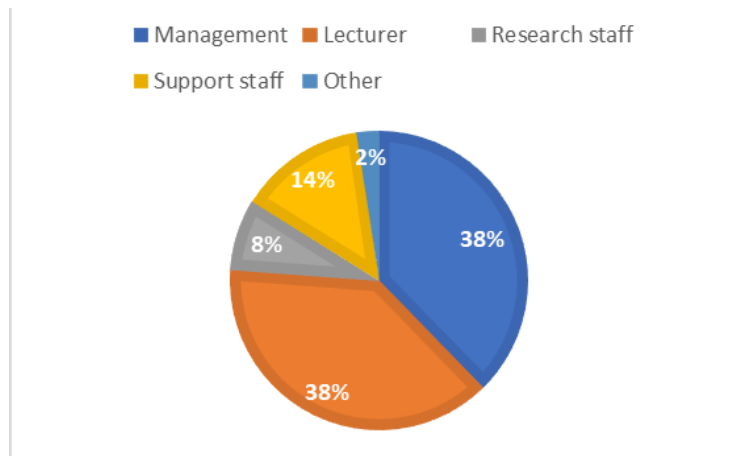


Figure 8 - Role of staff members participating in RUN-EU mobilities from Sep 2021-May 2022 (130 respondents)

In Figure 9, the overall satisfaction of staff who took part in mobility activities is shown. Results indicate that staff members were very satisfied with the welcome they received at the host institution (4.9). The overall satisfaction of staff members is at above 4 (out of 5) for all the aspects measured.

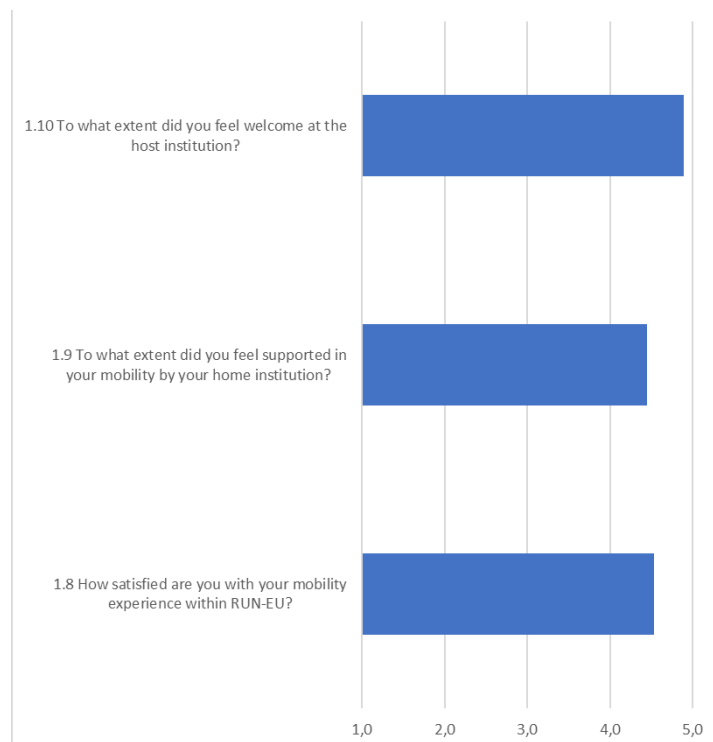


Figure 9 - Average overall satisfaction score of RUN-EU staff members

Figure 10 below suggests that staff members found that they improved on various aspects of personal development because of their mobility experience. The most highly rated areas of improvement are seen for reinforcing or expanding the professional network (4.8) and reinforcing the cooperation with the partner institution (4.7). The lowest score related to being more tolerant towards other people's behaviour and values (4.1), although this is still relatively high. It can be said that for both student and staff respondents had a positive response to their experience abroad which reinforces the value of RUN-EU programs for personal development.



Figure 10 - Areas of personal development for RUN-EU staff members

To identify areas of improvement for innovative mobility, staff were also asked if they would consider having a virtual mobility experience instead of a blended or physical one. The majority (66%) agreed to be open to having a fully virtual mobility experience to save time and reduce their carbon footprint. Some staff respondents mentioned that virtual collaboration was particularly suitable after having met colleagues live once. Continuing the collaboration online from there was not deemed problematic. The other 34% of respondents did not agree and argued that a live experience would help better build relationships and better facilitate learning about cultural differences. This is quite similar to the student respondents' view.

The survey results did not reveal the reasons why virtual mobility was preferred, e.g. the prioritization of saving time over reducing one's carbon footprint or vice versa. From Figure 11 it becomes apparent that 75% of staff respondents reached their host institution by plane. One plausible explanation for this might be that saving time is the main priority for staff members.

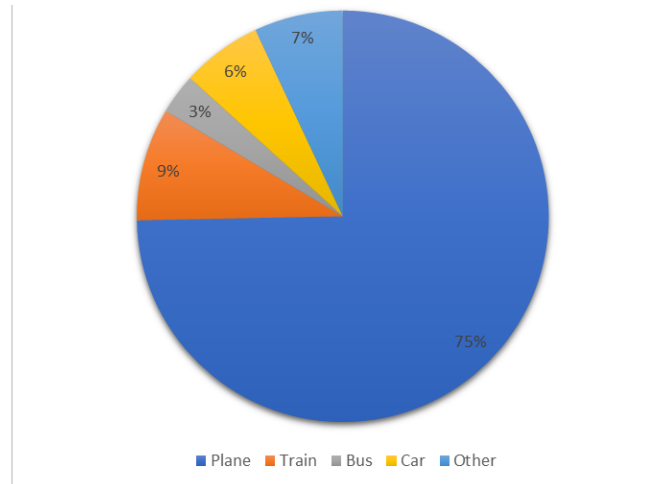


Figure 11 - Main mode of transport used by staff members to reach their host institution

Figure 12 shows most staff respondents (64%) is not inclined to consider other means of transport than the one selected. This suggests that for staff members traveling by plane is the preferred mode of transportation. Another important factor is the need to have more support to arrange transport (19%). This survey did not reveal how much time staff members had to book or arrange their travel options and the extent to which it was complicated or time consuming for them to arrange their travel plans.

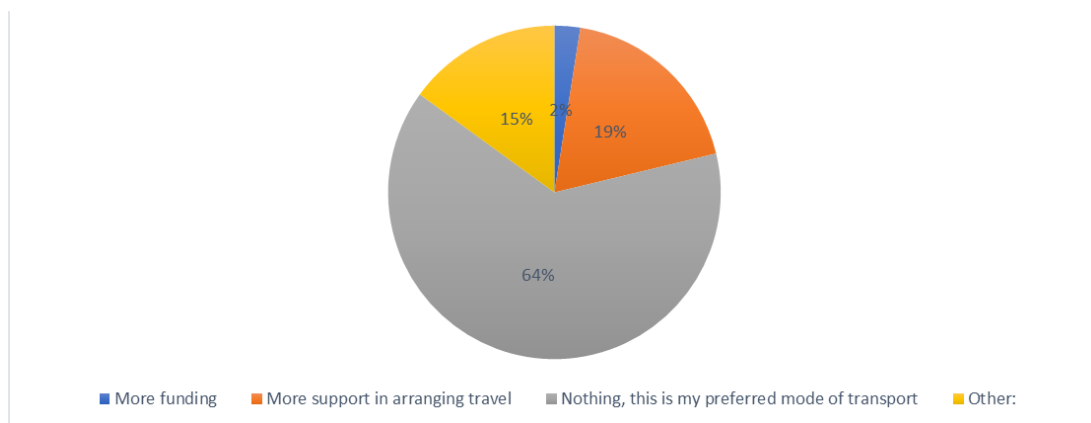


Figure 12 - Needs to consider other modes of travel for RUN-EU staff

4.3. Main notable differences – Staff / Student Mobility

One main notable difference between the staff and student mobility surveys was the number of respondents: 51 student responded and 130 staff members responded. It would be important to have the number of student and staff members involved in the RUN-EU mobility

to understand if those numbers were representative enough and to extract significant insights from the survey.

In addition, when evaluating transport choices insufficient data regarding distances between home and host institutions as well as the amount of time to plan these options made it difficult to understand how to improve future mobility activities. In both cases, students and staff members revealed a need to have more support in arranging travel. This support may be especially important for students as 26% were unsure if they received RUN-EU grant funding to help cover their travel expenses. Providing support could help students better understand the process of receiving the RUN-EU grant and how to best use it. Concerning staff members, funding did not appear to be a main issue since 60% had access to additional funding outside of RUN-EU (Erasmus+, Horizon or other budgets).

Comparing the main modes of transport used by students versus staff, it can be seen that staff members prioritize travelling by plane more than students. For future research, it would be important to identify if funding is a main factor for this choice or whether there are other reasons for staff to choose this travel option (e.g., scheduling, short-notice of planning and prices, etc.).

Finally, it was found that both students and staff members were open to having a virtual mobility experience. However, the reasons to have a virtual experience were inconsistent. Staff members agreed to a virtual experience after having had the chance to meet their colleagues in person. Students concerns revolved primarily around the lack of funding for alternative (and greener) travel options.

5. Future outlook and recommendations

5.1. Innovative opportunities to improve the RUN-EU mobility strategy

Enhanced mobility in higher education is a key aspect to the vision of the seven RUN-EU partners. The aim is to facilitate and promote an increase in student, researcher, and staff mobility opportunities within the RUN-EU alliance, which is an essential component in the design of our inter-university campus. To achieve this, a proper identification and development of new and innovative mobility activity models should be implemented with a focus on multiculturalism, equality, collaboration, innovation in teaching and research activities, inclusion and accessibility while also promoting the European values and culture among the RUN-EU alliance members and their regions.

5.2. Green mobility

In the context of mobility, innovation and digital transformation are gaining a vital role to anticipate, address, and overcome the new challenges and trends of the sector. Mobility is shifting towards an environmental-friendly, connected, autonomous, and personalized trend which needs to be addressed.

RUN-EU's focus in relation to Green Mobility has been gathering best practices in relation to providing information on sustainable travel, assessing existing policy plans, identifying concrete possibilities for more sustainable travel-options (including the cost) and gathering inspiring examples of innovative ways to work towards more sustainable travel and mobility. A good example is the HAMK Amazing Business Train. This is a workshop concept where students and professional experts meet together on a train to work on developing and bringing new business ideas to life. HAMK is currently implementing this initiative for its students and this workshop concept may be implemented in other RUN-EU partner locations in the future.

Various barriers were encountered in exploring ways to improve in the area of Green Mobility:

- An apparent tension between mobility and sustainability
- Current mindset still is to value time and money over reduced CO2 impact
- Funding is key, Erasmus+ top up is not nearly enough as a way to promote other forms of transportation

- Programmes are quite tight, sometimes allowing little flexibility
- Location of RUN-EU partners are remote and therefore not easy to be reached with alternative transportation. This makes it difficult to come up with green mobility transportation options to share to students and staff.
- Sustainable mobility is broader than only travel: requires a multidisciplinary approach from different angles and therefore should be backed up with policy

RUN-EU aims to work on green travel from 5 different angles which will all result in new ideas and solutions:

- 1) Give access and provide information on green mobility to individuals, students and staff
- 2) Give suggestions to provide education / training on green mobility (and broader) to individuals, students and staff
- 3) Embed working on sustainability in policy and structures
- 4) Suggest to start pilots within RUN-EU of existing innovative small scale activities and of possible new ideas.
- 5) Create an innovative community within RUN-EU dedicated to the topic of sustainable mobility.

5.3. Reflection on previous recommendations by EMIC in the deliverable report D4.1

An important first recommendation made in the document D4.1 was to connect the relevant persons in charge; which was done immediately through the launch of EMIC and the EMIC Live Weeks, which take place twice each year. This is noticeably helping to create strategies within the RUN-EU alliance with a view to increasing the exchange between the RUN-EU partners.

Secondly, D4.1 recommended to improve the visibility of mobility opportunities within the RUN-EU alliance. This recommendation was also acted on in the form of the creation of student friendly information materials (videos, flyers), improved visibility of RUN-EU on partner campuses as well as improved visibility of RUN-EU mobilities on the RUN-EU website and the websites of each RUN-EU partner institution.

Other recommendations were to remove barriers in student mobility, to create an environment of mutual enrichment and peer learning among staff of the International Offices of the RUN-EU partners, to develop and offer different (and green) options for mobility and to establish bridges with business entities in each region. All of these topics are being addressed by the Expert Teams composed by staff representing the International Offices of all RUN-EU partners.

Some RUN-EU partners already offer language courses, but the streamlining this offer across the RUN-EU alliance remains a point of attention. The same applies to ensuring the presence of attractive conditions for staff to participate in international mobility programmes. Each RUN-EU partner is following its own trajectory in increasing additional subject courses in English, and together the RUN-EU partners are currently in the process of developing new European Degrees (Joint and Double degree programmes in English). The EMIC Supportive Group is carrying out an ECHE Self-Assessment (ECHE = European Charter for Higher Education) of the implementation of European Standards such as the Bologna tools.

5.4. Recommendations

Although the number of mobilities has increased significantly in the 2021-2022 academic year, concerted efforts remain necessary to identify ways to boost mobility across the different work packages and to evaluate the impact of such activities.

This report shows the need for streamlined (administrative) processes across the participating institutions to facilitate mobility activities, particularly SAPs and the Research Discovery Programme this could contribute to more students and staff participating in such activities.

It is recommended to build on pilot promotional campaigns for various RUN-EU mobility programmes used at an institutional level and implement lessons learned across the alliance. This approach is believed to contribute to optimisation of established practices so as to raise awareness of RUN-EU mobility within the respective institutions and, in turn, increased numbers of participants for the full range of mobility activities offered.

In an effort to measure the impact of RUN-EU's diverse range of mobility activities more strongly, it is important for work package leaders and general management to raise awareness of and reinforce the importance of the evaluations to its members and participants in the activities organised. Increased response rates to mobility surveys remain vital to ensure the representativeness of results.

Despite that it is recognized that physical mobility has several advantages over virtual forms of collaboration, it is recommended to critically evaluate the need for physical mobility particularly in light of the RUN-EU alliance's commitment to green forms of mobility. Staff respondents to the mobility survey also indicate the desirability of virtual collaboration as a next step, after a connection has been established in a face-to-face setting.

It is advised to identify ways to increase the use of green travel options by students and staff. The mobility survey suggests that for students, increased mobility funding might play an important role in incentivising them to use greener travel options. For staff, support in making travel arrangements might be a factor that encourages them to explore alternative modes of travel.

Appendices

Appendix 1. EMIC Live Weeks

From 28-31 March 2022, the first face-to-face RUN-EU Mobility Week took place at FH Vorarlberg in Austria. This meeting came right after the official establishment of EMIC and was devoted to expert groups agreeing and working on their respective tasks and creating linkages between the different groups. The programme also consisted of informal activities for work package members to become further acquainted with each other and roles within EMIC.



Group picture EMIC team members, March 2022

The next Mobility Week took place from 24-28 October at IPCA in Barcelos, Portugal. During this week, expert groups built on the work they had done virtually in the preceding months and delivered prototypes of their respective deliverables at the end of the week.

Appendix 2. Recommendations for improving the Mobility Survey

To improve future analysis of mobility survey results for both students and staff key recommendations have been identified:

- There is a need to incentivise participants to complete the mobility survey for a higher response rate. Options could be to make it mandatory for participants, to schedule it in the agenda of participants, to make a draw to award participants with a lunch upon return to their home institution. This is because in the present study only 25% completed the survey which is not representative enough.
- When comparing the areas of personal development for student and staff members, all categories received a score of 4 or higher on a scale of 1-5. This approach confirms that using such a likert scale grading for a large number of questions may result in poor focus from the respondents. To improve focus in such a survey, asking participants to rank answers may give better results. For example, asking respondents to rank the different options through drag and drop options from more important to less important gives better insight and is more interactive for the respondents.
- The survey evaluated the main needs for students to consider other modes of travel but did not take into account the greener choices that the students were confronted with. For example, a train ride between the Netherlands and Portugal versus a plane trip to identify how to make future travel greener when suitable.
- In addition, the amount of time for students to book their travel options was not evaluated. If students had more time to plan and evaluate how to reach their destination, the results may have differed. For example, some Short Advanced Programs were promoted with very short time frames (1-2 weeks).
- To improve support provided to students and staff when planning their mobility, tailored questions regarding arranging transportation should be part of the next surveys to better understand what affects their decision making. For example, to reach islands like Ireland, some transport options may not be as accessible than to reach other locations.
- It is also recommended to pilot initiatives such as ride-sharing and accommodation for students to incentivise students to participate in RUN-EU activities. This is because travel and associated costs appear to be a problem for students.

- A need to better explain to students the process of RUN-EU grant funding was highlighted. A visual timeline illustrating how the process works and what are the key dates related to applying and receiving the grant may be a useful tool to do so.
- For both students and staff members, a clear calendar and early promotion of upcoming RUN-EU activities can help give more time to participants to plan their experience and perhaps improve the support they feel at their home institution.



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