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Feel at Home

Project InComm
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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**

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"…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, Beausaert, 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?

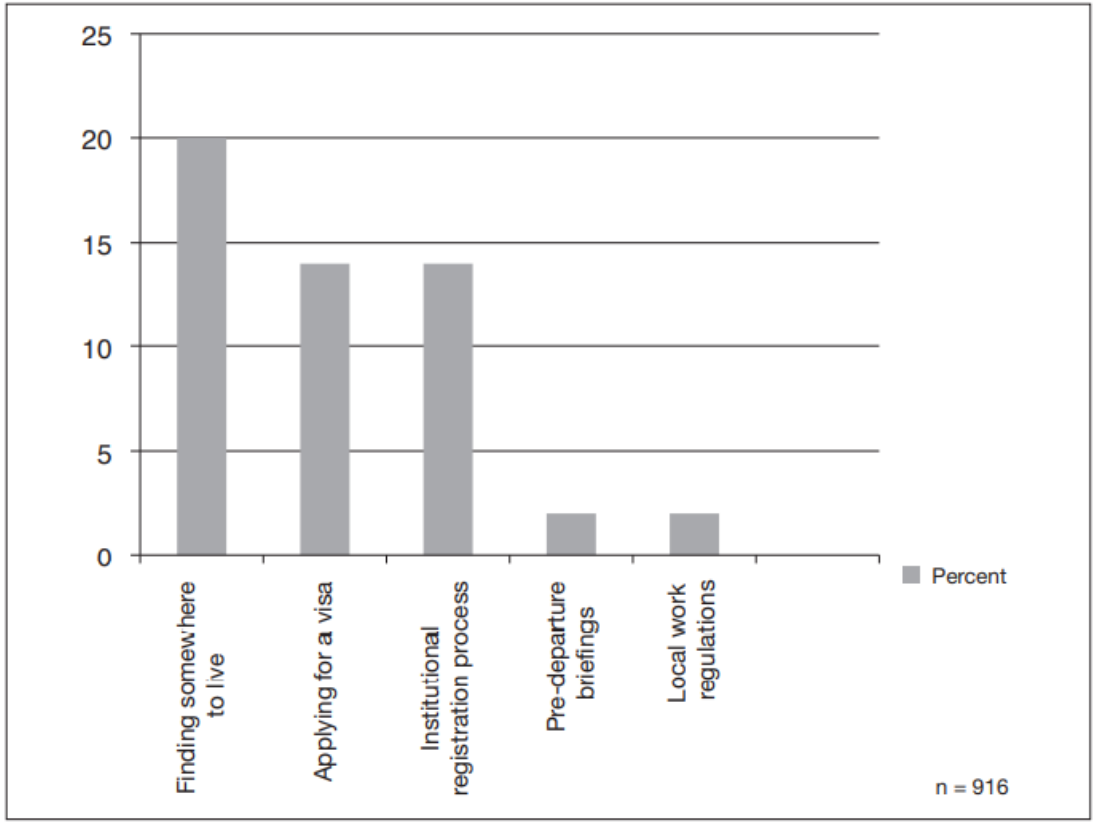

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Figure 2: Of the services offered pre-arrival, which do you regard as the least important?

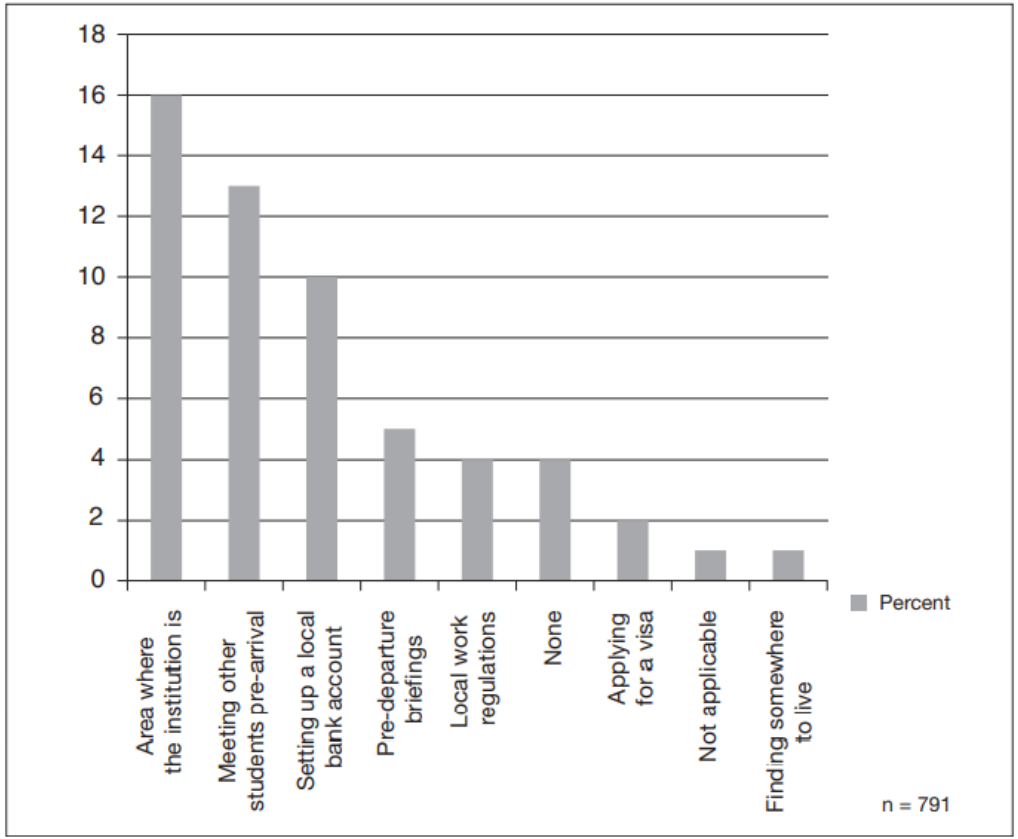

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Figure 3: Of the services offered on arrival, which do you regard as the most important?

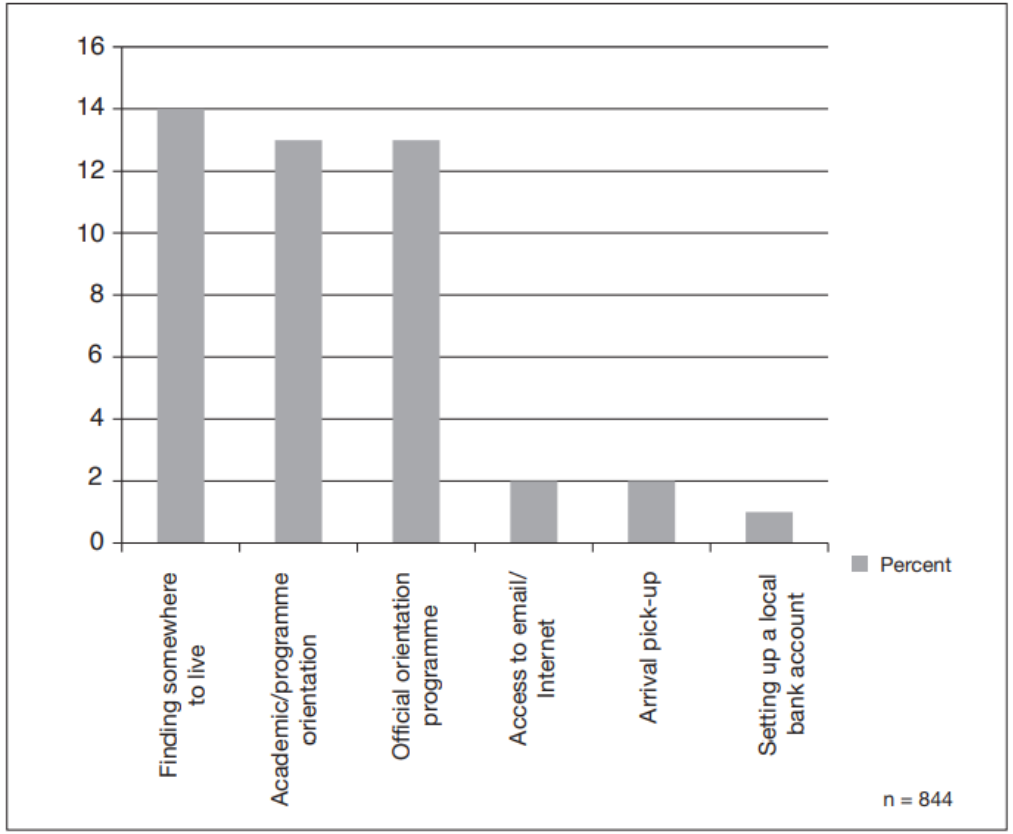

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Figure 4: Of the services offered on arrival, which do you regard as the least important?

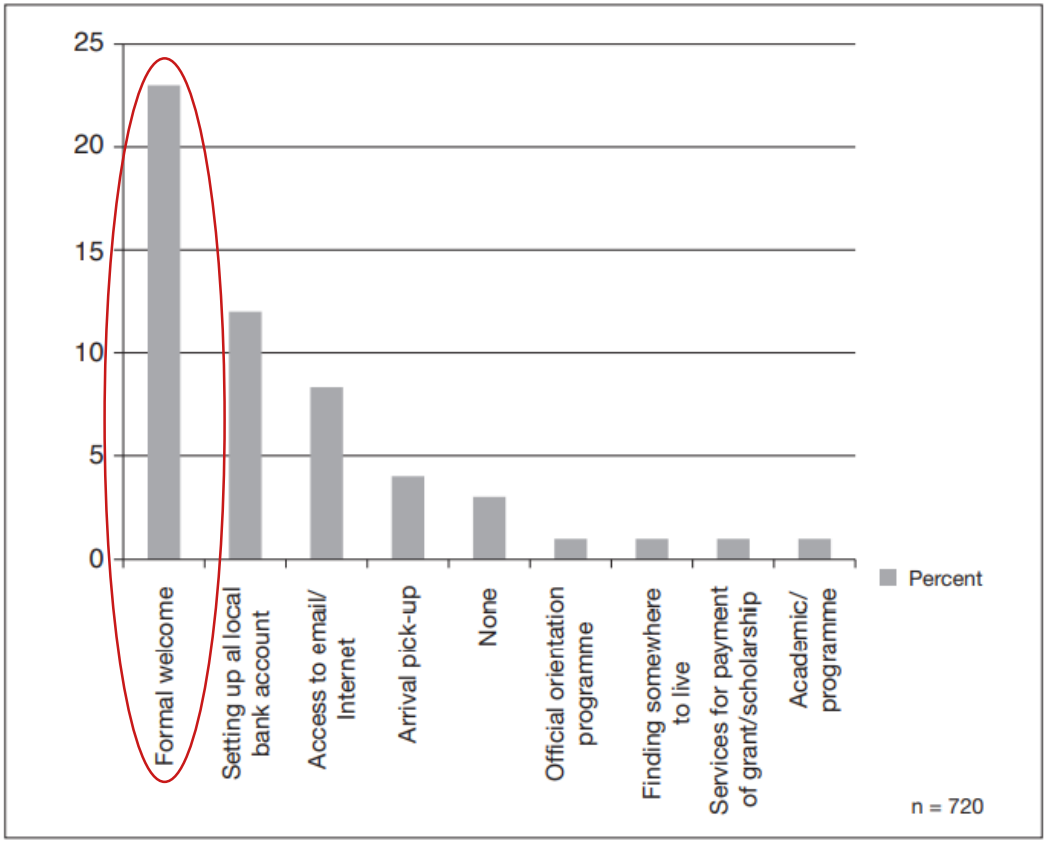

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Figure 5: Of the services offered during your studies, which do you regard as the most important?

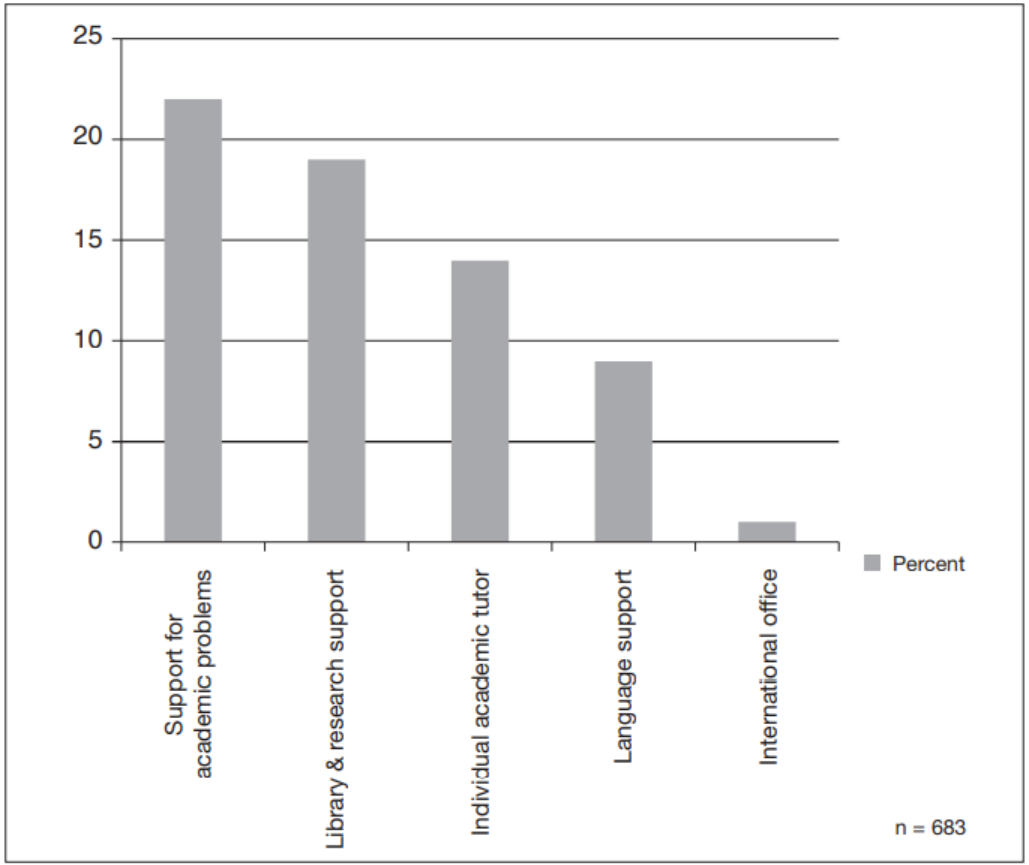

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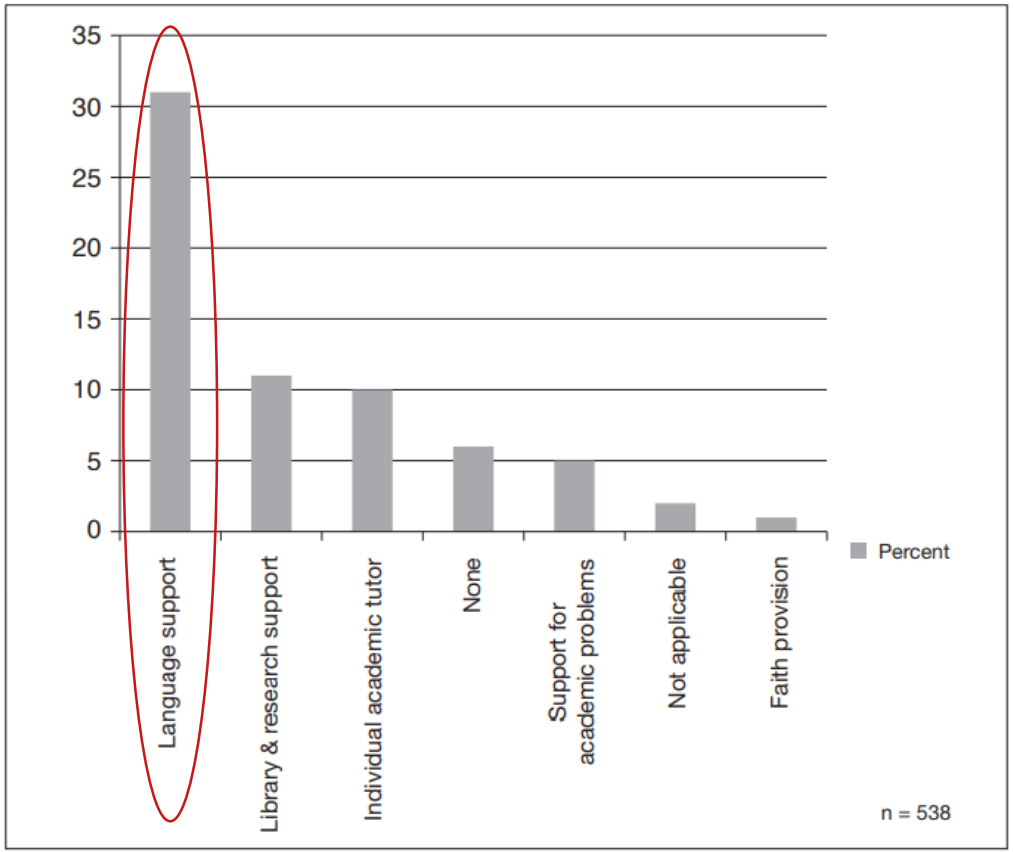
Figure 6: Of the services offered during your studies, which do you regard as the least important?



InComm – What do students need?

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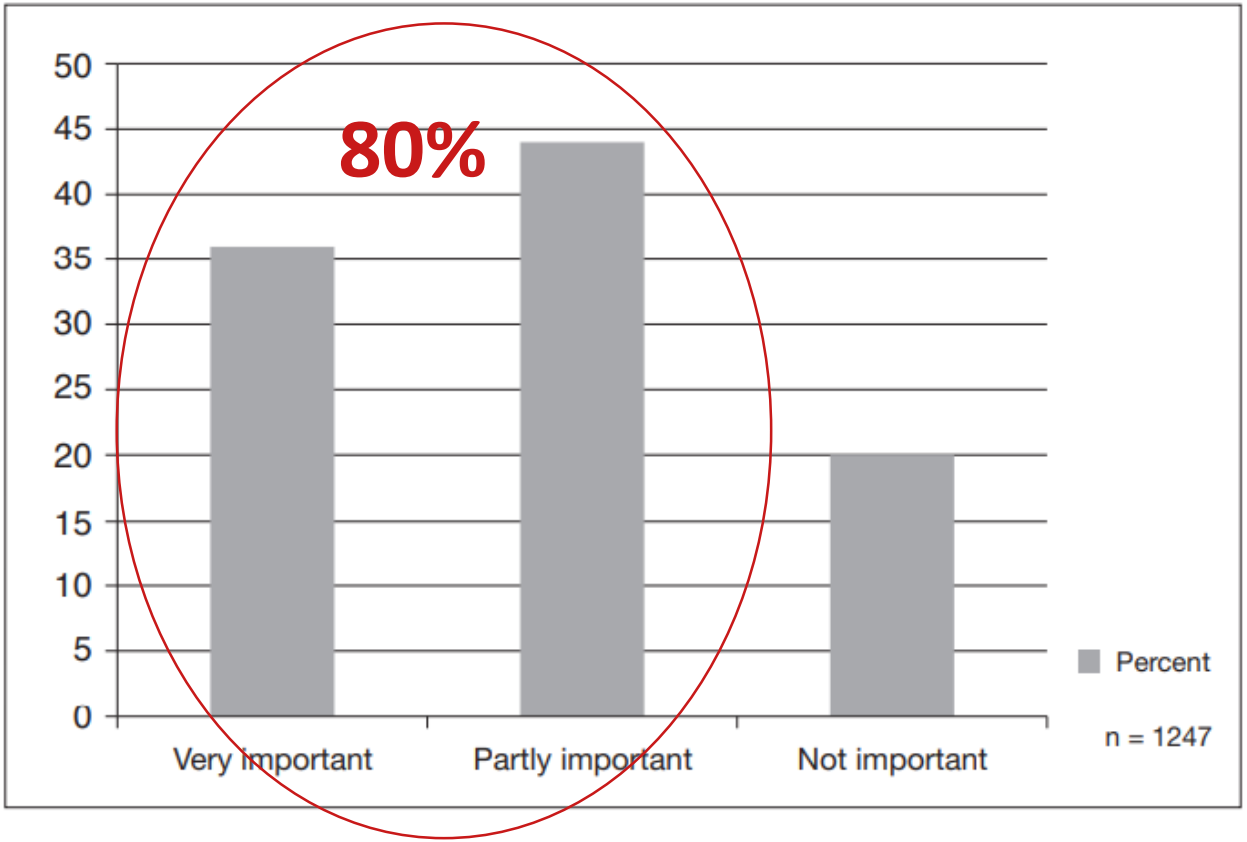
Figure 7: How important was the availability of services at your university in your final decision about where to study?



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- 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

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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

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VETENSKAP
OCH
KONST
KUNGL
TEKNISKA
HÖGSKOLAN

TU/e

UPC
UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA
DE CATALUNYA
BARCELONATECH

TECHNISCHE
UNIVERSITÄT
DARMSTADT

TÉCNICO
LISBOA

TU
Graz

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

InComm – Results and Deliverables

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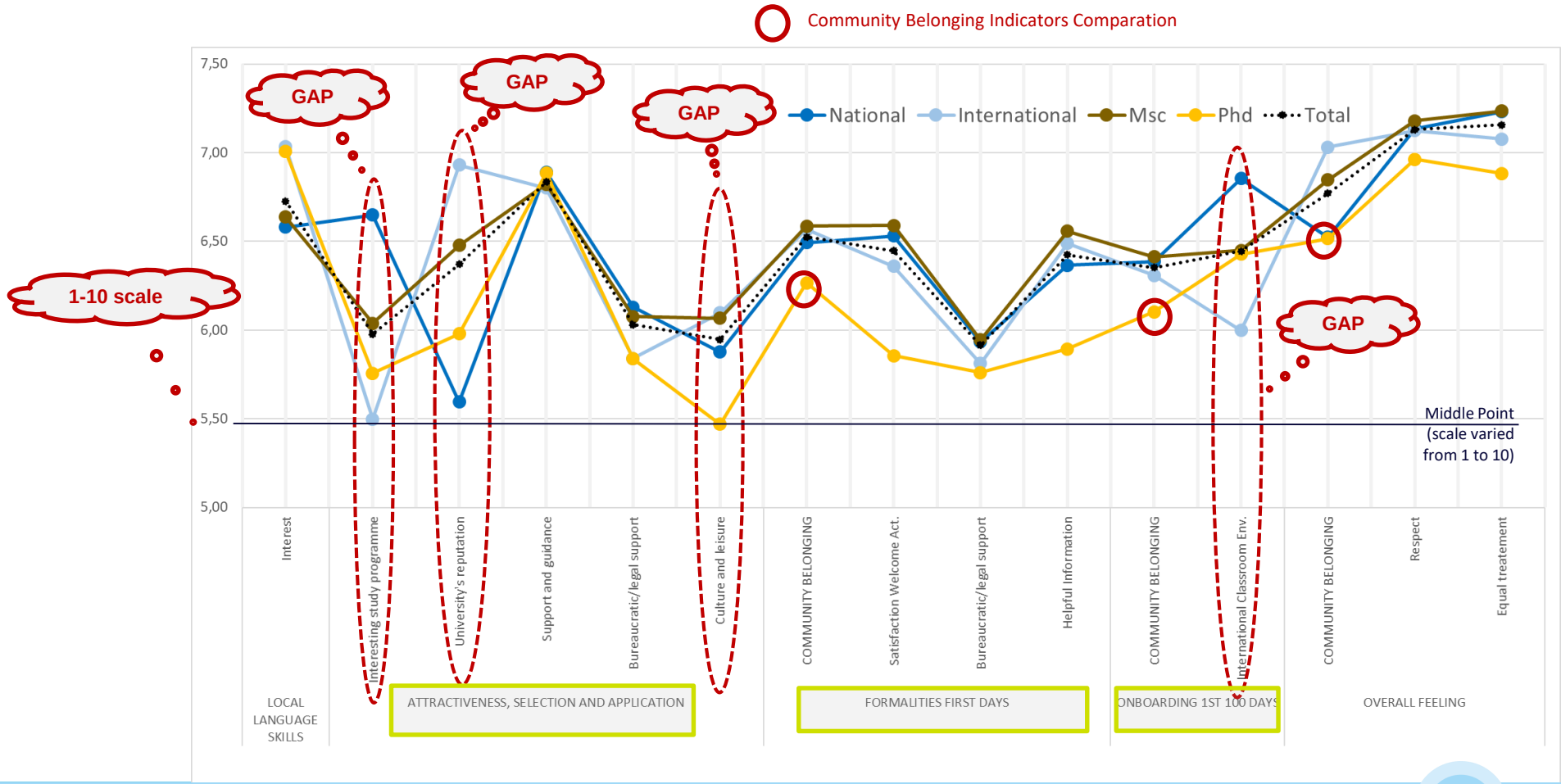

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InComm Customer Journey

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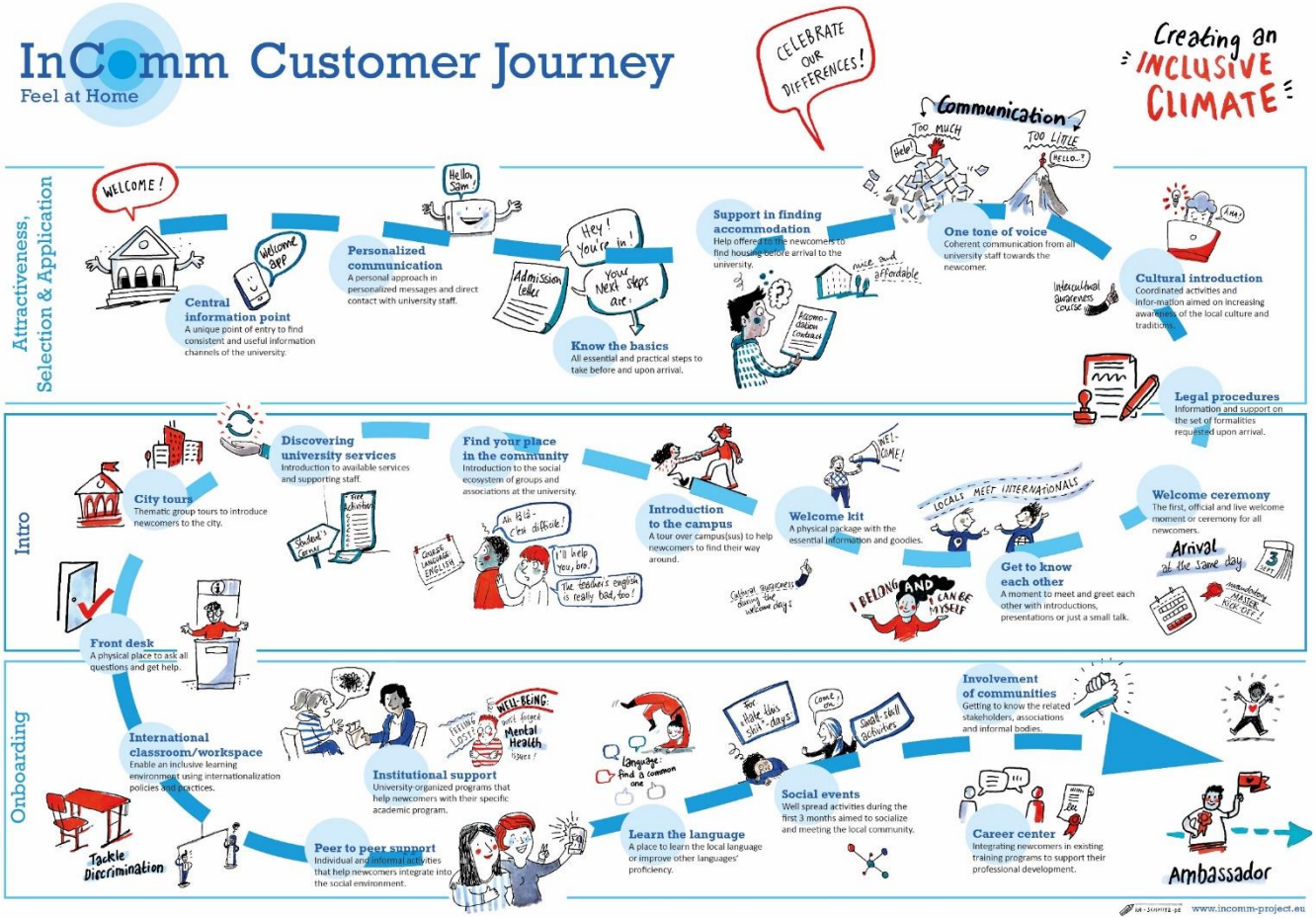

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- **Exploitation** of results both internally and externally

- Further **dissemination** of results

- Continuous **updating** of data, tools and best practices

- **Follow-up** project

JUST
THANK
YOU!