



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Increasing Participation in Mobility

Track 1: Managing student mobilities

JYU Staff week 2026

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What are we discussing today?



1. Current situation of student mobilities in Finland
2. National recommendations for increasing international mobility in higher education
 - a) Background
 - b) Final recommendations
 - c) Latest developments nationally
3. JYU's approach in adopting the recommendations
4. Group discussion to hear your thoughts about the recommendations

Background to the situation in Finland



- Already before COVID-pandemic the numbers of long-term outgoing mobilities in higher education had been decreasing for several years in Finland (approx. by 25% during 2016-2019)
- COVID stopped the mobilities for a while
- By today the numbers, especially at universities, have returned to the pre-pandemic levels, but are still behind the peak years of international mobility
- Some reasons behind the decline:
 - Difficulties (perceived?) to include the mobility into the curriculum/study plan
 - Requirements for graduating quickly have increased
 - Many students are working to finance their studies and living
 - Not adequate information on the costs of mobilities
 - Academic staff do not have enough information on the mobility options

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PERIODS OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS FROM AND TO FINLAND 2017-2025



Source: Vipunen

Longer mobilities abroad (3 months or more)

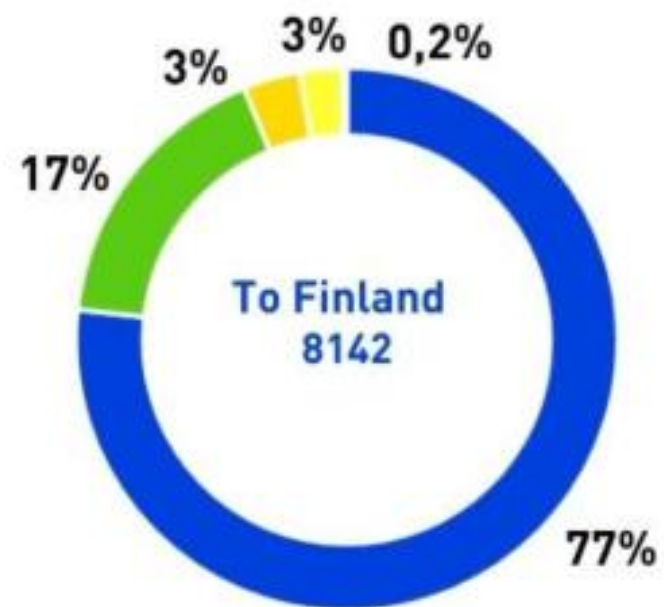


Shorter mobilities (under 3 months)



INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PERIODS OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS 2025

Mobility programmes (periods lasting over 3 months)



INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PERIODS OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN 2025

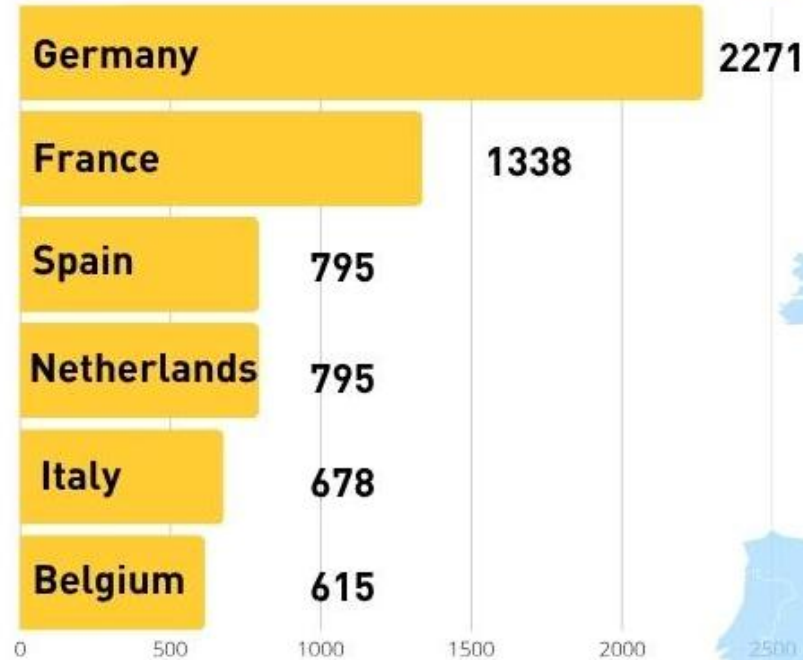


FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

Top 6 destination countries
(periods lasting over and under 3 months)



Top 6 sending countries
(periods lasting over and under 3 months)



Women are more active
in international mobility

Proportion of
women, outgoing **63%**

Proportion of
women, incoming **57%**



Source: Vipunen

Discussion 1:

What is the current situation in your institution and/or country?

Are students utilising international mobility possibilities?

Are the mobility numbers increasing or decreasing?

Are the outgoing and incoming in balance?

National recommendations for increasing international mobility in higher education

Can be found online at: <https://www.oph.fi/en/news/2025/new-recommendations-boost-student-mobility-higher-education>

Recommendations for Increasing International Mobility in Higher Education – WHY?



- Since 2024, a working group led by the Ministry of Education and Culture has analysed trends in European higher education and identified development needs for Finnish institutions.
- One key area for development is student mobility in higher education. According to an EU Council recommendation, at least 23% of graduates should have a study period abroad as part of their degree.
- International competence is an essential working-life skill, but although mobility has recovered after COVID-19, participation—especially in long-term exchanges—has declined.
- The emphasis on internationalization in Finnish HEIs had moved to attracting international degree students – the importance and benefits of outgoing mobility periods had been “forgotten”
- In 2025, higher education institutions, together with stakeholders in the higher education sector, prepared **eight recommendations to increase the international competence and mobility of higher education students.**

Recommendations for Increasing International Mobility in Higher Education – HOW?



- An operational programme that assigns **responsibilities** for achieving the objectives to both higher education institutions and national actors.
- The Finnish National Agency for Education will support the internationalisation measures of higher education institutions by further strengthening the **common knowledge base** on international student mobility.
- The working group recommends setting **clear targets** to promote student mobility and monitoring their progress by field of education.
- Higher education institutions should employ a **variety of means** to achieve their targets and communicate the importance of internationalisation.
- **Management and staff** should commit to promoting mobility.
- **Funding** should be secured through Erasmus+, exchange programmes and higher education institutions' own resources.

National
recommendations
to enhance
international
competence and
mobility among
higher education
students:

1. Set a **growth target** to increase mobility from the current level. Targets and measures can be defined by field of study.
2. **Monitor the development** of mobility volumes as part of the follow-up of HEI's performance agreements (with Ministry of Education), in connection with the already established objective to "promote diverse student and trainee mobility while taking into account different student profiles."
3. Ensure that the measures to increase mobility are widely known. Select the measures best suited to the **institutional and disciplinary context** and ensure adequate resourcing.

National recommendations to enhance international competence and mobility among higher education students:

4. Ensure the commitment of **higher education leadership** to promoting international competence and mobility.

5. Ensure that **academic fields and staff** in higher education institutions commit to advancing internationalisation. This should be reflected **in curricula both in terms of structure and content, and seamless recognition** of studies must be ensured. Enhance the international competence of higher education staff, taking into account institution- and discipline-specific needs. Commit to systematic guidance and encouragement of students from the very beginning of their studies.

National
recommendations
to enhance
international
competence and
mobility among
higher education
students:

6. **Communicate consistently** about the importance of international competence in society and working life.

7. **Develop the administration of the Erasmus+ programme and other funding programmes**, as well as shared digital solutions supporting mobility, to be more user-friendly and functional. **Safeguard funding** for student mobility through EU programmes, other exchange schemes, and institutional co-funding.

8. Increase knowledge and understanding of the **impact and benefits of short-term and/or blended mobility** periods for the development of international competence.

National developments on the topic in 2026

National discussions in spring 2026



- Finnish HEIs have gathered for two events in spring 2026
 - Erasmus coordinators' meeting in April
 - Spring Forum for Higher Education International Affairs in May
 - In these events we usually share quite openly the situation and good practices at HEIs
- Update on how the HEIs have started to work on the recommendations:
 - Some have moved forward and have some concrete actions already, some have not started yet
 - Important aspects raised in the discussions:
 - Difficulty for international coordinators to get into curriculum development processes
 - How to have enough funding for increasing mobility numbers?
 - HEI management needs to commit to the work and communicate it to the staff
 - The targets need to be set into the funding agreement between the HEI and the ministry + extra funding for exceeding the target numbers
- The Finnish Erasmus National Agency (EDUFI) is taking information forward from these discussions to the European Commission and the Finnish Ministry of Education

Recommendation nr 6: Communication > National student mobility ambassadors



- The Finnish Erasmus National Agency (EDUFI) launched a new initiative for national student mobility ambassadors in spring 2026
- 10 HEI students from all over Finland were selected, one of them from JYU
- They are outgoing exchange students that represent different exchange destinations, fewer opportunities, green travel, different nationalities
- They share their experiences during their mobility period in different social media channels > HEIs can utilise this material in their own marketing and channels

Recommendation nr 8: Knowledge and understanding on short-term mobilities > National study



- In 2026 the Finnish Erasmus National Agency (EDUFI) conducted a study on the scope, benefits and impact of short-term mobilities (5 days – 1 month)
- Main findings:
 - Students are more and more interested in short-term mobility options
 - The content of the mobility is one of the main interests
 - A possibility to try internationalisation in a "safe" way
 - A stepping stone for longer mobilities for some
 - The only option for some students (because of personal situation)

Students reported that they

- **Developed cultural learning and interpersonal skills**
- **Improved abilities to work in teams and deal with challenging situations**
- **Learnt to organise and plan their own learning**

This needs to be studied more!

Discussion 2

- Is there a shift towards short-term mobilities in your institution/country?
- How do you see that benefits of short-term vs. long-term mobilities?





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The work done at JYU on the recommendations

Auli Pitkänen

Team Leader

JYU International Office

How have we started working on the recommendations?



- Two internationalisation teams formed a working group (7 members) in early 2026, including several subgroups:
 - **Curriculum (OPS) group** (+ strategy group):
 - focuses on integrating internationalisation into the newly launched curriculum work,
 - monitoring national development on the issue
 - **Data group:**
 - collects mobility statistics by faculty and programme and
 - prepares a survey on barriers to student mobility (previous survey from 2019).
 - **Question framework group:**
 - develops a ready-made set of questions to support faculty-level discussions on targets for international competence and mobility, and their integration into curriculum work;
 - results will be taken to faculty development groups and the broader curriculum process in autumn 2026.

Roles and tools for increasing students' international competence at JYU



Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication

- **Internationalisation plan:** In each degree programme, students are expected to create a plan for developing their own international competences.
 - The formats vary across faculties and programmes.
 - The plan includes students' own reflection and articulation of their skills and development needs, in relation to their studies and working life.
- MOVI offers language and communication studies, as well as broader multilingual and intercultural communication competence courses

Internationalisation teams at Student and Academic Services

- Student mobilities
 - Short and long-term
 - Blended Intensive Programmes
- Traineeships
- FORTHEM alliance activities
- Internationalisation at Home, e.g.
 - Tutoring of international students
 - Local Friendship Programme
 - Summer Schools

We need to work in cooperation between these two actors in curriculum development and strategy work, so that we are able to develop them together into the same direction

Questions at this point?





Discussion 3 – in groups

- Take a look at the recommendations
- How do you see them?
 - Do they sound applicable and feasible?
 - Would they work at your institution / country as well?
 - What should be taken into consideration when implementing them?
 - Is something missing?
- Write down your comments in the document and we will discuss them together