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The experiences,
practices and
preferences of outgoing
exchange students

From Sweden with Erasmus+



Swedish Council for
Higher Education

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**The experiences, practices and preferences of
outgoing exchange students**



Universitets- och
högskolerådet

From Sweden with Erasmus+
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Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) 2018
Text: André Bryntesson, Mikael Börjesson & Ashley Haru, Swedish Centre for Studies
of the Internationalisation of Higher Education (SIHE), Uppsala University
Department for Policy Analysis
Contact person: Carina Hellgren.
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Foreword

The Swedish government, the European Commission and the Nordic Council of Ministers have tasked the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) with providing opportunities for participation in international exchanges and cooperation. Internationalisation and mobility increase the quality of Swedish education, and through the programmes for which the Council is responsible, pupils, students, teachers and staff at Swedish schools, higher education institutions and education providers can cooperate across borders and participate in exchanges and traineeships in European nations.

Since Sweden joined the European Erasmus programme in 1992, every year around 3,000 Swedish students have spent one or two semesters at a university in Europe. The issue of increased mobility for students is a high political priority, both nationally and in the EU, and after remaining constant for many years, the number of outgoing Swedish students has increased somewhat since 2014. This is good, but some funding intended for mobility in higher education remains unutilised. The budget for student mobility within Erasmus+ will increase significantly faster in the coming years than it has thus far, and participation must increase if Sweden is to achieve the European target of 20 per cent student mobility by 2020. Additionally, the ambition for student mobility remains high in the discussions that have begun about the programme to replace Erasmus+ after 2020.

To better understand the background behind Swedish students' limited participation in the programme, UHR needs more knowledge about why and how students choose to participate in an Erasmus+ exchange. The study presented here is based on questionnaires sent to around 6,000 Swedish students who travelled abroad via Erasmus+, providing a foundation for such knowledge. The focus of the study is the patterns found in Swedish Erasmus students' motivations for a period of mobility and the outcomes they experienced.

All students who participate in an Erasmus+ exchange complete a questionnaire as soon as their stay abroad is complete. The questionnaire includes questions about their motivation for the exchange and thoughts about their future after returning home, as well as their own assessment of their experience and personal development. The fact that all the students fill in the questionnaire and the high number of respondents make this data valuable for people who are interested in young people's thoughts about studies and the labour market, as well as on internationalisation and intercultural skills.

However, there is a large volume of data, both as regards the number of questions and respondents – so large that it is difficult to do it justice using simple statistical methods to identify relationships. UHR is therefore positive to its cooperation with the Swedish Centre for Studies of the Internationalisation of Higher Education (SIHE) at Uppsala University, which has undertaken this study of the experiences, practices and preferences of Swedish Erasmus

students on behalf of UHR. André Bryntesson, Mikael Börjesson and Ashley Haru have approached the data set using multiple correspondence analysis, which is a well-proven method for identifying systematic patterns in large amounts of data. The presentation and interpretation of the results in this report are those of the authors.

UHR is delighted to see that the Erasmus+ exchange is positive for the students. Of those who completed the exchange, 93 per cent say that they are satisfied. Partially new and important information for UHR is that the three most well-known types of reasons provided by students for the selection of country and higher education institution for exchange – academic, labour market-related and cultural – are not completely overlapping. The students who actively apply to academically attractive environments abroad are also among the most satisfied students, which has not been shown in previous Erasmus+ questionnaires.

UHR sees the issue of student mobility as a high priority. Knowledge and insights from the report will be used to develop and improve information and communication to students and higher education institutions about the opportunities for academic and personal development through Erasmus+. The hope is also that Swedish higher education institutions will use these results in their work to reach out to students with differing backgrounds as well as with differing motivations and reasons for studying abroad, so that as many Swedish students as possible will have the opportunity to develop through Erasmus+.

Karin Röding, Director-General

Summary

This report investigates patterns among Swedish Erasmus+ students' motivations for, and experiences of, their exchange period. Using the statistical method of *specific multiple correspondence analysis (SMCA)*, we have analysed data from the mandatory participant survey of all Swedish outgoing students during the 2014 and 2015 Erasmus+ calls for proposals. The method reveals which motivations and experiences often appear together and which ones rarely do. This report discusses the largest differences between more typical combinations of experiences and motivations, as well as other factors with which they tend to be associated.

Academic and labour market orientation is related to satisfaction and personal development

The clearest difference between more typical combinations of motivations and experiences among the students under investigation is based on their degree of academic and labour market-orientation in their motivations for going abroad and criteria for selecting a higher education institution (HEI). These motivations and criteria also correlate with their satisfaction with, and perceived personal development from, the mobility period, which is generally very high. 93 per cent were rather or very satisfied with their mobility period. Students who responded positively to questions about whether they were motivated to study abroad by the quality of the receiving HEI, and those who chose a receiving HEI based on its reputation or educational offering, were among those who were most satisfied with their mobility period. This was also the case for students who decided to go abroad to improve their position on the domestic or international labour market and who hoped to build a private and professional network. Students who expressed such academic or labour market-oriented motivations to a lesser extent tended to be somewhat less satisfied with their period abroad.

Degree of cultural orientation is the second most important division

The second most prominent difference in the data is the degree to which students have what we describe as a cultural orientation. On one side of the division, we find students who put linguistic, geographical and social factors at the heart of their decisions and motivations. These students are also somewhat more labour market oriented. On the opposite side, we find students who did *not* base their choice of receiving HEI on its geographical location or social life, and who did not choose to study abroad for linguistic

reasons or to get to know another country. These students tend to be more academically oriented.

Three oppositions: an academic, a labour market and a cultural

If we study the two first divisions in the analyses in a plane with two axes, three different oppositions appear. The first opposition is based on academic orientation and is an opposition between academically oriented students and students who are less academically oriented in their motivations for studying abroad and in their choice of receiving HEI. The academically oriented students were most satisfied with their academic experience, such as the form and content of teaching, while the inverse was true for the less academically oriented students.

The second opposition is based on questions related to work, and is an opposition between labour market-oriented students and students with less of a labour market orientation. The labour market-oriented students tended to perceive that they had improved their position on the labour market as well as their ability to adapt and act in new situations to a slightly higher degree than other respondents. The opposite was true for students who were less labour market-oriented.

The final opposition was based on a difference between culturally oriented students and those who were less motivated by cultural factors. Unlike the other two oppositions, this cultural opposition does not correspond to how satisfied students were with their mobility period, nor how much they believed they had personally developed.

North-South: an academic Nordic-French pole against a heterogeneous cultural pole

The data also shows that students at Swedish business schools, as well as at art and design schools, are most clearly overrepresented among the academically oriented and culturally disinterested students. This is also true for students on political science and engineering programmes at some Swedish HEIs.

To a very high extent, these students choose to study in other Nordic countries, and they tend to select their receiving HEIs based on reputation and educational offering. Many of the business and political science students do the same, but are also overrepresented at a few HEIs in France. These academically oriented students are markedly different to those who have chosen to study at French and Spanish HEIs, and to some extent German and British ones, to improve their language skills or study in a specific city. In the case of Germany, this cultural demand is mainly concentrated to Berlin's HEIs. These culturally oriented students come from a wide range of Swedish HEIs, although a few are somewhat overrepresented.

In this way, the degree of academic and cultural orientation, as well as the level of satisfaction with the mobility period, follow educational and geographical patterns, with an opposition between what could be called the academic Nordic-French pole and the more heterogeneous cultural pole.

Geographical patterns from north to south are also related to the level of satisfaction with the mobility period, not least with the study environment and the receiving HEI. For example, it is more common to be less satisfied with academic factors or to encounter administrative difficulties among students at some Spanish, Greek and French HEIs. Studying in the Nordic countries or at HEIs with a very good reputation appears to be a safer option for those who do not wish to risk struggling with sub-standard education, administrative problems or language difficulties. The students who study abroad in the Nordic countries are clearly overrepresented among those who are most satisfied, especially with their education.

In these places, one is also more likely to have more academically oriented Swedish classmates, since these factors are highly characteristic of the students who choose to study in other Nordic countries. For those who are academically oriented, yet wish to study in warmer locations, there are a number of prestigious HEIs in France and Italy that recruit students on the basis of academic reputation and educational offering.

East-West: Unclear motivations behind studies in Eastern Europe

In addition to the opposition between north and south, there is a division that largely mirrors the geographical difference between east and west. The Western European countries are overrepresented as destination countries among the more satisfied and most academically and labour market-oriented students, whereas most countries in Eastern Europe are overrepresented among students without such orientations.

The study shows that there seems to be a logic of distance that applies to both geography and culture. The more culturally oriented the students are, the further away from the Nordic countries the students travel for their mobility period.

The large Western countries have recruitment advantages

The pattern of which countries are overrepresented as destinations among different types of students can also be interpreted as a pattern of dominating and dominated countries, based on two different principles.

Students in countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany often have a combination of all types of motivations for studying abroad. These countries can recruit students according to both an academic logic as well as a cultural or linguistic logic by offering high quality education and good

conditions for improving the languages that the Swedish students studied in compulsory and upper-secondary education.

Instead, countries in more peripheral positions recruit mainly on the basis of only one of these recruitment logics. For example, the Nordic countries mainly recruit students based on quality and educational offering, but are not as geographically attractive or culturally interesting destinations. The opposite is true for Spain and Greece. However, France is an exception. While the country has an overrepresentation of the same type of students as Spain and Greece, it stands out by having HEIs that are positioned at two different extremes – some with a strong overrepresentation of the most academically oriented students, and others with the most culturally oriented ones.

Northwest has an advantage over southeast

Parallel to the centre-periphery relationship described above, the economically and academically weaker countries in the eastern and, to some extent, southern part of Europe are in a disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the countries in Western Europe and have an overrepresentation of moderately or less satisfied students. They largely do not appear to attract students with more academic or labour market-related motivations. Spain, Greece and Portugal have similar positions along the dimension of satisfaction to the Eastern European countries.

Furthermore, it remains unclear what makes some Swedish students choose Eastern Europe as their destination. Firstly, very few students choose to go there. Secondly, those who do are characterised by negative responses on most motivation factors – which may be a failure of the questionnaire to capture their true motivations.

More nuanced account of Erasmus+

One of the main contributions of the report is to highlight how students use the Erasmus+ programme for different purposes. Previous studies have often concluded that most students participate because they want to live abroad, learn languages and get to know new people. At the same time, most students retrospectively state personal and social factors as the main benefits of having participated in the programme. However, apparently, one important reason why some students choose not to participate is precisely this image of Erasmus+ as a social rather than as an academic exchange programme.

This study nevertheless shows that there is a significant minority of students who make use of the programme to go to academically attractive milieus abroad. This group of students is also overrepresented among the students who encounter the least difficulties and who are most satisfied with their participation.

Introduction

Student mobility is a central component in the internationalisation of higher education

The internationalisation of higher education in Sweden has come to be increasingly evident, focused and complex. This trend gathered pace at the end of the 1980s, due to the introduction in 1989 of the opportunity to receive Swedish student finance for almost all studies abroad, which led to a significant increase in the outward flow of freemover students. The annual number of students studying abroad went from a few hundred to around 25,000. Additionally, from 1992 it was possible to participate in the EU's major exchange programme for students, Erasmus (Erasmus+ since 2014). Even if the volumes within Erasmus were not as extensive as those for outgoing freemover students, having the Erasmus programme meant that Swedish HEIs had a clearer focus on internationalisation, through establishing exchange agreements with foreign HEIs and through students beginning to travel outward or come to Sweden from other countries within the framework of these agreements.

Internationalisation entered a new phase in the years around the turn of the millennium, with increasing focus on the structure of the higher education system. This was particularly noticeable in the reshaping of higher education that took place in 2007 due to the Bologna Process, with the central reasoning being that standardising the length of programmes would contribute to increased student mobility within Europe. In a parallel development, the flows of students to and from other parts of the world also became increasingly important. In 2011, after a significant increase in the number of incoming students from countries outside the EU/EEA, Sweden introduced tuition fees for these third country students. Naturally, this had significant consequences for the number of students travelling to Sweden, with an initial reduction of around 80 per cent in the group that must now pay fees. At the same time, this has meant that the incoming students are of greater economic value to the HEIs and that demands on HEIs have increased.

Even if the internationalisation of higher education is now more complex, student mobility remains its core. It is a central parameter for measuring the degree of internationalisation at international, national and local levels. Mobility is also what motivates further changes to the system – as was the case with the implementation of the Bologna Process. Student mobility also covers vast numbers of students. On any given occasion, there are around 24,000 Swedish students abroad, while there are more than 35,000 foreign students studying at Swedish HEIs (UKÄ & SCB, 2017, pp. 38–39). Comprehensive administration has been built up around these students, and many people now work solely with student mobility.

As we will argue below, there are major differences between incoming and outgoing mobility as well as between participating in an exchange programme and organising independent study abroad. In this report, we will focus on the group of students who study abroad via the largest exchange programme: Erasmus+.

Outgoing exchange students are, for Sweden, the smallest of the four varieties of student mobility (incoming or outgoing freemovers or exchange students). However, this is of interest because of its importance for internationalisation at Swedish HEIs. This group includes students who are offered an opportunity for international experience via Swedish higher education. Because they spend much of their period of education in Sweden, their international experience can also benefit many other Swedish students. Finally, outgoing exchange students are also important because they contribute to their HEI's international visibility by functioning as ambassadors for their home institution and for Sweden as a study destination.

Exchange studies and freemover studies are two different forms of student mobility

In general, student mobility can be divided into two types: *freemover studies* and *exchange studies*. The first type of study is also called *degree mobility* and the latter is called *credit mobility*, because studying abroad may have different purposes. In the first case, the idea is that the entire programme is studied abroad and results in a degree. In the latter case, the degree is awarded by the sending HEI, but includes elements of studying abroad.

A further designation comes from how these two types of mobility are organised. Freemover studies are characterised as *spontaneous mobility*, while exchange studies are *organised mobility*. This is reasonable from the perspective of the HEIs and the state, but from the perspective of an individual student, the name spontaneous mobility is perhaps strange as a great deal of preparation is often required before studying abroad.

In previous studies, we have chosen to regard these two ways of studying abroad as two distinct cases of transnational education strategies (Börjesson, 2005, p. 563; Börjesson & Broady, 2006, pp. 97–98). Freemover studies can be regarded as an *alternative* strategy. Instead of a degree from the home nation, the student invests in a foreign one. There may be various reasons for this, such as not being admitted to the Swedish programme that was applied for, or not choosing Swedish education because the content and quality of a foreign one is regarded as superior. However, exchange studies function as a *complementary* strategy, where studying abroad adds to the value of a Swedish degree.

Different logics in the flows of freemover and exchange students

Exchange studies and freemover studies also differ in another significant manner: they largely follow different logics. Freemover studies are a central element of the commodification and marketisation of higher education. Freemover students are charged the highest tuition fees, and in many countries, and for many HEIs, these students have come to be vital sources of income (Adams, 2007; Ziguras & Law, 2006; Mazzarol & Hosie, 1996). However, exchange studies are not usually associated with tuition fees and instead build upon the principle of a gift economy; HEIs exchange students with each other and can thus be said to have settled their costs.

There is also a numerical aspect to this. For exchange studies, at least theoretically, it is important to have some form of balance between incoming and outgoing students. This could be at a departmental level, where the costs are located, but could also be aggregated to HEI or national levels. There is no such integral limitation for freemovers. The number of freemover students that can be admitted to a programme is an issue for the market, that depends on the level of demand and how many students an HEI is prepared to admit – the prestige of a programme and HEI are often built upon the number and proportion of students who are *not* admitted.

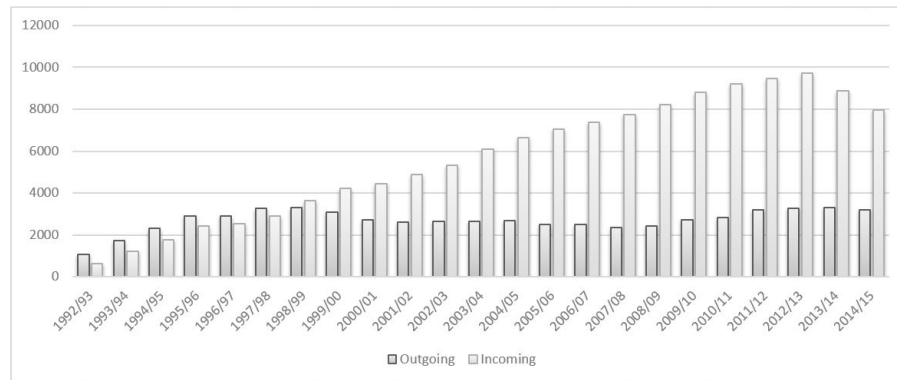
In studies and analyses of student mobility, it is wise to differentiate between exchange students and freemovers because they follow different logics at both individual and institutional levels. In this report, we will focus on exchange students that travel outward within the framework of the Erasmus+ exchange programme.

Sweden has more incoming than outgoing students within Erasmus+

Since 1992, every year several thousand Swedish students study abroad via the Erasmus programme, from three months to two semesters. Initially, the number of outgoing students increased rapidly and reached a level of about 3,000 outgoing students in four years. After this, the number has remained relatively constant, even if dropping to 2,500 outgoing students a few years into the 2000s. A slight increase has been observed in recent years, and since 2011/12 the level has been above 3,000 outgoing students. However, given that the number of students in higher education has significantly increased since the 1990s, the outgoing Erasmus students' share of all students has declined.

It is also noticeable that the balance between incoming and outgoing mobility has shifted with time. The number of incoming students noticeably rose until the academic year of 2012/13. However, despite the number of incoming Erasmus students then declining somewhat, Sweden now has more than twice as many incoming Erasmus students as outgoing ones.

Figure 1. Incoming and outgoing Erasmus students 1992/93 – 2014/15.



Source: The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR)

The aggregate statistics for Erasmus students show that Sweden does not have a balanced exchange within the programme. At the same time, it should be said that this is not unique to Sweden. Several Nordic and English-speaking countries have a surplus of incoming students, even if Sweden's surplus is among the larger ones (European Commission, 2017, pp. 22–23). To some extent, this reflects the general patterns that exist for freemover students, where English-speaking countries and/or economically strong countries with well-developed educational systems have many more incoming than outgoing students (Börjesson, 2017).

Recently, interest in outgoing students has become increasingly relevant because of the EU target that, by 2020, at least 20 per cent of people graduating from higher education should have had a period of study or traineeship abroad that lasted for at least three months. Even if this EU target is a benchmark for the total student population in the EU, it is something that individual countries compare themselves with. Sweden has not yet achieved this target (Ahlstrand & Ghafoori, 2016, p. 8; Hauschildt, Gwosć, Netz, & Mishra, 2015, p. 191). Overall, this justifies finding out more about the students who are travelling out of Sweden.

Exchange students in other studies

In this section, we describe relevant and contextualised results from studies and summaries of student mobility in general and Erasmus+ in particular. Studies of Swedish students are at the forefront, but some results relating to students from other countries are also discussed.

Large countries and languages most common

Outgoing Swedish Erasmus students mostly travel to the UK (18 per cent), followed by France (16 per cent), Germany (13 per cent), the Netherlands (10 per cent) and then Spain (10 per cent) (see the description of the population below). Altogether, these five destinations represented two-thirds of the outgoing Swedish students on the programme. The number that travels to the UK could well have been higher, however, because the demand for places exceeds those available (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 30). It is likely that the students' language skills largely explain these patterns. English, French, German and Spanish are languages that are traditionally taught in Swedish schools.

This is probably one reason why Italy, which has a larger population than Spain, does not attract more than 7 per cent of the Swedish Erasmus students. The greater proportion that travel to the Netherlands, which is a considerably smaller country, is probably also language related. Unlike Italy, the Netherlands has a wide range of education in English and a high level of English among the population. There are indications that, for many students, simply understanding the language of instruction is not enough; it is also regarded as important to be able to communicate with people outside the lecture halls (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 39).

There are also indications that the patterns of outward travel reproduce themselves, in that students tend to choose destinations to which many other others have previously travelled (Rodríguez González, Bustillo Mesanza, & Mariel, 2011, p. 416). This could be a contributing factor in why countries with the traditional school languages still dominate the outward flows, despite it now being possible to study and conduct everyday communication in English in a much greater number of countries.

Language and location the most important reasons

Given the countries to which Swedish students travel, it is not surprising that the two foremost reasons why Swedish students generally choose to study abroad are to experience another country and to learn a language or improve their language skills. In general, location and language appear to take precedence over academic considerations or labour market reasons. Other, slightly less important reasons they have provided are getting perspective on their studies, improving their career options abroad, improving the quality of their education, improving their career options in their home country, achieving a change in lifestyle or studying in a particular country for personal reasons. Swedish students themselves add further factors: gaining new experiences, meeting new people, challenging themselves, developing personally, travelling to have fun or having family ties in a particular country. (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, pp. 19–20)

In one study of Erasmus students specifically, reasons for studying abroad among Swedish students were ranked in the following manner: the opportunity to live abroad, meet new people, learn a language or improve language skills, improve labour market opportunities in their home country and develop “soft” skills such as adaptability or taking initiative (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 80).

Economic aspects are not significant

Just over 40 per cent of the students who neither undertook nor planned to undertake a mobility period stated that they experienced increased economic cost as a barrier. Almost as many of the students who do actually undertake a mobility period state that they had partially financed it with the help of money from their parents, family or partner. (Hauschildt, Gwosć, Netz, & Mishra, 2015, pp. 196–197; 200) When this question was specifically applied to the Erasmus programme, 36 per cent stated cost as an important or very important reason for not even considering participating (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 89).

Extending the length of studies can be experienced as problematic, because extending studies in addition to delaying entry to the labour market also entails greater student debt. One study highlights how student finance systems with a high level of loans, such as the Swedish one, is perceived as an economic burden similar to funding studies abroad privately (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 50).

However, the Swedish students who conducted a mobility period within the Erasmus programme had a low level of concern for the financial aspects, something that differentiates the outgoing Swedish students from those in many other countries (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 76). The Swedish students who participate in the programme thus do not appear to be particularly worried that they may increase their level of student debt. More than half the Swedish students who plan to study abroad actually undertake a mobi-

lity period, which is a high level internationally (Hauschildt, Gwosć, Netz, & Mishra, 2015, p. 192). This strengthens the perception that the barriers to Swedish students conducting studies abroad are relatively minor in comparison to those for students from other countries.

Erasmus+ is primarily perceived as a social experience

Both planning and actually completing a mobility period are more common among Swedish students who have parents with a high level of education than among other students (Hauschildt, Gwosć, Netz, & Mishra, 2015, p. 192). In Finland, Sweden and Denmark, it also seems that experience of moving within the country has a positive effect on the likelihood of studying abroad at a later stage (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 9). However, some students who had already had experience of living abroad for shorter or longer periods also stated this as a reason for *not* studying abroad. For these students, one experience of time abroad seems to be interchangeable with another, and the authors of the study therefore suggested that the academic value of studying abroad could be emphasised more for these students (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 13).

As regards students who have already participated in a mobility period, personal and social factors are ranked highest when they evaluate the benefits of studying abroad. Academic value and benefits on the labour market are ranked somewhat lower. In general, younger students find studying abroad more developmental than older students, with the exception of academic aspects that are ranked more highly by older students (Souto Otero, 2008, p. 142; CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, pp. 26–27).

This could conceivably be because older students have already had time to amass some of the experience and life lessons that are new to the younger students (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 26). To some extent, this could also be linked to younger students integrating more easily into the culture of exchange students, which many students believe is very focused on parties (see CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 28; Vossensteyn et al., 2010, p. 56).

The latter was also a common way for non-mobile students to explain their reasons for staying home – they did not feel it was worth risking extending their period of study to go on a student exchange that they perceived as primarily being about informal social activities (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, pp. 29–30). Only 20 per cent of the students in the survey felt that a mobility period brought academic benefits compared to completing the entire period of study in their home country, while two-thirds felt that mobility brought more personal development (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 30). The image of Erasmus+ as a socially, rather than academically, oriented exchange is double-edged, in that this is what attracts many students to participate, while the more academically oriented students may be put off (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, pp. 56–57).

Large differences in participation

The Swedish HEIs that sent out the most students via Erasmus+ during the survey period were Lund University, the University of Gothenburg and Uppsala University, followed by Stockholm University and Linköping University. Instead, if we calculate the outgoing students in the calls for Erasmus+ 2014 and 2015 as a proportion of all registered students at the HEIs for the academic years of 2014/15 and 2015/16, the Stockholm School of Economics is at the top, with 3.7 per cent. The University College of Arts, Crafts and Design is in second place with 2.1 per cent, ahead of Chalmers University of Technology at 1.8 per cent and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm at 1.6 per cent. The proportion for the three HEIs that send the highest number of students, in absolute terms, is around 1 per cent (SCB and UHR's calculations).

The highest percentages of outgoing students are found in the humanities and social sciences. Teacher education programmes have a particularly low mobility rate, not only in Sweden but in Europe as a whole. However, Finland and Norway have considerably higher percentages undertaking a stay abroad (14–17 per cent) in this area than in Sweden and Denmark (3–4 per cent). (Hauschildt, Gwosć, Netz, & Mishra, 2015, p. 195) Medicine, mathematics, ICT and agriculture in Finland, Sweden and Norway also have relatively low exchange mobility (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 9).

Many students feel that possibly needing to extend their period of study, miss parts of the programme at the sending HEI or make studying abroad fit with studies at home are problematic. On programmes in medicine, law, engineering and natural science or agriculture, one study showed that extending the period of study and missing parts of the programme at home were barriers. On medical and teaching programmes, difficulties in getting studies abroad to fit with studies at home were also frequently regarded as a problem. (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 11)

However, unlike the study referenced above, a study of Erasmus+ found no significant differences between the fields of education, neither as regards the problems students encountered nor their motivation for participating. Still, barriers were generally regarded as greater by students at first-cycle (bachelor) level rather than second-cycle (master) level, but the barriers' relative importance remained the same. (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, pp. 60–61)

Previous studies have shown that, internationally, participation in Erasmus+ differs between different types of HEIs, such as between more practical or vocational HEIs and traditional ones (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, p. 48). This could be associated with both the subject and socioeconomic profiles of the students recruited by the HEI, or the emphasis placed on internationalisation at the various HEIs.

Encouragement is important

One of the studies referred to above particularly highlighted encouragement as an important factor. Students who did not feel they had been encouraged to study abroad by their teachers often emphasised academic reasons for

not studying abroad, while those who had not received encouragement from other students, friends and family, more often emphasised personal reasons. A lack of encouragement from study counsellors and international coordinators was associated with the process of getting courses abroad to fit with courses at the sending HEI as well as inadequate information from the sending HEI as being perceived as barriers. (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 14) Encouragement from other students seems to have been particularly important (CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 22).

In other words, ensuring that outgoing students have a good experience and that they then have the chance to share these good experiences could be important in encouraging more students to undertake a mobility period.

Overall impression provided by previous studies

Students who travel out of Sweden do so for different reasons. Some hope to improve their position on the labour market. Some go abroad for academic reasons. Others want to meet new challenges, develop personally or travel for social reasons and meet new people. However, for the majority, the location and the language are central. The flows clearly head to countries with the traditional school languages as their national language, or to countries that offer education in English. The single largest receiving country, the UK, would probably receive even more students if there were places for all those who wanted them.

As regards the largest exchange programme, Erasmus+, many people appear to have an image of the programme as an opportunity to meet new people, spend time on social activities and perhaps take studying less seriously. According to previous studies, financial issues are not of great importance for outgoing Swedish students, who receive both Swedish student finance and programme grants. Those who don't feel geographically bound by social ties and relationships, and whose studies are not problematic to combine with a mobility period, are thus relatively free to define for themselves what they want their period of mobility to focus on. Even if social and cultural aims and reasons dominate, they do not apply to all students.

Several of the studies covered above treat exchange students as one group. As regards their motivations, the results are aggregated. They show that the majority of outgoing Swedish students are socially rather than academically oriented and that, in evaluations of the benefits of studying abroad, the majority of the students afterwards emphasise personal and social factors, rather than academic ones.

Instead, in the following report, the focus is on differences within the group of outgoing exchange students. We also investigate what other qualities in the student are associated with whether they are more academically or more socially or culturally oriented in their reasons for choosing to study abroad. For example, students may experience the benefits of studying abroad in different ways, depending on what their motivations were for their studies abroad and where they chose to travel.

About the study

A general overview of the purpose of the study, the data on which it is based and how we conducted the study is provided below. Finally, a statistical overview is provided in the form of frequency tables for the group of students who are included in the study.

Purpose: To explore the motivations for and the outcomes of Swedish students' Erasmus exchanges

The following study intends to investigate what the Swedish Erasmus students were looking for when studying abroad, as well as how they experienced the exchange period and what they think they gained from it. The data set for the study comprises data from an obligatory questionnaire (participant report) that everyone who participates in Erasmus+ answers after completing their mobility. This data includes responses from, in principle, all Swedish Erasmus students who were granted an exchange within the programme in 2014 or 2015. In total, this is around 6,600 students, which is therefore not a selection but the entire population.

The aim of our project is to better understand how Erasmus exchanges are experienced by the Swedish students who participate in the programme. What types of motivation do the students have for participating in the programme, how do they choose which HEI to travel to and what do they get out of their visit? The study has an explorative character and a broad approach to the data.

The questionnaire covers six themes:

- factors that influenced the choice to study abroad, the choice of country and HEI and how the exchange programme was perceived and experienced
- study situation
- personal development
- administrative issues (such as learning agreements and credit transfers)
- language skills and support
- personal finances.

The data makes it possible to investigate questions such as how motivation factors for the mobility period are associated with the students' experiences during the exchange and, in turn, whether this is linked to the country of choice, the sending HEI and programme.

The analysis method used is *specific multiple correspondence analysis (sMCA)*. This method is particularly suitable for analysing large numbers

of categorical variables and presenting fundamental patterns found in the data. This study is an attempt to examine, at a general level, the clearest patterns and differences between the outgoing students' reasons and their experiences, and to put these differences in relation to their sending HEI in Sweden, the receiving HEI and country, and the field of education.

Data: Questionnaire

One problem with several of the previous studies of exchange students is low response rates. The survey by CIMO, UHR and SIU had a response rate of 17 per cent in the Swedish selection, while the equivalent figure was 24 per cent in the Swedish basis for the Eurostudent V survey (UHR, 2015, p. 6; CIMO, UHR & SIU, 2013, p. 7).

The questionnaire data used in this report is unique in that practically all students have participated. There is a risk that response quality suffers when even students with low motivation are forced to participate. However, judging from the high number of free text responses, a large proportion of the students were motivated and took the time to properly complete the questionnaire. This applies to both satisfied and dissatisfied students. The data has been provided by UHR and analysed by the Swedish Centre for Studies of the Internationalisation of Higher Education (SIHE) at Uppsala University.

Method: Multiple correspondence analysis

The data has been analysed using *specific multiple correspondence analysis (sMCA)*, an analysis method that has been developed and used in France and which is part of the larger family of methods called *geometric data analysis* (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2004; 2010; Rouanet, Ackermann, & Le Roux, 2000; Lebaron & Le Roux, 2015). Typical for these methods is that they analyse the relationships between properties and individuals and present the results in multidimensional geometric spaces. The purpose is to find patterns in large and complex data and to highlight the most important differences between individuals and their properties.

The methods are widely used in sociology, which often works with comprehensive and complex data. For example, a predecessor to this method was the basis for Pierre Bourdieu's study of the social space in France during the 1960s and 70s (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 140f). He found systematic patterns in people's taste in music and literature, choice of car manufacturer, eating habits, sporting activities, etc, which turned out to be closely linked to people's inherited and acquired economic and cultural assets, and the relative balance between these.

The method builds a cloud of individuals and categories

The method builds two multi-dimensional clouds – one consisting of points that represent individuals and another consisting of points that represent response categories. How individuals respond to questions in the questionn-

aire thus decides how the individuals are positioned in relation to each other and how their answers relate to each other. Additionally, the method notes differences and looks for what factors are distinguishing. Individuals who have responded in a similar way are positioned close together in the cloud of individuals. The greater the differences in their answers, the further they are from each other in the cloud. A logical consequence of this is that individuals who have responded in a way that corresponds to the most frequent answers are located close to the centre of the cloud, while individuals who responded with a greater deviation end up in the periphery. A point's position in the cloud is entirely determined by its distance from all the other points, and the cloud can have a great many dimensions.

The cloud of response categories is a direct equivalent to the structure of the cloud of individuals, with unusual response categories at the periphery and more common ones in the centre. Response categories that often occur together with the individuals in the cloud are positioned close together, and response categories that rarely or never occur together are further apart. In sum: an individual's position in relation to all the other individuals is determined by their answers, and a response category's position is, in turn, determined by where the individuals who chose this response category are positioned in the cloud.

The distribution of the points in these clouds can be projected along many axes. However, the aim is to reduce complexity, which is done by creating a hierarchy of axes, where the most important differences are placed along the first axis, the second most important along the second, and so on. Often, analysing three or four axes is enough to gain a comprehensive image of the differences found in the data. When two axes are projected simultaneously, a two-dimensional plane appears. If this plane comprises the first and second axes, the two most important dimensions are visible at the same time. Whatever makes right or left or up or down in a projection is irrelevant, because the relative positions of the points to each other remains the same.

Axes are interpreted using supplementary variables

Multiple correspondence analysis makes an important distinction between active variables and supplementary variables. The active variables are used to build the cloud in the space to be analysed. How individuals respond to questions that are used as active variables decides how they are located in the space. The method exposes structures in the data, such as different groups that can be differentiated from each other. Because the method is relational, expressions such as poles (groups of linked response categories and the individuals that have chosen them) and oppositions (differences between such groups) are often used. For example, in one study examining Swedish cultural habits, the space of Swedish people's cultural habits is primarily characterised by a strong opposition between those who answered that they participate in a great deal of cultural activity and those who hardly participate in any cultural activities at all (Börjesson, 2016). After establishing the shape of these basic oppositions, one can go further and try to understand and explain why these structures have arisen.

This is done by projecting supplementary variables, variables which do not contribute to building the structure, but which can be assumed to be related to it, into the space. This makes it possible to see whether the differences that have been found are linked to properties such as sex, residential location or social background. In the case of cultural practices, it then becomes clear that people who are female or have higher education are overrepresented among large consumers of culture: the property of being female or highly educated ends up close to the categories that indicate comprehensive investment in culture (Börjesson, 2016).

In summary, the method is excellent if the aim is to expose the clearest structures in a data set and possibly then afterwards try to understand what these differences are due to or are associated with.

Terminology in the report

Correspondence analysis builds upon Euclidian geometry, and its technical vocabulary largely draws upon geometry and physics. We have tried to avoid unnecessary jargon and technicalities in this report, and explanations are generally provided when a concept is introduced. Even if this therefore entails some repetition, some compiled terminological notes are appropriate, so the reader can return to this section if necessary.

In the analysis, the **individuals** in the study are represented by **points**. A point's position in relation to all the other points is determined by how similarly or dissimilarly each individual has answered the questions used in the analysis. Two individuals with identical answers have exactly the same position in the cloud of individuals.

The **active variables** in the analysis are the questions that determine the distance between the individuals in the analysis. Individuals with similar answers to the different questions are located close together, and the distance between two individuals increases the more their answers differ.

Supplementary variables are questions, or properties, that do not decide the distance between individuals, but which can subsequently be projected onto the space. They can then help to interpret the results of the correspondence analysis.

The **response categories** are the values (responses) that the **variables** (questions) can assume. Like the individuals, the response categories are represented by points. In turn, the positions of these points are determined by the individuals who have provided these responses. This applies to both active and supplementary variables.

To make the graphs in the report easier to interpret, the thousands of points that represent individuals have been hidden. Instead, only the points that represent the response categories are shown.

When we use the concept of **space**, we are referring to the multi-dimensional space of *theoretically possible positions* that the individuals and categories in the analysis could assume, the space that the two clouds – of individuals and of response categories – are found in. Instead, a **cloud** consists of the individuals' and variable values' *actual positions* and their distribution in the space.

An **axis** is a one-dimensional representation of the cloud's distribution in space. The correspondence analysis creates a hierarchy of axes, in which the first axis is the best one-dimensional representation of the variation in the cloud. After this, there are additional hierarchically ordered axes in descending order, based on how much of the remaining variation in the cloud they capture. When we talk about a **plane**, this is a two-dimensional representation of the cloud's distribution in the space using two selected axes.

A **contribution value** is the relative contribution of one or more variables or response categories to the variance along a given axis. Because contribution value is a relative measure, the total is always 100 if all the variables' contribution values on a given axis are added together. A variable's contribution value is the sum of its response categories' contribution value. The contribution value is used to determine which variables and variable values can be used for the interpretation of a given axis. A rule of thumb is that the variables and variable values that contribute more than average are suitable for use when interpreting the axis.

Pole is an expression that is used for a group of individuals and response categories on a plane that have properties that are associated with each other and that can be differentiated from other groups of individuals and response categories on the plane. In general, poles represent trends in the data rather than actual groups with distinct borders to other groups.

When it is possible to see that groups of individuals and response categories differ from each other, it is often said that there is an **opposition**, i.e. an opposition or difference between groups of individuals and variables along one or several axes.

Description of the students in the data

In the surveyed group, six of ten students are female, and eight of ten have Swedish citizenship. The majority of students travelled out from the larger universities and institutes of technology. Most travelled from Lund University, the University of Gothenburg and Uppsala University, followed by Stockholm University and Linköping University. Altogether, these five HEIs represented half of all outgoing Erasmus students during the period under analysis.

Figure 2. Gender distribution, Swedish nationality and level of studies in the data.

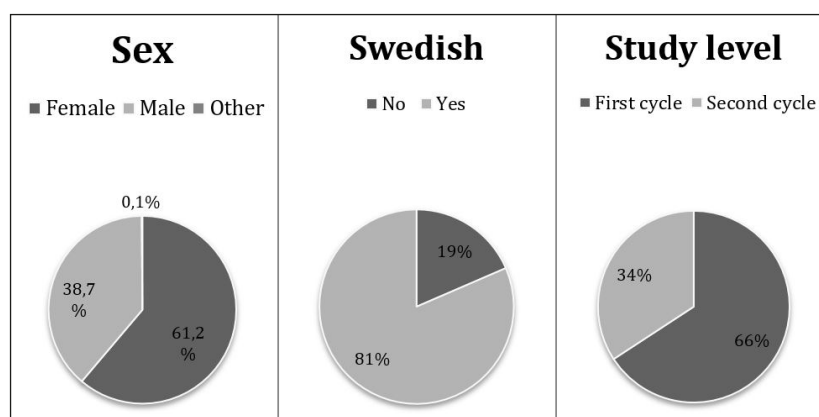
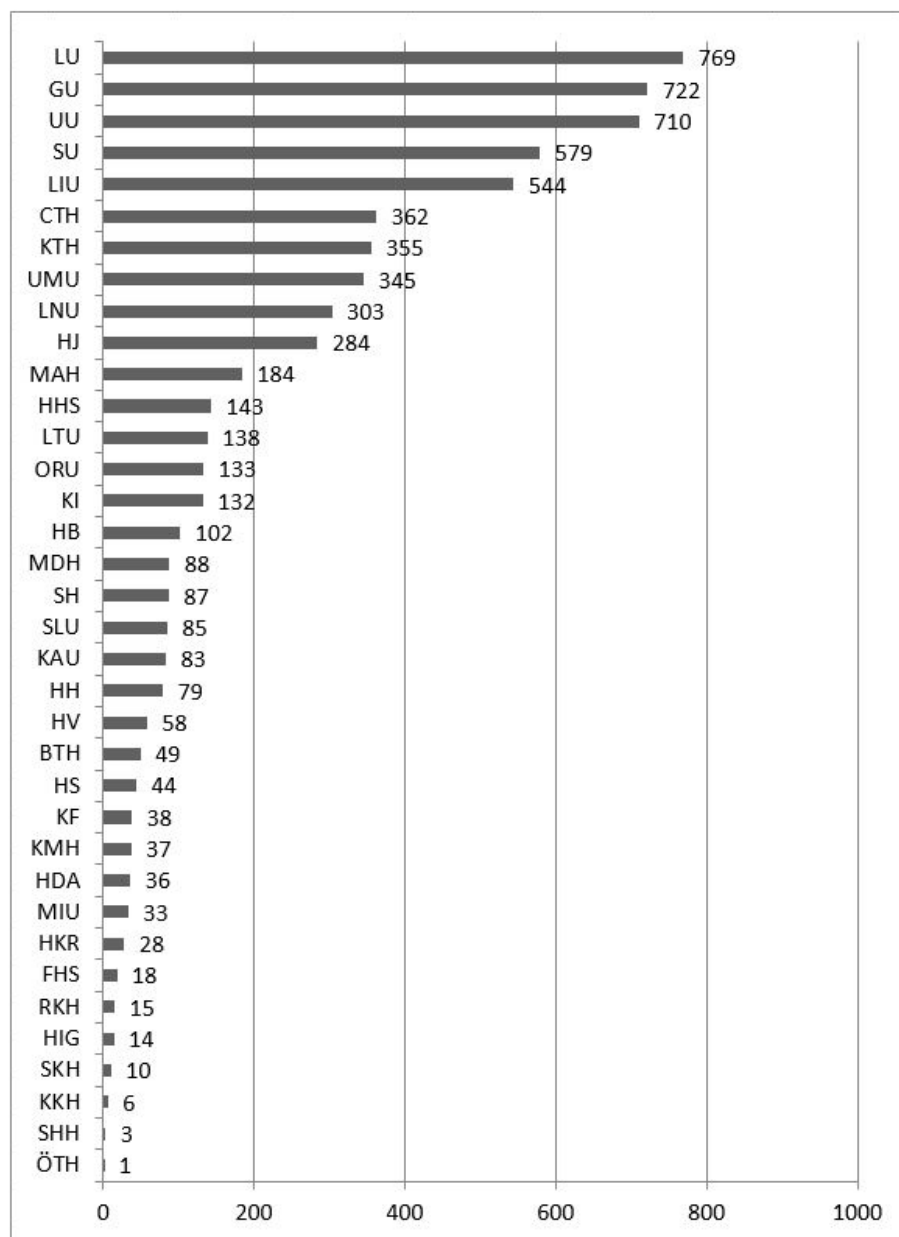


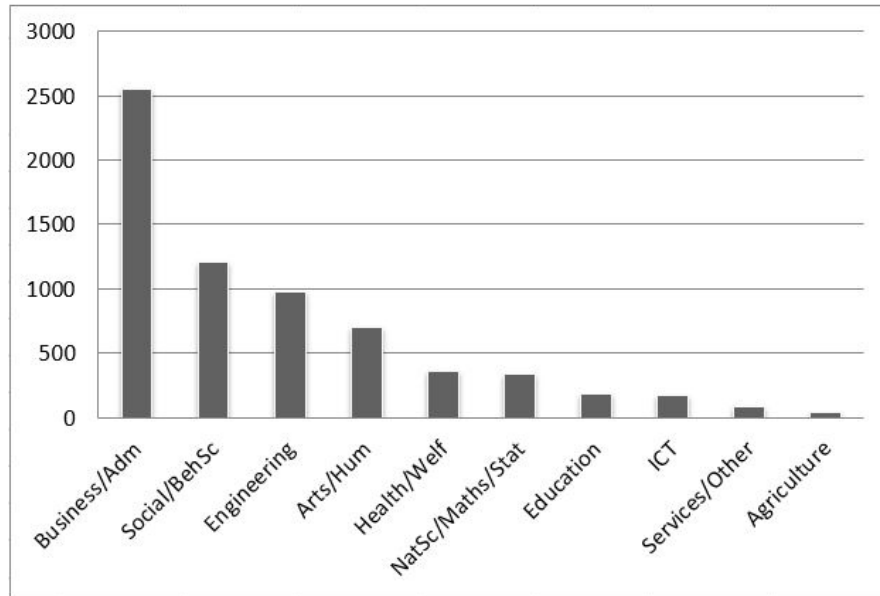
Figure 3. Students per HEI in the data.¹



¹ Abbreviations for HEIs in alphabetical order: BTH: Blekinge Institute of Technology. CTH: Chalmers University of Technology. FHS: Swedish Defence University. GU: University of Gothenburg. HB: University of Borås. HDA: Dalarna University. HH: Halmstad University. HHS: Stockholm School of Economics. HIG: University of Gävle. HJ: Jönköping University. HKR: Kristianstad University. HS: University of Skövde. HV: University West. KAU: Karlstad University. KF: University College of Arts, Crafts and Design. KI: Karolinska Institutet. KKH: Royal Institute of Art. KMH: Royal College of Music in Stockholm. KTH: KTH Royal Institute of Technology. LNU: Linnaeus University. LIU: Linköping University. LTU: Luleå University of Technology. LU: Lund University. MAH: Malmö University. MDH: Mälardalen University. MIU: Mid Sweden University. ORU: Örebro University. RKH: The Red Cross University College. SH: Södertörn University. SKH: Stockholm University of the Arts. SLU: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. SU: Stockholm University. UMU: Umeå University. UU: Uppsala University.

By far the largest group in the data consists of students with specialisations in business and administration. This is followed by social and behavioural sciences with half as many students, many of whom study political science. Engineering is in third place. Two-thirds conducted their exchange at first-cycle (bachelor) level, and one-third at second-cycle level (master). The students often applied to larger HEIs or institutes of technology.

Figure 4. Fields of study according to the top level of the ISCED.



Four of the five most popular destination countries correspond to the languages that have traditionally been taught in Swedish schools. The exception is the Netherlands which, with its extensive English-language offering, attracted many Swedish students. Few students chose to travel to our neighbouring Nordic countries, almost as few as to countries in Eastern Europe. Italy is in sixth place in the list of the most popular destination countries, but has two HEIs among the three most popular – one business school and one institute of technology. Both of these are in Milan.

Despite the UK being the most popular destination in the data, London was in twelfth place among the most popular cities and had no more than around one-tenth of the students who travelled to the UK. In comparison, the most popular city, Paris, had around one-third of the students who travelled to France, and Berlin and Madrid had almost one-fifth of the students in Germany and Spain. The most frequently attended British HEI, Edinburgh University, was in thirteenth place on the list of popular HEIs. As there is a high level of competition for places at HEIs in the UK, it is possible that students have been forced to apply to more HEIs with a wider geographic distribution. It may also be that Swedish students know more about the UK's educational landscape than French, German or Spanish ones, for example, and therefore apply to a greater number of different HEIs there.

Figure 5. Destination countries in the data.

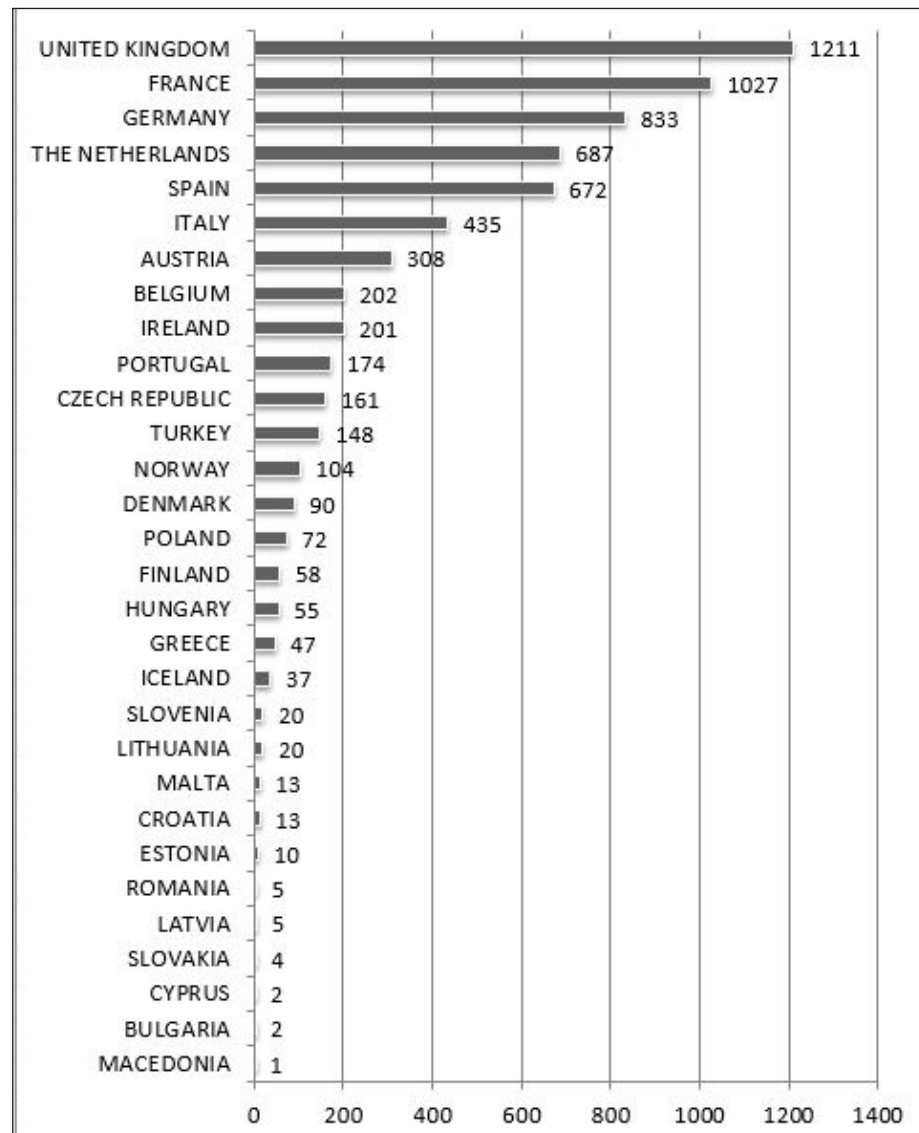


Figure 6. The most popular destination cities, with at least 50 students in the data.

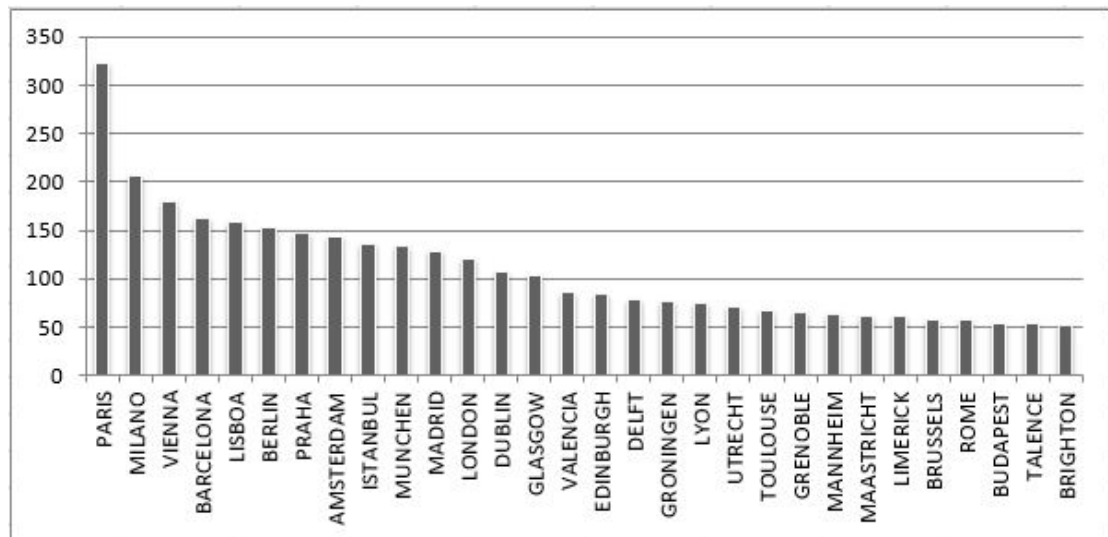
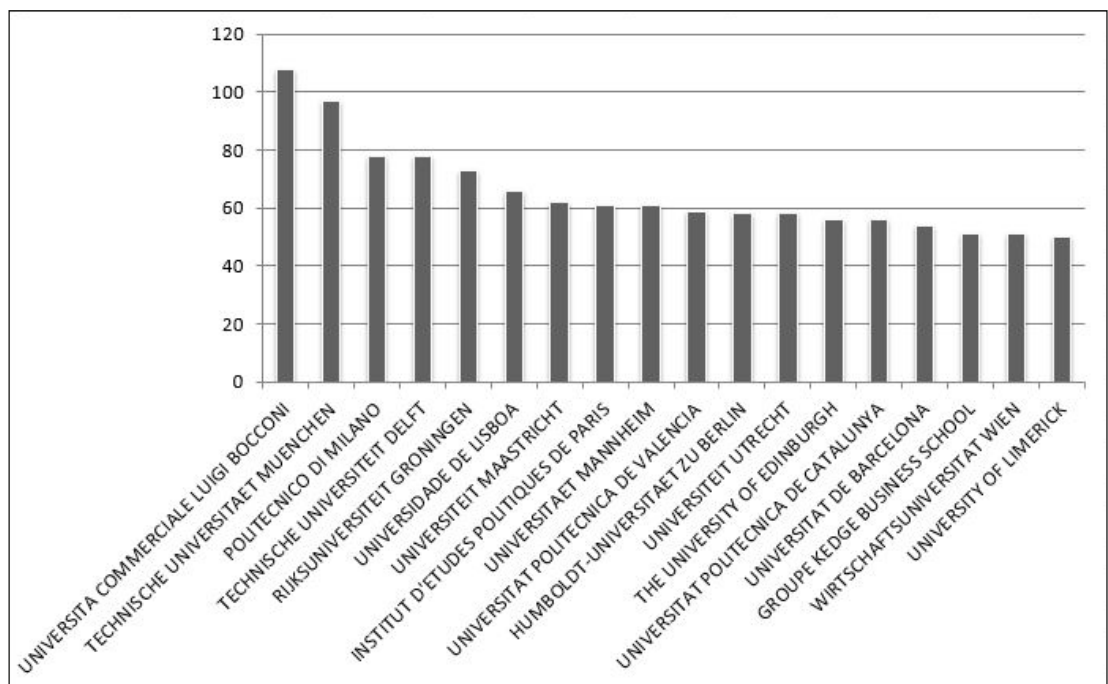


Figure 7. The most popular HEIs, with at least 50 students in the data.



The space of Swedish Erasmus students

The results of the correspondence analysis and our interpretation of these results are presented below.

Central variables in the analysis

There are 19 active variables in the correspondence analysis. These are what give the space its structure. How individuals are positioned in the cloud of individuals is determined by how they responded to the 19 questions that are used as active variables. Conversely, how the individuals combine the various response options determines how the response options are positioned in the cloud of variable values.

Selecting the variables to include in the analysis entails both qualitative judgements and interpretations as well as more quantitatively oriented criteria. Here, the variables, or survey questions, have been selected based on the aim of representing the survey's primary themes, or analysis dimensions, and including different types of questions. Distinguishing between the various analysis dimensions has been done by grouping the questions into themes. We have also performed preliminary analyses to check that our categorisations are empirically appropriate.

Three analysis dimensions have been distinguished: one that is academic, one relating to the labour market and one that we call cultural. The cultural dimension includes social, linguistic and geographic questions; these were grouped together as they consistently occurred together in the data. All questions in the analysis come from groups of questions with a high response rate and relate to *motivation factors* for studying abroad, the *criteria* for the choice of HEI, various types of outcomes or forms of *development* as a result of the mobility period and the degree of *satisfaction* with various aspects of the mobility period. Once the analysis dimensions and question types had been identified and a reasonable balance between the number of questions in these had been reached, a preliminary analysis was run, after which the variables that proved to have no significance in the arising structure were removed. Below, we have ordered the final active variables according to analysis dimension and question type.

Table 1. Active variables by analysis dimension and question type.

Variable name	Analysis dimension	Question type	Question	Response	N	Percentage
MotCont	Academic	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To experience different learning contents/curricula.	- + Missing	3,123 3,476 18	47.2% 52.5% 0.3%
MotQuality	Academic	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? The quality of the receiving institution.	- + Missing	3,865 2,734 18	58.4% 41.3% 0.3%
CriLearnOffer	Academic	Criteria	How important was the following criterion in selecting a receiving HEI? Learning offer.	-/-- 0 + ++ Missing	683 1,076 3,025 1,815 18	10.3% 16.3% 45.7% 27.4% 0.3%
CriReput	Academic	Criteria	How important was the following criterion in selecting a receiving HEI? Reputation/rankings.	-/-- 0 + ++ Missing	1,580 1,479 2,527 1,013 18	23.9% 22.4% 38.2% 15.3% 0.3%
SatContent	Academic	Satisfaction	Were you satisfied with the quality of learning and teaching at the receiving institution? The quality of content of courses.	-/-- 0 +/++ Missing	767 994 4,792 64	11.6% 15.0% 72.4% 1.0%
SatTeachSup	Academic	Satisfaction	Were you satisfied with the quality of learning and teaching at the receiving institution? The degree of learning support received.	-/-- 0 +/++ Missing	1,110 1,785 3,607 115	16.8% 27.0% 54.5% 1.7%
Logic	Academic	Development	During my stay abroad with Erasmus+ I improved my ability to think logically and draw conclusions.	-/-- 0 +/++ Missing	709 2,308 3,582 18	10.7% 34.9% 54.1% 0.3%
FieldSkills	Academic	Development	After having taken part in this mobility activity, I have increased my sector- or field-specific skills.	-/-- 0 +/++ Missing	406 1,859 4,334 18	6.1% 28.1% 65.5% 0.3%
MotEmpHome	Labour market	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To enhance my future employability in my home country.	- + Missing	3,454 3,145 18	52.2% 47.5% 0.3%
MotEmpAbr	Labour market	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To enhance my future employability abroad.	- + Missing	3,487 3,112 18	52.7% 47.0% 0.3%
MotNtwrk	Labour market	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To build up a personal and professional network.	- + Missing	4,228 2,371 18	63.9% 35.8% 0.3%
Adaptability	Labour market	Development	After having taken part in this mobility activity, I am more able to adapt to and act in new situations.	0/-/-- + ++ Missing	798 2,781 3,020 18	12.1% 42.0% 45.6% 0.3%
ChanceJob	Labour market	Development	Thanks to this stay abroad with Erasmus+, I believe that my chances to get a new or better job have increased.	0/-/-- + ++ Missing	1,040 3,112 2,447 18	15.7% 47.0% 37.0% 0.3%
MotStudInLang	Cultural	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To follow a study programme in a foreign language.	- + Missing	5,416 1,183 18	81.9% 17.9% 0.3%
MotLang	Cultural	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To learn/improve a foreign language.	- + Missing	2,636 3,963 18	39.8% 59.9% 0.3%
MotKnowCtry	Cultural	Motivation	Was the following a motivation for studying abroad? To gain knowledge of another country.	- + Missing	3,084 3,515 18	46.6% 53.1% 0.3%

CriCtry	Cultural	Criteria	How important was the following criterion in selecting a receiving HEI? Country.	0/-/-- + ++ Missing	996 2,620 2,983 18	15.1% 39.6% 45.1% 0.3%
CriCityCult	Cultural	Criteria	How important was the following criterion in selecting a receiving HEI? City and culture.	0/-/-- + ++ Missing	1,295 2,673 2,631 18	19.6% 40.4% 39.8% 0.3%
CriSocLife	Cultural	Criteria	How important was the following criterion in selecting a receiving HEI? Social life.	-/- 0 + ++ Missing	655 990 2,894 2,060 18	9.9% 15.0% 43.7% 31.1% 0.3%

Each variable has two to four variable values. In total, the 19 variables (questions) have 52 variable values (response categories). The Appendix describes how the variables were coded.

The three most important axes in the space

We have chosen to interpret three axes. These capture the most important differences between the students as regards the 19 active variables (the three axes add up to approximately 84 per cent of Benzécri's modified rate, which is used when determining the importance of each axis in order to understand the overall differences in the data). The first axis is by far the most important with 55 per cent of the modified rate. The second axis has 20 per cent, and the third one has 9 per cent. It is important to remember that there is a hierarchy between the axes, where the first one is most important for understanding the distribution of the cloud in the space. However, the first axis does not need to be the most sociologically interesting one.

An initial and general interpretation based on the three aggregated themes that have been discerned shows that the first axis is primarily based on academically oriented questions (59 per cent) and then on questions related to the labour market (35 per cent), while culturally focused questions are of no importance for the axis (6 per cent). However, the latter theme is the most significant on the second axis (54 per cent) and the third axis (46 per cent). The next most significant theme for the second axis comprises the academic questions (27 per cent), while labour market questions have the equivalent position on the third axis (36 per cent).

Table 2. The themes' contribution values, axes 1–3.

	Axis 1	Axis 2	Axis 3
Academic	58.9	27.0	17.9
Labour market	35.3	19.5	36.4
Culture	5.8	53.5	45.8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

To make the graphs easier to read, they only show the active response categories with an above average contribution value along the described and focused axes (the average value is $100/52=1.92$). The size of the active response categories, represented as squares in the graphs, symbolises their weight, which is dependent on the number of individuals that have chosen

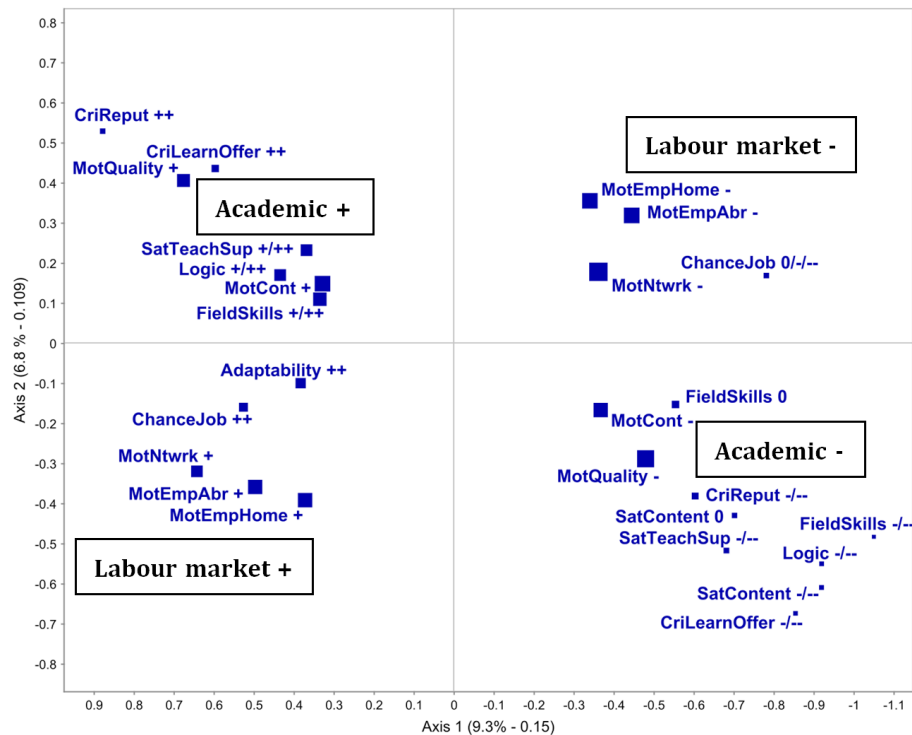
those response options. The greater the weight of an active response category and the further it is from the centre, the greater its contribution value, i.e. its contribution to the total variation along the axis. Where deemed relevant, the contribution value is described in the text within brackets in association with the active response categories. An explanation of the questions is found in [table 1](#), where the active variables are described. Because correspondence analysis is entirely based upon geometric distances between points, what is to the left and right or up and down in the graphs is entirely arbitrary. The relative distances remain the same, even if the axes are inverted.

Axis 1: Level of academic and labour market orientation and satisfaction

This first axis, which runs horizontally in the figure below, shows the greatest variation in the data (55 per cent Benzécri's modified rates). The clearest difference moves between a positive (to the left) and a negative (to the right) attitude on multiple questions.

To the left, it shows that the quality of the foreign HEI (contribution value of 8.2 per cent), as well as academic criteria such as the HEI's reputation (3.4) and course offering (2.8) were very important when applying to study abroad. There are also significant reasons related to the labour market here, such as students' motivations to grow their personal and professional networks (6.6) as well as to improve their employability abroad (5.1) or in their home country (2.9).

Figure 8. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Active variables that contribute to axis 1.



Note: See table 1 for explanation of variable names.

The opposing side is characterised by negative responses to the equivalent questions, particularly regarding the issue of whether the quality of the foreign HEI was a motivating factor when choosing to undertake a mobility period (5.8) and whether a reason for the mobility period was to improve foreign employability (4.5) or to build networks (3.6).

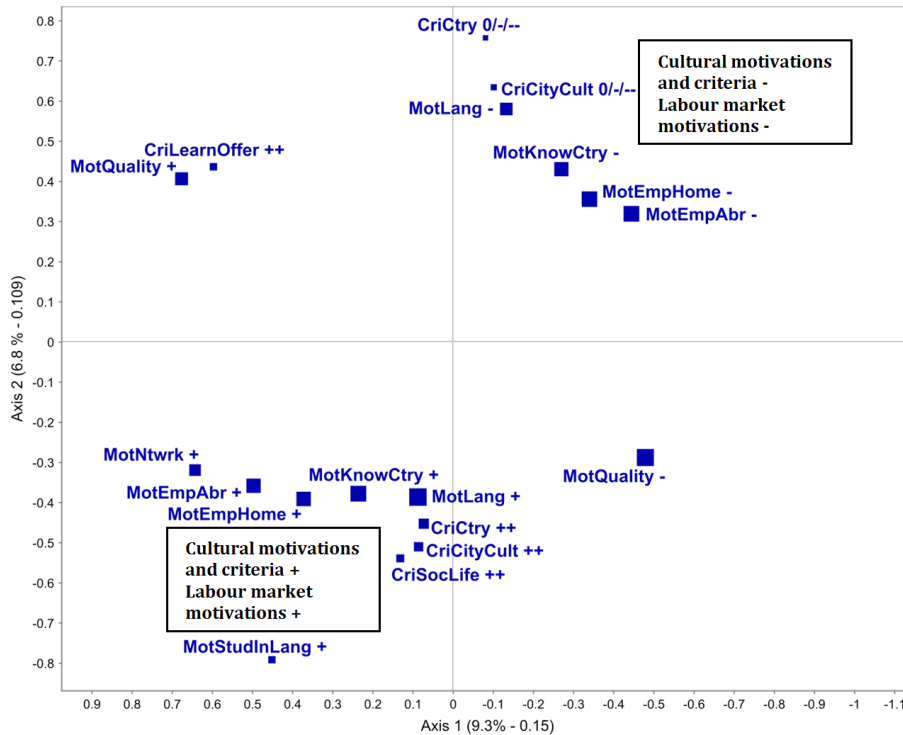
This difference also corresponds to how satisfied the students felt and how much they perceived that they had developed. On one side, one finds the responses for being satisfied with the learning support (2.2), feeling that students' field-specific skills have improved (2.1) and their ability to think logically (3.0), as well as perceiving that their opportunities on the labour market have improved (3.0) and that they have become more adaptable (2.0). On the other side are the equivalent neutral or negative responses.

It is worth noting that no social, geographic or linguistic response categories contribute to this division between more academic and labour market-oriented students and those who are less academic and labour market-oriented.

Axis 2: Academic versus cultural and labour market reasons

The second axis (20 per cent Benzécri's modified rates) primarily builds upon linguistic, social and geographic divisions (collected under the culture theme), but also the degree of labour market orientation. At the bottom of the image are motivation factors, like the desire to take a study programme in a foreign language (contribution value 6.7), to improve or learn a foreign language (5.3) and to gain knowledge about another country (4.5). Being motivated by improving employability in their home country (4.3) or abroad (3.6) also characterises this side. City and culture (4.1), country (3.7) and social life (3.6) are of great importance for the choice of HEI.

Figure 9. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Active variables that contribute to axis 2.



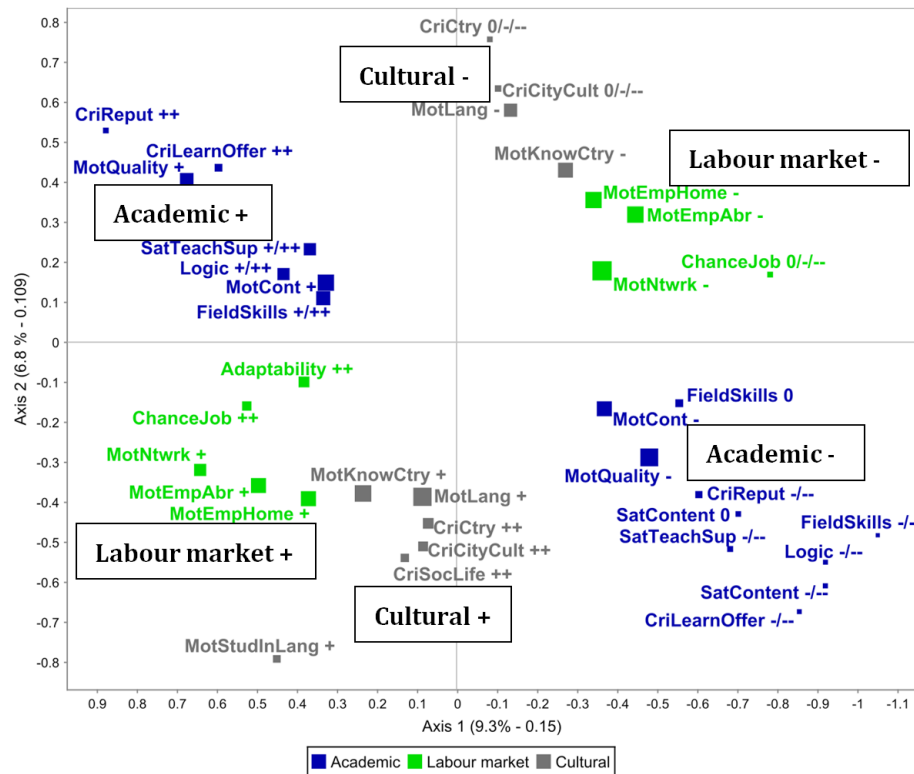
Note: See table 1 for explanation of variable names.

The opposite side is primarily oriented by negative answers to the questions of whether improving language skills (8.0), gaining knowledge of another country (5.2) and improving employability in the student's home country (4.0) were important motivating factors. However, affirmative answers to the question of whether the quality of the foreign HEI was a motivating factor are located here (4.1). Somewhat simplified, one can say that this axis places the academically oriented students against the others, but that the academic group is even more distinguished by the distance it takes from cultural and labour market reasons rather than by specifically academic motivations.

Synthesis of axes 1 and 2: Three oppositions

Three different oppositions appear in the plane if the first two axes are put together. One opposition is established using academic reasons and criteria. A high level of satisfaction with the teaching and its contents, as well as significant subject-based and cognitive development, are clustered in the upper left corner and oppose a low level of the same in the lower right corner.

Figure 10. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Active variables that contribute to axes 1 and 2.



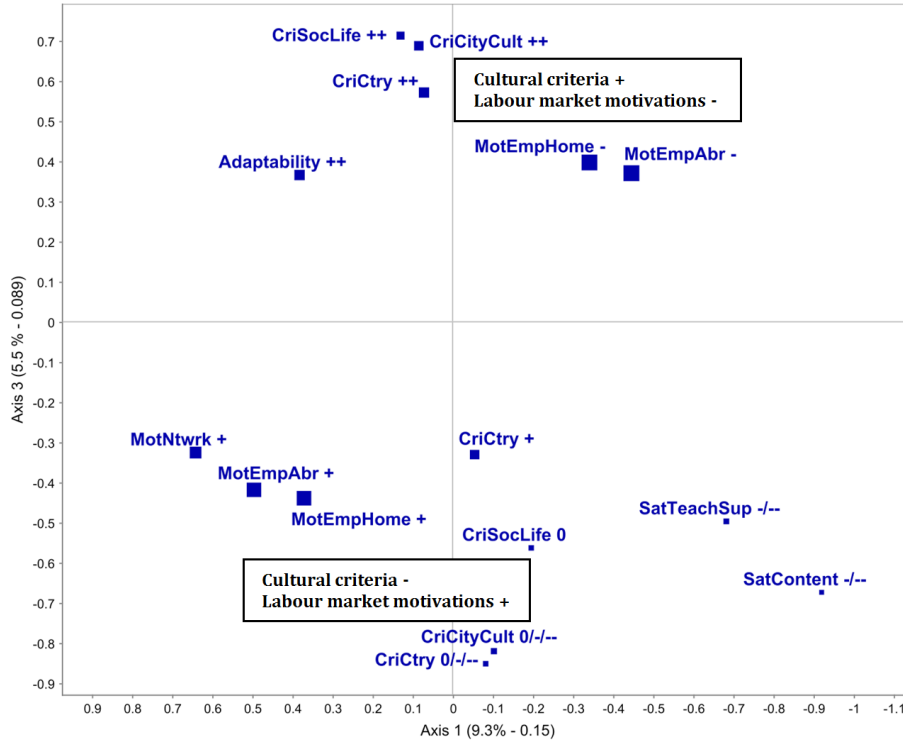
Note: See table 1 for explanation of variable names.

The second opposition comprises questions related to the labour market. To the lower left is a cluster of factors – the enhancement of employability in Sweden and abroad, as well as the opinion that exchange studies have contributed to improving the chance of getting a new or better job. The opposing answers are clustered to the upper right. This opposition is most clearly oriented along the first axis.

The third opposition comprises reasons and criteria related to linguistic, social and geographic factors, and this opposition falls along the second, vertical, axis. Positive values are towards the top of the plane and negative ones towards the bottom. This means that cultural reasons are different to factors related to the labour market and from academically related reasons and outcomes, which are both more clearly spread along the first, horizontal axis. It is notable that no answers indicating the students' level of satisfaction or how they have developed coincide with the vertical cultural dimension. Instead, such outcome variables are spread along the horizontal axis. Therefore, cultural orientation is not linked to the degree of satisfaction and development in the same way as for academic and labour market orientation.

Axis 3: Cultural versus labour market orientation

Figure 11. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 3. Active variables that contribute to axis 3.



Note: See table 1 for explanation of variable names.

The third axis (9 per cent Benzécri's modified rates), which runs vertically in the above figure, separates labour market and culturally oriented factors from each other and places them in opposition. These are located together along the second axis, in opposition to academically oriented motivations. However, in the third dimension, the academic variables have a more modest role.

Lower in the plane, there are affirmative answers to the questions of whether the students were motivated by improving their employability in their home country (contribution value 6.7) and abroad (6.0), combined with having had a neutral or disinterested attitude towards the city and culture (6.4) when selecting an HEI.

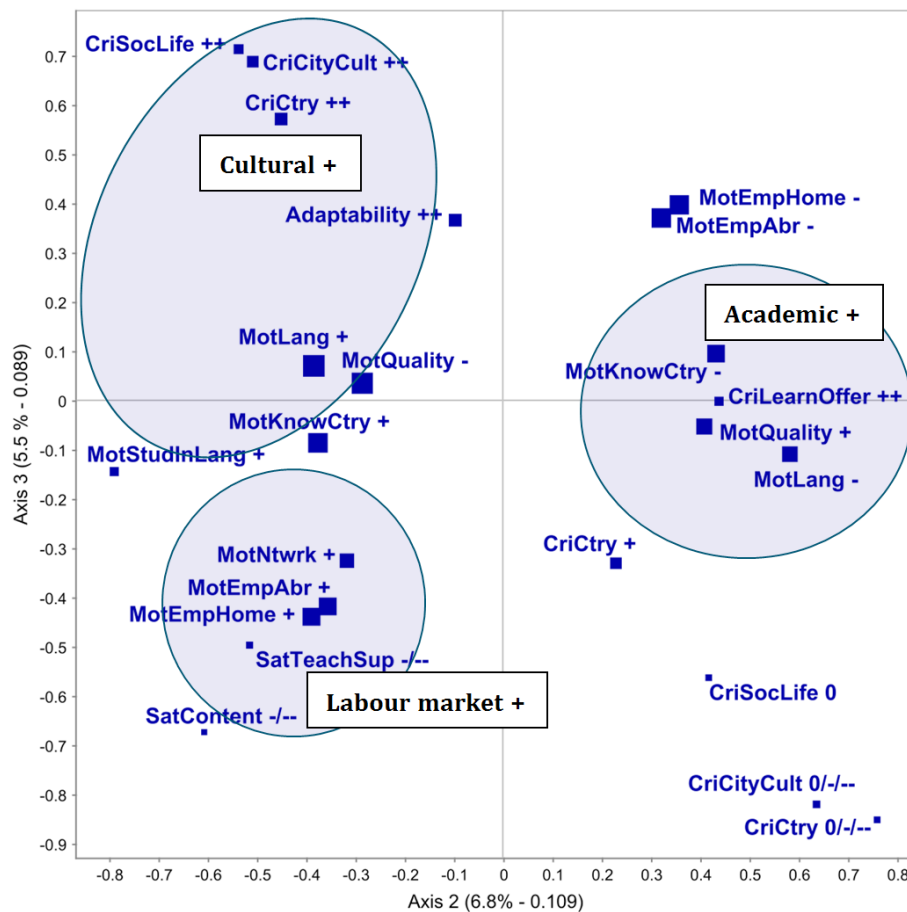
On the opposing side, to the top of the figure, is a cluster of the opposing reasons and criteria, that the country (7.2), city and culture (9.2) and social life (7.8) were very important when choosing an HEI, and negative answers to the questions about whether improved employability in the home country (6.1) and abroad (5.4) motivated the students to study abroad.

This third axis emphasises the importance of refraining from combining the groups of labour market-oriented and culturally oriented students in the discussion. Even if they have more in common along the other axis than with the academically oriented students, they still have two different sets of reasons and criteria that are not found among all students in both groups.

Synthesis of axes 2 and 3: Culture and labour market groups versus each other and versus academic group

The first axis' clear division between positive and negative responses is not found in the plane for axes 2 and 3. Instead of three clear oppositions of positive and negative responses, there is a higher degree of division between the three positive groupings for variable values: academic (to the right), cultural (to the left and slightly upward in the figure), and labour market (to the lower left).

Figure 12. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 2 and 3. Active variables that contribute to axes 2 and 3.



Note: See table 1 for explanation of variable names.

It is also interesting to see which negative or indifferent properties contribute to axes 2 and 3 and how these are combined with the positive ones. At the positive academic pole, to the right, there is also a cluster of values demonstrating that the students did not perceive improving their chances of finding work in Sweden or abroad as an important reason for studying abroad. Nor are some cultural reasons for the mobility period, such as learning a foreign language or gaining knowledge of another country, important at this pole. In the equivalent manner, labour market-related reasons share the space with a lack of satisfaction with the quality of education.

Summary

Analysis of the three primary axes in the correspondence analysis have helped us use trends in the data to distinguish three primary types of outgoing Swedish Erasmus students – academic, labour market and culturally oriented students. In addition, a fourth type can be indirectly observed, one that is not particularly characterised by any of these dimensions, or rather has an even distribution of these properties, and which is located in the middle of the space and to the right in the plane of axis 1 and 2.

The continuing presentation of the results will focus on the plane for axes 1 and 2. In this plane, the academically oriented properties are found in the left and upper left part of the plane. The labour market-oriented properties are in the left and lower left part. The cultural properties are instead at the bottom of the plane. Finally, we find a group of students, whose reasons do not appear to have been captured by the questions, to the right in the plane.

Along the horizontal dimension of the plane, there are positive responses to satisfaction and development-related questions to the left, with neutral or negative responses to the right. How this dimension divides more and less satisfied students is explained in more detail in the Appendix, under the heading “Expanded interpretation of the students’ experience of the mobility period”, in which additional satisfaction and development-related questions are projected in as supplementary variables. Overall, we can state that most students were satisfied with their exchange period (60 per cent were very satisfied, 33 per cent fairly satisfied, and only 7 per cent stated that they had a neutral or negative experience). Those who were most satisfied are located to the left along the first, horizontal axis and those who were least satisfied are located to the right. In other words, the students who were more academically or labour market oriented tended to be more satisfied than the students whose reasons we did not succeed in capturing. Some of the more culturally oriented students were also less satisfied with the mobility period.

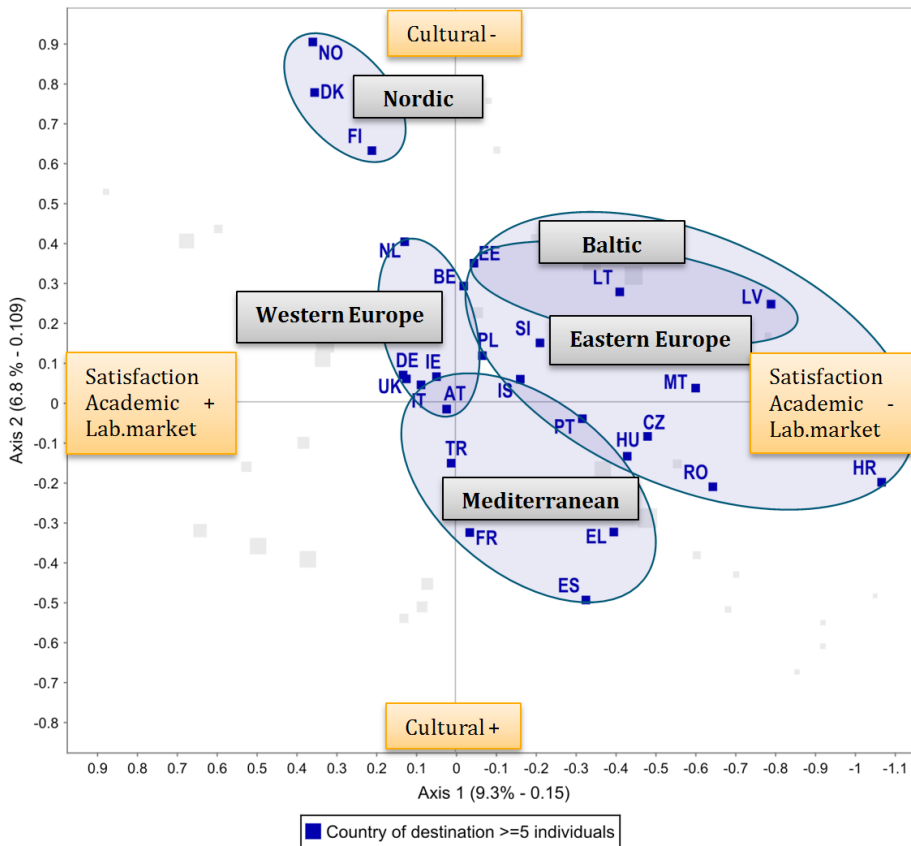
A geographically structured space

In the section below, we describe how supplementary variables such as destination country, HEI and specialisation are positioned in the space, in order to better understand the structure of the space. A rule of thumb when interpreting supplementary variables is that differences between response categories of at least 0.5 along any of the axes are notable, and differences of at least 1.0 are large (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2010, p. 71). Explanations for the supplementary variables in the graphs are found in [table 7](#) in the Appendix.

The structure of the space resembles a map of Europe

When we add the students' destination countries as supplementary variables to the plane for axes 1 and 2, the Nordic countries are at the top and somewhat further down, and to the right of these are the Baltic countries. Just under the Nordic countries are the Netherlands and Belgium, and in a more central position are countries such as Germany, Austria, the UK and Ireland. If we look at the bottom of the plane, there are the countries around the Mediterranean and, with a wide distribution in the area of the plane to the right, the countries in Eastern Europe.

Figure 13. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. The students' destination countries.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for key to country codes.

Division into north and south with respect to cultural and academic orientation

The geographic structure arises from the fact that students travel to different countries depending on how they reason about studying abroad. Students on an exchange in the Nordic countries are overrepresented among those who selected an HEI for academic reasons and who do not place great emphasis on improving their language skills or on the HEI's geographic location. Students in these countries are also overrepresented among those who are most satisfied with their academic situation and who feel that they have developed within their field. That cultural factors were not more decisive for studying in the Nordic countries should be understood on the basis of there being relatively small differences between the Nordic countries and that their languages are similar (Finland, which differs linguistically from Norway and Denmark, is also closest to the middle of the graph).

However, students in several countries around the Mediterranean are overrepresented among those who chose an HEI based on geographic location and culture rather than on an academic basis, as well as those who want to improve their language skills, study in another language or improve their position on the labour market. Students in these countries are also somewhat less satisfied in an academic sense. Both French and Spanish are important

languages in the Swedish school system, and many students already have some knowledge of these languages. A student exchange may well contribute to further developing these language skills, which could explain these countries' linguistic attraction power.

Few students travel to Eastern Europe, and they are less satisfied

Those students who went on exchanges to countries in Eastern Europe are either central or to the right in the plane. Some countries end up further down the figure, such as Hungary, Croatia and Romania. They are overrepresented among the students who are less satisfied academically, but who also did not choose to study abroad or choose their HEI based on academic reasons and criteria. Their decisions on these were for more cultural reasons.

The Baltic countries are positioned higher in the plane and are overrepresented among students who were less motivated by cultural geographic factors and more by academic ones. At the same time, the Baltic countries are spread along the first axis, which is linked to satisfaction. The economically more successful Estonia is positioned right beside Belgium, while the economically weaker Lithuania and Latvia end up further towards the outer edge of the plane with less satisfied students.

A couple of destinations in Eastern Europe with less than five students occupy even more peripheral positions in the right side of the plane. It is a general pattern that there are very few students who leave Sweden for Erasmus studies in Eastern Europe. However, even if all the countries in Eastern Europe are considered together, all are to the right in the plane, which is characterised by negative responses to academic and labour market motivation factors, as well as to questions about satisfaction. What determined the choice of study location among these students is unclear because the survey questions do not appear to have succeeded in fully capturing their reasons.

Similarities between geography and the countries' positions in the plane

The countries that are geographically closest to Sweden are located in the area of the plane that is the least culturally oriented. At the same time, the countries that are geographically furthest from Sweden are also located furthest from the Nordic countries in the plane. In other words, it is possible that the geographic distance from the Nordic region to other countries is perceived as a type of cultural distance, where the more culturally motivated the Swedish students are, the further they choose to travel from the Nordic region, and vice versa. When the axes are oriented as they are in the above plane, it is possible to see great similarities with a geographic map of Europe.²

2 However, it is arbitrary whether the pole with culturally oriented reasons is at the top of the figure; it could equally well be at the bottom, which would give us an upside-down and reversed European map. Still, it is a telling result of this analysis that the second axis points to a cultural dimension that coincides with a north-south geographical dimension.

The space illustrates relationships of geographic dominance

The plane can also be interpreted as a description of the power relationships in the space, where countries in the left and upper left of the plane have a status advantage compared to countries to the right and lower right, while the centre has a recruitment advantage compared to the periphery.

Countries that are positioned to the right in the plane are in a weaker position than countries to the left. They generally recruit fewer students, and seemingly not on the basis of good reputation and educational quality. In this way, the left area in the plane can be said to have an advantage over the right area of the plane.

Even if relatively few students are found in the countries in the upper left in the plane, these students primarily value HEIs and education that they perceive have a good reputation and high quality, and appear to feel that this is what they get. Instead, in the lower areas of the plane, the students' linguistic and cultural interests govern the mobility flows. In some cases, the students appear to compromise academic standards to access what they perceive as linguistically and culturally attractive places.

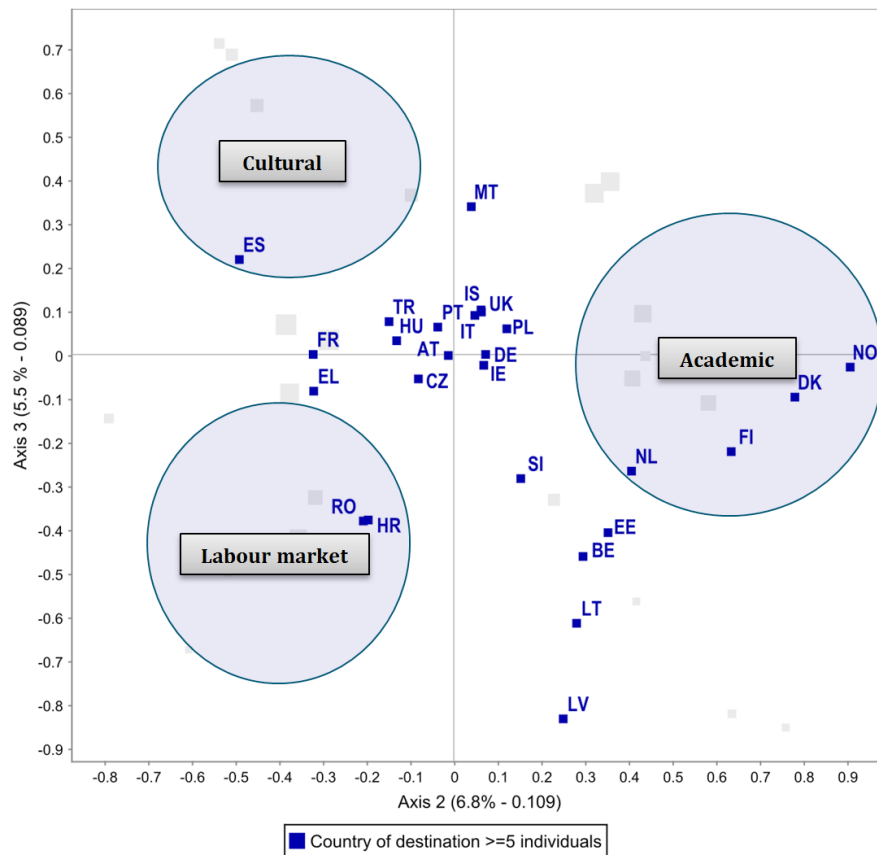
In the central areas of the plane, countries can recruit according to both these logics simultaneously – they have a good academic reputation but also offer a linguistically and culturally attractive environment. Many students therefore choose these destinations, such as the UK, France and Germany. This gives the centre a recruitment advantage compared to the periphery.

Spain is the most purely cultural destination

Along the third axis, which places the culturally oriented students against those with a labour market orientation, Malta and Spain are positioned towards the cultural pole, countries in Eastern Europe closer to the labour market pole, and other countries in a more central position.

In the plane for axes 2 and 3, where mainly positive answers contribute to the axes, Spain is primarily positioned in the cultural pole, Romania and Croatia in the labour market pole, and the Nordic countries and the Netherlands in the academic pole. Least attractive as cultural destinations are the Nordic countries, Belgium, the Netherlands and the Baltic countries. The Baltic countries are located closer to the labour market-oriented end of the plane than Romania and Croatia, but, unlike the latter countries, are also more academically attractive destinations.

Figure 14. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 2 and 3. The students' destination countries.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for key to country codes.

Language of instruction corresponds to destination country

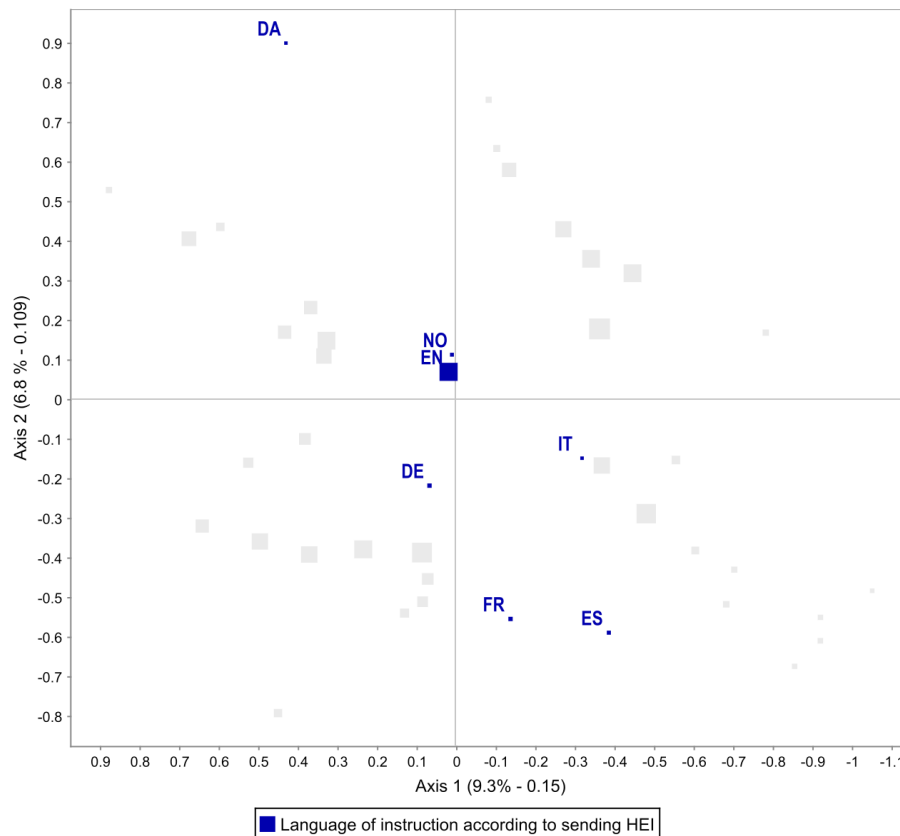
The language of instruction, as stated by the student's sending HEI, ends up in a location in the plane that corresponds well to the respective country's position in the plane. The exception is Norwegian, which is found in the centre of the plane rather than in the upper left like Norway. This would seem to indicate that the students who study in Norwegian are very different to students who study in other languages, presumably English, in the same country.

Danish is overrepresented as a language of instruction among the students who are found furthest from the cultural area of the plane. French and Spanish are at the diametrically opposite end of the plane. English is most central in the plane, which should be understood as a result of English as a language of instruction being spread throughout various areas of the plane, indicating that English does not have a clear profile. German and Italian similarly seem to lack a clear profile as they are also located more closely to the centre of the plane.

The point for languages of instruction other than English is clearly found in the lower area of the plane, and it is notable that teaching in French is

located further down in the plane than education in France. This is probably connected to the country's potential for recruitment using both an academic and a cultural logic. While culturally motivated Swedish students who apply to French HEIs largely study in French, there is also a significant proportion of academically motivated students who instead conduct their studies in English. A similar pattern is seen for Spain.

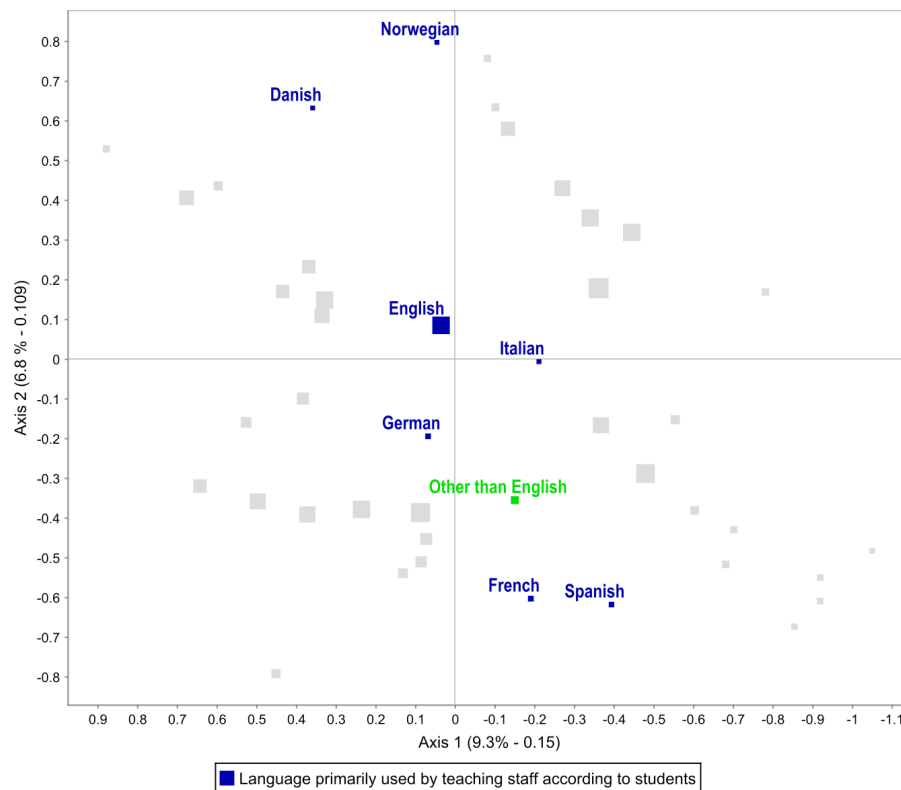
Figure 15. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Language of instruction according to the HEIs.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

However, compared with the information from the sending HEIs, the students themselves provide somewhat different responses to the question of which language the teachers mainly used. While Norwegian has a central position in the plane according to the HEIs' information about the language of instruction, it is clearly in the upper area of the plane according to information from the students. Considerably fewer students (34) state that Norwegian was actually used by teachers than the number of students that the HEIs state have studied in Norwegian (181). It is possible that there is a discrepancy between the officially stated language and the language actually used, where teaching has been in practice carried out in English despite Norwegian being stated as the language of instruction. No other major languages of instruction display any large discrepancy.

Figure 16. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. The language primarily used by lecturers according to the student.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Destination HEI closely interlinked with country and language

When we add HEIs with ten or more students to the plane for axes 1 and 2, we can see the position of the HEIs is largely dependent on which country they are in; the nation state thus remains a central unit in the analysis. This indicates that most students choose their studies abroad primarily by country and then by HEI.

Destination HEIs are grouped by country

Smaller countries often have a smaller dispersion of their HEIs in the plane, and larger countries usually have a larger one. The former is exemplified by Norwegian and Danish HEIs being placed far out in the plane's upper left quadrant and very close together. The latter relationship is revealed by major educational countries such as Germany, France and the UK, which have great internal variation in HEIs.

At the same time, a large country like Spain can have a relatively small dispersion. Of 21 Spanish HEIs, 17 are positioned in the lower right quadrant of the plane. This can be explained by the country primarily being regarded

as one that is of interest for linguistically and culturally oriented students. Spain can be contrasted with the Netherlands, which is a relatively small country but which has a greater dispersion than Spain, with an emphasis in the upper half of the plane (where 14 of its 20 HEIs are positioned). Many students seem to choose Dutch HEIs for mainly academic reasons, and others based on more mixed motivations.

The HEIs in Germany and the UK have a relatively large dispersion, but generally do not occupy positions at the outskirts of the overall dispersion of HEIs. The HEIs in France, however, have a centre of gravity that is clearly below the centre of the plane. In contrast to the UK and Germany, France also has relatively many HEIs far away in the plane's lower right and less satisfied quadrant, while a few are positioned in the plane's upper left, academically oriented and highly satisfied area.

Altogether, the image that appears is that each country's HEIs are often concentrated in the same area of the plane, which indicates that the country, rather than the HEI, is more associated with the differences in motivation and experience that are manifested in the plane.

Figure 17. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Destination HEIs in Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Spain.

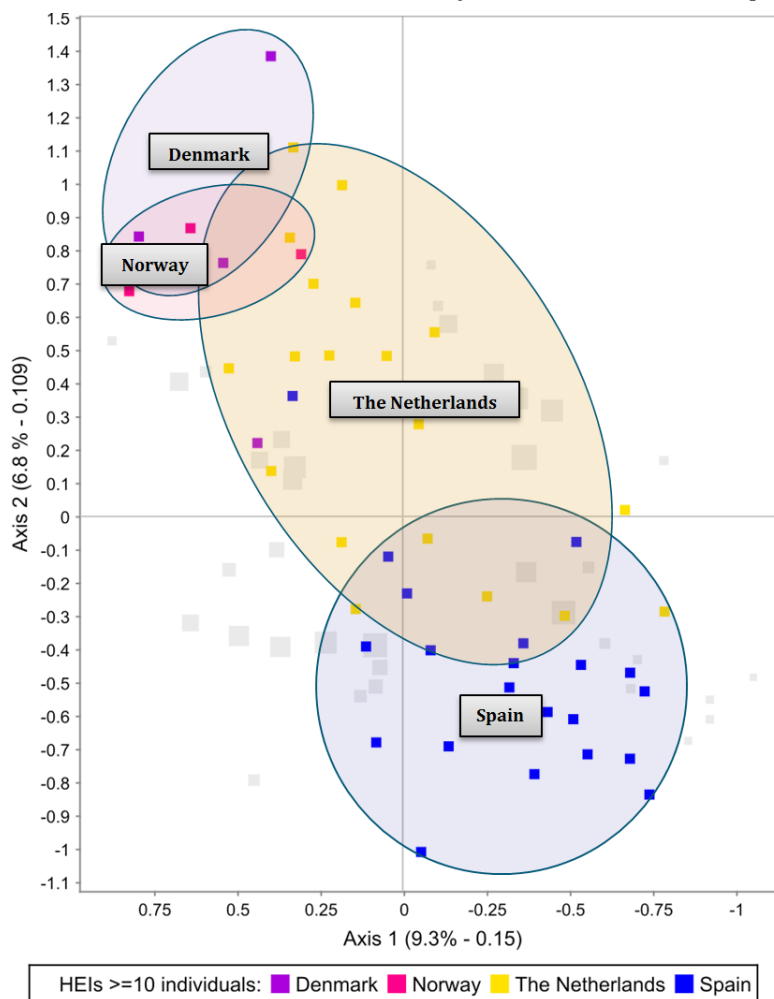
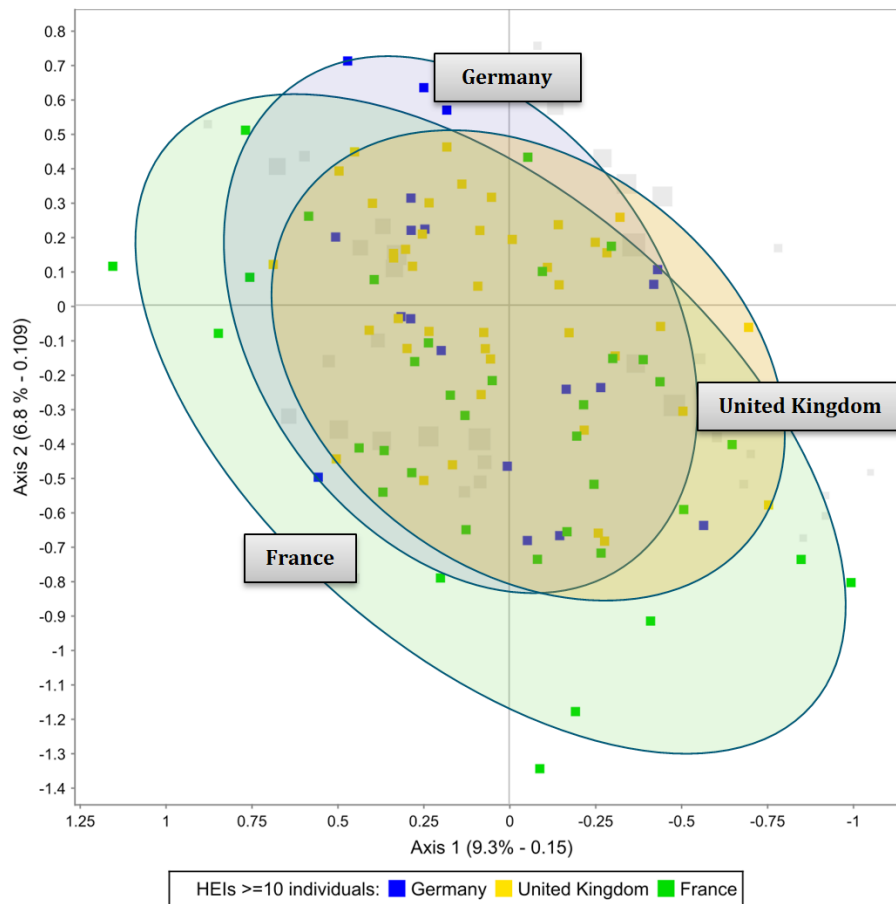


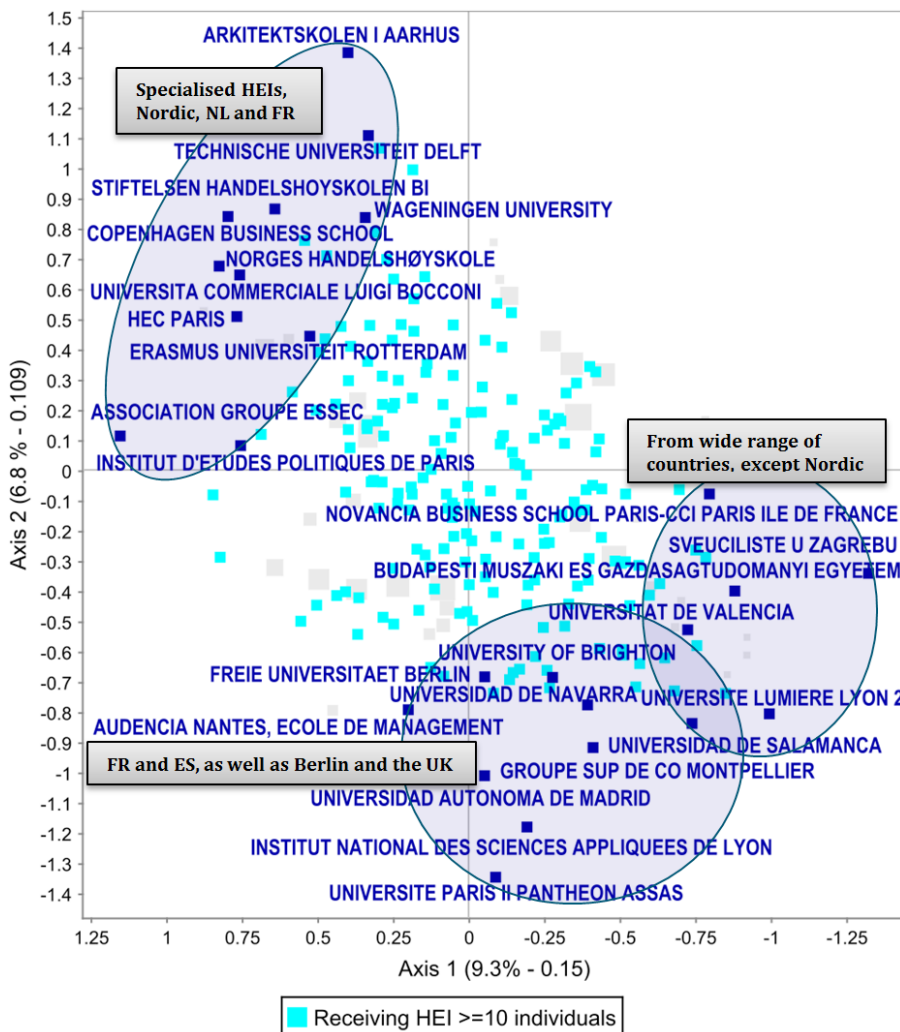
Figure 18. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Destination HEIs in Germany, the UK and France.



An academic French-Nordic pole versus a heterogeneous cultural pole

For individual HEIs, there is a clear logical polarity in the plane, from the upper and upper left area to the lower and lower right. An illustrative selection is shown in the graph below.

Figure 19. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. An illustrative selection of individual destination HEIs.



Furthest left (>0.5) in the plane, there is a substantial over-representation of high-profile business schools. There are also somewhat specialised HEIs, Sciences Po in Paris and two institutes of technology, as well as four broader HEIs: Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, King's College London, Sabanci University in Turkey and the University of Birmingham. The geographic spread is relatively large. Five of the HEIs are in France, two in Norway, two in Denmark, two in the UK, two in Germany, one in the Netherlands, one in Italy and one in Turkey. The students at these HEIs are over-represented among the most satisfied, have primarily looked for academic assets, but have also to some extent wanted to improve their position on the labour market. At the top of this left area of the plane, there are four Nordic HEIs – Handels-høyskolen BI, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark's Tekniske Universitet and Norway's Handelshøyskole. Cultural factors have not been particularly important for the students' choices here.

In the upper area of the plane (>0.5), seven of nineteen HEIs are Nordic and an equal number are Dutch. Another three are German, and France and

Italy each have one highly ranked business school in this area of the plane – HEC Paris and Bocconi University in Milan. The students who have chosen these HEIs are over-represented among the students who expressed that the geographic location, language and culture were of lesser importance when selecting HEI. Instead, academic reasons were most important. It is worth noting the lack of Spanish HEIs far out in the left or upper part of the plane, which is characterised by an academic orientation, relative cultural disinterest and high level of satisfaction.

The cultural area furthest down in the plane (<-0.5) mainly includes HEIs in France and Spain. Four British HEIs, three German and one Greek are also positioned here. The linguistic aspect is emphasised by French, Spanish, German and English being the languages that are usually taught in Swedish schools. For Germany, which has HEIs spread around the plane, it is interesting to note that all the HEIs in this distinctly cultural area of the plane are in Berlin. For Spain, France and the UK, a relatively large number of cities are represented.

There are several Spanish and French HEIs furthest out in the least satisfied end of the plane, the right (<-0.5) and lower right area, as well as some countries in Eastern Europe and single HEIs from the UK, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. The exchange students who travelled to these HEIs are over-represented among students who were less satisfied with their time abroad, not least in academic terms. No Nordic HEIs are positioned in this area of the plane.

An opposition can thus be discerned between an academic pole with, in many cases, highly ranked specialised HEIs in the Nordic countries as well as in France and the Netherlands, and a more heterogenous cultural pole dominated by HEIs in Spain, France and, to some extent, Berlin and the UK.

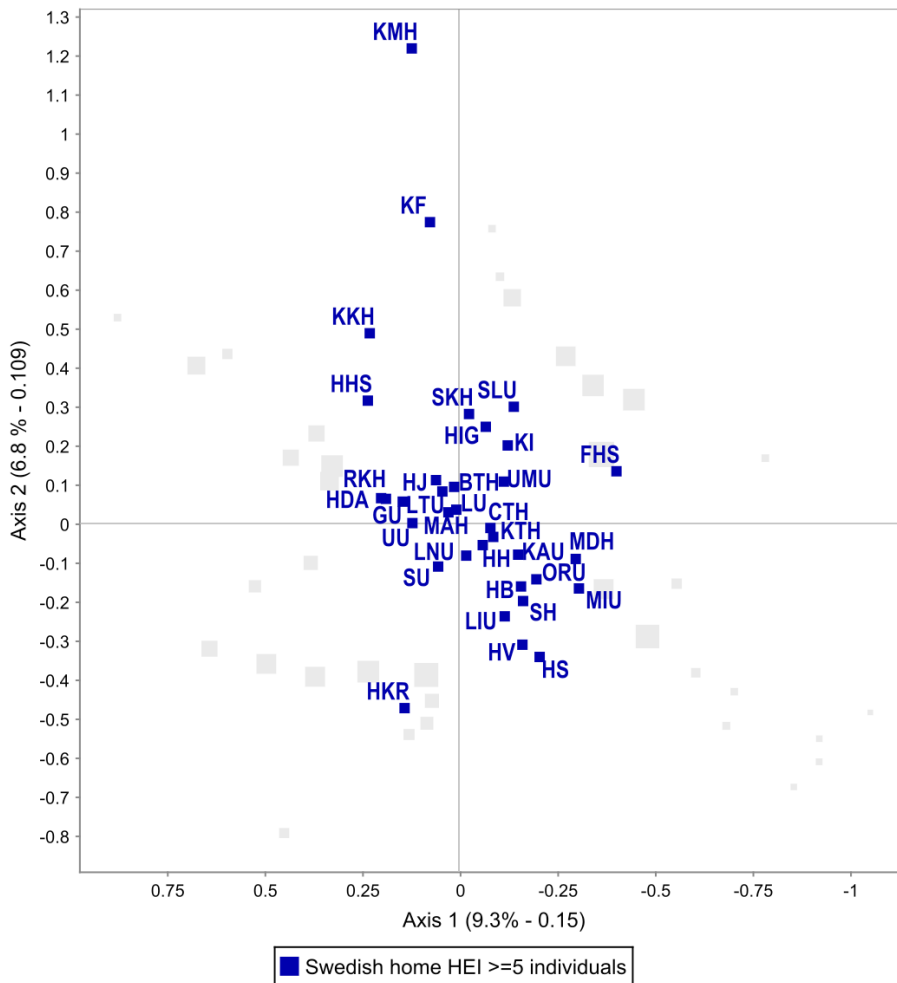
Small spread among sending HEIs

We will now look at the Swedish national arena and investigate how the students' sending HEIs and fields of education are positioned on the plane. Multiple parallels become visible between the students' national position in Sweden and the places they apply to for their exchange studies.

However, with a few exceptions, the distribution for the sending HEIs is not so large. It is likely that there is great variation within most HEIs, but these differences can be assumed to even out at the HEIs that have many different subjects and have a relatively broad societal, gender and merit-based recruitment.

Some of the more specialised HEIs and a few university colleges are particular contributors to the distribution in the plane. The less cultural and more academically oriented area of the plane especially includes the artistic HEIs. The Royal College of Music in Stockholm has an extreme position in the upper area of the plane, followed by the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and then the Royal Institute of Art. These are followed by the Stockholm School of Economics, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and Stockholm University of the Arts.

Figure 20. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Swedish home HEIs.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of HEI name abbreviations.

In the opposite, more culturally oriented area are a handful of university colleges such as the University of Skövde and University West and, somewhat closer to the labour market-oriented area, Kristianstad University. The only HEI with full university status that is further out in the cultural area of the plane is Linköping University.³

The distribution along the first axis is not nearly as wide as along the second one. The HEIs that to some extent stand out in the less satisfied area of the plane are the Swedish Defence University, followed by Mälardalen University and Mid Sweden University, whose students are somewhat over-represented among the less satisfied students. Students from the Stockholm

3 The English names of most Swedish HEIs do not accurately reflect the differences between universities and university colleges. In the Swedish language, status is differentiated within the name of the HEI, with HEIs either being a “högskola”, university college, or “universitet”, university. However, in the English names of these HEIs, both have been translated simply to “university”. Full university status in Sweden entails more research funding and a general right to issue doctoral degrees.

School of Economics and the Royal Institute of Art as well as university colleges Dalarna University and the Swedish Red Cross University College appear to have been most successful in their exchanges in terms of satisfaction during the investigated time period.

The students' education in Sweden corresponds to the patterns in destination HEIs

In the figure below, we have crossed the students' home HEIs with their study specialisation to capture more nuances in the data.

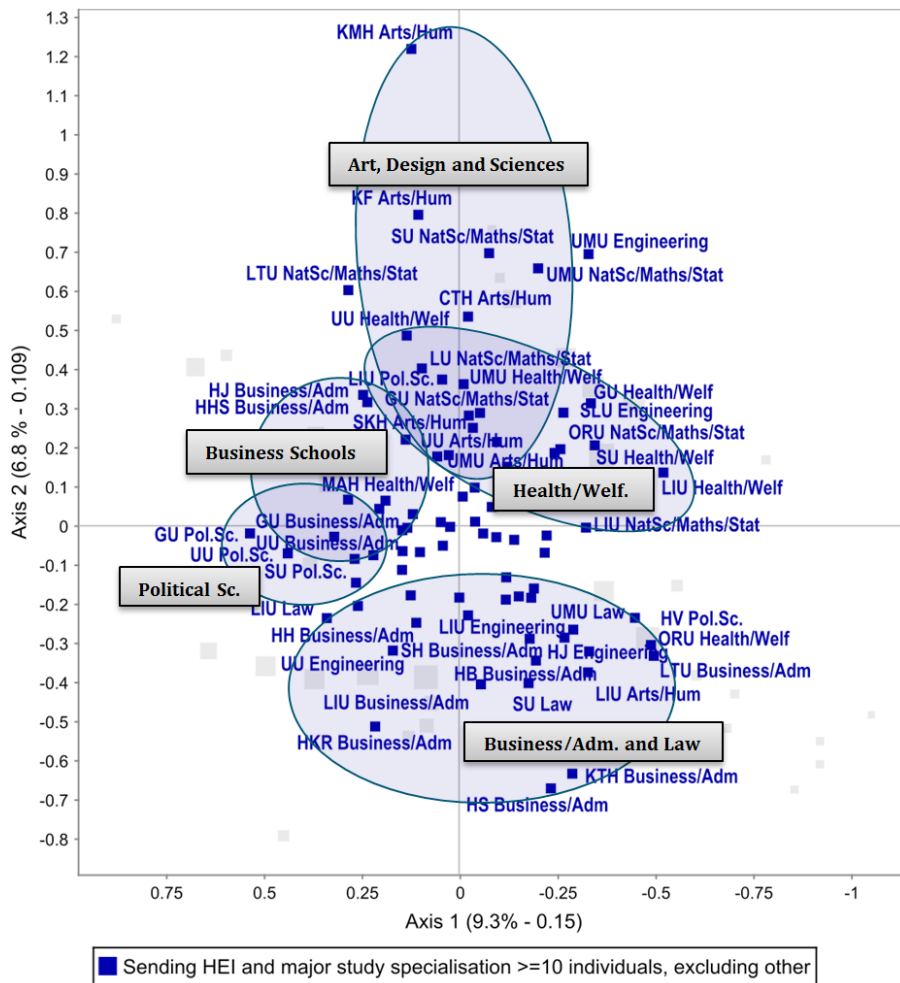
Political science programmes at the University of Gothenburg, Uppsala University and Stockholm University, along with programmes in business administration at the Stockholm School of Economics, the University of Gothenburg, Jönköping University and Uppsala University are clearly positioned in the left area of the plane (>0.25), among the more satisfied and more academically and labour market-oriented students.

The arts and humanities as well as the natural sciences/mathematics/statistics comprise a majority of the programmes in the upper area of the plane (>0.25), where the cultural factors have not been as important, but where reputation and educational offering have been more decisive. The students in arts and humanities from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and from the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design take the same position as their HEIs as a whole, at the top of the figure, because a majority of all students at these HEIs are found in this field of education. The arts and humanities programmes are the most prevalent in this area of the plane, followed by programmes in the natural sciences/mathematics/statistics, health and welfare, and one engineering programme, located at larger universities (Stockholm, Umeå and Uppsala) and institutes of technology (Chalmers and Luleå).

The lower and culturally oriented end of the plane (<-0.25) is dominated by programmes in business administration at HEIs other than those named above, but law and some engineering programmes are also found here. There is no significant dispersion to the plane's right-hand and less-satisfied area (<-0.25), and it is difficult to see any patterns in the few programmes that are positioned there.

The pattern in the positions of the receiving HEIs is thus reflected in the pattern for programmes and HEIs in Sweden. In the upper and left area, there are several prestigious programmes in the arts, business administration and political science. The lower area of the plane is instead more heterogeneous and has more programmes from university colleges.

Figure 21. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Sending HEIs and the major study specialisations.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the HEI and study area abbreviations.

Gender and financing are not associated with the resulting structure

Gender is not clearly associated with the distribution of students along the investigated axes. However, this does not exclude gender being potentially important within specific subgroups in the data, for example within some programmes.

Nor do the students' responses to how they have funded their stay abroad (for example, whether they have used their own savings or not, and whether they were supported by their family or worked alongside their studies) display any significant differences along the investigated axes.

The students' monthly costs are another factor that is not associated with the differences along the investigated axes, even if there is a marginal difference between lower costs in the right area of the plane for axis 1 and axis 2 to higher costs in the left area. Nor did we find any meaningful difference in the plane as regards to how much of the cost was covered by the programme grant.

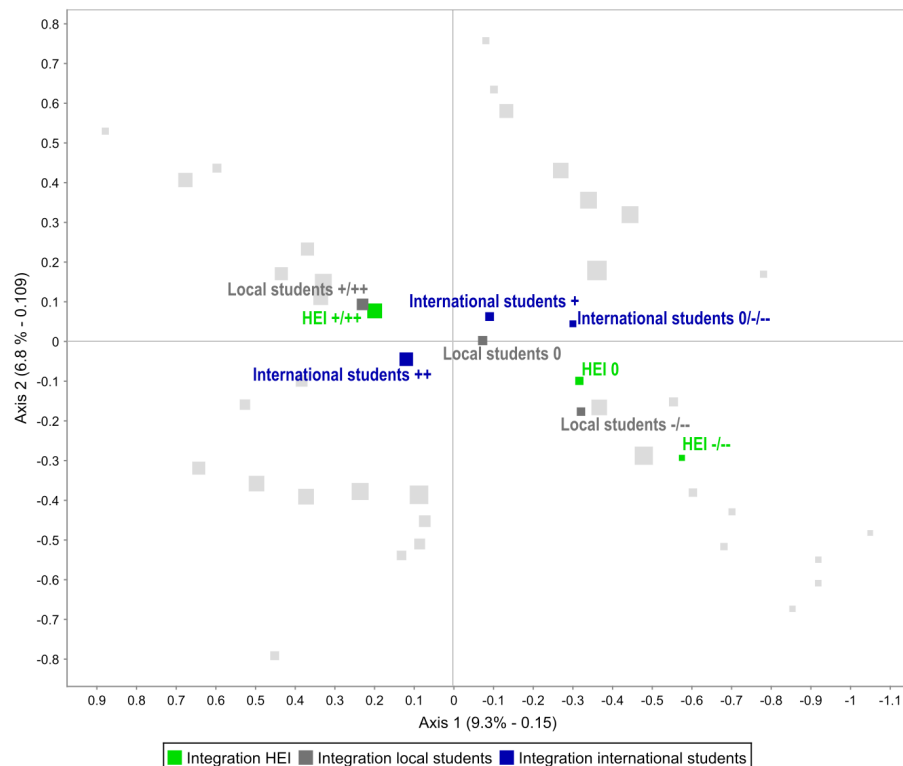
Furthermore, there was no differences based on whether or not the students stated that they would have conducted the mobility period even without the programme grant.

This does not exclude potential differences about financing between different groups. However, financing is not linked to the structure that is displayed along the investigated axes. The differences in satisfaction or in the cultural, academic or labour market orientations thus do not appear to be associated with the students' financial situation.

Integration with local students difficult but potentially rewarding

The figure below analyses the Swedish students' integration with the local students. Not unexpectedly, it appears to be more difficult for the Swedish students to integrate with the local students than with other international students. Fewer students have felt themselves to be well-integrated among local students than among international students or at the HEI. The figure below shows that it is primarily integration in the everyday life of the HEI and among local students that is associated with the level of satisfaction and academic orientation. Both high and low levels of integration among international students are located comparatively closer to the centre of the plane.

Figure 22. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. The students' degree of integration.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

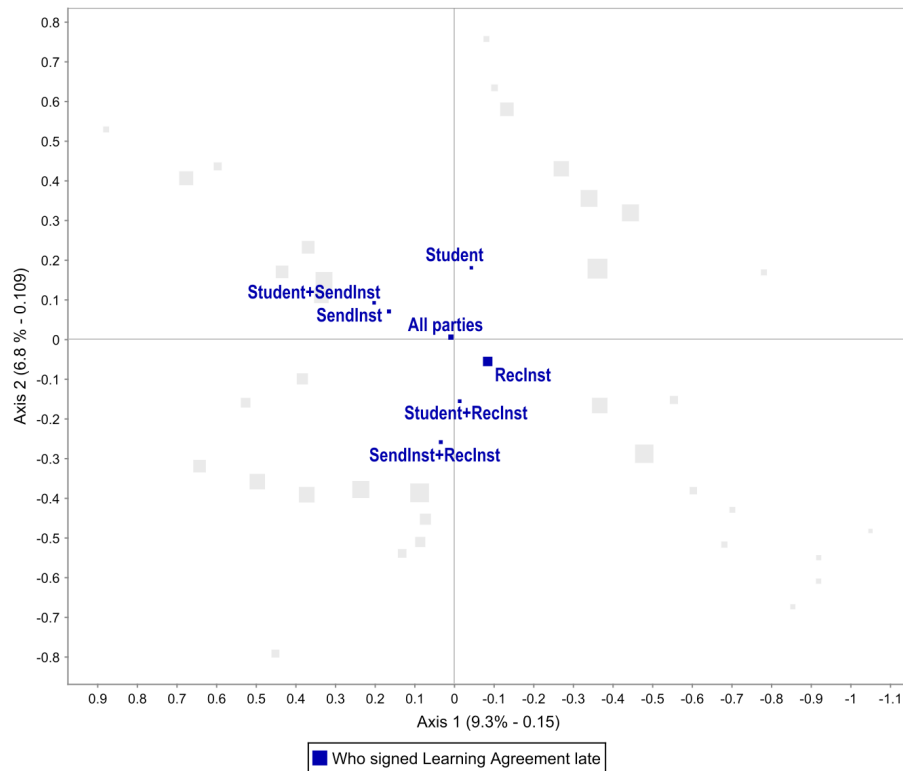
Overall, it is clear that the degree of integration follows the same dimension as the students' satisfaction with the mobility period, two factors that can logically be associated.

Problems most common among some culturally oriented and less satisfied students

Previously, and in the extended interpretation in the Appendix, we have stated that the first axis is highly indicative of how satisfied the students are with their mobility period. While more negative responses to questions about how the student's intercultural competence and understanding, as well as prospects on the labour market, have developed during the mobility period are found in the central areas or the upper right area of the plane for axes 1 and 2, the students who have been less satisfied with their studies are over-represented in the lower right of the plane. Whether and in what way various types of problems are associated with satisfaction, motivation and location is investigated below.

One response that can be classified as a type of problem is when the learning agreement (an individual study plan specifically for the exchange period) is not signed until after the mobility period has started. The students who are themselves a cause of the learning agreement being signed late are found somewhat more often in the upper area of the plane. Students whose learning agreement was instead signed late by both their HEIs are somewhat overrepresented in the lower area of the plane. This could be interpreted as it being more common among more culturally oriented students that, for some reason, the HEIs do not sign the learning agreement before the start of the mobility period, but the points' deviation from the centre of the plane is small and the trend is therefore weak.

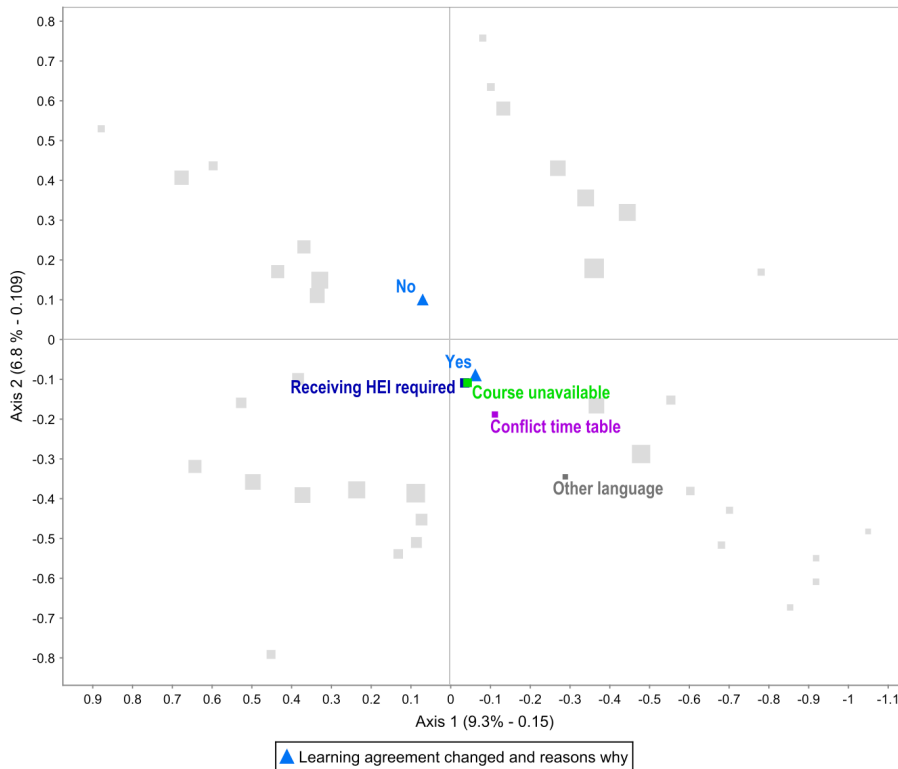
Figure 23. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Late signing of the learning agreement.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

One form of extra administrative task that can also be classified as a problem is when the learning agreement needs to be amended for some reason. Changes to the learning agreement due to the course being held in a language other than that expected are found in the lower right area of the plane and appear, not unexpectedly, to be associated with dissatisfaction with academic factors. However, the categories indicating that the learning agreement was amended for other reasons do not appear to have such a clear position among the less satisfied students.

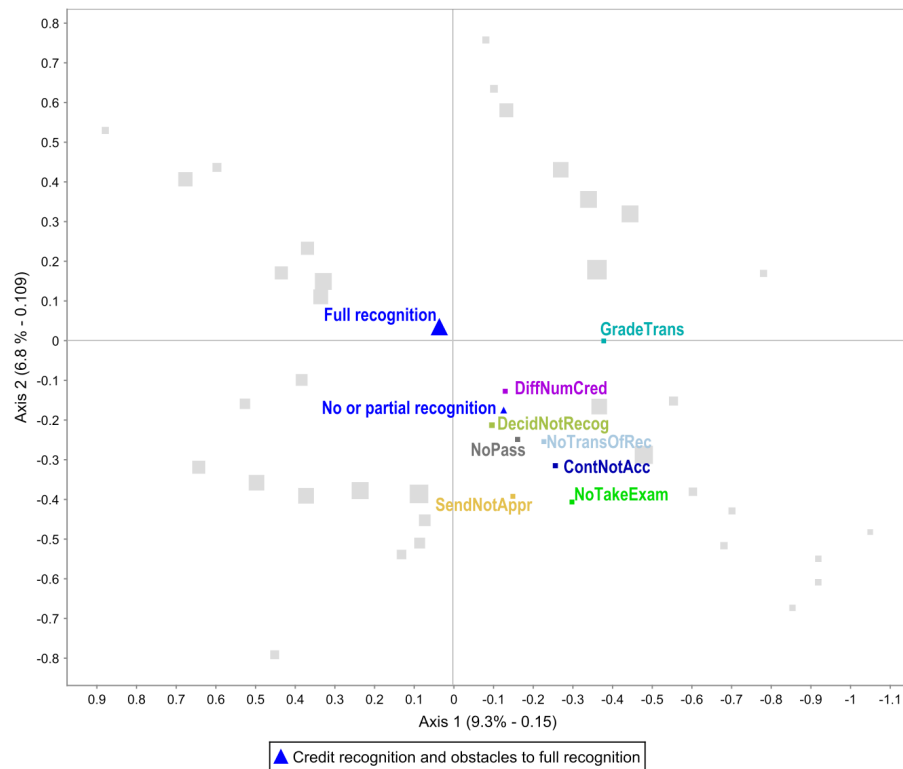
Figure 24. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Changes to the learning agreement.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

If an exchange period is conducted via Erasmus+, the idea is that the credits taken during the exchange period will be included in the degree from the sending HEI. However, problems with credit transfer do occur and, based on the students' responses, they are localised in the lower right area of the plane. Only the reasons that the student did not sit the exam or were unable to get the course content accepted in Sweden deviate from the more central areas of the plane to any greater extent, and are more concentrated to only the lower right area.

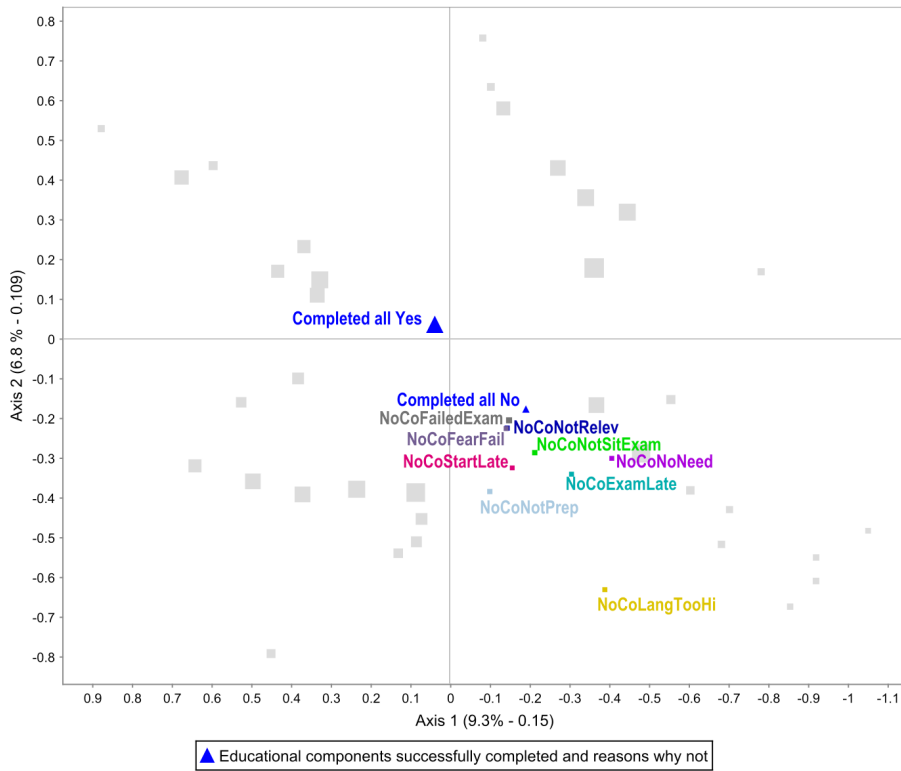
Figure 25. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Credit transfer and barriers to this.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Another problem deals with different types of barriers or obstacles that meant the student did not complete course element(s) during their exchange period. As regards incomplete elements, language problems are those that most deviate from the central areas of the plane; more specifically that the student has not completed the course or educational component because the linguistic level was too high. Among the less satisfied students, some also chose not to complete courses because they did not need to.

Figure 26. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Completion of educational components and barriers to this.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Conclusions and discussion

Main results

The academically motivated students are most satisfied and are overrepresented in the Nordic countries

The results of the study illustrate how students from different areas of the Swedish higher education landscape use the Erasmus programme for somewhat different purposes. Students in prestigious programmes in Sweden are overrepresented among those who conduct academically oriented exchanges with high-status foreign HEIs, not least in the Nordic countries, but also in the Netherlands and France, among others. They can perhaps benefit from course content or educational approaches not offered at their sending HEI and, in general, their exchange is not associated with any major complications. Instead, these students, along with those who are motivated by improving their position on the labour market, are among the most satisfied ones.

Culturally oriented students travel south and more often encounter problems

Another group of students from a wider range of programmes and HEIs in Sweden make a more culturally oriented exchange, in which location, language and social life are in focus. These exchanges are often to Spain, France or Berlin, but also to UK HEIs. Notably, the students in these locations are able to improve the languages they learned in school, and possibly place a little less focus on their academic studies. It is not uncommon for them to experience that they have had to compromise their academic standards, and for some, it is difficult to keep up with their studies when choosing a language of instruction other than English.

In the study, the degree of cultural orientation is not associated with the degree of satisfaction in various respects, in the way that academic and labour market reasons are. However, the culturally oriented students tend to be somewhat less academically oriented, and some of them are somewhat overrepresented in the area of the plane where it is more common to experience administrative problems and have a lower degree of satisfaction with the programme.

Students in Eastern Europe are among the least satisfied

Few Swedish students choose to study in Eastern Europe, and the differences between the countries are relatively wide. A few countries are positioned close to the central European countries, but there is also a clear tendency for students in in Eastern European countries to be overrepresented among

those who are not motivated by academic or labour market factors and who are least satisfied with their mobility period.

Discussion

Relationship between country and HEI

Do students primarily choose to study at a particular HEI or in a particular country? We interpret our results as showing that countries appear to be the primary orientation point for studying abroad. With the choice of a given country, it usually follows that teaching is conducted in a particular language and that one gets to engage in a particular national culture. Students who have a cultural orientation with their exchange studies appear to prioritise country over HEI. At the same time, this reasoning can be taken one step further: what is valued is not only country but specific location, where big cities such as Berlin, Paris and Barcelona have an advantage compared to more provincial HEIs in the major education nations in Europe.

Geographic destination could also be interpreted as a variable that lies between motivation and outcome. If you want to study abroad to improve your language skills and choose an HEI on the basis of country as well as city and culture, but not based on reputation, quality or educational offering, the risk is probably greater that you will be less satisfied with the educational content, compared to if the choice is instead made primarily on the basis of academic considerations.

The students who deliberately apply to a specific HEI are found at the academically oriented pole. At the same time, this reasoning has some circularity. Those who put a high value on the HEI often study programmes where the status of the HEI is considered decisive for the quality of education, which is often the case for programmes in business administration and for fine arts programmes. For many of these students, ranking lists are considered the natural starting point for determining the quality of the HEIs and their education. Academic quality, which is identified here in one respect as the importance the students place on the HEI's reputation, thus to some extent risks measuring the degree to which ranking lists govern the impression of quality in the specific field of education.

The students' motivations, experiences and destinations reflect power relationships

If we attempt to interpret Swedish students' image of Europe based on the results of the study, some familiar patterns appear. In the conceptual world reflected by the motivations and movements of students, western and northern Europe have an academic advantage over its eastern and southern areas. More southerly destinations appear more culturally exotic, but inferior in an academic sense. Despite very few students in the study being born before the fall of the Soviet Union, it still appears that there is a mental border that divides Europe into an east and a west, where the former Eastern Bloc remains stigmatised and does not appear to attract Swedish students

as an academic or cultural destination. Many of the students also have their image of these countries confirmed through the exchange, but, as discussed above, this may not only be a result of the destination country, but also a result of the choice of HEI and subject.

Nuanced image of Erasmus+

Previous studies have further shown that social and cultural aspects are most important for Swedish students when choosing to study abroad, such as the experience of living abroad, meeting new people and improving their language skills. In evaluations of the benefits of studying abroad, personal and social factors are what rank most highly. That Erasmus+ is often regarded as a socially and experientially oriented programme is also emphasised by the fact that only one-fifth of the students feel that participation provides academic advantages compared to staying at the home HEI. According to the results of previous studies, this image of the Erasmus programme is also an important reason why many students choose not to participate, either because they want to focus on their studies or because they already have foreign experience that they regard as interchangeable with an Erasmus exchange.

One important contribution from this study is providing nuance to this image. Several of the Swedish HEIs with students in the study who are the most academically oriented – the Stockholm School of Economics, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm – also have some of the highest percentages of outward travelling students of all Swedish HEIs. These HEIs send out many of their students relative to their populations, and these students are generally academically oriented, encounter the fewest problems and are among the most satisfied. They often choose to study in other Nordic countries, but are also overrepresented at several HEIs in France, the Netherlands and in Milan, for example.

In other words, some of the most successful Erasmus exchanges are of an academic character, and thus differ completely from the usual image of the programme as non-academic.

Understanding the differences between programmes and HEIs

Another finding from the report is that looking at the differences between different fields of education is not always enough, as a previously referenced study of Erasmus students found no clear differences in motivating factors, for example (Vossensteyn, et al., 2010, pp. 60–61). As we have seen in this report, interesting differences can appear when the educational field is combined with individual HEIs.

Even if the study's results cannot provide a clear answer as to why participation in Erasmus+ differs considerably between fields of education and HEIs, some results may still have a bearing on this issue.

Previous studies have emphasised encouragement from other students as an important factor in whether students choose to study abroad or not. Because students in some disciplines at particular HEIs with a relatively high

level of Erasmus+ participation are among the most satisfied, it is possible that there are some feedback effects. HEIs and programmes with students that are satisfied with their exchanges can thus use this to maintain high participation. In extreme cases, studying abroad may become the norm for a particular programme. However, there is a risk that the effect of this positive feedback becomes largely isolated to a specific programme or, in the best case, HEI, as encouragement and positive examples probably spread via more informal channels. Equally, the feedback may be negative if students on some other programmes are not as satisfied with their exchanges, or perhaps provide an image of them as very social but less academically oriented. The differences in the various HEIs' international cooperation may also influence patterns of outward travel, as they create different conditions for the students.

It should also be stated that the link between HEIs, proportion of outward travelling students, academic orientation and satisfaction probably encompasses a socioeconomic dimension. Students in prestigious programmes in Sweden generally come from somewhat stronger socioeconomic groups, probably have more experience with spending time abroad and are better prepared, both academically and linguistically. These are probably skills and experiences that increase the chances of successfully benefitting from what is offered by an academically focused exchange period, and it may be important to ensure that the students have the right competencies for managing this type of investment. We have reason to return to the importance of social background and educational path in the choice of exchange country, HEI and perceptions of Erasmus+ in future studies.

Appendix

Variable coding

An initial coding process was conducted as the method places particular requirements on the data.

Only one response per question

For example, each respondent can choose one, and only one, option (variable value) for each question (variable). For example, since the question about the respondent's primary reason for studying abroad made it possible to choose up to 10 options for one question, this was recoded as 10 new variables, where each one comprised a Yes/No question about whether a particular factor was a reason for studying abroad.

Low frequency categories have been grouped

Additionally, in this method, response categories with very low frequencies should be avoided among the variables that are actively used in the analysis. A rule of thumb is that response categories with less than 5 per cent of the responses should be merged with the semantically closest category (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2010, p. 39). If the category "Very dissatisfied", for the question of the student's level of satisfaction with an aspect of studying abroad, has been selected by less than 5 per cent of the students, it has been merged with the semantically closest category, "Rather dissatisfied". In the few cases in which these two still comprise less than 5 per cent of the responses after being merged, they have been merged with "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied".

Scale variables have been treated as categorical

The method is particularly suitable for treating categorical variables as active. However, the majority of questions in the questionnaire build instead upon scales, where the respondent is asked to provide their degree of satisfaction or agreement using a five-point scale. In the social sciences, these types of scale variables are often somewhat inaccurately used as if they were linear, numeric variables. This makes it possible to use regression analysis.

Instead, in this study we have chosen to treat scale variables as categorical variables and coded the responses using the model `++/+/0/-/--`. In MCA, this often results in a horseshoe structure that moves from positive at one end to negative at the other (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2004, p. 220). This is because respondents tend to consistently use about the same level of agreement or positivity on multiple questions. The result is that a high level of agreement with question A tends to occur alongside a high level of agreement with questions B, C, D and so on. More nuanced differences may thus be overshadowed.

However, in this study, the horseshoe shape to which the scale variables contribute is moderated by other variables in the analysis not building upon such scales. Because most variables that would traditionally be considered dependent variables are based on steps in a scale, we have also chosen to use motivating factors as active in the analysis. This is because these factors could easily be made dichotomous as Yes/No questions, thus making it possible to avoid the typical horseshoe formation. Instead of a horseshoe, scale variables then tend to manifest as a linear opposition between positive and negative responses. At the same time, the choice of motivation factors as active in the analysis means that we do not maintain a strict division between dependent and independent variables as active or supplementary. Instead, the distribution in space has built upon the association between what the students were looking for and what they encountered or received.

Questions with a high response frequency were selected

As active variables, we have limited ourselves to those questions which almost all respondents have answered. Several sets of questions were only answered by respondents who had given a particular answer on a previous question, such as that they had not had or did not expect to have their credits transferred or that they did not complete all their courses. The questions from these sets have thus not been used as active categories in the analysis, but have subsequently been placed in the generated structure as supplementary variables.

To avoid scale variables dominating the structure and creating the above-mentioned horseshoe, we have filtered out most of these. The complete set of variables included in the analysis has been selected with the aim of obtaining a good representation of the most central themes in the survey and a balance between them. This has been done through a combination of logically categorising variables into themes and, in preliminary analyses, seeing which response categories are consistently positioned close together in various constellations and thus tend to occur together.

Questions with only two response options have been weighted

Questions regarding which motivating factors lay behind the decision to study abroad have only had two responses options – yes or no. Scale variables have generally had three, and sometimes four, response options after low frequency categories were merged. Because the size of a question's contribution to the total variation in the cloud of points has a direct relationship to the number of response categories (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2010, p. 39), the motivating variables were weighted upward by a factor of 1.5.

The correspondence analysis

Axes and variance

Tabell 3. The variance of the axes (eigenvalue) and modified values.

Axis	Axis variance (eigenvalue)	% of explained variance	Total % of explained variance	Benzécri's modified rate (%)	Retained according to the Kaiser criterion
1	0.150	9.3	9.3	55.0	X
2	0.109	6.8	16.1	20.3	X
3	0.089	5.5	21.6	9.4	X
4	0.078	4.9	26.5	5.2	X
5	0.073	4.6	31.0	3.8	X
6	0.070	4.3	35.4	2.8	X
7	0.064	3.9	39.3	1.6	X
8	0.059	3.7	43.0	0.8	X
9	0.055	3.4	46.4	0.4	X
10	0.054	3.3	49.7	0.3	X
11	0.053	3.3	53.0	0.3	X
12	0.049	3.1	56.1	0.1	X
13	0.047	2.9	59.0	0.0	X
14	0.045	2.8	61.8	0.0	
15	0.044	2.7	64.5	0.0	
16	0.042	2.6	67.1	0.0	
17	0.041	2.5	69.6	0.0	
18	0.040	2.5	72.1	0.0	
19	0.039	2.4	74.5	0.0	
20	0.038	2.4	76.9	0.0	
21	0.036	2.3	79.1	0.0	
22	0.036	2.2	81.3	0.0	
23	0.034	2.1	83.4	0.0	
24	0.033	2.1	85.5	0.0	
25	0.032	2.0	87.4	0.0	
26	0.030	1.9	89.3	0.0	
27	0.029	1.8	91.1	0.0	
28	0.028	1.7	92.9	0.0	
29	0.027	1.7	94.5	0.0	
30	0.026	1.6	96.2	0.0	
31	0.024	1.5	97.7	0.0	
32	0.021	1.3	99.0	0.0	
33	0.016	1.0	99.9	0.0	
34	0.001	0.0	100.0	0.0	
35	0.000	0.0	100.0	0.0	
Total	1.610	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Description of axes 1–3.

Tabell 4. Contribution values for variables and variable values for axis 1.

Name	Type	Theme	Contri- bution	Left	Contri- bution	Right	Contri- bution
MotQuality	Motivation	Academic	14.1	+	8.2	-	5.8
CriReput	Criterion	Academic	7.3	++	3.4	-/--	2.5
Logic	Development	Academic	7.2	+/++	3.0	-/--	2.6
SatContent	Satisfaction	Academic	6.8	+/++	1.8	-/-- 0	2.8 2.1
FieldSkills	Development	Academic	6.6	+/++	2.1	0 -/--	2.5 2.0
CriLearnOffer	Criterion	Academic	6.4	++	2.8	-/--	2.2
MotCont	Motivation	Academic	5.2	+	2.5	-	2.8
SatTeachSup	Satisfaction	Academic	5.2	+/++	2.2	-/--	2.3
MotNtwrk	Motivation	Labour market	10.1	+	6.5	-	3.6
MotEmpAbr	Motivation	Labour market	9.6	+	5.1	-	4.5
ChanceJob	Development	Labour market	6.1	++	3.0	0/-/--	2.8
MotEmpHome	Motivation	Labour market	5.5	+	2.9	-	2.6
Adaptability	Development	Labour market	4.1	++	2.0		
MotKnowCtry	Motivation	Cultural	2.8				
MotStudnLang	Motivation	Cultural	1.9				
MotLang	Motivation	Cultural	0.5				
CriSocLife	Criterion	Cultural	0.3				
CriCityCult	Criterion	Cultural	0.2				
CriCtry	Criterion	Cultural	0.1				
Total					45.5		41.2

Note: **Bold** indicates that the variable has a contribution above the average.

Tabell 5. Contribution values for variables and variable values for axis 2.

Name	Type	Theme	Contri- bution	Down- ward	Contri- bution	Up-ward	Contri- bution
MotLang	Motivation	Cultural	13.4	+	5.3	-	8.0
MotKnowCtry	Motivation	Cultural	9.7	+	4.5	-	5.2
MotStudInLang	Motivation	Cultural	8.2	+	6.7	-	1.5
CriCtry	Criterion	Cultural	8.0	++	3.7	0/-/--	3.4
CriCityCult	Criterion	Cultural	7.9	++	4.1	0/-/--	3.1
CriSocLife	Criterion	Cultural	6.3	++	3.6	-/--	1.5
MotQuality	Motivation	Academic	7.0	-	2.9	+	4.1
CriLearnOffer	Criterion	Academic	4.6			++	2.1
CriReput	Criterion	Academic	3.8				
SatContent	Satisfaction	Academic	3.8				
SatTeachSup	Satisfaction	Academic	3.2				
Logic	Development	Academic	2.1				
MotCont	Motivation	Academic	1.5				
FieldSkills	Development	Academic	1.1				
MotEmpHome	Motivation	Labour market	8.3	+	4.3	-	4.0
MotEmpAbr	Motivation	Labour market	6.8	+	3.6	-	3.2
MotNtwrk	Motivation	Labour market	3.4	+	2.2		
ChanceJob	Development	Labour market	0.6				
Adaptability	Development	Labour market	0.3				
Total					41.0		36.2

Note: **Bold** indicates that the variable has a contribution above the average. *Italics* indicates that the variable category contributes below the average value, but that it has been included anyway because it is regarded as contributing to the interpretation of the axis.

Tabell 6. Contribution values for variables and variable values for axis 3.

Name	Type	Theme	Contribution	Down-ward	Contri-bution	Up-ward	Contribution
CriCityCult	Criterion	Cultural	17.2	0/-/--	6.4	++	9.2
CriCtry	Criterion	Cultural	14.7	0/-/-- +	5.3 2.1	++	7.2
CriSocLife	Criterion	Cultural	12.4	0	2.3	++	7.8
MotKnowCtry	Motivation	Cultural	0.6				
MotLang	Motivation	Cultural	0.6				
MotStudInLang	Motivation	Cultural	0.3				
MotEmpHome	Motivation	Labour market	12.8	+	6.7	-	6.1
MotEmpAbr	Motivation	Labour market	11.3	+	6.0	-	5.4
Adaptability	Development	Labour market	6.0	0/-/--	1.9	++	3.0
MotNtwrk	Motivation	Labour market	4.3	+	2.8		
ChanceJob	Development	Labour market	1.9				
SatContent	Satisfaction	Academic	4.4	-/--	2.6		
SatTeachSup	Satisfaction	Academic	4.0	-/--	2.0		
Logic	Development	Academic	3.1				
MotCont	Motivation	Academic	3.0				
FieldSkills	Development	Academic	2.0				
CriReput	Criterion	Academic	0.7				
CriLearnOffer	Criterion	Academic	0.5				
MotQuality	Motivation	Academic	0.1				
Total					38.0		38.7

Note: **Bold** indicates that the variable has a contribution above the average.

Supplementary variables

Tabell 7. Explanation of abbreviated supplementary variables.

Variable name	Variable theme	Description or question wording
Satisfaction	Satisfaction	How satisfied are you with your Erasmus+ mobility experience in general?
OtherKnowlSkills	Academic outcome	Did you gain knowledge and skills that you would not have gained in your sending institution?
RateClassroom	Academic outcome	How would you rate the facilities for students at the receiving institution? Classrooms.
FindSolutions	Academic outcome	Through my stay abroad with Erasmus+, I learned better how to find solutions in difficult or challenging contexts (problem-solving skills).
ReachLearnGoal	Academic outcome	Did you reach your personal learning goal during the study abroad?
SatAdminSupport	Academic outcome	How satisfied were you with the support arrangements provided by your receiving institution? Administrative support arrangements.
SatTeaching	Academic outcome	Were you satisfied with the quality of learning and teaching at the receiving institution? The quality of teaching methods.
PlanLearning	Academic outcome	Through my stay abroad with Erasmus+, I learned better how to plan and carry out my learning independently.
ChanceStudJob	Cultural or labour market outcome	Thanks to this stay abroad with Erasmus+ I have better opportunities for traineeships or student jobs in my home country.
FutureWorkAbr	Cultural or labour market outcome	How has the stay abroad changed the way you see your future work? I can easily imagine working abroad at some point in the future.
CoopCultBackg	Cultural or labour market outcome	After having taken part in this mobility activity I am more able to cooperate with people from other backgrounds and cultures.
Tolerance	Cultural or labour market outcome	After having taken part in this mobility activity I am more tolerant towards other persons' values and behaviour.
ValueCulture	Cultural or labour market outcome	Through my stay abroad with Erasmus+, I learned better how to see the value of different cultures.
AT	Destination country	Austria
BE	Destination country	Belgium
CZ	Destination country	Czech Republic
DE	Destination country	Germany
DK	Destination country	Denmark
EE	Destination country	Estonia
EL	Destination country	Greece
ES	Destination country	Spain
FI	Destination country	Finland
FR	Destination country	France
HR	Destination country	Croatia
HU	Destination country	Hungary
IE	Destination country	Ireland
IS	Destination country	Iceland
IT	Destination country	Italy
LT	Destination country	Lithuania
LV	Destination country	Latvia
MT	Destination country	Malta
NL	Destination country	Netherlands
NO	Destination country	Norway

PL	Destination country	Poland
PT	Destination country	Portugal
RO	Destination country	Romania
SI	Destination country	Slovenia
SK	Destination country	Slovakia
TR	Destination country	Turkey
UK	Destination country	United Kingdom
DA	Language of instruction	Danish
DE	Language of instruction	German
EN	Language of instruction	English
ES	Language of instruction	Spanish
FR	Language of instruction	French
IT	Language of instruction	Italian
NO	Language of instruction	Norwegian
BTH	Swedish HEIs	Blekinge Institute of Technology
CTH	Swedish HEIs	Chalmers University of Technology
FHS	Swedish HEIs	Swedish Defence University
GU	Swedish HEIs	University of Gothenburg
HB	Swedish HEIs	University of Borås
HDA	Swedish HEIs	Dalarna University
HH	Swedish HEIs	Halmstad University
HHS	Swedish HEIs	Stockholm School of Economics
HIG	Swedish HEIs	University of Gävle
HJ	Swedish HEIs	Jönköping University
HKR	Swedish HEIs	Kristianstad University
HS	Swedish HEIs	University of Skövde
HV	Swedish HEIs	University West
KAU	Swedish HEIs	Karlstad University
KF	Swedish HEIs	University College of Arts, Crafts and Design
KI	Swedish HEIs	Karolinska Institutet
KKH	Swedish HEIs	Royal Institute of Art
KMH	Swedish HEIs	Royal College of Music in Stockholm
KTH	Swedish HEIs	KTH Royal Institute of Technology
LNU	Swedish HEIs	Linnaeus University
LIU	Swedish HEIs	Linköping University
LTU	Swedish HEIs	Luleå University of Technology
LU	Swedish HEIs	Lund University
MAH	Swedish HEIs	Malmö University
MDH	Swedish HEIs	Mälardalen University
MIU	Swedish HEIs	Mid Sweden University
ORU	Swedish HEIs	Örebro University
RKH	Swedish HEIs	The Red Cross University College
SH	Swedish HEIs	Södertörn University
SKH	Swedish HEIs	Stockholm University of the Arts
SLU	Swedish HEIs	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

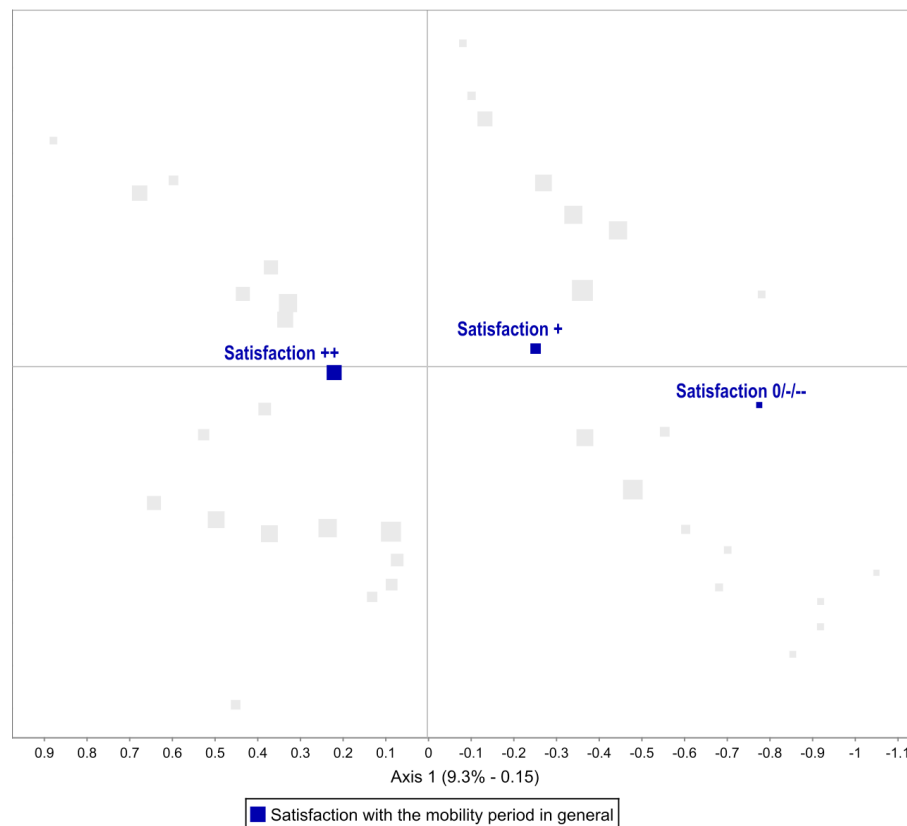
SU	Swedish HEIs	Stockholm University
UMU	Swedish HEIs	Umeå University
UU	Swedish HEIs	Chalmers University of Technology
Arts/Hum	Field of education	Arts and humanities
Business/Adm	Field of education	Business administration
Engineering	Field of education	Engineering and manufacturing
Health/Welf	Field of education	Health and welfare
Law	Field of education	Law
NatSc/Maths/Stat	Field of education	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
Pol.Sc.	Field of education	Political science
HEI	Degree of integration	How would you consider your degree of integration at your receiving institution? In the everyday life of your receiving institution.
International students	Degree of integration	How would you consider your degree of integration at your receiving institution? With other Erasmus + / international students.
Local students	Degree of integration	How would you consider your degree of integration at your receiving institution? With local students.
Student	Late signing of the learning agreement	The student (I) signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
SendInst	Late signing of the learning agreement	The sending HEI signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
RecInst	Late signing of the learning agreement	The receiving HEI signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
Students + SendInst	Late signing of the learning agreement	The student (I) and the sending HEI signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
Students + DestInst	Late signing of the learning agreement	The student (I) and the receiving HEI signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
SendInst + DestInst	Late signing of the learning agreement	The sending HEI and the receiving HEI signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
All parties	Late signing of the learning agreement	All parties (the student, sending HEI, receiving HEI) signed the learning agreement after the start of the mobility period.
Receiving HEI required	Changes to the learning agreement	The learning agreement was changed because the receiving HEI required this.
Other language	Changes to the learning agreement	The learning agreement was changed because the courses I selected initially were in a different language than foreseen in the course catalogue or the language was not specified in the course catalogue.
Course unavailable	Changes to the learning agreement	The learning agreement was changed because the courses I selected initially were not available.
Conflict time table	Changes to the learning agreement	The learning agreement was changed because of timetable conflicts.
GradeTrans	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was problems with grade transfer.
NoTransOfRec	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was problems with receiving the Transcript of Records from the receiving institution.
DiffNumCred	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that the number of credits recognised is different from the one agreed in the final version of the Learning Agreement.
SendNotAppr	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that professor(s) at my sending institution did not give the approval.
ContNotAcc	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that the course content (or part of it) as agreed in the final version of the Learning Agreement was not accepted by the sending institution upon return.

NoTakeExam	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that I did not take some or all exams.
NoPass	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that I did not pass some or all exams.
DecidNotRecog	Credit transfer	A main obstacle to full recognition was that I decided NOT to have some courses recognised.
NoCoNoNeed	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that I had no need for recognition (of credits).
NoCoStartLate	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that I started the course too late.
NoCoNotRelev	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that the course and grade were not relevant for my degree programme.
NoCoNotPrep	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that I did not feel appropriately prepared.
NoCoExamLate	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that exams took place later than my planned departure.
NoCoFearFail	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was personal fear to receive a bad grade or fail.
NoCoNotSitExam	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that I did not sit exams.
NoCoLangTooHi	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that the language level of the course was too high.
NoCoFailedExam	Completion	A reason for not completing all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of my Learning Agreement was that I failed exams.
Completed all	Completion	Did you successfully complete all the educational components that were listed in the study programme of your Learning Agreement?

Expanded interpretation of the students' experience of the mobility period

Below, we provide a foundation for our interpretation of the first axis as a division between students who are more satisfied or less satisfied with their exchange. This is emphasised by our subsequent addition of supplementary variables that have the same character as some of the active ones, but which did not contribute to determining individual positions in the space. These can be projected into the already determined space based on how individuals in the cloud have answered these particular questions. Responses to the question of how satisfied the students were with the mobility period in general are clearly located along the first axis when the distribution is projected along axes 1 and 2, with the most satisfied students over-represented to the left and the least satisfied to the right. Based on the size of the quadrants, which has been determined by the active variables based on the number of individuals they represent, we can see that the majority of students were satisfied with their exchange period. As mentioned in the report, 60 per cent were very satisfied, 33 per cent fairly satisfied, and only 7 per cent stated that they had a neutral or negative experience.

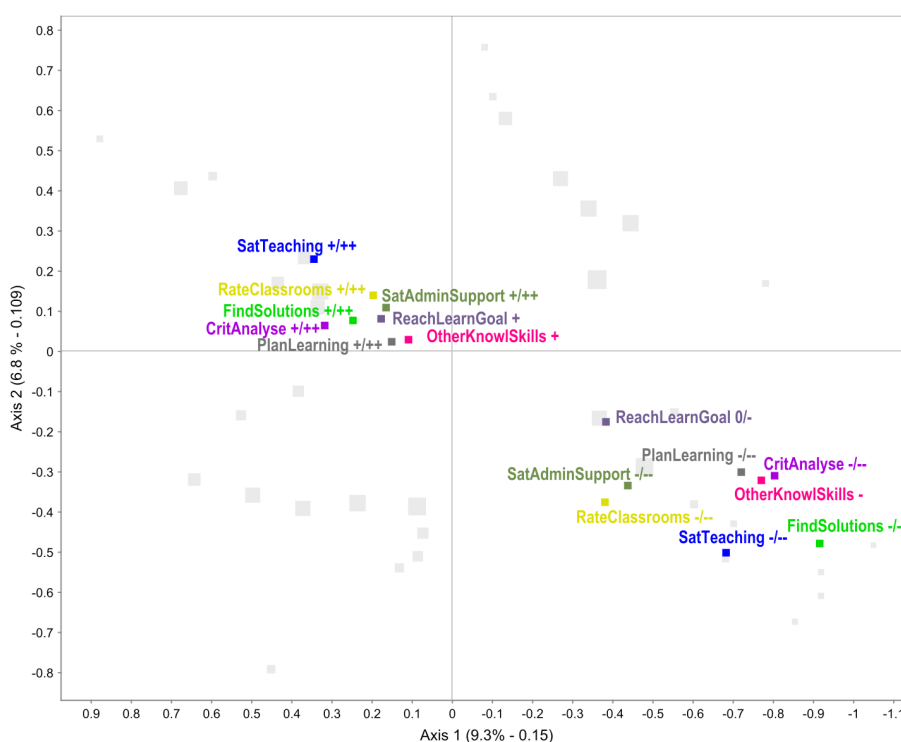
Figure 27. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Satisfaction with the mobility experience in general.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Questions that are in some way linked to the level of satisfaction with the academic situation or how much the individual has developed in a more academic, logical or practical sense are positioned in line with the academic opposition in the plane. The negative responses are those that are most distinct. While the satisfied students are in the majority and have some distribution around the centre, the less satisfied students are more concentrated in the lower right of the plane.

Figure 28. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Satisfaction and development in an academic sense.

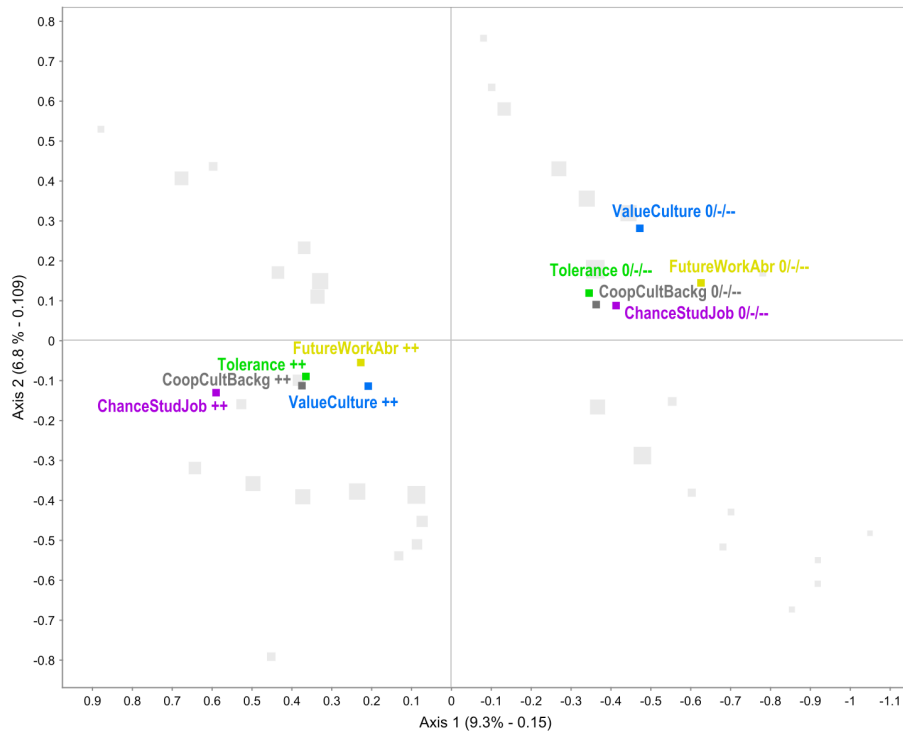


Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Responses to questions about personal development and attitude changes with a more cultural or labour market orientation are positioned along the first axis, somewhat diagonally from the lower left to the upper right quadrant.

Altogether, this emphasises how the students generally appear to get what they are looking for, or that they subsequently state that what they afterward perceived as being particularly valuable was also what made them originally choose that programme. The respondents who stated academic reasons as being most important for participation in Erasmus+ are those who are most satisfied with their exchange in terms of academic quality. They also end up further away from the academically less satisfied than the students who stated cultural or labour market-oriented reasons for their studies.

Figure 29. The space of Swedish Erasmus students. The plane for axes 1 and 2. Satisfaction and development in a cultural or labour market orientation.



Note: See table 7 in the Appendix for explanation of the supplementary variables in the figure.

Limitations of study

The questionnaire may not succeed in capturing some motivating factors

It is very possible that the questionnaire has not succeeded in capturing all the relevant motivating factors, such as a desire to spend time in a country where a student has family ties. In previous studies, such reasons have been stated as motivating studying abroad among some students in Sweden, and could partly explain why students in several countries in Eastern Europe have answered neutrally or negatively to most or all motivating factors and selection criteria in the survey.

There is also ambiguity about the extent to which the questionnaire captures the students who, according to common belief, primarily study abroad as a type of break from studying, a semester free of obligations and with many opportunities for social activities. In this study at least, the cultural and linguistic reasons cannot be separated from social reasons.

Students get what they are looking for, or say they are looking for what they get

Overall, the students' aims and motivations correspond relatively well to what they feel they gained from their time abroad. This is highly applicable to the academically oriented students, who are positioned far from the stu-

dents who responded negatively to questions on the quality of education, the standard of the classroom or personal development in a more academic or cognitive sense, for example.

A problem, however, is that questions are answered after the mobility period. There is thus a risk that the students redefine what they wanted to gain from their time abroad and respond accordingly. It would be advantageous for the questionnaire to be completed at the same time as the relevant themes are undertaken. Questions about the choice to study abroad, motivating factors and the criteria used when choosing an HEI would be better asked at the beginning of the mobility period.

A broad approach may miss many points

This study has taken a relatively broad approach to the data and explored the overarching patterns. With more specific questions, the same data could provide more answers and dig deeper into areas this report has excluded or only lightly touched upon. Even simple frequency and contingency tables could provide many informative answers. Given the high proportion of scale variables in the data, it would also be appropriate for dealing with these in a more Anglo-Saxon spirit in the social sciences, as linear, numeric variables and using regression analysis.

Studies of participants' backgrounds and comparisons with non-mobile students would be valuable

Finally, a lack of access to data about students' backgrounds has been perceived as a limiting factor in this analysis, in several respects. The hope is that future studies can link together the students' mobility periods and study paths with individual data about social background and previous study results to provide a deeper understanding of the structures that govern the students' motivations, destinations and experiences. Comparisons with non-mobile students would also be valuable in improving the understanding of who Erasmus students are.

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Résumé

Le but de cette étude est de révéler les patterns liés aux motifs des étudiants suédois participant au programme d'échange Erasmus et les résultats vécus de leur période d'échange. À l'aide de la méthode statistique d'analyse des correspondances multiple spécifique (ACMs), les informations issues d'un sondage obligatoire, auquel la totalité des étudiants ayant déposé une candidature au programme Erasmus pour 2014/2015 ont répondu, sont analysées et interprétées. La méthode révèle quels motifs et quelles expériences vécues ont tendance à être associés l'un à l'autre puis quels motifs et quelles expériences vécues le sont plus rarement. Le rapport suivant présente les principales différences entre les diverses combinaisons de motifs et expériences vécues les plus typiques ainsi que d'autres facteurs liant les motifs aux expériences vécues.

L'orientation académique et professionnelle est associée à la satisfaction et au développement

La différence la plus flagrante entre les combinaisons de motifs et d'expériences vécues chez les étudiants dans notre étude est basée sur la question de connaître à quel point l'orientation académique et la position professionnelle des étudiants a eu une influence particulière sur le motif des étudiants de partir à l'étranger et leurs critères de choix d'établissement d'études supérieures. Cette distinction est également liée à la satisfaction et au développement personnel vécu. Une très grande partie des étudiants, 93 pour cent, était assez ou très satisfaite de leur période de mobilité. Les étudiants ayant répondu de manière affirmative à la question de savoir si leurs motifs pour étudier à l'étranger étaient basés sur la qualité de l'établissement d'études supérieures à l'étranger et qui ont fait leur choix en se basant sur la réputation de l'établissement ou les cours offerts sont surreprésentés parmi les étudiants les plus satisfaits. Il en va de même pour les étudiants qui souhaitent faire des études à l'étranger pour améliorer leur position professionnelle sur le marché du travail suédois ou international, et qui voulaient élargir leur réseau social. Les étudiants qui, dans une moindre mesure, ont répondu que leurs motifs étaient liés au marché du travail et aux études ont tendance à être moins satisfaits de leur période d'échange.

Le degré d'orientation culturelle est la seconde distinction ayant le plus d'importance

La seconde distinction la plus importante dans cette étude est basée sur ce que nous appelons le degré d'orientation culturelle. D'un côté, nous trouvons les étudiants dont les motifs ont été influencés principalement par des facteurs tels que la langue, la géographie et des facteurs sociaux. Ces étudiants sont un peu plus souvent plus orientés vers le marché du travail. De l'autre côté, nous trouvons les étudiants dont le choix d'établissement d'études supérieures n'est pas basé sur des facteurs géographiques ou sociaux, et qui n'ont pas choisi de poursuivre des études à l'étranger pour apprendre une langue ou découvrir un autre pays. Ces étudiants ont tendance à avoir une motivation plutôt académique.

Trois oppositions : une opposition académique, professionnelle et une opposition culturelle

En étudiant les deux premières distinctions de l'analyse d'une manière générale comme un plan à deux axes, il ressort trois contradictions distinctes de notre matériel d'étude. La première contradiction est basée sur l'orientation académique et oppose les étudiants qui ont essentiellement indiqué que leur choix d'établissement pour leur échange avait été déterminé par les études aux étudiants qui, dans une moindre mesure, ont pris en compte ces mêmes facteurs. Les étudiants avec orientation académique étaient les plus satisfaits par leur environnement d'apprentissage, comme, entre autres, le contenu des cours et les formes d'enseignements contrairement aux étudiants avec moins d'orientation académique.

La seconde contradiction est basée sur des variables liées au marché du travail et oppose les étudiants qui ont essentiellement décidé d'étudier à l'étranger en raison du marché du travail et qui dans une certaine mesure estiment avoir amélioré leur perspective d'emploi et adaptabilité aux étudiants qui n'avaient pas pris en considération les facteurs liés au marché du travail.

Finalement, la troisième contradiction concerne les étudiants les plus motivés par l'aspect culturel et les étudiants qui n'ont pas pris en considération les facteurs culturels. À la différence de la contradiction liée aux études et celle liée au marché du travail, la contradiction culturelle n'est pas associée au niveau de satisfaction des étudiants Erasmus ou au niveau de développement des étudiants. De plus, les étudiants les plus académiquement orientés sont, plus rarement, également motivés par l'aspect culturel de l'échange et vice versa.

Nord- Sud : Un pôle académique Pays Nordique- France face à un pôle culturel hétérogène

Notre matériel d'étude indique que les étudiants en école de commerce suédoise ou les formations en Art et design sont plus particulièrement surreprésentés parmi les étudiants motivés par leurs études et qui ne sont pas intéressés par l'aspect culturel de l'échange. Nous y retrouvons également les étudiants en formations politiques et techniques.

Ces étudiants choisissent en grande partie d'étudier dans les Pays nordiques, ou pour les étudiants en école de commerce et politique optent pour la France, et choisissent un établissement d'enseignement supérieur en fonction de sa bonne renommée et les formations proposées. Ces étudiants se différencient essentiellement de ceux et celles qui optent pour les établissements d'enseignement supérieur espagnols et français, et dans une certaine mesure les établissements allemands et anglais, pour principalement améliorer leurs connaissances linguistiques ou étudier dans une ville particulière. En ce qui concerne l'Allemagne, cette demande culturelle se concentre avant tout sur les établissements berlinois. Les étudiants les plus motivés par l'aspect culturel viennent d'établissements d'enseignement supérieur suédois mais certains écoles et universités sont quelque peu surreprésentés.

Le degré d'orientation académique et culturelle ainsi que le degré de satisfaction suivent en d'autres mots un pattern lié aux études et à la géographie, avec une contradiction entre ce que nous pourrions appeler le pôle académique nord-sud et le pôle culturel hétérogène.

Les patterns géographiques Nord-Sud sont également liés à la satisfaction, et notamment à l'environnement d'apprentissage et à l'établissement d'enseignement supérieur. Il est plus fréquent parmi les étudiants auprès d'établissements d'enseignement supérieur espagnols, grecs et français d'être moins satisfaits par des facteurs académiques ou d'être confrontés à des difficultés administratives. Étudier dans les Pays nordiques ou auprès d'établissements ayant une très bonne réputation semble être une carte plus sûre pour celui ou celle qui ne souhaite pas risquer, dans le pire des cas de faire face à un enseignement de mauvaise qualité, des problèmes administratifs ou des difficultés linguistiques. Les étudiants dans les Pays nordiques sont clairement surreprésentés parmi ceux et celles les plus satisfaits, notamment de l'enseignement. Ils/elles semblent également généralement avoir des camarades suédois motivés par les études puisque l'orientation académique caractérise essentiellement les étudiants qui cherchent à suivre leurs études dans un pays nordique. Pour celui ou celle qui est motivé(e) par les études et qui souhaite tout de même étudier dans le sud de l'Europe, un petit nombre d'établissements français et italiens renommés recrutent des étudiants intéressés par la renommée académique et les formations proposées.

Est-Ouest : Des raisons peu claires d'étudier en Europe de l'Est

Au-delà de ce partage entre le Nord et le Sud, il y a un partage qui reflète largement la différence géographique entre l'Ouest et l'Est. Les pays d'Europe de l'Ouest sont surreprésentés en tant que pays de destination parmi les étudiants les plus satisfaits et les plus orientés vers les facteurs académiques et les facteurs liés au marché du travail. La plupart des pays d'Europe de l'Est sont plutôt surreprésentés par les étudiants n'ayant pas ces motifs.

L'étude montre qu'il semble fortement avoir une logique liée à la distance concernant à la fois la géographie et la culture. Plus les étudiants sont motivés par l'aspect culturel de l'échange plus ils partiront loin des Pays nordiques pour poursuivre leurs études.

Les grands pays de l'Europe de l'Ouest ont plus facile de recruter

Un pattern concernant les pays surreprésentés parmi les différents types d'étudiants semble ressortir de notre étude : pays dominants et pays dominés, selon deux principes différents.

Les étudiants dans des pays comme l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne ont souvent une combinaison de différents types de motifs pour poursuivre leurs études à l'étranger. En proposant des formations de qualité et de bonnes possibilités d'améliorer les connaissances linguistiques que les étudiants ont acquises au collège et au lycée, ces pays peuvent recruter selon une logique aussi bien académique que culturelle ou linguistique.

Les pays ayant une position plus périphérique recrute, à la place, plus selon l'une ou l'autre logique. Par exemple, les Pays nordiques attirent avant tout grâce à la qualité de leurs formations et les formations proposées mais n'attirent pas d'un point de vue géographie et comme destination culturellement intéressante. Ce qui est tout fait le contraire en ce qui concerne l'Espagne et la Grèce. La France a certes une surreprésentation du même type d'étudiants surreprésentés en Espagne et en Grèce mais se démarque en ayant des établissements d'enseignement supérieur dans deux positions extrêmement différentes – en partie avec une forte surreprésentation d'étudiants les plus motivés académiquement et, en partie, parmi les étudiants les plus motivés par l'aspect culturel.

Le Nord-Ouest a l'avantage sur le Sud-Est

En même temps, les pays plus faibles d'un point de vue économique et académique dans l'Europe de l'Est et dans une certaine mesure dans le sud de l'Europe sont en position inférieure en comparaison avec les pays de l'Europe de l'Ouest et ont une surreprésentation d'étudiants moyennement ou moins satisfaits. Ces pays ne semblent particulièrement pas attirer les étudiants les

plus motivés académiquement et ayant des motifs professionnels. L'Espagne, la Grèce et le Portugal se retrouvent à cet égard du même côté de la dimension de satisfaction que les pays de l'Europe de l'Est.

Ce qui attire les étudiants suédois dans les pays de l'Europe de l'Est est peu clair. Premièrement, très peu d'étudiants demandent à y poursuivre leurs études et deuxièmement, ceux qui le souhaitent répondent négativement à toutes les questions concernant les facteurs liées à la motivation, ce qui pourrait dépendre du fait que ces questions ne couvrent pas les motifs derrière leur choix.

Une image plus nuancée d'Erasmus+

Une des contributions principales de ce rapport est de souligner que les différents groupes d'étudiants participent au programme Erasmus+ à des fins diverses. De précédentes études ont souvent montré que la plupart des étudiants participent au programme d'échange pour par exemple vivre à l'étranger, apprendre une langue et rencontrer de nouvelles personnes, et, en même temps, que pour la plupart, les facteurs personnels et sociaux sont les avantages les plus importants de participer à un tel programme. Apparemment, une raison importante pour laquelle une partie des étudiants choisissent de ne pas participer est cette image d'Erasmus+ comme un programme social plutôt qu'un programme orienté sur les études supérieures.

Cependant, cette étude indique entre autres qu'une minorité significative d'étudiants participe au programme d'échange pour étudier dans un environnement académique attractif à l'étranger. Ces étudiants sont, de plus, sur-représentés parmi ceux qui rencontrent le moins de problèmes et ceux qui sont les plus satisfaits de leur participation.

Zusammenfassung

Die Studie untersucht Verhaltensmuster schwedischer Erasmusstudenten und festgestellte Ergebnisse ihres Austauschzeitraums. Mit der statistischen Methode *spezifisch multipel korrespondenzanalyse (sMCA; dt. mehrfache Korrespondenzanalyse)* werden Daten einer obligatorischen Umfrage für alle Studenten in den Erasmusausreibungen 2014 und 2015 analysiert und interpretiert. Die Methode zeigt, welche Motive und Erfahrungen in der Regel zusammenhängen und welche eher seltener auftreten. Der folgende Bericht diskutiert die Hauptunterschiede zwischen verschiedenen solchen eher typischen Kombinationen von Erfahrungen und Motive und mit welchen weiteren Faktoren sie zusammenhängen.

Akademische und arbeitsmarktbezogene Orientierung hängen mit Zufriedenheit und Entwicklung zusammen

Der deutlichste sich aus diesem Material ergebende Unterschied zwischen typischeren Kombinationen und Erfahrungen bei Studenten beruht darauf, wie akademisch und arbeitsmarktbezogen die Studenten bei ihren Motiven waren, ins Ausland zu gehen sowie in ihren Kriterien, ihre Bildungsstätte auszuwählen. Dieser Bereich hängt ebenso mit Zufriedenheit und festgestellter persönlicher Entwicklung zusammen. Ein sehr großer Teil der Studenten, 93 Prozent, war ziemlich oder sehr zufrieden mit seinem Auslandsaufenthalt. Die Studenten, die bejahend darauf geantwortet haben, dass die Motivation in der Qualität der ausländischen Bildungsstätte lag und diese aufgrund des Rufs und des Studienangebots ausgewählt haben, sind unter den zufriedensten Studenten am stärksten vertreten. Es sind auch diese Studenten, die sich im Ausland bewarben, um ihre Stellung auf dem nationalen oder internationalen Arbeitsmarkt zu verbessern und ihr Netzwerk zu erweitern. Studierende, die in geringerem Maße arbeitsmarktbezogene und studienbezogene Motive angaben, sind tendenziell mit ihrem Austauschzeitraum etwas weniger zufrieden.

Der Grad der kulturellen Ausrichtung ist der zweithöchste Bereich

Der zweithäufigste Bereich im untersuchten Material basiert auf dem Grad der kulturellen Orientierung. Auf der einen Seite stehen Studenten, die sprachliche, geografische und soziale Faktoren in den Mittelpunkt ihrer Entscheidungen und Motive stellen. Diese sind etwas häufiger arbeitsmarktbezogen. Auf der anderen Seite stehen Studenten, deren Auswahl der Bildungsstätte *nicht* auf geografische Orte oder soziale Faktoren beruht, und

die sich nicht aus sprachlichen Gründen für ein Auslandsstudium entschieden haben oder um ein neues Land kennenzulernen. Diese Studenten neigen zu einer akademischeren Orientierung.

Drei Gegensätze: ein akademischer, ein arbeitsmarktbezogener und ein kultureller

Untersuchen wir die ersten zwei Bereiche in der Analyse zusammen als einen Plan mit zwei Achsen. Dabei treten drei klare Gegensätze in unserem Material hervor. Der erste beruht auf der akademischen Orientierung und stellt die Studenten dar, die zum großen Teil akademische Gründe für ihren Austausch und ihre Wahl der Institution angegeben haben, gegenüber jenen, die aus diesen Gründen eine niedrige Priorität hatten. Die akademisch orientierten Studierenden waren mit ihrem Studiumfeld, auch in Bezug auf Lehrinhalte und Lehrmethoden, am zufriedensten, während das Gegenteil bei den weniger akademisch orientierten Studierenden der Fall war.

Der zweite Gegensatz beruht auf arbeitsmarktbezogenen Variablen und stellt Studenten dar, die sich hauptsächlich aus arbeitsmarktorientierten Gründen im Ausland bewarben und die im höherem Maße eine Verbesserung ihrer Aussichten auf dem Arbeitsmarkt und ihrer Anpassungsfähigkeit wahrgenommen haben gegenüber denen, deren Gründe nicht auf arbeitsmarktbezogene Faktoren basiert.

Schließlich gibt es einen Gegensatz zwischen denen, deren Schwerpunkt auf der kulturellen Orientierung lag und denen, deren Gründe nicht kulturell motiviert waren. Kulturelle Gegensätze hängen hingegen zu akademischen und arbeitsmarktbezogenen nicht damit zusammen, wie zufrieden die Studenten mit dem Austauschstudium waren oder wie sehr sich die Studenten entwickelt haben. Weiterhin sind die eher akademisch orientierten Studenten seltener kulturell motiviert und umgekehrt.

Nord-Süd: Ein akademisch nordeuropäisch-französischer Pol gegen einen heterogenen kulturellen Pol

Das Material zeigt, dass Studenten schwedischer Handelshochschulen oder von Kunst- und Designerausbildungen am deutlichsten unter den akademisch orientierten und kulturell uninteressierten Studenten überrepräsentiert sind. Einige staatswissenschaftliche und technische Ausbildungen finden sich ebenso hier.

Diese Studenten entscheiden sich hauptsächlich für ein Studium in nord-europäischen Ländern; Studenten von Handelshochschulen oder Staatswissenschaftler auch in Frankreich, und sie wählen die Bildungsstätte aufgrund des guten Rufs und des Studienangebots aus. Sie unterscheiden sich hauptsächlich von denen, die sich vor allem an spanischen und französischen, aber auch in gewissem Maße an deutschen und britischen Bildungsstätten bewerben, insbesondere um ihre Sprachkenntnisse zu verbessern oder in einer

bestimmten Stadt zu studieren. Diesbezüglich ist die kulturelle Nachfrage für Deutschland vor allem auf Bildungsstätten in Berlin konzentriert. Die eher kulturorientierten Studenten kommen von den meisten schwedischen Bildungsstätten, aber einige Hochschulen sind etwas stärker repräsentiert.

Mit anderen Worten folgen der Grad der akademischen und kulturellen Orientierung sowie der Grad der Zufriedenheit Bildungs- und geografischen Mustern, mit einem Widerspruch zwischen dem, was man den akademischen nordeuropäisch-französischen Pol nennen kann und dem eher heterogen komplexen, kulturellen Pol.

Geografische Muster in nordsüdlicher Richtung hängen auch mit Zufriedenheit zusammen, nicht zuletzt mit dem Studenumfeld und der Bildungsstätte. Unter Studenten an spanischen, griechischen und französischen Universitäten begegnet man häufiger Studenten, die mit akademischen Faktoren weniger zufrieden sind oder administrative Schwierigkeiten haben. In nordischen Ländern oder an Institutionen mit sehr gutem Ruf zu studieren, scheint eine sicherere Karte für diejenigen zu sein, die nicht riskieren wollen, dass sie sich mit unzureichenden Lehr-, Verwaltungs- oder Sprachschwierigkeiten herumschlagen müssen. Die Studenten in den nordeuropäischen Ländern sind deutlich überrepräsentiert unter den zufriedenen, insbesondere mit dem Studium. Sie scheinen im Allgemeinen auch mehr akademisch orientierte schwedische Studienkameraden zu haben, da die akademische Orientierung in sehr hohem Maße die Studenten charakterisiert, die sich in nord-europäischen Ländern bewerben. Für diejenigen, die akademisch orientiert sind und dennoch in südlichen Breitengraden studieren wollen, gibt es eine kleine Anzahl von renommierten Institutionen in Frankreich und Italien, die Studenten anwerben, die vom akademischen Ruf und vom Studienangebot angezogen werden.

Ost-West: Unklare Motivation hinter Studien in Osteuropa

Zusätzlich zu dieser Aufteilung zwischen Norden und Süden gibt es eine Aufteilung, die weitgehend den geografischen Unterschied zwischen West und Ost widerspiegelt. Die westeuropäischen Länder sind als Zielländer überrepräsentiert zwischen den zufriedeneren und eher akademisch und arbeitsmarktbezogen orientierten Studenten. Die meisten Länder in Osteuropa sind stattdessen überrepräsentiert bei Studenten ohne diese Motive.

Die Studie zeigt, dass es eine Distanzlogik zu geben scheint, die sowohl für die Geografie als auch für die Kultur gilt. Je kultureller die Studierenden sind, desto weiter weg von den nordeuropäischen Ländern bewerben sie sich.

Die großen westlichen Länder haben Rekrutierungsvorteile

Welche Länder unter den verschiedenen Studententypen überrepräsentiert sind, kann auch als ein Muster dominanter und dominierter Länder interpretiert werden, die auf zwei unterschiedlichen Prinzipien beruhen.

Studenten in Ländern wie Großbritannien und Deutschland haben häufig eine Kombination aus allen möglichen Motiven für ihr Auslandsstudium. Indem sowohl eine gute Bildungsqualität als auch gute Möglichkeiten angeboten werden, die Sprachen zu verbessern, die die Studenten in Oberschule und auf dem Gymnasium gelernt haben, können diese Länder nach akademischer und kultureller oder linguistischer Logik rekrutieren.

Länder in eher peripheren Positionen rekrutieren stattdessen vor allem nach der einen oder anderen Logik. Zum Beispiel ziehen nordeuropäische Länder vor allem mit Bildungsqualität und Angebot an, aber nicht als geografisch oder kulturell interessante Ziele. Für Spanien und Griechenland gilt das Gegenteil. Frankreich hat zweifellos eine Überrepräsentation derselben Art von Studenten, die in Spanien und Griechenland überrepräsentiert sind, zeichnet sich jedoch dadurch aus, dass einzelne Institutionen in zwei verschiedenen Extrempositionen vertreten sind: teils mit einer starken Überrepräsentation der akademisch motiviertesten Studenten, teils unter den kulturell orientiertesten.

Nordwest hat ein Vorteil gegenüber Südost

Gleichzeitig sind die wirtschaftlich und akademisch schwächeren Länder in Ost- und teilweise auch in Südeuropa gegenüber den westeuropäischen Ländern benachteiligt und weisen eine Überrepräsentation von mäßigen oder weniger zufriedenen Studierenden auf. Diese Länder scheinen nicht besonders Studenten mit akademischer oder beruflicher Motivation anzulocken. Spanien, Griechenland und Portugal enden in dieser Hinsicht auf der gleichen Ebene der Zufriedenheitsskala wie die Länder Osteuropas.

Es ist außerdem unklar, was schwedische Studenten nach Osteuropa zieht. Zum einen sind es äußerst wenig Studenten, die sich dafür bewerben, zum anderen zeichnen sich diejenigen durch die Verneinung der meisten Motivationsfaktoren aus. Dies wiederum kann davon abhängig sein, dass die Fragen ihre Motive nicht einfangen.

Ein differenzierteres Bild von Erasmus+

Einer der Hauptbeiträge des Berichts besteht darin, hervorzuheben, dass verschiedene Gruppen von Studierenden das Programm Erasmus + für verschiedene Zwecke nutzen. Frühere Untersuchungen haben häufig festgestellt, dass die allermeisten Studenten daran teilnehmen, um z. B. im Ausland zu wohnen, eine neue Sprache zu erlernen oder um andere Menschen kennenzulernen, während die allermeisten persönliche und soziale Gründe als wichtigste Faktoren ihrer Teilnahme nannten. Offensichtlich ist ein wichtiger Grund dafür,

dass ein Teil der Studenten sich entscheidet, nicht teilzunehmen, genau dieses Bild von Erasmus+ als ein soziales anstatt eines akademischen Programms.

Diese Untersuchung zeigt doch unter anderem, dass eine signifikante Minderheit das Austauschprogramm nutzt, um sich für ein akademisch attraktives Umfeld im Ausland zu bewerben. Diese Studenten sind außerdem unter denjenigen überrepräsentiert, die am wenigsten Probleme haben und am zufriedensten mit ihrer Teilnahme sind.



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- facilitating international exchange and training across the entire educational spectrum
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