Compass

RECOMMENDATION BOOKLET

June 2023

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Glossary

Abbreviation/Acronym	Definition
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IRO	International Relations Officer
ESN	Erasmus Student Network
NA	Erasmus+ National Agency
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
EC	European Commission
ECHE	Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

1.   The Compass project

Participation in the Erasmus+ programme has become an essential step of the personal and academic journey of students. As mobility opportunities have multiplied and diversified over the decades — which now include joint masters, traineeships, short term exchanges, blended mobility and more — international cooperation in the field of higher education has strengthened. In this context, the Compass consortium was formed in 2020 by Erasmus Student Network (ESN) France, the project coordinator, Erasmus Student Network International, Erasmus Student Network Italy, the European University Foundation, University of Hertfordshire and the University of Vienna, to carry out a project that promotes <u>qualitative and inclusive support toward outgoing students, everywhere in Europe</u>. The project was centred around an online peer-to-peer platform. This platform enables students to write testimonies about the country, city or university and helps outgoing students in their international mobility preparation phase. It secures access to quality information and stronger collaborations between youth mobility support, student associations and higher education institutions. Namely, the project objectives are:

- Improving support during the orientation and preparation phase through a digital tool for students who are organising their mobility;
- Fostering the internationalisation of Universities and local students associations by promoting dialogue, open-mindedness and mutual understanding, all of which are tools for European citizenship; and
- Strengthening the support structures for mobile students, helping stakeholders to reinforce the existing practices, as well as developing sustainable relationships between key stakeholders.

"Compass - orienting you towards your best international mobility choices" is a unifying project for international mobility stakeholders in Europe. It provided common pedagogical tools, as well as a common platform to facilitate and promote shared support practices. It optimised both international mobility and the internationalisation at home, with a view to cultivate intercultural preparation and continuously sensitise youth about the importance of European dialogue and citizenship.

The booklet of recommendations at hand is primarily addressed to Universities across Europe with the aim to successfully improve their practices. As an advocacy tool, it is also directed to public decision-makers at European level who can reinforce the quality of support for international mobility by establishing favourable public policies. It starts with the summary of the major results of the study on the expectations and needs of students in the organisation of their mobility (O1), the study on stakeholder practices (O2), and an overview and good practice guide for stakeholders based on research conclusions and recommendations (O3). The next chapter outlines the policy recommendations for the two target groups, all of which were based on the conclusions of our research and the existing literature. Finally, some concluding thoughts, questions, and outcomes will be discussed.

2. Executive summary

The Compass project Recommendations Booklet proposes a wide range of measures to implement in order to upgrade the support structures for mobile students and develop robust connections between stakeholders. The main takeaways that emanate from our research are associated with:

- The value of developing intercultural competences for students who are preparing to go on mobility, especially for preventing and managing culture shocks, and improving language skills;

- The relevance of establishing and reinforcing evaluation mechanisms of the guidance provided in the pre-departure phase;

- The positive impact of standardising and facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration;

- The importance of enabling peer-to-peer learning, both online and in person; and

- The need to sustain the inclusive dimension of the Erasmus+ programme.

3. Main project findings

The two starting points of the Compass platform were the study reports on the "Expectations and needs of students preparing their mobility process" and the "Research about stakeholders' practices when helping students to prepare their mobility"; these reports are freely available on the [project website](#).

The purpose of the first report was to gain further insights into the **orientation and planning phase of the international mobility choices of students.** In more detail, we aimed at identifying possible influencing factors that impact the students' decision making process when preparing for mobility. We further investigated the different information channels and sources that are used in the preparation phase, as well as other elements that might still be lacking in order to make a well-informed choice. Thirdly, the survey addressed the role of peer support and other structures at the host and home institution.

The first study included both quantitative (more than 1.200 participants) and qualitative data (34 interviews). To better understand their motivations and expectations, respondents were classified into four groups:

- Local students preparing for mobility;
- International students currently in mobility;
- Local students back from international mobility; and
- Students having given up on a mobility project.

Overall, the questions fell into the following seven categories: **planning process** (length, challenges), **motivations** to go abroad, **general information** (application process, information channels), **selection of country** (criteria), **culture and language** (proficiency, improved skills, decision criteria), **selection of institution** (criteria), **improvements** (support, information), and **future online platform** (features, preferences).

To begin with, students prioritised personal variables as motivating forces to go abroad, such as the expected benefits for their own personal development and for their own future career. They also referred to cultural and linguistic factors, for instance, acquiring new intercultural competences or learning and improving foreign language(s). Students considered academic and financial reasons as important as well. Interestingly, the proximity between home and host countries geographically, as well as any linguistic, cultural, or historical ties, appeared to be less relevant.

Regarding available information, students planning to go on mobility mostly depended on friends and peers as sources of information, specifically fellow students having returned from mobility as well as students on mobility. Other channels encompass the international relations office (IRO) or study abroad office at their home university, official institutions' websites, social media, personal information (via telephone or face-to-face) or word of mouth.

The most important selection criteria concerning the host country were the possibility and motivation to develop linguistic and cultural competences and the assumption that the country of destination would be an exciting place to live. As for the host institution, we found out that formal aspects, such as the availability of study programmes and recognition methods, were most influential, as well as the perceived quality of the faculty and education programmes; this is in contrast to the weight of the private or public nature of the university and its marketing efforts, for example.

Apart from the aforementioned, we collected input on the most prominent fields where instructions are lacking:

- Better guidance from international university officers;
- Better communication with and advice from professors/teachers;
- Financial aid and scholarships;
- Job opportunities (within the HEI); and
- More guidance from/meetings with students who had previously been to the host institution/host country.

With respect to the second report, the five main categories of findings were: **mobility procedures, profile of students who reach out for information, collaboration between stakeholders, peer-to-peer feedback,** and the **Compass peer-to-peer platform.** The results derived from quantitative data (more than 130 respondents) and from semi-structured interviews with 30 participants from higher education institutions' (HEIs) leadership and international offices, as well as student associations and National Agencies (NAs). The goal of the study was threefold:

- To present an overview of all interactions between information seekers and information providers;
- To establish whether parts of the orientation or preparation still remain unanswered; and
- To identify which structures can intervene in the different orientation and preparation stages.

Firstly, the most common starting point for stakeholders is to direct students to the University's or international department's website, for instance to learn more about the application process, the steps to prepare for mobility after being accepted, scholarships and funding opportunities, the learning agreement document, and a list of all partner institutions. Furthermore, the study showed that emails, phone calls and social media are the channels that stakeholders use the most. In terms of activities, stakeholders usually organise online and in-person information meetings, but they also offer individualised support and find that testimonials of returning students are quite helpful as well.

The most challenging aspects during the orientation phase were the lack of financial resources, equivalences between courses, fear of social exclusion, and the application process. Similarly, the responses showed that finding accommodation, obtaining a visa and providing documents are the most common difficulties met by students in this step. Further discoveries in the interviews included the different ways stakeholders use to encourage students that do not reach

out, such as by increasing personalised assistance, providing more information about available scholarships, and offering more training for language learning. In regards to ways to make student mobility more appealing, stakeholders need to adapt their communication channels to students' preferences, increase the frequency and diversity of events, and encourage former students to share more testimonials.

It is known that the collaboration between structures is not standardised. However, during the orientation phase and preparation phase, HEIs tend to collaborate the most with partner HEIs (30%) and NAs (25%), yet far less with student associations (16%) and accommodation organisations (9%).

The consortium also explored what methods stakeholders are implementing to put former mobility students in contact with prospective outgoing students: emails, private social media groups, student feedback forms, events and buddy schemes. The main challenges indicated were to respect the GDPR-related concerns and motivate former students to contribute. What is more, some of the more discussed topics amongst peers were: social life experience, course catalogue at host institutions, and accessibility potential for people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Finally, the study concluded that the totality of participants would be willing to recommend a peer-to-peer platform to students. Their expectations for such a platform were to be able to promote international mobility, their institution and their city, ask questions about the destination that a student would not ask otherwise, and encourage prospective students to go on mobility.

4. Policy recommendations

4.1. Introduction

The Compass project directly responds to the horizontal priority of Inclusion and Diversity of the Erasmus+ programme, especially in the establishment of inclusive higher education systems. Among the most pertinent issues that underpinned our work are the investigation of mobility barriers, the level of accessibility and clarification of information, the standardisation of support practices, and the recognition of stakeholders' commitments and their correlation.

The consortium has carried out significant research and effort towards developing comprehensive support and information to outgoing students across Europe. First and foremost, we investigated the students' decision-making process, their expectations, experiences, the role of peer-to-peer feedback, and the reasons for mobility abandonment. The feedback from students pointed to the importance of receiving personalised support, structured stakeholder cooperation, mobility ambassadors, as well as simplifying the planning and application processes, amongst others. On the other hand, the stakeholders study emphasised the opportunity to guarantee a "win-win" scenario when students and higher education institutions, notably HEI staff and student organisations, complement and support each other. All this input was key for the design of the Compass platform, which can substantially improve their access to information, and impact international mobility at large for the next generations.

The achievement of truly equal opportunities requires a transformation of the current higher education landscape. Both universities and public policy makers are invited to revise and upgrade their strategic planning and approaches with a view to widening access to quality information and mobility programmes, notably for students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, sustaining partnerships with local and international actors, and defending the development of intercultural competences.

4.2. Institutional level

4.2.1. Ensure intercultural training is offered to students preparing to go on mobility

A recurring topic that was revealed in our surveys, as well as during the multiplier events and the online training, refers to the importance of cross-cultural training for students during the pre-departure stage. The development of intercultural competencies, based on the principles of diversity, communication, and adaptation, is highlighted in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) 2021-2027 under the proposition to "Ensure that outgoing mobile participants

are well prepared for their activities abroad, including blended mobility, by undertaking activities to achieve the necessary level of linguistic proficiency and develop their intercultural competences" (European Commission, n.d.-a). Indeed, this is crucial for obtaining multiple benefits:

- To prevent the risk of social exclusion;
- To increase self-awareness levels, as well as the sensitivity, sympathy and mutual respect of young people and learners, all of which are vital elements of a healthy emotional intelligence;
- To eradicate stereotypes, biases, and misconceptions that still prevail;
- To contribute to the sentiment or identity of global citizenship;
- To create a proactively inclusive mentality and behaviour that embrace cultural similarities and differences.

In practice, intercultural preparation can be carried out in various ways. Some of these include the participation in language courses, immersion activities, orientation events, online courses, guided trainings and workshops by experts, peer-to-peer discussions, buddy schemes, as well as mentorship programmes. Admittedly, it is preferred to ensure intercultural preparation at the pre-departure stage, so that mobile students feel indeed ready and confident before their travel. The content of such support can cover timely topics, such as, but not limited to, understanding intercultural communication, challenging (negative) conventional ideas and stereotypes that lead to intolerance, preventing and managing culture shocks, and dealing with conflict resolution. Funds from the Erasmus+ organisational support costs can be channelled towards the preparation for cross cultural training that is needed for outgoing students to guarantee a successful, well rounded and memorable experience.

4.2.2. Simplify the administrative management of mobility

A common problem that students face regards the <u>administrative aspects of applying for, preparing for, and following up after mobility</u>. There is a real interest in easing the burden on both students and HEI staff in order to clarify instructions, streamline processes, as well as tackle negative perceptions. This can be accomplished in various ways:

- Leverage existing digitalisation tools and services to simplify the administration of the mobility experience;
- Develop comprehensive and tailor-made step-by-step guides for students, including clarification on the learning agreement and recognition;
- Appoint one general contact email address that anyone can access to resolve questions promptly or ask for more information;
- Carry out regular trainings or briefings with students to explain different parts of the application and preparation phases, clarify terms, and resolve questions;

- Distribute a personal risk assessment to increase awareness and readiness, for example on accommodation-related concerns, healthcare at the destination university and location; and
- Ensure the information on the official HEI's website is updated, available (even) earlier in advance, and easily accessible, particularly the course catalogue.

4.2.3. Establish and reinforce evaluation mechanisms of the guidance provided pre-departure

Another important area of improvement is the standardised evaluation of the support offered to students as they prepare to go on mobility. It is meaningful to consider what assessment mechanisms are in place, what quality standards are promoted, and which specific indicators are monitored. This is decisive for institutions to ensure that the help students receive is easily accessible, reliable, and up-to-speed with their needs and priorities, hence ultimately upgrading the design and delivery of their activities. Some notable examples in this direction consist of:

- Analysing data from satisfaction/feedback surveys, attendance lists, interviews, one-on-one consultations; and
- Setting up frequent internal meetings or focus groups between different interested parties, primarily outgoing students, student organisations, student representatives, and HEI representatives.

For instance, the distribution of evaluation surveys is a great method to appraise the effectiveness of specific services and resources, to understand the extent to which they contribute to the most appropriate preparation of outgoing students, and to create an opportunity for new ideas to be discussed. These questionnaires can cover various topics, such as the dissemination and communication strategies of mobility opportunities, the clarity of information, and the mobility experience at the host institution. Similarly, implementing an alumni tracking system is useful in determining the success rate of the skills of outgoing students.

4.2.4. Improve and standardise multi-stakeholder collaboration

At the university level, a priority goal is the further promotion of mobility opportunities so that the overall number of participants is consistently expanded. Indeed, for the purpose of simplifying these increasingly complex internationalisation practices, involving more stakeholders and effectively is necessary:

- To better balance and improve the division of workload;
- To facilitate and strengthen communication and open dialogue;

- To pool resources to tackle common challenges; and
- To coordinate activities and avoid duplication.

The leading stakeholders are different groups inside the home institution (e.g., professors/teachers, academic exchange coordinators, department coordinators, HEI leadership), their counterparts at partner universities, student organisations, student unions, private entities that offer traineeships/internships, external accommodation providers, NAs, embassies, amongst others. Their interactions can be strengthened in the following ways:

- By agreeing to common objectives and overall vision;
- By establishing transparent decision-making processes and communication protocols;
- By openly sharing relevant information, resources, and best practices, to the best extent possible within of the GDPR framework;
- By holding regular meetings, both online and in person;
- By setting clear targets and tasks well in advance for the short, medium, and long term;
- By designing conflict resolution mechanisms that anticipate and mitigate possible delays or disagreements; and
- By routinely asking for feedback and reflecting on the existing cooperation system to identify areas of improvement.

A notable case of this recommendation concerns the financial component. By maintaining a close collaboration with funding agencies and local governments, HEIs can better guarantee the provision of precise information to students about funding options, requirements and procedures, as well as clarify any doubts upstream.

4.2.5. Further promote peer-to-peer activities

A principal conclusion from our reports highlights the role of peer-to-peer communication, above all between former and prospective exchange students. Positively, the totality of our interviewees "agreed that peer-to-peer feedback is a major factor for having better preparation and a better experience abroad". Nevertheless, our research demonstrated the existence of some key challenges that prevent us from achieving the full potential of such exchange. Firstly, a valid concern regards the GDPR-related restrictions and considerations that need to be in place when asking, managing, and storing personal data. Secondly, the willingness and participation of former mobility students is not always guaranteed, yet this problem could be overcomed by offering an incentive to recognise and compensate for their time and effort. Some practices that were shared to combat this problem included:

- Giving vouchers to students who participated in mobility fairs;
- Awarding electronic badges for "Most posts" or "More likes" in the Compass platform;
- Accounting for (a minimum of) hours invested in related activities as volunteering or extracurriculars to be channelled towards, e.g., extra ECTS per semester, an electronic

label students can attach to their CV or graduation certificates, or "honourable medals" added to their certificate or degree;
- Paying students a symbolic amount.

In more detail, opportunities that enable peer-to-peer contacts can consist of:

- Targeted emails/mailing lists;
- Social media groups;
- Feedback forms from events;
- Physical and online events, such as [Erasmus day(s)](#), mobility forums/fairs, welcome/orientation ceremonies, "welcome back" events;
- Cross-cultural trainings;
- Buddy schemes, e.g., [Buddy System](#), ESN local buddy programmes;
- International dinners;
- Student advisors/representatives;
- Alumni tracking/database; and
- Other student-led initiatives, such as [AskErasmus](#), operated by ESN Italy, that "matches" local, prospective mobile students with former exchange students at the same city, country or university.

In this context, is it crucial to consider which priority questions are predominantly voiced amongst peers: the expectations on-the-ground realities of the social life at the host city, the existence of an updated course catalogue at the host university, the infrastructure capabilities for people with disabilities, to name a few. Thanks to the above-mentioned activities, it is ultimately possible to further disseminate formal and informal information, encourage networking amongst peers, as well as empower students to share personal experiences, testimonials, practical tips and tricks, and any other related advice.

Similarly, universities can complement their strategies by introducing the new Compass platform to students. This online tool was developed exactly with the aim to foster the cooperation between students, student organisations, and HEIs by:

- Helping the preparation of future exchange students as they connect with students who have already gone abroad or with local students at the desired institution or destination;
- Collecting and posting testimonials from former exchange students on the host institution, city and/or country; and
- Reaching out to even more students and sharing useful informal information on topics that range from accommodation, finances, social life, and more.

The added value of this peer-to-peer platform can be exploited by universities by incorporating it in the information material disseminated during the orientation and preparation phase, whether it is at a physical mobility fair, an online session for outgoing students, or in the official website of the institution, for example. In fact, a major output of the Compass project is dedicated to explaining the functionalities of the platform and assisting all four target groups on how to use this novel tool. The Compass Platform Toolkit, developed by ESN International, includes

practical guidelines, tips, suggested timeline, social media visuals, leaflets, posters, and email templates. These materials are made available for free on the Compass project website.

4.2.6. Reinforce and standardise your outreach to students with fewer opportunities

Lastly, but not least, special focus should be placed on <u>students that come from disadvantaged or under-represented groups</u>. In order to increase their participation in mobility and improve their overall experience, there are purposeful actions to be taken towards widening their access to the most relevant information, promoting a non-discrimination policy, and actively helping reduce inequality gap(s) and injustices. Such efforts in the orientation and preparation phase, as cited in our surveys, can cover:

- The employment of diversified yet targeted marketing strategies to these student groups;
- The avoidance of arbitrary categorisation of individuals;
- The adoption and promotion of the "internationalisation at home" approach;
- The organisation of more short term mobilities;
- The exercise of active liaison and periodic/standardised dialogue;
- The revision of current definitions of "disadvantage" and "under-representation";
- The advocacy for student-led initiatives;
- The offer of personal/individualised assistance;
- The inclusion of student ambassadors;
- The creation of safe spaces, preferably in person and facilitated by experts/professionals, for more students to engage in conversations about their identities, experiences, and concerns related to the preparation and experience of mobility; and
- The organisation of intercultural training, especially language courses.

In reality, however, there is still a long way to go before we witness successful impact on a large scale. Interestingly, one IRO admitted in our interview that "We will do whatever we can to support them when we send our students with disabilities abroad, but we don't have this specific way of targeting them necessarily before they apply." Likewise, another respondent declared that "We don't have that specific focus yet during the information markets nor in the faculties. We do have information on our websites regarding the grants, but we don't really reach out to them before they think of going abroad."

4.3. National decision makers

4.3.1. Potentiate and unify the voice of student bodies at national level

Stakeholders that collectively represent the interests of the student population are an integral part of the Erasmus+ programme and our continuous efforts to improve the quality of support provided to mobile students. Whether it be a student organisation, association or union, they have the power to <u>advocate for the rights of their members</u> and engage with policymakers, educational institutions, and other actors at the local, regional and national level, so as to raise awareness about different issues and influence the allocation of resources to ensure their needs are met. What is more, they are charged with <u>collecting input from prospective and past mobile students regarding their experiences and challenges</u>. This feedback can help to inform the continuous improvement of mobility programmes, policies, and services, thus ensuring they remain responsive to the evolving priorities of students.

Furthermore, student representative bodies foster a sense of community and belonging before, during and after the mobility experience. Consequently, it is necessary for them to <u>actively pursue openness, transparency, tolerance, and receptiveness to international students</u>. Even more so, they provide an opportunity for networking, for example thanks to local events or workshops, that bring together local and mobile students, alumni, academics, and professionals from various fields. As a result, international students can establish valuable and long term connections at their host city or institution, and even enhance their employability prospects in the future.

Thirdly, student representatives play an important role in the dissemination of information and resources for both local and international students. In the complex web of communication channels between the different offices within a university, on the one hand, and students, on the other, student organisations and unions can <u>intervene to make sure the information shared is accurate, up-to-date, as well as available in language(s) other than the local one</u>, i.e., primarily in English.

Above all, student bodies are valuable actors that contribute to a democratic and inclusive higher education system. Their collaboration and healthy dialogue at national level should be fomented in order to harmonise their strategies and maximise the impact of their work.

4.3.2. Highlight the role of national ministries in coordination and research

Another key actor is the regional and national agencies responsible for the field of education, also called departments or ministries. They are found by various names across Europe, with the most common portfolios attached to them being those of (higher) education, universities, research, innovation, youth, science, skills, and culture. Their contribution to the improvement of the internationalisation of higher education as a whole is notable as policy makers, funding agencies, and sources of information. Accordingly, these governmental bodies should <u>coordinate and standardise the collaboration channels between HEIs, students, student organisations</u>, and other relevant stakeholders in order to streamline support mechanisms for mobile students. This can include regular coordination meetings, sharing best practices, and establishing clear lines of communication to ensure cohesive and efficient support services.

Secondly, <u>ministries should invest more in research and data collection by HEIs and student organisations</u> that aim to gain a better understanding of the support provided to incoming and outgoing mobile students. They are ideally placed to facilitate identifying areas for improvement and producing evidence-based policy decisions, given that they benefit from achieving a truly comprehensive overview of capacities, resources and opportunities nationally.

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4.4. European decision makers

4.4.1. Specify the ECHE monitoring guide for NAs, with special focus on monitoring, peer feedback and inclusion

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education monitoring guide (European Commission, 2023) is a quality framework that applies to HEIs and countries participating in or associated with the Erasmus+ programme. It outlines the fundamental principles, good practices, and expectations for universities to follow, as well as indicators to monitor their compliance and retroactive steps in case of non-compliance. NAs undertake the monitoring and compliance with the ECHE thanks to the self-assessment tool.

The adoption of revised European standards, as reflected in the ECHE principles and requirements, will be decisive for the achievement of the above-mentioned mobility goals. It would be beneficial to specify this framework and supplement the list of basic mobility questions to staff members with the following suggestions:

- Course catalogue, recognition, credit transfer:
  - Have you developed performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of the information provision and support provided during the preparation phase?
  - How do you promote open communication and facilitate the cooperation between staff members at different levels?
- Student support:
  - Do you organise peer-to-peer communication?
  - Have you developed performance indicators to measure the success of peer-to-peer activities (e.g. number of participants, positive feedback/level of satisfaction, frequency)?
  - How do you evaluate the level of intercultural competencies of outgoing and/or incoming students?
  - What are the types and content of cross-cultural preparation provided to outgoing and/or incoming students?
  - How and when do you inform new students in the orientation phase about the available mobility opportunities?
  - Have you implemented a standardised approach to facilitate the collaboration between students and student organisations?

Further revisions can be adopted to enhance and sustain the inclusive dimension of the Erasmus+ programme. Coupled with the example questions above, the ECHE guide can be enriched to include more targeted points, such as:

- Do you provide information on opportunities for internationalisation at home? Do you offer virtual exchange opportunities which can act as a precursor to physical mobility?

- Do you enable systematic exchanges and collaboration with students, e.g. via focus groups, to get first-hand information on their needs and priorities?
- How do you evaluate the satisfaction of the support available to students from disadvantaged or underrepresented groups?

5. Conclusions

Erasmus+, being one of the flagship initiatives of the EU for more than three decades, has undoubtedly had a tremendous impact on the lives of millions of people across Europe. Participation in the various mobility schemes has gradually increased and diversified, bringing together even more students and institutions. As demand for more inclusive and quality higher education grows, so too shall the support provided during the orientation and preparation phase. This is essential to promote cross-cultural understanding, enhance academic and professional growth, cultivate personal development, build transnational networks, and nurture active citizenship. Indeed, these learning outcomes do not only benefit the individual students, but also contribute to creating a more interconnected society and to guaranteeing a successful mobility experience.

The current landscape of structures and services that assist and advise students offers fertile ground for further improvement. In order to maximise the long-term impact of our recommendations, we should aim to address gaps and identify opportunities at different levels, i.e., at the HEI, national and European level. For instance, a pressing challenge is the need to standardise collaboration between stakeholders so as to better balance the division of workload and create synergies. At the same time, we also need to pay special attention to the benefits of peer to peer communication, as a desired and effective tool to collect first-hand testimonies and empower exchange students. Their involvement and active role in engaging with other students is a strong pillar for the next generations who aspire to have a positive and well rounded mobility.

In sum, the Compass Recommendations Booklet has the potential to contribute significantly to the optimisation of international mobility and internationalisation at home. The consortium invites partners and decision makers from universities, student organisations, and the EU institutions to reflect on the issues and solutions laid out in this report, endorse the recommendations and create positive change.

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