



INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

A magnifying glass icon inside a white square, which is part of a larger graphic of overlapping colored squares (blue, pink, green, orange) that frame the word 'PRIME'.

PRIME

**Problems of Recognition
in Making Erasmus**

Tania Berman
President Erasmus Student Network

president@esn.org

www.esn.org



What is ESN?

- * One of the biggest non-profit interdisciplinary student's organisations in Europe
- * Founded in 1989
 - With the return of the 1st Erasmus students
- * Aim: support and develop student exchanges and provide an intercultural experience
 - also to those students who cannot access a period abroad ('internationalisation at home').
- * Principle: "Students helping students"

International projects



What is PRIME?



- ✱ Problems of Recognition In Making Erasmus
- ✱ European-wide research project
- ✱ Conducted by ESN with the support of the European Commission and with a partnership of Vilnius University



- ✱ Two editions:
 - 1st in 2009
 - Follow-up in 2010

Objectives

- * Draw attention of the stakeholders and parties involved in the process of recognition to **ever-lasting problems** and obstacles
- * Map and monitor **good practices**
- * Provide **solutions** and recommendations
- * Improve **the quality** of exchange and increase **the numbers**

Fields of the research

- ✱ Most common practices in Europe regarding:
 - Information provision about Erasmus and other exchanges
 - ECTS
 - Course credit calculation
 - Usage of the ECTS at European universities
 - Learning Agreement (LA)
 - Negotiation and signing
 - Recognition
 - Validity of the LA, involved parties, common problems
 - Grade transfer
 - Erasmus and additional grants, tuition fees

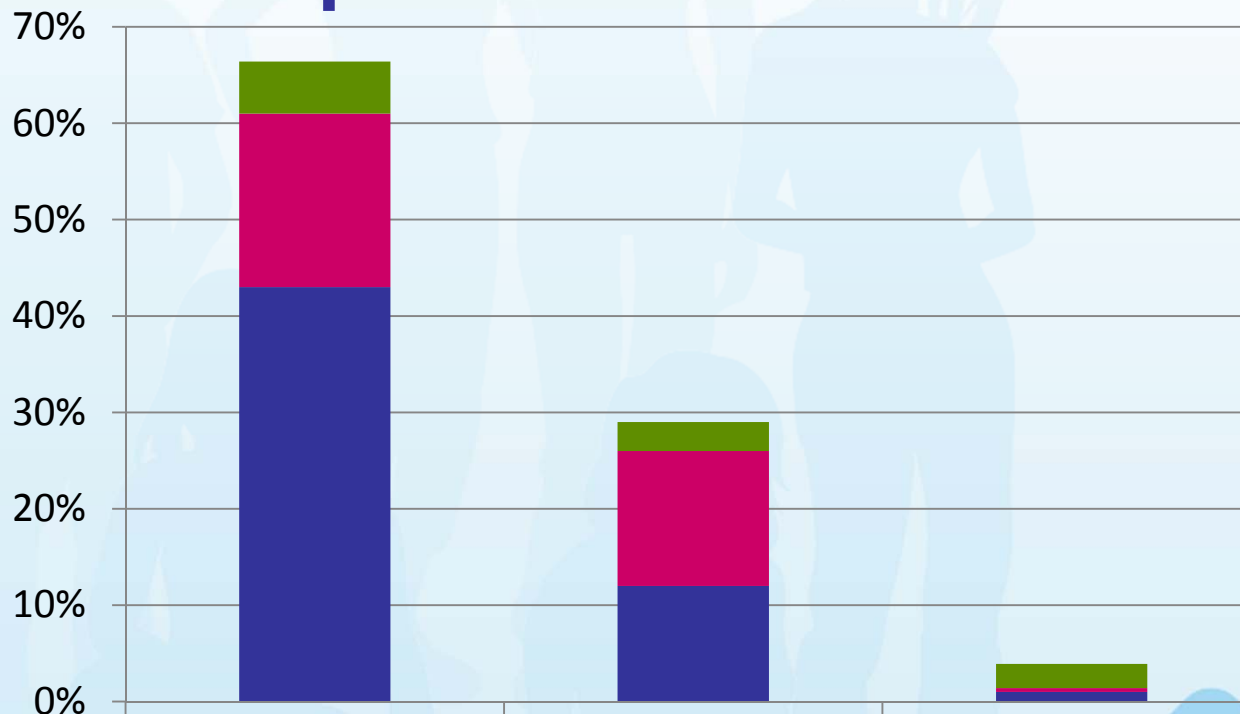


INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

PRIME 2009



Recognition and exams upon return



	Full	Partial	No recognition
All courses	5,40%	3,00%	2,50%
Some courses	18%	14%	0,40%
None	43%	12%	1%

Nothing; 4%

Partly; 30%

Full; 66%



INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

PRIME 2010



Research

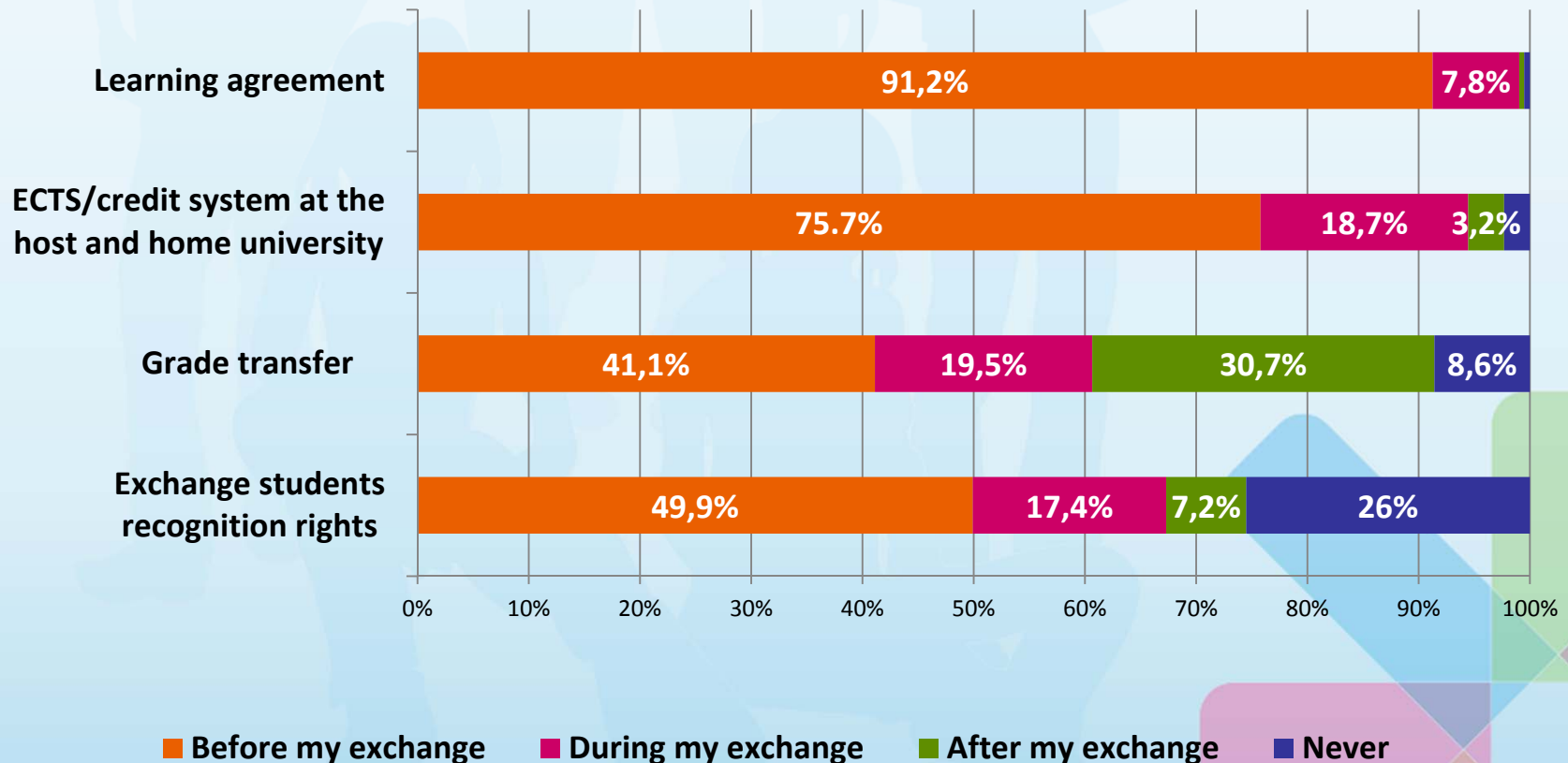


- * Both qualitative and quantitative
- * Three-level research:
 - **New:** In-depth interview with National Agencies
 - Online questionnaire for Higher Education Institutions
 - Online questionnaire for Students
- * From February until the end of April
- * **16** interviews with National Agencies
- * **500** responses from Higher Education Institutions (500% more than in 2009)
- * **9000** responses from students (375% more than in 2009)

Information provision

✱ 26% of students never receive information on exchange students recognition rights

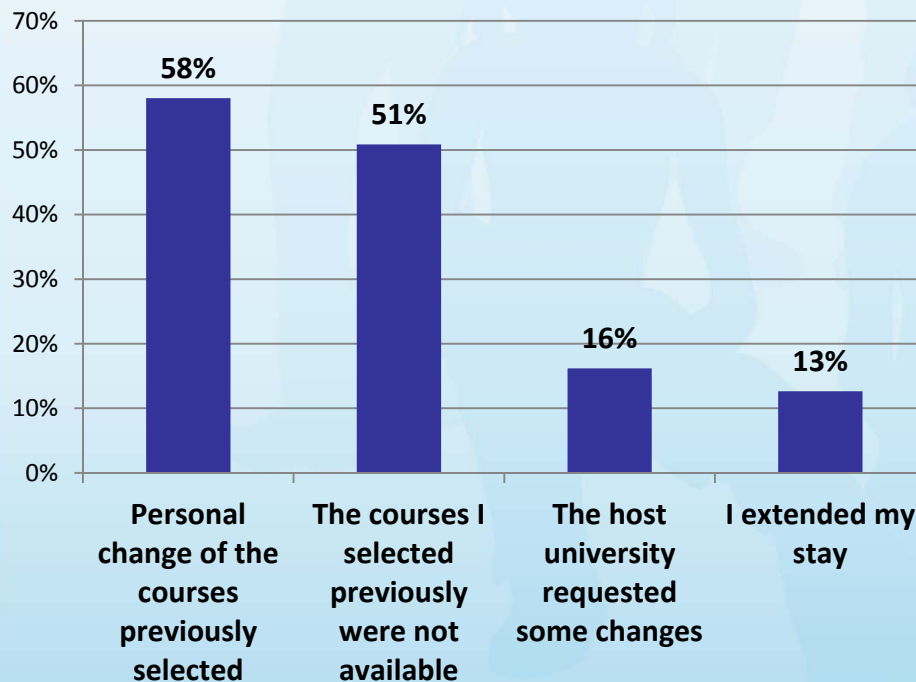
Information provision to students



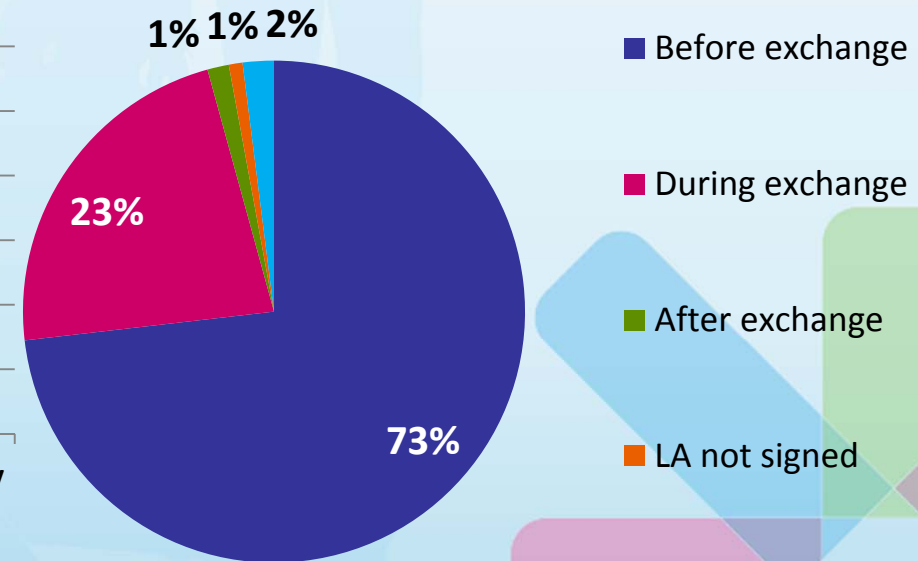
Learning Agreement

- ✿ 87% of institutions use official form of Learning Agreement provided by European Commission
- ✿ 75% of students make changes to the Learning Agreement

Reasons for changing the courses



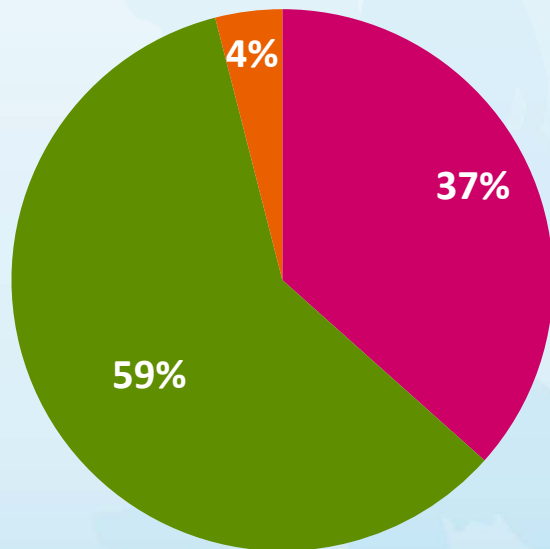
Signing the Learning Agreement



ECTS

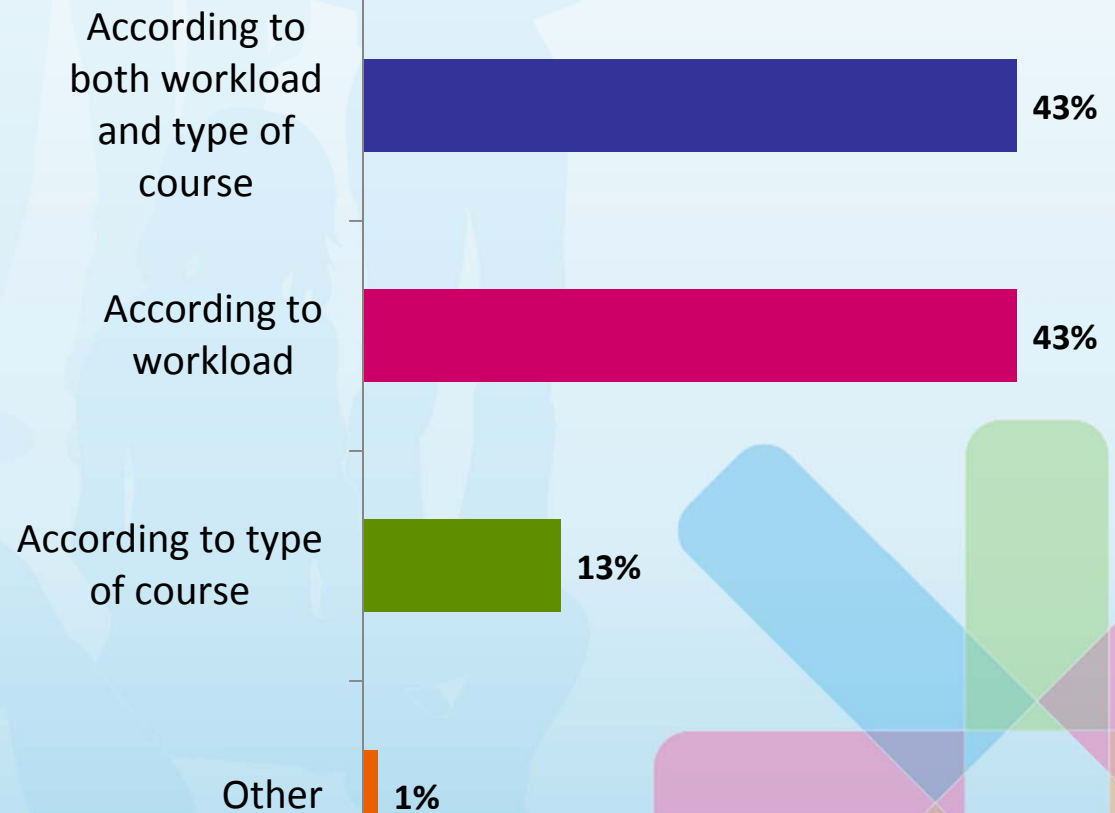
93% of students use ECTS in their Learning Agreement

Usage of ECTS credits



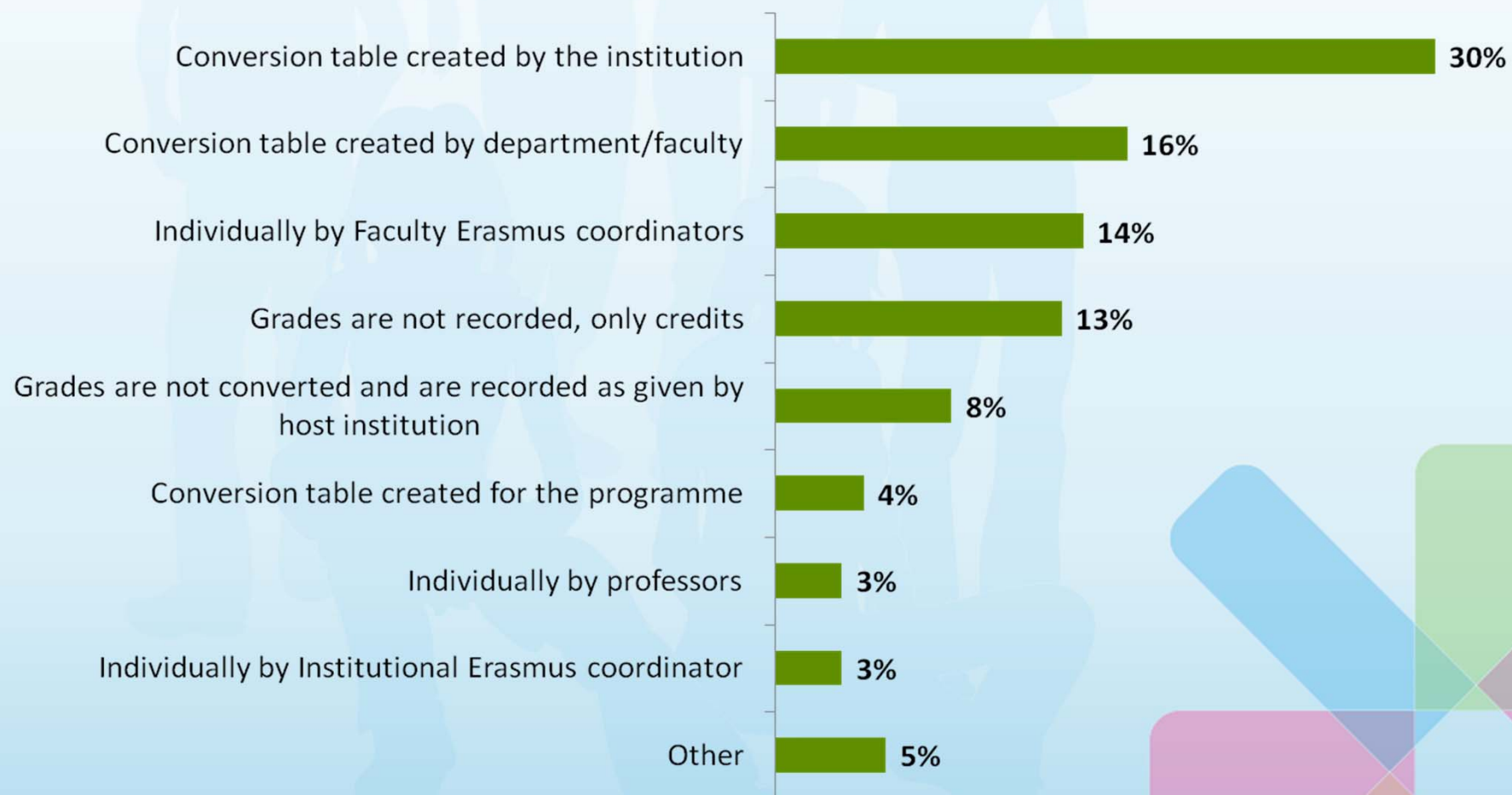
- Together with national credit system
- As the only credit system
- ECTS are not used

Calculation of the ECTS credits



Grade transfer

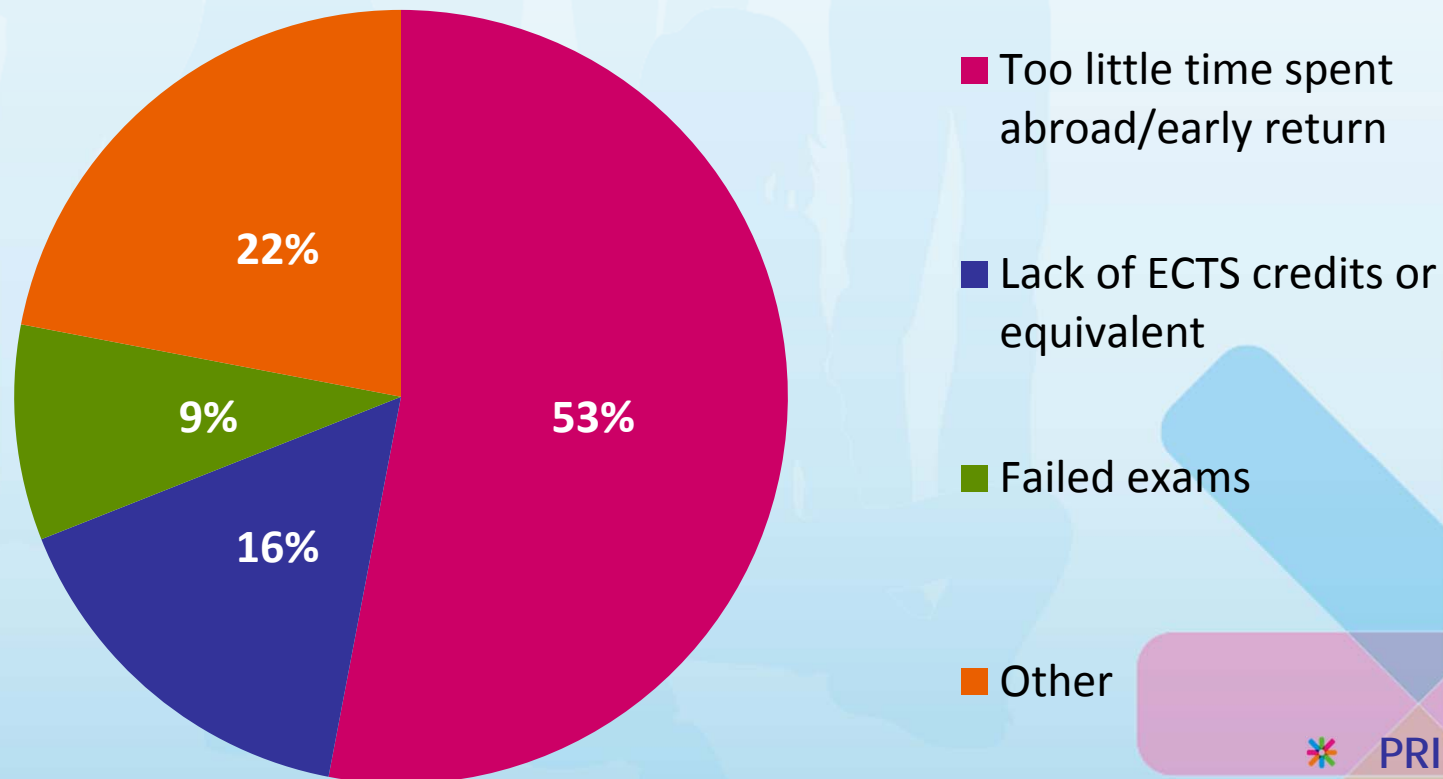
Conversion of grades at home university upon return



Erasmus grants

- * Almost 100% of Erasmus students receive the grant
- * 4% of students are required to pay back part or entire grant

Reasons

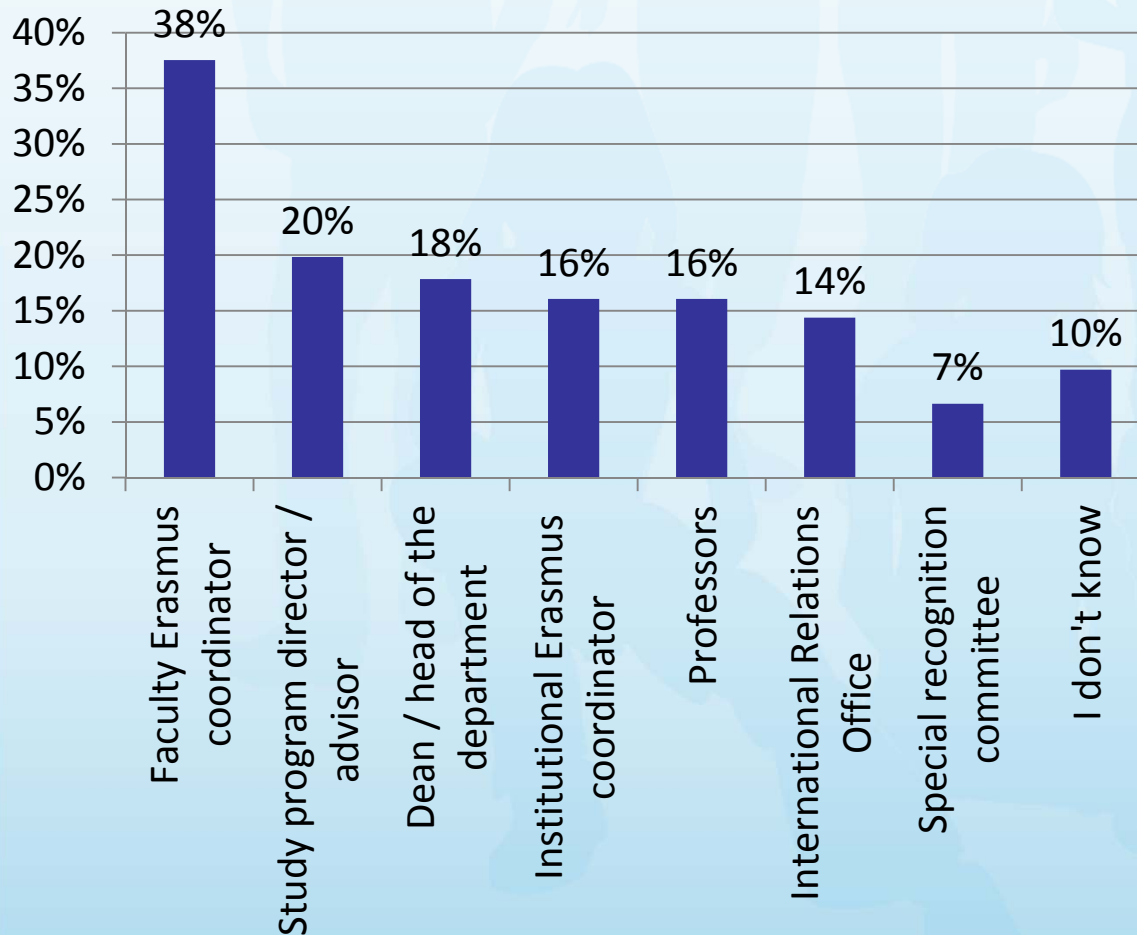


Recognition: the concept

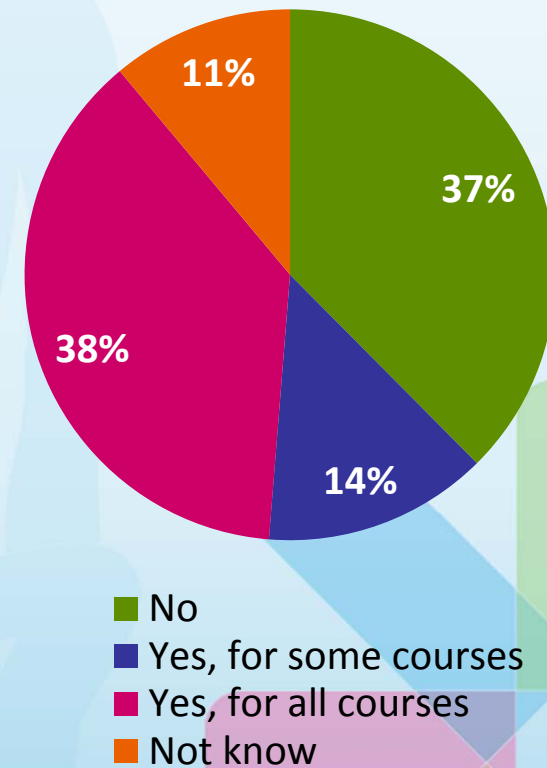
- * No common definition-subject of interpretation
- * Full recognition according to ESN:
 - *“All the credits earned during the exchange and that were originally present in the final version of the Learning Agreement are recognised by the home university without a need to take any further courses or exams.”*

Recognition: procedures

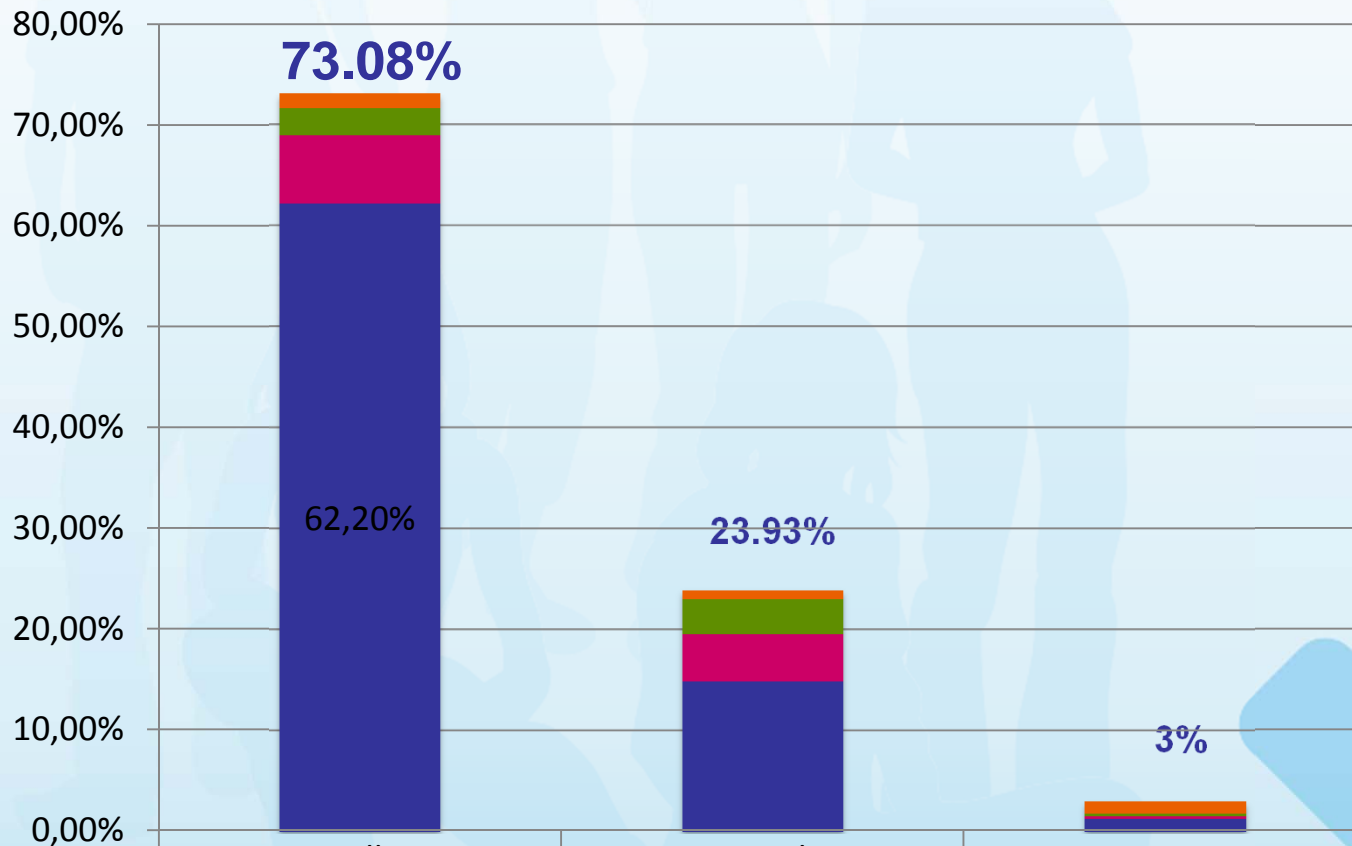
Parties involved in recognition of courses studied abroad



Need of professors approval before courses were recognised



Recognition and exams upon return



	Full	Partial	No recognition
All	1,47%	0,91%	1,18%
More than 50%	2,64%	3,46%	0,27%
Less than 50%	6,78%	4,67%	0,25%
None	62,20%	14,89%	1,29%

Recognition: decisive factors

- * Country of home institution
- * Field of studies
- * Information provision
- * Changes in the LA
- * Need of professors approval
- * Parties involved in signing the LA and recognising courses

Recognition: remaining challenges

- * Incompatibility of study programmes
- * Problems with credit calculation
- * Problems with grade transfer
- * Bureaucratic issues
- * Attitude of certain professors
- * Insufficient information provision

Recommendations

- * Binding bilateral agreements
- * Flexible study programmes and creation of “mobility windows”
- * ECTS as the only credits system, uniformity in ECTS calculation
- * Usage of ECTS grading scale or development of other grade conversion method
- * Common guidelines on course recognition and specific roles for all parties
- * Better and more timely information provision
- * Information and training provided to professors

More information



✱ Justyna Pisera, PRIME Project Coordinator,
prime-coordinator@esn.org

✱ www.prime.esn.org

- Final report





INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

THANK YOU FOR
ATTENTION