



Regional Networks for Quality in Vocational Mobility
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Intellectual Output 1

Research Study Report

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1. Introduction

The REMO project aims to foster regional exchange and improve the quality of mobility for vocational education and training (VET) learners. Thereby the cooperation between vocational education and training and the world of work will be supported and the transparency of skills and competences is put an emphasis on.

In order to achieve the set aims, an online platform and a network will be developed allowing everyone involved in vocational education and training to be informed, to inform as well as to connect and interact with each other concerning the planning and implementation of mobility actions. This includes both, learning as well as working mobility of VET learners. For VET learners, VET organisations and the world of work the online platform will support the planning, organisation and implementation of VET mobility. By providing a legal structure that is able to maintain and support the objectives reached during the project duration, the REMO network will be installed which ensures a sustainable structure for long-term cooperation between the participating organisations.

Targeting the quality of mobility actions, ISO 9001 coherent process descriptions will be developed based on the principles of the European Charta for Quality in Mobility¹, as well taking into account requirements of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

As the first core intellectual output of the REMO project, the research study was conducted on the basis of prior investigations by partner institutions in order to allow a detailed analysis of requirements and needs of the different main target groups of the project, initial VET learners, HR managers and VET organisations. Related to the mobility online platform, the network building as well as to the process descriptions considering the European Charta for Quality in Mobility and ECVET requirements, research instruments were developed. During the research phase, members of all three target groups in all six partner countries, including Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovenia, were then asked and invited to contribute with their opinions and ideas. In addition, also external stakeholders got questioned in order to have an as broad as possible support.

¹ Recommendation (EC) No [2006/961](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: [European Quality Charter for Mobility](#) [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006].

The research study report comprises results from interviews done with VET learners and HR managers respectively persons responsible for mobility in VET schools as well as from questionnaires for sending and hosting organisations and external stakeholders. Summarised results will then lead to the conclusions drawn regarding the further project tasks and intellectual outputs.

2. Methodology

Prior investigations by partner institutions were basis for the conduction of the introductory research for the REMO project. As it is of crucial importance to create products and framework conditions customised for potential users best possible, representatives from all target groups that are being addressed were involved in the survey. Data collection took place in spring 2015 in Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovenia. Following, an overview of the sample included as well as the research instruments used is given.

2.1 Sample

In favour of having a broad basis included in the introductory research, all different target groups were questioned about mobility actions, the online platform as well as the network structure. With Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovenia, all six partner countries identified and contacted target group representatives, each aiming to implement research and gather results from

- 3 HR managers or persons responsible for mobility in VET schools,
- 5 initial VET learners,
- 30 sending and hosting organisations and
- 40 external stakeholders.

As these numbers could be achieved by all partners with also even some more contributions of the REMO target group representatives, this introductory research report is based on data collected from a total of

- 21 HR managers or persons responsible for mobility in VET schools,
- 38 initial VET learners,
- 183 sending and hosting organisations and
- 240 external stakeholders.

2.2 Research Instruments

For each target group, an adjusted research instrument was elaborated in order to address the specific needs and being able to include all perspectives best possible for the further project work and development of outputs. The four generated research instruments include

- interview guidelines for HR managers or persons responsible for mobility in VET schools,
- interview guidelines for VET learners,
- questionnaires for sending and hosting organisations and
- questionnaires for external stakeholders.

All developed instruments for the REMO target groups propose a similar structure in favour of having a good basis to bring together results from different target groups on the one hand and to be able to profit as much as possible when it comes to the development of the REMO products on the other one. Comprising mobility actions, the online platform as well as the network, all important issues for the further project work were addressed in the research instruments. As important input for the process descriptions for mobility actions, questions were included to profit from the experiences, views and needs in respect to working and learning mobility to be able to provide suitable and useful information. Also in respect to regional dimensions questions were included. Concerning the online platform, the target groups were consulted on their opinion on important features and shared content. As the network is developed in favour of a sustainable structure, this issue was as well referred to within the research implementation. Whereas the questionnaires allowed a large involvement and on the point consultation, the interview guidelines enabled an into depth asking for explanations, opinions, reasons and additional ideas. Combining those two approaches with the perspectives of the four target groups, a detailed picture could be gathered for the further work on the REMO products.

After a pre-test of each of the four research instruments, translations into all of the different partner languages were conducted in order to enable a clearly comprehensible access for the data collection. The research instruments conducted in English as the common basis can be found in the Annex attached to this report.

3. Research Results

The following section is dedicated to the results of the REMO introductory research survey. Focusing on the separate target groups, outlining national aspects and specifics, one chapter each provides a detailed insight into the data collected. Taking into account all perspectives on the issues having an influence on the development of the REMO products, a summarising chapter will allow conclusions to be drawn.

3.1 VET Learners

With each eight learners in initial VET interviewed in Romania and Slovenia, seven in Hungary and five in Austria, Croatia and Italy, a total of 38 individuals were interviewed by the REMO consortium. Taking time for between 10 and 50 minutes, learners in initial VET shared their perspectives and opinions. Having a focus on national outlines and recommendations as well, summarised and analysed research results are presented in this chapter.

3.1.1 General Information

Going more into detail about the sample of the interviews, the following broad variety of branches were represented by the questioned VET learners:

- 10 food industry
- 8 office administration
- 3 economy
- 2 retail sale
- 2 car mechanics
- 2 agriculture
- 2 chef
- 1 butcher
- 1 banker
- 1 mechanical engineering
- 1 electrical engineering
- 1 electro mechanics

- 1 computer specialist
- 1 visual arts and design
- 1 cosmetics
- 1 carpenter.

The range of the year of vocational education and training VET learners are in is spread, with indications of

- 12 being in their first year,
- 2 being in their second year,
- 15 being in their third year and
- 9 being in their fourth year of their professional training.

3.1.2 Mobility

The majority of VET learners have not heard about the **possibility of a mobility stay**, with about two thirds indicating. Being informed from schools mainly, only three got the information from the company and one from a friend. Questioning if they have **already been on a mobility stay**, a bit less than one third of interviewees stated that they did and one wants to do it.

When it comes to the knowledge about the existence of **ECVET instruments** the picture is very similar. About two thirds indicate to have never heard about them, five stated that it sounds familiar to them. With just two VET learners who have been on a mobility stay, using a personal learning diary only, all others did use at least one of the European Quality instruments. Whereas two of them cannot remember which, eight of them got the Europass Mobility, five a Learning Agreement and one a Europass Language Passport. The vast majority of interviewees that have been on a mobility action did not receive any **credit points**, with two adding that they got grades from their teachers and one that the mobility action was recognised.

The information VET learners find interesting and important **before going on a mobility stay** cover accommodation, information about the country with a focus on living there and general information about the organisation as the strongest factors. Also information about travelling, bureaucratic aspects in the country, the salary and languages spoken in the organisation are of great interest. Interviewees also want to know what they gain and can profit from when going on a mobility stay, the duration of the

programme, the activities and offers in the host country and organisation. A contact person, also being available in case of any troubles and a language preparation is important for VET learners. Clarifying what happens in case wanting to stop and quit the mobility stay earlier as planned finds interest as well as receiving a work contract. **Worries and concerns** about going abroad are very often connected to language issues and communication problems, even though there are some exceptions. Also being alone and lost somewhere abroad, managing life, financial problems and accommodation issues VET learners are concerned about. The question of how people in the organisation are, if finding a connection and issues concerning the work contract trigger concerns among interviewees alike.

The support interviewees unexceptionally wish to have **during the mobility action** on-site includes a direct responsible contact person in the host country, who is available in case of questions or emergencies with a few underlining that somebody to accompany them during especially the first days would be great. Half of VET learners would also like to have support concerning the accommodation, others a guarantee that their job is safe and that they get regular salary. One third would also welcome to have contact possibilities to peers so to enable finding friends they can spend time with during their stay at their age.

When **coming back** again, VET learners want that their stay abroad is somehow confirmed, also including some kind of validation connected to the experiences made as well as skills and knowledge gained during the mobility action. Being able to continue with the vocational education and training without any problems or delays was mentioned as important alike.

3.1.3 Online Platform

Concerning **features and functionalities** of the online platform, interviewees in general underline that it needs to be user friendly and simple to understand enabling a practical quick use. A search option is definitely desired with VET learners high lightening that the most important issues for them connected are languages spoken in the organisation, the country, concrete institutions and companies as well as the branch and exact job they offer a mobility action for. Except for one VET learner only who does not have a preference, all others agree that the online platform needs to be accessible threw a mobile phone as well as on a tablet computer alike with some underlining that this is state of the art and especially often used to check information.

The **information provided** on the online platform should include some general information about the country and the place the organisation is located, taking into account exchange rates, price level as well as the surrounding and activities that are possible to do there during leisure time. General information about the company referring to the branch, what they produce and if they already hosted VET learners are from interest alike. Also important are the languages that are spoken there and contact details to a responsible person as well as some information concerning the accommodation. VET learners themselves would like to provide some general information about them, being able to upload their CV and having some space for indicating what they are interested in and would like to work. About half of them also asking for experiences of others who have already been on a mobility stay, the question whether they would want to have access to **testimonials or case descriptions** is positively answered by the vast majority of learners, with two indicating that this would help to find courage for those being insecure, another one seeing the advantage to be prepared for problems that might arise. Keeping the text short or having a short video of cases would be preferred. Whereas only two would not want testimonials in order to avoid influences as every mobility stay is different anyway, seven do not have a clear preference.

About two third would **put information about themselves on the platform**, underlining that public access should be very limited or not possible at all. Visible in a safe login area could be basic information including contact details as well as their motivation for wanting to go for a mobility stay. More than two thirds would be willing to **test the platform** and give feedback on it, with some wanting to focus on those parts available in their native language. Whereas one not being sure about it, only three VET learners would not put the platform to the test with two of them indicating that they would not need it anymore.

Additionally remarked by VET learners is that they really like the idea with the platform as it would be a good help for going on mobility actions. As well highlighted is that the structure of the platform should permit all languages, not English only and include photos for giving a better impression. A contact person or hotline in case of problems coming up would be nice to include on the platform also.

3.1.4 Network

Questioning **the interest to join the network**, more than half of interviewees answered affirmatively, some adding that if it is about registering for data security to consider it as well. With two not being sure about it, eight VET learners are not interested in joining the network.

Good reasons interviewees name to motivate them for joining are data security connected to a restricted and safe area on the online platform. Going on mobility, making friends and seeing other organisations abroad, also having easier access to information and many contact possibilities are mentioned alike. Seven learners state to not find any good one as at their organisation, there is always a mediator and so no need to do anything themselves on a platform.

Asking if they would be willing to **share their experiences** and offer help after they have been on a mobility stay, apart from eight refusing and one not being sure, all others consider this with some underlining that they would like pass on the support they received as well, share their great experience during they have learned a lot and their conclusion to recommend it to anyone.

3.1.5 National Outline and Recommendations

Out of the five **Austrian** learners in initial VET interviewed, three already experienced a mobility exchange, two of them a working and one a learning mobility. Therefore their perspectives on mobility actions were much enriched by the organisation of their stays abroad. Directly being informed about the possibility of a mobility stay by the organisations sending them only, this completes the picture of the two others who have heard about this chance for the first time during the interviews. However, talking about ECVET instruments, only two have heard about specific ones so far, only one has used one document but does not exactly remember which one. This shows the potential of VET mobility actions on the one hand as well as the need for enhancing transparency.

The major concerns refer to language issues and being left alone without any support. Whereas information for the time before the mobility starts is important regarding accommodation, working/learning environment and life abroad, issues connected to coming back again are from less relevance. On the platform information about the country, detailed information about the working/learning environment including language as well as the exact procedure of the mobility are from interest. A mobile use of it is seen as state of the art. Testimonials are highly recommended in order to reduce insecurities for interested

learners, with all of them open to share their experiences afterwards. The benefit of the network is majorly seen in the context of information access being restricted and not publicly visible.

The VET learners in **Croatia** have never heard about the possibility of mobility and ECVET instruments, Memorandum of understanding, learning agreement, personal transcript, European Skills Passport, European Language Passport or Europass Mobility.

They are worried about how they would manage their life abroad (finances, accommodation, getting around, being away from their families and support during their stay abroad). The interviewees would like to see their mobility experience to be validated, evaluated and recognized in their own country.

For them the platform should contain:

- A possibility to research institutions and companies that offer mobility programmes
- Languages spoken in hosting organizations
- General information about schools and companies
- Personal experiences (good and bad)

For **Hungarian** VET learners, the actual practical information regarding the mobility itself is the most important. At this age they do not consider preparation and especially follow up too important. Therefore this should get special importance on behalf of sending and hosting organisations and parents.

For students the most important aspects are the living, travelling and working features. They would like to get practical info on the journey, accommodation and work details. Preparing them as to self esteem, communication and language is very important.

They do not really understand the meaning and use of the platform and the network, so it might be rather primarily addressing the sending and hosting organizations (teachers, mentors etc). Maybe a chat forum for those who had already been at the mobility and those who would like to go there would be nice, but most probably language barriers will hinder flow of communication.

In **Italy**, the five learners have never participated in mobility actions and do not know anything about credits and recognition. Important for them in case of mobility is to know about the bureaucratic aspect of the hosting country as well as the different cultural aspect of the hosting country to optimize the experience. They would need a referent person that could help them in all practical aspect of the stay abroad and in case of urgent need, a real or virtual tutor to contact in case on line with experience in the hosting country.

About the platform it must be user friendly, containing a lot of resources and information related to the means of transports and their timetables, itineraries and eventually estate agents info, how to move in the city/place, what to do in the free time, etc. and contain a list of countries adhering to the mobility actions, to clarify from the beginning if there will be some job development and possibility, know which kind of training and work are available in a determinate period of time and place, find out an European list of different hosting companies divided into working sector and all possible general aspects in use to help the mobility. Four students would be interested to adhere to the network and five would like to test the platform

Concerning **Romania**, platforms like REMO are very much needed to facilitate the selection process for VET learners before getting involved into mobility actions, as more probably REMO will provide direct access to various hosting organisations in different sectors and allowing intelligent search based on several criteria. Moreover, using REMO platform VET learners will feel highly supported during the mobility process by getting reliable and up to date information about placements, companies and training providers.

Among young people in **Slovenia**, there in general is interest in mobility but they have same concerns. One of the major is referring to language, different culture, different habits etc. The platform should be available in all European languages. All user experiences, both positive and negative should be published on the platform.

3.2 Sending and Hosting Organisations

Except for Hungary with 32 and Austria with 31, out of all other countries data from each 30 representatives from sending and hosting organisations were collected during the survey phase. With a summed up total of 183 people being questioned, perspectives and opinions from all six countries of the project consortium are displayed and analysed in this chapter.

3.2.1 General Information

To get an impression of representatives from what kind of organisations that were giving their feedback threw the questionnaire, they were asked for some general information.

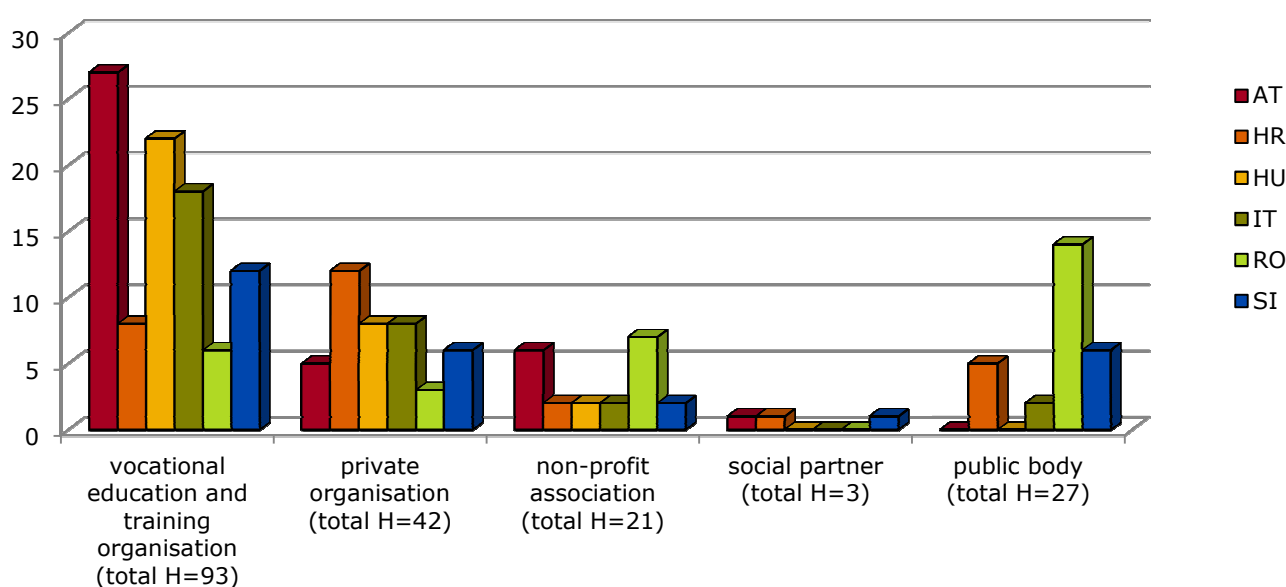


Figure 1 Types of organisations

As can be seen in the chart above most of the questionnaires provided by the partnerships were filled in by vocational education and training organisations (93 in total). Furthermore private organisations (42), non profit organisations (21) and social partner (3) are represented. Public bodies appear with a total frequency of 27 – remarkable is that most of the feedback of public body institutions is provided from Romania.

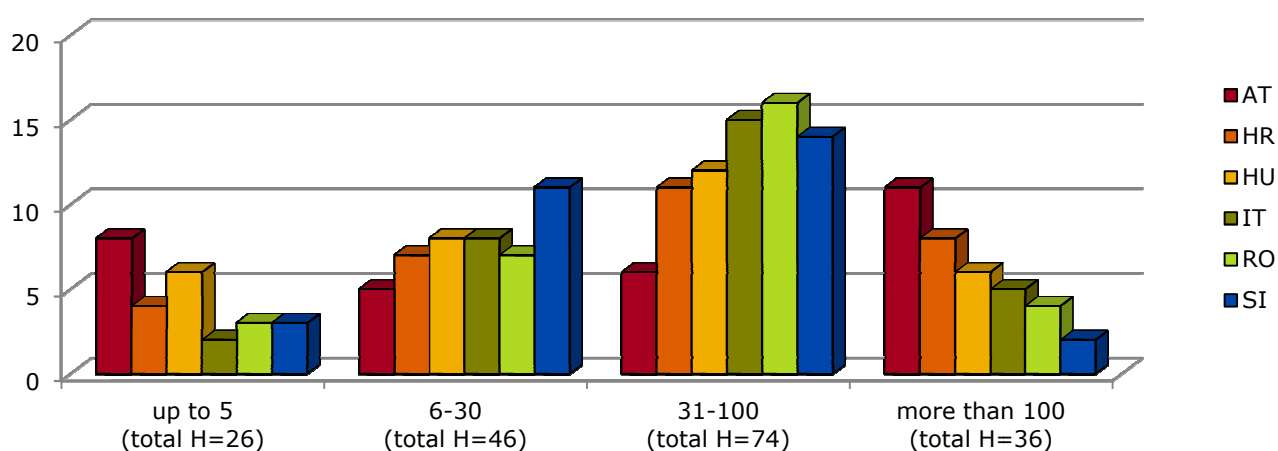


Figure 2 Number of employees at organisations

The chart above reflects the size of the organisations which filled in the questionnaires. On an overall perspective most feedback was provided by people who work in an organization that employs between 31 and 100 people (a total of 74). Representatives of organisations who employ between 6 and 30 people appear with an average frequency of 46, followed by organizations with more than 100 employees. Organizations with no more than 5 employees are represented with an average frequency of 26.

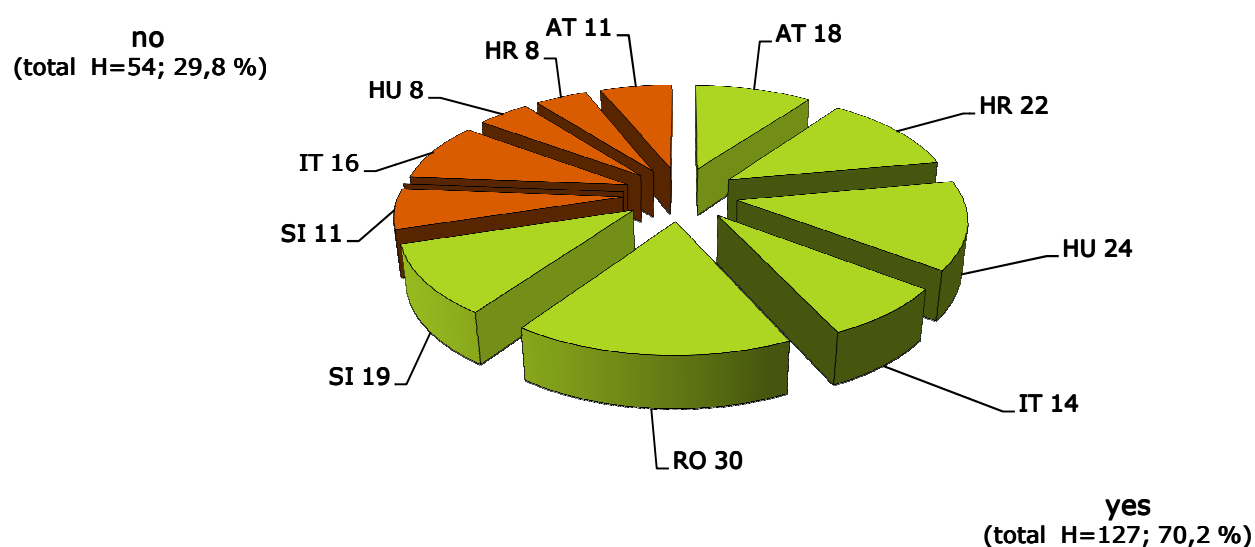


Figure 3 Interregional cooperation beyond the country

Figure 3 shows that out of 181 organisations 70.2 % (a total appearance of 127) do have interregional cooperation beyond their country borders. Therefore representatives of organisations who do not have interregional cooperation are represented with a percentage of 29.8% (54).

To get more detailed information on which countries are included in interregional cooperation you can consult the following figure 4. The horizontal list provides information in which country the data was collected, the vertical list shows the cooperating countries:

		country cooperation is indicated for						Total
		AT	HR	HU	IT	RO	SI	
country of data collection	AT		7	10	13	9	12	51
	HR	11		9	12	4	16	52
	HU	4	6		10	20	4	44
	IT	9	5	7		7	10	38
	RO	6	4	21	9		4	44
	SI	18	16	9	15	4		62
	Total	48	38	56	59	44	46	291

Figure 4 Cooperation to project partner countries

3.2.2 Mobility

Below, representatives of sending and hosting organisations share their assessment concerning the usefulness, importance and experiences in respect to mobility actions as well as what they consider as absolutely necessary connected to the realisation.

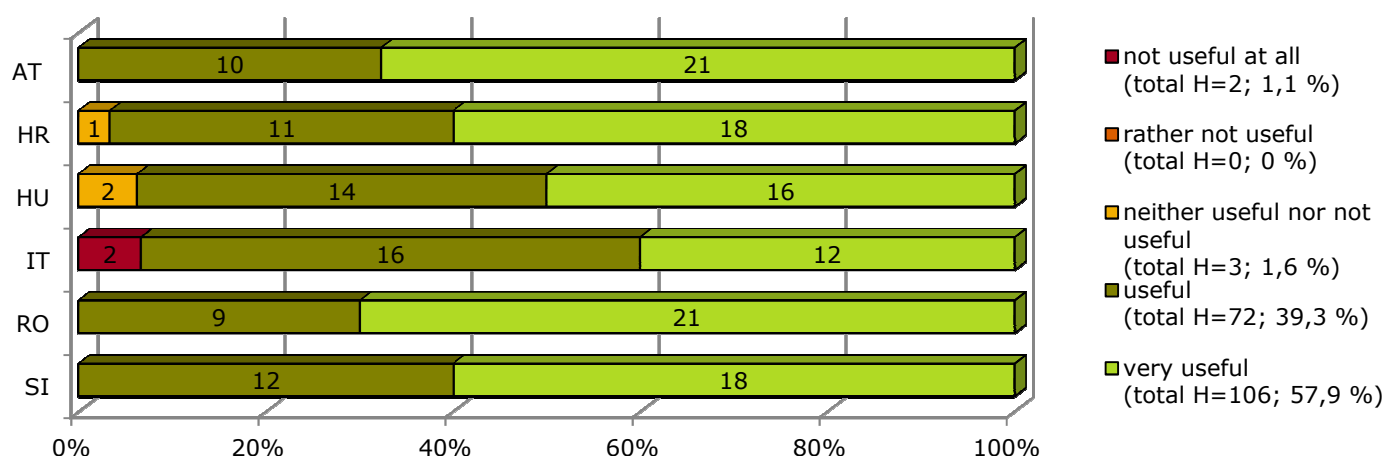


Figure 5 General usefulness of mobility actions

Organisations were asked how they rate the usefulness of mobility activities in general. As it can easily be seen in the figure above organisations assess this instrument with vast majority as very useful to useful. Only a tiny minority of 5 feedbacks consider mobility activities as neither useful nor not useful (3) and not useful at all (2).

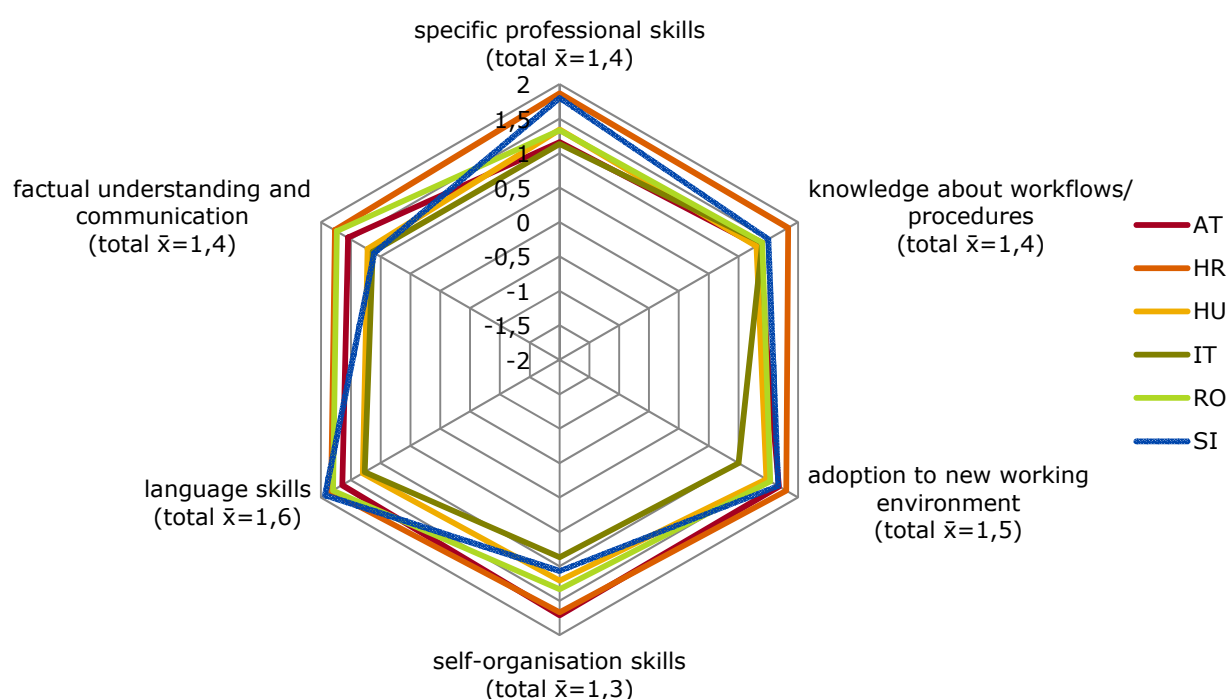


Figure 6 Main competences that can be acquired during mobility

The spider graph above shows that all predefined competences within the questionnaire were rated with a clearly positive average. This means that people absolutely or rather agree that those competences can be acquired during a mobility stay.

Questioned target group representatives in addition consider social competences (8), inter-/multicultural skills (4), communication skills (3), open mindedness and tolerance (3), problem-solving skills (2) as clearly acquirable during mobility actions. Furthermore, ability to work in a team, self confidence, flexibility, formation of opinion and important and more common work life skills were mentioned each once as well.

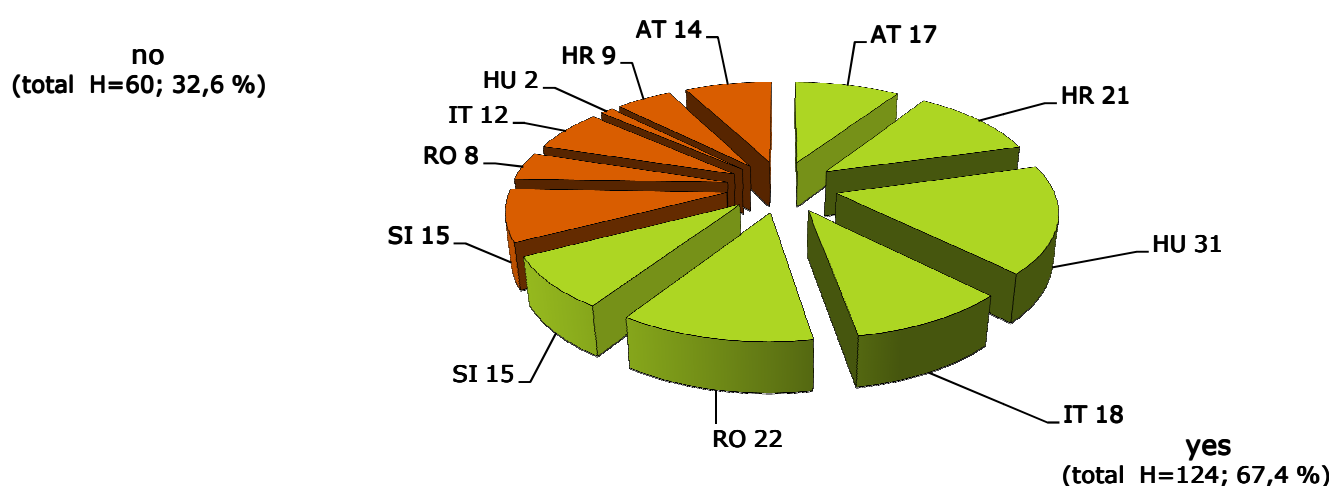


Figure 7 Already established mobility programmes in organisations

Figure 7 shows that with a percentage of 67.4 questioned organisations have already established mobility programmes in their organisations. The different roles and perspectives regarding mobility programmes of the questioned organisations are displayed below.

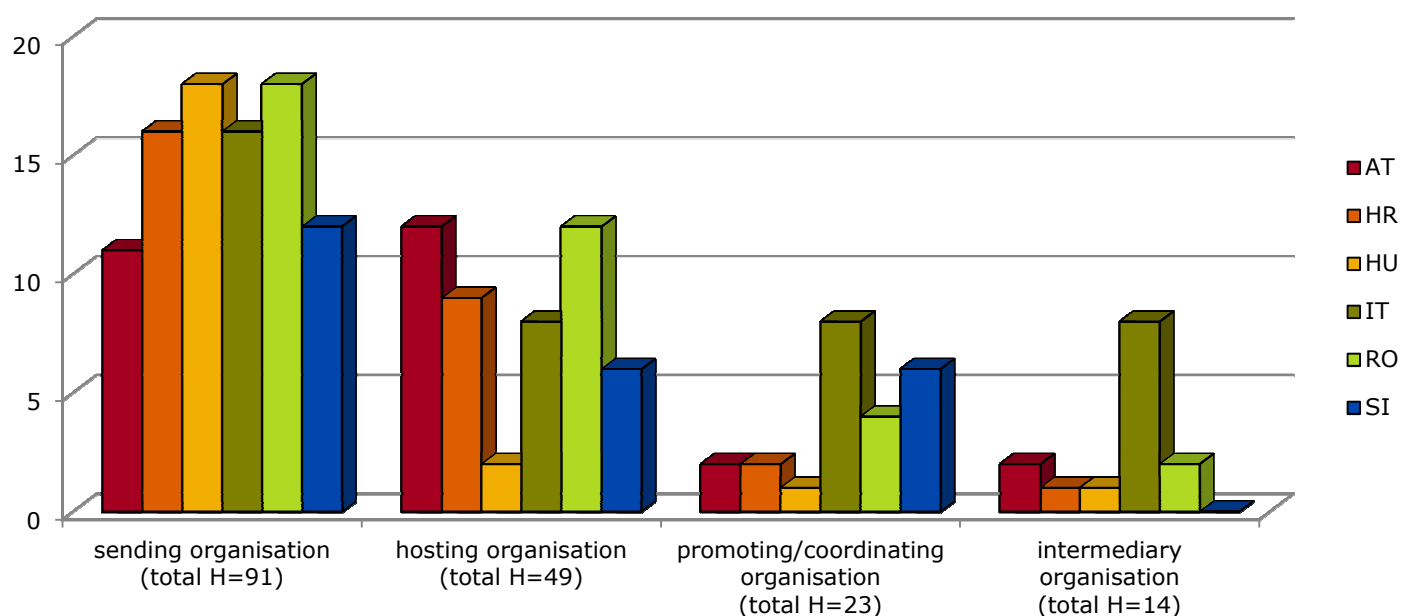


Figure 8 Roles organisations have experiences as with mobility programmes

The majority of the questioned organisations (H=91) experienced themselves as sending organisation, followed by hosting organisation (H=49), promoter or coordinator (H=23) and intermediary organisations (H=14).

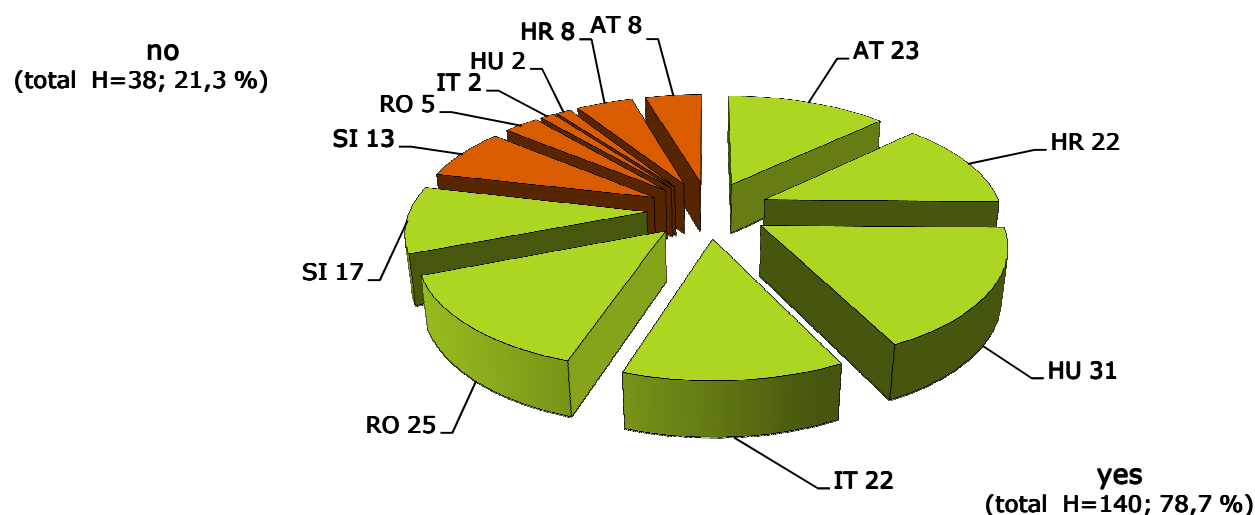


Figure 9 Need for more transparency in mobility processes

The majority of the questioned organisations already have experience with mobility programmes, with 78.7 percent answering positive to that particular question and agreeing on the need for more transparency. Summing up the statements for their choice, four main reasons can be extracted concerning the need for more transparency with claiming for gained competences being traceable and rewarded (11) and more effective mobility results with a more simple procedure, making it easier to enhance mobility stays (11) being the strongest. Further, also the Europe wide recognition with a coherent frame and commonly created awareness (9) and non-formally learnt and experienced needing to be validated and recognised (7) are considered important. The minority not seeing need for more transparency in mobility refers to multiple, already existing and satisfying instruments sufficiently validating only necessary to be used (5) and the general perspective that procedures leading towards transparency are too time consuming (2).

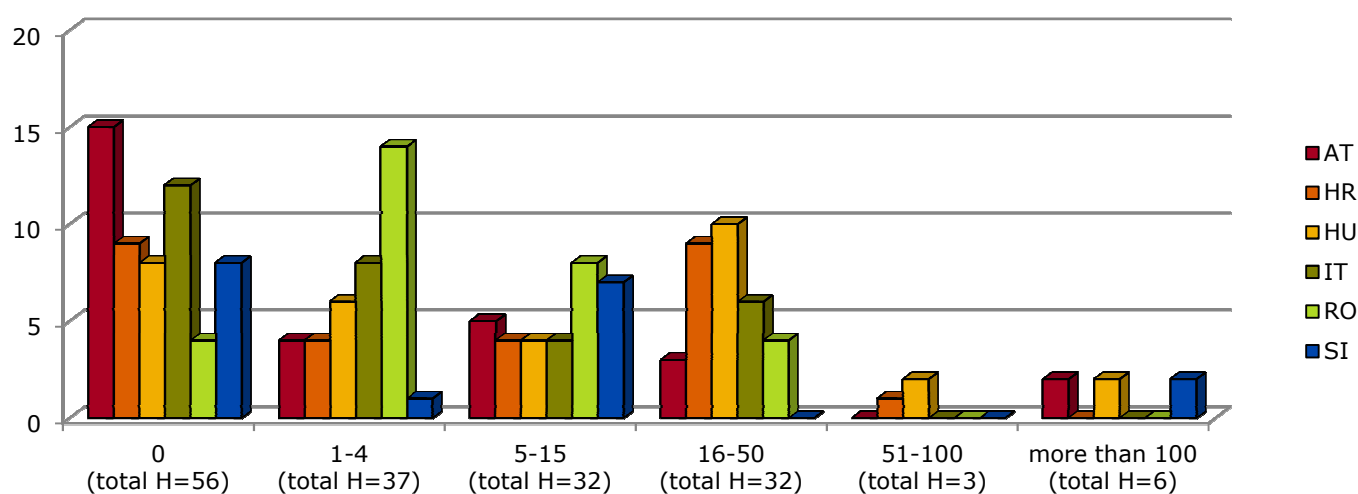


Figure 10 Number of employees/learners requesting mobility actions within the last 2 years

The figure shows the total frequency of employees and VET learners who actively requested mobility actions within the last two years. The majority (H=56) state that they have not had any learners who requested a mobility. In second rank an amount between 1-4 learners (H=37) asked for a mobility stay, followed by the category 5-15 learners (H=32) in line with the category 16-50 learners (H=32). More than 50 learners who actively asked for a mobility stay within the last two years are represented with an average occurrence of 9.

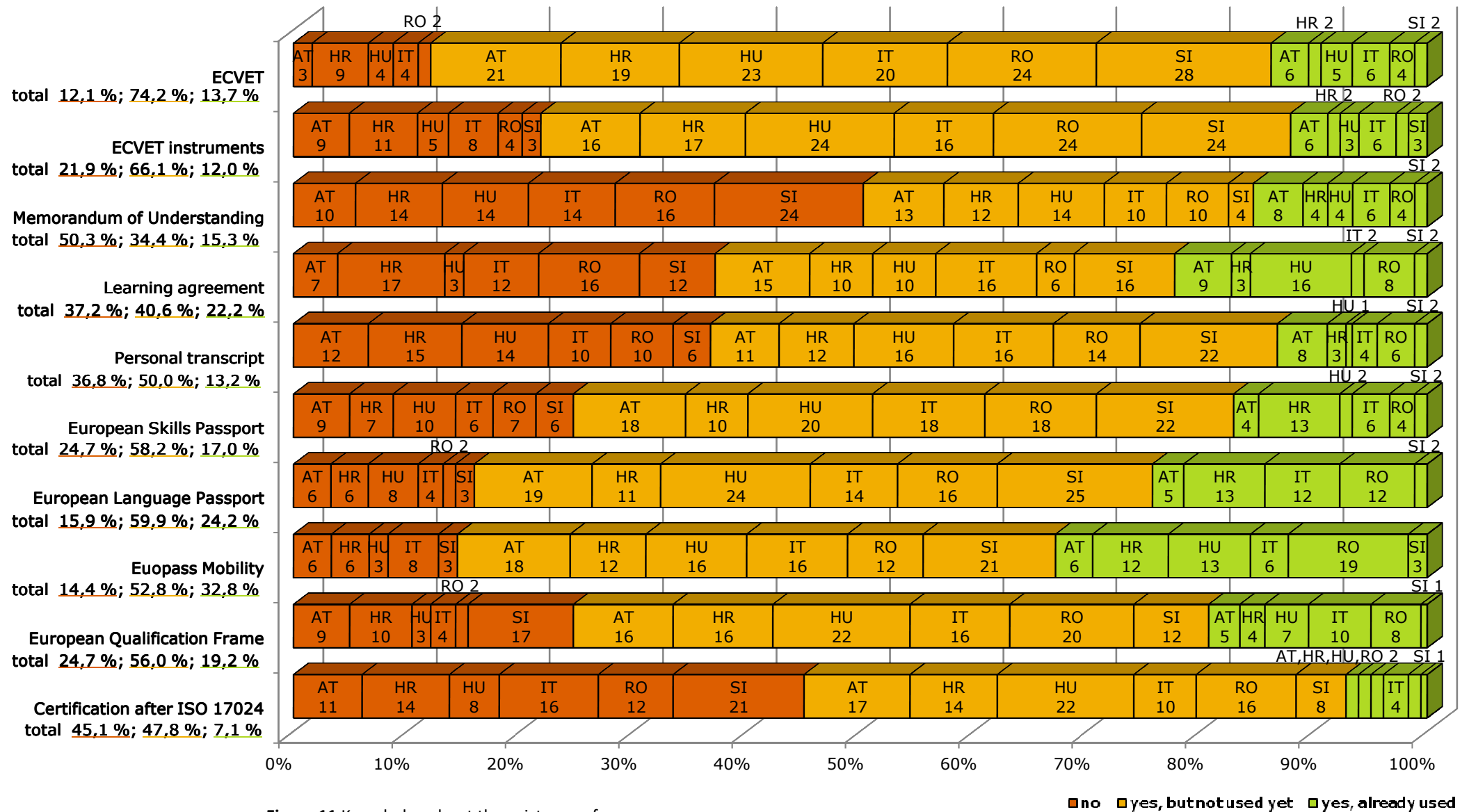


Figure 11 Knowledge about the existence of ...

The figure above (figure 11) gives detailed information about the different European quality instruments combined with the level of awareness and implementation. It can be seen that only a small amount of the provided quality instruments (marked green) have already been used by the questioned organisations. With the exception of the Memorandum of understanding (34.4 %), the learning agreement (40.6 %) and ISO Certification (47.8 %), these instruments are known but not used yet (marked orange). The red marked parts highlight the frequency of organizations who never even heard of those instruments.

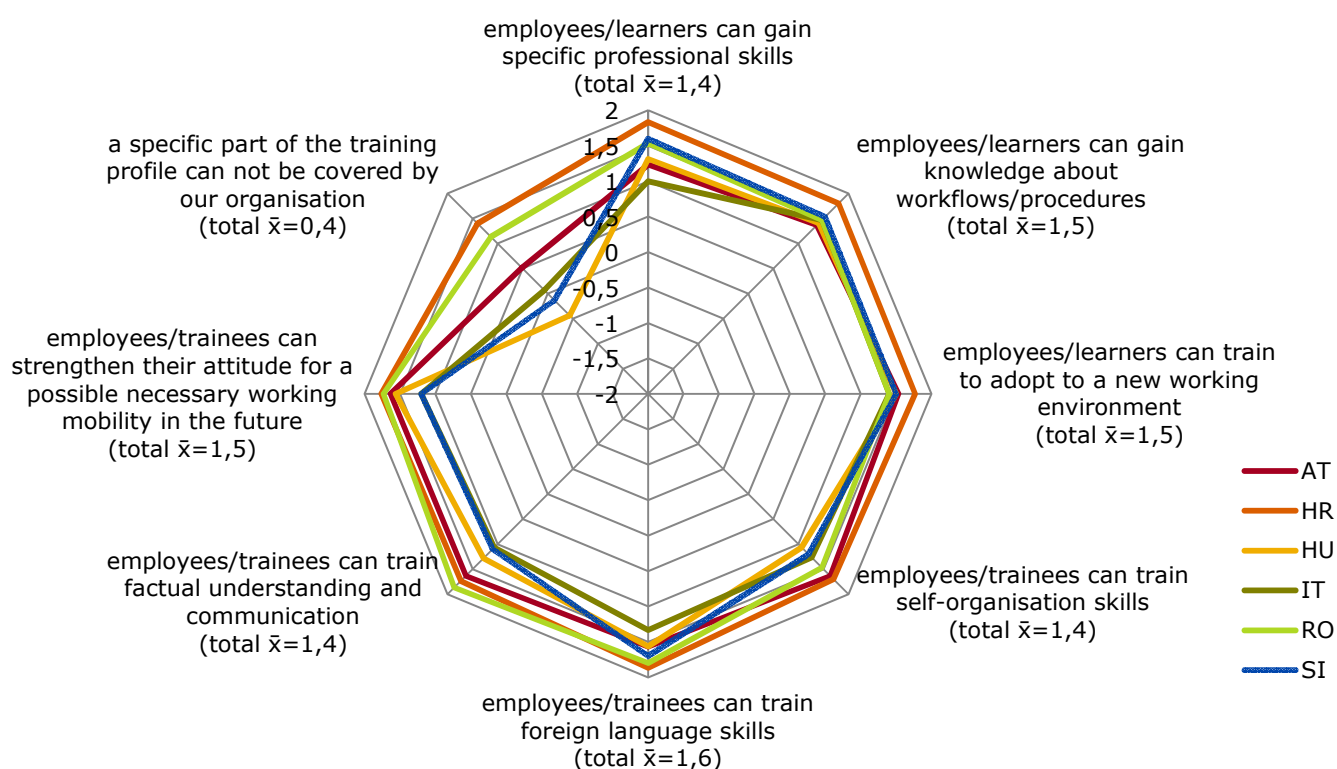


Figure 12 Reasons for sending employees/learners on mobility actions

Representatives were asked about the reasons of sending an employee or VET learner on a mobility action. The spider graph shows that language training (average of 1.6), followed by adaption strategies (1.5) in line with a general positive attitude for mobility actions in future (1.5) as well as gaining knowledge about workflows and procedures are the definite reasons and motivators for organisations to send staff on a mobility action. The least reason indicated is that organisations are not able to cover the training profile. Further reasons additionally stated making sending attractive is personal further training, a common

understanding and quality, meeting new people as well as promoting the own organisation abroad threw employees.

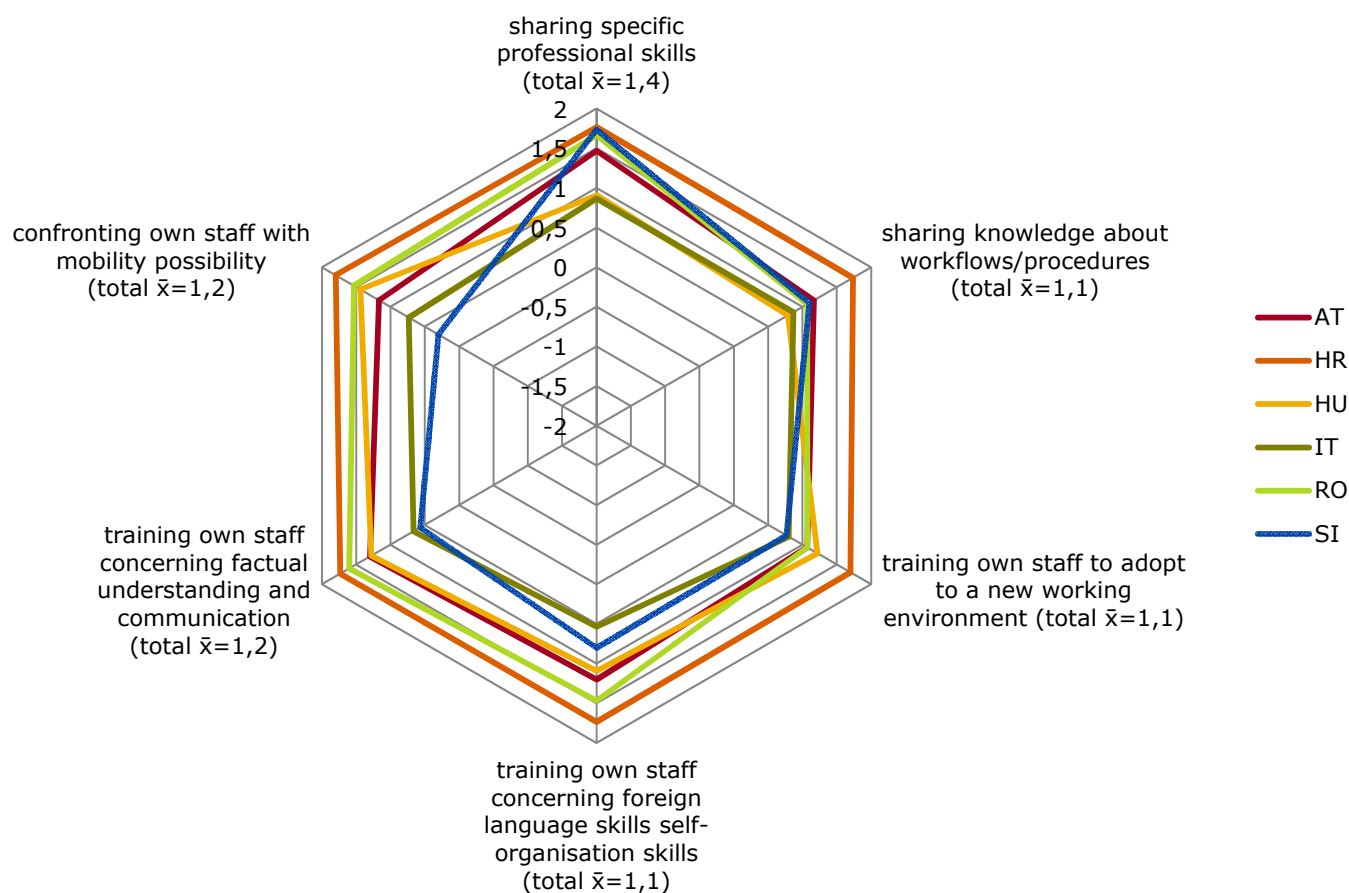


Figure 13 Reasons for hosting employees/learners for mobility actions

Figure 13 shows the reasons to host employees and VET learners for mobility actions. All of the provided categories were rated with a high average, meaning between the answering possibilities absolutely and rather. Noticeable is that sharing professional skills stand out as one of the main reasons (average of 1.4) to host an employee or learner in the framework of a mobility action. Furthermore, meeting new people and building up a network was mentioned as additional reasons.

In order to get impressions of the **importance** of different steps concerning **mobility actions**, the questioned representatives were asked to rate different factors considering a mobility action within the measurement classifications absolutely, rather, rather not and not at all. Based on the European Charta for Mobility, the following spider graphs reflect the outcomes within the timeline **before, during and after a mobility action**.

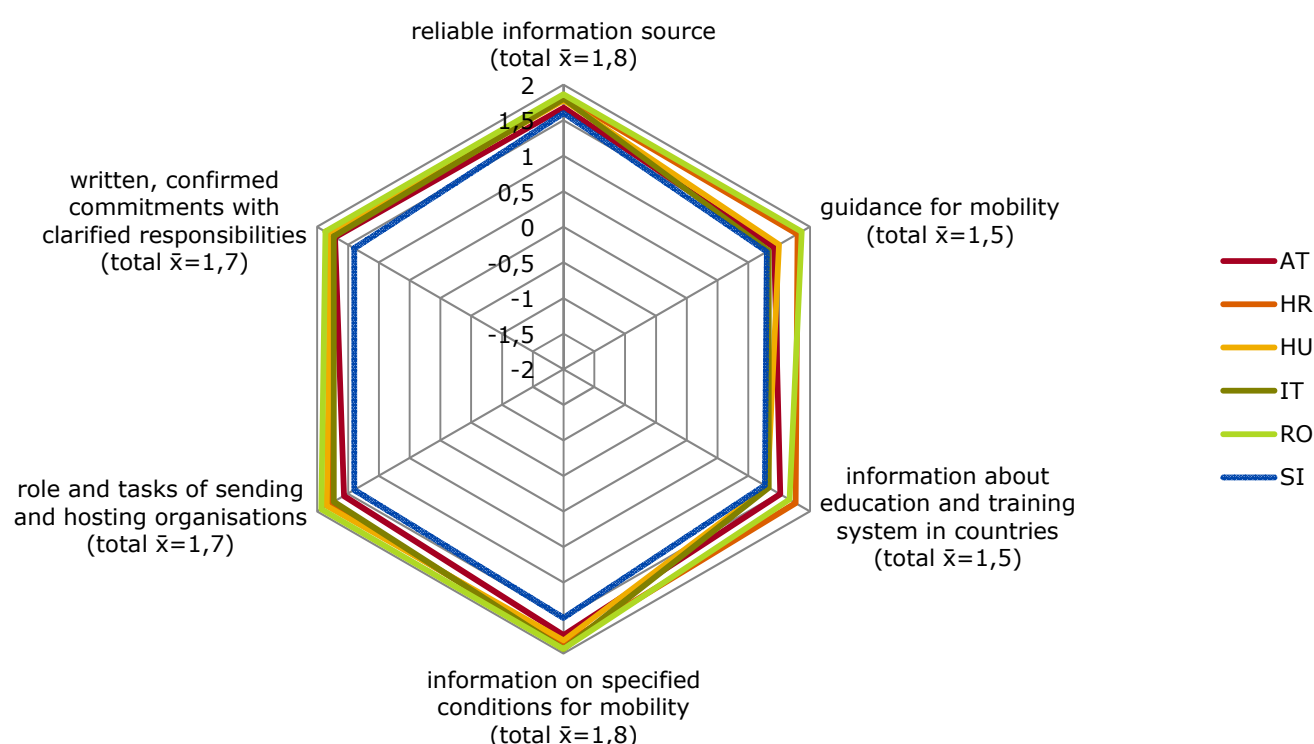


Figure 14 Important before mobility a) general 1

The first five items, clustered as 'general aspects 1' named reliable information source, guidance for mobility, information about education and training system in countries, information on specified conditions for mobility, role and tasks of sending and hosting organisations as well as written, confirmed commitments with clarified responsibilities reflect that all these items tend towards being classified as absolutely important.

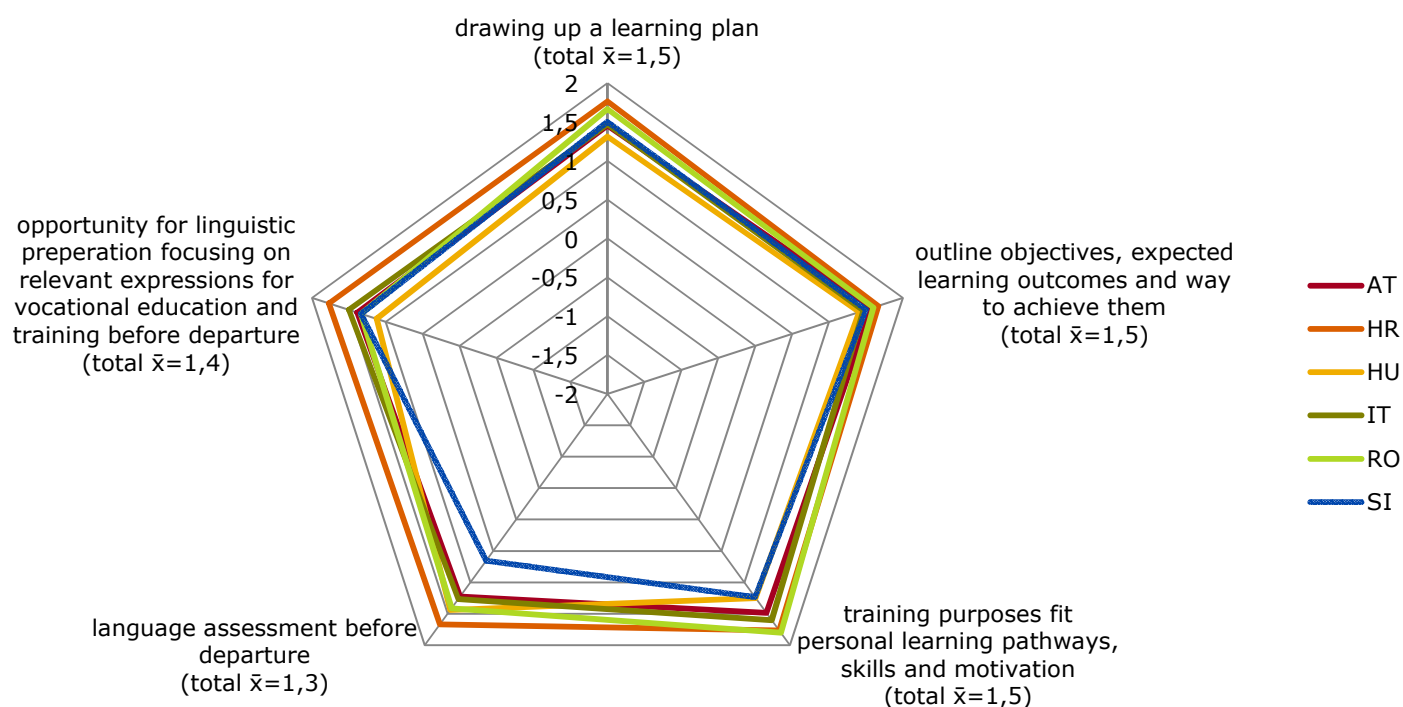


Figure 15 Important before mobility b) general 2

The next five items clustered into the spider graph in figure 15 also focus on general aspects before a mobility action. As you can see above, the picture is a little bit more diverse. Nevertheless, all of these factors tend to be of high importance. To draw up a learning plan, to outline expected learning outcomes and having training purposes that fit personal learning pathways were rated the highest with an average of 1.5.

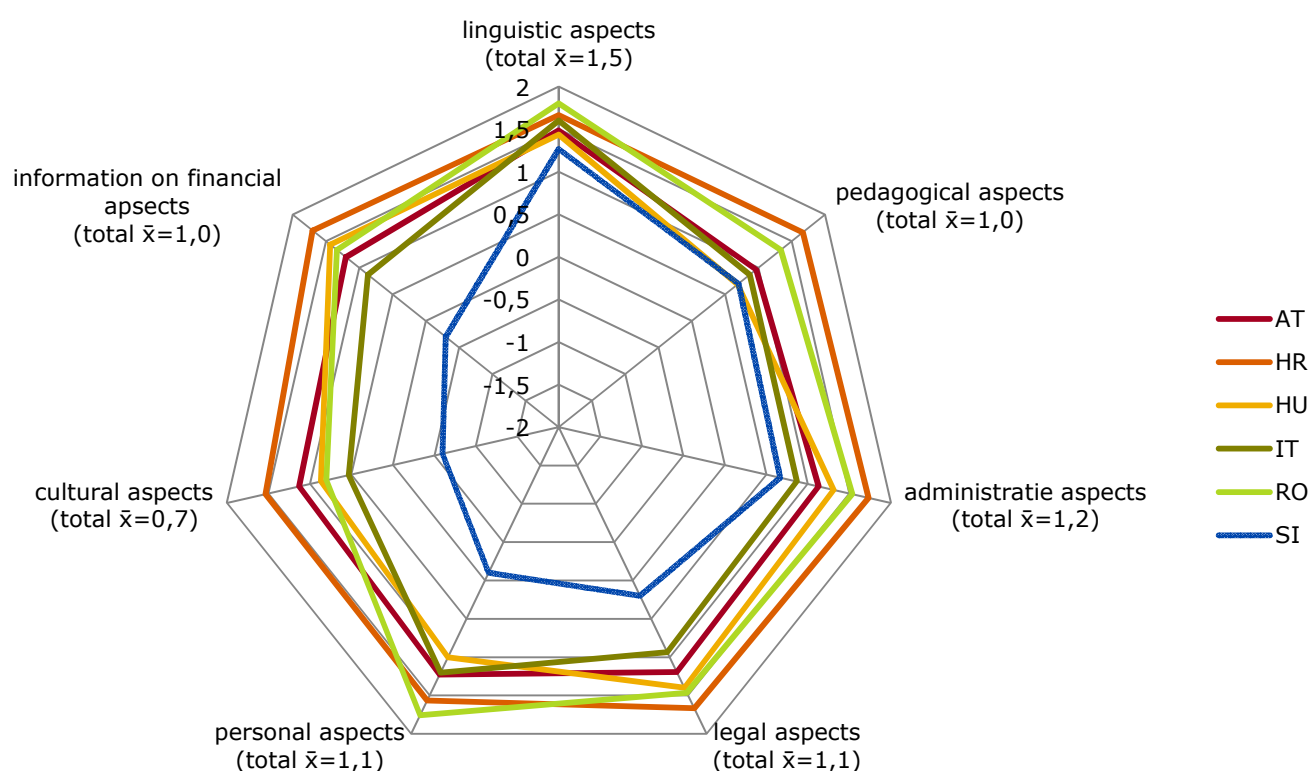


Figure 16 Important before mobility c) concerning general preparation

Within this spider graph you can find aspects in respect to general preparation before mobility stays which were rated towards the tendency of being rather important. One outlier is the linguistic aspect, having a high importance with an average of 1.5.

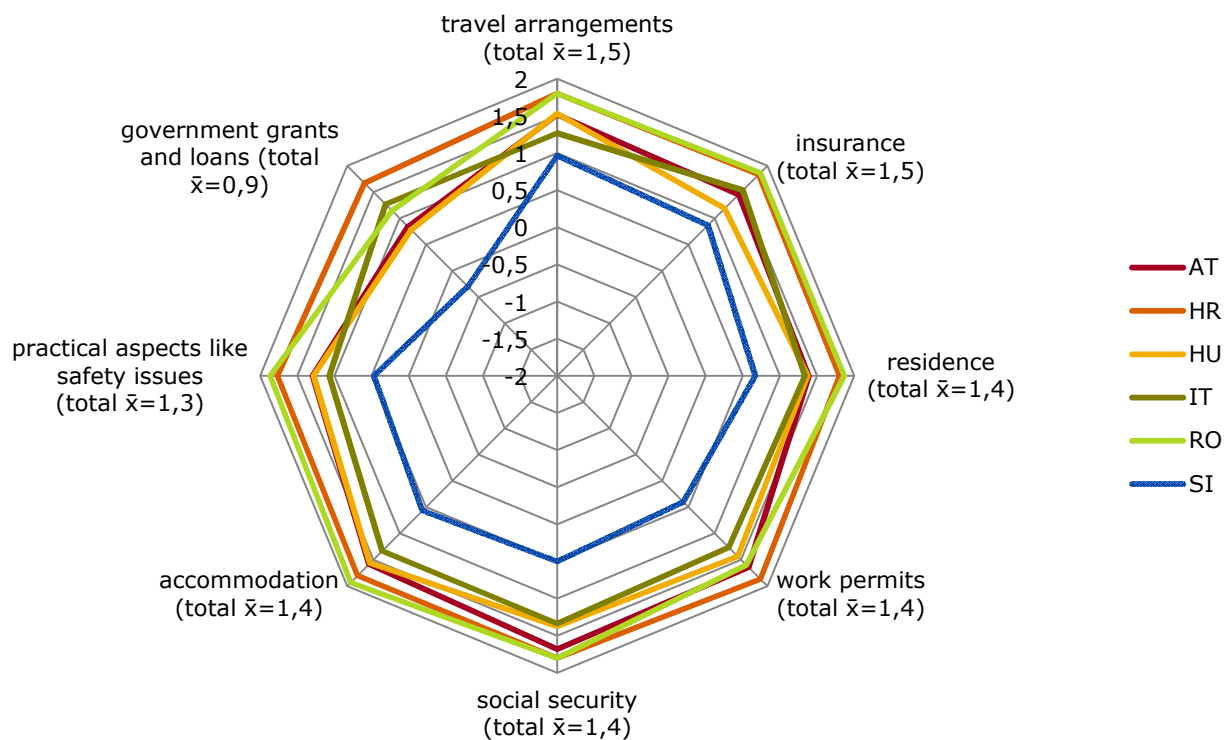


Figure 17 Important before mobility d) concerning information and assistance

Items regarding information and assistance before a mobility visit are clustered in the graph above. To clarify insurance, residence, work permits, social security, accommodation and further practical aspects (i.e. safety) tend to be of highest importance. Exclusively the item government grants and loans is –averagely – rated as rather important only.

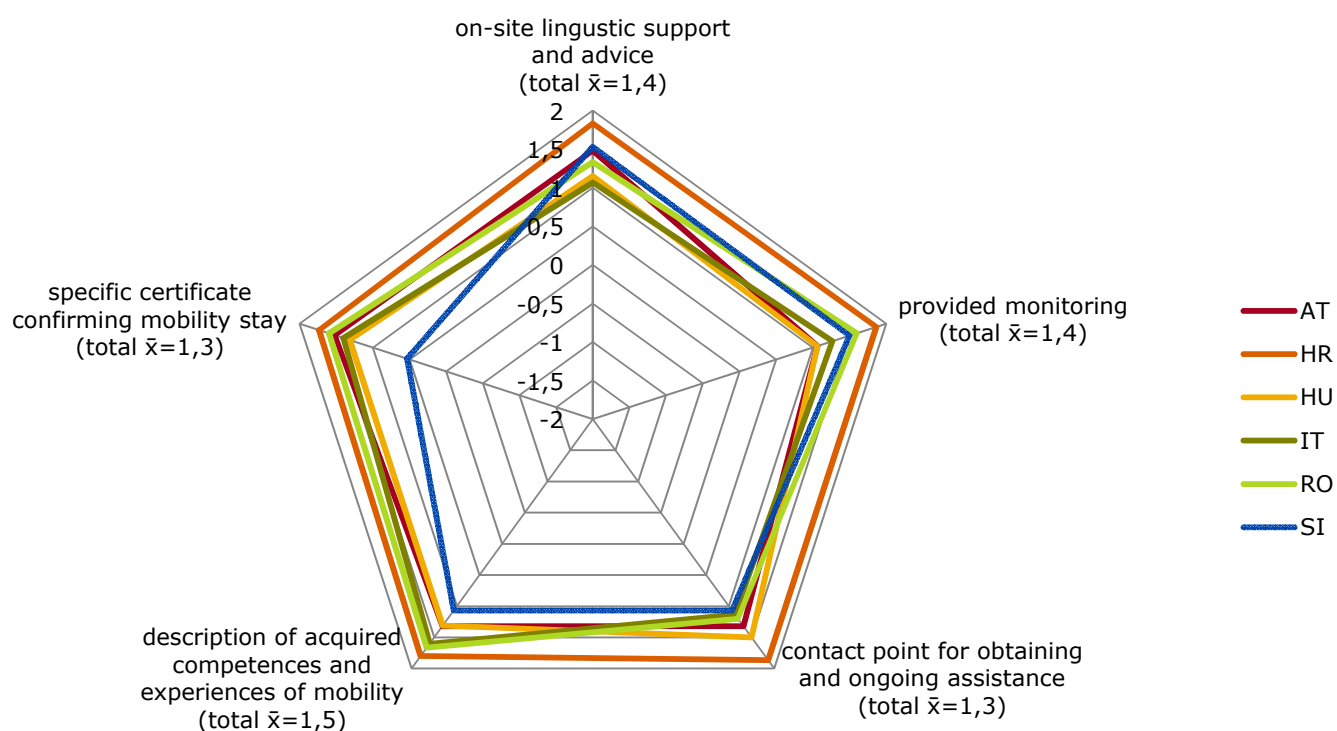


Figure 18 Important during mobility

During the mobility actions all five provided items have been rated of rather or absolute high importance as can be seen in the graph above, reflecting that a continuous process during the stay abroad ensuring the targeted aims is essential.

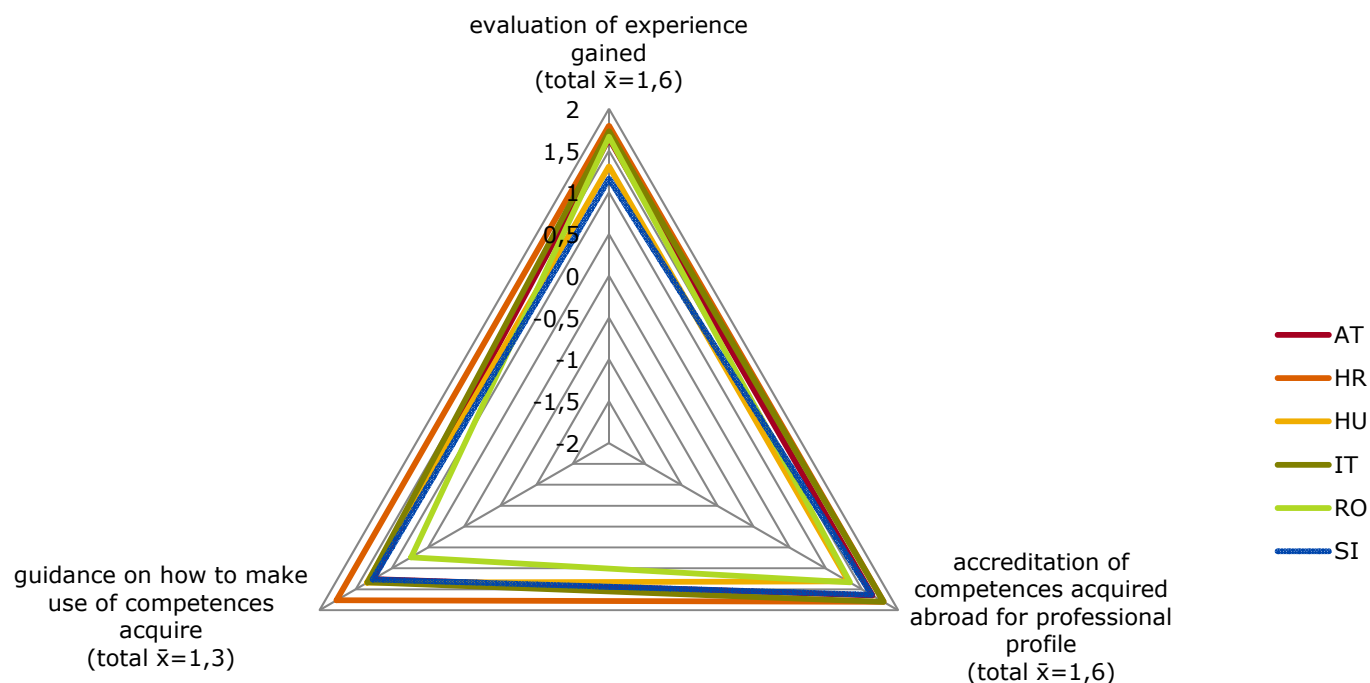


Figure 19 Important after mobility

Also the inquired items regarding tasks after a mobility stay, including evaluation of gained experience, accreditation of competences and guidance on how to make use of competences, had been averagely assessed between rather and absolutely important. The importance of the implementation of experiences and development was underlined by an additional remark.

3.2.3 Online Platform

Within the third part of the questionnaire, representatives of organizations were asked about their opinions on features and functionalities of a networking platform.

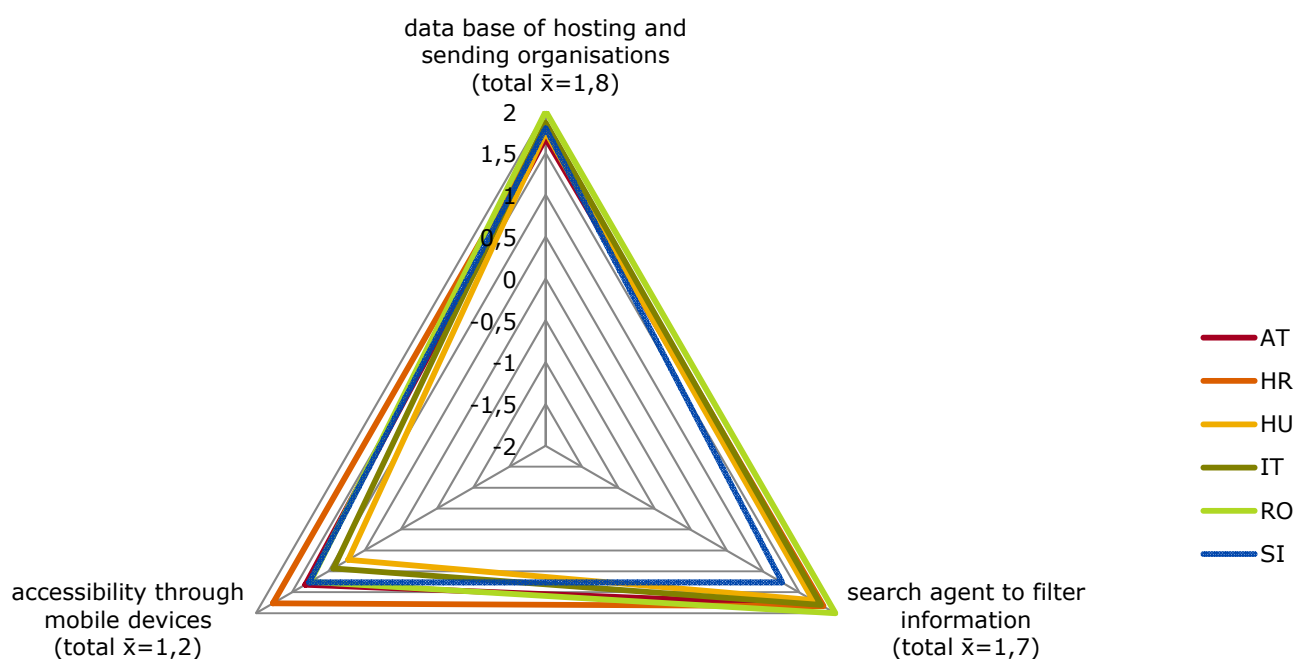


Figure 20 Features and functionalities that should be provided on the online platform

Regarding the features and functionalities that should be provided on the online platform, the provision of a data base was rated highest (1.8), followed by a search agent to filter information (1.7) and the accessibility through mobile devices (1.2). Furthermore, additional demands were remarked by representatives, also involving a key word search (3), a chat or some other sort of instant messaging (2) as well as the maintenance after project lifetime. Important concerning the user-friendliness, a clear and well arranged structure (4), information kept complete and up to date (2) and some assistance or indication for possibly matching mobility actions is mentioned. As well attractive would be some online support in addition to a handbook

what to pay attention to before, during and after mobility and content-related, ready prepared forms. Assessment of partners, presentations of countries and a separation according to industry sectors were suggested alike. Next to translations, the wish for experiences and testimonials including pictures as well as the management aspect mentioned four times is underlined by the results for the results of the questions displayed below.

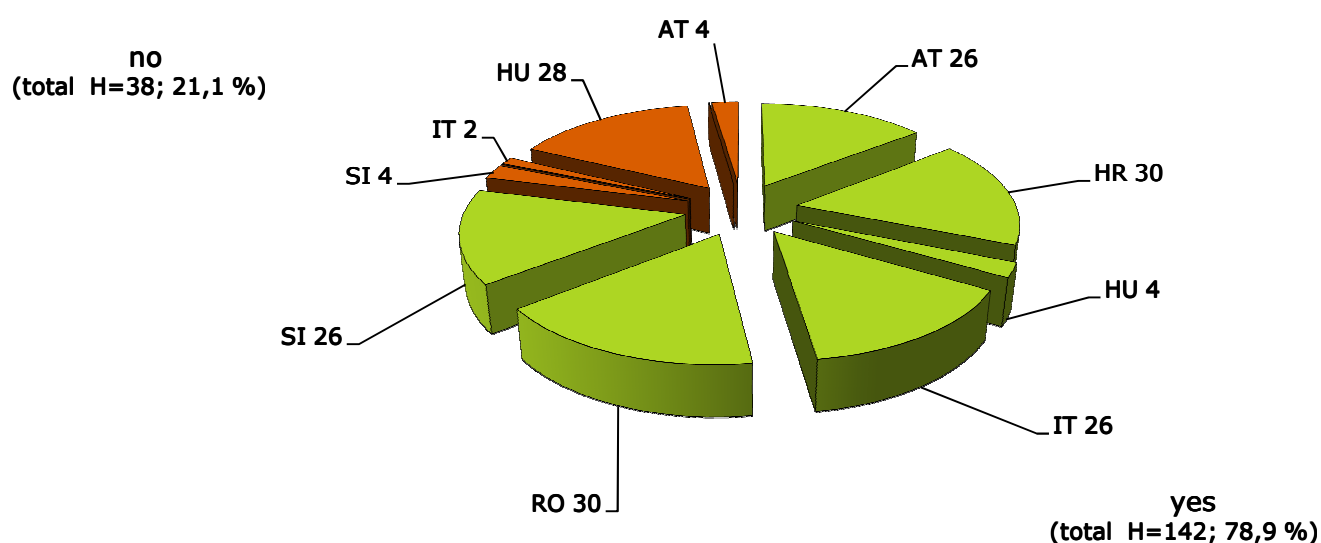


Figure 21 Interest in provided testimonials and case descriptions on the online platform

The question concerning the interest in testimonials or case descriptions including problems and good practices on the online platform met great approval. A majority of 78.9 % welcomes this idea and would like this to be put into reality. With one remark added, possible solutions to practical problems should be given some space to as well.

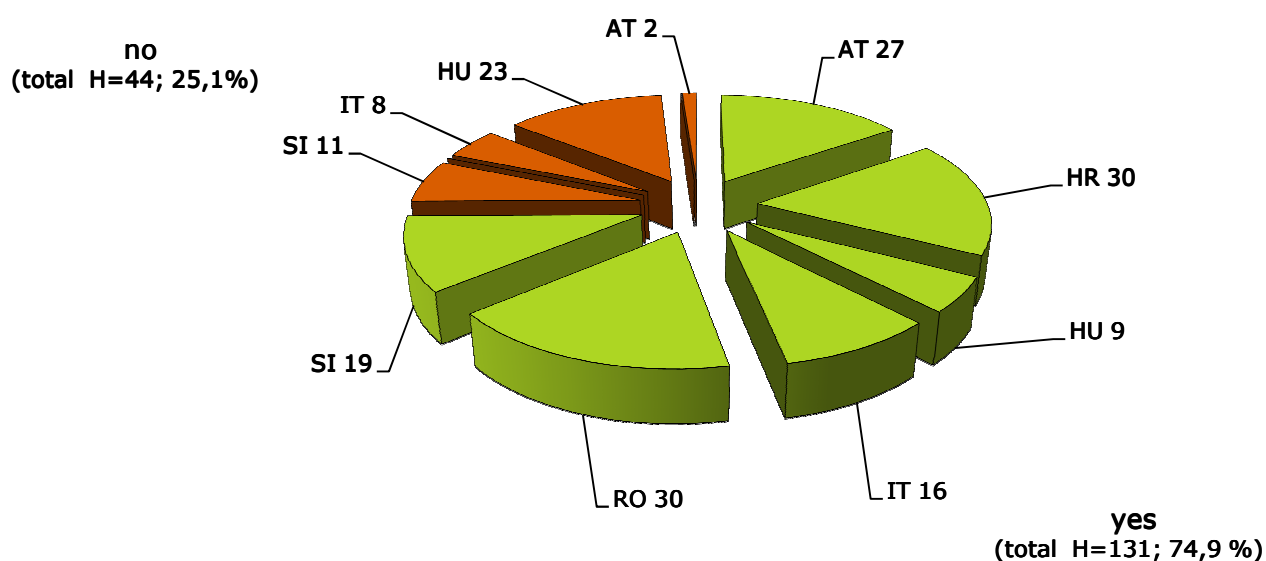


Figure 22 Interest in putting information about organisation on the online platform

A quite similar picture can be drawn when organisation representatives are asked if they could image to put information about their organisation on the online platform, with 74.9 % answered affirmatively.

The strongest reasons that create interest are promoting the own organisation to attract partners (31), actively participate, cooperate and host (24) as well as exchanging experiences (16). Whereas for some it is a good opportunity to get involved into mobility actions (3), others want to increase their number of mobility actions (2), search new partners for a bigger data base (2) and build and enlarge their network (2). An advantage is also seen as the coverage can be increased threw virtual availability (2), a better exchange of information and projects (2) and more transparency and information (2) is possible. As well mentioned is to thereby promote mobility actions inside the organisation and increase the attractiveness as employers.

Whereas four representatives of organisations are not interested in the use of the platform and one institution has their own, another one considers the initiative as very useful and might take advantage of it in the future. Another one mentions to want to see the product before taking a decision.

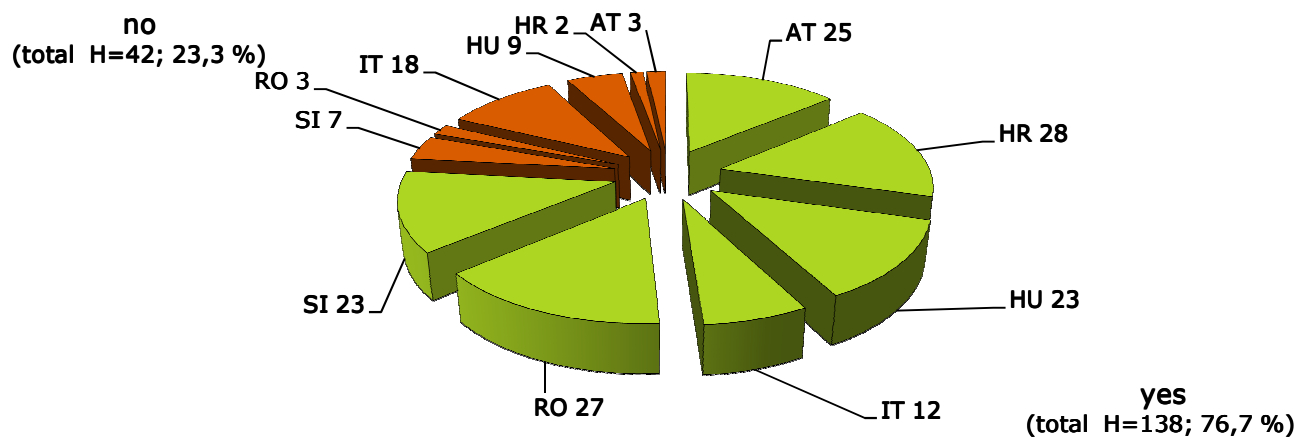


Figure 23 Willingness to test the online platform

The willingness of questioned organisation representative to test the online platform is majorly present. With 76.7 % a total of 138 of the respondents answered affirmative.

3.2.4 Network

Questions concerning the network idea in favour to establish a sustainable structure were also included in the survey.

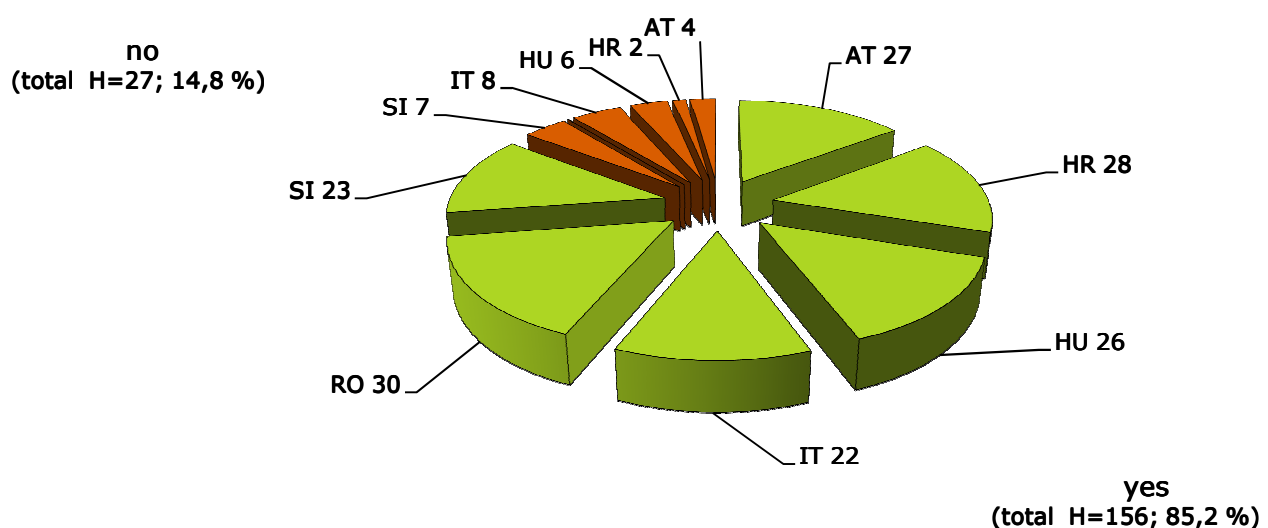


Figure 24 Interest in joining the network

Figure 24 shows that a vast majority (85.5 %) is interested to join such a network. Within the next graphs you can see the motivating factors leading to this decision.

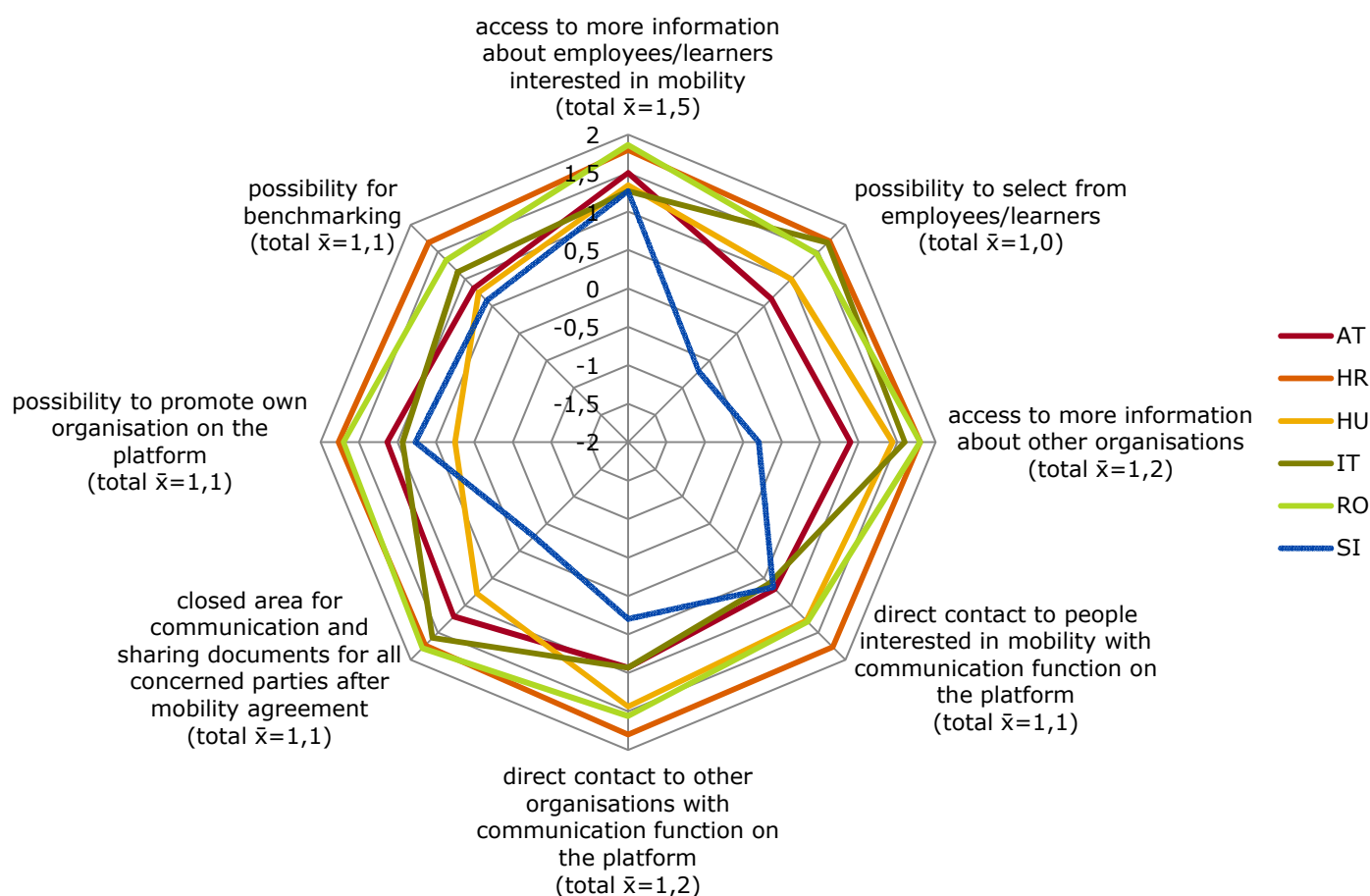


Figure 25 Motivating factors for joining the network

One of the main motivating factors for joining the network is the access to information about learners/employees who are interested in mobility activities (average of 1.5 points). Further factors like access to more information about other organisations, direct contact to interested people, direct contact to other organisations, closed area for communication, the possibility to promote the own organisation as well as the possibility for benchmarking are – averagely – rated as ‘rather important’. No additional motivating factors were mentioned by the questioned representatives of organisations.

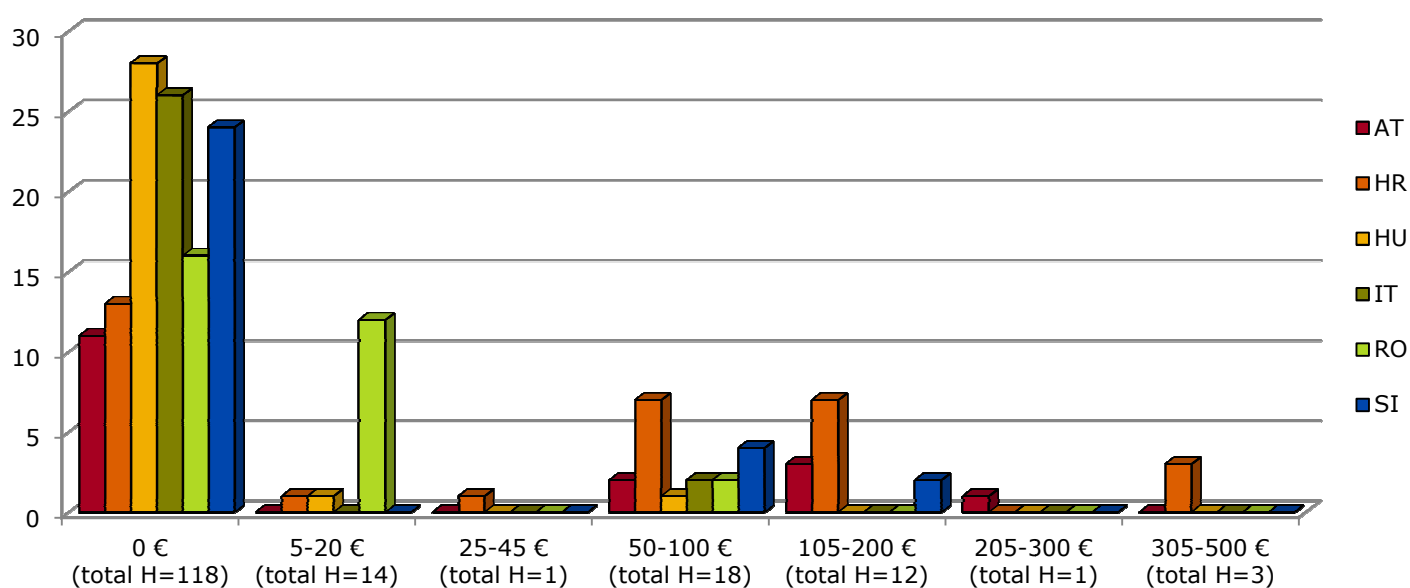


Figure 26 Amount willing to pay for networking platform service per year

The last question regarding the online platform cornered the willingness to pay for using it. The vast majority (H=118) prefers the online platform to be free of charge, followed by amounts between 50 and 100 € (H=18) and amounts between 105 and 200 € (H=12). The category 5-20 € was stated 14 times; amounts that account more than 200 € were named four times. Noticeable are the diverse results in regard to the different countries as it can be seen in the graph above. Hints to the reason for abstentions are given in the remarks, as it is either according to the currently available budget or depending from the effectiveness of the use and offer. A rather results-oriented payment is suggested as well.

3.2.5 Remarks

Additional remarks given by representatives of the organisations encourage the interesting idea of the project, encouraging thinking of also adding information concerning adult lifelong learning. A trendy design of the platform service is suggested in order to attract young people. As answering to some questions seemed difficult without more detailed information, two questioned representatives would have liked to have a look at the products first.

3.3 HR Managers and Persons Responsible for Mobility in VET Schools

The interviews with human resource managers and persons responsible for mobility in VET schools, involving a total of 21 representatives, lasted between 10 and 60 minutes. In all partner countries, at least three individuals were questioned with Hungary even interviewing four and Slovenia five. Following, the summarised and analysed results are presented with a focus on national outlines and recommendations rounding up the research results.

3.3.1 General Information

The detailed sample of the interviews consists of a broad as well as of a balanced group of representatives, including

- 8 HR managers from companies of various sectors,
- 8 VET school responsible for mobility, one of them a former one now being a representative of a National Agency,
- 4 HR managers of public institutions and
- 1 HR manager from a chamber.

Also the range of **people employed for the organisations** is spread, with indications of

- 3 having up to 20 employees,
- 10 having up to 100 employees,
- 4 having up to 400 employees and
- 3 having between 1000 and 2000 employees.

The vast majority of the interviewees stated to have international cooperation. Only one organisation does not have **cooperation beyond country borders** at all, each one has shops abroad and trades with organisations from abroad. All others indicated to have cooperation across Europe, two of them also to organisations outside. Apart from two of those organisations having beyond country cooperation, all others do have connections to at least one of the regional close countries involved in the consortium. While about one third indicates the difficulty of seeing the advantages of **regional cooperation**, another third underlines that there clearly are some. Reasons explaining those include the general focus for abroad contact with neighbour countries, the shorter distance also concerning costs of mobility actions as well as mother tongue speaking minorities in the surrounding countries.

3.3.2 Mobility

Whereas everybody agrees on the huge benefit and high **usefulness of mobility actions** for VET learners, the profiting aspect is not always seen right away on the side of the organisations. Especially for a smaller company the VET learners are a cost factor and needed to take over tasks, which is why an exchange would be a better option. However, also the additional bureaucratic workload including accommodation and insurance issues reduce the attractiveness of a mobility stay. Being asked about the **main competences** that can be acquired during a mobility, more than a quarter of representatives asked name professional as well as language and communication skills. Underlined several times alike are the different work approaches, with learners getting a view beyond the horizon and more open minded and gaining social competences including intercultural aspects, as well as flexibility and adaptability of learners. Also organisational and self-determination skills are mentioned.

With only three of the interviewees disagreeing, the vast majority of organisations already have some sort of **mobility programme installed**. A few being active as hosts or both, hosting and sending organisations, more than half of them took over the role as sending organisation only. The number of **employers being interested in a mobility stay** varies a lot. Each four representatives indicated none, up to 20 and up to 100, with another two indicating even more.

The **need for transparency** is highlighted and agreed on by all but one interviewee. The reasons for the importance can be clustered into two main categories. The united Europe should also find expression in a bringing together of the different systems, allowing transparency and formalise acquisition and validation of skills. Alike developed competences should be traceable and manageable to indicate as a reference. Being asked about **European quality instruments**, more than half of the target group representatives know or heard about some but have never used them yet. Each about one quarter have never heard about them at all or already used some of them, once also mentioning the bureaucratic aspects connected.

Questioning the **reasons leading to send own staff** on mobility actions, about one quarter of interviewees agrees on learners deepening their professional education, getting familiar with different work approaches as well as improving their foreign language skills, getting to know different cultures and habits. As well important are social skills, an enlargement of the horizon and more open mindedness. Mentioned alike are the representation of the own country and its' positioning on the inter-regional labour market and the adaptation of learners to a new working environment, bringing them forward. The **motivation to host** employers or learners is quite close to the sending reasons. The exchange of experiences and knowledge and

development of communication skills are in the foreground, with additionally setting a model for the own organisation and employees. Promoting the institution and gaining some external feedback was mentioned too.

Highly important for mobility actions according to representatives of the target group is a good organisation and the acquisition of new skills and their use, going along with the certification and evaluation of the experiences. Accurate information, guidance, information about particular conditions, language, and how to communicate are therefore necessary just like support, consultancy, contact, mentoring, feedback and linguistic preparation. Summing up as well as explicitly mentioned concerning the timeline all steps are important; before, during and after the mobility stay.

3.3.3 Online Platform

Platform features and functionalities interviewees would like to see included a database with contacts for establishing cooperation, a communication possibility, a download area with documents and descriptions as well as photos, opinions, recommendations, useful links and news. It should be easily usable, include an FAQ part and provide different areas for different sectors. However, it is also stated that the tool has to offer more and different things than already existing ones. The networking idea has to be supported, with a search for partners, languages, accommodation and catering facilities as well as a filter for the level of their qualification.

The **information considered as most interesting** is closely connected to the features and functionalities that are expected on the online platform. This includes all issues related to mobility and basic information respecting data protection regulations on the one hand. On the other hand also information and photos of hosting location and accommodation, contact details, curricula and work programmes of organisations. Also regulations concerning machines learners are allowed to work with, their interests about what they would like to learn and a short CV including their competences and attitudes. Experiences of learners, sending and hosting organisations including the intent and feedback of their mobility actions are much desired as well. This is again underlined by the fact that out of all interviews asked, only one is not interested in **testimonials or case descriptions** including problems and good practices. However, this needs to focus on important information (and not for example weather or food) in favour to get the possibility to get informed extensively and also prepare for possible problems in advance. In addition, it is also mentioned that it would be good to

see how other organisations are dealing with this mobility actions, having an FAQ section for those being new in mobility as well.

When it comes to putting **information about the own organisation on the online platform**, the majority agrees to be interested in that. Mostly they would upload information they share on their websites as well. Only three of the interviewees do not consider taking this opportunity.

Additionally mentioned concerning the **user-friendliness** of the platform is to offer a mobile version, the use of a common language (English) with common information standards as well as keeping the text very short and rather using bullet points for information. In general, interviewees are open for the platform with except of three of them everyone else being **willing to test the platform** and give feedback on it.

3.3.4 Network

The **interest in joining the network** is split among interviewees. Having an own mobility network within the company, being too small and not having enough capacities to be involved in more mobility actions at the moment are reasons given why joining the network is not intended. **Motivating factors to join the network** include access to forms, guidelines and anything that makes mobility processes easier, quicker and improves the quality. An easy way to establish cooperation with other organisations with more transparency is the strongest argument underlined by interviewees.

Asking if and how much they could **imagine to pay for the networking platform service**, interviewees often do not exactly know as the product is not available yet and it is not clear what service would then be included. Only two could name an exact amount if benefitting from it with one saying up to 20 € and another one up to 100 € a year. Especially responsible persons for mobility in VET schools indicate not being able to pay anything because of the financial situation not allowing it.

3.3.5 National Outline and Recommendations

The interviewees in **Austria** did all emphasis the need for transnational mobility with their learners in initial VET, they all mentioned the need for more networks and support as well as quality in mobility. All approaches that combine higher quality with less effort, less time, easier access and participation, easier

support etc. will be highly welcomed. However it would be important to consider this need in all developments of the project, this means when developing process descriptions to increase the quality of mobility, these standard processes should not increase the workload, documentation work load, organisation workload etc. of responsible persons in companies for VET learners and mobility.

The process descriptions should make it very clear how they can support the task and make them easier and quicker. Companies have a huge responsibility in front of the parents of young VET learners in initial VET as well as a permanent time pressure. This must be considered in the tools developed. Moreover the HR persons responsible gave the feedback that on one hand they would like to get in contact with people responsible from other organisations organising VET learner mobility, on the other hand they are all willing to share their knowledge and experiences with others, provide case studies (in anonymous way of course), support others etc. This should be made available in the online platform. Also the platform must allow for an easy and transparent use AND must be made available for mobile devices such as smartphones and tablet PCs this is a crucial condition. Regarding the network this seems to be the most difficult issue to solve, here it would be important to make the added value of joining such a network very transparent together with the effort and price asked for participation. The availability of testimonials and role models from companies already joining the network would make the broadening of the network easier.

The regional component of mobility and the network as such is a new perspective and should be communicated as added value behind the whole outputs. Transparency instruments like ECVET as quality assurance tools are so far hardly used and hardly known on company level, this needs to be kept in mind. The language of companies and business should be used when describing processes and quality assurance instruments to be understandable for the end users.

All of the **Croatian** interviewees see an advantage in European mobility:

- See and learn new things
- Practice and methodology in the region
- Improvement of language and communication skills
- Improvement of certain professional skills

All of the school representatives see the transparency as a problem and they see a need for a more transparent mobility process.

The platform should provide:

- Information about schools (their projects, contacts)
- Sectors (be divided by sectors and information about institution and organizations within sectors)
- Information about students shouldn't be too personal because of the child protection and the possibilities of abuse)

The interviewees said that the network should be free for certain time so that they can test the platform and decide if it is for them. After the test time, if they decide to use the platform, they will pay for it but no more than 100 Euros.

In **Hungary** sending is more dominant than hosting. Practically the hosting system is totally different from that of bigger countries like Germany or Austria, which have long traditions in work placement. This should be considered. There is a potential for collaboration with Hungarian speaking communities in the surrounding countries.

The platform should use search function and has to have the capability of uploading photos. Both, the platform and the network are only useful if they can offer more than already existing partner search tools.

Companies involved are hosting companies for mobility stays of students but **Italian** ones. For them it would be very interesting to host specialized students. From this experience it is very important that students get recognized credits because the competences they earn are: language, management and organization. At the same time it is very important for companies to host new generations for a period and new ideas to refresh the company context and working habits.

Two companies are willing to collaborate within the network and to test the online platform for it in which they expected to find profiles and motivation of the students that would go on mobility. The

profiles should be authentic and include the main experience they have, better to include also elements of originality and their competences. There must be a focus on their personal attitudes also. They would like to know in which sector students would like to train and work in the companies, which would be the students' interests, their competences and ideas as well as, on the other side companies' competences and ideas.

Regarding **Romania**, promoting European mobility is crucial in nowadays knowledge society, mobility actions are an accessible tool that facilitates the exchange of professional experiences on EU level, development of various transversal skills of VET learners.

There is an obvious need for more transparency in mobility processes since for various reasons the mobility process seems to be a bit complicated for persons who have not yet participated and quite often these tend to be considered as simple 'leisure travels'. Furthermore, a platform that would support such actions from many points of views is really helpful, and probably would significantly contribute to increase the number of European VET mobility actions on the long term.

In **Slovenia**, all HR managers agree that mobility actions are very important. The main important issues are the transfer of knowledge from abroad, the exchange of experience as well as the acquisition of new skills and their use. Also the official recognition of competences acquired abroad is seen as highly important.

3.4 External Stakeholders

With each 40 collected questionnaires from external stakeholders, a total of 240 representatives from all six countries project partner countries shared their perspectives and opinions. In this chapter analysed results of the target group are displayed.

3.4.1 General Information

Questions concerning general information of organisations are gathered within the following paragraphs in order to get an impression of the broad field of external stakeholders.

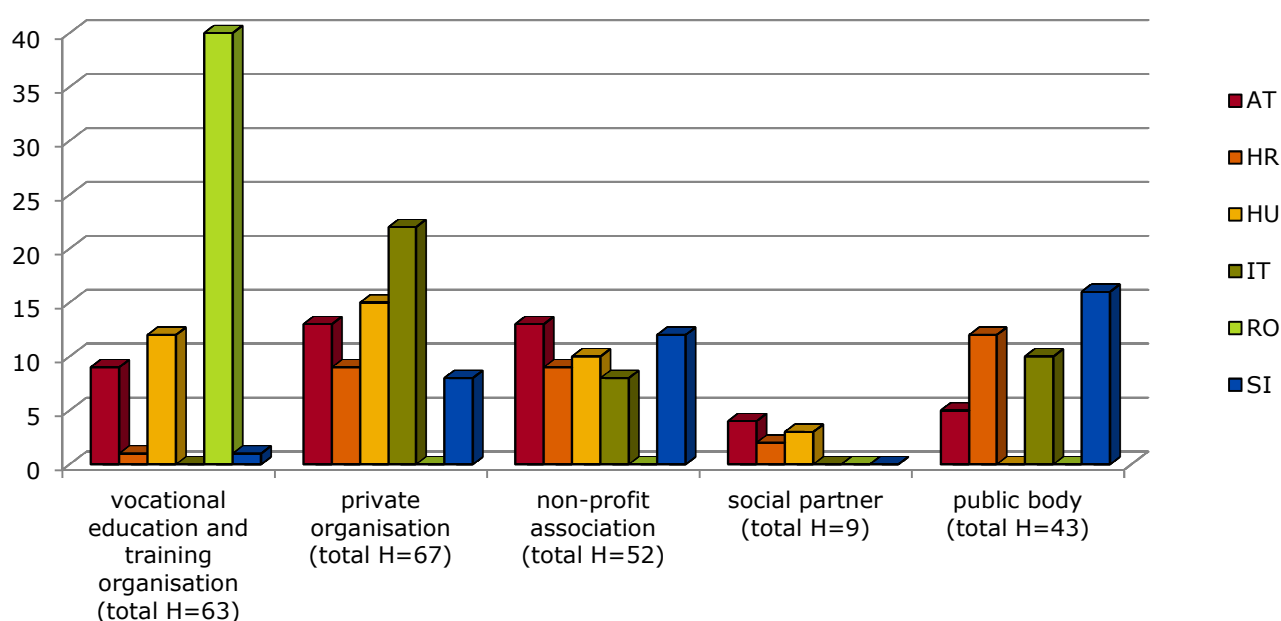


Figure 27 Types of organisations

As can be seen in the chart above most of the questionnaires provided by the partnership were filled in by private organisations (67), closely followed by vocational education and training organisations (67). Furthermore non-profit organisations are represented with a total of 52, public bodies with a total of 43 and 9 social partners. The country specific variations can be seen within the different coloured bars.

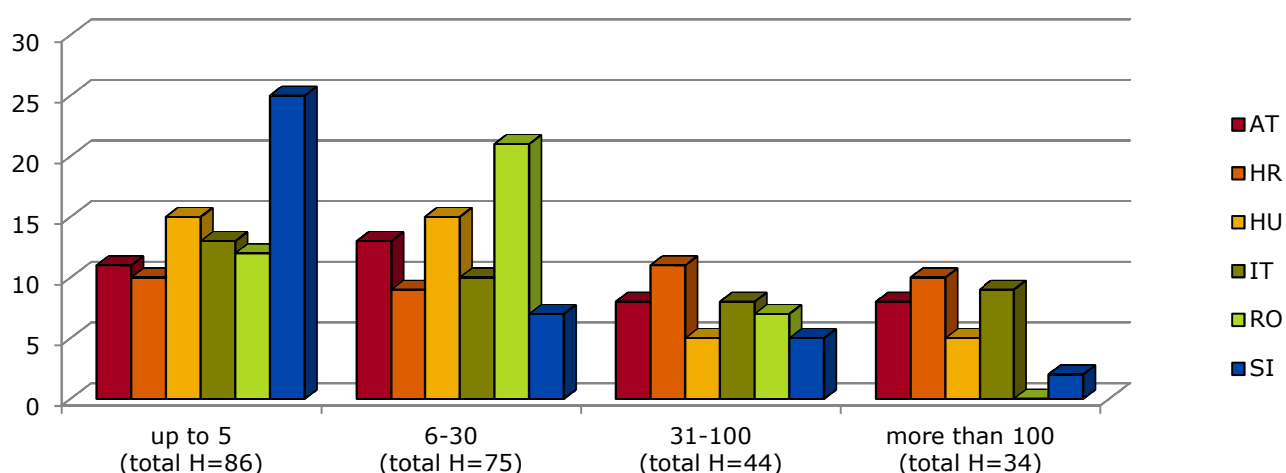


Figure 28 Number of employees at organisations

The figure above reflects the size of the stakeholders which filled in the questionnaires. The two major categories are stakeholder organisations with up to five employees (86) and organisations which have a staff of between 6 and 30 employees (75). Representatives of organisations who employ between 31 and 100 people appear with an average frequency of 44, followed by organizations with more than 100 employees (34).

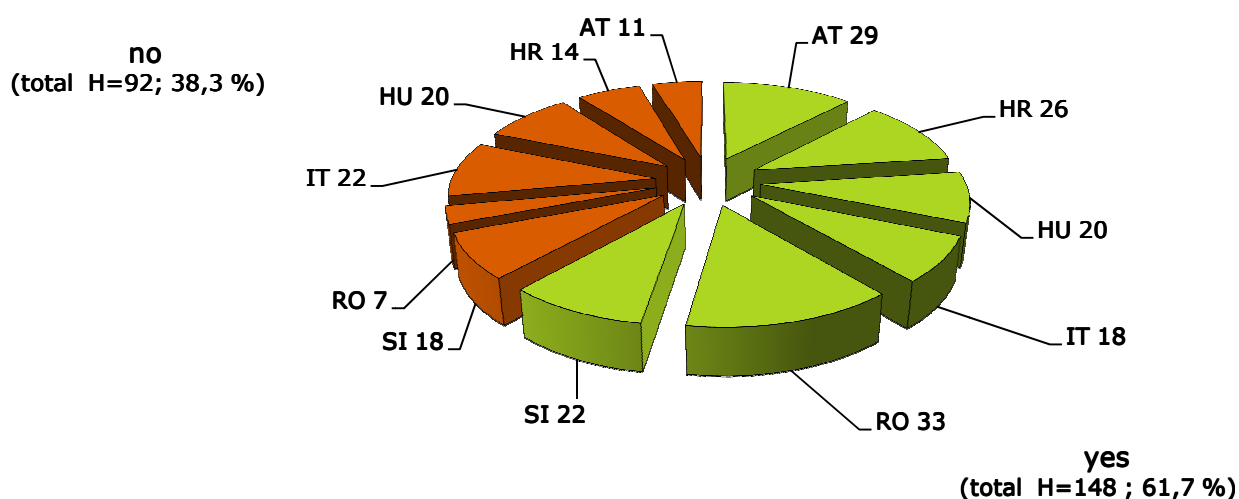


Figure 29 Interregional cooperation beyond the country

Figure 29 shows that out of 240 organisations 61.7 % (a total appearance of 148) do have interregional cooperation beyond their country borders. Therefore, representatives of organisations who do not have interregional cooperation are represented with a percentage of 38.3 % (92).

To get more detailed information on which countries are included in interregional cooperation, please consult the following figure 30. The horizontal list provides information in which country the data was collected, the vertical list shows the cooperating countries:

		country cooperation is indicated for						
		AT	HR	HU	IT	RO	SI	Total
country of data collection	AT		16	17	18	11	21	83
	HR	15		15	6	6	21	63
	HU	20	0		10	20	0	50
	IT	10	3	3		3	11	30
	RO	8	11	11	5		1	36
	SI	21	8	12	11	2		54
	Total	74	38	58	50	42	54	316

Figure 30 Cooperation to project partner countries

3.4.2 Mobility

External stakeholders as well got questioned about their opinion and experiences in respect to mobility actions, including the usefulness, importance and practicability. Analysed results of data collected is displayed below.

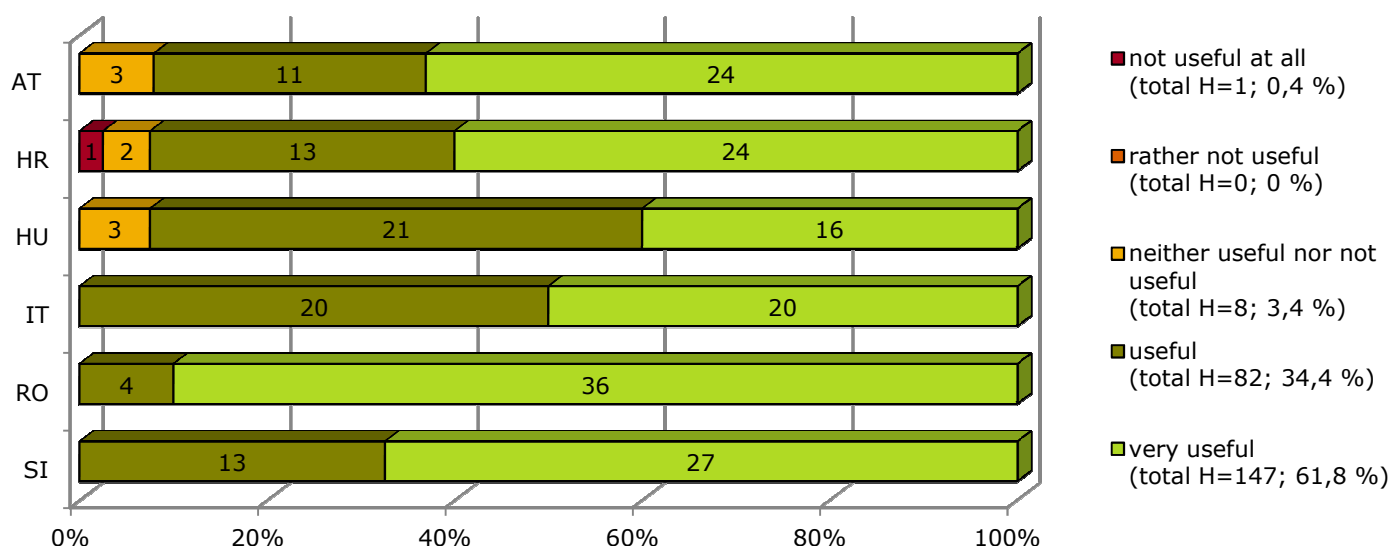


Figure 31 General usefulness of mobility actions

Stakeholders were asked how they rate the usefulness of mobility actions in general. As easily can be seen in the figure above stakeholders assess mobility actions with a vast majority as very useful to useful. Only a tiny minority of 9 representatives consider mobility activities not positive but as neither useful nor not useful (3), not useful at all (3) and rather not useful (1).

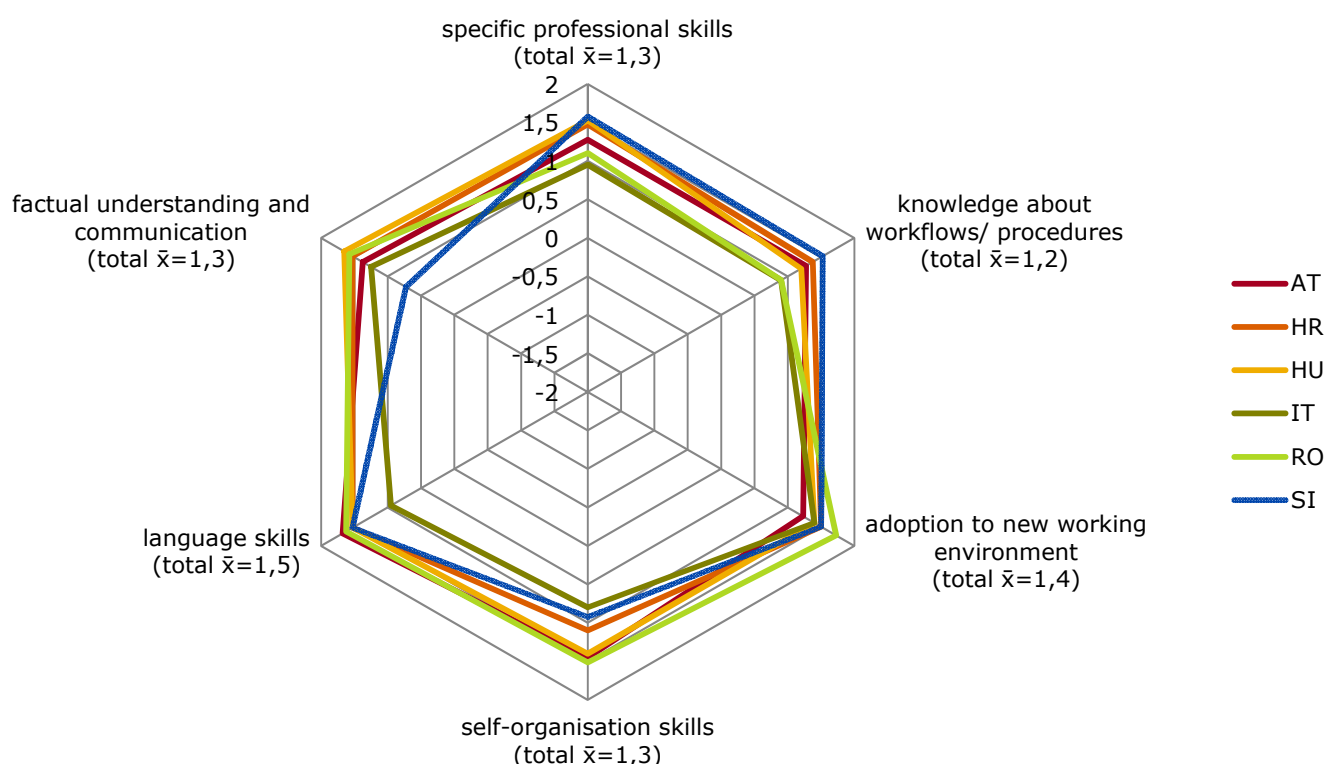


Figure 32 Main competences that can be acquired during a mobility activity

The spider graph above shows that all predefined competences within the questionnaire were rated with a clearly positive average. This means that people assess those competences between absolutely and rather acquired during a mobility stay. Additionally competences mentioned by external stakeholders are social competences in general (2), with conflict solving skills (2) and cooperation skills (2) going more into detail. Also intercultural competences (2), the ability to work in a team (2) and a complex vision and empathy (1) are stated. As well underlined are competences acquired including building connections and communication and the courage to join such a program.

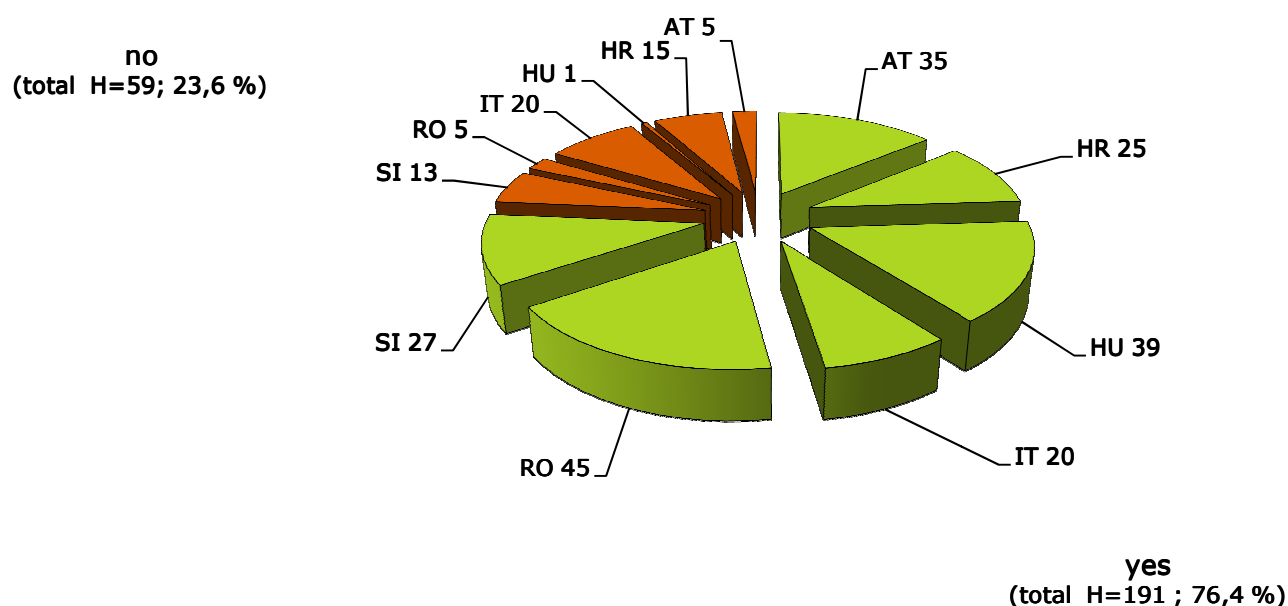


Figure 33 Need for more transparency in mobility processes

With a total of 191 responses, the vast majority (76.4 %) do see the need for more transparency in mobility processes as displayed in the figure above. One of the strongest reasons mentioned is that mobility actions are still seen as holidays too often and the useful meaning, importance and professional level need to be underlined, leading to an upgrade (26). Highlighted as well is the importance of recognition as part of the VET training, allowing cross-national comparison and offering a standard needed because of the broad diversity of systems (25). This is closely connected to the wish for a more effective transfer with transparency and simplicity of accreditation (19) as recognition is often bound to a high bureaucratic burden (2). By transparency, an easier use of outcomes (6) would be guaranteed and employees as well as employers can benefit from gained and applied experiences (6). Others see the experience and self organisation of learners being in focus (2) with a grading system net being able to significantly show what appears during collaboration (1). Whereas a frame is feared to have bad influence on willingness of learners to go on mobility (1), transparency is stated to be already practiced in various forms (1).

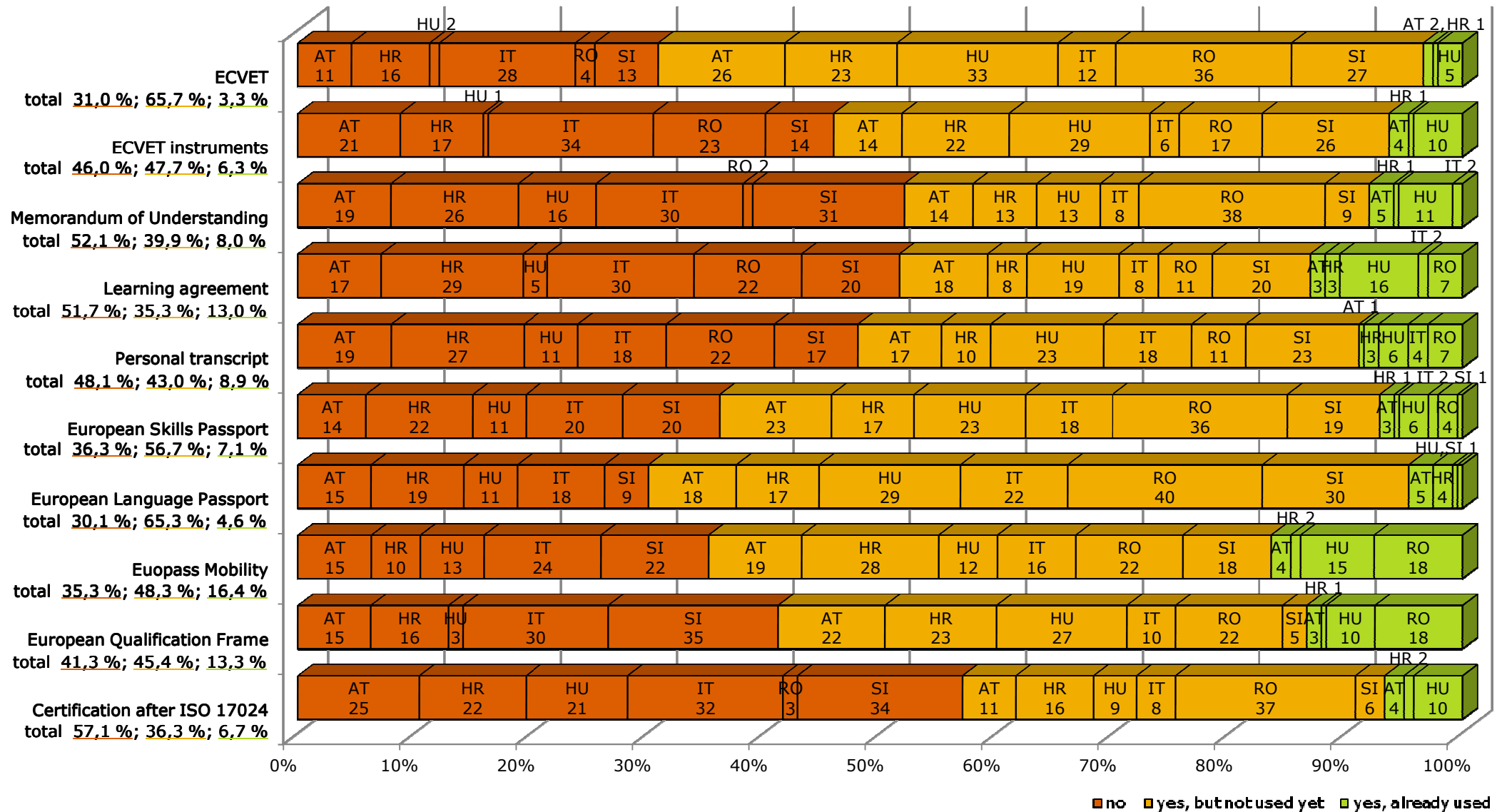


Figure 34 Knowledge about the existence of ...

The figure above (figure 34) gives detailed information about the different European quality instruments combined with the level of awareness and implementation. It can be seen that only a small amount of the provided quality instruments had already been used by the respondents. The orange marked columns show the instruments stakeholders are aware of but have not used so far. The columns marked in red provide information which of those instruments being totally unknown by the respondents.

The interviewed representatives were asked to state their opinion on different **factors considering a mobility action** within the measurement classifications absolutely, rather, rather not and not at all. The following spider graphs reflect the outcomes within the timeline **before, during and after a mobility** action.

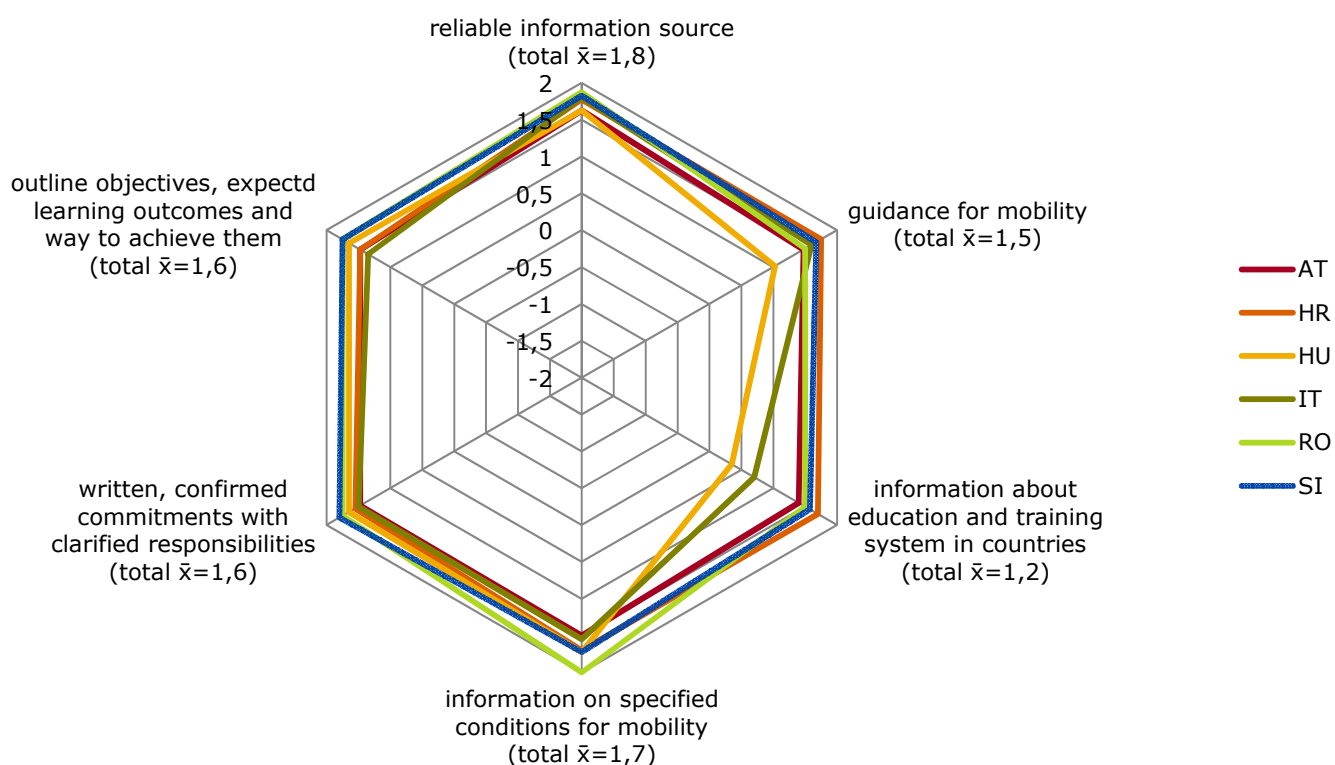


Figure 35 Important before mobility a) general 1

The first graph, clustered as general aspects 1, named reliable information source, guidance for mobility, information on specified conditions for mobility, role and tasks of sending and hosting organisations as well as written, confirmed commitments with clarified responsibilities and reflect that all these items tend towards the classification being absolutely important. One slight deviation is recognizable within the category information about education and training systems - country specific differences in the assessment of this item are evident.

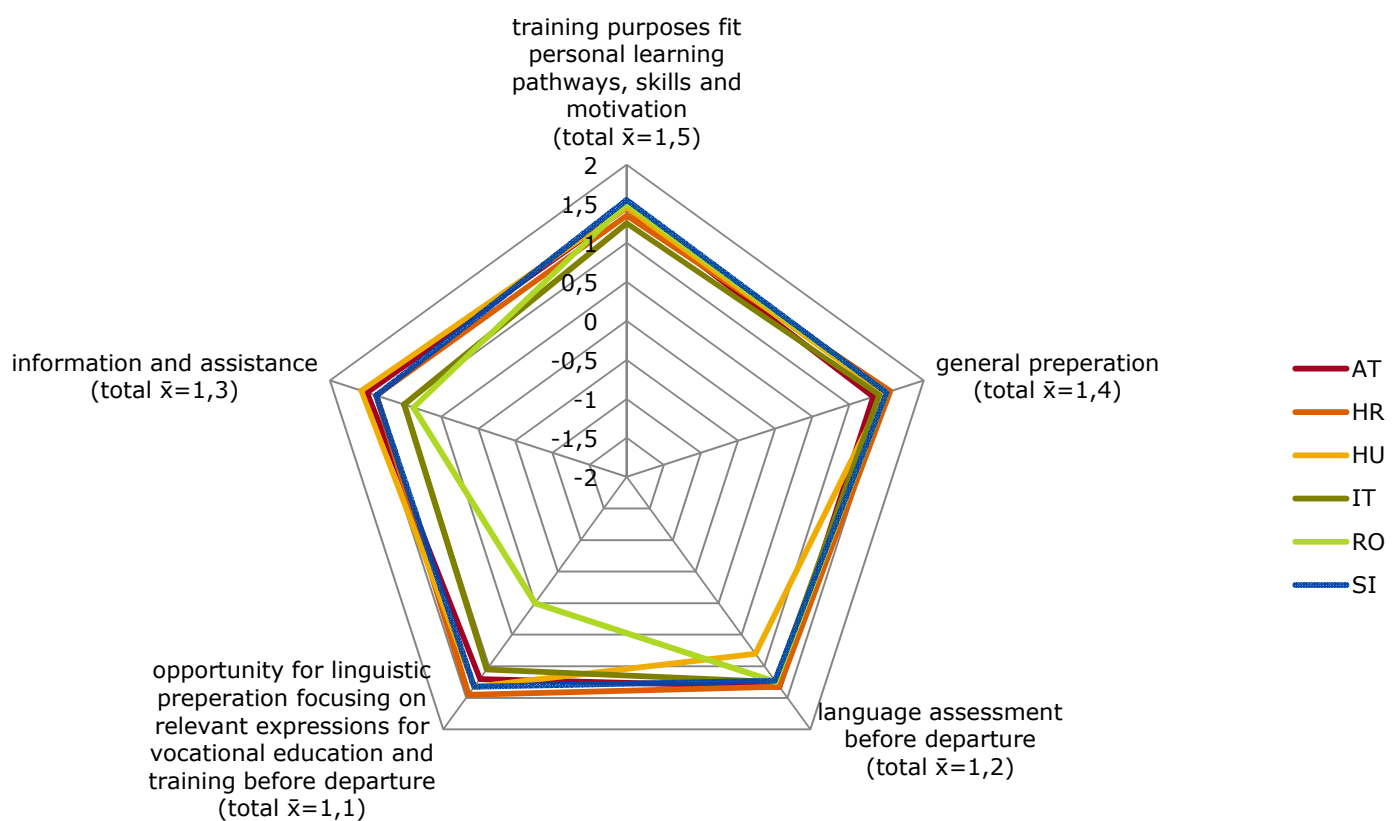


Figure 36 Important before mobility b) general 2

Within this second spider graph regarding important general preparation work for a mobility action it can be seen that all of the provided items are furthermore rated between absolutely

and rather important. Country specific deviations are found within the item linguistic preparation only.

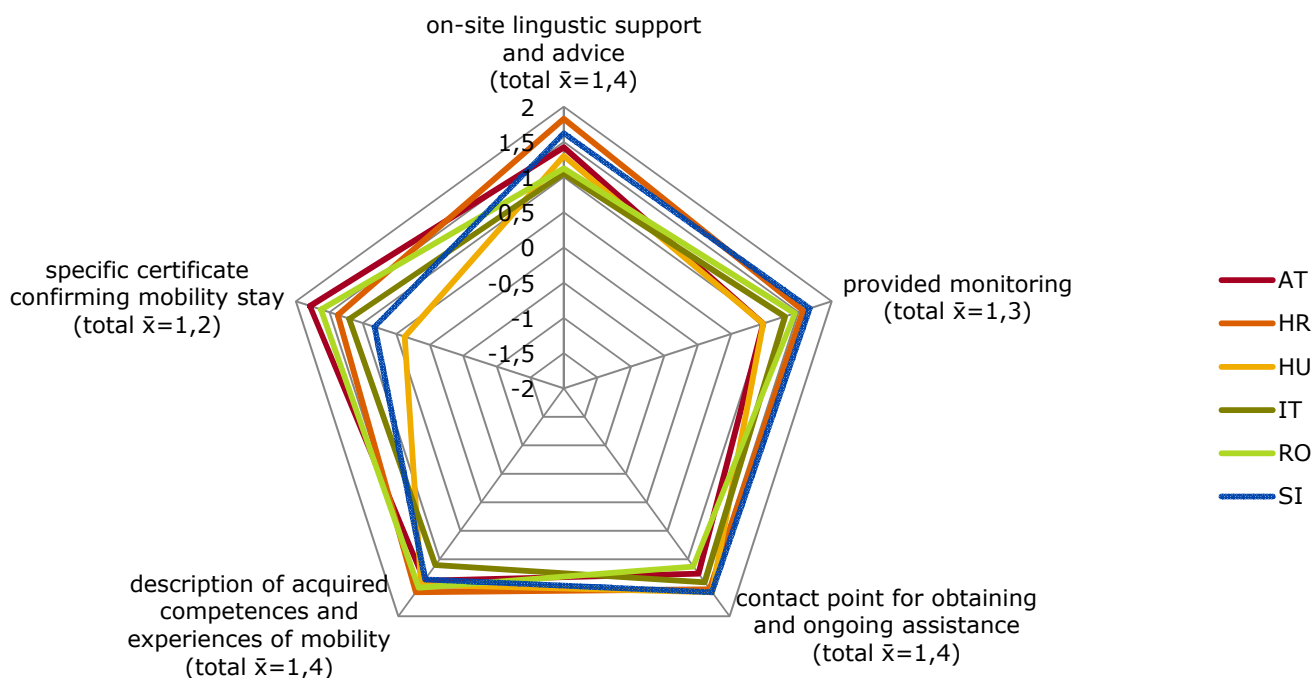


Figure 37 Important during mobility

During the mobility actions all five provided items had been rated of rather or high importance as can be seen in the figure 37 above, expressing that a continuous process during the stay abroad is essential for external stakeholders.

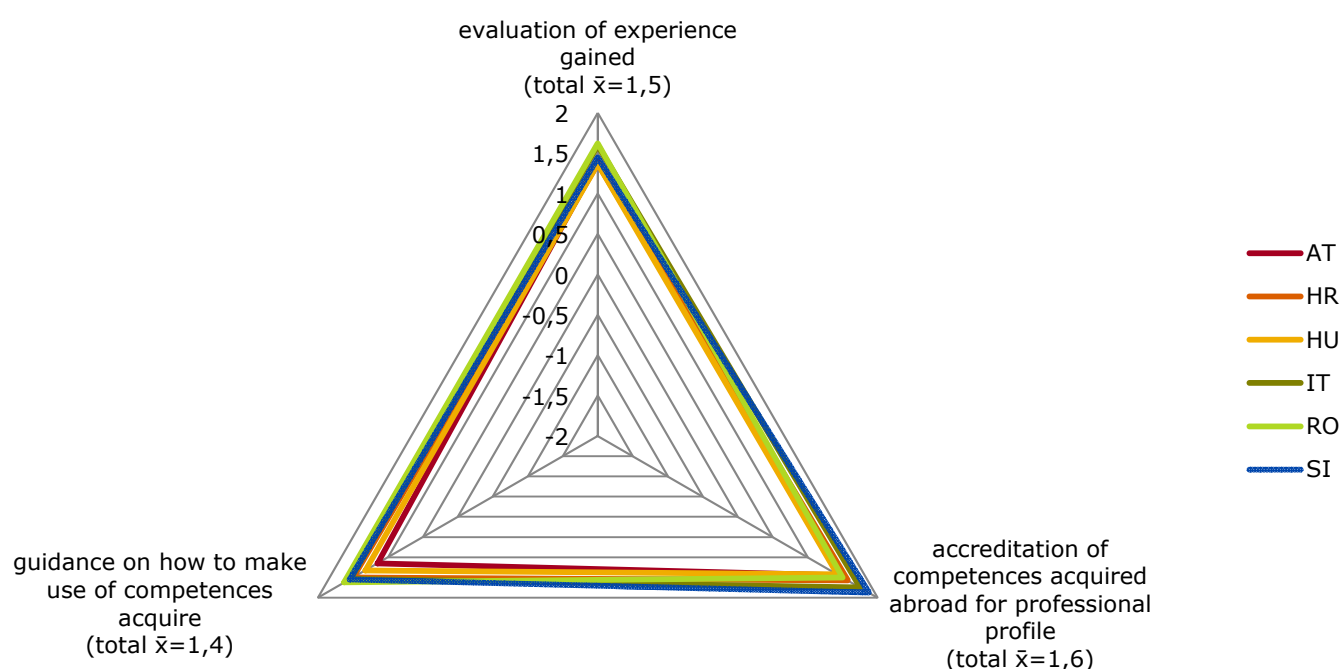


Figure 38 Important after mobility

Also the inquired items regarding tasks after a mobility stay including the evaluation of gained experience, accreditation of competences and guidance on how to make use of competences had been averagely assessed between rather and absolutely important. Additional practical factors mentioned are a platform to keep in touch (1), exchange of information and follow up support of intermediary organisations (1) as well as personal meeting for networking and exchange of experiences with other users of mobility offers (1).

3.4.3 Online Platform

Within the third part of the questionnaire stakeholders were asked about their opinions on features of a networking platform.

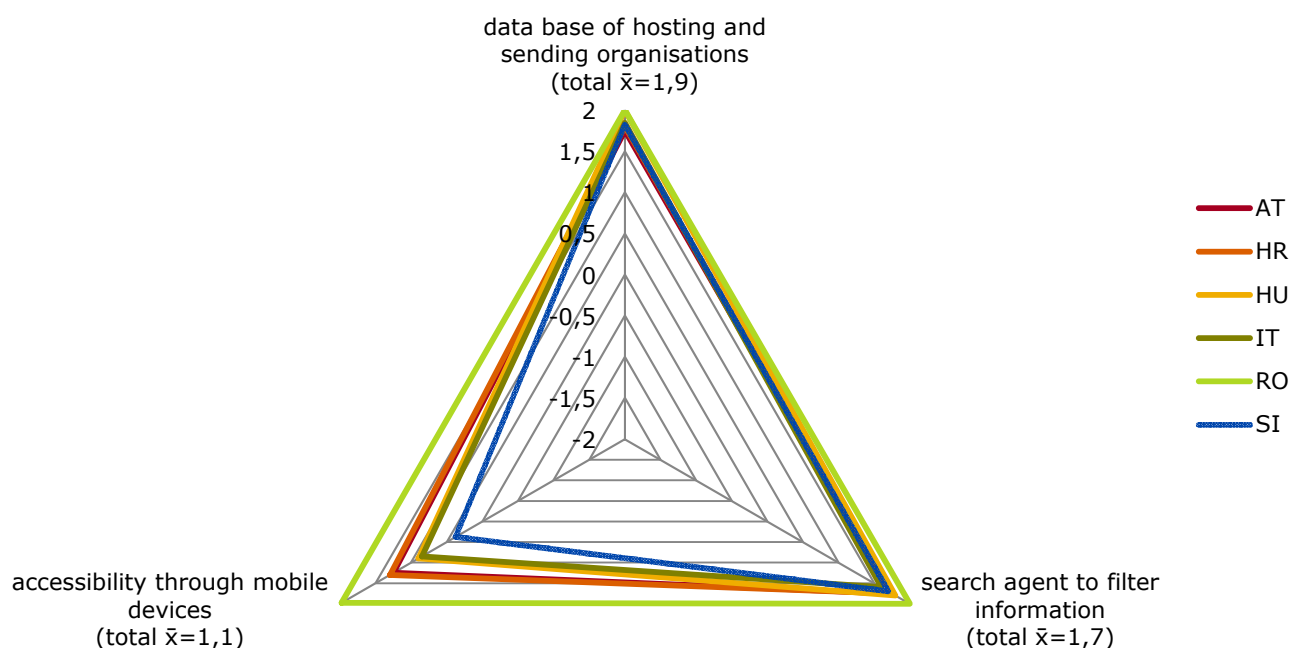


Figure 39 Features and functionalities that should be provided on the online platform

Regarding the features and functionalities that should be provided within the online platform the provision of a data base was rated highest (1.9), followed by a search agent to filter information (1.7) and the accessibility through mobile devices (1.1). Furthermore, demands include easy applicability (2) and guidelines (2), a Din A4 adequate printing possibility (1), a telephone service in case of questions or need for support (1) and the indication of similar network links (1). FAQs (1) would be welcome on the platform as well as email address, name and results of companies (2).

When it comes to the user friendliness, the possibility for direct communication between users (32), an easiest possible handling (28), taking care of data protection (27) and downloadable useful documents regarding mobility processes (26) are wished. A very strong focus is also put onto the language aspects, making the online platform accessible in more languages (33) and switching between languages (1) but providing English texts also (1). Links to sending/hosting organisation websites (24) and a section for suggestions for the platform (18) are mentioned alike. A nice design (7), with a barrier free use changing colour and font sizes (2) should be considered. Testimonials of users with experience and exchange of experiences from reliable sources (4), also including negative ones (1) would be welcome just as a map of Europe (4) and regular newsletters or reminders about new opportunities (3). Next to transparency, the search for fields, a link to external resources and a continuous updating of accurate contacts for receiving information in short time were mentioned once each as important.

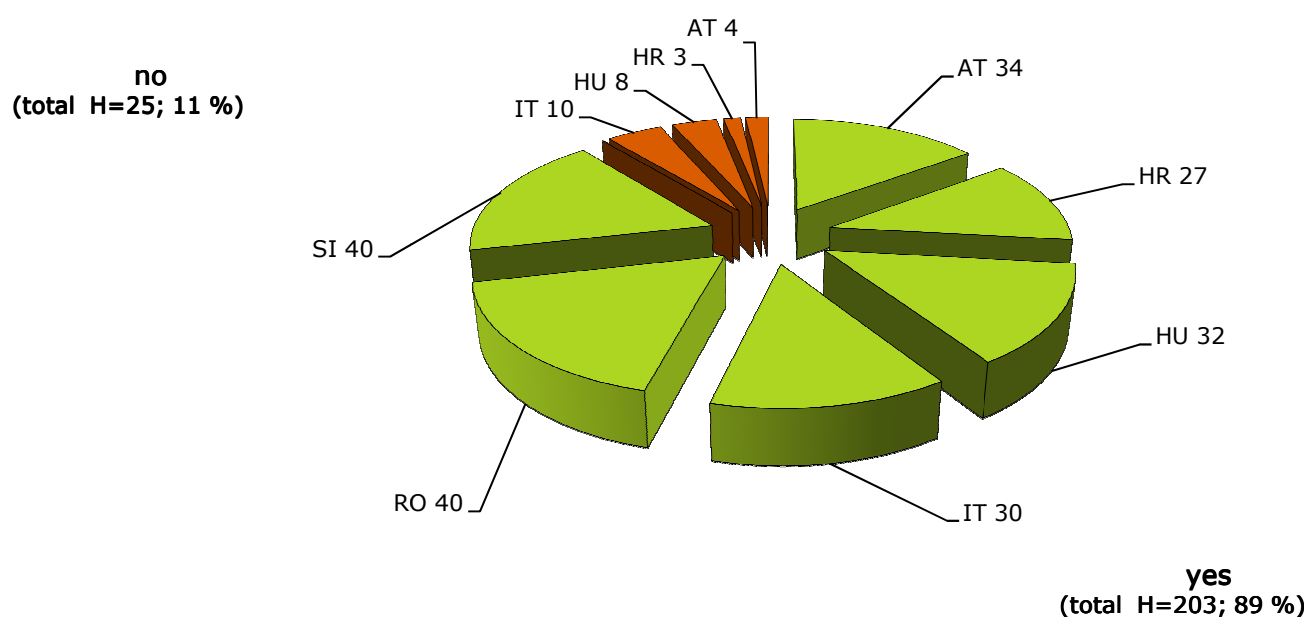


Figure 40 Interest in provided testimonials and case descriptions on the online platform

The question asking if testimonials or case descriptions including problems and good practices are interesting to offer on the online platform met great approval. With 89 %, the vast majority

welcomes this idea. Additional comments left refer to welcoming a standardised format as well as taking into consideration to publish positive findings only.

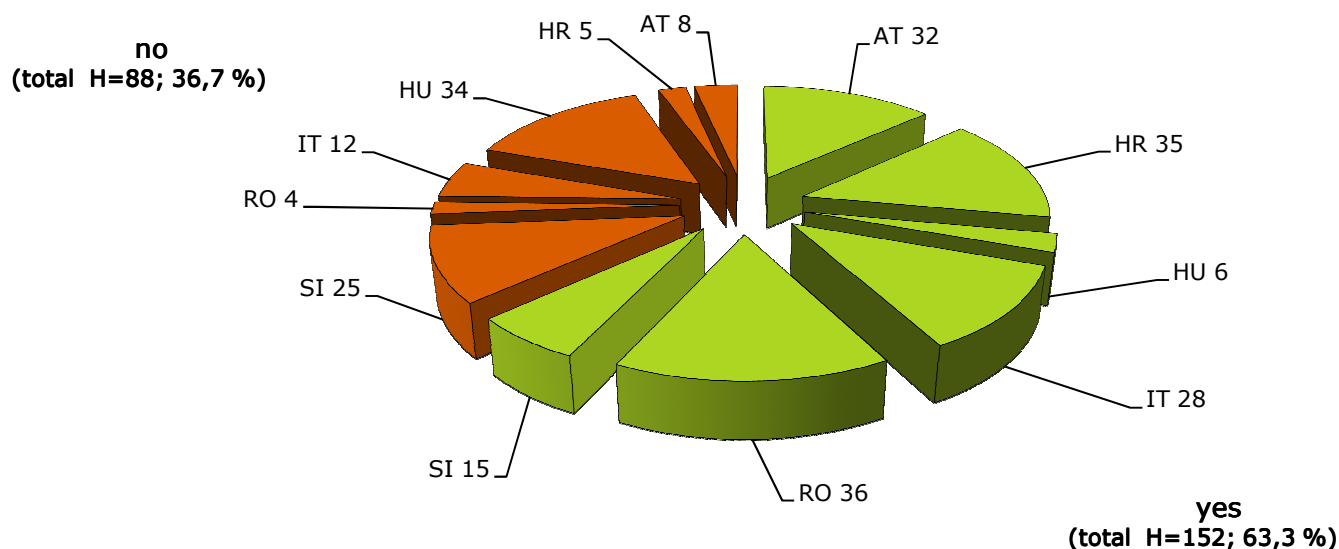


Figure 41 Interest in putting information about organisation on the online platform

A quite similar picture is given within the question if they can image to put information about their organisation on the online platform, with 63.3 % answering affirmatively. Reasons underling this include the exchange of knowledge and experiences with other organisations (7), expanding the network and opening new possibilities (4), adding that the platform will be enlivened by the two-way street of networking (1). Furthermore, actively taking part in mobility programmes (2) and having a visibility is good for organisations working in this field (2). The platform being a good and easy way to look for and compare organisations in similar fields (2), the great opportunity to present the own organisation (1) as well as searching might becoming easier (1) is mentioned. Gathering experiences in both roles, increasing interest for mobility actions for learners, educators and companies as well as seeing the chance for more transparency and fair chances in mobility actions are stated once alike. While stated that the platform needs to be evaluated before (1), others already provide information within a different network (2), another currently not being interested but maybe in the near future (1). Not being appropriate for the institution (2) with one of them specifying that the organisation is too small

is mentioned just like the fact that this decision requires agreement by the central administrative bodies (1).

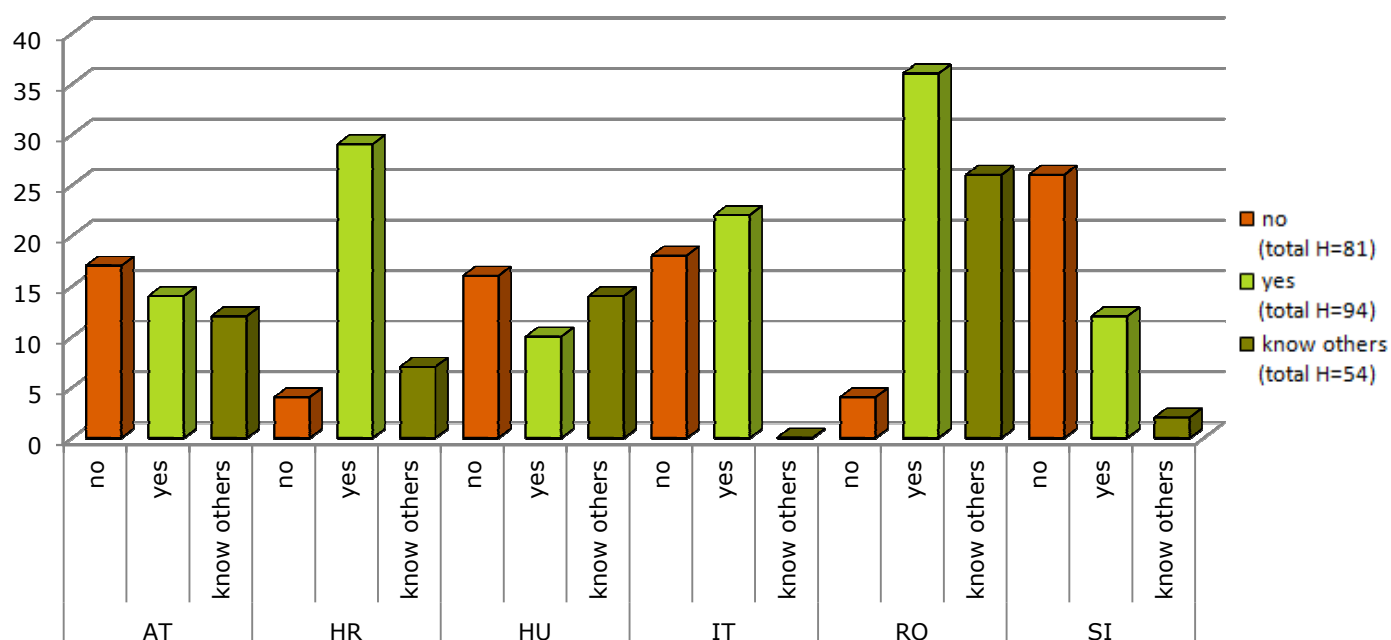


Figure 42 Interest for promotion of region or branch of trade on the online platform

The analysis of the question if external stakeholders are interested in promoting their region or branch of trade on the online platform draws a diverse picture. Enabling a multiple choice answer, a total number of 94 respondents are interested in promotion activities whereas a total number of 81 are not interested. 54 respondents do know others who could be interested. The country specific deviations can be seen in the graph above.

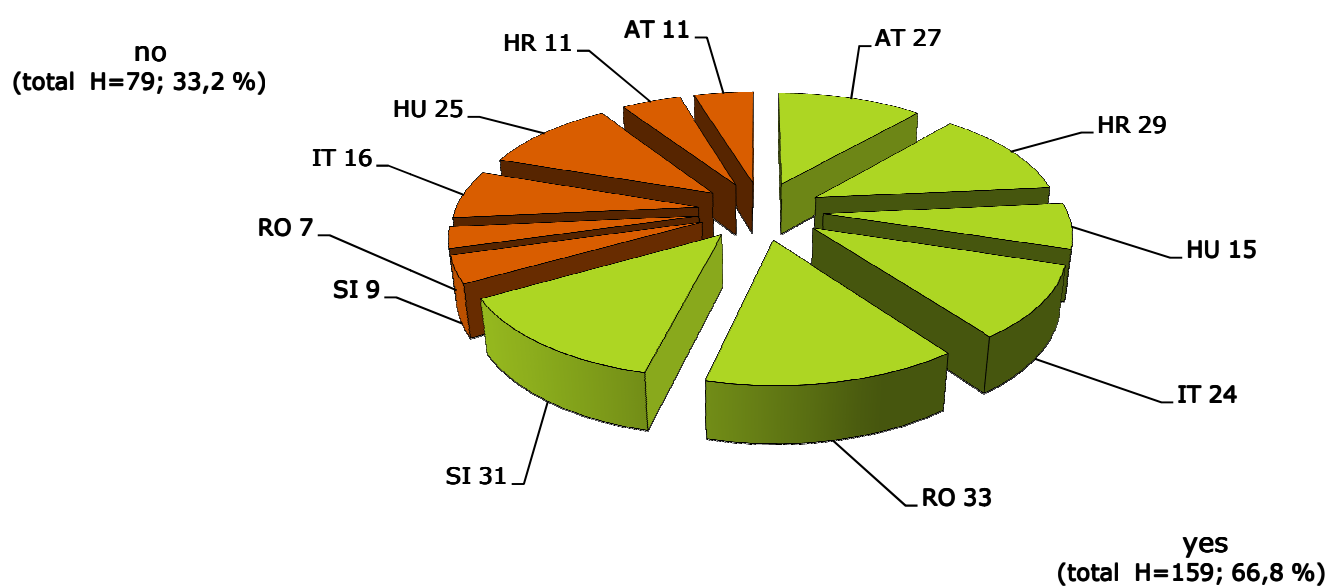


Figure 43 Willingness to test the online platform

As can be seen in figure 43 above, the willingness to test the platform is present within two thirds of the respondents (66.8 %), showing that representatives of external stakeholders are interested in having a look at the platform, trying it out and giving feedback for further improvement.

3.4.4 Network

Below, results from questions concerning the network idea in favour to establish a sustainable structure are displayed and analysed.

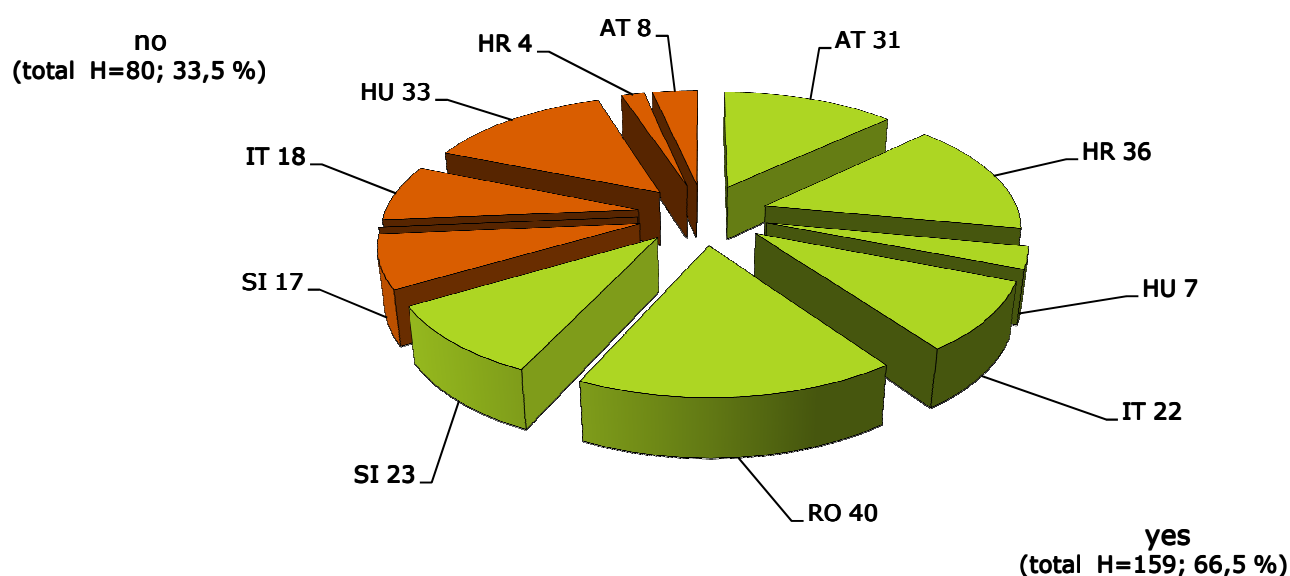


Figure 44 Interest in joining the network

The graph shows that with 66.5 %, the majority of external stakeholder representatives is interested in joining such a network. Within the next graphs you can see the motivating factors leading to this decision.

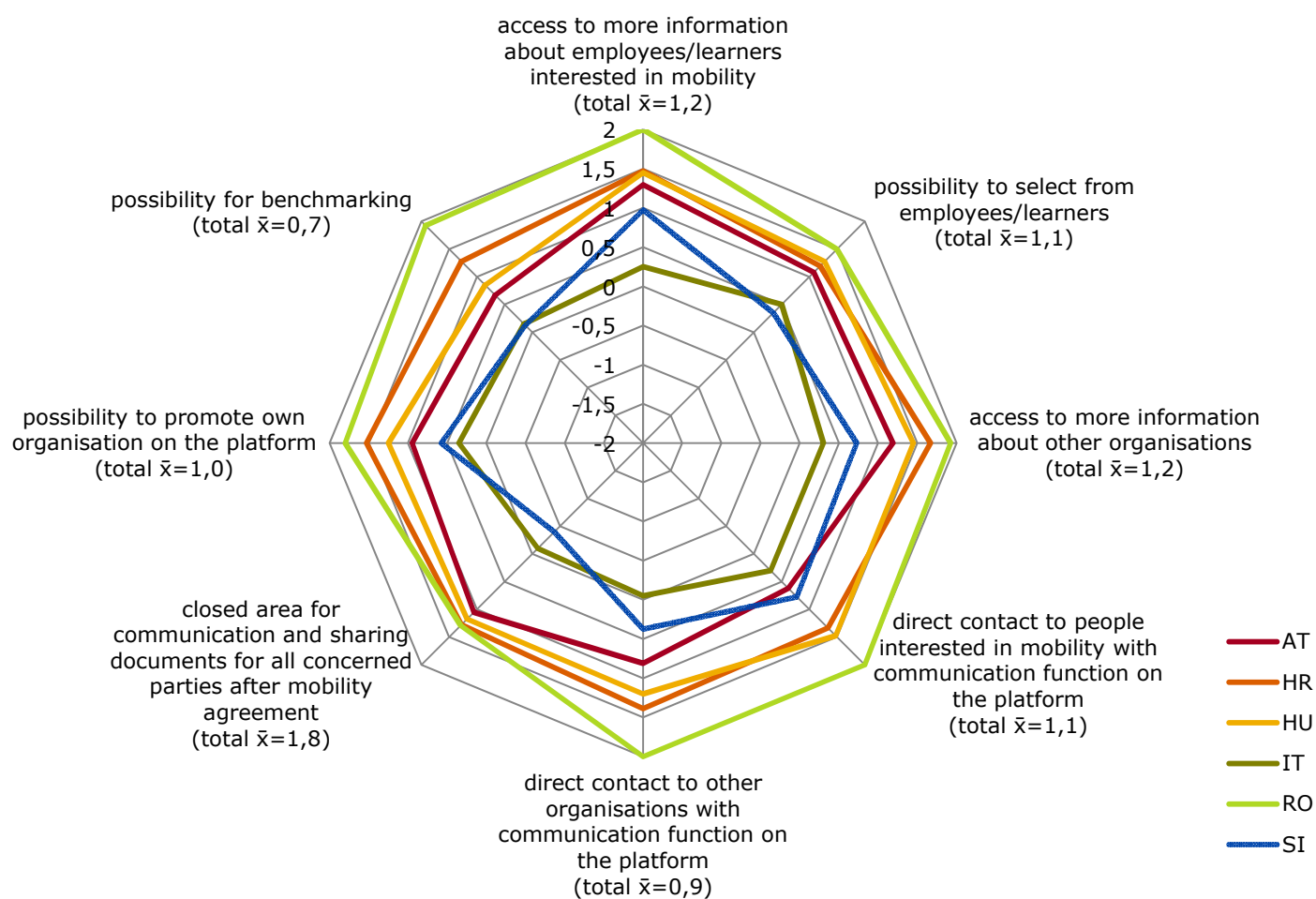


Figure 45 Motivating factors for joining the network

One of the main motivating factors for joining the network for external stakeholders is the closed area for communication and sharing with an average of 1.8. Further factors like the access to more information about employees and learners, the possibility to select from employees/learners, access to more information about other organisations, direct contact to people interested in mobility, direct contact to other organisations, a possibility to promote the own organisation and the possibility to benchmark are – averagely – rated as rather important.

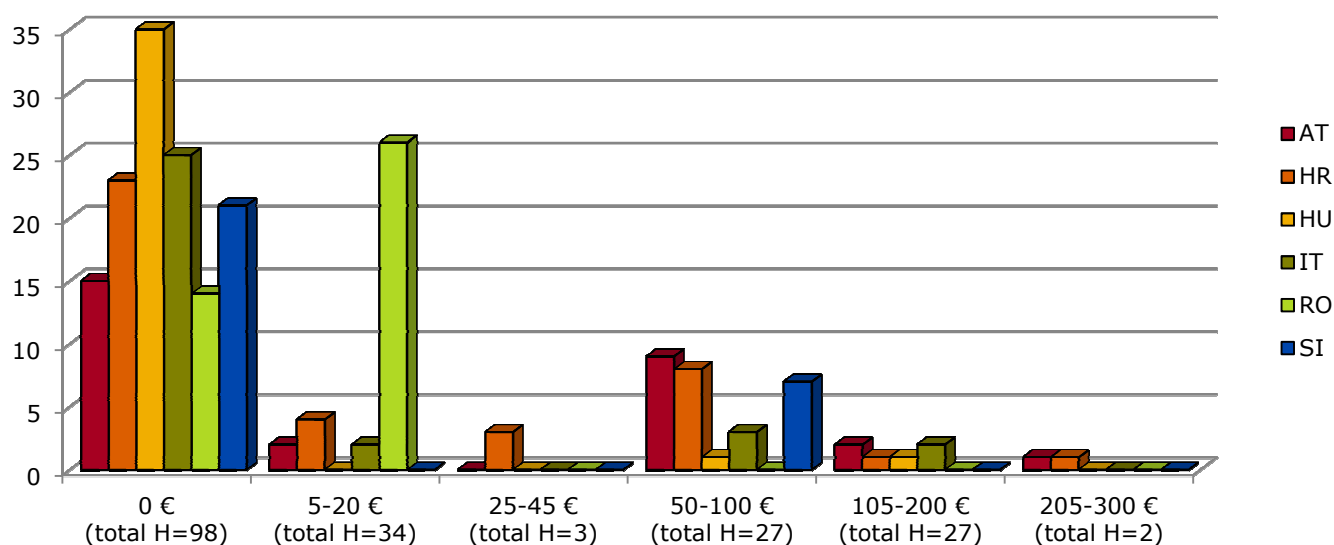


Figure 46 Amount willing to pay for networking platform service per year

A further question regarding the networking platform concerned the willingness to pay for using it. The vast majority (98) prefers the online platform to be free of charge, followed by the willingness to pay amounts between 5 € and 20 € (34). On the third rank an equal number of respondents are willing to pay either 50-100 € or 105-200 € (27). The category 25-45 € was chosen 3 times, the category 205-300 € was named two times. Noticeable are the diverse results in regard to the different countries as it can be seen in the graph above.

3.4.5 Remarks

Additional remarks given underline the positive impression by wishing good success (2) and waiting for an invitation to join the platform (2). Ideas given include to create a phasing-out scenario and the data handling when exiting the network as well as to arrange training courses for representatives for implementation of mobility actions. Publishing up-to-date information connected to mobility in other countries, especially referring to laws and regulations and the idea to have separate network areas with a specific focus but include a connection also belong to shared considerations.

4. Summarised Results and Conclusions

Giving a separated overview of all target group results in above chapters, below results are merged in favour of getting an insight into the main issues addressed and connected to the further project outputs, also enabling drawing conclusions and deductions for the upcoming work tasks.

4.1 Mobility

Mobility stays are generally considered as very useful among all target groups. Thereby, next to language skills, communication and adoption to new working environment, social competences including intercultural aspects and VET learners becoming more open minded and flexible are of the highest importance for all those questioned. Based on the European Charta for Mobility², process steps connected to before, during and after mobility actions are commonly seen as important. However, questioned representatives put a focus on all matters connected to the time before a mobility stay takes place. This includes reliable and up to date information with clarified and confirmed conditions including roles and tasks on all sides and a good organisation. Especially for VET learners but also for HR managers and responsible persons for mobility in VET schools, a support function and having a contact person is of significant relevance. Furthermore, VET learners underline that they want to be informed about the country with a focus on living there, the accommodation as well as travelling there. These and mainly language and communication issues abroad, especially also in the hosting organisation belong to the biggest worries and concerns. Whereas a constant contact and support should continue during mobility, also the preparations allowing later on accreditation of competences are considered as essential. The validation is seen as crucial among the vast majority as a cross-national comparison and common standard allowing transparency and traceability but keeping it simple by avoiding too much bureaucratic effort. Even though recognition and transparency are among the important aspects for everyone, the general use but also knowledge about the existence of

² Recommendation (EC) No [2006/961](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: [European Quality Charter for Mobility](#) [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006].

European quality and transparency instruments is rather low. Next to the Europass Mobility and learning agreement, the European Language Passport belongs to those documents people are more commonly familiar with and put into practice.

4.2 Online Platform

Concerning the online platform, all target groups highlight the importance of the user friendliness by suggesting a clear and well arranged structure with content provided being short and easy to understand, enabling a practical, quick use. Besides ensuring up to date information and providing information in languages other than English only, also links to external resources are wished. Especially for the young target group of VET learners but also for the majority of others, mobile accessibility to the online platform is an important feature. Provided information should contain some kind of short guidelines for mobility stays, ready prepared forms and a data base of sending and hosting organisations as well as interested VET learners. Concerning the data base, general country information, branch and/or production, the experiences regarding mobility stays, languages spoken and accommodation issues belong to the most important ones mentioned. There should also be the possibility to include photos and upload documents. Short case descriptions and testimonials are considered as essential for the majority of questioned target group representatives. Some kind of direct contact possibility as well as a search function is considered as necessary alike. Filter options should allow searching for the country, branch and languages spoken just as for specific sending and hosting organisations. The majority would put information online and also be willing to test and give feedback on the online platform. One motivating factor is that target groups are interested to have a look at the product, decide on the further use of it and also getting the possibility to address some further requests.

4.3 Network

Among questioned target group representatives, an interest to join a sustainable network certainly exists. Strongest benefits seen are in connection with a secure access to the platform guaranteeing data protection, admission to more detailed information as well as a closed area to contact other users and share documents. The expenses feasible for organisations vary, as

many do not have a budget foreseen or would like to make it depending on the benefit of it. VET learners are open to share their experiences and offer help to others after they have been on a mobility stay as they would like to pass on the support they have received as well as to encourage others to use this chance.

Summing up, mobility stays are broadly considered as very useful especially for the personal development of learners which all target groups can profit from in the end. As a high number of organisations have cooperation to interregional organisations beyond country borders, this aspect be taken into account for the REMO project. Their cooperation can be strengthened and a broader network within the region can be build up by fostering mobility stays and exchanges.

With the strong demand for an easiest possible handling which is user friendly and not very bureaucratic but at the same time guarantees transparency, validation and recognition, the project is facing a huge challenge that is known in the context of the ECVET. This core problem will be faced within REMO but at the same time the awareness exists that maybe only little steps can be accomplished when taking into account the frame conditions coming along with the project. An easy and up to date step-by-step guide, keeping information short and simple is targeted with a feedback loop including all target groups again implemented in favour of establishing a good quality product.

This piloting of process descriptions will be carried out together with the online platform as it is part of the product. As well as concerning guidelines, also the online platform should have an easiest possible handling and be user friendly going along with a well structure. Taking into account achievements already made alike, including links to external sources and connecting diverse accomplishments represent an opportunity to provide a best possible overview for all target groups of the project even beyond the work frame of REMO. The development of the online platform also faces challenge when it comes to switching between languages or a barrier-free use. Other important features like a direct communication possibility, mobile access and an adequate search function will also be part of clarifying technical possibilities and affordable programming solutions.

For the establishment of the network the strongest motivations indicated for joining and setting up a sustainable frame will be considered. However, the task of maintenance of the platform, keeping information up to date far beyond the projects lifetime will be another challenge as the introductory research showed that for a service like this the budget very often is not available. Nevertheless, the best possible solution needs to be targeted when starting the programming of the platform to keep the work load connected to maintenance as low as possible and guarantee a long-term use of REMO. As the interest of all target groups is high, the preconditions for project outputs to be sustainably benefited from are very good.