Student Mobility in Romania - Perceptions and Trends

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Aim of the article

- Increase awareness on the strengths and weaknesses of the Intl. dimension of education in Romania;
  - Understanding students perceptions on intl.
  - Reasons for/ barriers against taking part in a study or placement mobility programme;
  - Analysis the institutional strategies on intl.
- Contribute to the improvement of this dimension
  - Students' recommendations.

Why is the study relevant?

Demographics of the respondents

- 5126 respondents - 5.7% were foreign students (293 respondents) and 94.3% (4833 respondents) were Romanian students
- 61.7% were male and 38.3% female; aged between 21 and 25 years, 34.8 aged between 18-20 years and 11.5% older than 26 years.

Perception of students over the international dimension of their university according to fields of study

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ABOUT THE LEVEL OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THEIR UNIVERSITY

Factors influencing the perception of students about the level of internationalization of their university

Relationship between level of internationalisation and participation in a mobility

Correlations

			Internationalization	Mobility
Kendall's tau_b	Internationalization	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.417**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	5126	5126
	Mobility	Correlation Coefficient	.417**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	5126	5126
Spearman's rho	Internationalization	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.475**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	5126	5126
	Mobility	Correlation Coefficient	.475**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	5126	5126

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Factors influencing the perception of students about the level of internationalization of their university

Correlation between being perceived as international and the capacity to welcome international students and to offer them opportunities to mingle with the elements of internationalisation (website in a foreign language, English study programmes, etc.) all gathered in one over standing variable (I1)

		Welcome	Mingle
I1	Correlation Coefficient	.306**	.330**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	3913	3913

Factors influencing the perception of students about the level of internationalization of their university

The link between the international department and the availability of data about the mobility opportunities

		Opps_A	Depart
Info	Correlation Coefficient	.429**	.331**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	3913	3913

* Info = There is good information about study/work/volunteering abroad opportunities
*Depart = There is a helpful International Relations Department
* Opps_A = There are opportunities to study/work/volunteer abroad

Factors influencing the perception of students about the level of internationalization of their university

Perception of the efforts undergone by the university to

- offer programmes that prepare student to work in an international environment (prepare)
- encourage students to study/work/volunteer abroad (encourage)
- help students to develop an international outlook (outlook)
- offer international opportunities as part of the programme (Opps)
- offer opportunities to study another language (languages)
- raise awareness among academics and support staff about European global issues
- invite international teachers (Acad_foreign)

Mobility programs

Reasons for going / barriers

Reasons that determined students to follow a mobility program

Mobility experience

Why won't more Romanian students go on a mobility?

1. the lack of financial resources - 47%
2. personal reasons – 40%
3. incomplete information about the process /lack of transparency - 19%

4. few opportunities available - 18%
5. the lack of moral support from families or friends - 14%

Suggestions to improve the internationalization of education

1. **developing more international cooperation opportunities- 49%**
2. **inviting more foreign teachers to teach within the university– 39%**
3. **offer more courses in English even for home-students - 31%**
4. **attracting more international students – 32%**

Other: more transparency, better promotion of mobility opportunities, preparing the teachers to teach in foreign languages, developing MOOCs and online courses, adapting courses so that they follow international trends, organizing alumni events, and inviting professionals to share their experience.

Goals and objectives for internationalization of Romanian HEIs

- Increasing mobility
- internationalisation at home, research, marketing, partnerships, services for international students and areas regarding the quality of education and internal organization matters;

Limited understanding of the concepts linked to internationalisation

Conclusions

Students perceive easier efforts that also meet some of their desires

Other efforts are less perceived by the respondents;

Respondents consider mobility programs valuable

Final recommendations

- More efforts towards the mobility programs so they become:
  - More transparent;
  - Better promoted;
  - Better communicated with the beneficiaries;
  - Better supported by allocating more money and addressing the emotional and academic needs of the beneficiaries.
- More efforts towards internationalization at home;
- More international cooperation opportunities (chose strategically);
- Improved institutional and human capacity of HEIs;
- Reduced bureaucracy with the help of technology;

Thank you!

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