



Erasmus Student Network

“Reaching Out: Universities & Societal Challenges in the City” by UNICA & the City

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Tackling societal challenges through internationalisation

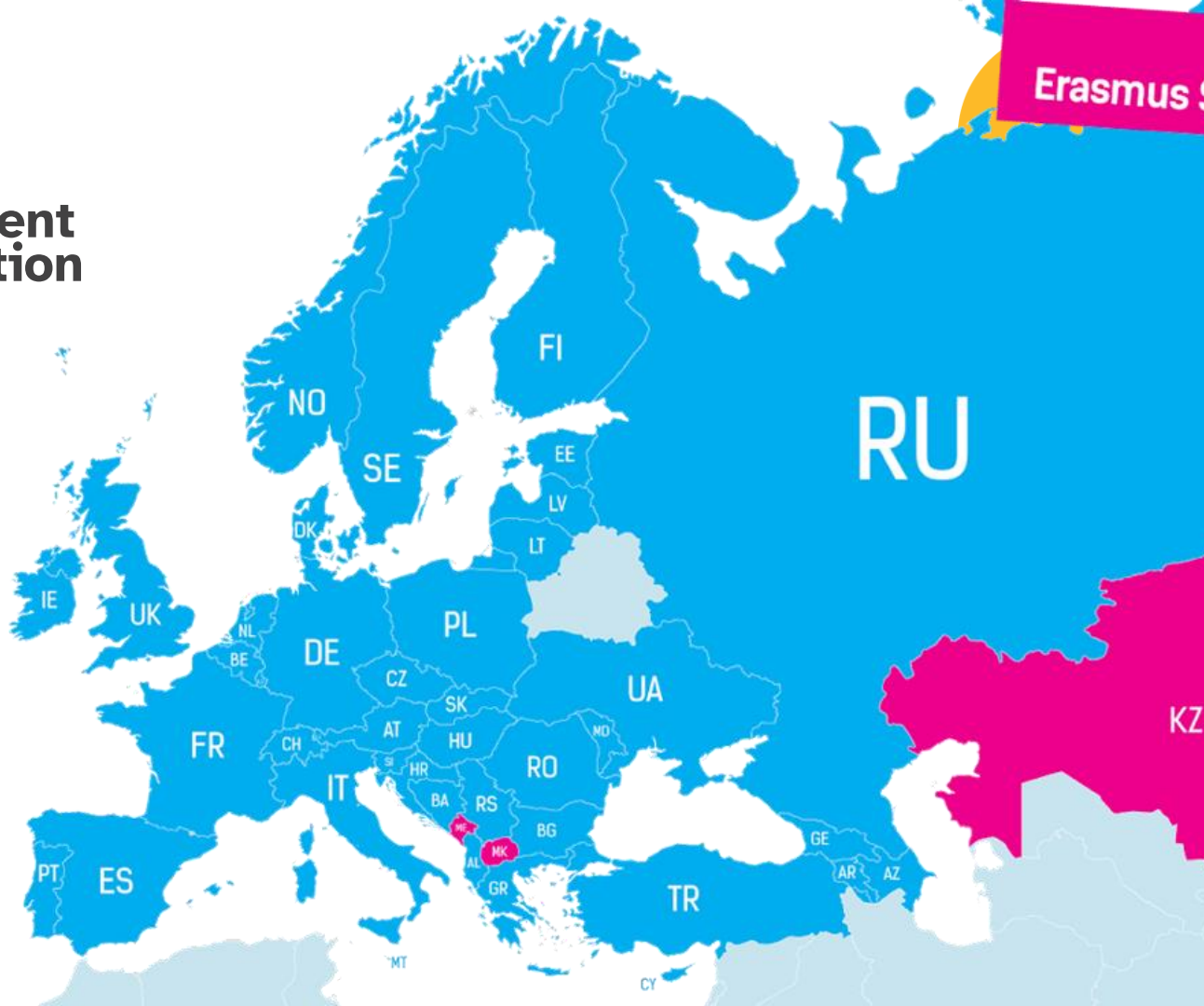
The experience of the Erasmus Student Network



Key international **student and alumni organisation** working towards **enrichment** of society through **international student mobility**.

Active in **41** Countries
517 local organisations
connected to **+1000 HEI**

15.000 volunteers
350.000 students



Pillars of our activity



Student Support and engagement

ESN sections usually run or support the organisation of Buddysystems, they organise welcome weeks and weekly cultural, social and volunteering activities. They also have a guidance and coaching role in aspects such as accommodation, administrative procedures or day-to-day issues encountered. **This support is especially important in the case of students from fewer opportunities backgrounds and special needs.**

Outreach and promotion

ESN sections connect international students with local communities. The **promotion of mobility opportunities, especially among students with fewer opportunities** is a core part of our work at all levels, together with awareness raising on the benefit of these opportunities. Through initiatives such as Erasmus in Schools, we reach out to thousands of young people. In many cases, our local associations are the first point of contact to provide useful information on mobility.

Reintegration

The Erasmus Student Network is a unique community of more than 15.000 members that feel a strong sense of belonging to the organisation and our values of Unity in Diversity and intercultural understanding. We provide a space for networking, personal development and interaction with like-minded people.



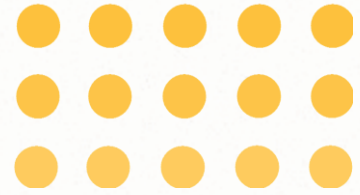
Internationalisation of Higher Education



“the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to **enhance the quality of education** and research for **all students** and staff, **and to make a meaningful contribution to society**”.

ESN considers that when the meaningful contribution to society is prioritised, the quality of education increases





The enrichment of society through international student mobility

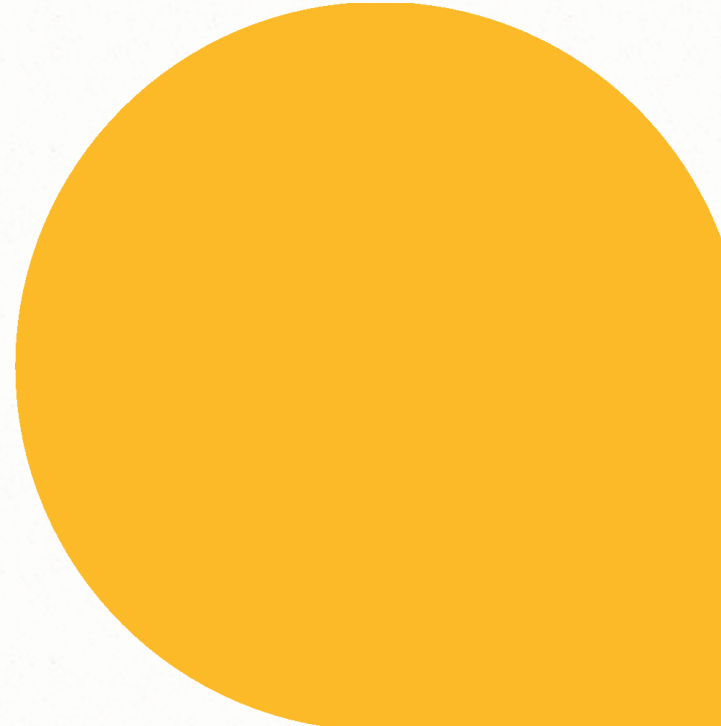
How do we make sure that communities also benefit from international student mobility, the most successful internationalisation activity?



Internationalisation for all

We believe that international activities can be planned in a way that benefits society as a whole, and not only those who take part as direct participants

This approach is also built under the premise through engagement with communities, internationalisation will become more inclusive



The elephant in the room

international students don't always manage to integrate in local society



Data: ESN Survey

Expectations vs reality when it comes to making new friends

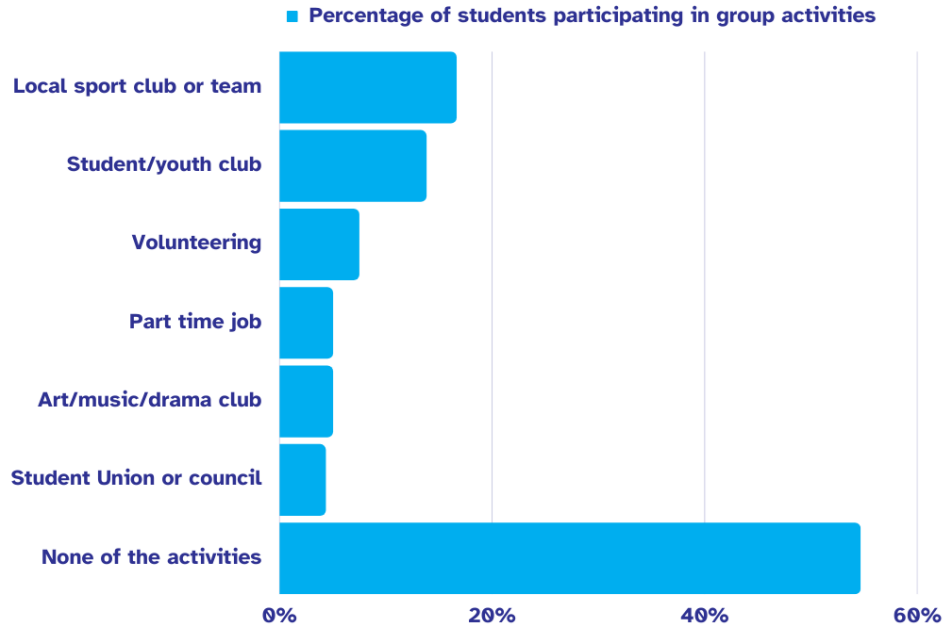


Data: ESN Survey

Internationals and locals report barriers interacting with other, reducing the “internationalisation at home” potential of incoming student mobility

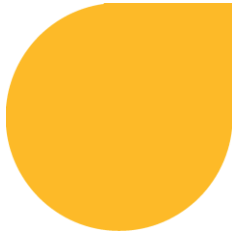
Engagement can not be taken for granted

For years, we have seen that international students struggle to engage with local communities if there are no proper systems in place to facilitate that engagement.

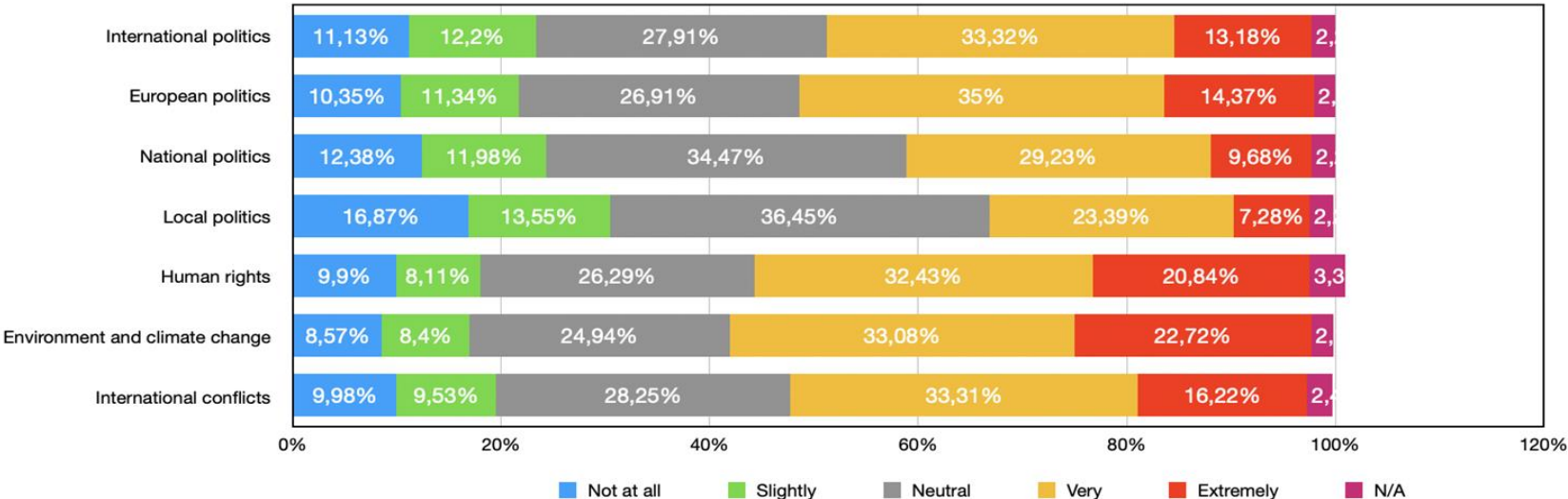


Data: ESN Survey

Upbeat news: we can create global citizens through mobility



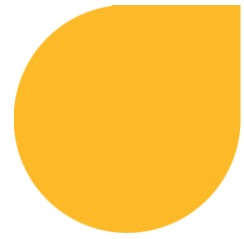
How impactful was your mobility on your interest in the following topics?



Interest in pressing global issues increases thanks to mobility - but clear connections with realities of hosting communities should be prioritised

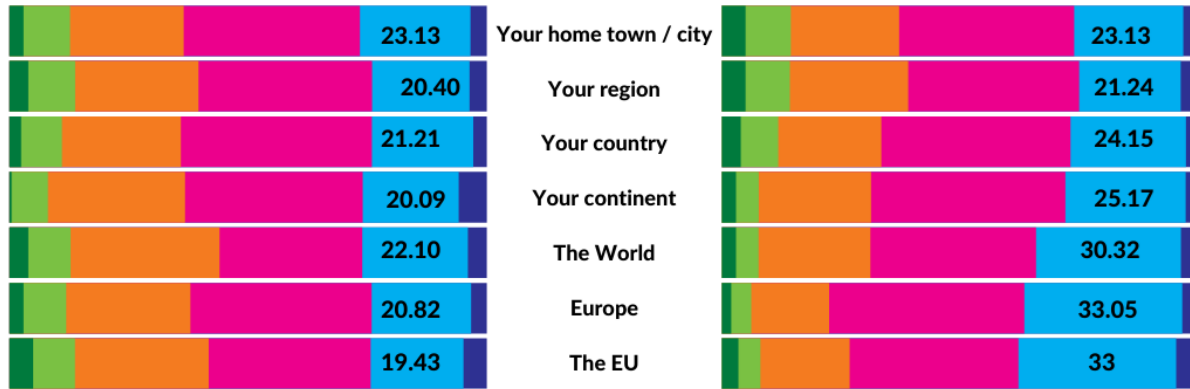


Developing multi layered identities through internationalisation



Before

After

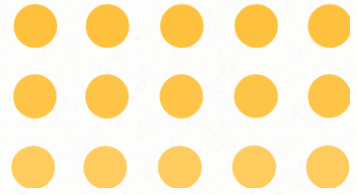


Not at all Slightly Neutral / unsure Very Extremely N/A

Student mobility can bring global issues closer to the students - but enough attention should be dedicated to connect them to local realities

Identification before and after mobility - ESN Survey 2021





Interaction with local communities should be at the heart of the international experience

Community engagement activities are the best way to ensure this happens in a impactful way.



Even if HEIs recognise the importance of engagement, this is not translated into systemic changes in the structure of student mobility

Recognition of the experience is needed to ensure that students who are not



Community-engaged learning

A large yellow semi-circle is positioned in the top right corner of the slide, partially overlapping a dark blue vertical bar that runs down the right edge.

An Educational framework is needed to support community engaged learning and ensure recognition of learning outcomes.

Frameworks need to plan the involvement of stakeholders and give the students and student organisations a leading role - connecting it with related topics such as citizen science.



Community service-learning

Community Service-learning is an innovative pedagogical approach that integrates **meaningful community service or engagement** into the curriculum and offers students **academic credit** for the learning that derives from **active engagement** and work on a **real world problem**.

Europe Engage, 2015-2017
(Aramburuzabala P., McIlrath L., et al., 2016).

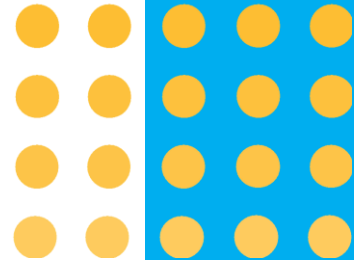


ESN and the SocialErasmus project aims to apply this in an **international setting**.



SocialErasmus

**Community engagement and
volunteering for students on
exchange, by students**



SocialErasmus+

2017-2019

Erasmus+ project focusing on improving integration through volunteer activities for students on exchange (SocialErasmus, 2009), with a specific focus and piloting through Erasmus in Schools visits.



Better integration of exchange students in local society, and teach exchange students the local values. Spread intercultural understanding and knowledge of Erasmus at a younger age.



Improve the implementation process of volunteer activities by collaboration across education & youth sector.



introducing an educational framework for recognition of community engagement and voluntary activities in Higher Education



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

1.292

SocialErasmus
activities

86.034

people involved

2.526

ESN volunteers

18.574

international students

Volunteering on Exchange

262

Erasmus in
Schools visits

10.442

local school students

438

ESN volunteers

1.324

international students

Implementation numbers of Academic year 2018-2019

The initial SocialErasmus+ campaign paved the way for yearly initiatives

Activities for the Erasmus Generation

Actions & Activities

The Erasmus Generation actively engages with its local community through a variety of initiatives and activities, enriching society by connecting international exchange students with their local host communities. Erasmus students take part in local activities organised by ESN volunteers with a focus on 6 different focus areas: education & youth, social inclusion, culture, health & well-being, environmental sustainability and skills & employability. On this page, you can find an overview of the latest activities taking place.

Causes



14173

ACTIVITIES

1342

ORGANISATIONS

1458

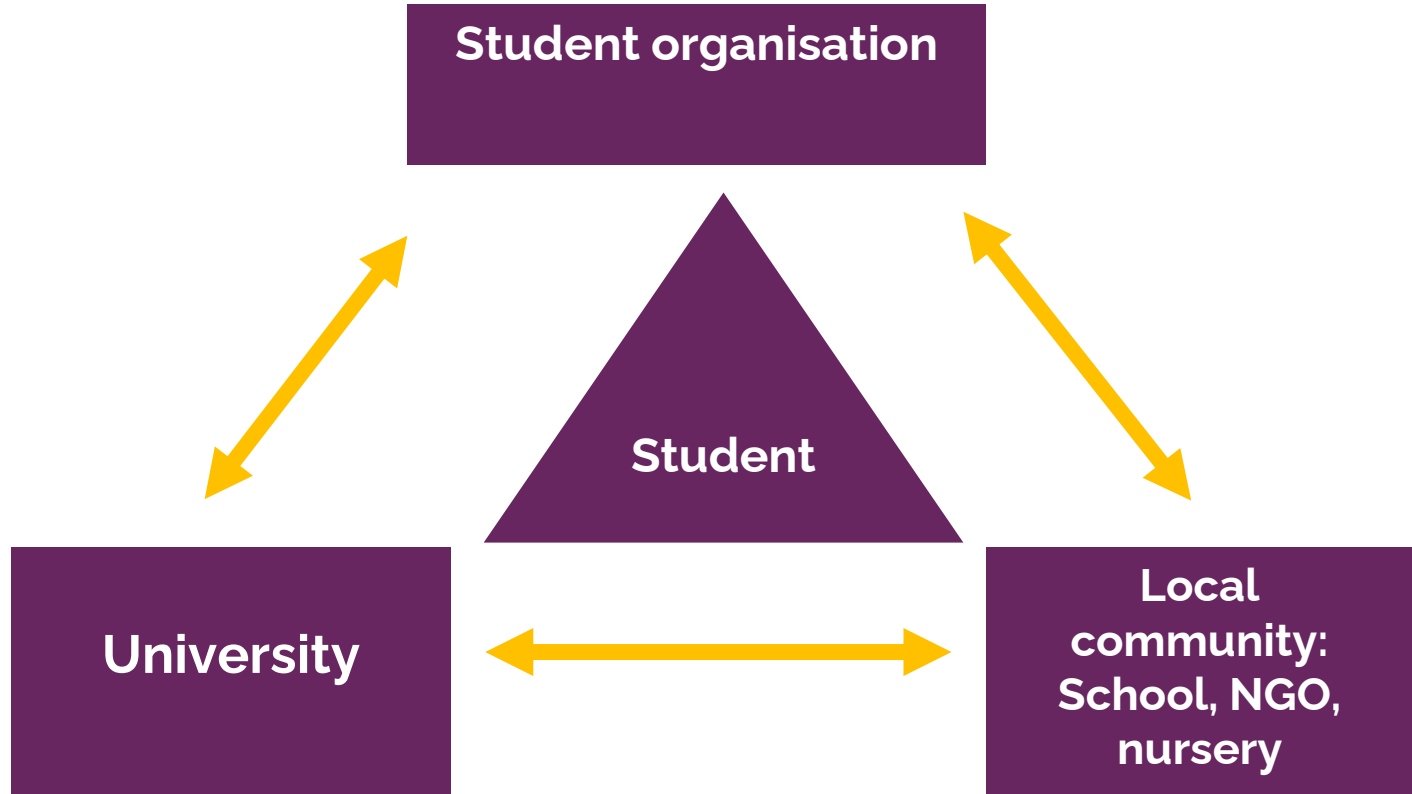
CITIES

709125

PARTICIPANTS

Through activities.esn.org, ESN int is able to conduct social impact measurement of all local initiatives done by sections

A process that involves all actors



Focus on:

- **Meaningful benefit for local communities:** language learning, intercultural dimension, useful support, awareness of local challenges and global ramifications.
- **Co-creation with students and local actors:** mechanism to empower the students and their representatives, outreach to society.
- **Institutional support:** recognition systems, connection with research, impact measurement.

ESN Besancon & University de Franche Comte

Center of Applied Linguistics

Focus on French language learning, intercultural awareness & social inclusion

Course Set-Up

25h of volunteering:

3 – 4 activities / week

Preparation of the sessions

Intake & Debriefing Meetings

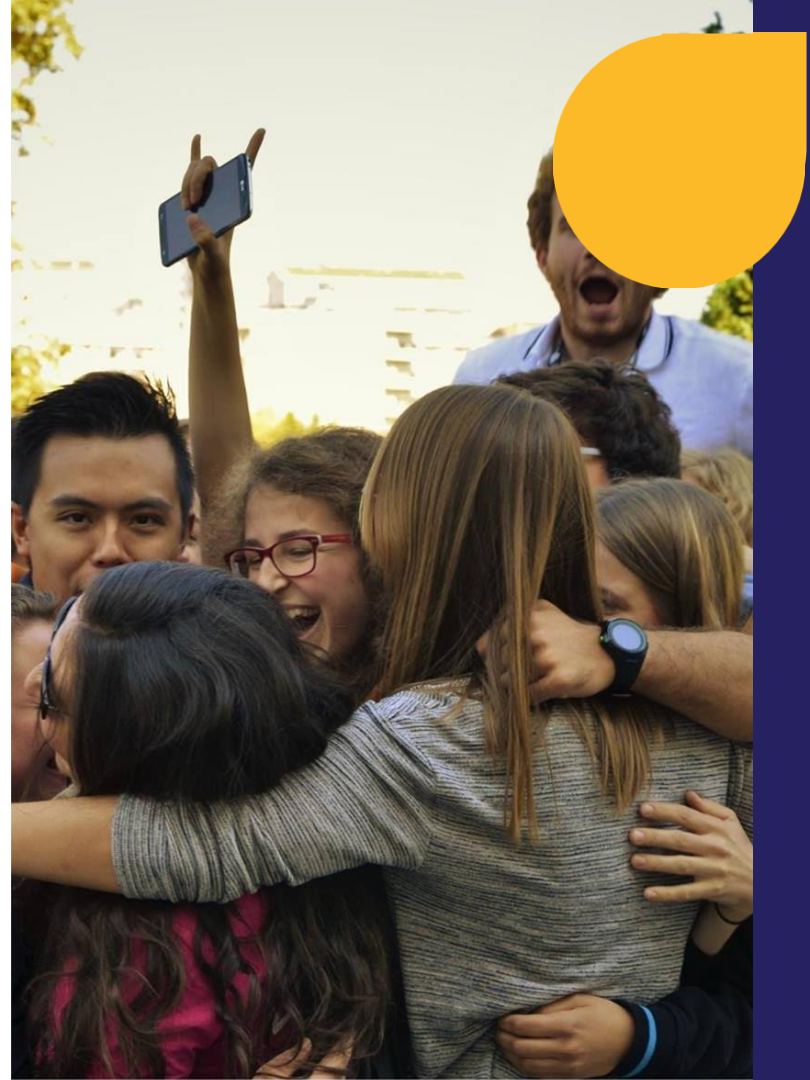
Evaluation: Presentation and Interview



ESN Besancon & University de Franche Comte

Recognition

- Elective Course
- 3 ECTS credits
- Diploma supplement
- Close Cooperation
 - University has an Academic Responsible
 - ESN Activity coordination
 - 1 full time employee
 - 2-3 volunteers per activity



Why are international student networks important?



- Networks create the **space for mutual learning** processes, bottom up initiatives and coordinated efforts.
- Initiatives can be tested at the local level, further developed at the national level and then expanded to an international context.
- Having a **common direction allows for coordinated impact**, but space for adaptation to local context is key.
- Encourage your students to connect across borders!



Key points

- Prioritise needs and benefits for the community and adapt pressing global issues to local context.
- Think about the connection with research
- Students and their representatives leading processes.
- Involve community actors in the design and implementation.
- Put recognition at the centre to reach beyond usual suspects.
- Promote the international dimension of local student activities through networks





Erasmus Student Network

Thank you so much!

Juan Rayón González

**President of the Erasmus
Student Network**

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