IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME KA1 MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION STAFF: RESULTS OF ESTONIAN RESEARCH

Research report

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30.06.2016

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is part of the research *Impact and Sustainability of the Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 (KA1) Mobility Projects for School Education Staff* conducted in Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Germany and Poland. In this report, the results of the empirical research in Estonia are presented.

Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020 (Erasmus+ Programme guide, 2016). The programme consists of three key actions, KA1 – *Learning mobility of individuals* – being the focus of this research. In Estonia, 80 school staff applications for KA1 mobility projects were submitted in 2014 and 44 in 2015, of which 36 (45%) was funded in 2014 and 28 (64%) of 2015. The applications were in general of high quality – an average score for applications was 86 points out of 100 in 2014 and 83.5/100 in 2015. An average grant per mobility was 2015€ in 2014 and 2039€ in 2015.

The aims of the research are to (Damkuvienė, M., Valuckienė, J. & Balčiūnas, S., 2015):
1) reveal the situation of teacher professional development through participation in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility;
2) evaluate the impact and recognition of teacher professional development through the KA1 mobility of staff in the school community (mobile staff, non-mobile staff, students, parents, school principals) and correspondence of teacher professional development to strategic goals of a school;
3) evaluate leadership for learning of mobile staff;
4) identify school and school leader's involvement and support of mobility-related ideas to be implemented and sustained;
5) estimate the alignment of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility actions with strategic aims of school, identifying good transferable practices of Erasmus+ KA1 in terms of impact and sustainability so that these practices could be transferred to foster students' learning motivation, quality of education, openness and internationalisation of schools.

Background about teacher professional development policy in Estonia

In 2013/2014, there were 24 224 teachers in Estonia: 2 129 working in vocational education, 7 869 in pre-school institutions and 14 226 in general education. When developing teacher training in Estonia, it was agreed that initial, induction and continuing training programmes are based on professional standards: Teacher level, Senior teacher level and Master teacher level (for the description of professional standards see *Occupational qualification standards* in References).

According to Estonian Ministry of Education and Science (*Training and development activities, n.d.*), the growing expectations of society continue to set new challenges for education – the role of a teacher is no longer confined to teaching classes and heads of school are no longer just executives. Both professions carry a number of roles and functions, which require leadership competence, preparedness and capabilities for teamwork, interdisciplinary skills, supervisory expertise, and the skill of using information and communications means and educational technologies. More than ever, the emphasis has shifted toward competence evaluation when assessing the professional performance of teachers and heads of school. Each staff member is personally responsible for self-development and for maintaining their qualifications at least at the level of competence required for performing their professional duties. Teachers and heads of school alike are active learners who plan, organise and evaluate their learning processes and professional development.

Continuing training, according to Estonian Ministry of Education and Science, is a systematic activity aimed at supporting the development of students through professional self-development of teachers and heads of school. Continuing training means both professional self-improvement, or learning in

general, which encompasses the acquiring and improving of professional and/or subject-specific knowledge and skills as well as individual self-improvement through studying materials, participating in courses, studying with the help of an instructor, learning under the supervision of others, study trips, peer counselling, including sharing best practices, etc.

Continuous training is organised based on the concept of continuous education of teachers and heads of school, adopted at the end of 2013 by the Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with its partners:

- Since 2013, trainings have been ordered centrally, especially from universities offering teacher training, and proceeding from national education priorities.
- Continuing education funds are also used for supporting teachers' networks, including learning from each other.
- State foundations organise carrying out or ordering of trainings.
- Centrally organised trainings are free of charge for teachers.
- Local municipalities may allocate additional resources for teachers' continuing education and determine the fields where they may be used.
- Schools make continuing education decisions on the basis of their needs and development plans.
- Management of training is the task of the school manager.

The characteristics of Estonian teacher professional development in the European context are described for example by Scheerens (2010). As teachers' everyday work is based on National Curriculum, the changes in curriculum policy are relevant factors that influence the needs of teacher training. More information about the curriculum policy in Estonia and curriculum development can be found from Erss and others (2014).

The profession of the teacher and its value, teachers' professional development and worthy pay are the priorities of Estonian teacher policy during 2014-2020. In 2014 the Estonian Government adopted the *Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2014-2020*. The document aims to create a strategic framework for coherent management of education and training sector during the period of next seven years and for improving the use of education sector resources (including EU structural funding) to ensure an increase in the competitiveness of the country.

The general objective of the *Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy* is to create learning opportunities for all people according to their needs and abilities during their whole life span. To pursue the general objective five main goals have been established.

- Change in the approach to learning.
  The goal is to implement an approach towards learning that supports each learner's individual and social development, learning skills, creativity and entrepreneurship in the work of all levels and types of education.
- Competent and motivated teachers and school leadership.
  The roles of the teacher and the school leaders are of key importance in carrying out changes. The goal is to make the evaluation and compensation of teachers and school leaders proportional to their professional qualifications and their effectiveness in the performance of their work.
- Correspondence of lifelong learning opportunities with the needs of labour market.
- A digital focus in lifelong learning.
- Equal opportunities and increased participation in lifelong learning.

2. METHODS

The research is based on mixed research approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection methods consisting of on-line surveys for four target groups, document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews.

2.1. RESEARCH SAMPLE

The *online surveys* were completed by 975 respondents:
- 112 teachers that participated in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility aboard (from 23 schools);
- 175 non-mobile teachers from 20 schools;
- 466 15-19 years old students from 19 schools;
- 222 parents from 19 schools.

More detailed information about the sample and data collection limitations are described in Section 3.1.

The *qualitative data collection* included 19 focus group or individual interviews related with four *case studies*. Four focus group and three individual interviews were conducted with *school leaders*. Overall, the final sample was 70 school members, including 21 school leaders, 24 mobile teachers (including 8 participating in job shadowing) and 25 non-mobile teachers. For more information, see sections 4 and 5.

At first, an e-mail explaining the research aims and plan was sent to school leaders by Estonian National Agency. Each school selected a contact person who was responsible for coordinating the data collection, including finding teachers, parents and students. In the case study schools the contact person was also responsible for organising the focus group interviews (persons, date, place, etc.) and informed the interviewer. The interviewer contacted personally with school leaders (schools granted 2014/2015) and provided three dates for interviews; the focus group or individual interviews were conducted with school leaders from 21 schools (out of 25).

The survey data was collected in March and April, 2016. During the data collection period, two e-mails were sent to each school in order to give an overview of the number of respondents and remind the deadline, if necessary. Additionally the school leaders were provided with the survey progress during the interviews. The interview data was collected from March to May 2016.

The case studies were selected according to the following criteria:
- high quality project applications and reports (all applications of case study schools got 83-94 points from 100 in 2014);
- the applicants had previous experiences with mobility programs (e. g., LLP) or other international cooperation projects;
- more than 3 participants from one school (all case study schools had 4-10 participants), including different forms of mobility, e.g. job shadowing instead of only structured training courses (professional development courses);
- the profile of overall applicants in Estonia (according to the results of 2014) – although 40% of applicants were from secondary schools and 30% from basic schools, about 1/5 (19%) of Estonian applicants were from kinder gardens or kinder gardens/elementary schools and 10% from schools for students with special educational needs; so it was taken into consideration that these school types are represented;

- representativeness considering the distribution of nationalities among Estonian population – as 1/3 of Estonian population are Russians, it was made sure that there was at least one Russian-language school among the case study schools
- positive feedback according to NA's monitoring of the progress, including active communication with NA.

2.2. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

For the data collection four pre-designed questionnaires and three qualitative instruments were used (see Damkuvienė, M., Valuckienė, J. & Balčiūnas, S., 2015).

The survey instruments were translated into Estonian and inserted into an online survey application *LimeSurvey.* Each respondent had also opportunity to fill in the questionnaire in English. Parents' questionnaire was additionally translated into Russian, as some schools reported difficulties in reaching the sample size due to language problems.

In order to get a better overview of the sample and the progress of data collection, a numeric code was specified for each school that all respondents had to insert at the beginning of the questionnaire.

When compared to the original instruments some questions were added into Estonian questionnaires. In order to clarify respondents' overall satisfaction with the school and its relations with their views regarding teacher mobility, all target groups were asked to assess their school satisfaction in *Likert* scale from *very dissatisfied* (1) to *very satisfied* (5). Respondents' background was specified my same additional questions. All respondents were asked their gender, parents and students also their age. Teachers were asked to specify what subjects they are teaching. Parents and students were asked if they or their family members have studied aboard. Parents were asked to specify their possible role in the school – if he/she is a member of parent council of the school or works at the same school.

All questionnaire items were mandatory, except open-ended ones, but *No answer* option was provided for all questions. The questionnaire URLs:
- mobile teachers: https://goo.gl/0L4DYL
- non-mobile teachers: https://goo.gl/9P2yGZ
- students: https://goo.gl/Gd70TZ
- parents: https://goo.gl/Fulo9S

For the qualitative data collection, three instruments were used: *mobile teachers, non-mobile teachers* and *school leaders* (Damkuvienė, M., Valuckienė, J. & Balčiūnas, S., 2015). An average, one hour was planned for a focus group interview; the actual durations varied from 52 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the number of participants and their acquaintance or experiences with the topic. All interviews were recorded, asking previously participants' permission.

2.3. DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

The survey data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The nominal data was described by frequencies and percentages. For the rank or continuous scales, the means and standard errors were presented. For the open-ended questions qualitative content analysis was performed.

For the statistical analyses *IBM Statistics 22* software was used. Scale reliability was assessed using *Cronbach alpha*; the scales were constructed at the alpha value at least 0.70. For the comparison of variables between groups, *ANOVA* test or *Chi-squared* analysis was used, depending on the scale type. Relations between the variables were calculated using *Pearson* correlation analysis. All results were considered statistically significant at the level of p<0.05.

For analysing interview data, content analysis was performed using mainly categories provided by Damkuvienė, Valuckienė and Balčiūnas (2015). All audio records from the interviews were listened and transcribed. New categories were created according to the content of the interviews, if necessary.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF SURVEY DATA

3.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

During the research, the questionnaires were filled in by four target groups: 1) mobile staff (participants of Erasmus+ mobility), 2) non-mobile staff (at least 10 per school), 3) 15 years old or older students (at least 20 per school) and 4) parents (at least 10 per school). As a total, the questionnaires were filled in by 975 respondents.

The *mobile staff* questionnaire was filled in by 112 respondents (10 males and 102 females) from 23 Estonian schools. The majority of the respondents (86%) were teachers, mainly foreign languages (43%) or science teachers (35%). For almost half of the respondents the mobility visit was not the first training aboard, as 48% had previous experiences of in-service training aboard. Descriptive characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the research sample of mobile staff (N=112, 23 schools)

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Position	School Principal	6	5.4
	Vice Principal/Assistant Principal/Teacher Supervisor/Head Teacher	2	1.8
	Teacher	96	85.7
	Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)	8	7.1
Subjects delivered (n=96) [a]	Estonian, literature	21	21.9
	Foreign languages	41	42.7
	Mathematics	22	22.9
	Science	34	35.4
	Social subjects	16	16.7
	Arts	15	15.6
	Other (ex. Gymnastics, Technology)	12	12.5
Experience of pedagogical work	Less than 5 years	14	12.5
	5 to 15 years	48	42.9
	16 to 25 years	28	25.0
	More than 25 years	22	19.6
Programme delivered	5 to 10 years old (primary level)	60	53.6
	11 to 13 years old	79	70.5
	14 years and older	78	69.6
Number of students in school	Less than 100	23	20.5
	100 to 300	4	3.6
	301 to 500	31	27.7
	More than 500	54	48.2
School location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	12	10.7
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	11	9.8
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	29	25.9
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	60	53.6
Overall school satisfaction [a]	Very satisfied	57	50.9
	Satisfied	46	41.4
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	8.0
Previous experiences	Previous experience of in-service training abroad	54	48.2
	No	58	51.8

[a] Only in Estonian questionnaire

The *non-mobile staff* questionnaire was filled in by 175 respondents (21 males and 154 females) from 20 schools (Table 2). The response rate was a bit smaller than expected in this target group, an average of 9 teachers per school instead of 10. There were several small schools in the sample; therefore, it was not possible to find an extra ten teachers beside the mobile staff. Also, in some schools, non-mobile teachers were not motivated to fill the questionnaire. Descriptive characteristics of the non-mobile sample are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the research sample of non-mobile staff (N=175, 20 schools)

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Position	School Principal	1	0.6
	Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Teacher Supervisor, Head Teacher	5	2.9
	Teacher	161	92.0
	Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)	8	4.6
Subjects delivered (n=161) [a]	Estonian, literature	50	31.1
	Foreign languages	44	27.3
	Mathematics	42	26.1
	Science	45	28.0
	Social subjects	27	16.8
	Arts	38	23.6
	Other (ex. Gymnastics, Technology)	34	21.1
Experience of pedagogical work	Less than 5 years	34	19.4
	5 to 15 years	76	43.4
	16 to 25 years	36	20.6
	More than 25 years	29	16.6
Programme delivered	5 to 10 years old (primary level)	76	43.4
	11 to 13 years old	122	69.7
	14 years and older	114	65.1
Number of students in school	Less than 100	34	19.7
	100 to 300	3	1.7
	301 to 500	49	28.3
	More than 500	87	50.3
School location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	8	4.6
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	29	16.8
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	58	33.5
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	78	45.1
Overall school satisfaction [a]	Very satisfied	87	49.7
	Satisfied	78	44.6
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	5.7

[a] Only in Estonian questionnaire

The *students'* questionnaire was filled in by 466 14 to 19 years old students (mean age 16.4 ±1.2) from 19 schools, an average of 25 students from one school. The data collection in this target group was limited as 11 of 23 schools in the sample were primary or basic schools with no or very few at least 15 years old students. Descriptive characteristics of the students are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Characteristics of the research sample of students (N=466, 19 schools)

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Gender [a]	Boys	211	45.3
	Girls	255	54.7
Number of students in school	Less than 100	18	3.9
	100 to 300	1	0.2
	301 to 500	169	36.3
	More than 500	274	58.8
School location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	9	1.9
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	30	6.5
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	184	39.8
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	239	51.7
Overall school satisfaction [a]	Very satisfied	139	29.8
	Satisfied	222	47.6
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	85	18.2
	Dissatisfied/Very dissatisfied	18	3.9
Previous experiences [a]	Has been abroad with a student exchange programme	114	24.5
	No	352	75.5
Have you or your family member(s) studied abroad? [a]	Yes, myself	23	4.9
	Yes, my family member(s)	147	31.5
	No	296	63.5

[a] Only in Estonian questionnaire

The *parents'* questionnaire was filled in by 222 respondents from 19 schools, on average of 12 parents from one school. Descriptive characteristics of the parents are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Characteristics of the research sample of parents (N=222, 19 schools)

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Gender [a]	Male	40	18.0
	Female	182	82.0
Age [a]	35 or under	27	12.2
	36 to 40	66	29.7
	41 to 45	76	34.2
	46 to 50	36	16.2
	51 or over	17	7.7
Member of parent council of the school [a]	Yes	28	12.6
	No	194	87.4
Working in the school [a]	Yes	23	10.4
	No	199	89.6
Number of students in school	Less than 100	52	24.5
	301 to 500	46	21.7
	More than 500	114	53.8
School location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	33	15.6
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	56	26.4
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	46	21.7
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	77	36.3
Overall school satisfaction [a]	Very satisfied	89	40.1
	Satisfied	102	45.9
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21	9.5
	Dissatisfied/Very dissatisfied	10	4.5

Have you or your family member(s) studied abroad? [a]	Yes, myself	36	16.2
	Yes, my family member(s)	41	18.5
	No	145	65.3

[a] Only in Estonian questionnaire

When analysing respondents' overall satisfaction with their school, we can see that in general all target groups are very satisfied or satisfied with the school – 92% of mobile staff, 94% of non-mobile staff, 77% of students and 86% of parents. There are no statistical differences between mobile and non-mobile teachers' school satisfaction. Parents and students, however, are generally less satisfied with their school when compared to teachers (F=16.9, p<0.001).

3.2. OVERALL EVALUATION OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY: MOBILE AND NON-MOBILE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

This section contains the results of general satisfaction with mobility, preparations for the visit, preference of mobility forms and coordinators' views on support provided by National Agency.

General satisfaction with mobility

The results of the mobile staff answers showed that in general teachers are satisfied with their visit, including responsiveness of the host institution, intercultural experience and visit organisation (Figure 1). The content of the courses is rated slightly lower – 6% of respondents answered that the course content did not meet their expectations.
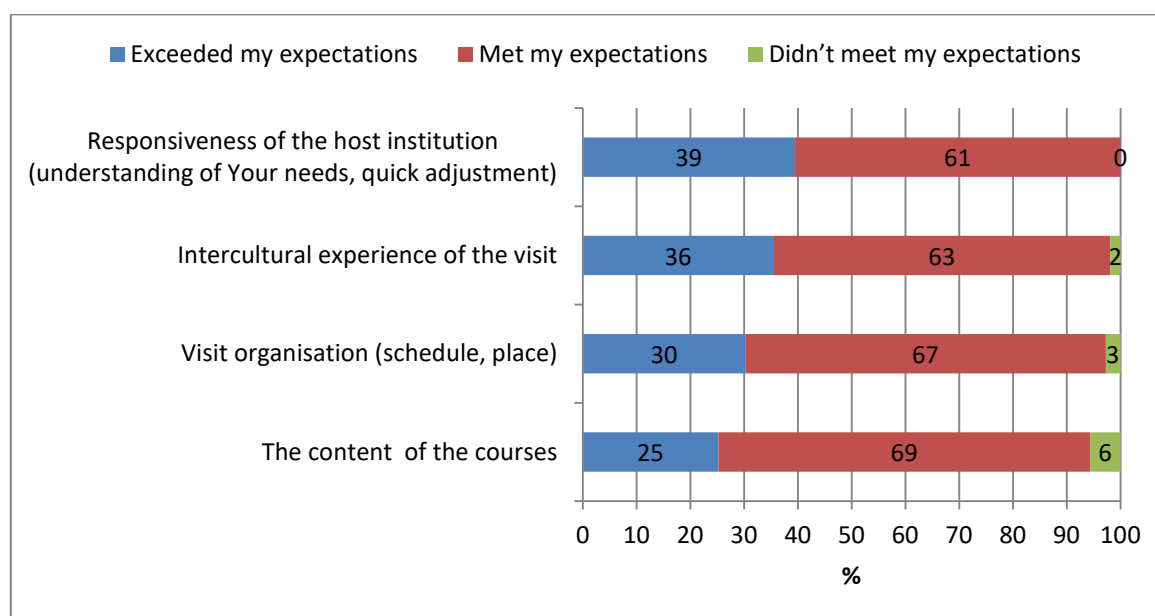
Figure 1. General satisfaction with Erasmus+ KA1 mobility visits of mobile staff (N=107-109)

Statistically significant differences in satisfaction with mobility were found between mobility forms. Teachers that participated in job shadowing or teaching are generally more satisfied with the mobility when compared to participants of professional development courses (total score: F=8.0, p<0.01). No differences were found between teachers that had participated in training aboard previously and teachers that went for the first time.

Preparations for the visits

The results of mobile teachers revealed that the majority of teachers, 89% did some preparation activities before their visits and 11% did not make any preparations (Figure 2). The most prevalent preparation activities before the mobility are studying materials about the culture of the host country (71%), searching for additional information about the course topic (60%) and reading about the educational system of the country (40%).
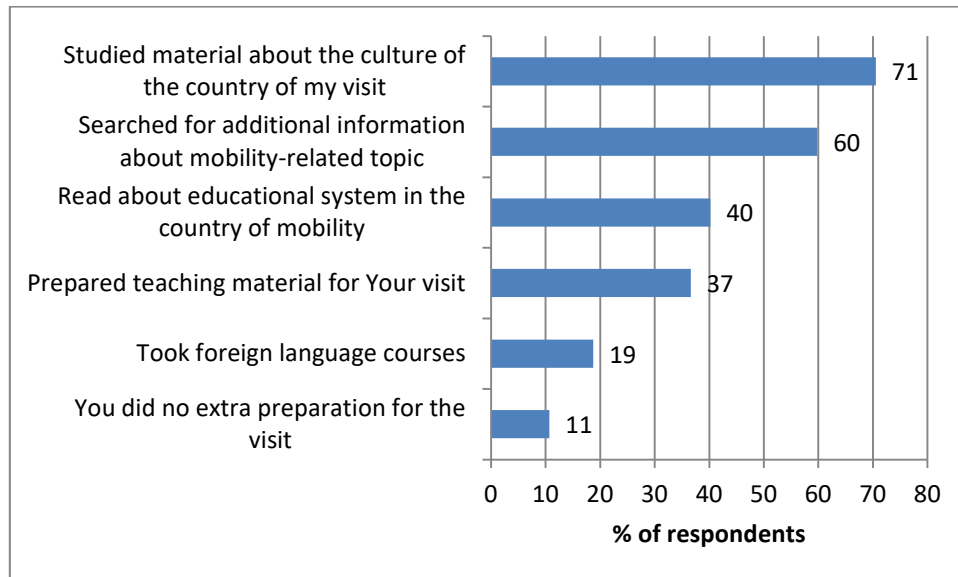
Figure 2. Mobile teachers' (N=112) preparation activities for mobility visits

The analysis reveals that preparation work before the mobility is a significant factor for better outcomes. The total score of preparations is positively correlated with overall satisfaction with the visits (r=0.39, p<0.001). Therefore, teachers who did more preparation work were also more satisfied with their mobility experience.

The content analysis of mobile teachers' open-ended answers revealed that they were satisfied with the experience and encouraged their colleagues to also participate. A lot of suggestions were made to colleagues who are going to participate in mobility projects, for example:

- *Think very carefully through what are your purposes and why. It is crucial to find a course that meets you needs.*
- *Take the initiative yourself – search opportunities for mobility projects and make suggestions to school leaders.*
- *Be aware that that the mobility project brings a lot of work – planning, paperwork, reports, dissemination. But it's all worth it!*
- *If it is possible, go together with your colleagues to the same course. It enables to collaborate and share the experiences more extensively hereafter.*
- *Thorough preparations are crucial for a successful mobility (the country, culture, people and their customs, language, etc.).*
- *Be very careful when choosing courses, the selection is wide. I got help from my colleague that participated last year at the same provider's course, so I could be sure that the course is useful and interesting.*
- *It is important to develop your media competencies to disseminate the new knowledge and experiences effectively.*
- *My colleagues are often passive as they are afraid of the extra work related with the visit, but actually the new experiences and knowledge outweigh all the work.*

- *Be brave! After the mobility I understood that it did not matter that my English was not that good or I was lacking experiences in several areas, because everyone were friendly, helpful and understanding.*

Preference of mobility forms

According to mobile teachers' answers, the majority of teachers (84%) participated in professional development courses. Job shadowing was selected by 14% and teaching in other country only by 2% of participants. Professional development courses were also rated as the most useful form of activity by non-mobile staff (Figure 3).
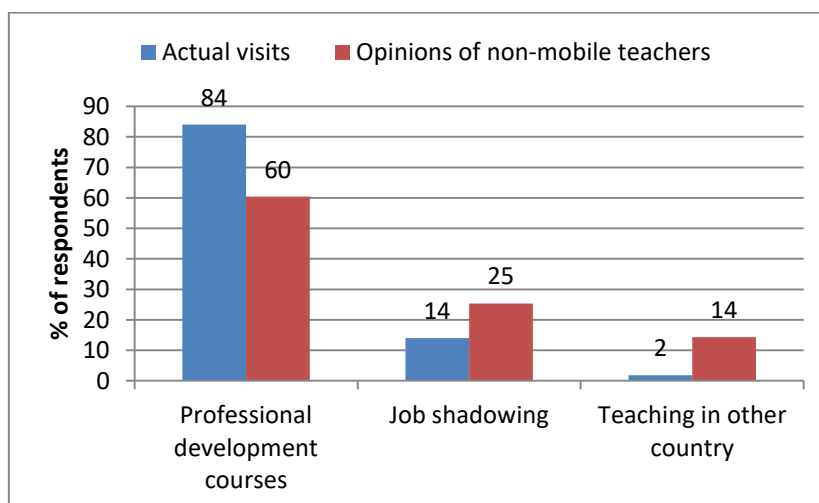

Figure 3. Mobility forms of mobile staff (N=112) and assessment on usefulness of different mobility forms by non-mobile staff (N=154)

The analysis revealed that assessments on the usefulness of mobility forms is significantly different from the forms of actual visits (X^2=17.6, p<0.001). According to non-mobile staff, job shadowing and teaching in other country are rated the most successful mobility form significantly more than is prevalence of these forms among the actual mobility visits (25% vs. 14% for job shadowing and 14% vs. 2% for teaching). This indicates that many teachers would prefer to participate on these activities, but for some reason, still choose to participate on courses.

Evaluation of National Agency support

According to school project coordinators, the support by NA is mostly rated positively (Figure 4). NA support is assessed as timely and helpful and information about the programme is sufficient. Three of 15 project coordinators, however, found that the application form for the programme was complicated. In open-ended questions they also brought out that *working on applications is extremely time-consuming* and *this workload does not "pay off" when comparing pros and cons in the case of smaller projects.*
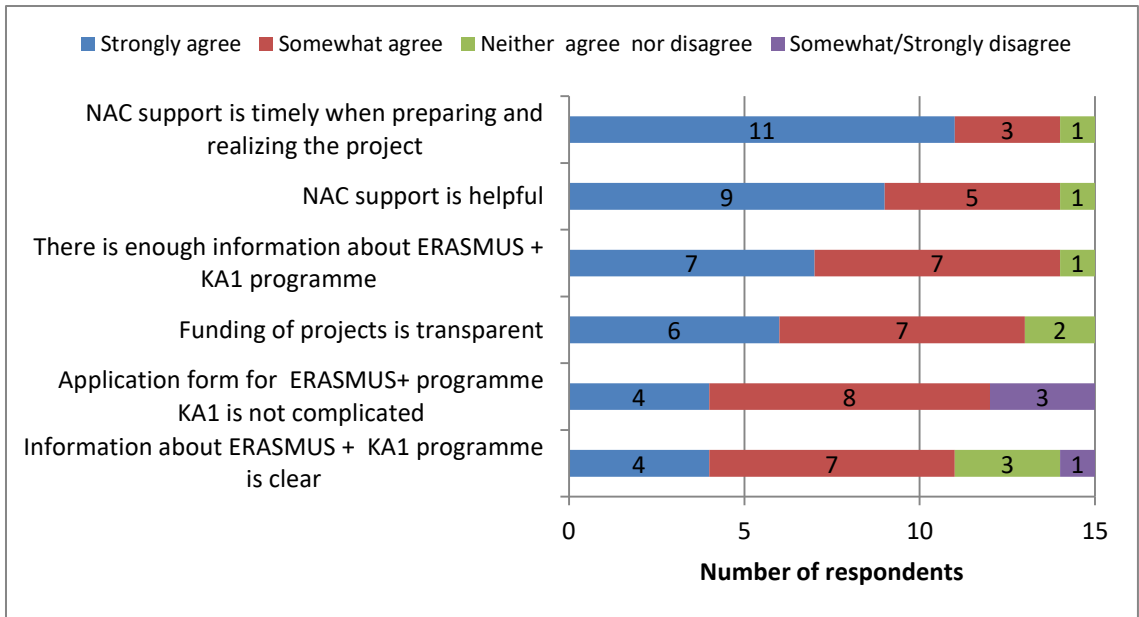
Figure 4. Assessment of National agency support by project coordinators (N=15)

3.3. IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY ON TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: MOBILE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

In this section, the mobile teachers' perceptions about their personal changes in professional competencies due to Erasmus+ KA1 mobility are presented (Figure 5).
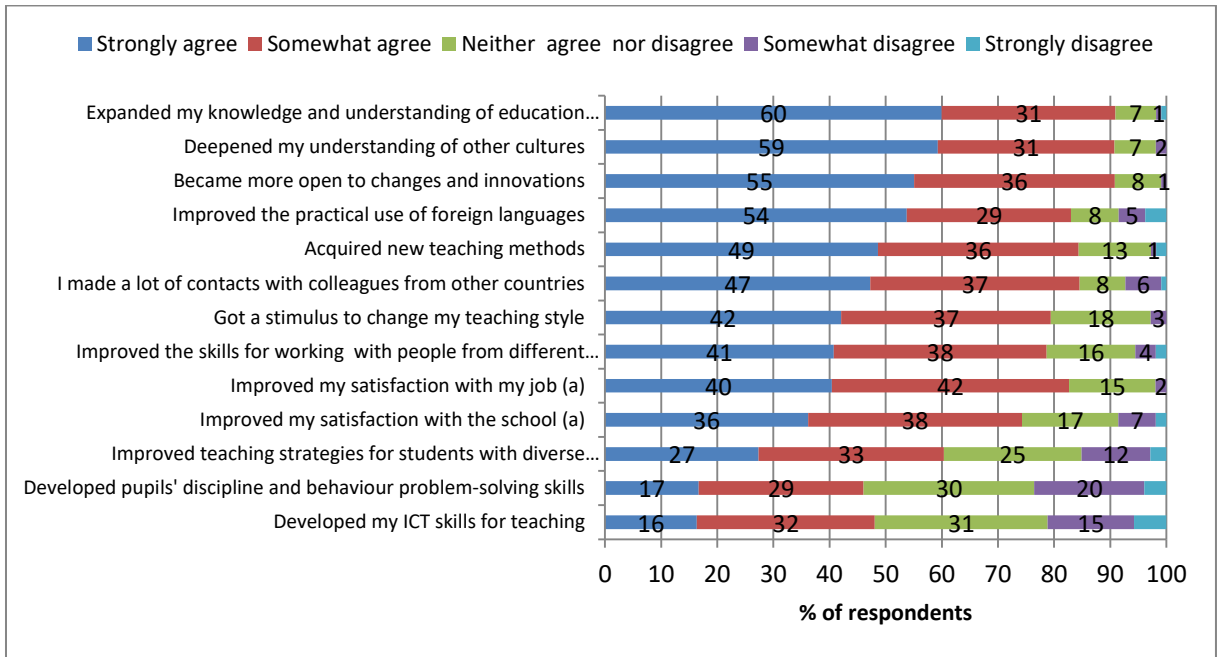
Figure 5. Perceptions of mobile teachers (N=102-110) about changes in their competencies caused by Erasmus+ KA1 mobility
(a) Only in Estonian questionnaire

The results reveal that the biggest changes are perceived in mobile teachers' general competencies when compared to the didactical and subject-related competencies. The majority of teachers thought that the mobility expanded their knowledge about educational systems of other countries

(91% strongly or somewhat agreed), deepened their knowledge about other cultures (90%) and they became more open to changes and innovations (91%). There is a significant relation with the length of teaching experiences – teachers, who have worked longer in school, perceive more that the mobility visit has deepened their understanding about other cultures (r=0.21; p<0.05).

In teachers' answers to the open-ended questions they also referred mainly to their changes in general competencies and attitudes, such as *tolerance, more broad worldview, openness to changes and innovations, feeling proud of my school, motivation for teaching, getting out from my comfort zone, intercultural experiences, higher self-esteem, new ideas for work, better foreign language skills*, etc.

The personal changes in professional competencies teachers perceive is once again related with their preparation work – the more teachers prepare for the visit, the more they gain the personal competencies (r=0.43, p<0.001; see Table 5 in Annexes). For instance, the teachers who studied material about the culture of the mobility country deepened their understanding of other cultures, made contacts with colleagues from other countries and improved their skills of working with people from different cultures. Teachers that took foreign language courses before mobility perceived more often the improvement in practical use of foreign languages. These results once again stress the importance of preparation work for a successful mobility project.

Somewhat surprisingly, when analysing the relations between total change in competencies and preparation activities, there is no significant correlation with taking language courses, as opposed to all other activities. This might indicate that improvement in foreign languages is not as crucial for a successful mobility when compared to other preparation activities. Similarly, mobile teachers' open ended answers often included suggestions not to worry too much about foreign language skills.

Most of the teachers agreed that the mobility increased their satisfaction with their job (82% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed) and with the school (74%). Improvement of satisfaction with working as a teacher after mobility was also repeatedly brought out in teachers' responses to the open ended questions, for example:
*Before my last course aboard I had totally lost my motivation of working as a teacher and I thought of quitting my job. This two-week course really raised my motivation and I am more satisfied with my profession than ever.*

3.4. IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY ON SCHOOL: MOBILE AND NON-MOBILE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

The analysis of mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about the impact of Erasmus+ KA1 programme on school indicated that according to both groups of teachers, positive changes have been taken place in school's culture and curriculum, students' motivation and performance.

The mobility is important in order to achieve the school's goals – 89% of mobile and 79% of non-mobile staff strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement (see Figure 14 and Figure 15 in Annexes). The majority of respondents also agree that debate about school's internalisation has increased (76% of mobile and 72% of non-mobile staff), new learning methods have been introduced (66% vs. 62%), students' creativeness and activeness has increased (79% vs. 65%) and teachers are more satisfied with the school (70% vs. 66%).

The analysis also reveals that non-mobile teachers' ratings on changes in school are generally lower than mobile teachers' ratings. Statistical differences between mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions were found by comparing mean scores of two groups with *ANOVA* (Figure 6).
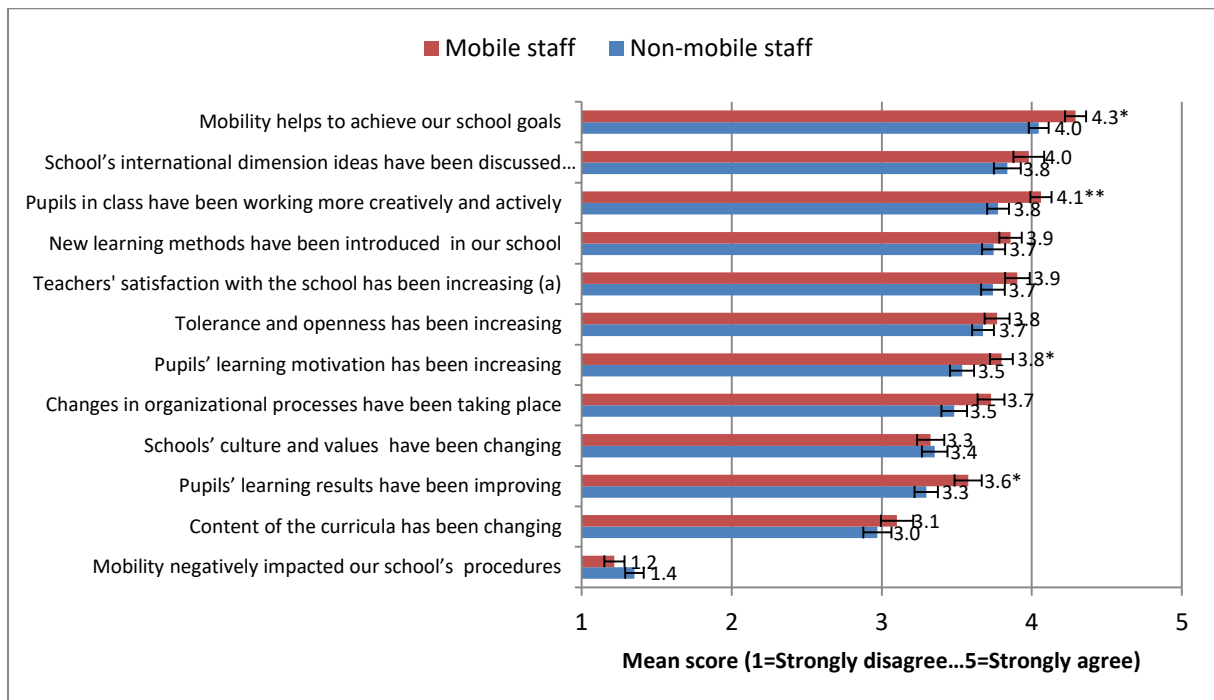
Figure 6. Differences in perceptions of mobile (N=85-103) and non-mobile (N=118-153) staff about the impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility on school (*p<0.05; **p<0.01).
(a) Only in Estonian questionnaire

It can be concluded that differences between mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions appeared mainly on classroom level. Mobile teachers answered more frequently that students' learning motivation has increased (F=5.2, p<0.05), they are working more creatively and actively (F=7.5; p<0.01), and their learning results have been improving (F=5.4; p<0.05). The differences on classroom level are somewhat expected as the changes in classroom might not be noticeable to other colleagues without special dissemination activities. Mobile staff also agrees more strongly that mobility helps to achieve school goals (F=6.1, p<0.05) when compared to non-mobile teachers.

3.5. PRACTICE OF DISSEMINATION, SHARING OF EXPERIENCES AND TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The results of the survey data indicate that most of the teachers share their experiences of the mobility visits according to both, mobile and non-mobile staff. The most popular form of sharing of experiences is giving an oral report (89% in both target groups; Figure 7). Majority of the mobile staff also applies the new knowledge and experiences in their daily work – 71% have prepared new teaching material and 41% prepared recommendations about organising the learning process.
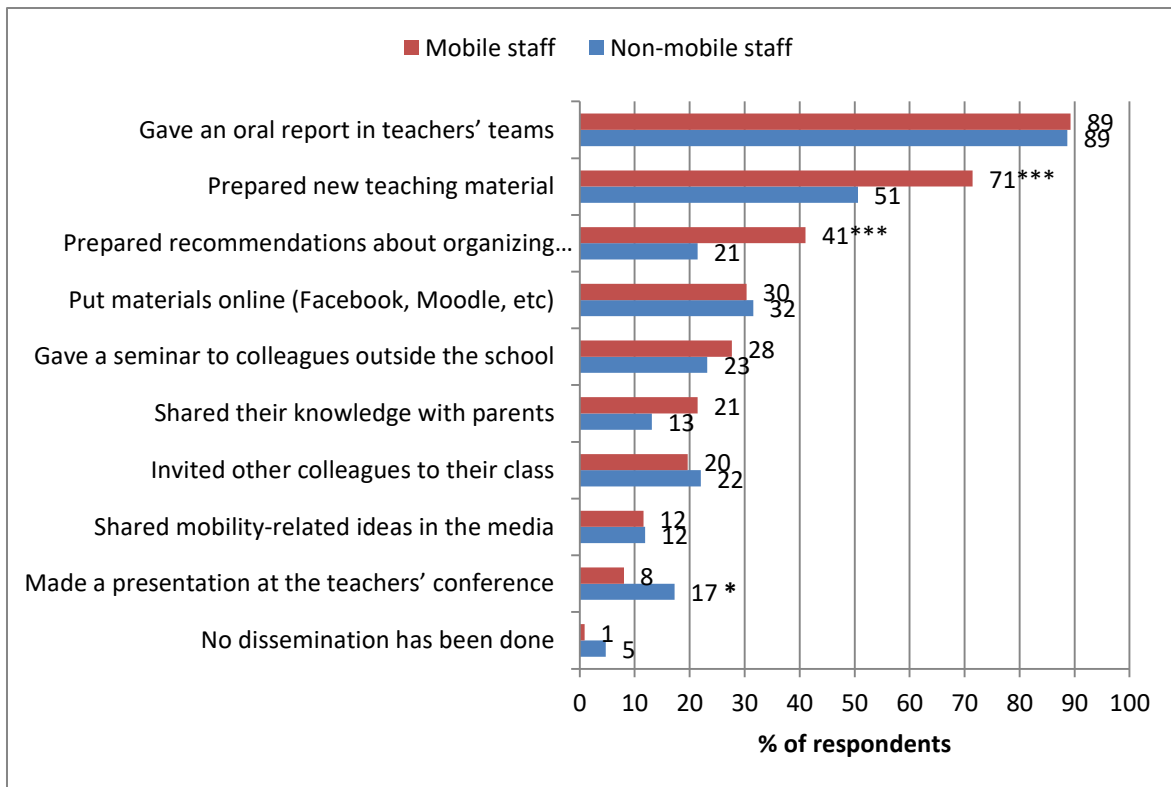
Figure 7. Dissemination and sharing of experiences from Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programme according to mobile (N=112) and non-mobile (N=168) teachers' answers (*p<0.05, ***p<0.001)

There were statistically significant differences between mobile and non-mobile teachers' answers in some dissemination forms. Mobile teachers said that they prepared more new teaching materials (71% vs. 51%; p<0.001, χ2=12.1) and recommendations for organising learning process (41% vs. 21%; p<0.001, χ2=12.5). Also, an opposite tendency appeared as according to non-mobile teachers, presentations on teachers' conferences were more frequent (17% vs. 8%; p<0.05, χ2=4.9).

It was also found that the forms of dissemination are related with the length of teaching experience – less experienced teachers made more often presentations at the teachers' conferences (r=-0.20, p<0.05) and more experienced teachers prepared more frequently new teaching materials (r=0.22, p<0.05). The results also indicated the importance of previous experiences, as teachers who had previous experience of in-service training aboard, in general took more dissemination activities (F=6.8, p<0.05). The analysis once again confirmed the importance of preparation work, as teachers that made more preparation work also shared their experiences more often (r=0.42, p<0.001). A negative correlation was found among non-mobile teachers between the dissemination activities and years of teaching experience – older colleagues perceived mobile teachers' dissemination activities less frequently (r=-0.16, p<0.05).

Figure 8 summaries mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about leadership when implementing ideas of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility.
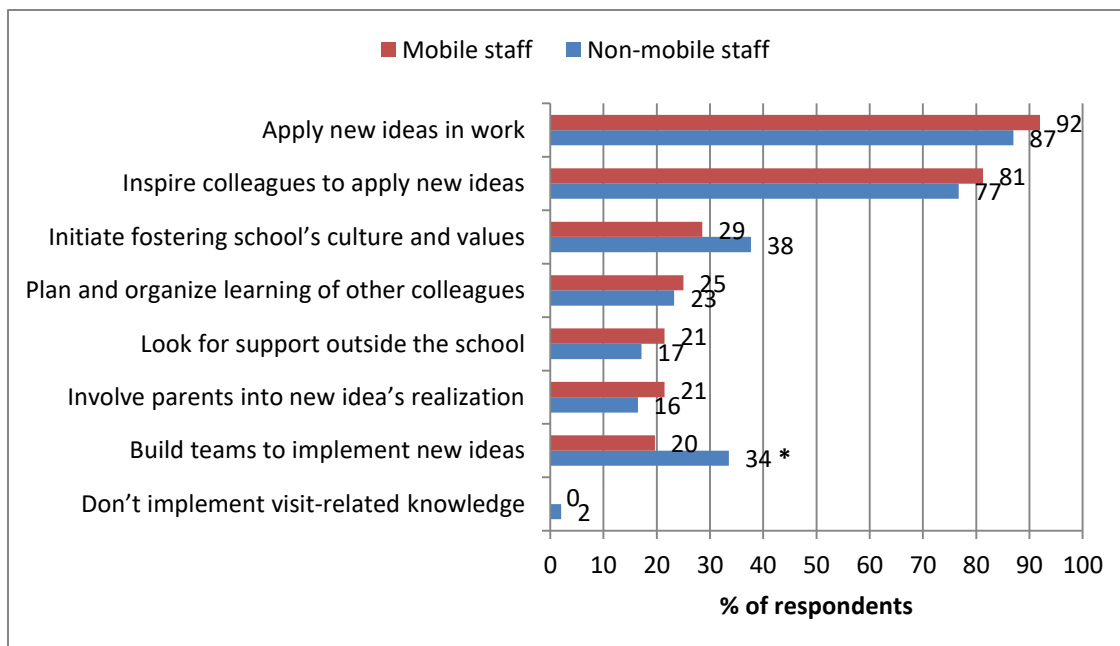
Figure 8. Mobile (N=112) and non-mobile (N=146) teachers' perceptions about leadership when implementing ideas of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility (*$p<0.05$)

Most of the teachers apply new ideas from mobility visits in their work according to both, mobile (92% of respondents) and non-mobile staff (87%), and inspire colleagues to apply new ideas (81% of mobile and 77% of non-mobile staff). Only one statistically significant difference was found between the two groups – according to non-mobile staff, the mobile teachers more often build teams to implement new ideas (34% of non-mobile and 20% mobile staff; $p<0.05$, $\chi2=6.2$).

It was found that the teachers, who have had previous experience of in-service training aboard, apply the ideas from mobility more frequently ($F=14.9$, $p<0.001$). Similarly to the previous results the implementation of visit-related knowledge and ideas is also positively correlated with preparation work ($r=0.38$, $p<0.001$).

3.6. PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CULTURE AS A CONDITION FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES

The teachers' survey included seven items about school's culture, more specifically in the aspects of school leaders' and colleagues' support.

The survey data indicates that the school leader support is perceived strongly by the majority of respondents; both among mobile and non-mobile teachers, varying from 80% to 94% depending on the questionnaire item (see Figure 16 and 17 in Annexes). The support of colleagues is rated slightly lower, but still 82% of mobile staff and 73% of non-mobile staff strongly or somewhat agree that colleagues support new ideas taken from Erasmus+ mobility projects.
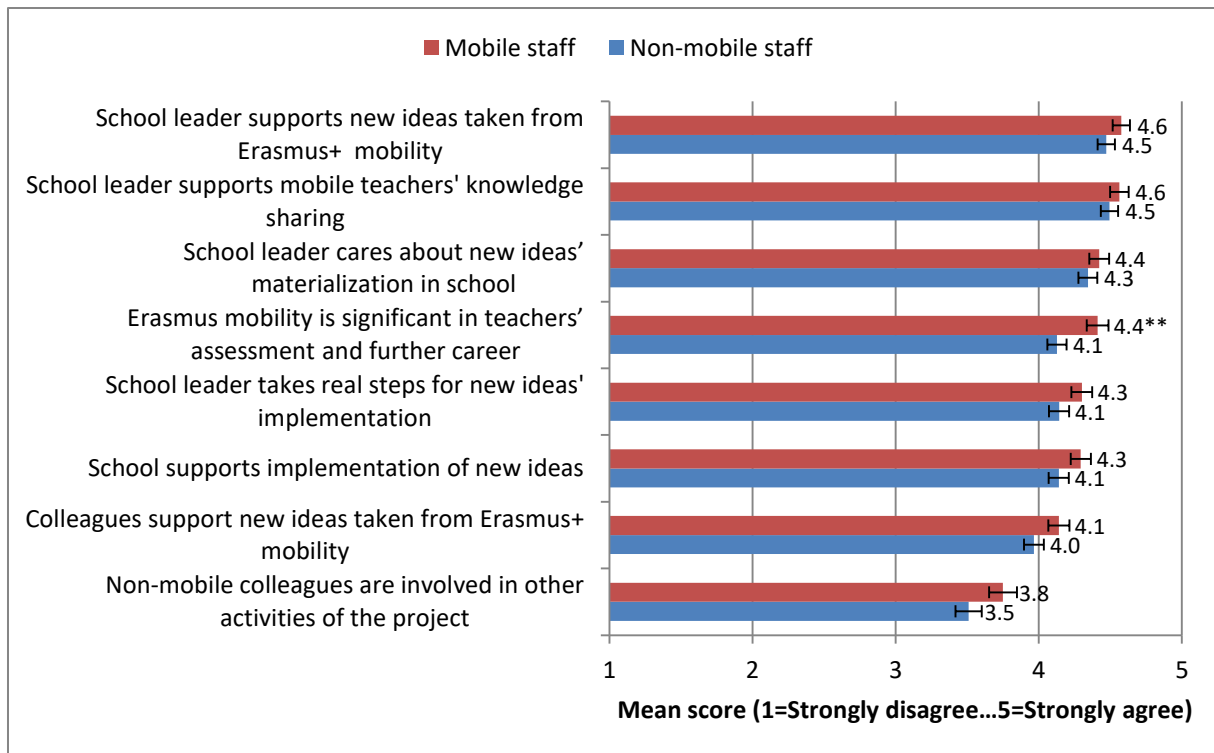
Figure 9. Mobile (N=92-111) and non-mobile (N=147-164) teachers' perceptions about school culture (**p<0.01)

Statistically significant differences between mobile and non-mobile staff were found only in one question (Figure 9) – mobile staff considers Erasmus+ KA1 mobility more significant in teachers' assessment and further career when compared to non-mobile staff (F=7.6, p<0.01).

3.7. STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL'S INTERNATIONALITY AND ASSESSMENT OF CHANGES TAKING PLACE AFTER TEACHER MOBILITY

The students' questionnaire assessed their expectations towards school's internationality (teachers' international competencies, collaboration with students from other countries, international students' exchange, etc.) and perceptions about the changes taking place after teachers' mobility visits aboard (teaching methods and content, motivational aspects, sharing of experiences, etc.).

Overview of students' expectations towards school's internationality is presented on Figure 10. The results show that for the majority of students it is important that their teachers are open and tolerant to other cultures (87% strongly or somewhat agreed with the item), use modern technology in classroom (80%), and speak foreign languages fluently (76%). The least important aspect for students is that they teachers are using foreign languages to teach non-language subjects (only 6% strongly agreed and 25% somewhat agreed) and giving assignments that require reading in foreign languages (11% strongly and 35% somewhat agreed).
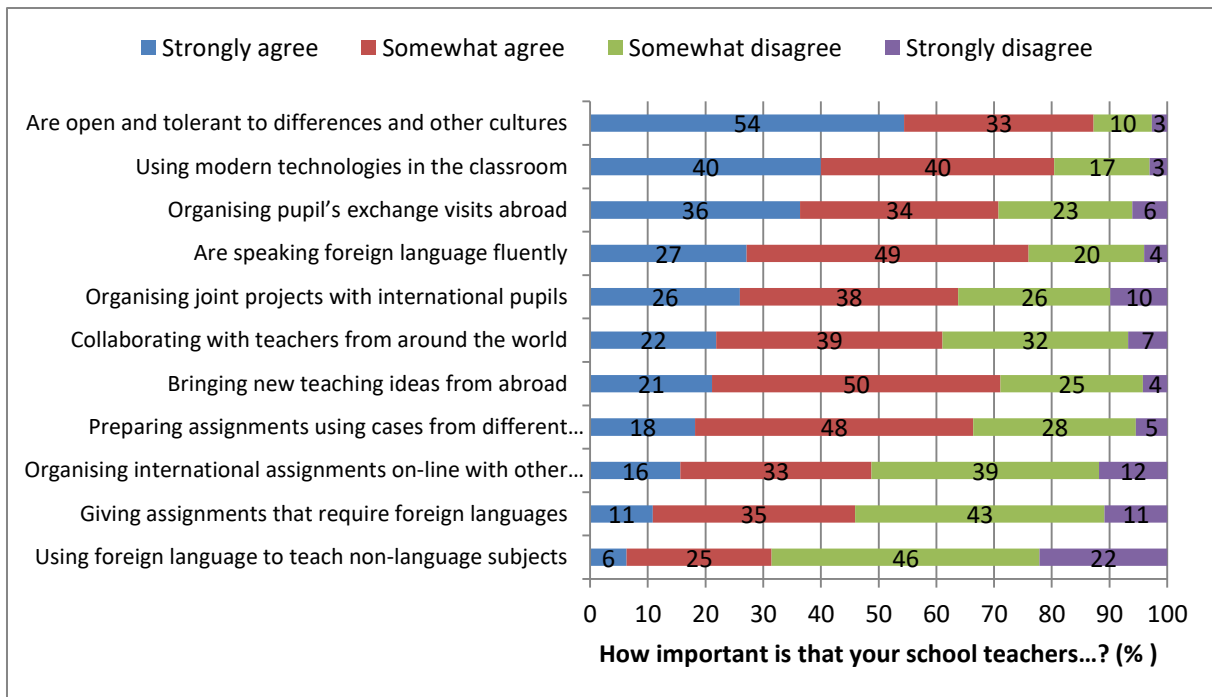
Figure 10. Students' (N=429-460) expectations for teacher professional competencies and school's internationality

The results reveal that students' previous experiences are related with their expectations towards' school's internationality, as students who have been abroad with a student exchange programme have also higher expectations regards teachers' foreign language skills (F=8.5, p<0.01), bringing new teaching ideas from aboard (F=8.1, p<0.01), giving assignments in foreign languages (F=8.0, p<0.01), using foreign languages to teach non-language subjects (F=8.0, p<0.01), organising joint projects with students from other countries (F=19.7, p<0.001) and students' exchange visits aboard (F=25.0, p<0.001). The results also reveal that girls have generally higher expectations for teacher professional competencies and school's internationality when compared to boys.

Students were asked about the changes they had observed in activities of their teachers after their participation in mobility visits aboard. The majority of students thought that after the mobility their teachers shared their experiences from the visit (86%), talked about learning in other countries (81%) and gave more interesting glasses (79%; Figure 11).

The results also indicate that perceptions about changes after mobility are positively correlated with students' overall satisfaction with their school (r=0.24, p<0.001); therefore, the changes made by teachers after mobility might also increase students' school satisfaction. Total changes perceived is also negatively correlated with students' age, so that younger students have perceived changes more frequently (r=-0.15, p<0.001).
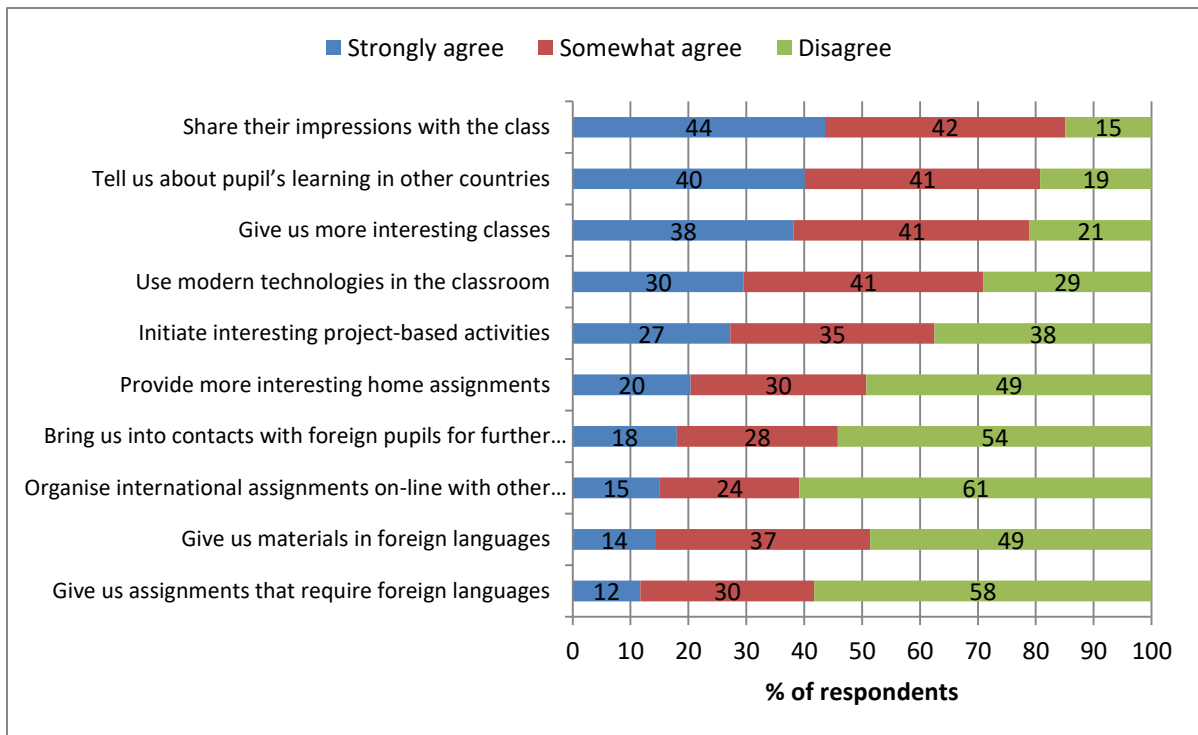
Figure 11. Students' (N=406-441) perceptions about changes in teachers' performance after mobility visits

In an open ended question, students were asked for comments, suggestions and wishes concerning the school's international projects. Many of them wrote that they would like to go aboard with a students' exchange programme or participate in other projects aboard. The students made comments about lacking of information: they brought out that they did not know that teachers went aboard and wished that there was more information about students' exchange programmes and other international projects. They also wished that there were more foreign students in their school or more possibilities to communicate with same-aged students aboard.

3.8. PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL'S INTERNATIONALITY AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ABOARD

With the parents' questionnaire their opinions about the school's international activities and benefits of internationalisation for school were assessed.

The results reveal that only half of the parents are aware of teachers' mobility visits and international projects implemented in the school, as only 54% answered that school is providing such information (Figure 12). Only about one third of respondents (30%) think that school is involving parents into international activities. Nine percent of parents agree or somewhat agree that education suffers because of teachers' visits aboard, as lessons are missed.
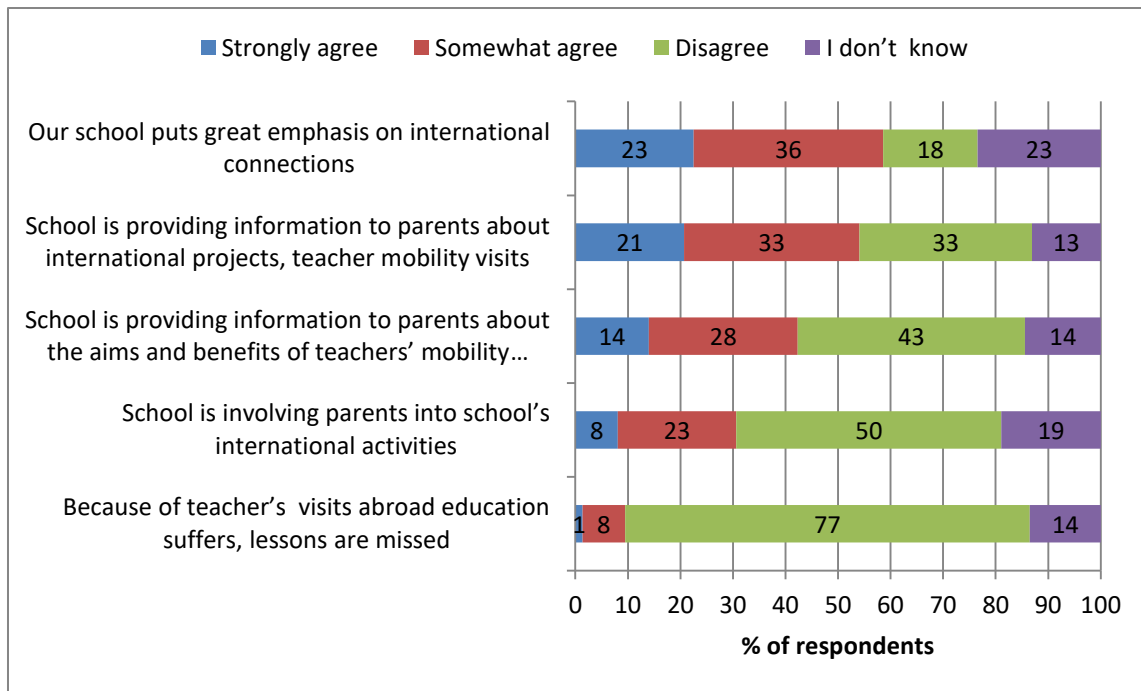
Figure 12. Parents' (N=222) assessment of school's international activities

Results reveal that school's internationality is an important contributor to school satisfaction, as parents' assessment of school's international activities is positively correlated with their overall satisfaction with the school (r=0.40-0.48, p<0.001).

Despite the relatively small awareness of the school's international activities, it is found that parents still rate school internationality considerably important (Figure 13). Altogether 96-99% of parents strongly or somewhat agree that teachers' visits aboard improve children's teaching, are important for developing teacher competencies and stimulate school's improvement. Almost all (98%) parents think that it is important that their children get international competencies at school.

Parents' perceptions about school's internationality are related with their previous experiences, as respondents with studying experiences aboard agree more that teachers' visits are important for developing teacher competencies (F=4.2, p<0.05), improve children's teaching (F=6.3, p<0.05) and stimulate school's improvement (F=4.9, p<0.05).
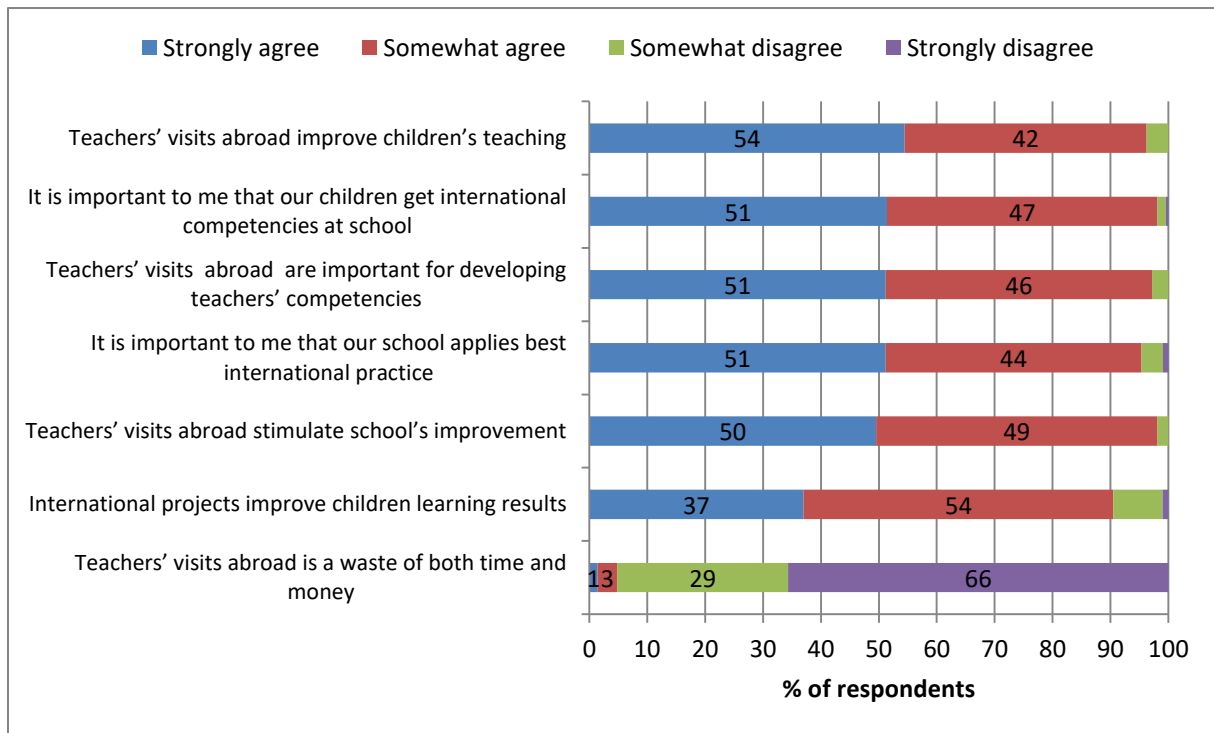
Figure 13. Parents' (N=200-216) perceptions concerning school's internationality and teachers' professional development aboard

The analysis of parents' open-ended answers re-confirmed the previous results. In one question, parents were asked to comment the school's participation in international projects. It was repeatedly stressed by parents that teachers' mobility visits have positive effect on school, e.g. *it improves teacher competencies, there should more such opportunities; both, children and teacher benefit from such projects,* etc. Some parents mentioned that they have not heard of such projects and wished that there would be more information.

The respondents also shared their own positive experiences regarding international projects in school, for example:

- *As a parent I have seen presentations from two teachers from our school that participated in mobility visits aboard. The presentations were of high quality and very interesting for parents.*
- *I like that our school is involving parents into different international projects. For example, our family has hosted visitors from Norway and Sweden. It was an excellent experience for our whole family.*
- *I am very satisfied and proud that our school has tradition of participating in international projects for years. I have been seeing how it facilitates in forming young adults who are well-educated, broad-minded and have the right values.*

4. THE RESULTS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS COMPOSED OF MOBILE STAFF MEMBERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

4.1. THE RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF THE FOCUS GROUP OF MOBILE STAFF MEMBERS

Research sample. To better disclose the peculiarities of preparation and implementation of ERASMUS+KA1 action projects and usefulness and sustainability of their outcomes at schools in Estonia, focus groups of mobile staff and school principals of schools that received funding for projects in 2014 were organized.

A focus group of mobile teachers was composed for the research. Four teachers from a school for pupils with special needs participated in the focus group: two teachers participated as job shadows, one attended a training course and the fourth acted as project coordinator.

Choosing the purpose of academic mobility: *This was the first project, where the needs of the school were considered most. There is close cooperation between the teachers and management of the school; the management informs the teachers of what is expected from them, and the objectives of the academic mobility were also discussed with the participating teachers first. This year the teachers presented their wishes about what they would like to do within the framework of the development plan and what would they like to learn in connection with the plan.*

Experience of participation as a job shadow: *The project was written during a period of changes in the school in order to learn how to work with children of care study. The job shadowing project in England was the most successful as it was an extremely good school that used to be our partner during the Comenius project already. It has extremely modern environment and a super system. The school was under renovation at the time of our academic mobility, and thus we also got ideas for how to perform our own renovation works in a better manner. For us it was essential to prepare our teachers for their new work, and one teacher who acted as job shadow actually is working as a teacher of a care class. We were allowed to look into all the documents and strategic plans of the school as well as arrangements of how everything functioned in the school. Afterwards the documents and experience were also shared with the school's management, which was very important. No training course can offer such experience! It was very useful experience indeed. We are now in the process of changing the development plan of our school, and we can take account of the experience of another school.*

Experience of attending a training course: *The material acquired on the course of active study methods also supports this principle, including in case of pupils with special needs. We tested everything in practice on the course, both outdoors and indoors, with very different materials. I really do apply everything that I received on the course. I also applied these methods when organising a teachers' seminar. They work equally well on both teachers as well as pupils. We are now preparing for the final seminar of the project together with our colleagues. We will use the methods learned by me there as well, and I have seen that my colleagues have applied them in their work too.*

Selection of teachers: *Related to the teachers' own wishes and the circumstance of who should work on with what according to our plans. Those teachers who share and contribute more than others and have greater influence on other teachers were selected. The teachers who participated in academic mobility are always ready for challenges, to do something.*

Obstacles to participation in academic mobility: *The biggest obstacle to participation in academic mobility is the language skills as teachers do not want to make mistakes when speaking – they are ashamed of their mistakes. But the fear of making mistakes can be overcome in a couple of days; it is*

important to make a start. The teachers' fear about their language skills is actually not justified. In fact, they would manage with it when they need. Some teachers also have personal reasons because of which they cannot leave home for a longer period. Partially this implies stepping out of your comfort zone, given that besides listening you also need to introduce your own school, and participate in various activities and discussions.

Teachers would like to participate as a team: *Given that I went together with my younger colleague who spoke the language, it was easy for me. In the future, two or three teachers could go together – then it would be easier and not so scary. If you go alone on an academic mobility trip, you will feel yourself somewhat lonely in a strange country, especially if you are the only representative from your country on a particular course. For the project manager, providing support to a participating elderly teacher during the trip was the most difficult part, as the teacher was very much afraid at the beginning and needed continual encouragement and calming-down.*

Selection of the form of academic mobility: *The forms of academic mobility were chosen according to the aims of the projects. In one case, job shadowing was most useful as it gave long-term (3 weeks) experience of direct participation in study work and the teachers could interact directly with pupils. Given that we have practiced outdoor studies for 5 years already, we needed to develop this further and learn new methods. Therefore we chose the course which also included visiting a lesson. Of course, we could test this on pupils as well.*

Support from the school: *General attitude towards going on academic mobility trips is very good. For example, the colleagues are interested in the experience of academic mobility and those who have participated willingly share their experience. The pupils were aware of it too that the teacher had participated in academic mobility. The teacher shared her experience with pupils, made changes in her work, and surely her attitude towards pupils changed.*

Changes in the work and attitude of the teacher: *I understood that the teacher must not feel pity for pupils with special needs but look on them as normal people. Indeed, my attitude changed in the first place. My attitude towards out-of-school activities also changed: e.g. when going on an excursion, the pupils get a preparing task – this is another form of study that includes feedback about what pupils have seen. I changed my grading criteria to make it more pupil-centred and focused on the development of the pupil, to include internal grading and also diversify the methods of teaching outside of school. We got the idea of building an outdoor study class from an earlier training course, and we also found a place for this on our new premises based on the wishes of the teachers who had attended the course.*

Changes within the teacher: *Participation in academic mobility enables the teacher to see her from a new perspective, to meet her fears and get aware of her strengths. Quite often the teacher also makes changes in her own life after having participated in a project. The teacher's attitude towards her work and school changes as she feels more self-confident also in new situations and when interacting with new people. Indeed all things succeed if the person is not afraid of giving it a try and to make mistakes and to try once more. The teachers who have participated in training courses keep contact with each other via Facebook and share photos of various activities they have conducted at their classes. And the pupils of the teachers who have participated in academic mobility want to have contacts with pupils from other countries – we have also helped them to get such contacts.*

Forms of sharing experience: *After having participated in academic mobility the teachers share their experience with the whole school family. The pupils also talk about their experience, and sharing of experience with teachers of other schools also takes place in the form of seminars and active study. The teachers also gave new ideas for the development plan of the school, and we discussed with the whole school team at a seminar which of those could be possible to use.*

Learning as an important objective of the school which is supported by academic mobility: *The principal of our school follows the principle that every teacher and educator must learn something new that could be applied in her work, and also share her experience. Even if you feel scared, the only thing you need is to make your first step, and then things will become easier. As the world changes all the time, the teacher must also learn and develop herself all the time to teach her pupils. It is good that such opportunities have emerged to travel under various projects as people tend to forget pretty soon what they have learned at traditional training courses but projects enable to educate and develop teachers, and this is highly important and it really works.*

4.2. THE RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF THE FOCUS GROUPS COMPOSED OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Six focus group discussions with principals of schools that were granted support for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects were organized. The groups included principals of 8 schools of different types and from different regions. Most of them have participated in project-related professional development visits abroad before. The main questions at discussions with school principals were related to coherence between the projects implemented and the school strategic management, attitudes of school principals to teacher professional development events abroad, benefits these events bring to professional development of teachers, and aspects of applicability and sustainability of outcomes of mobility visits.

The initiative for applying for academic mobility projects usually comes from **BOTH SIDES.** *Every year the school looks for opportunities and introduces and suggests them to teachers who need to inform the management in advance of their interests. But the teachers also express their wishes concerning applying for projects: e.g. some teachers, and also pupils, wanted a project on a topic of their interest.*

An idea expressed by one school principal very well describes the **USEFULNESS** of academic mobility: *'If we want to raise citizens of the world of our pupils, the teacher must act as a model in this to her pupils and see the world herself first, build her self-esteem, get an experience of travelling herself in order to encourage children after that. Tolerance towards internationalisation is only possible in case you have seen it with your own eyes.'*
According to the school principals, projects intended for the teachers' professional development are useful as an **INSTRUMENT FOR MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC CHANGES AT SCHOOL** that serves as the following factors:
• **a measure for (internal) motivation and activation of teachers:** *The most important thing is the teacher's motivation to learn and work, as well as their being aware that they are acknowledged at school and they can share their experience with others;.*
• **a means for strengthening leadership and teamwork at school:** *On an impulse of international training courses, teachers of our school have become instructors of both other teachers of our own school as well as teachers of other Estonian schools. Instructing each other within our school and learning from each other has substantially grown, but the pupils of the teachers who have participated in academic mobility also instruct other teachers;*
• **an incentive for changes at school:** *KA1 was the first step before applying for KA2 projects. This was an indirect aim from the part of the school. We had some experience with Comenius, but actually very little of it. It really was a big step. We decided to deal with it for two years. The people in our school are proud; the European dimension is not incomprehensible any more. We can compare ourselves to others, and in some aspects also to share our own good experience with others. I have noticed that teachers who have participated in academic mobility change: they have new ideas, their classrooms have new outlooks, and the teachers personally change too;*

• **giving input for the development of the school:** *The teachers who have participated in academic mobility know that they are expected to give input for the development of the school curriculum – this is the aim of academic mobility;*
• **a means for strategy implementation:** *The first year we did not succeed to gain financing but then we improved our project and the feedback to the project was very good, and we received financing. A model presented beforehand as an example does make analysis of your activities and assessment of results much easier. The Erasmus+ project was the beginning from where our management gained inspiration to get familiarised with and learn from other educational systems and best practices applied in both Estonia and other countries. International training courses have brought the ICT sphere on a new level in our school;*
• **an opportunity for making choices and being more flexible:** *Even if the teacher who has participated in academic mobility does not start working at once in the sphere in which she passed additional training, the school can demonstrate flexibility and find another teacher from the same school for this purpose when such need arises. The school knows that the teacher can teach pupils with different needs but, if possible, she would still work in the sphere that is her strongest and fits her most. This is beneficial both to the school and the teacher herself;*

Results of analysis of material from the focus group discussions with principals of schools suggest that school principals give only positive feedback about all international projects, and teacher professional development visits abroad as part of implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects bring school **TANGIBLE BENEFITS SUPPORTING MANAGERIAL DECISIONS**. That is:
• **Positioning of the school:** *International training courses have brought the ICT sphere onto a new level in our school, and the teachers of our school have become instructors to both teachers of our own school as well as of other Estonian schools;*
• **Strengthening of international professional networking:** *Going to practise as a job shadow implied having earlier contacts. We has a lot to learn from our Swedish partner, incl. the theoretical lessons. The Swedish partner has now sent one of their teachers here, and our cooperation will continue in 2015 to 2017 in our next project where our teacher of Swedish will also participate. Right now Swedish teachers act as job shadows to the teachers of our school;*
• **Improvement of self-esteem of the staff:** *It is crucial for a teacher to get an experience of success: that I made it myself, I managed – this is very important. In the next stage, the teacher will also be ready to take responsibility for writing the project and the organisational side of the project. The greatest benefit is the widening of horizons of the teacher and the rise of her self-perception (rise of self-esteem), given that you cannot hear much about the positive side of the educational system from the Estonian media. Given that we are ahead of other countries in terms of use of ICT devices, this is a strong internal bonus to the teachers who have motivation and will to work as a teacher: they can travel and feel that they are doing something that is important. Otherwise no changes will take place. We may talk and imagine, but they really get a very great impetus from there;*
• **Changes in teachers' attitudes:** *From the very beginning our idea has been to direct people to give their own input to the thinking process. Independent thinking is also carried over to everyday work, study work, development of the school, etc. They can very well give their input on why we need this or that, where the school should be heading, etc. This helps to develop the organisation too. Knowledge can also be obtained from literature and training courses but we wanted to bring about a shift in attitudes and values via our academic mobility projects. Quite often people tend to stick to their visions without seeing the broader picture;*
• **Certainty that we are moving in the right direction:** *In connection with ICT, we did not get anything new directly, except for the assurance that we are moving in the right direction and we are good ourselves;*
• **Additional possibilities to fund the development of the teachers' competence:** *The amount of training moneys from the government is all too little, and therefore Erasmus+ constitutes a very important and high-level individual and professional training opportunity to the school. This project is a really good opportunity for the school particularly for the reason that training funds are scarce and*

very much depends on support from the school leader. Academic mobility is one of the most positive projects, particularly in the light that the schools have been deprived of their training funds and thus their training options. Training courses within Estonia really remain meagre but good trainings or lecturers are expensive and I cannot afford to bring them in for my staff.

Depending on the aim set, some schools have also achieved very specific results: *The development plan of the school was finalised and the software programming curriculum has been implemented, plus the related hobby groups and subjects. The conference presented the opportunity to analyse what is that what we are doing well and what could definitely remain in the development plan, and what should still be added to the plan. Some source materials, ideas or study exercises for compiling the software programming curriculum. The desire to write a new project and participate in academic mobility again.*

Participation in projects is a good incentive for saying out your opinion, **which also implies the need for better knowledge of foreign languages:** *We support our teachers with courses of English to enable them to interact with our guests and visit foreign countries.*

Results of analysis of materials of discussions with school principals confirm that their schools that received funding for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects were striving to comply with the Fund requirements at all stages of implementation of the project. Criteria for selection of teachers for mobility visits were established at the schools, these criteria were referred to in selecting teachers, choosing different forms for professional development, and planning and implementing dissemination of results of mobility visits on different levels. It is important to note that the research revealed some specific aspects of implementation of the projects. These aspects are presented below, illustrated with statements by the research participants.

Selection of teachers at schools headed by principals who took part in the research was done on the basis of **SELECTION CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY THE PROJECT ORGANISERS.** The following aspects of candidates were important to the project implementers:
• **Language skills**: *The teachers were not sure whether they could manage in English and were good enough in it.*
• **The teachers' willingness and readiness to participate in academic mobility:** *The persons' readiness to participate in the project increases the probability that everything will work out well as the person is motivated and will take responsibility for the successfulness of academic mobility.*
• **Key persons of the school who are responsible for the development of some sphere:** *We offered the opportunity to participate in the project to the key persons engaged in selected topics: the principal is responsible for the development plan; the educational technologist is responsible for the compiling of the software programming curriculum.*
• **On the basis of training needs of which the management has been informed:** *In spring, our teachers always fill in a self-analysis form and one part of it covers the person's training wishes. After that we hold development interviews with our employees where we discuss these wishes. The teachers also write motivation letters where they justify their motivation.*
• **Participation in writing academic mobility projects:** *The teachers had to clarify their aims for themselves and give their input to the project, so that would take part in the thinking process. This way they would also value the project higher. The writing of the application was conducted in a team comprised of several teachers and the teaching manager as not everyone has got the skill of writing an application. We have our own special team for the Erasmus+ project, and a mailing list where we discuss the project, and the school leader will then compile the ideas.*
• **Matching the teacher's personal study objectives with the aims of the school:** *Those willing to participate found such courses for themselves that fitted into the general principles context. They could also formulate what it was what they expected from those courses.*
• **The teachers who have stood out from others for their good work so far.**

• **Representatives of different age groups and subjects:** *When selecting people for projects, we try to ensure the coverage of different subjects and school levels. The teachers present their wishes to the heads of chairs during their development interviews, and together with the heads of chairs we analyse who could go and develop the topics on the basis of their study subjects.*

• **Several selection criteria and selection stages:** *We had several rounds during our selection procedure: when the academic mobility projects had been agreed upon and the courses selected, the courses were introduced to the teachers during an informational meeting and the information was also sent to the teachers' mailing list. These opportunities are open to everybody; everybody can participate. Given that only a few teachers wanted to participate themselves, we had to persuade other teachers to take part as we wanted to create choice and competition between at least two teachers.*

The school leaders brought out several obstacles to participation in academic mobility, the first of which is the language problem, but also fear in front of learning something new or simply unwillingness to step out of one's comfort zone: *The greatest obstacle to academic mobility lies in the language problem, but also fears before trying out something new. Teachers tend to think that it is enough to be a good teacher to their pupils in their own classrooms to be a good teacher, that no additional effort is needed.*

At several occasions the school leaders, like the teachers, pointed out the desire to send **SCHOOL TEAMS** to academic mobility trips: *While so far each teacher went to a different place, then in my opinion it would be best if we could send groups. In such case the impact of change would be much stronger, as the idea of just one person can sometimes get stuck somewhere but if there are 3 or 4 persons already (key persons, e.g. heads of subject commissions) and they perceive something, then this would definitely result in a substantially greater boost at school. We would like to do more of team trainings but we cannot. Group trainings (e.g. for chair heads) during school holidays could be one form of continuation to academic mobility. Much greater change can by implemented by a group than when going alone.*

The school leaders emphasised that proceeding from the needs of the school is the **CRITERION OF SUCCESS** of academic mobility, and academic mobility should be **PURPOSEFUL, WELL THOUGHT THROUGH and ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC MEANING:** *Indeed, one aspect that made the first project successful probably was that it was thought trough comprehensively and in full (during a long period of time), redone, and very clearly written – so that an outsider would also understand it. We do not implement projects because of projects; projects are always connected to specific needs. Effectiveness of academic mobility could be higher if the person returning from academic mobility would fill the results with a specific meaning for herself, and pass this over to others. In this way the better will be the result that you will get for yourself.*

The school leaders also emphasised that in order to achieve sustainable changes it is crucial to be **CONSISTENT** and **SYSTEMATIC** at implementation of innovations after academic mobility: *Attitudes can be changed gradually and simultaneously from all the aspects. In such case it will become the norm. Change cannot be implemented at once, and just single effort is not sufficient for change to get rooted.*

Importance of the attitude of **SCHOOL LEADERS** was also pointed out: *Success of academic mobility begins from the attitude of the school's management: whether academic mobility is considered to be important or not, and whether teachers are given the opportunity to participate in academic mobility and implement innovations afterwards.*

According to the research participants, dissemination regarding the mobility visits during the projects was carried out actively and in accordance with requirements: by producing a report, organizing

informational events at school, in town, and nationwide: Teachers came back very happy and shared their experience with colleagues as well as regional schools really actively. Later everyone writes reports and must do publicizing at meetings, lessons, to colleagues, friend to friend, and they did that in town too. The teachers managed to spread the results very widely and immediately apply in their work as well as share with the community. The visits are followed by seminars: these take place not only at school, as there were some national-level conferences.

From the point of view of research participants, all forms of teacher professional development abroad are useful. Selection of forms of job shadowing is essentially limited by teachers' foreign language skills. To sum up the results of content analysis the topics mentioned below were identified. They relatively reflect and support the exclusiveness or appropriateness of one or another form of teacher competence development for satisfaction of the needs of school or teachers:
• **All forms are necessary:** *All options are appropriate; it depends on the person. Information received at a course can also afterwards be applied at school, reviewed and passed over to others. A lot of teachers are not ready yet to go job shadowing for long time – because of language skills, lack of self-confidence and the time factor. Therefore different options should be possible out of which one could choose. It would be beneficial to trainings too if another and different approach were added to the two major pedagogic approaches that exist in Estonia (the approaches of the Universities of Tartu and of Tallinn).*
• **Appreciation of job shadowing visits:** *Today it seems that the time has come to stay somewhere on site for a longer period, e.g. as a job shadow, in order to see how school life is arranged in different places. Lessons on what does not work can also be drawn from other countries' experience. When going on school visits (job shadowing), you can see what the school looks like or what is being done for these purposes in that particular school, and you can see a broader picture. Job shadowing presents a new challenge which implies greater preparations from the host school but we could make it thanks to our contacts found earlier, and we could learn from direct teaching and compare the methods to our own experience.*
• **Combined forms of academic mobility:** *But according to my own experience, combined forms – theory plus practical observation – are the most effective forms.*
• **Reasons why not to choose job shadowing:** *A lot of teachers are still not ready to go job shadowing for long time – because of the language problem, lack of self-esteem and the time factor.*
• **Reasons why not to choose teaching:** *I believe that it will still take some time before the teacher's self-confidence increases to such extent that she dares to go to teach on her own. I think today there are too little of such teachers who are open and ready for this. The new generation is definitely more open on this matter and has more courage to take risks. Plunging into practice would probably really be the next step for those teachers who already have travelled and seen a lot.*

Considering appropriateness and match of qualification forms to the aims of mobility, it was found that school principals are best familiar with professional development courses or professional conferences and seminars. Some teachers left disappointed with the course quality.

The school principals pointed out the following forms of insemination of experience: writing articles (also by pupils); blogging to write down the ideas that have emerged; (internal) trainings or seminars from-colleague-to-colleague; delivering open lessons; making presentations at conferences to other schools; trying out various methods and games in practice.

Just like mobile staff, school principals who participated in focus group discussions also expressed their opinions on collaboration with the specialists of the Education Exchanges Support Foundation who administrate preparation and implementation of project applications of schools as well as presented **PROPOSALS CONCERNING SUPERVISION OF PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS:**

• **Evaluation of activities of specialists of the Foundation**: *Supporting academic mobility is very well organised by the Archimedes Foundation. The conduct information days, answer to any questions that have emerged. Postponing the deadline for submission of applications was very much necessary.*
• **Needs for help**: *Considering small schools that have no experience the Foundation may need to think how it could help them with their applications. It was not easy at all to go through the public procurement procedure.*
• **Cooperation with schools with experience of participation to introduce the possibilities of academic mobility:** *The Archimedes Foundation could engage schools as well as pupils with experience of participation into the process of introducing the possibilities of academic mobility. They would share their experience with other schools in a luscious manner to induce competition to academic mobility, considering that envy is a driving force.*

5. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

5.1. Study environment as a factor that shapes the pupil's personal development: THE CASE OF THE VÄÄNA MANOR SCHOOL (Vääna Mõisakool)

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

The objectives set out in the application form (building of a study environment that is modern in its contents and based on cultural values in its form) **are in line with the main goal set out in the strategic plan for the years 2016-2018** (further development of an organisation that relies on agreed upon values).

Specific features of the school: The Vääna Manor School is a kindergarten/primary school with 6 forms and 93 pupils. The school is situated in a rural district, in a renovated manor house that is surrounded by a huge park. Placing high value on the history of the manor and application of outdoor studying have been specific features of the school for some time, while the use of ICT devices, outlining integration of national groups and development of a training system have been added to those quite recently.

To ensure the sustainability of the mobility outcomes the following activities have been planned in the application form: 1 course (a teacher and a study manager), 3 trainings (3 teachers and the school leader), 1 training + visit to a school (1 teacher), 2 outdoor study trainings (4 teachers).

Research sample. 3 focus group discussions: (1) mobile staff (5 respondents); (2) non-mobile staff (5 respondents); (3) interview with school leader.

Project implementation peculiarities: (1) clear linkage between project topic, approach to teaching and strategic goals; (2) well organized and managed dissemination of mobility experience; (3) effective implementation of mobile staff experience by non-mobile staff.

PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL LEADER

Learning through action and analysis of what has been accomplished: *When I took over the management of this school, hardly any development activities were conducted here. When conducting an activity, we always learn which nuances have been missed with a project. For example, we still have room for development at conducting training courses and conferences; we need to make training courses from colleague to colleague and open lessons to work more systematically, and organise acting as job shadows with two of our neighbouring schools. I would like all things to launch*

fast and changes to become real quickly, but a school is a slowly changing entity and the processes take time.

Associating the project with the teachers' personal development goals: *The aim of the project was to apply the existing strengths of the school in a systemic and integrated manner (values of the manor, studying outdoors, ICT). I try to bind the objectives of the school with specific interests of the teachers, and then with options for training, which means that the aim of the project is formed of two components. New options granted also imply obligations to contribute to the development of a specific topic. Different spheres have different 'engines' who lead particular topics, and together they form the big picture. As a result of the project, the objective of the school has also become clearer.*

Taking joint responsibility with the teachers: *The best managed project is the project where the ideas proposed by me are bought by the teachers, where these ideas become part of their plans. I aspire towards the teachers taking responsibility for the plan. I put an idea on the table, and then we discuss it jointly with the whole team, and we also may put it aside if it is inappropriate or if we lack the necessary resources to carry it out – so that the initiative would not be left on me alone. My task is to find the resources necessary to implement an idea. The school leader's role is to detect and direct discourses, and to shape such discourses through positive direction and sharing stories and personal experience, as well as to act as a mentor who helps the teachers to give meaning to their activities.*

Selection of project participants: *After introduction of the ideas of the project only those teachers continued to participate who were interested in the project, because if the teacher is not ready, she or he cannot be forced. In case of some teachers whom I have encouraged to participate the language barrier constitutes an obstacle, which could be overcome if two different persons who see the training from different perspectives could attend the same training, and later on they could also implement the ideas better at school. I encouraged the teachers to overcome their fears related to language skills, and those who have attended have actually overcome their fears, and they also share their experience with others. We have actually special courses of English for teachers but unfortunately not all those teachers who would need such courses attend them.*

Sustainability of mobility outcomes: *Today we have such teachers at schools who are open and ready to learn, who are already prepared to teach other teachers (to perform the practical part in cooperation with universities), who have created study materials themselves, and who work in close cooperation with school managers. The ideas proposed are being considered, consensus is achieved upon them, and together the ideas are put into practice. Prospective to become tutor to other teachers is good motivation to the teachers for making an effort.*

Being well prepared, teamwork and professionalism as preconditions for putting experience into practice: *We always prepare ourselves thoroughly for everything. For example, we think through and practise our presentations, trainings or sharing of experience and answering any questions in advance in a safe environment, and sometimes via role plays, in order to avoid failure. Good teamwork is definitely one factor that helps experience to become rooted: willingness to take account of each others' wishes, common goal for activities that has sustained any debates and fosters development, clear and shifting division of roles and professional approach, as well as both formal and informal methods of sharing of experience.*

Benefits from academic mobility: *Participating in academic mobility gives contacts for organising trainings in the future, as well as makes teachers more open to what is going on outside their own schools and more international, and also diversifies the spectrum of trainings. Maybe they will even read articles in another language in the future. The project has given the necessary methods and obligated the teachers to look at the contents in a holistic manner (why do we do what we do?) – from setting the targets to mainstreaming the innovations.*

Options for further development: *We have developed methodical materials for studying outdoors but have not yet consolidated them into an integral work manual – this could be done in the near future. Teachers actually do not demonstrate particular willingness to share the materials they have developed with their colleagues as they are afraid of potential criticism. Relying on these materials, we could actually start training other teachers as well – we have found possibilities for this already.*

Flexibility: *A teacher must present her or his work plan twice a year in a format of her or his own discretion. The plan must set out how the main topics and integration will be treated, although a teacher may decide herself for how long a period she would plan her activities in advance. Beginning from this year we have a lesson of outdoor studies but in order to motivate the teachers by giving them freedom and not to impose restrictions on them, we have agreed that we will execute any written formalities about this lesson (the part of setting targets) retrospectively.*

Changes within pupils: *Alongside with other educational innovations, academic mobility has helped to gain new ideas and try them out in the classroom, and thereby to make the teaching process at the lessons more diversified (offering various options and possibilities via ICT, independent work and project studies, flexibility and individual curricula), and this has also changed the pupils: it has broadened their minds and made them to take more responsibility for their studies. We also offer pupils a broad spectrum of hobby activities. The teachers have both courage and ideas for this, and this constitutes an essential part of balanced education. Indeed, many of the ideas gained from the projects have found their way into hobby activities and breaks between the lessons.*

Reasons why projects are successful or unsuccessful: *The teachers' motivation and objectives at implementation of a project; why it is implemented, what will change at school as a result of the project? If the aim of the project has not been thoroughly thought through, if it has not undergone discussions and perhaps even debates on why it is conducted, the project will not succeed. It is easier and less time-consuming to conduct thorough discussions on the project, incl. criticising it in a constructive manner and taking account of various opinions, than to start motivating teachers at the stage of implementation of the project. Indirectly, the project gave us experience of acting as a team and the feeling of breathing as a team.*

PERCEPTION OF A MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

Benefit from and long-term impact of the project: *I could see how teaching music is looked upon elsewhere in the world. Visiting museums gave a great deal of different ideas that can be used at lessons. I enjoyed very much the opportunity to participate in lots of different workshops; I admired the abundance of educational materials and related trainings (and advising) provided to the teachers right at their schools. You could find professional trainer for each topic right away, and life-long learning took place practically everywhere. I had the opportunity to compare: e.g. in Italy, options for using musical instruments are substantially broader, for the whole class at the same time. I liked to see men and practicians as teachers. This ardour will probably still last for a couple of years; I can use this experience all the time and I know what I am talking about; I also made a lot of pictures. I got the assurance that I speak beautiful English and lots of various apps to use. I actually use five or six apps out of those learned, that I have become comfortable with and that are fit for the class, every day. My self-confidence increased immensely: I made it although I was pretty nervous before going. It was a very good life experience, and I am already looking forward to my next academic mobility trip.*

Sharing experience: *First we shared our experience in our presentation at the Tabasalu school; I wrote an article to the newspaper of our rural municipality; we presented a summary to our colleagues; we have conducted information hours and thematic days, e.g. on the use of apps, a mobility day, a hiking event with activities; one teacher thought that she had directed more of her experience to the class, although the teachers have exchanged their impressions amongst themselves.*

Satisfaction with my own school and job: *I was very proud to show pictures of our school as we have a really beautiful house. I made an introduction on how musical studies are organised in Estonia and a little bit on my own school as well, but not particularly comprehensively. We have nothing to be ashamed of: we could include ourselves in some lists and offer trainings to others, e.g. on outdoor studies. Our people have so many ideas and we can allow teachers to visit the classroom. For example in England, they did not want to allow us to the classroom. Going out unites people and adds to the persons' courage.*

Selection of teachers to participate in academic mobility: *We ourselves selected the trainings of interest to us that matched the aims of the school, and then wrote the project. During the first year, we did not receive that much money from the project, although the number of courageous teachers was also less. Moreover, exchange of teachers was taking place at our school as well as moving to our newly renovated building, and therefore several of the trainings were postponed. These were reasons beyond our control – we are eager to go everywhere.*

Selection of the form of academic mobility: *We also thought about job shadowing but we have such a small school that it would be difficult to find a substitute for three weeks. In order to teach, you need to be fluent in the language. Rather job shadowing should come first, or we could invite somebody here to give lessons. I have always wanted to watch a foreign language lesson, how foreign languages are taught in other countries. I would love to go to teach Russian somewhere: I would take my own methodology and look, say after two weeks, whether they can acquire the basics or not.*

Changes: *Although outdoor studies were applied before our academic mobility trips too at our school, teachers became somewhat more courageous with this after academic mobility. I used to do it alone before, but now everybody knows that I have gone out and done it, and ask for help or suggest doing something together. There is much more cooperation with colleagues now. I gained specific confidence for doing something that I thought was forbidden to me before. Indeed we must facilitate the courage to be creative – this is a piece of knowledge that I indeed gained specifically from there.*

Changes in the attitudes of the teachers: *I already feel myself as a better teacher. Even the courage alone when I did these things with children or the knowledge – this is already something different. I like the idea that I know where I want to arrive before spring, and that pupils must be able to do some things. Sometimes you actually learn very good tricks from children, and then we indeed apply them. This is one thing that builds bridges between children and the teacher. I was inspired by conclusion of social/cultural agreements, and I wanted to pass this information on also to my colleagues. I can see that we are gradually moving in this direction as well.*

Introducing your own experience: *We have also hosted guests under the Manor Schools Project and received highly favourable feedback. I made a longer summary of this to the principal and study manager, and just talked about it to other teachers and compared different schools.*

Support from the management to innovations: *The aims of the school and the teachers are very much in symbiosis and support each other. We have very flexible arrangements; we should have a work plan but we write it for ourselves – we watch ourselves, know ourselves where we need to arrive or what we do. The study manager visited our lesson and afterwards we discussed what the aim of my lesson was and whether I achieved it, and not whether I achieved the aims that were written down in the work plan for that particular day. Everything that is novel is allowed if you can justify it to the management's satisfaction and you have a clear picture in your own mind.*

Obstacles to sharing of experience: *Perhaps experience is not shared because of lack of time as finding time that fits everybody is the most difficult thing. A general lecture format does not work. I,*

for example, go and talk to my colleagues when a need for a specific activity emerges. We enjoy the advantage of a small school, and we can talk to each other at any time.

Importance of the role of the school leader: *In our school, the principal would suggest something, and the teachers usually come along with it – in case of such things that drive us forward. We can drive forwards our own things but we cannot drive forward the mentality of the school.*

Impact of academic mobility on teachers: *I gained the courage for improvisation or courage for constant development and use of creativity. I was brave enough to pick up the idea from the Bach's Museum to conduct a thematic day – a Baroque Morning, given that we are situated in a baroque manor house. Outdoor studies have become more comprehensive and more deeply rooted, more specific; we become wiser ourselves all the time and accumulate information from others in addition. Thanks to these trainings we also have tablets and everybody use them with such energy; a huge shift has taken place in our development. The teacher who has attended a training acts as a support person who is addressed with questions, but the teachers also take further and deeper insights into the topics themselves. We are satisfied ourselves too: e.g. I will work as a teacher for as long as there is still something that is exciting, until it is still exciting to teach. When other teachers come here to learn from us – this also raises our feelings.*

The teacher's career model: *For me it is enough for my career when somebody comes to watch my lesson. A 'trainer' sounds gorgeous, is recognition to you, but also does a small bonus amount in addition to your salary. We have conducted one test training already, and now we are expecting next teachers to visit us.*

Impact of academic mobility on the pupils: *We have talked about academic mobility trips also to our pupils, and the children also take as if a better and friendlier attitude towards you. The children are indeed more or less informed about the good things that we have accomplished here; they also become more trusting towards you. The children's lives have definitely become merrier and more interesting, their horizons have broadened, and they also have gained specific skills of how to use computers. When compared to my previous class, then now we do a very great deal of our work in web environments; we review things and practise, they make apps themselves, indeed they learn much more, better and with enthusiasm. And other teachers can use these skills at their lessons; they do not need to start teaching them from scratch.*

Options for further development as a teacher-trainer: *In my opinion, we indeed could give training a try. We already have such a team that I would very much like to conduct lessons with them; I trust these people.*

PERCEPTION OF A NON-MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

Learning from your colleagues and applying what you have learned: *The teachers have played through with their colleagues what they have learned at their courses, they use themselves what they have learned, and thereby also give new ideas to their colleagues. We do not just only think, but also start testing at once. Most of all, I have taken over IT – the sphere that one teacher went to learn and then passed on to us. At some period, we experienced some kind of a real apps-mania. About 18 months ago I did not understand what an app was, and I was afraid that I would not be able to catch up with all this IT staff, that children would get far ahead. Besides sharing the experience of academic mobility, it is important that one could ask for help or advice from that teacher, e.g. where to find some materials or how something worked. In fact, it has been an exciting process – all those apps, QR codes and searches, as well as all kinds of web pages and possibilities they give to users. Given that we have got the facilities for using ICT, it is quite interesting and today I already courageously use it.*

Shared ideas and teamwork: *On the one hand, academic mobility gives you specific methods and ideas, but on the other, it also contributes to the building of mentality and attitude that we do new things. When somebody has attended an event and got inspired, then it also carries away the others. We discuss how could we make this thing even better and put more of it into practice. We do not simply take over an idea but we try to adapt it to our needs, taking also account of our own environment, and to develop it further. At some point we cannot remember any more where the idea came from – it becomes our own. Today we have a perfectly functioning and trustworthy team at our school, and what we ourselves need, what we can give to the school through our niche, is also taken into account. As we all share in everything, and all the teachers of our school do the same things, e.g. outdoor studies, it unites us as a school. It all starts from an idea shared by a teacher, which then spreads to other teachers, from them to the pupils who take it to their homes to their parents. Given that open-minded being is part of our culture, then everybody gets engaged with different ideas, we can apply them immediately, and we REALLY need them.*

Professional development of teachers: *Last year we developed study materials ourselves, and all the teachers of our school could use them at their lessons. This year we are also going to train other schools with the team of our school: we will give lessons to pupils in an ancient key (that fit into the environment of a manor).*

Development of distinctive features of the school: *If there are many schools in a particular region and the school wishes to stand out amongst them, it is essential to find the school's own image via different projects. It can be observed already now that the school has obtained a strong image thanks to the fact that so many things are done here and we have our own firm vision, and therefore very many children want to come and study here.*

The directing role of the school manager at management of changes: *I have been working at this school for long time already. The new principal came three years ago – before that there was nothing. The former principal was not particularly interested. She did not engage teachers at putting ideas into practice, and each teacher carried on her or his own business in her or his own corner. We did gorgeous things on our own and alone. But there was no appreciation or support whatsoever. When the new principal came, we were not able to thing along during the first semester – we were not used to it. Today we do not just dream about all the things that could be, but the new principal picks up practical ideas immediately and asks what are we going to do next with it, why are we going to do it, what will it give us and where will it take us, whether it is sustainable, etc. Each person has a little spark within him or her, and the principal is indeed the person who has ignited fire out of these sparks – so that we would have motivation. She always agrees with all kinds of ideas and innovations, but also offers real and practical assistance, takes some of the tasks on her own shoulders as an equal member of our team.*

5.2. Modernisation and improvement of the CLIL methods and the language immersion programme: THE CASE OF THE TALLINN PAE SECONDARY SCHOOL

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

The objectives set out in the application form (to receive feedback to the activities of the school/teachers via international cooperation; to raise the teachers' motivation and conviction that language immersion is a right thing to do; to develop the school's internal CLIL tutoring programme and ensure cooperation between school levels; to modernise and improve the CLIL methodology) **are in line with the goals set out in the strategic plan for the years 2015-2017** (to perform annual

evaluations of the effectiveness of trainings; to conduct internal trainings within the school to share experience and learn from each other; to broaden cooperation with language immersion schools and other schools via implementation of common projects).

Specific features of the school: This is a large city school with 850 pupils that applies Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology. A major part of the school's resources are specifically allocated for the development of the language immersion programme as a result of which the school has achieved public recognition. The teachers who have gone out teaching within the framework of academic mobility did their teaching in their native language. A (Finnish-Russian) bilingual school that applies the language immersion method in Finland was knowingly selected as the project partner.

To ensure the sustainability of the mobility outcomes the following activities have been planned in the application form: 2 academic mobility trips to a Finnish partner school for job shadowing in order to learn from their experience with CLIL, 2 trainings on application of CLIL in the secondary school, and participation in a CLIL conference.

Given that this is a bilingual school with two official study languages, the members of the focus group could talk in both Estonian and Russian, by choosing themselves which language they preferred, although the interview questions were presented in Estonian.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADER FINDINGS

Research sample. 3 focus group discussions: (1) mobile staff (8 respondents, 4 job shadowing); (2) non-mobile staff (7 respondents); (3) interview with school leader.

Project implementation peculiarities: (1) clear linkage between project topic, approach to teaching and strategic goals; (2) well organized and managed dissemination of mobility experience.

PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL LEADER

A distinctive feature of the school: *We have more than 10 years of experience at application of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). The aim of the project was to find a school with a similar language background as a job shadow partner school. Thanks to language immersion, the number of pupils of the school has doubled, and more children are coming in also because of general activities of the school, inc. implementation of projects. The school has built such an image of itself to the community that modern and interesting things that also broaden the pupils' horizons are done at the school, that interesting people go to our school. Openness and talking about ourselves in the media have also contributed to this: we are continuously present in the media as well as support such presence.*

Introducing innovations: *All the teachers of our school realise today that language immersion is one of the strongest facets of our school. Training from-teacher-to-teacher takes place at our school where our teachers have become training instructors who have passed instructors' training. Lack of time is, of course, a problem: given that our teachers work with a huge workload, the planning and analysing activities have moved to the web, while they used to take place via immediate contact before. The principal has been informed of the topic from the very beginning and is able to give her input into the discussion; she is a genuine member of the CLIL methodology team. Our school and teachers are also open to innovations in general: we go out and learn from the experience of others to adapt it to our school and gain new results; we also travel abroad to introduce our own experience.*

Supporting teamwork: *Our school building indeed favours teamwork: it does not have a system of offices and partitions; the teachers gather in the teachers' room for work and mutual discussions. Cooperation takes place in subject sections where members of management also participate, and*

support experts are also engaged when needed. The school has developed its own acknowledgement system: the subject sectors nominate their candidates for the title of the most valuable employee of the previous academic year, and present a summary of their achievements and their impact on the pupils. Joint social events and trips to foreign countries to make oneself familiar with any innovations.

The career model of the school takes account of the teachers' needs, supports their initiatives and delegates management: *The school has developed a career model to see personal development potentials of its people. Any teacher can be useful to the organisation also with something else, e.g. as a project manager, educational technologist, development manager, or language immersion coordinator. There are many options in our school to get engaged with besides giving lessons, and these activities are financed. A leader of a big school cannot get everything done on her or his own, and therefore it is essential to support those who really want to do something, otherwise they would look for options for self-realisation outside the school. When dividing roles, we try to find for each person just the sphere that fits the person most and with which he or she could manage in the best possible way. We cannot always rely rigidly on what is written in the job description – we rather make changes in our work organisation, if necessary. We need to act slowly but surely. If we support our people and enable them to interact also with people on similar posts in other schools, the things will gradually shake into their places. We need to find balance between the development of our school and the needs of our teachers.*

Criteria for selection of teachers: *We offer our teachers various options for attending different training courses. All the teachers have equal opportunities for participation in different training courses but they must demonstrate that they also invest their time and efforts themselves, e.g. learn a language themselves. The quality of teaching was an important criterion at selection of teachers for participation in academic mobility: what are the pupils' academic results based on lessons attended, feedback given by parents, and self-analysis of teachers. When a teacher participates in academic mobility, she or he represents the school, and she or he has to make a good impression of the school.*

Importance of project manager: *A school definitely needs a project manager as projects imply lots of organisational and reporting work which must be performed well and with precision. It can be also a teacher with light workload who performs these tasks in parallel with her own work but there definitely must be one certain person to do the job and take responsibility for the results – a leader who gives information and divides the tasks between people. Otherwise nothing will come out of it – in case of dispersed responsibility nobody actually takes responsibility for anything.*

Tracking the development of the teacher: *Development interviews with teachers were conducted by the head of the subject section for years (a colleague with colleague) but the teachers also wanted to interact with the management, and now it has been divided between the members of management who would talk to which teachers, and each member of the management can talk to all teachers within a 3 years cycle. The tasks of the development manager should also include talking to teachers, and tracking and supporting their development. The principal also has the task to visit the lessons of language immersion teachers: for example, this term she will visit the lessons of all 6th forms, next term the lessons of all 7th forms – so that she would gain a holistic picture that could be shared with teachers, a big picture of development of language skills and activities of the teachers and pupils. Each month we have a week of open lessons that are open to both other teachers as well as parents.*

Forms for sharing experience: *We offer our teachers various options for attending different training courses. All the teachers have equal opportunities for participation in different training courses but they must demonstrate that they also invest their time and efforts themselves, e.g. learn a language themselves. Once a month we hold a CLIL week at our school, and during this week both the parents and teachers have the opportunity to visit lessons. Taking this opportunity is particularly popular in case of early language immersion: a pupil of the 1st form cannot speak the language at all, and the*

parents are really worried and feared about their children – whether they can manage with this at all. During school holidays a CLIL conference takes place.

Benefits from the project: *We could demonstrate ourselves, to show our Finnish colleagues how well we work. Our teachers could compare how things work in Finland, how they act there, how they overcome various difficulties, and what we could apply also in our school. We started to introduce more actively using an assistant teacher in the classroom (we had the idea already before). The academic mobility project gave an impulse to our teachers of English to go and Polish teachers of English to come to give lessons mutually in each others' schools outside the framework of the project. Such projects create opportunities for making contacts. We are also planning to continue our cooperation with our partner school in Finland. Given that we are planning to start teaching Finnish in our school, then we could visit their school and invite them to our school, and the pupils can apply their knowledge of the language. Their teachers have also visited our school.*

Creating additional value: *As no special textbooks have been written for language immersion, our teachers have developed a common work plan for teachers of the 5th to 9th forms. It is impossible to work without this but all this constitutes extra work load. We have developed a well-structured model of how it would be possible to implement integration between different subjects, how a central subject is chosen and how all the other subjects support the central subject. This model has undergone continuous further development and improvement. It was not possible to take over Finnish experience directly as great differences exist between the two schools.*

Reasons why projects are successful or unsuccessful: *The need for a project manager to deal with administration of the project; a well-chosen topic for the project that would be interesting to the project manager in the first place, and via him or her to all the other stakeholders. Together we discuss the plan of the project in general, and we also discuss it with the participating teachers. Already at the stage of planning the project, there must be a firm vision and understanding of what should be done and where do we want to arrive, and what do we need for this purpose. If a project is simply implemented for the reason that something must be done, then nothing will come out of it. Thirdly, it is important to choose the right team and partners with whom to implement the project. The project manager must always have good justifications for selecting this or that person to participate in the project, and also have an overview of how each person has contributed to the project.*

PERCEPTION OF A MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

Benefits from the project: *Cooperation, contacts, and learning from the experience of our colleagues in other countries, making ourselves familiar with the educational system of another country, ideas and skills related to methodology and organisation of work, introducing our own experience and arrangements of cooperation, interacting with our colleagues in our own school and analysing the experience gained together with our colleagues. Assured knowledge of the fact that the Estonian education and school are on a high level, and the Estonian teacher does a good job. Assurance that the language immersion method chosen by our school works (is a step ahead as compared to others), and the school is moving in the right direction. Assurance that our knowledge of foreign languages is sufficient for interaction with people of other nationalities.*

Results: *Achieving an international dimension as 27 teachers, which is one-third of the employees of the school, have participated in academic mobility during recent years. Participation in projects does develop a person, makes him or her to contemplate about his or her work, gives skills, specific ideas, teaching methods or also general principles (preferring individual work to group work). Participation in projects gives personal conviction in several aspects, which makes the teaching also more trustworthy in the eyes of pupils. The teacher's self-assuredness grows, and she gains a deeper*

understanding of the needs for development (e.g. why it is necessary to learn languages) and for finding new opportunities and for seeing a broader picture.

Options for further development: *We have some things in our school that work very well: a long tradition, and it would not be necessary to start inventing something completely new but, indeed, we could develop some things further or to broaden the number of teachers who use the project. At the moment we have two separate integration schemes: one for language immersion classes and another for traditional classes, but it would be reasonable to combine these into one whole. We should compile a document to write down the principles of the language immersion programme, i.e. the system on which our work is based, but I am not convinced whether we actually need this. A code of ethics for the teacher of the language immersion programme, a document to describe our values, a list of agreements.*

Sharing experience: *The school has created a mentorship system to support new teachers, developed an integration plan, and introduced a monthly open lessons week that forces the teachers to apply efforts and find something new. The colleagues show their interest and ask questions but there is no overview of application of ideas. Acting as substitute at other teachers' lessons constitutes extra work. The teachers have shared their experience also with pupils and parents, made new contacts, and organise meetings outside the framework of the project (invite visitors here to watch open lessons). More importance is laid on the changes that take place within the person rather than sharing information that is targeted to the outside, although more attention could be paid to this as well. We have not directly measured the results of the project or formally spread them.*

Reasons for selecting the forms of academic mobility: *The combined form is assessed to be the most useful: where it is possible to acquire new theoretical knowledge or to watch a colleague working, and to apply this new knowledge immediately in practice, e.g. in workshops at a conference. Or also pure practice – applying your skills on your own. On the other hand, the most effective form of academic mobility is the most difficult and labour-intensive thing to organise as finding the most appropriate partner takes time, and it also implies undertaking additional obligations, e.g. inviting the partner school to visit us or giving open lessons. At the same time, the least effective training course is the easiest and fastest to arrange. Teaching an unfamiliar class constitutes the greatest challenge to the participants, although it gives experience and a feeling of assuredness for the future.*

Reasons why projects are successful or unsuccessful: *Expectations of the participants and their plans for future application; quite precise information about what is going on. There are less of resources and tools for carrying ideas out in practice; more pupils in a class but only one teacher.*

PERCEPTION OF A NON-MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

Impact of academic mobility and its sustainability: *As a result of participation in projects the life at school changes for both the teachers and pupils – and all this is very nice. Besides this means extra money to the school budget, which is very important. I participated in the Comenius Project 7 years ago, and it influences the way I work still now: I remember and share the experience I acquired and what I heard and saw still now – it makes our interactions with children livelier.*

Forms of sharing experience: *After returning from a study trip the teachers tell the management of the school how the study trip went and give an overview of the trip. It has become a tradition to conduct a conference from-teacher-to-teacher where we share our experience. There are also guests from other schools. Every month visits to lessons take place within the framework of our monthly CLIL weeks. We make presentations, discuss the topic with other teachers in the teachers' room, and give the information about which teachers have participated in which events and where to the members of the pupils' representation and the pupils' representatives pass this information on to other pupils. One teacher asked the pupils to tell their co-pupils what they experienced on their study trip, and the*

pupils also wrote an article about it for the school newspaper. Information about projects where pupils have participated as well can be obtained from the school noticeboard together with pictures and photos. I think that the school is very proud when somebody has been somewhere, and then it is also covered on the radio: like we have very good news to tell you that our colleagues or pupils went to this or that place. In such case, the person has very good feeling and the pupils are also very happy. This is very important for people. We should think even more how to call together all the colleagues and make a bigger event out of this, as it very nice to learn new things – we could take photos or make presentations. We will need to think how to organise this getting of feedback.

Selection of project participants: *We have a project manager in our school, and he is probably the first person who receives all the information related to projects, and to a great extent it is then up to him to whom in particular she will then forward this information. Given that we have many teachers in our school and we have a pretty large community, it is not possible to organise it in such a way that the project manager would simply distribute letters to everybody that now there is such or such project, and who would like to participate. This would not be as effective either. If a person really has particular wish and interest, then she or he would go and tell the project manager and ask him to engage her or him when specific opportunity emerges. In such a way the selection process is also easier for the project manager. I have only worked at this school for a short time and probably I have not proven myself yet either – that is why this information has not yet reached me, and probably I have not shown strong enough interest in projects myself either.*
It is not the case in our school that only the same teachers participate in academic mobility all the time. The project manager selects different teachers to participate, and as many of them as possible. They try to engage as many teachers as possible, not the same teachers every time. We are very happy with the situation that we have projects, that we have a project manager, and that he can compile and write reports in such a way as required and to distribute moneys in such a way that everybody would receive something. We want that as many teachers as possible could participate but not all of them speak a foreign language.

Results of academic mobility where pupils are engaged too: *Via participating in projects, pupils gain understanding why they study, and tell this also to other pupils. Projects help to build closer relationships between the teacher and the pupils; they give an opportunity for interaction outside the school as well. Mutual relationships between pupils become better: they find common interests and points of contact with each other as well as new friends. Pupils get opportunities to stay with strange families and overcome their fears – the most important victory is victory over yourself.*

Reasons why projects do not succeed: *Readiness and motivation of the project participants to get involved in the activities, the right people who participate in the project (those who work together with their heart and soul); the teachers' lack of time, given that teachers are overloaded and they are not interested in extra work without pay.*

5.3. The teacher of the 21st century: THE CASE OF THE VIIMSI SECONDARY SCHOOL

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

The objectives set out in the application form (enrichment of the curriculum via exchange of experience (sharing of experience related to both the contents of studies as well as arrangements of teaching work), improvement of skills and competencies in order to raise the level of professionalism of teachers, which in turn would contribute to the better quality of education provided by the school)

are in line with the goals set out in the strategic plan for the years 2015-2018 (changes in teaching approaches, competent and motivated teachers, and learning in the digital era).

Specific features of the school: The Viimsi School is the biggest school in Estonia with its 1782 pupils that is situated in the proximity of a big city, and the number of its pupils is still constantly growing. The strengths of the school include openness to innovations, active participation in and successfulness at pupils' competitions, good facilities for hobby activities, and international cooperation.

To ensure the sustainability of the mobility outcomes the following activities have been planned in the application form: 6 teachers to participate in training programmes (incl. ICT, outdoor studies), 1 participant in a conference for school leaders, and 3 participants in job shadowing (1 study manager, 1 teacher, and 1 support specialist).

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADER FINDINGS

Research sample. 3 focus group discussions: (1) mobile staff (7 respondents); (2) non-mobile staff (7 respondents); (3) interview with school leader.

Peculiarities related to project implementation: Those teachers who had not participated in academic mobility yet had already submitted applications for participation in the next round of academic mobility. (1) clear linkage between project topic, approach to teaching and strategic goals; (2) well organized and managed dissemination of mobility experience.

PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL LEADER

A distinctive feature of the school: *We are a studying organisation, which means that the teachers are open to innovations and very eager participants in training courses. For the school this principle implies that we enable teachers to learn, especially when this supports obtaining a broader picture of Europe. Openness cannot be built by force. We have long-term experience at participation in projects. We started with by supporting more eager teachers at receiving individual projects. Internationality has already become rooted in our school, and when there is a critical mass of people at school, the process will go on. If necessary, we have ourselves encouraged good teachers to participate because this is an opportunity that attracts teachers to our school and keeps them here.*

Objectives of academic mobility that are based on the development plan: *Every year when writing our academic mobility plan, we have proceeded from the specific needs of our school and the spheres that need improvement in order to keep our focus. Our curriculum work focused on assessment in general and the external perspective was indeed added from there, while supporting individuality is related to assessment via assessment that supports learning.*

Selection of teachers to participate in academic mobility: *We have put in place a system of annual conversations with our teachers. Development interviews are conducted with our teachers, and one item on the agenda of these interviews is the training courses where the teachers' wishes are revealed. When we have a good idea or a training course, we also discuss it with the management what the topic could be and which teachers could be engaged. We have 10 years of experience at implementing cooperation projects. The number of participants in academic mobility has been constantly growing, while travelling has become normal part of our school life. We define the main topic and then ask for specific offers from teachers. In such a way the change will gain more support. We normally give a broader topic, and then the teacher can choose what would fit under that topic. This year we set the condition that only those teachers would qualify who have not participated in academic mobility before, and again we received 10 applications from new people. We encourage and support our teachers, make suggestions, give them self-confidence and share positive experience*

with them. We have chosen job shadows for specific target groups (targeted towards a specific school level). Each team includes the carrier of the idea and a key person, one support specialist and one teacher in order to foster the emergence of a network. We also need to take account of the people's personal matters, e.g. whether they can be away from home for a week. The academic mobility project was indeed targeted towards the 3rd school level, as other school levels already had their international projects, and in such a way we tried to create equal opportunities. We have also made proposals to participate in academic mobility to some particular teachers for the sake of acknowledgement of their work.

Writing project applications: *At the initial stage of writing a project, people, incl. teachers, who have ideas are invited to participate, and this is how the project team is formed (an optimum of 4 to 5 key persons to make the result of the project more effective). The team draws up the project application, and if the project gets financing, the circle of participants is broadened.*

Preferring participation as a team: *The results of academic mobility are more effective if more than one person participates because they can divide the tasks between them, and the results reach other people in a stronger manner and in greater quantities. We have appointed 2 to 3 persons as job shadows who can go together as they will see different things at their destination of mobility. This is a good opportunity for team building as in such a way synergy is created, people can exchange their ideas about what they have seen, new ideas are born about how to go ahead, and the colleagues can spend time together. For example, a team of the 3rd school level travelled to Finland together to get an insight of their support systems. We restructured our structural unit as we got ideas from there how we could do it: the role of the special education needs coordinator (SENCO), career planning and all the things that are included in the responsibilities of the support centre. Today we do not have a separate support centre any more but supportive employees are included in the team of the school level and work beside the study manager. Supportive employees do meet each other but they do not form a separate unit. I used some of the ideas that I heard at a conference when drawing up our development plan: e.g. team-based or network-based organisational structure. Although these models cannot be taken over directly, small things still can be adopted.*

Academic mobility projects give contacts, and a cooperation project has grown out of it: *When looking for a partner school for our academic mobility project, we used our contacts received during our previous projects and also schools recommended by those contacts. A network of partners has been formed on the basis of previous projects. We could develop a long-term strategic project with those partners who are interested, and go in depth with some specific topic. It is difficult though to launch a strategic cooperation project with unfamiliar partners with whom you do not have any early experience.*

Reasons for success: *We only implement those projects that are based on our own needs and topics of our focus or contribute to the elimination of our weaknesses or support things in need of improvement. When writing our projects, we target them specifically on such things. We do not engage in projects because of prevailing culture or similar matters. One of the reasons for success definitely is that we choose very carefully what we want to do, and we have a development manager's position in our school that was created by the rural municipality government. Today writing projects has become extremely difficult, and it needs to be highly detailed. When there is one person to coordinate the whole process, the project will be well managed, consistent with general aims, targeted, uninterrupted, and it will form a whole. In a big school it might be purposeful to form a separate position for management of projects, while in case of small schools, there could be one position for several schools, given that this implies big extra workload, and teachers working full time just lack time for such extra work.*

Impact of the project: *Participation in projects helps to improve the school's image both in the eyes of local government as well as parents. It means recognition to the school, which proves their openness and readiness to adopt new things.*

Forms of insemination of experience: *The teachers share the experience they have gained in an experience chamber, and the colleagues use what they have learned. Teachers from other schools are also invited to the events of sharing of experience. In August we are planning to conduct a development day for the teachers of our rural municipality, which will be a training day that takes place the fourth year already. This year's training day will be devoted to entrepreneurship and innovation, and the teachers who have participated in academic mobility will conduct workshops there. We do not write much of articles, but articles are probably not read much either – only in the local newspaper. We keep our training blog where our summaries are always available. After returning from an academic mobility trip, the teacher tests the new methods on her pupils to get to know what works and what not, and only then she shares her experience with other colleagues. If the teacher attended a course in order to learn active teaching methods, then the direct beneficiaries will be the pupils for whom their lessons will become more interesting. Experience also spreads via teachers who teach the same class. The time of the experience chamber may not be suitable for all the teachers as they may have lessons at the same time, and finding a time that suits everybody is quite difficult. For example, the teacher of mathematics has tested the ideas obtained by her at her lessons and also introduced them to her colleagues.*

Reasons for failure: *Support from the management of the school is crucial, as well as their own experience with participation in projects. In such case they favour participation in projects and take writing projects as a natural part of school life. The teachers are afraid that this would constitute extra work for them, and that is why they do not participate. At this time it is possible to pay teachers extra money for extra working hours in some projects, but potential benefit outweighs extra work, and in some cases the teachers are even ready to invest also their own money in these projects. In case of cooperation projects, poor contents may also be one reason for failure. It is crucial to think through for yourself what will change as a result of the project, so that continuation activities would also be foreseen. The person must also be a very good writer to be able to communicate very well the idea of what is that what is expected. One obstacle to going on academic mobility trips is the teachers' poor knowledge of English. We have considered this, and it is possible to apply for language courses. Indeed, we already have one group that comes together to learn the language.*

Acknowledgement of teachers as part of the motivation system: *In our school the Act of the Year title is attributed as sign of acknowledgement, and one year the title was also attributed to a project that involved lots of pupils. In addition, we also have the Class Teacher of the Year, the Basic School Teacher of the Year, and the Secondary School Teacher of the Year titles. Sometimes also participants in academic mobility have been attributed such titles as they usually are more open and act differently. To those who have been diligent participants we hand over letters of acknowledgement at the end of academic year – we have such acknowledging and distinguishing. On the other hand, going on an academic mobility trip will not suffice but this must be followed by an act that will have on impact on something in the future.*

Options for development: *The next step could be that the pupils themselves will write a project. We will introduce an optional course of project writing for the secondary level pupils, and it will be possible to submit best projects for receiving of funding. Given that it is actually most difficult to sell verbal feedback to parents, we could send a parent (member of the board of trustees) job shadowing next time together with teachers.*

Academic mobility as an essential and highly valued part of the professional development of teachers: *I hope that academic mobility projects will continue, that the academic mobility budget of the Archimedes Foundation will grow and the Foundation will be able to offer more options to*

schools. We are planning to submit our applications every year and we hope to receive funding. The positive side is that we receive feedback to our applications: what was well and what poorly elaborated in the application. When we began writing a new application, we put the old one in front of us. This could be continued! If you have a good project idea, feedback can be very helpful to write it down better. International projects are part of our school culture. Some sort of feeling of solidarity emerges amongst the travellers, which has positive impact on general satisfaction, satisfaction with work and the school climate. Indeed it is a much broader impact than just one single teaching method that was brought home by somebody.

PERCEPTION OF A MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

Motivation for and benefit from going on academic mobility trips: *All academic mobility trips taken together give the effect of a whole. I have been going on academic mobility trips for the whole of my life. As a foreign language teacher I cannot imagine my work otherwise. It was very inspiring and motivating to see what others do differently and what do they do similarly to us. I gained assurance and a broader picture of how things are organised elsewhere, and I can compare those things to the situation in our school and may confirm that we are moving in the right direction. I liked that the training course was multisided: lectures, discussions, exercises, practical activities, introducing your own country, cooperation tasks, and guests with special needs came to talk about their lives. We exchanged our contacts with other participants. I have attended courses before but job shadowing is the most productive form. I would recommend this to everyone. The organisers had taken account of our wishes when making their plans, what kinds of lessons and meeting we wished to watch. The employees explained everything in detail to us, and we introduced our experience. Cooperation and preparations for hosting had commenced already before. We had sent our general wishes and our topics of interest to the organisers already beforehand. In addition to specific teaching methods, I took along the understanding that we must not be afraid of playing, taking pupils outdoors, making studying easier. In such a way, the material is acquired better by pupils. We expect high level of knowledge from pupils, and it is quite difficult for the teacher to come down from the level of her own knowledge. The broadening of the picture of the world and situating ourselves to where we are today, by placing high value on our strengths and places for development.*

Advantage of job shadowing: *As I changed my speciality recently and began work as a special education teacher, a gained a lot of new things: I could see work instruments that are not available to us yet (textbooks, workbooks and aids for pupils with special education needs). I could watch as a bystander how a pupils with special education needs was taught, which was very informative. One aim of job shadowing also was to gather ideas for the restructuring of our supportive structure. We did gain assurance and ideas from there about how to deal with this in the future. There is always something professional to learn from every training, although besides there is also something more general, like interacting with your colleagues. It is crucial for the teacher to step into the shoes of the pupil from time to time: to study and sense whether there is too much of material, whether studying is too slow, whether there is enough time to do your homework, what homework should look like, etc. And then come back and understand her pupils' points of view of how things could be done most effectively.*

Selection of teachers: *First an offer is made, then teachers apply for the places, some teachers express themselves their special wishes. One teacher took the job on the condition that she could attend trainings as much as there are opportunities for this. Input is given to the project manager, and he or she performs the main bulk of work. Still we had to tell one teacher that the training chosen by her did not match the topic chosen by the school, but we found another training course for her. Once I had to write a project myself to participate in a training course. Then there was a catalogue, which we do not have now, and it is difficult to find a course that matches your wishes.*

Preferring diversity of forms of academic mobility and combined forms: *Courses on specific subjects are too topic-specific and sophisticated; they are not school-based. Some more of this niche could be offered. While job shadowing, one topic can be treated in a broader manner, and it will not be with so narrow orientation. Readiness to teach also yourself in another country. I liked the training in the form of combined professional knowledge and hands-on practice where the educational system of the country was also introduced. Job shadowing in combination with real teaching on your own and receiving feedback would definitely also be highly useful. In case of conferences, I like the combined format: presentations from acknowledged lecturers combined with more practical workshops, or an opportunity to see the schools of the other country.*

Impact of academic mobility: *A more general perspective. Self-confidence that we are doing a good thing, that we are moving in and also I am thinking in the right direction. We do have something to teach to lots of other people. New working methods and ideas about how the work could be better organised. In every sphere: special education needs, cooperation between teachers, how to create formats, how to take over pupils from other schools, career studies, the willingness to participate in academic mobility in the future as well. I am a better teacher.*

Selection of courses: *Selection of courses that take place abroad is a complicated process because you cannot know in advance which trainings are good. Although options for trainings have been offered to all teachers, sometimes complaints can be heard that it is always the same people who go on trainings. The teachers are expected to inform us ourselves about their interests in training.*

Obstacles to implementation of innovations*: Time is a limiting resource. We need to make the tools ourselves. But the school supports various forms of study, e.g. outdoor studies. Pupils too are open to innovations. The curriculum does not enable to take time for in-depth treatment of some topic. Some teachers are afraid of the pupils' questions and that they must admit that they cannot answer all their questions. There are too little of tools, or too little of resources to purchase them. The resources for obtaining tools have not increased for years.*

Benefits to pupils: *Application of new ideas, tools and methods makes studying more interesting for the pupils, and the more interesting studying is for pupils, the better they acquire knowledge. When the lesson is more interesting, the pupils are present with their thinking. If I had not participated in academic mobility myself, I would not have had the courage to implement the pupils exchange project which I implemented. Going on academic mobility trips implies courage and independence, and if I am courageous and independent as a teacher, then pupils also get a share of it, and I dare to offer them my experience of academic mobility. We started implementing cooperation projects from teachers, and only afterwards we began doing them for pupils. At the same time, it is quite difficult to point out what the impact of academic mobility specifically on pupils is. On the one hand, it is important to assess this, but on the other hand, we cannot do it.*

Obstacles to going on academic mobility trips: *The language barrier: the teachers think that they must be perfect in the particular language. Being personally engaged or reasons of personal life, as usually those teachers take on academic mobility trips who are active anyway. Substituting at giving lessons can be trusted to some better pupils, or retired teachers can be invited to substitute. A teacher represents Estonia at a training course, but the Estonian teacher has nothing to be ashamed of. Teachers of our school attend so many training courses that others actually even do not notice when a teacher is absent because of academic mobility. We always hold comprehensive discussions before leaving for academic mobility about what we are going to talk there. Thus, insufficient preparation may pose a barrier.*

Placing high value on participation as a job shadow or as a team: *Job shadowing enables sending more people e.g. to different schools of the same region, and they can then share their experience and discuss things. In this way greater impact could be achieved. Although discussing the experience*

with a colleague from another country might give the same result, impact on the school would definitely be greater if more than one teacher from the same school participates.

PERCEPTION OF A NON-MOBILE STAFF MEMBER

What does participation in academic mobility give you? *Participation in academic mobility will give you another perspective in addition. It is a refreshing experience. You get new ideas and angles; you can inspire pupils from a new angle. Even travelling around in Estonia enriches you and gives you a lot of experience – it should be even more so when going abroad. To see that a problem or concern that worries us is present there as well, and perhaps they have found some sort of a solution, and then we could try to transfer this to our school and apply it here. Stepping out of some clichés that may develop during the course of everyday work; definitely to take something over. We know that the attitude towards pupils with special needs has changed in the whole of Europe, and such pupils are constantly being engaged.*

Going job shadowing supports the aims of the school: *As the assessment system is one of the common topics of our school, this was chosen as one of the topics of academic mobility. It is not always possible to transfer everything, and it is actually not necessary. We want to obtain the experience of the other country. We have a certain plan to have a look how assessment is conducted there, how do they give feedback, and how does it work in reality. Indeed we have set the initial task for them in such a way: assessment system as holistic solution for the school. We let them know during the stage of writing the project that we would like to get the assessment topic. In cooperation with the school we have developed a programme about what we would like to observe or what themes we are interested in, and the host will compile daily plans according the options available to them. We also met the school beforehand: the whole of the Norwegian school came to visit us, and then the idea emerged. We already knew the background, and we could refer to earlier cooperation.*

The number of academic mobility trips is growing; academic mobility trips are becoming more systematic and support better the aims of the school: *Academic mobility of teachers has become more and more wide-spread. Earlier there used to be twin schools (e.g. pupils mutually visited each others' schools in the other country for competitions; choirs visited each other, etc.), and projects related to pupils. Our school made use of the possibilities offered by Comenius. It seems like there is more of systematics now. While earlier teachers with more initiative who looked for options themselves used to travel more, then now there is more of awareness, which is also thanks to the development manager.*

Attitude towards the experience of the colleagues who have participated in academic mobility: *This could be a confirmation that our experience is also worth to be applied – I am getting convinced in this more and more. The interest in the experience of academic mobility is rather topic-based or sphere-based, but the attitude is rather positive. Internationalism has been on the agenda for a longer period already: it shapes the school culture, and the schools are more open to it. Different teachers go on academic mobility trips, and nobody expects from the teachers that all that they have seen and experienced would be taken over 100 percent. Generally it has all been positive what they have seen and experienced (matched the course description and expectations of the participant). Acceptance of international experience depends on the general openness of the school to experience, knowledge and new angles. It does not matter whether these are international or not.*

Forms of academic mobility change with experience, and they include specific restrictions: *Going together with pupils was very effective. Separate activities were organised for pupils: they got lots of ideas, and began reading books in English. We have not practised yet teaching abroad. This would probably be the next step, which would be very exciting. It very much depends on the topic and purpose: e.g. at a refresher course a very great deal is presented to the participant while in case of*

job shadowing, you must yourself be the active party and do a lot of asking and investigating. It would be impossible to communicate effectively some topics in the format of a refresher course: e.g. the topic of assessment and how it works in practice. It seems like job shadowing is the most effective form because if I simply go to a course with my colleagues, they would tell me the methods and we would then share our experience but I would not see real children doing those things. If a teacher would go to another country to teach, it would be easier to teach some subject than another, and the language would be one barrier at teaching.

Application and insemination of experience: *Before the training we were provided with materials that we needed to look through in advance. If we want to take over some teaching methods, we need to consider that several teachers teach the pupils of the same class. This is a place for sharing: I introduce what I have taken over, and maybe the other teacher would apply the same thing. One condition for participation in academic mobility is sharing your experience. You are not given any choice. It is easier to share experience of others than materials created by yourself (fear of criticism). Sharing of experience is actually going on all the time informally as well. When the teacher's grade depended on sharing of experience, there used to be a very great deal of it.*

It is easier and more useful to pass over what you have worked through yourself, and adapt the form of insemination, if necessary: *The teachers have always had the obligation to share any materials that have been developed under various projects. At the same time, there is a great abundance of materials, but if you have not practised or worked through or compiled the material yourself, it is quite difficult to use someone else's material. For this reason lots of our Experience Chambers work in such a way that besides introduction, the materials are also played trough in practice. There could be more of sharing of experience but quite often the time does not suit to the participants. Therefore we could introduce an Experience Day – and not only to share experience received from international projects but we could combine two things.*

Academic mobility as part of acquiring of experience as a whole: *The topic of assessment is one of this year's focuses, and academic mobility constitutes one small component in all this. We went to gather experience and examples beforehand from three different Estonian schools. And now our questions to the Norwegian school are much better targeted: how their assessment system work and why, why is it good, what do they desire, what do they lack?*

Support from the school to participation in academic mobility and eagerness of teachers at learning: *Self-development is a very much favoured activity, including in the framework of academic mobility. The development manager will give information to teachers on what is going on and what kinds of options are available. One teacher feels that she has received everything she wished: money, support and materials, and thinks that maybe many teachers still do not have the courage to ask/wish. There are very few such training courses in case of which we cannot send the teacher to the training course she wishes for some reason. The school also supports learning via (paid) substituting at lessons. Participants find that a training course in a foreign country is itself acknowledgement to the teacher, as well as a good change to everyday work.*

The need for development of individual training plans: *Today our teachers do not have individual training plans although we are planning to introduce such plans. Currently there only are training topics which the management considers necessary to enable to all the teachers (e.g. a theoretical and practical training course on treatment of aggressive children).*

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

- **Participants of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility visits are satisfied with their visit**, including responsiveness of the host institution, intercultural experience and visit organisation. Teachers that participated in job shadowing activities were more satisfied with the visit when compared to the teachers participating in professional development courses. Couple of courses did not meet expectations, e.g. due to different course content when compared to the information provided before visit. Also, there is less selection of courses for Russian and Estonian teachers. Some visits were cancelled due to security reasons in hosting country or bad weather.

- Majority of participants did prepare for the mobility – mostly studying materials about the culture and educational system of the country, searching for information on the topic of the mobility, etc. The research revealed that **preparation for the visit is a significant factor for success**: preparation work is related with higher satisfaction with the visit and higher achievement in professional competencies. The teachers who took more preparation activities before the visit also put more emphasis later on dissemination, sharing of experiences and taking leadership when applying new ideas**.**

- Most of the school **project coordinators assessed support by National Agency in administering Erasmus+ KA1 programme positively**. Some respondents experienced problems when filling in the application form due to its complexity. In focus groups, NA's support was rated very helpful, well-organised, questions were answered in short order. NA's feedback on project applications was fair and useful and gave opportunities for improvement in future projects.

- According to mobile staff questionnaire, the biggest changes were perceived in **development of general competences and attitudes** – the mobility visits expanded teachers' knowledge and understanding about educational systems and culture of other countries, and they became more open to changes and innovations. Also, after the visits mobility teachers are more satisfied with their job and the school.

- Most of the school staff, both mobile and non-mobile, perceived positive changes caused by mobility in **school culture and curriculum** – they agree that mobility helps to achieve school's goals, the debate about school's internalisation is more frequent and new learning methods have been introduced.

- The most popular form of sharing of experiences from visits is **oral presentations inside the school**, followed by preparing new teaching materials and recommendations about organising the learning process. The results revealed the importance of previous experiences in dissemination – the teachers who had previous experiences of in-service training aboard, took more dissemination activities.

- The majority of mobile teachers apply the new ideas from mobility visits in their work and also inspire their colleagues to apply new ideas. These changes are also noticed by colleagues, who did not participate in mobility visits.

- The changes due to mobility projects are also acknowledged by **students** – most of the respondents agreed that after the mobility their teachers shared their experiences from the visit, talked about learning in other countries, gave more interesting glasses, etc.

- The research revealed students' high expectations concerning school's internationality. For the majority of students it is important that their teachers are open and tolerant to other cultures, use modern technology in classroom, speak foreign languages fluently, etc.

- The results indicated **parents**' positive attitudes towards school's internationality and teachers' professional development abroad. Almost all parents agree that teachers' visits aboard improve children's teaching, are important for developing teacher competencies,

stimulate school's improvement and it is important that children get international competencies at school.

- **Only half of the parents were aware of teachers' mobility visits** and international projects implemented in school; about one third of respondents said that school is involving parents into international activities.
- **In focus group interviews**, it was brought out that international courses have lifted the mobility-related topic to the next level, e.g. participants of mobility have become trainers inside and outside the school. From colleague to colleague training has considerably increased; also students have become teacher trainers.
- Teachers' mobility gives an opportunity to learn from other countries' good experience, meet authorities of the field and discuss important, actual educational topics with leading experts. Being in mobility gives an opportunity to concentrate only on learning (away from everyday problems), get contacts for future collaboration, deepen understanding of other cultures, learn organising conferences and making good presentations, change attitudes towards teaching, learning and students, etc. Teachers also assess highly the team work experiences they get from the project.
- Teaches, who already have participated, appreciate mobility and are willing to participate again.
- In general, Erasmus+ KA1 mobility was rated as an excellent possibility for schools to participate in high quality professional development courses, as schools' financial and topic-specific possibilities are quite limited. Continuing of the programme is highly expected and appreciated by the schools.

Recommendations

- Many teachers are not feeling confident in foreign languages and are afraid of making mistakes. This is re-confirmed by the fact that 43% of mobile staff was foreign language teachers. Therefore, preparation for mobility should include language courses.
- Teachers expressed fear of travelling and/or participating alone as one of the main reasons not to participate in mobility. Therefore, we suggest that there should be possible to take part in one course by two or more colleagues. This option would also facilitate discussing new ideas during the visit and broader implementation of the ideas and elaboration of team work in school.
- Although participants assessed all mobility forms necessary, there should be courses provided which mix different forms of courses – more theoretical courses mixed with more practical forms, like job shadowing and teaching. That gives an opportunity to observe and try out the new theoretical ideas right away in practice.
- Projects often end with sharing of experiences, but less attention is paid on implementation of the new ideas into practice. As implementation of changes takes time, the topics/aims should be in focus of whole school (instead of only mobility teachers) and in a longer time period, not only during the project period. The impact and sustainability of the project should be analysed in the quality assessment of school. Schools should pay attention on project-related outcomes, both on student and school-level, in the process of assessment. For more effective self-assessment, it is recommended to provide schools with self-assessment forms that include the most important aspects and are relatively easy to fill in and analyse.
- There should be materials (videos, booklets, etc.) for introducing the programme for parents. National Agency is recommended to include teachers and students into the dissemination activities for introducing their personal experiences and inspire others to overcome their hesitations and take the decision to participate in the mobility projects.

- Our recommendation is that project application forms should include information about preparation activities that have already implemented in school before submitting the application. This information should be taken into consideration in the assessment of project applications.
- Although schools understood the necessity of follow-up studies and were willing to participate, they suggested conducting these after a reasonable time period, e.g. 2-3 years, so that this would be not too time-consuming and intensive in terms of workload, and there would be sufficient time to implement the changes. Additionally, the participating schools appreciated the possibility of getting an overview of the research results in order to see good practices, differences between schools and make changes in their own activities, if necessary.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about the impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility on school

ANNEX 2: Mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about school environment

ANNEX 3: Relationships between mobile teachers' preparation activities and perceived changes in professional development

ANNEX 1. Mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about the impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility on school
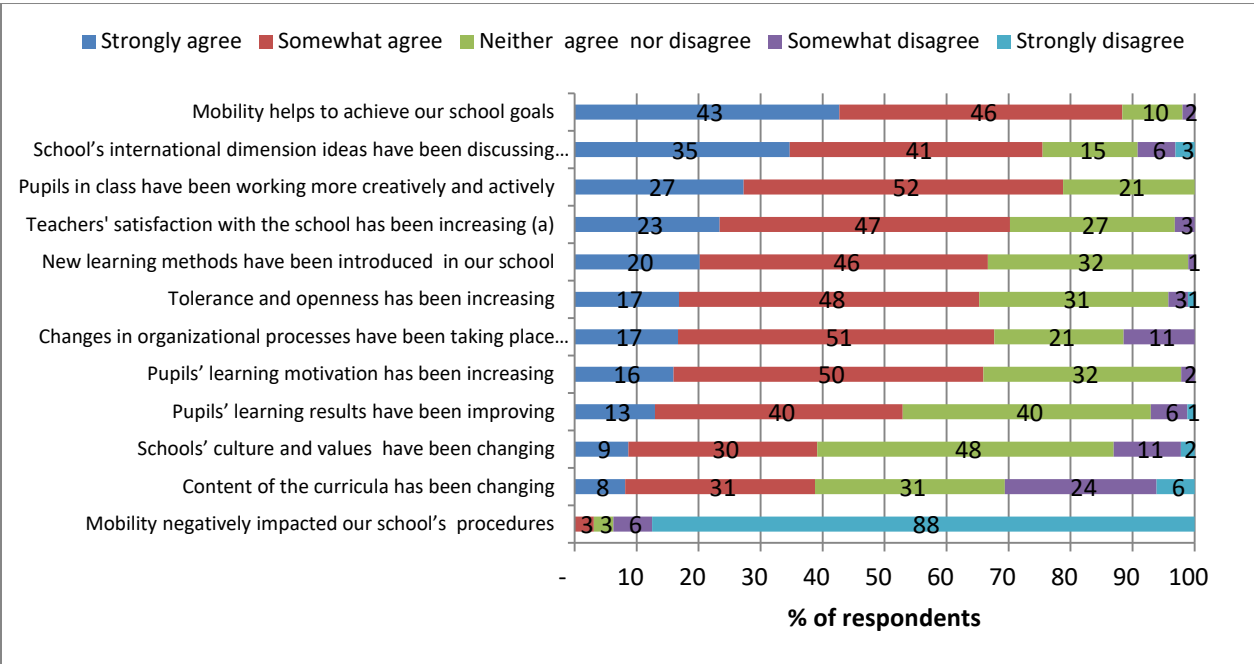

Figure 14. The impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility on school according to mobile staff perceptions (N=85-103); (a) Only in Estonian questionnaire
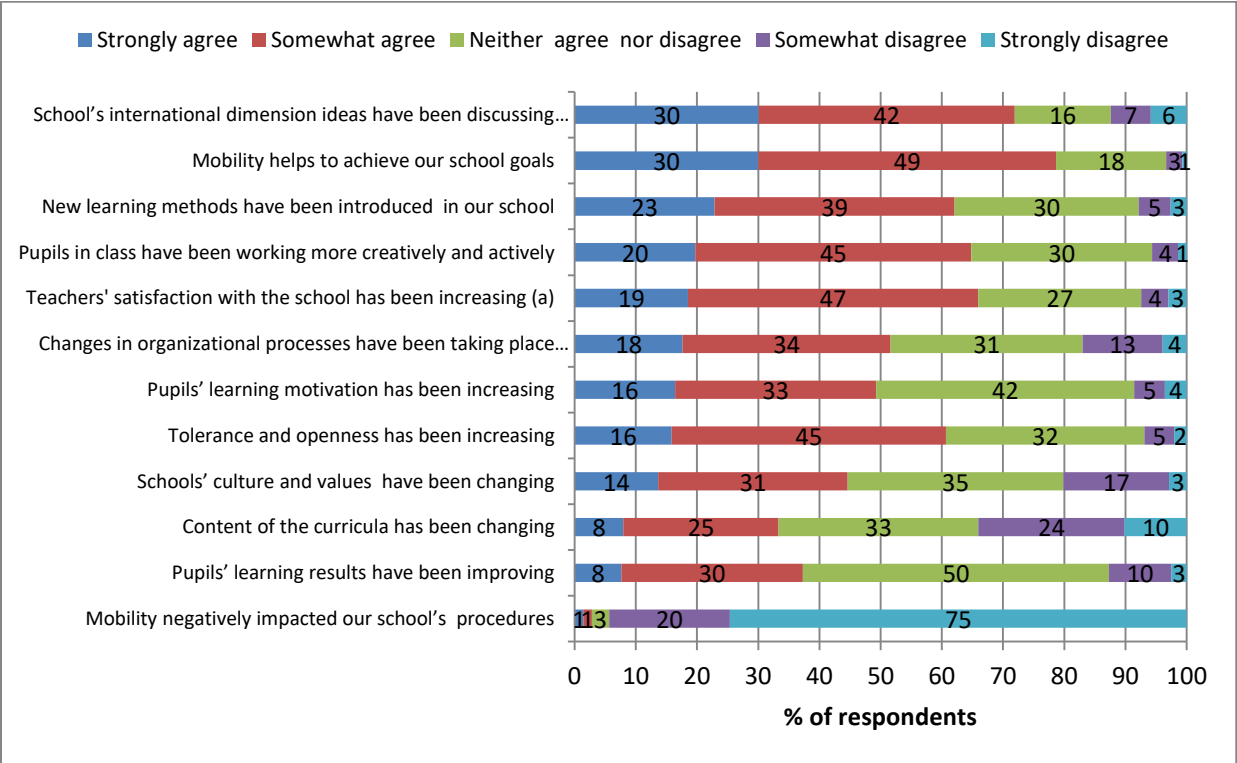

Figure 15. The impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility on school according to non-mobile staff perceptions (N=118-153); (a) Only in Estonian questionnaire

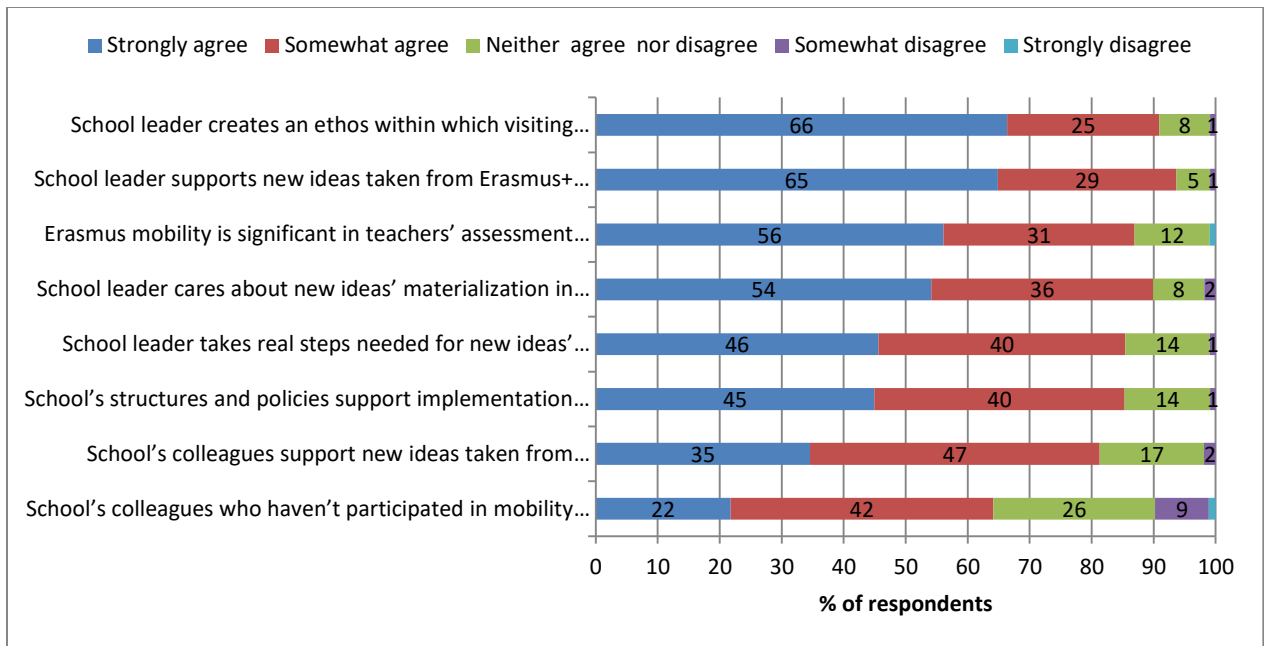# ANNEX 2. Mobile and non-mobile teachers' perceptions about school environment

Figure 16. Mobile teachers' (N=92-111) perceptions about school leaders' and colleagues' support
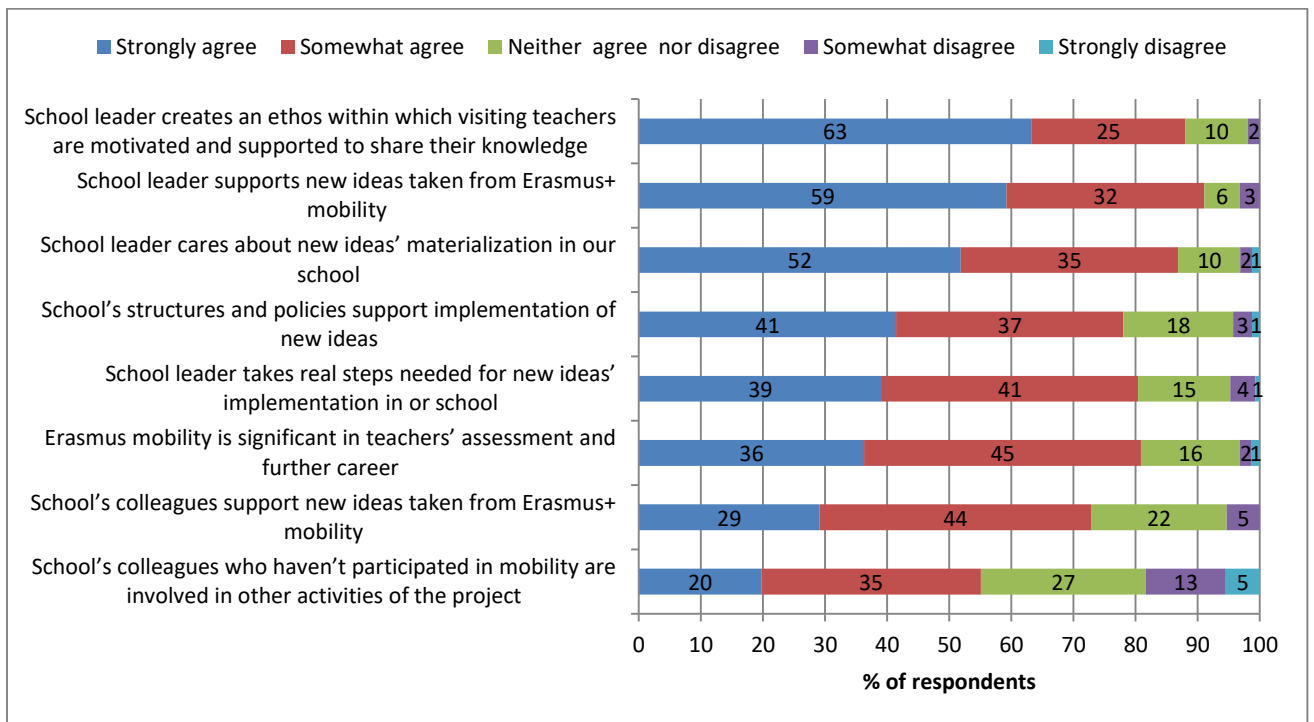

Figure 17. Non-mobile teachers' (N=147-164) perceptions about school leaders' and colleagues' support

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ANNEX 3. Relationships between mobile teachers' preparation activities and perceived changes in professional development

Table 5. Correlation coefficients (r) between mobile teachers' (N=102-110) preparations made for the visit and perceived change in general and didactical competencies

Professional competencies/preparations before visit	Studied material about the culture of the country	Read about educational system in the country	Took foreign language courses	Searched for information about mobility topic	Prepared teaching material for the visit	Sum of preparations
Deepened understanding of other cultures	0.26^{**}	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.22^{*}	0.36^{**}
Expanded understanding of education system in other countries	n.s	0.24^{*}	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s
Developed ICT skills for teaching	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.22^{*}
Developed pupils' discipline and behaviour problem-solving skills	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.30^{**}
Made a lot of contacts with colleagues from other countries	0.21^{*}	0.22^{*}	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.30^{**}
Acquired new teaching methods	n.s	n.s	0.19^{*}	n.s	n.s	0.20^{*}
Improved the practical use of foreign languages	0.23^{*}	n.s	0.22^{*}	0.21^{*}	0.20^{*}	0.34^{***}
Improved teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs	n.s	0.21^{*}	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.31^{**}
Improved the skills for working with people from different cultures	0.28^{**}	0.24^{*}	n.s	n.s	n.s	0.29^{**}
Became more open to changes and innovations	0.25^{**}	0.25^{**}	n.s	0.23^{*}	n.s	0.33^{***}
Got a stimulus to change my teaching style	0.20^{*}	n.s	n.s	0.20^{*}	n.s	0.25^{*}
Total change in professional competencies	0.27^{**}	0.25^{**}	n.s	0.23^{*}	0.20^{*}	0.43^{***}

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001