



Project InComm
Feel at Home

An Introduction

Background

- Exponential **growth** of mobile students
- Growing share of **non-European** mobile students
- 3 month **honeymoon factor**
- **Academic** performance impact
- Erasmus **impact study**
- The **internationalization paradox**
- The **adjustment dilemma**
- **The Covid factor**



“...students’ **self esteem** depends on the positive or negative experiences that they get from their environment as well as on how they are perceived by their teachers or peers. In addition, the **inability to integrate** with the local students due to language and cultural barriers could make them feel homesick, helpless and doubtful of their intellectual and social competences...”

De-Andrés (1999)

“...hassles in **social adaptation** could also cause **loneliness**. Hence, well-being is seen to be naturally correlated to the positive relations with and the cultural empathy that they receive from others...”

Cacioppo and Patrick (2008)

“The complete integration of international students at the university must meet various requirements related to the **social, academic and organizational systems** of Higher Education”

(Himmel, 2002; Rienties, Beusaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet, & Kommers, 2012)

“Currently, there exist many studies which have addressed general exchange programs and international students’ mobility, as well as their benefits (improved social ability, cultural sensitivity, heightened acceptance of other cultures, knowledge of other languages). However, few studies have analysed **how to integrate** these international students and **which strategies to use** so they are enriched with these benefits”

Vazirani et al.(2018) in “International Students’ Integration in Classroom: Strategies and Support by Teachers and Local Students in Higher Education”

Figure 1: Of the services offered pre-arrival, which do you regard as the most important?

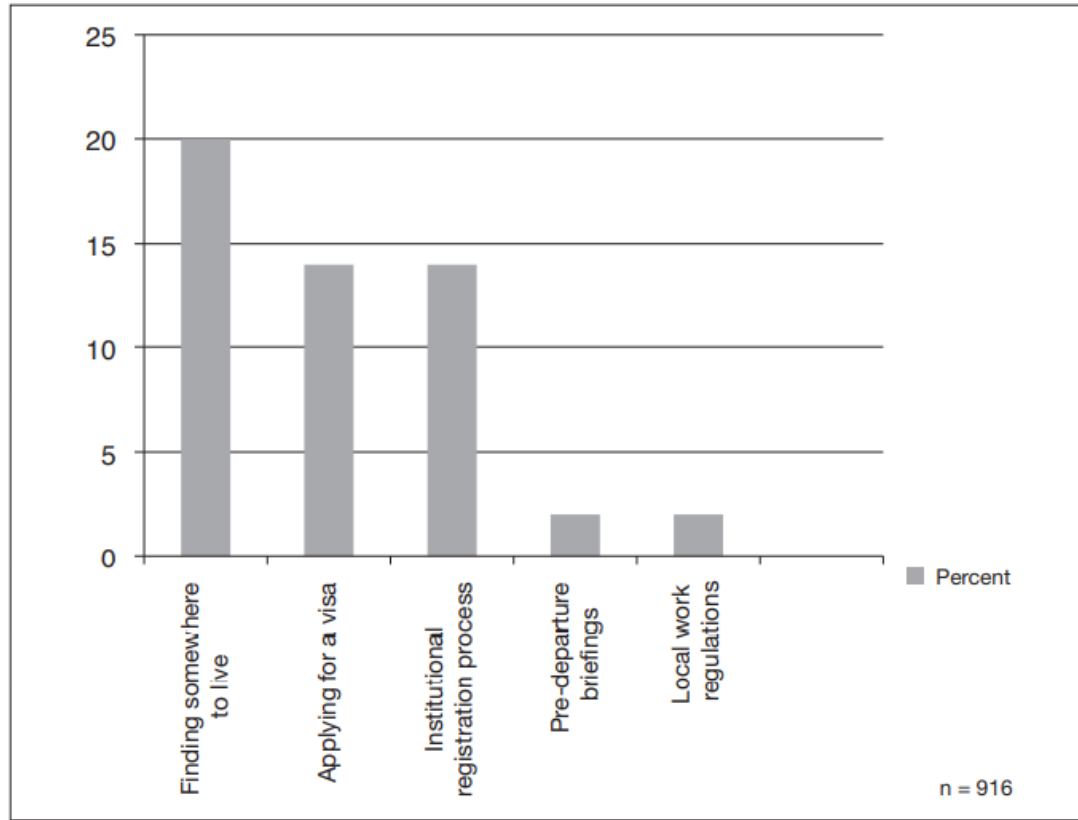


Figure 2: Of the services offered pre-arrival, which do you regard as the least important?

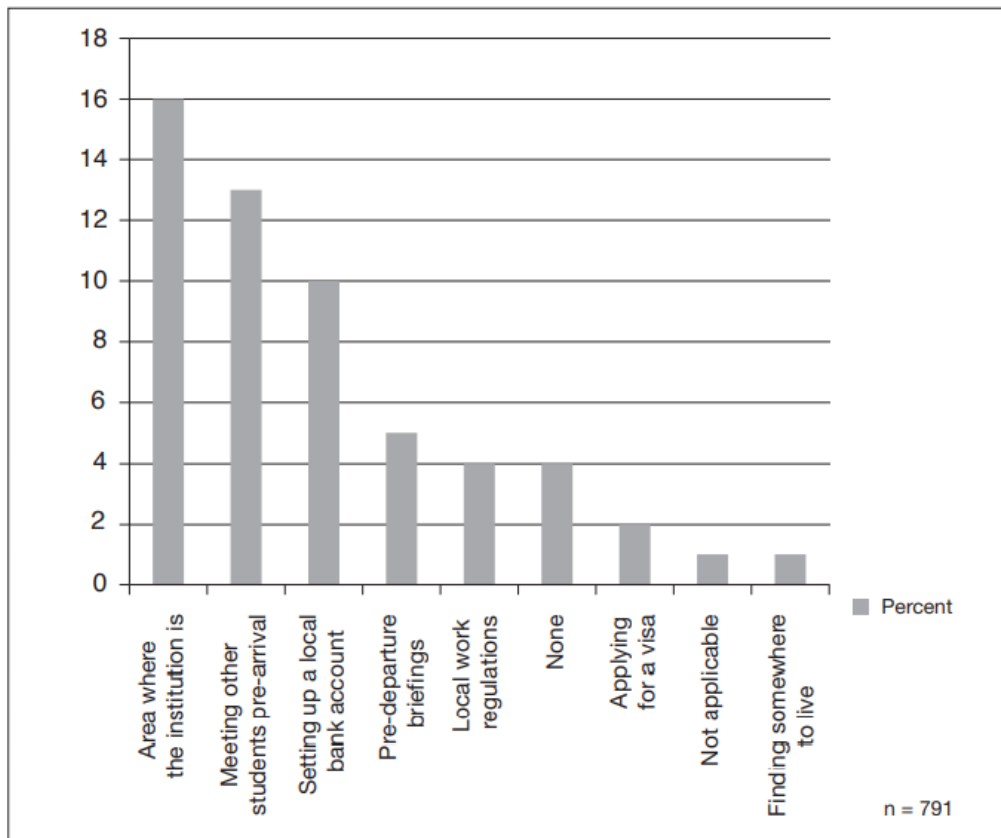


Figure 3: Of the services offered on arrival, which do you regard as the most important?

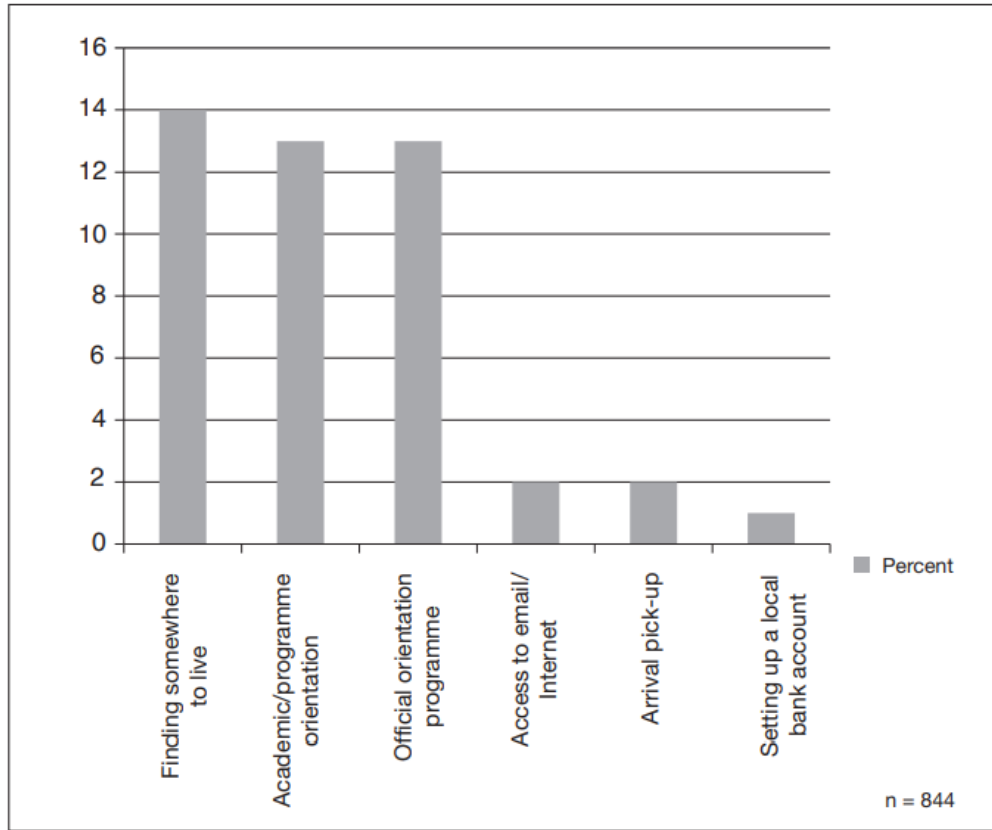


Figure 4: Of the services offered on arrival, which do you regard as the least important?

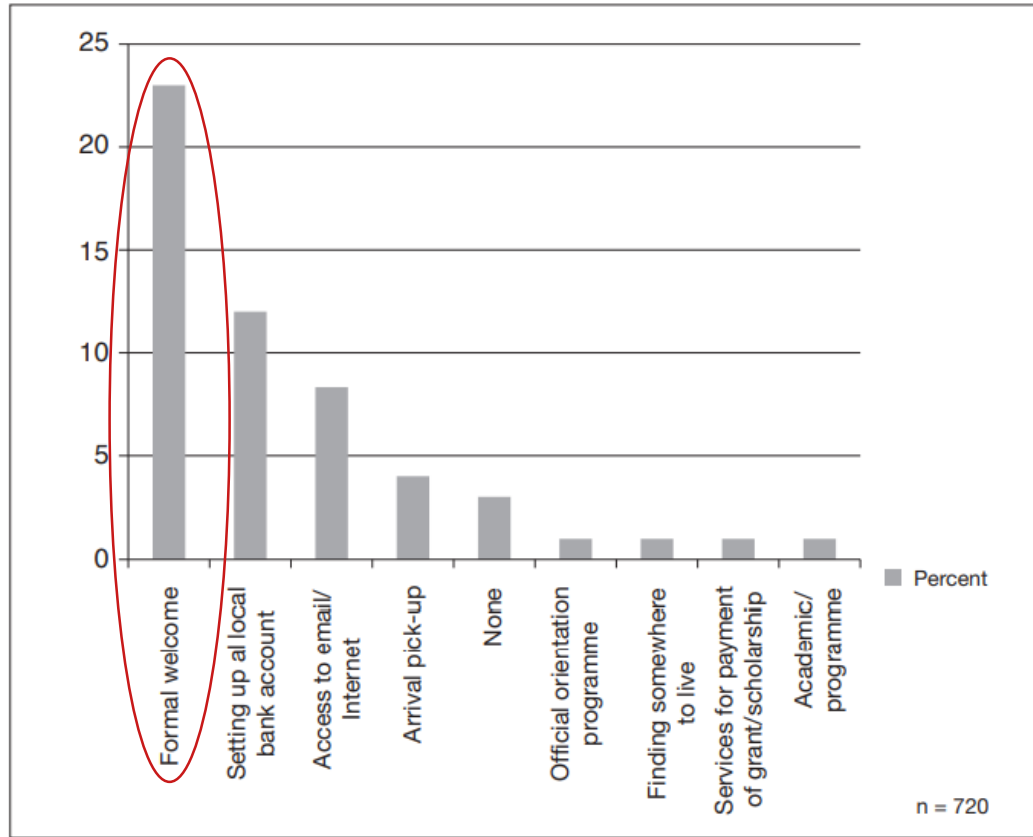


Figure 5: Of the services offered during your studies, which do you regard as the most important?

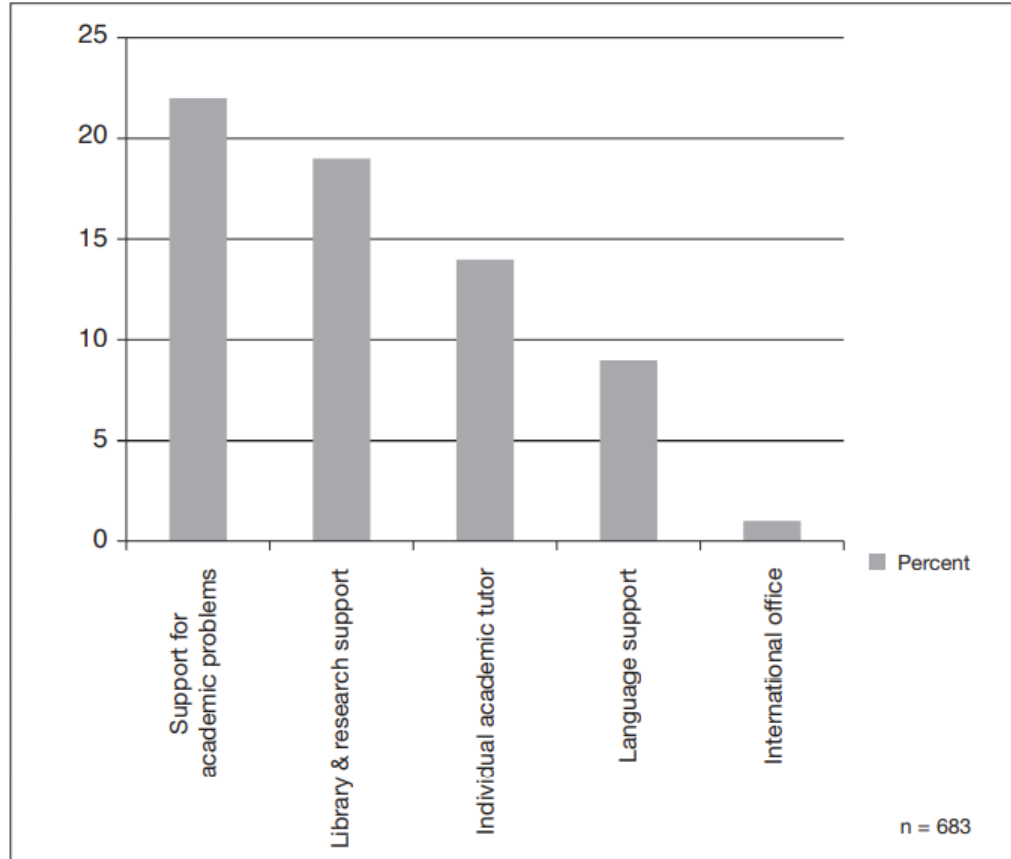


Figure 6: Of the services offered during your studies, which do you regard as the least important?

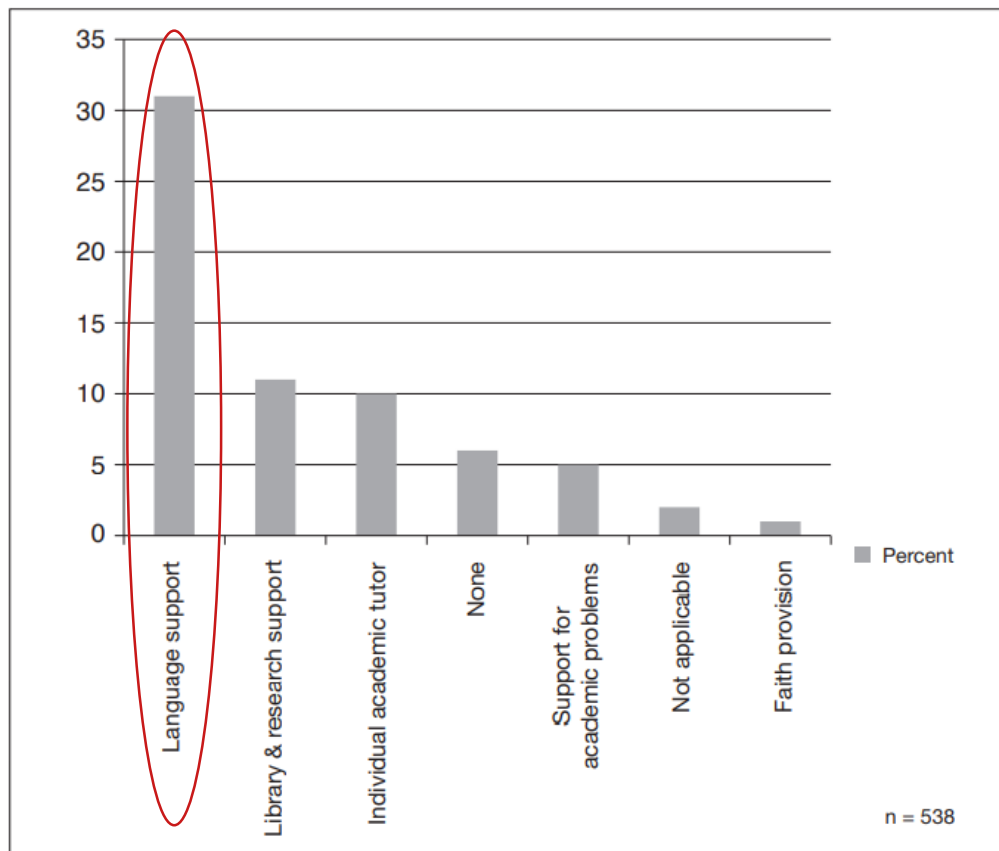
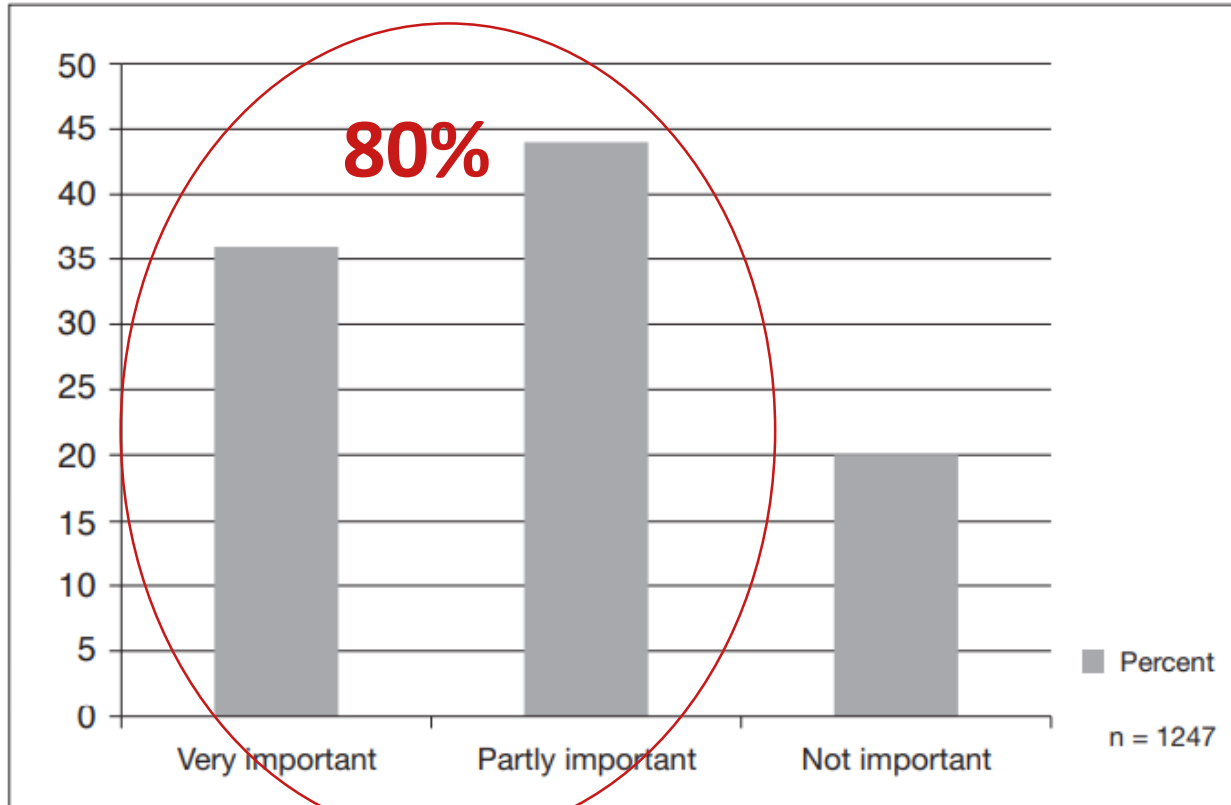


Figure 7: How important was the availability of services at your university in your final decision about where to study?





- Consortium of 12 universities founded in 1990
- 11 full members and 2 associates
- Registered in 1995 as a « stichting » under the Dutch law
- A multi-location European University
 - 2'500 professors
 - 10'700 teaching staff
 - 13.100 PhD students
 - 142'000 students



The MISSION of CLUSTER is to:

- Enhance **cooperation** among members to promote exchange, cooperation and interaction between students, faculty and administrative staff
- Provide a strategic platform for **joint programmes**
- Develop interaction, cooperation and joint programmes **with associate members**
- Support **best practice** in all aspects of university management and leadership
- Provide a forum for **strategic policy discussions**



The MISSION of CLUSTER is to (2):

- Benefit from **EU programmes** within education, research and innovation
- Become a strategic partner for the **European Commission**
- Take a lead in **pedagogical development** to strengthen the education at the MSc and PhD level for CLUSTER members
- Build partnerships with major European **enterprises**
- Become the first choice for **MSc engineering** students in and outside Europe



TU/e



Funding umbrella: Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnerships for HE

Project duration: September 2019 – August 2022 (extended until December 2022)

Priorities:

- HORIZONTAL: Social inclusion
- Higher Education:
 1. Building inclusive higher education systems
 2. Promoting internationalisation

Funding: 434.576.00 EUR

The InComm project aimed to:

- Developing and implementing a **more inclusive welcome process**
- Raise **awareness** on the international identity of our universities
- Identifying the most **appropriate tools and best practices**
- Making incoming students from all backgrounds feel welcome and integrated at the host university through an effective and tailor made **customer journey**
- Develop more integrated and **inclusive communities** on campus
- Create improved and integrated **International Classrooms**
- Creating **truly international campi** and HEIs



Focus: all new incoming **Master Students** and **PhD's**, both national and international

Time span: welcoming process, from roughly 100 days before enrollment till 100 days after enrollment:

- **Interaction phase:** from application to 3 months before arrival
- **Introduction phase:** generally one week
- **Onboarding phase:** first 3 months at the university



Incomm Customer Journey



#1:
Catalogue Of
Best Practices



#2:
Customer
Journey

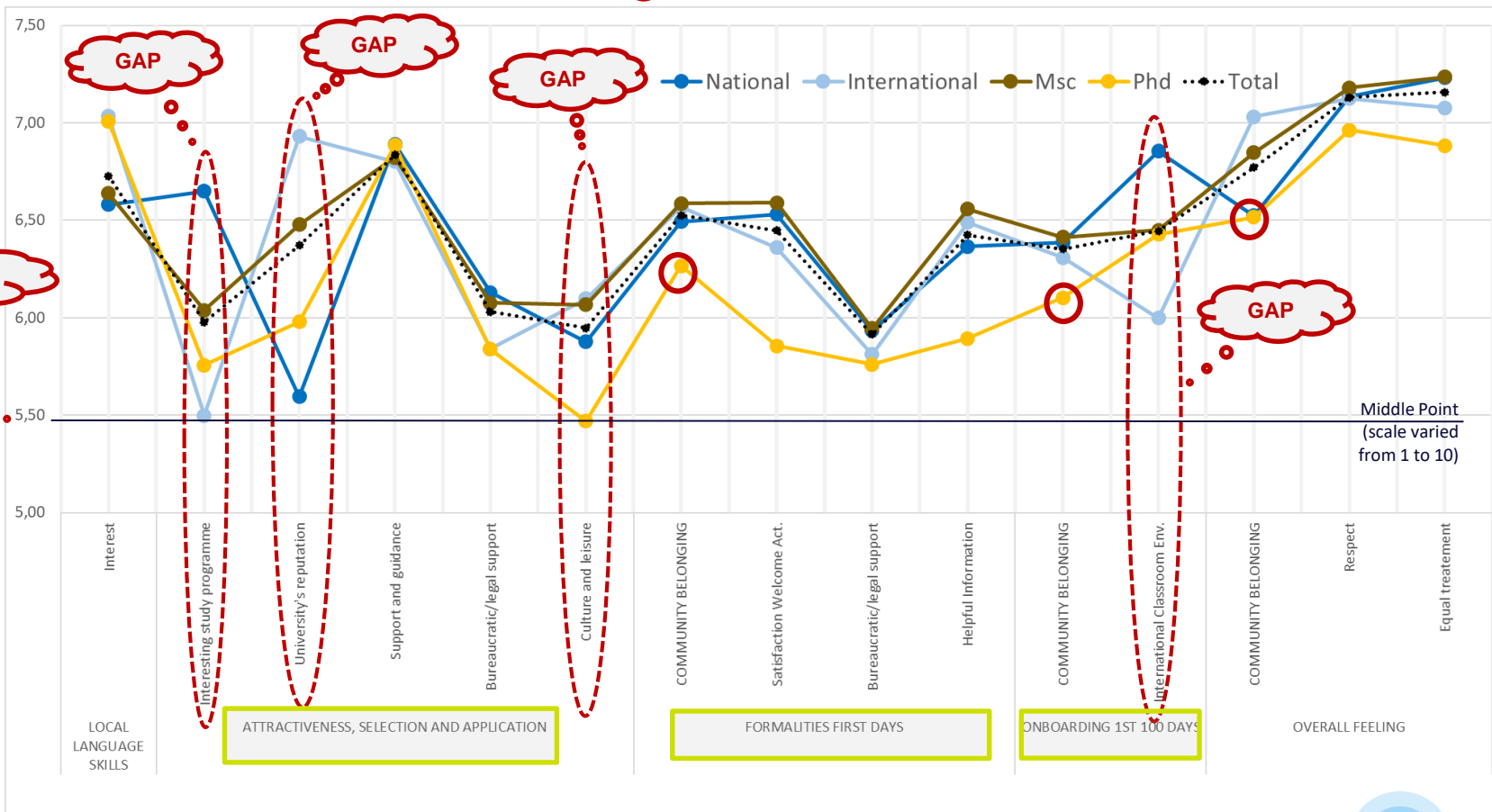


#3:
Training
Modules



#4:
InComm+
Tool

Community Belonging Indicators Comparison



InComm Customer Journey

Feel at Home

Creating an **INCLUSIVE CLIMATE**

Attractiveness, Selection & Application



Central information point
A unique point of entry to find consistent and useful information channels of the university.



Personalized communication
A personal approach in personalized messages and direct contact with university staff.



Know the basics
All essential and practical steps to take before and upon arrival.

Support in finding accommodation
Help offers newbies to find housing before arrival at the university.



Communication



One tone of voice
Coherent communication from all university staff towards the newcomer.



Cultural introduction
Coordinated activities and information aimed at increasing awareness of the local culture and traditions.



Legal procedures
Information and support on the set of formalities required upon arrival.

Intro



City tours
Thematic group tours to introduce newcomers to the city.



Discovering university services
Introduction to available services and supporting staff.

Find your place in the community
Introduction to the social ecosystem of groups and associations at the university.



Introduction to the campus
A tour over campus(s) to help newcomers to find their way around.



Welcome kit
A physical package with the essential information and goodies.



LOCALS MEET INTERNATIONALS



Welcome ceremony
The first, official and live welcome moment or ceremony for all newcomers.



Get to know each other
A moment to meet and greet each other with introductions, presentations or just a small talk.



Front desk
A physical place to ask all questions and get help.

Onboarding



International classroom/workspace
Enable an inclusive learning environment using internationalization policies and practices.



Institutional support
University organized programs that help newcomers with their specific academic program.



Peer to peer support
Individual and informal activities that help newcomers integrate into the social environment.



Learn the language
A place to learn the local language or improve other languages' proficiency.



Social events
Well spread activities during the first 3 months aimed to socialize and meeting the local community.



Involvement of communities
Getting to know the related stakeholders, associations and informal bodies.



Career center
Integrating newcomers in existing training programs to support their professional development.



- **Exploitation** of results both internally and externally
- Further **dissemination** of results
- Continuous **updating** of data, tools and best practices
- **Follow-up** project



www.incomm-project.eu