

## FROM EXPECTATIONS TO RESULTS: THE EFFECTS OF ERASMUS PLUS MOBILITIES ON STAFF AT A ROMANIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to conduct a comparative analysis between the expectations of international mobility beneficiaries in the higher education sector, and the results obtained following participation in such programs. To this end, a pilot quantitative study was conducted among staff members of Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania, who benefited from at least one Erasmus Plus teaching or training mobility ( $N = 96$ ). The research instrument was a questionnaire adapted from the EU Survey developed by the European Commission. The results highlight effects analyzed through both gap analysis and statistical significance testing. The gap analysis indicates improvements in organizational, managerial, and leadership skills, increased confidence in intercultural contexts, and the generation of indirect outcomes such as the development of joint curricula, courses or modules, academic networks, and research collaborations. The results of the statistical analysis indicate a negative outcome, expressed through unmet expectations concerning the development of professional and methodological competences, especially regarding innovative teaching practices and the acquisition of practical skills.

**Key words:** *expectations, higher education sector, international mobility, results, staff members*

**JEL Classification:** *I23, D84*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Erasmus Plus mobilities represent an important instrument in the higher education sector, frequently used by university staff and students. The reasons why academic personnel choose to participate in international mobility activities vary considerably. On the one hand, mobilities may be undertaken to develop professional competences, improve teaching practices, or enhance one's knowledge within their own field of specialization through the exchange of best practices with counterparts at the host university. On the other hand, such experiences contribute to expanding professional networks with individuals who share similar interests, developing language competences, initiating joint educational or research projects, and strengthening soft skills relevant to academic activity.

Regardless of the motivation for participating in an international mobility funded by the Erasmus Plus Programme or other tools, it is essential to examine the effects of these activities and the extent to which the initial objectives have been achieved. In many cases, the assessment of impact remains largely declarative, relying on feedback questionnaires completed by participants or on testimonials published by International Relations Departments.

Therefore, the present paper aims to address the following question: What has been the effect of Erasmus Plus mobilities on the professional development of staff members in the higher education sector over recent years? A pilot study was conducted on a sample of employees from a Romanian university to address this question. The initial results obtained may serve as a foundation for future research on a larger scale, first at the national level and subsequently internationally, including a wider range of universities.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As a simple definition, internationalization can be described as referring to "any relationship across borders between nations, or between single institutions situated within different national systems" (OECD, 2009, p. 21). Applied to the higher education sector, this process refers to cooperative relationships between universities from different countries, which involve "shared and joint research and scholarship", "student and staff exchange", and "working together in aid/development projects" (OECD, 2009). Thus, internationalization serves to connect at least two parties from different countries to achieve a common goal.

Over time, the process of internationalization has represented an important objective for universities worldwide. At first glance, looking back at the periods of the two world wars or the communist regimes that dominated several countries in Central and Eastern Europe, one could argue that this crucial process for university development was nearly impossible to implement. Nevertheless, based on the principles of peace and mutual understanding, a series of initiatives were developed as early as 1919 to support such cooperation and international exchanges: the Institute of International Education in the United States (1919); the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) in Germany (1925); the British Council in the United Kingdom (1934); and the Fulbright Program in the United States (1946) (de Wit and Altbach, 2020).

With the development of the European Union (EU) and international mobility programs, the implementation of internationalization became even more feasible, at least among member countries. Today, higher education institutions increasingly explore various ways to establish international partnerships and to support the development of multicultural competences among students, academic staff, and administrative personnel, making such practices a standard part of institutional activity (Dincă et al., 2019). According to studies conducted by the International Association of Universities and the European Association for International Education, one of the objectives of these internationalization initiatives is to improve the quality of teaching and learning (de Wit et al., 2015). Thus, both academic staff and students, as direct beneficiaries, can derive tangible benefits from the internationalization process within their institutions.

One instrument of the European Union that can support the implementation of such international activities is the Erasmus Plus Programme. Although currently operating in the 2021-2027 period and targeting multiple sectors, including education, vocational training, youth, and sport (European Commission, 2025a), the program has a longer history. It was launched in 1987 under the title “the programme for the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS)” (Official Journal of the European Communities, 1987). Its evolution has been remarkable. At its inception, international exchanges could only take place among 11 countries: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom (Hubble et al., 2021). Today, for the 2025-2026 period (similar to previous cycles), a large number of countries are eligible to participate. In addition to the 27 EU member states, six other countries are fully eligible to participate in all program actions: North Macedonia, Iceland, Norway, Serbia, Liechtenstein, and Türkiye (European Commission, 2025a). Beyond these 33 countries, a further category (non-associated third countries), including nations from other continents, may participate in certain activities, but not with full rights (European Commission, 2025a).

Mede and Tuzun (2016) state that the Erasmus Plus Programme has the following objectives: (1) the development of students’ competences and employability; (2) the modernization of teaching and learning processes; (3) the optimization of international cooperation through the program; and (4) the strengthening of the Bologna Process and dialogue with strategic partners. Accordingly, this instrument occupies a key position in advancing the European ideal of education, also contributing to the adequate preparation of academic staff to face anticipated challenges (Ivasciuc et al., 2025). Among these issues are political realities and national security, government policies and the cost of education, curriculum internationalization, online learning, quality assurance, and European policies, among others (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Additionally, other barriers may include migration, climate change, and cultural polarization (Eidson, 2025).

As mentioned earlier, international exchanges represent a fundamental instrument for implementing universities’ internationalization policies. These exchanges are characterized by multidimensional complexity, encompassing various levels of impact for their beneficiaries, particularly among university staff: individual, institutional, and systemic (Academic Cooperation Association, 2023). Accordingly, the promotion of international exchanges should be regarded as a strategic objective, not only for university employees and leadership but also for the relevant ministry or other authorities responsible for the effective functioning of the higher education system in a given country.

Programs such as Erasmus Plus not only enhance the teaching competences of academic staff but also foster their professional development, facilitating a shift from a student-centered perspective to one oriented toward their role and identity as educators (Ivasciuc et al., 2025). Such mobility opportunities can provide staff with increased visibility and recognition upon returning to their home institutions, offering a comparative advantage over colleagues who have not participated in international mobility. The positive effects of this professional transformation can often be observed through student feedback on classroom activities following the mobility. When these changes are recognized by students, the international mobility can be considered to have fully achieved its primary objective: supporting the professional development of its beneficiaries. Furthermore, a study indicates that staff mobility contributes to the enhancement of social and intercultural competences (Vlad, 2021).

Furthermore, participation in international mobility can contribute to enhancing the university’s reputation. Academic staff become better equipped, while the institution may benefit from new educational

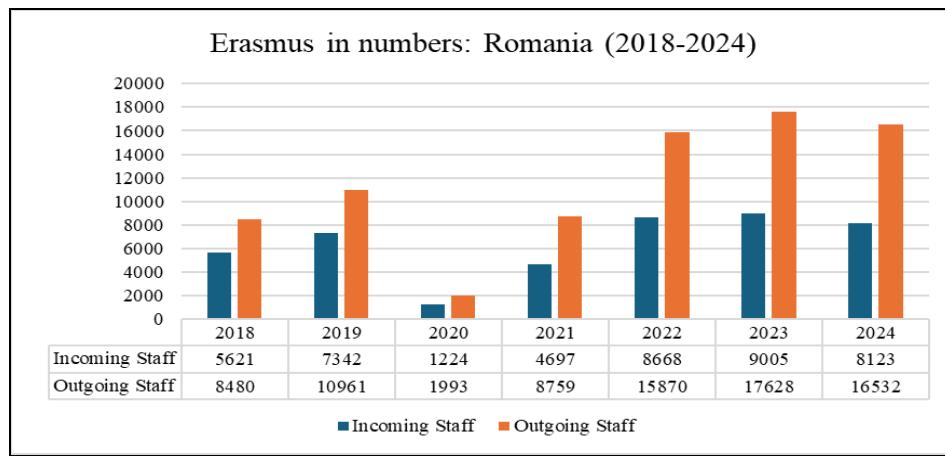
programs or research projects developed through international collaborations initiated by mobility participants. In addition, the number of students engaging in international mobility programs is likely to increase, as they are encouraged to apply by faculty members who have already gained such exchange experience (Mede and Tuzun, 2016).

Given the extensive benefits for both participants and institutions, international mobility has emerged as a key driver of transformation in higher education (Eidson, 2025). It serves as a cornerstone in the modernization of European higher education, directly influencing competitiveness and fostering international integration. Its effectiveness, however, relies on coherent institutional strategies, supportive policies, and the strengthening of global academic partnerships (Kazantsev, 2025).

### III. ERASMUS PLUS IN THE ROMANIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

As previously indicated, Romania is among the countries that fully participate in the Erasmus Plus Programme, being a Member State of the European Union. It benefits from the involvement of organizations across multiple actions, ranging from Higher Education, School Education, and Adult Education to Youth, Sport, and other sectors. In 2024, out of a total of 1,333 mobility projects implemented, 116 were allocated to the Higher Education sector (European Commission, 2025b). Regarding the financial magnitude of these mobilities, in 2024 the total funding for Higher Education exceeded EUR 60,560,700 (European Commission, 2025b).

The following figure presents the evolution of the number of incoming and outgoing staff participants in Romania over the period 2018-2024, across all sectors of the Erasmus Plus Programme.



Source: own processing; European Commission (2025b) data.

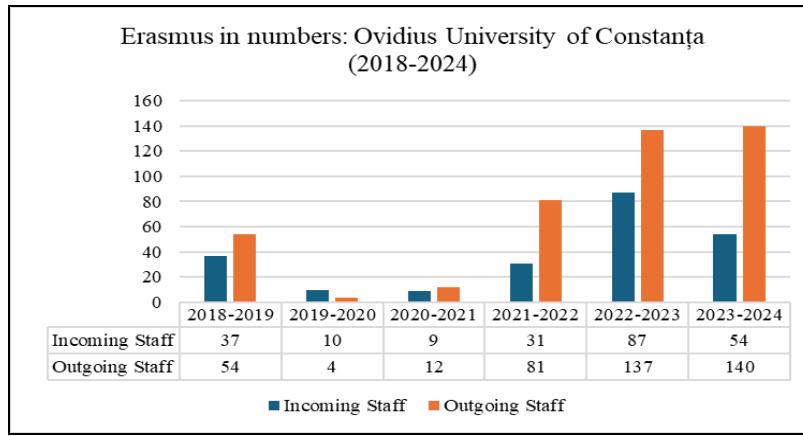
**Figure 1 - Erasmus staff mobility: Romania (2018-2024)**

According to Figure 1, an upward trend can be observed in the number of beneficiaries for both outgoing and incoming staff mobility over the period analyzed. As expected, the lowest values were recorded in 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions imposed at that time. After 2020, the number of beneficiaries traveling from and to Romania increased significantly until 2023. However, in the most recent reference year (2024), a slight decline in the number of mobilities can be observed compared to the previous year. This decrease may be attributed, on the one hand, to economic conditions, as rising inflation and living costs may reduce the attractiveness of such opportunities, particularly in the absence of a corresponding increase in grant amounts. On the other hand, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, occurring in close proximity to Romania, may represent a discouraging factor, especially for incoming participants, who might prefer destinations perceived as safer.

A higher education institution that has undoubtedly contributed to the indicators presented above is Ovidius University of Constanța. For this organization, internationalization represents a strategic opportunity to strengthen its reputation and to adopt higher education practices aligned with the future standards and demands of the market and the international community (Jugănaru and Drugă, 2022). Accordingly, one of the main instruments employed, and reported in its annual reports, is international mobility funded through the Erasmus Plus Programme. Figure 2 illustrates the evolution in the number of mobility beneficiaries, both incoming and outgoing staff, over the academic years 2018-2019 to 2023-2024.

The data presented in the mentioned figure (Figure 2) largely mirror national trends over the same period. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a marked decline in the number of staff participants in teaching and training mobilities, both incoming and outgoing, during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years.

Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, however, both mobility flows exhibited a substantial recovery. Ovidius University of Constanța implemented targeted measures to compensate for the disruptions caused by the pandemic. These measures included intensive promotional campaigns, initiatives to enhance staff engagement in professional development (particularly through the organization of various activities within national institutional development projects focused on internationalization), and strategic efforts to reassert the institution's position in the international higher education arena, leveraging its advantageous location on the Black Sea coast.



Source: own processing; Ovidius University of Constanța (2025) data.

**Figure 2 - Erasmus staff mobility: Ovidius University of Constanța (2018-2024)**

Although, by the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, the number of outgoing mobilities remained roughly at the level recorded the previous year, incoming mobilities appear to follow a downward trend. This pattern may be explained by the same factors identified at the national level. External and geopolitical conditions, as well as rising costs, likely constitute the main reasons behind these fluctuations. However, the steady increase in the number of outgoing beneficiaries can also be attributed to Ovidius University of Constanța's efforts to join a European Universities initiative. In 2024, the university successfully became a member of the ARTEMIS consortium (Alliance for Regional Transition, Equality, Mobility, Inclusion and Sustainability), alongside seven other universities from France, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Estonia, Norway, and Italy (ARTEMIS, 2025).

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To address the research question formulated in the introduction of this paper, a quantitative marketing study was conducted. The research instrument consisted of a questionnaire. The target group included staff members of Ovidius University of Constanța who had benefited from at least one Erasmus Plus grant in recent years. The questionnaire was administered exclusively online during the period October-November 2025, either via social media platforms or by e-mail, using the institutional database of academic and non-academic staff who had participated in teaching or training mobilities, with the support of the Erasmus Plus Office of the university.

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research, the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. No personal data enabling the identification of participants were collected or processed, and data handling complied with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The aim of this study is to measure the effects of Erasmus Plus teaching and training mobilities through a comparative analysis between the objectives and expectations set by beneficiaries prior to departure and the outcomes and results achieved at the end of the academic exchange period. The specific research objectives are as follows:

- O1: to assess the level of familiarity of the surveyed staff with international mobility opportunities funded through the Erasmus Plus Programme;

- O2: to identify the types of grants most frequently accessed by the surveyed staff.

This research is classified as a pilot study because the scale used to measure these effects is newly developed, based on the feedback questionnaire that participants receive at the end of their mobility through the EU Survey instrument (European Commission, 2025c). Data were processed and analyzed using SPSS Statistics software. The analysis included descriptive statistics, gap analysis, and non-parametric inferential testing.

## V. SAMPLE STRUCTURE

A total of 102 questionnaires were collected. Of these, six were excluded because they were incomplete or were completed by individuals who had not participated in at least one Erasmus Plus mobility. Therefore, the final sample for data analysis and interpretation consisted of 96 beneficiaries. As this study is also a pilot, as previously mentioned, this sample can be considered a convenience sample.

The following table presents a description of the sample according to various socio-demographic variables.

**Table 1. Sample structure**

Variables	% Male (12.5%) Female (87.5%)					
<i>Gender</i>						
<i>Age (years)</i>	18-24 (2.09%)	25-34 (7.29%)	35-44 (18.75%)	45-54 (38.54%)	55-64 (32.29%)	>= 65 (1.04%)
<i>Marital status</i>	Married (61.46%)	Divorced (19.79%)	In a relationship (3.13%)	Single (13.54%)	Widowed (2.08%)	
<i>Average income (RON)</i>	2,576-3,500 (1.04%)	3,501-4,500 (17.71%)	4,501-5,500 (37.50%)	Above 5,000 (43.75%)		

Source: own processing.

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents are female (87.5%). Regarding age, most participants are between 45-54 years old (38.54%) and 55-64 years old (32.29%). In terms of marital status, most respondents are married (61.46%). Finally, considering average income, the largest group (43.75%) reported earnings above RON 5,000, followed by those earning between RON 4,501 and RON 5,500 (37.50%).

In addition to the details presented in Table 1, the roles of respondents at Ovidius University of Constanța are further examined. Of the participants, 53.13% hold administrative positions, 30.21% are academic teaching staff, and the remaining respondents include faculty secretarial staff (15.63%) and researchers (1.03%).

Among the respondents, 81.25% did not hold a managerial position at the time of the study. Furthermore, 96.88% were full-time employees with permanent contracts.

Finally, regarding the length of service at Ovidius University of Constanța, the largest group of respondents (44.79%) had been employed at the institution for more than 20 years. This finding correlates with the most representative age groups presented in Table 1. Conversely, the least represented group consisted of those with more than one year but less than five years of service (12.50%).

## VI. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first thematic question of the study focused on the level of familiarity of Ovidius University of Constanța staff with the international mobility opportunities funded through the Erasmus Plus Programme. The question employed a semantic differential scale ranging from 5 (to a very great extent) to 1 (to a very small extent). The mean score obtained was 4.55, indicating that respondents are almost completely aware of the details regarding these mobility grants. This high score can be explained by the fact that all participants who answered this question had benefited from at least one Erasmus Plus teaching or training mobility. Of the respondents, 59.38% had participated in such international exchanges between 2 and 5 times, while 28.13% had benefited only once. Only 17.71% had experienced both teaching and training mobilities. The majority (79.17%) participated in training mobilities, whereas only 3.13% had exclusively teaching mobilities. These percentages can be attributed to the nature of the positions held by the respondents at the higher education institution on the Black Sea coast. Furthermore, they may provide explanations for certain results that will be analyzed later in Tables 2 and 3.

Among the most important sources of information regarding these international mobility opportunities were official emails received from the team managing these exchanges at the university level (53.13%), the university website (17.71%), and colleagues who had previously participated in such opportunities (12.50%).

Of all the mobility grants accessed by the respondents, 89.58% considered training mobilities to be the most beneficial for their personal and professional development. Conversely, only 10.42% expressed the same regarding the teaching mobilities they participated in. Considering the time elapsed since the participation in these mobilities, 54.17% reported that the experience took place more than one year but less than three years ago. Only 5.21% indicated that their participation occurred more than five years ago. Among the most frequently chosen destinations for the respondents' mobilities were Italy, Spain, and Türkiye.

In the following, the results that directly address the research question are presented. The analysis was conducted in two stages.

In the first stage, mean scores were calculated for each attribute of the five dimensions derived from the EU Survey feedback questionnaire: professional and methodological competences; organizational and leadership competences; personal and intercultural competences; satisfaction and career; and impact and sharing. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree), and assessed twice: initially as objectives set by participants prior to the mobility, and subsequently as actions reported after completing the mobility. Discrepancies between pre- and post-mobility scores were then calculated through a gap analysis, highlighting the differences between participants' initial expectations and the outcomes achieved. This approach enables identification of areas where the program fully met, partially met, or fell short of participants' expectations, providing a robust measure of its effectiveness. Results are summarized in the table below.

**Table 2. Dimensions for Assessing Mobility Outcomes**

Item	Pre-Mobility Mean	Post-Mobility Mean	Gap (Post - Pre)*
<b>Professional and methodological competences</b>			
<i>Learning from exchanges of best practices abroad</i>	4.74	4.76	0.02
<i>Experimentation with and development of new and innovative teaching or learning methods</i>	4.37	4.22	-0.15
<i>Acquisition of sector-specific or job-relevant practical skills for current work and professional development</i>	4.71	4.60	-0.11
<i>Improvement of curriculum development skills</i>	4.32	4.36	0.04
<b>Organizational and leadership competences</b>			
<i>Improvement of organizational/managerial/leadership skills</i>	4.12	4.23	0.11
<i>Strengthening or expanding professional networks and establishing new contacts</i>	4.61	4.52	-0.09
<i>Enhancing cooperation with the partner institution/organization</i>	4.53	4.43	-0.10
<i>Developing collaboration with stakeholders from the labor market</i>	3.85	3.67	-0.18
<i>Developing collaboration with stakeholders from civil society</i>	3.88	3.73	-0.15
<b>Personal and intercultural competences</b>			
<i>Improvement of foreign language skills</i>	4.70	4.70	0
<i>Enhancement of social, linguistic, and/or cultural competences</i>	4.76	4.75	-0.01
<i>Improvement of skills in using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools</i>	4.41	4.47	0.06
<i>Increase in confidence within an intercultural environment</i>	4.65	4.75	0.10
<b>Satisfaction and career</b>			
<i>Increase in professional satisfaction</i>	4.71	4.77	0.05
<i>Enhancement of employment and career opportunities</i>	4.28	4.21	-0.07
<b>Impact and sharing</b>			
<i>Sharing one's knowledge and skills with students and/or other individuals</i>	4.71	4.78	0.07
<i>Contributing to the creation of indirect outcomes, such as the development of curricula, courses or joint modules, academic networks, research collaborations, etc.</i>	4.40	4.50	0.10
<i>Contributing to the improvement of the quality and quantity of student and staff mobility to and from one's home institution</i>	4.62	4.63	0.01

\*Note: Gap = Post-Mobility Outcomes - Pre-Mobility Expectations, indicating the extent to which achieved outcomes exceeded or fell short of initial expectations.

Source: own processing; SPSS data.

According to Table 2, respondents evaluated a total of 18 items related to teaching and training mobilities. An initial examination of the gap scores indicates that 10 items demonstrated a positive or zero gap, meaning that more than half of the initially set objectives were achieved. This finding suggests that these mobilities had a positive impact on participants. The most prominent outcomes in this category include: (1) improvement of organizational/managerial/leadership skills; (2) increase in confidence within an intercultural environment; and (3) contributing to the creation of indirect outcomes, such as the development of curricula, courses or joint modules, academic networks, research collaborations, etc.. Overall, the gap scores provide a quantitative measure of the extent to which mobility objectives were attained, highlighting the areas in which the expected benefits were realized.

In the second stage of the analysis, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was applied to assess the statistical significance of the differences between the objectives set prior to the mobility and the actions reported after its completion. The results are presented in Table 3. According to the data, only two items showed statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) between participants' pre-mobility expectations and post-mobility achievements. These items are: (1) experimentation with and development of new and innovative teaching or learning methods, and (2) acquisition of sector-specific or job-relevant practical skills for current work and professional development. Both items display a negative gap. Although mobility participants aimed to develop these professional and methodological competencies before their Erasmus Plus mobility, certain factors may have

prevented them from fully achieving these goals. Possible explanations include: insufficient time allocated by host universities for such sessions; unclear communication of intentions by participants to their counterparts at the host institution; overly ambitious expectations for a relatively short mobility period (4-5 working days); inadequate evaluation tools, as no standardized instrument currently exists to assess such outcomes; and the time elapsed between the mobility and completion of the survey, which may have been insufficient for participants to observe concrete effects of these international exchanges.

**Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank tests results**

Item	Negative Ranks	Positive Ranks	Ties	Total	Z-value	p-value
<b>Professional and methodological competences</b>						
<i>Learning from exchanges of best practices abroad</i>	5	8	74	87	-.638	.523
<i>Experimentation with and development of new and innovative teaching or learning methods</i>	18	6	48	72	-2.311	.021*
<i>Acquisition of sector-specific or job-relevant practical skills for current work and professional development</i>	14	6	69	89	-1.966	.049*
<i>Improvement of curriculum development skills</i>	9	10	56	75	-.426	.670
<b>Organizational and leadership competences</b>						
<i>Improvement of organizational/managerial/leadership skills</i>	4	11	59	74	-1.414	.157
<i>Strengthening or expanding professional networks and establishing new contacts</i>	13	6	62	81	-1.517	.129
<i>Enhancing cooperation with the partner institution/organization</i>	12	7	59	78	-1.304	.192
<i>Developing collaboration with stakeholders from the labor market</i>	12	4	56	72	-1.904	.057
<i>Developing collaboration with stakeholders from civil society</i>	10	5	59	74	-1.538	.124
<b>Personal and intercultural competences</b>						
<i>Improvement of foreign language skills</i>	5	8	77	90	-.500	.617
<i>Enhancement of social, linguistic, and/or cultural competences</i>	6	7	77	90	-.277	.782
<i>Improvement of skills in using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools</i>	6	11	71	88	-1.031	.302
<i>Increase in confidence within an intercultural environment</i>	5	12	72	89	-1.789	.074
<b>Satisfaction and career</b>						
<i>Increase in professional satisfaction</i>	4	9	76	89	-1.000	.317
<i>Enhancement of employment and career opportunities</i>	9	7	69	85	-.662	.508
<b>Impact and sharing</b>						
<i>Sharing one's knowledge and skills with students and/or other individuals</i>	2	6	79	87	-1.613	.107
<i>Contributing to the creation of indirect outcomes, such as the development of curricula, courses or joint modules, academic networks, research collaborations, etc.</i>	4	7	62	73	-.663	.507
<i>Contributing to the improvement of the quality and quantity of student and staff mobility to and from one's home institution</i>	5	7	69	81	-.162	.871

\*p < .05

Source: own processing; SPSS data.

## VII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research encountered two main limitations. The first relates to the number of respondents whose questionnaire data were analyzed. However, this choice was justified in the methodology section due to the nature of the study, being a pilot investigation. The second limitation concerns the fact that the sample was composed exclusively of staff from Ovidius University of Constanța. Thus, the study's findings cannot be generalized to the entire country or extended beyond national borders.

For future research, it is recommended to include additional higher education institutions, both within Romania and internationally, in order to collect a larger number of responses and enable more generalizable conclusions. Furthermore, prior to conducting a similar study on a larger scale, preliminary investigations such as interviews or focus groups are advisable to enrich the measurement scales with mobility outcomes not currently captured by the EU Survey instrument.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effects of Erasmus Plus teaching and training mobilities on staff at Ovidius University of Constanța by applying a gap analysis framework that compared pre-mobility expectations with post-mobility outcomes. Based on 18 items adapted from the European Commission's EU Survey instrument and structured into five analytical dimensions, the findings confirm that international mobility contributes significantly to the development of organizational and leadership competences, increases confidence in intercultural professional settings, and generates indirect institutional outcomes through academic networking

and research collaboration. In line with the study objectives, the results also indicate a high level of staff familiarity with Erasmus Plus international mobility opportunities offered through the university's dedicated support structures. Furthermore, training mobilities were found to be more frequently accessed than teaching mobilities, a pattern that can be partly explained by the sample composition, which included a limited number of respondents eligible for teaching assignments abroad.

However, several outcome areas recorded negative gaps, particularly those related to collaboration with labor market and civil society stakeholders, experimentation with innovative teaching methods, and the acquisition of job-relevant practical skills. These results suggest that certain expectations exceed what can realistically be achieved during short-term mobilities and that some outcomes depend more strongly on institutional support mechanisms than on individual effort alone.

From a policy perspective, universities should embed international mobility more systematically within institutional development strategies and create structured post-mobility follow-up mechanisms to enhance knowledge transfer and organizational learning. At the operational level, clearer communication of learning objectives and stronger coordination with host institutions are recommended to improve alignment between expectations and results. Overall, Erasmus Plus mobilities remain a key instrument for professional development and institutional internationalization, but their long-term effectiveness depends on strategic integration, monitoring, and targeted institutional support.

## IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This work was supported by the NODENS PLUS project, code CNFIS-FDI-2025-F-0434, financed by the Ministry of Education and Research, Romania.

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