

# Why international mobility is an asset to youth employment?

Theoretical framework

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# Theoretical framework

This document is part of the second work package of the "Boost Your International Mobility" (BIM) project, funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Commission (EC). The project aims to enhance the international mobility of students and, in turn, improve their employability.

The project partners are located in Spain, France, Croatia, and Belgium, with this report focusing on the first three countries. Specifically, this work examines the perceptions and impact of international mobility on the career paths of students, taking into account both the supply and demand sides of the job market.

To achieve this, the study will analyze the differences in educational and labor policies related to international mobility in these countries. These nations provide an ideal framework for investigating the variations in the valuation of international mobility and its effects on the labor market. This analysis contributes to the personal and professional development of students, enhancing their readiness to face the competitive challenges of today's globalized market.

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## INDEX

I. Summary.....	2
II. International Student Mobility.....	3
III. Employability.....	7
IV. International Student Mobility (ISM) and Employability.....	15
V. Employability impact.....	20
VI. Conclusion.....	27
VII. References.....	30

## ANNEX

# I. Summary

International Student Mobility (ISM) is seen as crucial for preparing individuals for a globalised world. Several forms of mobility, including exchange programs and studying abroad, are discussed for their benefits in cultural diversity and professional growth. Initiatives like European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus) are essential for facilitating mobility, with countries actively developing strategies to promote internationalization. The program is singled out as a significant example, promoting mobility within Europe and beyond. Its aim is to create inclusive educational communities that foster mobility, cooperation, and knowledge exchange globally, enhancing global understanding and competitiveness in higher education. In this sense, Spain, Croatia and France are noted for their strategies in promoting internationalization in education through collaboration and exchange initiatives.

The employability is influenced by regulatory environments and labour market dynamics. The literature emphasizes skills, knowledge, and personal attributes for securing and maintaining employment. Employability skills are classified with frameworks from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Labour Organization (ILO), and World Economic Forum (WEF) highlighting core competencies like cognitive skills and interpersonal abilities. For example, the ILO stresses core skills and access to education for enhancing employability. On the other hand, organizations like Indeed and EY (Ernest & Young) emphasize the importance of both technical and soft skills in the job market. International mobility is seen as valuable for developing competencies and language skills, enhancing employability prospects across fields.

ISM intersects with employability spotlighting its role in boosting job market outlooks. In general, ISM is perceived as advantageous for enhancing professional careers. Historical perspectives like the Theory of Professional Mobility (TPM) suggest a positive link between mobility and labour outcomes. ISM programs impact employability and career prospects, standing out positive outcomes like professional development, perceived employability, and international career promotion. Studies support the advantage of international experience, attributing it to skill acquisition. Categories of competencies developed during ISM include academic, cultural, and personal achievements, with employability gains as a significant outcome. Despite the positive impact on employability, there's a recognition of skill demand-supply gaps, requiring adaptation to market dynamics.

Socio-economic factors influence the benefits of ISM and motivations for participation vary from personal enrichment to career advancement, shaping the complex relationship between mobility and employability. Graduates with ISM experience often achieve higher salaries and faster wage progression, particularly with foreign language proficiency. However, effects on wages vary based on factors like field of study and socioeconomic background. Employers generally value ISM experiences, though preferences may differ across countries and industries. Internships abroad are prioritized over study abroad, especially in certain contexts, though some industries may value study abroad for language and decision-making skills. Factors like academic discipline and parental education also influence the ISM-labour market relationship.

## II. International Student Mobility

Internationalization in higher education has emerged as a fundamental challenge in the current global landscape, gaining growing importance in an increasingly globalised and digitalized world. According to Knight (1993) the internationalization of higher education refers to the process by which educational institutions integrate international or intercultural aspects by adopting a global approach in the planning of activities such as teaching or research.

This trend consolidates as an essential element to ensure the educational quality provided by institutions of higher learning (Cámara de Comercio de España, 2023). In this context, one of the most prominent aspects is the movement of students across national borders to study at foreign institutions. This process is carried out through various types of student mobility, such as exchange programs, studying abroad, and international internships (Crossman and Clarke, 2010).

Student exchange programs facilitate mobility between different countries, allowing students to study abroad for a specific period. These initiatives promote cultural diversity and intercultural understanding by exposing students to diverse perspectives and learning approaches (Alamo-Vera et al., 2020). On the other hand, studying abroad offers the opportunity to complete part or all an academic program at a foreign educational institution, enriching education with experiences in multicultural environments and strengthening language skills (Sisavath, 2021).

Additionally, international internships represent another significant form of student mobility, providing students with the opportunity to gain work experience in an international context (Hermann et al., 2021). This expands their professional networks and prepares them for the global job market (Baert et al., 2021). The benefits of this mobility are varied and significant: exposure to different cultures fosters intercultural understanding and tolerance, while immersion in linguistic environments different from one's native language improves communicative skills and intercultural confidence (Bird and Stevens, 2017).

Internationalization in higher education, driven by student mobility and other types of actions, is essential to prepare students for a globalised world (Buckner, 2019). In addition to promoting cultural diversity and the development of language skills, this practice contributes to the personal and professional growth of individuals and the socio-economic progress of communities. As more students and professionals seek educational and work experiences abroad, cultural diversification, knowledge exchange, and the development of intercultural skills are encouraged, strengthening global understanding in our interconnected society (Sobkowiak, 2019).

This trend finds a particularly notable example in Europe with the Erasmus program. Established in 1987 and financially supported by the European Commission (EC), Erasmus has played a crucial role in facilitating student mobility within Europe and promoting the internationalization of higher education across the continent. However, it is important to recognize that Erasmus is not the only pathway for international mobility. Many European institutions have established student exchange agreements with universities outside of Europe, extending opportunities for global participation to regions such as the United States, Canada, Latin America, and Asia. The interconnection of global mobility trends, along with the impact of initiatives like Erasmus, underscores the transformative power of international experiences in the personal and professional development of individuals. In fact, the countries part of this study (Spain, France and Croatia) are also active players in international mobility and specially in the Erasmus programme. According to data<sup>1</sup> from the European Commission, a total of 99,229 Spanish students participated in the Erasmus+ program in 2022. In the case of France, the figure rises to 102,261 students, while for Croatia, the number of participants in the Erasmus+ program was 12,940 students.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/statistics-and-factsheets>



In light of the substantial participation of Spanish, French and Croatian students in the Erasmus+ program, it becomes imperative to examine the specific measures implemented by each country to foster internationalization in education.

In the specific case of Spain, at the national level, the Ministry of Education released the "Strategy for the Internationalization of Spanish Universities 2015-2020" in 2014 (this initiative remains in effect to this day while work is underway on the new strategic plan.) This strategic plan was formulated with an overarching goal to be achieved by 2020: "To consolidate a robust and internationally appealing university system that promotes both inbound and outbound mobility of the best students, faculty, researchers, and administrative staff. Additionally, it aims to enhance educational quality, harness the potential of the Spanish language in higher education, internationalize educational programs, and activities of research, development, and innovation, thereby contributing to strengthening the international allure and competitiveness of Spain. Simultaneously, it seeks to propel socio-economic development in its immediate environment based on knowledge" (Ministerio de Educación, 2014).

In Spain, university competencies are divided among the State, the Autonomous Communities, and the universities themselves (Hernández, 1991). In general, State competencies include the approval of basic regulations for the Spanish University System. This entails establishing essential knowledge for obtaining degrees, basic regulation and coordination of curriculum plans, foundations for scholarships and aid, fundamental requirements for the establishment of universities, and the regulation of their basic structures. Autonomous Communities, operating within the framework defined at the state level and respecting university autonomy, have the authority to establish an autonomous university system. Their competencies include developing the foundations for the creation and recognition of universities, coordinating university activities within their region, establishing conditions regarding financial assistance (scholarships and aid), and defining the academic calendar. An especially illustrative case of this dynamic is found in the funding of public universities. To a large extent, these funds come from both the central State and the corresponding regional governments. This implies that the resources available to each public institution are directly influenced by its geographical location (Bueso, 2012).

In Croatia, although the central government oversees the education system, local and regional authorities also play a significant role (Veić and Mraović, 2004). In an effort to promote internationalization and provide more opportunities for young people, the Croatian government (2023) has launched the "Nacionalni program za mlade za razdoblje 2023 do 2025" (National Youth Program for the period 2023-2025), which aims to promote internationalization and offer international mobility opportunities for young people.

This program includes specific measures such as providing information about exchange programs like Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps (a European Union funding program that creates opportunities for young people to volunteer and manage their own solidarity projects for the benefit of communities throughout Europe), as well as improving access to information about national policies aimed at young people. Additionally, it seeks to ensure national-level co-financing of the Youth Wiki Program (an initiative of the European Union aimed at providing a centralized and accessible platform to gather and share information about policies and measures targeted at youth in European countries) in collaboration with the European Commission and the national contact point.

In France, education system is centralized in terms of general policies; however, regions have some influence and autonomy in the implementation and management of education at the local level (Neave,1985). France extensively promotes cross-border learning mobility, particularly within the framework of the Bologna Process, with the aim of fostering linguistic and cultural learning experiences and shaping global citizens. Various mobility programs, including Erasmus+, target students and educators at all levels of education. As mentioned in the report from “Youth Wiki - Youth Policies in France” elaborated by the European Commission (2019), these initiatives are often conducted in partnership with public authorities and community operators and are designed to promote student mobility, allowing them to take study breaks to gain personal or professional experience both domestically and abroad. Additionally, efforts are made to integrate foreign students by simplifying administrative procedures and providing support services, facilitated by ministries, regional student service centers, and local authorities. Regarding non-formal mobility, programs for young people are implemented in collaboration with organizations involved in youth work and non-formal education. These programs aim to offer diverse opportunities, especially for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. In terms of cross-border mobility in employment, France offers numerous programs and schemes. Institutional bodies like the Ministry's "Discover the world" portal, Pôle Emploi International, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Eures platform facilitate access to international job offers and employment-related services.

In general, Spain, Croatia and France, with the support of the European Union, are actively developing their strategies for internationalization in the field of education. The main objective of these strategies is to create globalised educational communities that promote student mobility, inter-institutional cooperation, and knowledge exchange at the international level. Through programs such as Erasmus+ and other cooperation initiatives, these countries are strengthening their ties with other European and global nations, thus fostering a more inclusive and diverse approach to higher education.

# III. Employability

## Concept of employability

Employability is complex and difficult concept to define, that depends on aspects such as the regulatory framework or supply and demand within the labour market (Suárez Lantarón, 2016). Over the years, there have been several approaches to the concept of employability, although those that focus on the labour market, either from the point of view of the individual or the organisation, stand out. This concept, moreover, is changing over time, according to Gazier (1998), and has gained nuances over time.

Among the various definitions, the following are of particular interest, relevance or impact. For the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2000), employability is defined as the probability of obtaining a vacancy in a specific labour market on the basis of the attributes with which the seeker is endowed, and which enable him or her to overcome the obstacles imposed by the market. ILO (2008) recognises that employability is an issue that is affected by several factors: "a foundation of core skills, access to education, availability of training opportunities, motivation, ability and support to take advantage of opportunities for continuous learning, and recognition of acquired skills - and is critical for enabling workers to attain decent work and manage change and for enabling enterprises to adopt new technologies and enter new markets".

In line with this emphasis on the personal characteristics of the individual, the UK government at the end of the last century defined employability as 'the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce in which all those who are able to work are encouraged to develop the skills, knowledge, technology and adaptability to enable them to enter and remain in employment throughout their working lives' (HM Treasury, 1997, p. 1).

Together with these characteristics of the individual, Hillage and Pollard (1998) incorporate the labour market environment into the definition of the concept of employability. Thus, for these authors, employability is defined as "the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment. For the individual, employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess, the way they use those assets and present them to employers and the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labour market environment within which they seek work)". Employability therefore relates to the development of attributes, skills, abilities or competences that are valued by the labour market.

It is therefore the usefulness of competences to perform a job in the labour market that is the overriding feature of the concept of employability. Moreover, an individual's employability has a dynamic dimension, i.e. it is a trait that can change over time, as his or her skills may become obsolete or fail to keep pace with new labour market demands (ILO 2004); it is therefore essential to pay attention to lifelong learning. Finally, it should not be forgotten that employability can be developed both for employment and self-employment (Rentería and Malvezzi, 2008).

## Employability skills

Given the strong link between employability and competences, it is striking that there is no unity in the classification of employability competences. It is noted that each institution or organisation uses its own taxonomy.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is important to make the distinction between knowledge, skills and abilities used by the Qualification and Evaluation Framework of the United States Government. Hence :

- Knowledge statements refer to an organised body of information usually of a factual or procedural nature which, if applied, makes adequate performance on the job possible.
- Skill statements refer to the proficient manual, verbal or mental manipulation of darn or things. Skills can be readily measured by a performance test where quantity and quality of performance are evaluated.
- Ability statements refer to the power to perform an observable activity at the present time. This means that abilities have been evidenced through activities or behaviours that are similar to those required on the job. Abilities are different from aptitudes as the latter only relate to the potential to perform the activity.

**Table 1. Skills, abilities and knowledge – OECD**

SKILLS	ABILITIES	KNOWLEDGES
Reading comprehension*	Verbal abilities*	Computers and electronics*
Writing*	Reasoning abilities*	Education and training*
Speaking*	Quantitative abilities*	Clerical*
Active learning*	Memory*	Psychology*
Critical thinking*	Perceptual abilities*	Therapy and counselling*
Learning strategies*	Attentiveness	Mathematics knowledge*
Active listening*	Auditory and speech abilities	Medicine and dentistry*
Judgement and decision making*	Visual abilities	Sociology and anthropology*
Systems analysis*	Spatial abilities	Administration and management* Communications and media*
Systems evaluations*	Reaction time and speed abilities	Customer and personal service*
Monitoring*	Fine manipulative abilities	Engineering, mechanics and technology*
Instructing*	Endurance	Biology*
Complex problem solving*	Physical strength	Law and government*
Mathematical skills*	Flexibility, balance and coordination	Philosophy and theology*

SKILLS	KNOWLEDGES
Time management*	Economics and accounting*
Operation analysis*	Sales and marketing*
Science*	Personnel and human resources*
Management of personnel resources*	Chemistry
Persuasion	Fine arts
Negotiation	Physics
Service orientation	History and archeology
Coordination	Transportation
Programming	Public safety and security
Technology design	Production and processing Food production
Management of financial resources	Design
Management of material resources	Building and construction
Installation	
Quality control analysis	
Troubleshooting	
Equipment selection	
Operation monitoring	
Operation and control	

SKILLS
Equipment maintenance
Repairing

\* Critical shortage, defined as top quartile.

Source: OECD (2017). Skill for jobs indicators : Data overview and analysis.

The ILO (2004) also uses this theoretical framework by distinguishing between skills, competences and abilities, emphasising lifelong development. In order to better adapt to changes in the labour market, the ILO proposes the following set of core skills :

- The ability to learn and adapt;
- Reading, writing and computing competently;
- The ability to listen and communicate effectively;
- Creative thinking;
- Solving problems independently;
- Self-managing at work;
- The ability to interact with co-workers and to work in teams or groups;
- Handling basic technology;
- Leading effectively;
- As well as the ability to follow supervision.

The World Economic Forum (WEF, 2023) uses the following conceptual framework of competencies :

**Table 2. Core skills in 2023**

<b>Cognitive skills</b>	Analytical thinking Creative thinking Systems thinking Reading, writing and mathematics Multi-lingualism
<b>Engagement skills</b>	Service orientation and customer service Marketing and media
<b>Ethics</b>	Environmental stewardship Global citizenship

<b>Management skills</b>	Quality control Talent Management Resource management and operations
<b>Physical abilities</b>	Manual dexterity, endurance and precision Sensory-processing abilities
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	Resilience, flexibility and Agility Motivation and self-awareness Curiosity and lifelong learning Dependability and attention to detail
<b>Technology skills</b>	Technological literacy AI and big data Design and user experience Programming Networks and cybersecurity
<b>Working with others</b>	Empathy and active listening Leadership and social influence Teaching and mentoring

Source : World Economic Forum (2023), Future of Jobs Survey

Of these, the WEF highlights the following ten skills as key elements for employability in 2023 :

1. Analytical thinking remains the most important skills for workers in 2023. Analytical thinking is considered a core skill by more companies than any other skill and constitutes, on average, 9% of the core skills reported by companies.
2. Creative thinking, another cognitive skill, ranks second.
3. Three self-efficacy skills – resilience, flexibility and agility; motivation and self-awareness; and curiosity and lifelong learning – recognize the importance of workers ability to adapt to disrupted workplaces.
4. Technological literacy.
5. Dependability and attention to detail.
6. The list is completed by two attitudes relating to working with others – empathy and active listening and leadership and social influence – as well as quality control.



Furthermore, the WEF provides as a specific feature the intersectoral differences in relation to the skills that will be most in demand in the coming years and which, consequently, increase the level of employability of individuals.

A classification of competences, particularly important given its use in the European Union in the Europass application and platform for connecting employers and jobseekers, is the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) classification, part of Europe 2020 strategy, within the European Quality Framework (EQF) defined by the Bologna Working Group in 2005. This classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training.

**Table 3. The ESCO classification. Skills and competences (Levels 1 and 2)**

<b>Transversal skills and competences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core skills and competences</li> <li>Thinking skills and competences</li> <li>Self-management skills and competences</li> <li>Social and communication skills and competences</li> <li>Physical and manual skills and competences</li> <li>Life skills and competences</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication, collaboration and creativity</li> <li>Information skills</li> <li>Assisting and caring</li> <li>Management skills</li> <li>Working with computers</li> <li>Handling and moving</li> <li>Constructing</li> <li>Working with machinery and specialised equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary</li> <li>Arts and humanities</li> <li>Business, administration and law</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Engineering, manufacturing and construction</li> <li>Field unknown</li> <li>Generic programmes and qualifications</li> <li>Health and welfare</li> <li>Information and communication technologies (ICTS)</li> <li>Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics</li> <li>Services</li> <li>Social sciences, journalism and information</li> </ul>
<b>Language skills and knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Languages</li> <li>Classical languages</li> </ul>

From the point of view of companies operating in the labour market, it is interesting to see which competences are defined and are of interest as most relevant in relation to employability. For example, Indeed is considered, in 2023, the number 1 job site in the world with over 350 million unique visitors every month. Indeed strives to put job seekers first, giving them free access to search for jobs, post resumes, and research companies. Indeed highlight 120 skills to incorporate into jobseekers' CVs that are valued by employers.

These skills are classified into the following categories :

- Soft skills
  - Communication skills
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Critical thinking skills
  - Leadership skills
- Hard skills
  - Technical skills
  - Language skills
  - Design skills
  - Analytical skills

On the other hand, EY (2020), a global leader in assurance, tax, strategy, transaction and consulting services, estimates that there are around 700 different competences, but classifies them into three broad categories :

- Knowledge based skills. From this point of view, Knowledge is seen as the beginning of practice, whilst doing is the completion of knowing; Knowledge-based skills have always seemed to be an essential requirement for any role.
- Personal traits. According to EY, personal traits and attributes have never been more sought for in the workplace and some employment market experts tend to claim that up to 80% of the job profile are one's personal soft skills.
- Transferrable or functional skills complete the professional profile. These skills are typically the actions performed to accomplish a task, transferrable to different work functions and industries.

In a similar vein to EY, the Fundación Adecco (2022), whose main objective is the integration into the labour market of people who, due to their personal characteristics, find it more difficult to find a job, also points to the fundamental role of soft skills in employability. These human values and attitudes, beyond mere technical knowledge, bring great value to organisations.

Obviously, not all competencies and skills are equally important for all jobs, as the sector of activity, the position and the responsibility of the job are determining factors, although the Fundación Adecco highlights the following as essential: ability to adapt, teamwork, proactivity, commitment and the ability to work under pressure.

Finally, Randstat (2018) detected in a study carried out that there was a shortage of talent due to the fact that the candidates to be hired do not possess the skills that companies consider relevant. Among the skills sought and not found, experience in the sector, technical skills, motivation and English are the main ones. On the other hand, they point out that remuneration is also an obstacle because salaries are not very competitive.

Based on the information above, as highlighted by the Erasmus Jobs Project (2022), there is a clear correlation between specific skills and employability. It's important to note that these knowledge competencies vary among students in different fields of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and initially, international mobility should not impact learning outcomes. International mobility thus has an important role to play in the development of transversal competences, and attitudes and values (soft skills) and language skills.

## IV. International Student Mobility (ISM) and Employability

One of the main objectives of international mobility is to improve employability (European Commission, 2018), which has been a significant motivation for students to choose to study abroad (European Commission, 2014). Even in the last century, the 'Theory of Professional Mobility' was mentioned (Sicherman and Galor, 1990), which affirmed the existence of a positive relationship between mobility and labour outcomes. Subsequently, various studies, both from institutions and individual researchers, have indicated that international mobility of students has been beneficial for obtaining employment (Teichler and Janson, 2007; Alfranseder et al., 2012), and how graduates with international experience tend to stand out significantly in the labour market (Lukas et al., 2014; Waibel et al., 2017).

This advantage in the labour market is often attributed to the acquisition of skills; therefore, it is necessary to analyse the competences developed during the mobility period.

There are many studies and approaches that provide different classifications of competences; there is no consensus on the terminology used and sometimes not even on the concept of competence itself. However, there are coincidences in the results. Taking into account both the objectives of the Erasmus Program and the participants' expectations, Unlu (2015) classifies learning outcomes into: academic achievements (vocational knowledge, vocational experiences, and professionalism), cultural achievements (learning about different cultures, educational training in multicultural environments, and attitudes towards different cultures), and personal development achievements (learning foreign languages and self-confidence).

There are several competency frameworks that can be useful for analysing the competencies developed through international student mobility, such as the KSA (Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes) approach, which is a reference for organizations and professionals worldwide. This approach considers competencies to have three dimensions: knowledge, skills, and attitudes (De La Torre et al., 2022). Another framework used by the European Commission is the ESCO manual (European Commission et al., 2018), which adds language skills as an independent category to the previous classification.

In any case, it can be useful to group competencies into various categories. Following the framework developed by Unlu (2015) and the results of the Erasmus Careers project conducted by Perez-Encinas et al., (2024), where the authors categorized the competencies acquired during the mobility experience into four categories of learning outcomes: Academic Achievements, Cultural Achievements, Personal Achievements and Employability gains. In this approach, employability is already mentioned as a related competency within the academic realm; however, other studies regarding student mobility assert that employability is a competency in itself.

Assigning competencies to each of these categories is complex; some competencies may be considered cross-cutting because they belong to several categories by their very nature, such as 'linguistic competence,' 'critical thinking,' 'social skills,' among others. In order to identify the competencies of each category, the following framework have been taken into account: Perez-Encinas et al., (2024). Table 4 shows the results of a content analysis from a systematic literature review on ISM and competences. It is important to mention that some competences have a transversal nature across these clusters, such as the case of "language skills" which belongs to all of them (Academic, Cultural, Personal and Employability Gains) as the "Competence frameworks in international student mobility" specifies (2024).

**Table 4. Content review : classification of competences developed in international mobility environments**

Academic Gains	Cultural Gains	Personal Development Gains	Employability Gains
Educational innovation	Intercultural	Time management	Networking
Multidimensional thinking	Cultural	Openness	Collaboration
Interactive learning	Intercultural sensitivity	Listen to others	Teamwork
Language skills	Cultural awareness	Self-awareness	Quality of work
Field of knowledge's competences	Open-mindedness	Self-confidence	Digital
	Communication	Decision making & Judgement	Careers perceptions and future working lives
	Cross-cultural communication	Sense of being successful	Curriculum
	Language skills	Resilience	Language skills
		Equality understanding	Search and analysis of information
		Intelligence	Adaptability

## Personal Development Gains

Sensibility
Empathy
Adaptability
Global Mindedness
Personal Identity
Sense of belonging
Language skills
Self-expression skills
Reconciliation competence
Conflict competence

Source: Erasmus Careers (2024) "Competence frameworks in international student mobility"

The "Erasmus Impact Study Regional Analysis" (EC, 2016) confirms that the student exchange program enhances employability and professional mobility. It notes that Spain is one of the countries where mobility programs have the most positive effects on labour market outcomes and the personal skill development of participants. In Spain, where youth unemployment rates are concerning, Erasmus students have a 23% lower unemployment rate and are half as likely to experience long-term unemployment. Other studies indicate that students with international mobility are approximately 16% more likely to continue their studies and work in relation to peers who did not study abroad (Di Prieto, 2015).

Therefore, there is consensus that mobility experience is positive for students as it supports the development of the competencies.

However, there is still a mismatch between the supply and demand for skills for available jobs, which prevents young Europeans from finding employment, and without losing sight that technological changes, globalization, and new forms of work require new competencies and skills in the labour market (Monteiro et al., 2019). However, a recent study conducted by van Mol et al. (2024) within the Erasmus Careers consortium, whereby through the fictitious application for job positions with different experimental profiles varying the way of highlighting international mobility experiences, it was found that studying abroad does not provide a significant advantage during the recruitment process, suggesting that the popular assumption that employers take study abroad experience into account when recruiting is not supported by empirical evidence.

Regarding the socio-economic context, although the effect of participation in international educational programs is always positive for the student, it is less significant for those from advantaged backgrounds. The most benefited students are from disadvantaged backgrounds, although not extremely disadvantaged, as it provides them with an excellent opportunity to improve in new skills, which they may not have access to due to their socio-economic situation (Di Pietro, 2015).

From the student's perspective, there are several motivations for participating in an international exchange. Some students may opt for an exchange program simply for the desire to travel or experience another culture, which could have a negative impact on their academic performance as this mindset can lead to a lack of dedication to academic responsibilities, as the primary motivation becomes exploring new places and cultures rather than engaging deeply with coursework. Consequently, students may prioritize leisure activities over studying, resulting in lower academic performance during the exchange period. (Soares and Mosquera, 2020; Liwinski, 2019), while others choose this experience to enhance their employability, either as a differentiating factor when entering the job market and finding higher-quality employment (Brooks et al., 2012; Brandenburg, 2014), or to pursue an international career (Wiers-Jensen, 2008; Dai, Lingard, and Musofer, 2020).

Depending on the motivation, the competency development approaches in international mobility will differ. If the aim is to acquire a distinguishing element, the mobility experience will focus on the development of skills generally associated with professional advancement, such as career guidance, managerial skills, and personal skills. On the other hand, those interested in an international career seek to develop adaptability skills for operating in different countries and cultural contexts, teamwork skills, tolerance and respect, and adaptation to people from diverse backgrounds through mobility.

It is true that when considering the outcomes compared to other candidates who have not engaged in international mobility, the differences can be relative depending on the country. It can be observed that in countries with a long history of mobility, such as Norway, it no longer has a distinguishing effect since almost all students have some international experience (Wiers-Jenssen and Støren, 2020). The VALERA<sup>2</sup> study also indicates that the impact of undertaking Erasmus ISM is greater in Central and Eastern Europe than among Western European countries.

According to the results of The Erasmus Impact Study Regional Analysis (Brandenburg, 2016), in Southern Europe, 9% more students than in Western Europe considered mobility as a way to enhance and broaden their career prospects. Similarly, in Southern Europe, 9% more students than in Northern Europe considered the opportunity to improve their language skills as a compelling reason to go abroad. For 93% of students in Southern Europe, enhancing career prospects is an important reason.

In this way, it is observed that the returns on studying abroad vary according to the educational level of parents and the financial situation of students (Parey and Waldinger, 2011; Netz and Grüttner, 2021), reflecting that the socio-economic profile of students can have a lever effect on their professional development, and therefore, the mobility experience itself is not the only factor justifying employability outcomes.

## V. Employability impact

Roy et al. (2019) have recently conducted a comprehensive literature review about the main outcomes of the International Student Mobility (ISM) programs, including the effects on the employability and personal careers. It appears that there is an increasingly compelling evidence indicating that participation in short-term international programmes yields beneficial effects in professional development (Bryla, 2015; Winslade, 2016), perceived employability on the part of students (Potts, 2015; Cleak et al., 2016; Meier and Smith, 2016), the promotion of international careers (Felker and Gianecchini, 2015; Kronholz and Osborn, 2016), career success in terms of higher wages (Kratz and Netz, 2018; Messer and Wolter, 2007) and entrepreneurial competence (Hallows et al., 2011).

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<sup>2</sup> VALERA Study: 'The Professional Value of Erasmus Mobility', an evaluation study conducted at the European level by the International Centre for Higher Education Research. University of Kassel.



The effects on employability will be addressed in the following subsections from two differentiated perspectives: the attained salary level and professional success, on one hand, and employer's perceptions and labour market outcomes on the other.

## **Wage attainment and Occupational status**

The effects of international student mobility on wage earnings remain uncertain, despite growing interest in understanding its implications. Existing evidence suggests that the effect of studying abroad varies across graduate groups, work and personal contexts, and types of stays abroad (Waibel et al., 2018). Based on the German context, the authors found slight differences in occupational status between graduates who studied abroad and those who did not. In particular, they observed that although positive benefits are obtained from studying abroad in the first years of the professional career, international experiences provide certain (albeit limited) advantages in the case of graduates from unspecific fields, finding no evidence in this sense when it comes to graduates trained for jobs where specific competencies are required. Furthermore, it notes that these benefits are more likely to be obtained in students with a reduced propensity to live these experiences, who generally belong to social strata with reduced socioeconomic and cultural resources.

Graduates who have participated in international mobility programs possess distinctive attributes that incline them toward higher wage attainment (Messer and Wolter, 2007); Rodrigues (2013) or steeper wage progression early in their career, as noted by Kratz and Netz (2018). In this last study, through two graduate surveys (Graduate Panel of the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies-DZHW and the Panel Survey of the Bavarian State Institute for Higher Education Research and Planning-BAP) observed that students with international mobility experience enjoy salary advantages due to their self-selection based on wage-relevant characteristics. However, these advantages diminish slightly when considering their superior language proficiency and completion of doctoral studies. Their enhanced wage growth is partly attributed to job changes, while their long-term advantage stems from working in large corporations and multinational firms.

Using a sample of Italian university graduates who completed their studies between 2007 and 2010, Sorrenti (2017) estimates that proficiency in at least one foreign language is associated with higher wages of between 4% and 6%. In addition, women who study abroad would benefit more than men in this regard, so this type of experience could be a partial contributing factor to the reduction of the gender gap.

On the other hand, employees who work in a foreign country tend to earn a higher salary (about 39%), thus showing that internationally mobile students who improve their foreign language skills are likely to benefit in the international labour market. The foreign language learned seems to be relevant: Spanish would not have a significant effect on wages, English and French would moderately improve wages, while knowing how to speak German would have significant positive effects. Ultimately, individuals with a lower socioeconomic level seem to benefit more from this type of experience.

Teichler (2015) finds a salary difference between those who had participated in Erasmus, slightly higher positions in the initial stages of their career and points out that there may be differences depending on the country. Thus, in Central and Eastern European countries students obtain better professional results.

The higher salary growth of graduates with ISM experience is partly due to their greater likelihood of upgrading through changes of employer, having greater chances of working in large multinational companies or entering foreign labour markets where salary levels tend to be higher. Other factors such as developing language skills and having higher education have a less significant effect on graduate salaries (Netz and Cordua, 2021).

Wiers-Jenssen (2011) found that students with international mobility obtain higher salaries on average than those students who have not had such experiences (specifically, 8.5% more; exchange experiences would increase salary by 2.5%) Specifically, students in less demanded fields of study may experience higher salaries as a result of studying abroad compared to their peers. But in the case of more specialized fields of study with better outlets in the labour market, the fact of having undertaken mobility stays does not result in significant salary increases with respect to their peers.

According to Liwiński (2019) a positive correlation between parental education attainment and the earnings of their offspring is noted. This result is based on a survey of Poland graduates in the years 2006-2007 for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

On the other hand, existing literature underscores a notable relationship between engagement in International Study Mobility (ISM) during undergraduate studies and both wage levels and the duration of the transition from education to employment. In a study based on data from Dutch students, Van Mol et al. (2021) found that participation in undergraduate studies abroad programmes are positively associated with increased wages, whereas completion of international internships is linked to shorter transitions into the workforce.

They also found that female students demonstrate higher levels of mobility during their Bachelor studies compared to their male counterparts. However, in the same study, after controlling for selection, they found evidence that the effects of mobility experiences during postgraduate studies do not significantly impact either wages or the duration of the transition, due to the Dutch education system and labour market, where limited opportunities for upward vertical mobility restrict the returns of ISM in the local labour market. Additionally, graduates from countries with robust education systems and a higher number of flagship institutions tend to experience slightly longer transitions from education to work, a statistically significant finding despite its minimal impact (Van Mol et al., 2021).

In the context of a long tradition of student mobility between Indonesia and Australia, Ikhlas (2020) conducts a case study through interviews with a number of stakeholders: students, graduates, mobility staff, policy makers and employers. Many of the interviewees convey that international study experiences are positive and enhance students' employability through the acquisition of a range of soft skills such as global citizenship or cross-cultural understanding. However, there are differences in the positive effects during the first years of the professional career: it seems that the longer the duration of the stay within the international program, the clearer students perceive their future career prospects.

Pinto (2022) analyses the data from the 2014 Employability Survey of Spanish University Students, prepared by the National Institute of Statistics finding that participation in an Erasmus Program during studies increases the probability of becoming an entrepreneur but no significant effects are observed in obtaining a permanent contract or highly qualified employment.

Di Pietro (2015) noted within a cohort of Italian university students that the likelihood of securing employment three years post-graduation was approximately 23% higher for those who had engaged in international mobility compared to their peers who had not. This implies that such experiences potentially endow students with a spectrum of skills highly regarded by employers.

## **Employer's perceptions and labour market outcomes**

Based on Flash Eurobarometer 304 "Employers perception of graduate employability" that was conducted in 31 countries between 30 August and 7 September 2010 in all EU-Member States, Croatia, Iceland, Norway and Turkey, Van Mol (2017) found that employers tend to value internships abroad more than study abroad experiences. However, when it comes to studying abroad, approximately 80% of employers across most countries do not prioritize

international study. Conversely, Southern European countries generally place higher importance on study abroad. Notably, only three countries—Hungary, Iceland, and Ireland—rate study abroad significantly higher than internships abroad. Additionally, multivariate analysis highlights substantial variations among countries in employer perceptions of international study and internships, with employers showing a preference for study abroad when seeking graduates with strong language, computer, and decision-making skills. Furthermore, the analysis reveals a notable correlation between the presence of European and non-European graduates in a company and the importance attributed to study abroad experiences by employers.

Zhu and Zhao (2022) have recently observed that in the specific case of Chinese students returning home after having a mobility experience in the UK, the skills and abilities most valued by domestic employers are not achieved.

Wiers-Jenssen (2011) analyses the labour market outcomes of international mobility from two perspectives: the transition from higher education to first job and the extent to which they obtain jobs internationally. Taking a sample of Norwegian students surveyed in 2007 who had graduated three years earlier, he finds that students who obtained their degree abroad had more difficulties in finding employment (although no persistence in this problem is observed), which could be related to the impossibility of having a national network of contacts because they had studied outside of the country. However, students who simply carried out exchanges did not face as many difficulties, since temporary exchanges are compatible with the maintenance of the aforementioned network of contacts. Another finding is that students with international experience are more likely to seek and find a job abroad after graduation.

In an investigation spanning the years 2007 to 2017, focusing on Norwegian students with and without international mobility experiences, Wiers-Jenssen and Støren (2021) discerned, through post-graduates surveys conducted six months subsequent to their academic completion, that notwithstanding alterations in labour market dynamics, distinctions in unemployment rates, job relevance and part-time employment between the aforementioned cohorts are marginal and have exhibited sustained constancy over the period under scrutiny.

Although most studies analyse mobility understood as a study period, the reality is that some students also carry out a work placement abroad. The report (European Commission, 2016) points out that this group of students tend to be more entrepreneurial than those who remain in their home country, one in ten have set up their own company and 75% are considering or planning to do so. Entrepreneurship in short is another form of employability that we should not ignore.

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Parey and Waldinger (2010), using a sample of German university graduates who completed their academic training between 1988 and 2005, estimated that participating in an international mobility program as a student increased the probability of finding a job in a foreign country by around 15%. In addition, they found that the profitability of this type of experience was higher for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Wiers-Jenssen and Try (2005), with a sample of Norwegian graduates, analyse whether there are effects on employability between those who obtained their degree outside and inside the country. Their analysis seems to indicate that there are simultaneously positive and negative effects of international study experiences. Regarding graduates who obtained their degree in Norway, those who obtained their degree abroad have a lower probability of finding employment in the domestic labour market and a higher risk of being overqualified; however, they have higher salaries, probably due to certain acquired skills (cultural and language skills), which are highly valued by employers considering that a significant proportion of graduates studied at Western universities.

According to Wiers-Jenssen & Støren (2021) differences in labour market outcomes among various academic disciplines exist, yet the influence of international student mobility on unemployment rates and job relevance remains minor and statistically inconclusive when considering graduates' individual backgrounds. Specifically, while technology graduates with international mobility experience in the latest cohort displayed lower unemployment rates compared to domestically educated peers, the combined effect of being a technology graduate and engaging in international mobility lacked statistical significance. Conversely, for business and administration graduates, international student mobility significantly reduces the risk of involuntary irrelevant employment and concurrently enhances the likelihood of securing relevant employment opportunities. On the other hand, for graduates with strong academic performance, participation in study abroad programs mitigate the likelihood of unemployment, whereas this effect is not observed among those with lower academic performance. The results do not substantiate the notion of a beneficial impact of international experiences on labour market integration for graduates with parents of lower educational attainment. Similar findings are observed regarding immigrants. Additionally, business and administration graduates, primarily employed in the private sector, experience a slightly greater advantage from international student mobility in terms of decreased likelihood of holding irrelevant employment. No notable effects of studying abroad were observed among graduates in other academic disciplines. Furthermore, students with high academic performance demonstrate greater benefits whereas no discernible effects were evident for those with low or moderate academic performance.

Liwiński (2019) through survey conducted by the Central Statistical of Poland in the years 2006-2007, found that apparently exists a positive association between studying abroad and higher employment rates, but this correlation diminishes in significance after employing matching techniques to mitigate selection bias. Consequently, the direct impact of studying abroad in relation to studying domestically appears to be negligible in terms on employment. However, a notable positive effect on employability emerges for students with at least one parent possessing a university degree. Beyond employment considerations, various motivations for participating in international exchange programs exist, including travel aspirations, which may detrimentally affect academic performance.

Following to Gajderowicz et al. (2012) in a 2007 surveys-first job with 5.566 graduates from Polish higher education institutions observed that there is not a statistically significant influence of international mobility on the duration of job searches. It is likely that the impact on graduates' employability does not stem directly from the act of international mobility itself, but rather from other characteristics associated with individuals who are more inclined to- be mobile, such as higher levels of success in the labour market. Employers could enhance their candidate selection process by considering candidates' international mobility experiences. Additionally, proficiency in foreign language has been shown to be crucial factor in securing employment with permanent contracts.

In a work carried out through undergraduates' who studied abroad between 2014 and 2019 at three public universities in Laos, Sisavath (2021) observed that the 94% of the respondents believed their international experience worthwhile to develop the professional career, especially in an international context.

## VI. Conclusion

International Student Mobility (ISM) plays a fundamental role in preparing individuals for a globalised world. Cultural diversification, knowledge exchange, and the development of intercultural skills strengthen global understanding in our interconnected society. Programmes like Erasmus have been crucial in facilitating student mobility within Europe and promoting the internationalisation of higher education across the continent. ISM also fosters cooperation, knowledge exchange, and global understanding, enhancing competitiveness in higher education. It contributes to the development of skills and competencies that increase employability prospects in the labour market and to the personal and professional growth of individuals, as well as the socioeconomic progress of communities.

The development of skills and competencies is essential for employability in an ever-changing labour market. The distinction between knowledge, skills, and abilities provides a solid foundation for understanding how individuals can prepare for the job market. Cognitive skills, engagement, effective communication, and collaboration are fundamental for professional success. Adaptability and the ability to learn and adjust are also crucial in a dynamic work environment. The development of these competencies benefits not only individuals but also organisations and society at large.

International student mobility has a positive impact on employability, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although there are discrepancies in the classification of competencies, it is acknowledged that the acquisition of skills during mobility is beneficial. However, the advantage in the labour market is not always significant, and the assumption that employers value the experience of studying abroad is not supported by empirical evidence.

Nevertheless, the effects on salary gains remain uncertain. Although graduates who have participated in international mobility programmes tend to earn higher salaries and experience faster wage progression, these benefits can vary depending on the job context and the specific skills required. Additionally, proficiency in foreign languages is associated with higher salaries, especially for women. Despite these advantages, it is important to consider that international mobility does not always guarantee a significant advantage in the hiring process by employers.

Employers value professional internships abroad more than study abroad experiences. Although 80% of employers do not prioritise international study, Southern European countries place more importance on studying abroad. Furthermore, the presence of European and non-European graduates in a company correlates with the importance attributed to study abroad experiences. Despite these advantages, entrepreneurial spirit is also a form of employability that should not be overlooked. Therefore, although there are gaps between the demand and supply of skills, international experience remains highly valued by employers. It is important to understand students' perceptions of how international mobility experiences have contributed to the development of personal and professional skills and competencies that enable them to stand out in the job market. It is also highly relevant to determine whether these perceptions differ among students from different countries.

This theoretical framework serves as a starting point to understand the perceptions of all stakeholders in employment regarding international mobility, which can vary from country to country.



It examines how students manage to value their international mobility experience before employers, and the impact that international mobility has on their career paths. The "Boost your International Mobility" (BIM) project aims to address precisely these issues providing the necessary tools for students to recognise and make the most of their skills and experiences acquired during international mobility. It not only promotes the personal and professional development of students but also better prepares them to face the challenges of the current job market and stand out among the competition. By encouraging students to identify their potential, BIM contributes to their individual success and the overall growth of the workforce.

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# ANNEX

Furthermore, an in-depth analysis has been conducted on the following documents related to measures to address youth employment and statistics regarding internationalization in the different countries of this study. This exploration aims to provide valuable insights into the strategies and trends in these areas.

## SPAIN

- **Youth Employment Shock Plan 2019-2021** (Plan de Choque por el Empleo Joven 2019-2021)

The Youth Employment Plan from Spain aims to create a high-quality work environment for young people, engaging them actively in the employment and skill-building process. It focuses on improving qualifications and employability by addressing technological and gender disparities. The plan also aims to foster a new economic model based on social sustainability and added value.

To achieve these goals, the plan proposes several key initiatives:

- Programs to Facilitate Youth Employment
  - First Professional Experience Programs
  - Employment Measures for Challenging Areas
  - Mobility Talent Return and Support for Mobility Programs
- **Strategy for the Internationalization of Spanish Universities** (Estrategia para la Internalización de las Universidades Españolas)

This report proposes measures to consolidate a strong and internationally attractive university system that promotes the inbound and outbound mobility of students, faculty, and staff, while ensuring educational quality.

Key factors of internationalization outlined in the report include recent approval of the LEI, which simplifies visa and residence permit issuance for foreign individuals engaging in various activities. Efforts by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports aim to streamline university access for foreign students, while discussions within the European Commission focus on improving entry and residence conditions for third-country nationals. Spain has signed bilateral mobility agreements with several countries and aims to extend these agreements further. Advanced immigration legislation attracts foreign talent, providing access to the job market for graduates and postgraduates from prestigious universities.



Highly qualified professionals can obtain a single authorization for residence and work across Spain, and researcher status is extended to educators hired by universities, research centers, or business schools. Bilateral agreements with Ibero-American countries also facilitate international mobility.

- **Autonomous Competencies in the Field of Employment** (Las Competencias Autonómicas en Materia de Empleo, Agencias de Colocación y Empresas de Trabajo Temporal: En Especial, la Experiencia Andaluza)

The report analyses the process of assumption of competences in the field of employment by the Spanish Autonomous Communities, paying special attention to the Andalusian experience. It is indicated that this process has coincided with an almost Copernican shift both in the conception and importance of employment policies, as well as in the public and private structures responsible for their configuration and execution.

In the case of Andalusia, it is highlighted that the Autonomous Community has developed an active and proactive employment policy, based on public-private collaboration. In particular, the report analyses the role of placement agencies and temporary employment agencies (ETT) in the Andalusian labour intermediation system.

The report concludes that the Andalusian experience is an example of how Autonomous Communities can effectively and efficiently assume competences in employment matters. However, it is also pointed out that it is necessary to continue advancing in the multilevel coordination of employment policies to guarantee equal opportunities for workers throughout Spain.

- **Statistics on Internationalization Academic Year 2021-22** (Estadística de Internacionalización (EI) Curso 2021-22)

This report explores the complex dynamics of inbound and outbound student mobility in Spain, examining regional variations, the impact of mobility programs, and evolutionary trends in internationalization efforts within the Spanish higher education landscape. The analyses are based on data from the Integrated University Information System.

In the academic year 2021-22, Spain witnessed a significant influx of international students, with 135,474 individuals arriving to pursue studies within the Spanish University System (SUE).

Among them, 54,163 accessed through various mobility programs, including Erasmus, while the remainder enrolled directly in official degree programs. These incoming students predominantly originated from the European Union, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Asia and Oceania.

Simultaneously, Spain experienced an outbound mobility trend, with 46,481 students venturing abroad through mobility programs, notably Erasmus. The majority of these outgoing students hailed from traditional, in-person public universities. Interestingly, the lifting of pandemic restrictions saw a considerable surge in outgoing student numbers compared to previous years.

- **Spanish Universities That Offer More International Mobility to Their Students** (Las Universidades Españolas que Ofrecen Más Movilidad Internacional a su Alumnado)

This document explores the top-ranked Spanish universities in terms of international mobility, shedding light on their efforts to provide students with transformative experiences and opportunities for global engagement. It identifies universities that obtained a high "A" score in international mobility according to the U-Multirank 2021 ranking, showcasing their commitment to facilitating international exchanges and offering joint degrees with foreign institutions.

The top 6 is as follows:

Universidad Pontificia Comillas : Ubicación : Madrid

Universidad de Mondragón : Ubicación : Mondragón, Guipúzcoa, País Vasco

Universitat Pompeu Fabra : Ubicación : Barcelona, Cataluña

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid : Ubicación : Madrid

Universidad Loyola: Ubicación : Sevilla, Andalucía

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona : Ubicación : Barcelona, Cataluña

### **Conclusions for the Spanish context**

- National Level

In Spain, the State Public Employment Service (SEPE) coordinates policies for youth employment, although the Autonomous Communities play a crucial role in their implementation. The main objective is to ensure that young people aged 16 to 29 receive job offers, education, training, or professional internships within 4 months of leaving the education system or becoming unemployed. Youth unemployment remains a structural problem, with a rate of 28.6% according to Eurostat in January 2024, surpassing the European Union average of 14.9%.

To address this situation, the government has extended the "Youth Guarantee" program until 2030, invested 4.95 billion euros in youth employment policies, and reformed vocational training.

- Regional Level

At the regional level, the Autonomous Communities offer a wide range of measures and programs to enhance the employability of young people, including training, internships, support for job creation, and career guidance. These policies are tailored to the specific needs of each territory.

### SOME OUTSTANDING MEASURES OF THE SPANISH AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES :

**"Garantía Juvenil" in the Community of Madrid** aims to improve labour market access for individuals aged 16 to 25. It provides employment opportunities and a customized training plan to enhance vocational skills.

Employment opportunities are enhanced through incentives offered to companies that hire program participants, thereby increasing job prospects. Participants benefit from a tailored training plan aimed at providing them with the necessary skills and vocational training, improving their readiness for the labour market. Additionally, the program encourages the completion of compulsory education to ensure that young individuals meet formal education requirements. Participation in Vocational Training programs is also encouraged, offering specific educational pathways to acquire specialized and technical skills.

**"Avalem Joves" in Comunitat Valenciana** is the strategic plan of the Consell de la Generalitat aimed at improving employment opportunities for individuals under 30 years old in the Comunitat Valenciana from 2021 to 2024. The program is designed for individuals aged 16 to 29 and includes personalized career guidance, training itineraries, enhancements to job searches, and information about available employment programs. All actions are endorsed by the Conselleria de Economia and co-financed by the European Social Fund. (<https://labora.gva.es/es/avalem-joves>)

The plan involves subsidies to encourage the indefinite hiring of qualified young individuals (Avalem Joves) within the framework of the National Youth Guarantee System. The "PROYECTOS T'AVALEM" program supports projects involving training in conjunction with employment for young individuals registered in the Youth Guarantee. Additionally, there is a subsidy program for the employment of unemployed individuals under 30 years old by local entities in the Valencian Community (Avalem Joves).

In **Catalonia**, the Public Employment Service of Catalonia (Servei Públic d'Ocupació de Catalunya) offers opportunities to gain professional and personal experience while enhancing proficiency in foreign languages through internships or contracts with companies in various European countries. **The Eurodisea (Eurodyseey) program** is a transnational mobility initiative enabling young Europeans to acquire professional and personal experience, improve language skills, and engage in internships in regions affiliated with the Assembly of European Regions (ARE). These internships provide a monthly stipend covering living expenses, accommodation, and local transportation, along with linguistic training and cultural activities. The **TLN Mobilicat program** offers practical and formative learning experiences abroad with personalized support to facilitate entry into the job market for young individuals who have completed specialized studies at the intermediate or higher level without work experience or with less than 12 months of experience. Additionally, the Generalitat offers 12-month full-time internship contracts to work in municipalities, county councils, and non-profit entities throughout Catalonia.

In **Andalusia**, the "**Programa Primera Experiencia Profesional en las Administraciones Públicas**" (First Professional Experience Program in Public Administrations) is aimed at unemployed individuals aged 16 to 30 registered with the Andalusian Employment Service and the National Youth Guarantee System. The program prioritizes hiring in areas related to ecological transition, green economy, service digitization, social cohesion, and rural local development. Specific percentages are established for hiring in green and digital jobs. For three or fewer positions, at least one hiring in these lines is guaranteed. Entities primarily engaged in green or digital economies are exempt from meeting these percentages. The funding includes salary costs and additional support such as individual protective equipment and travel allowances of up to 1,000 euros per hired person with a residence in a province different from their workplace.

Moreover, similar programs are conducted, such as the Investigo Program, aiming to favour the hiring and job retention of young job seekers aged sixteen or older and under thirty, by entities carrying out research projects. The Social and Community Cooperation Initiative promotes job creation in Andalusia, encouraging the employment of unemployed young individuals by municipalities for social and community cooperation projects.

## **FRANCE**

- **The internationalization of education in France** (La France et l'Internationalisation de l'Enseignement)

The article proposes several measures to address the internationalization of education in France.

These include developing local strategic leadership tailored to each educational institution, promoting the presence of foreign students in French universities, engaging in European programs to strengthen European identity, implementing internationally adapted governance, reassessing the French international education project, preserving educational sovereignty and independence of educational systems, and promoting French educational cooperation in a competitive environment. These measures aim to enhance the internationalization of education in France by addressing various key aspects and fostering excellence in a globalised context.

- **National Implementation Plan of the European Youth Guarantee** (Plan National de Mise en Œuvre de la Garantie Européenne pour la Jeunesse)

The document provides detailed information about the National Implementation Plan of Youth Guarantee in France. Among the most prominent measures mentioned in the document are:

- **Emplois d'avenir:** Program that activates and accompanies young people facing greater difficulties in their first work experience.
- **Garantie Jeunes:** Initiative that supports the most disadvantaged young people in their job integration.
- **Contrat de génération:** Measure that encourages the hiring of young people in the private sector.
- **Loi sur la sécurisation de l'emploi:** Law that promotes the hiring of young people on indefinite contracts in the private sector.

**Pôles Etudiants pour l'Innovation, le Transfert et l'Entrepreneuriat (PEPITE):** Program that promotes entrepreneurship among young people, facilitating continuity between secondary and higher education.