

Employers' perception of graduate employability

Summary

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This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Flash EB Series #304

Employers' perception of graduate employability

Survey conducted by The Gallup Organization,
Hungary upon the request of
Directorate-General for Education and Culture



EUROBAROMETER

Coordinated by Directorate-General
Communication

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THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

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Introduction

This Flash Eurobarometer “*Employers' perception of graduate employability*” (N° 304) provides insights into the needs and perceptions of graduate recruiters by monitoring the opinions of staff in companies throughout Europe with at least 50 employees across a range of business sectors.

In addition to identifying the background of the higher education graduates currently recruited in the surveyed countries, this Flash survey covered:

- the importance of various skills and abilities required by graduates
- the levels of satisfaction as to whether or not graduates have these skills
- which levels of graduate education are best suited to fill vacant positions
- the factors that influence the level of graduate recruitment
- the importance of educational institutions' reputation
- the amount and type of training given to graduates
- the numbers of graduates recruited from abroad and the reasons why such graduates are hired
- the major challenges that companies face in hiring graduates
- the amount and type of cooperation between companies and educational institutions
- views on how graduates could be made more employable.

The survey covered all 27 EU Member States, Norway, Iceland, Croatia and Turkey. Companies included in this study had recruited higher education graduates in the past five years and/or were planning to recruit such graduates in the next five years. More than a third (35%) of respondents estimated that more than a fifth of their employees were that type of graduate. Although companies included in this study recruited such graduates from a variety of educational fields, the areas most frequently mentioned were business or economic studies and engineering (54%-55% of companies). Somewhat more than 4 in 10 (42%) respondents estimated that at least 10% of their day-to-day operations involved dealing with people in – or from – other countries.

The targeted number of interviews varied depending on the size of the respective country. Overall, 7,036 companies were interviewed, between 30 August and 7 September 2010, using a fixed-line telephone methodology. Eligible respondents were chief human resource officers or chief executive officers. Of the companies surveyed, about three-quarters (76%) were medium-sized companies (with between 50 and 249 employees) and the rest (24%) were large companies with 250 employees or more. The largest share of companies included in the survey were active in the industry sector (36%), followed by the sectors of non-public services (23%) and public services (17%). About one in eight (12%) companies were active in the trade, accommodation and food services sector and the same proportion (12%) in the construction, transport and ICT sector.

Post-stratification weights were used to restore the artificially-distorted proportions according to company size and industry sector. When summary (“total”) estimates are discussed, the results of the interviews have been weighted to correct for the disproportional selection of countries in the starting sample.

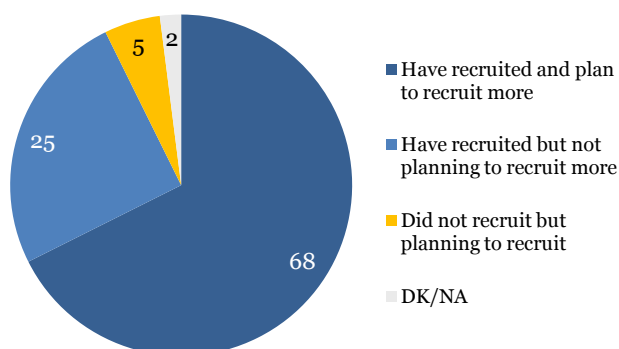
1. Recruitment of higher education graduates

Approximately two-thirds (68%) of employers participating in this study had recruited higher education graduates in the past five years and were planning to recruit such graduates in the next five years; a quarter said they had recruited such graduates in the past but were not planning to recruit more in the next five years.

The proportion of employers who said that they *had recruited higher education graduates in the past five years and were planning to recruit such graduates in the next five years* ranged from a slim majority in the Czech Republic and Romania (both 53%) to more than 9 in 10 respondents in Iceland and Estonia (92%-93%).

More than a third (35%) of respondents estimated that more than a fifth of their employees were higher education graduates: 15% felt it was more than half and 20% said between 21% and 50%. In eight countries, a majority of employers answered that at least a fifth of their employees were higher education graduates: Norway (56%), Luxembourg (55%), Belgium, Estonia and Greece (all 53%), Latvia and France (both 52%), and Sweden (51%).

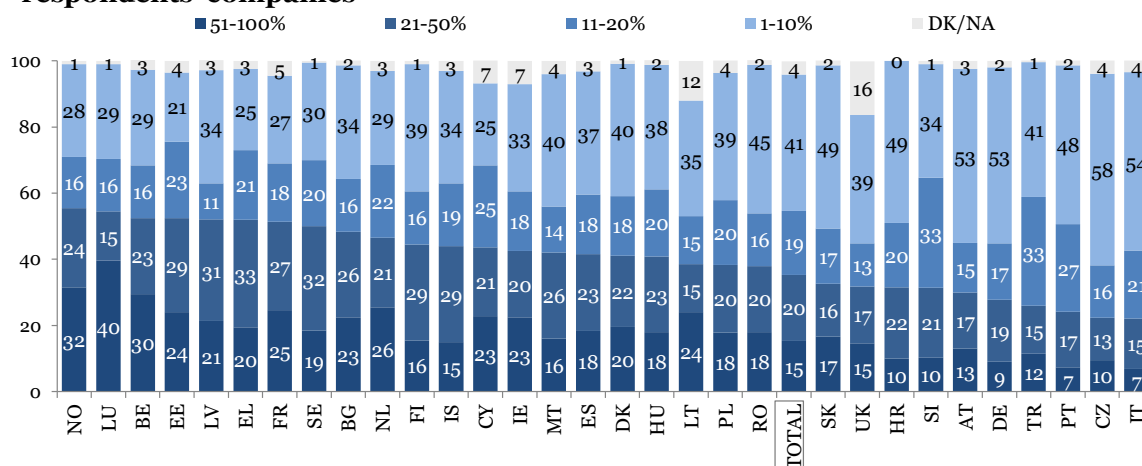
Recruitment of higher education graduates – TOTAL



Q1.2. Did you recruit higher education graduates in the last 5 years, or are you planning to recruit higher education graduates in the next 5 years?

Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Estimated percentage of higher education graduates currently employed in respondents' companies



Q2.1. In your estimation, what is the overall percentage of higher education graduates currently employed in your company?

Base: all companies, % by country

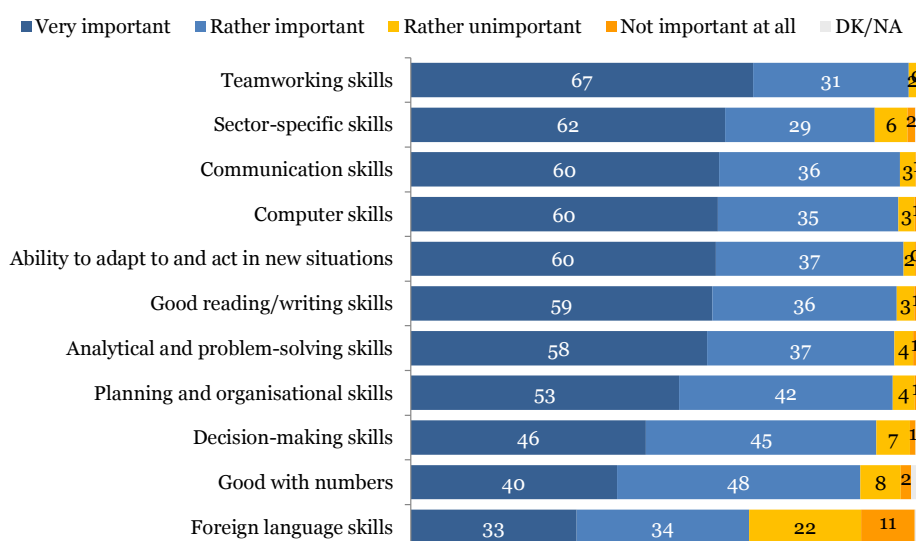
2. Skills and capabilities: importance and satisfaction

2.1 Important skills and capabilities when recruiting higher education graduates

Almost all **skills and capabilities** listed in the survey – such as the ability to work in a team or computer literacy – were **considered to be important when recruiting higher education graduates** (between 88% and 98% of respondents ranked these skills as “very” or “rather important”).

In terms of rating certain skills and capabilities as being “very important”, graduate recruiters were most likely to highlight the importance of teamworking (67%), followed by sector-specific skills, communication skills, computer literacy, being able to adapt to new situations, first-class ability in reading/writing, and analytical and problem-solving skills (all 58%-62%).

Importance of various skills and capabilities when recruiting higher education graduates – TOTAL



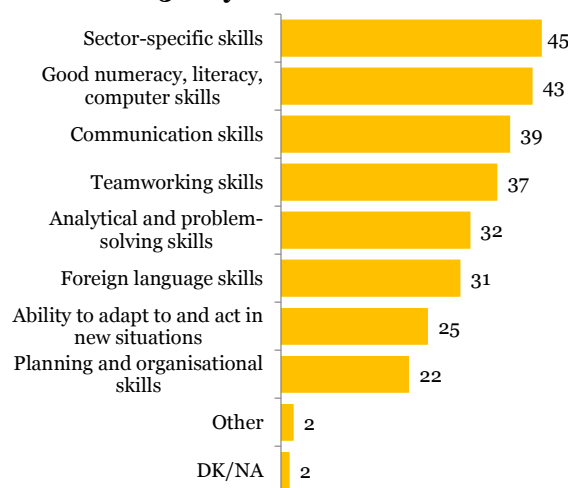
Q3.2. Please rate the following skills and competencies in terms of how important they are when recruiting higher education graduates in your company. Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Graduate employers appeared to be less likely to highlight the importance of foreign language skills: 33% rated these skills as “very important” and 34% as “rather important”.

Looking ahead, however, at employers’ views about the importance of these **skills for future higher education graduates** (5 to 10 years from now), foreign language capabilities were ranked as a higher requirement; the proportion selecting these skills was higher than the corresponding proportions for planning and organisational skills, and being able to adapt and act in new situations (31% vs. 22%-25%).

All other skills and capabilities were ranked similarly when comparing employers’ views about the importance of various skills required by today’s employees and those required by future higher education graduates.

Opinions about the skills and capabilities that higher education graduates should have in next 5-10 years – TOTAL



Q3.4. In your opinion, in the next 5-10 years, which skills and competencies will be the most important for new higher education graduates? Please choose the three most important ones! Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Graduate recruiters across all countries surveyed, and across all types of companies surveyed, were in agreement that all skills and capabilities (listed in the survey) were *at least rather* important when recruiting higher education graduates. For example, graduate recruiters across all countries were in agreement that teamworking skills were important when hiring higher education graduates in their company; the proportion of “very” and “rather important” responses varied between 94% and 100%.

In terms of rating certain skills and capabilities as being “very important”, the largest differences were found for the importance of foreign language skills. Graduate recruiters in the industry sector were most likely to highlight the importance of foreign language skills when recruiting higher education graduates (43% vs. 16% in the public services sector). Similarly, a higher proportion of graduate recruiters with international contacts indicated that foreign language skills were *very important* when recruiting higher education graduates (58% for those with more than 50% of “international” day-to-day operations, compared to 17% for those with no international contacts).

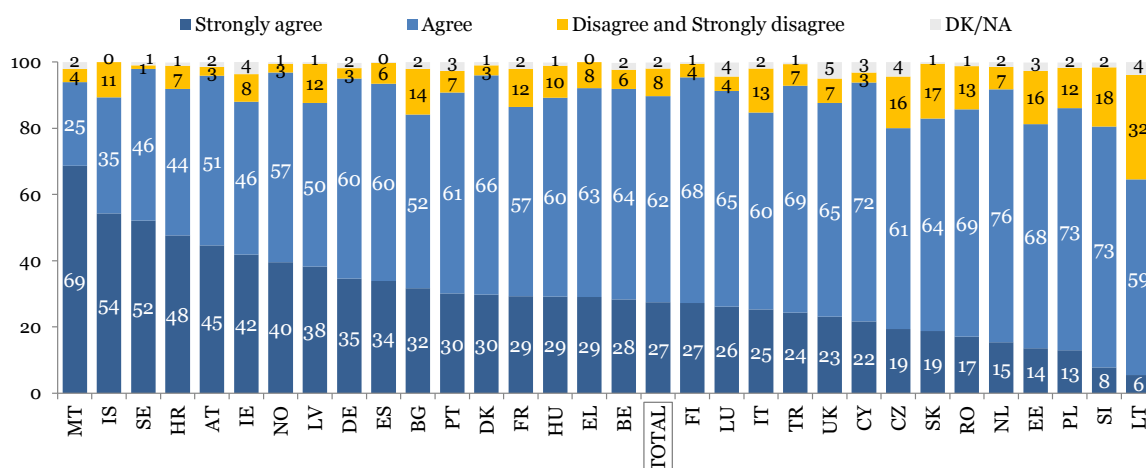
An analysis in terms of company characteristics showed similarities in graduate employers’ views about the importance of various skills and capabilities required by today’s employees and those required from future higher education graduates. For example, a higher proportion of graduate recruiters with international contacts indicated that foreign language skills were important for future higher education graduates (48% for those with more than 50% of “international” day-to-day operations, compared to 18% for those with no international contacts).

2.2 Employers’ satisfaction with graduate skills

A large majority (89%) of employers – who had recruited higher education graduates in the past five years – agreed that these graduates had the skills required to work in their company. Moreover, more than a quarter (27%) of respondents *strongly agreed* with this proposition.

The proportions of employers who agreed that higher education graduates recruited in their company in the last three to five years had the skills required to work in their company were the highest in Sweden (98%), Norway (97%) and Denmark (96%). Respondents in Malta, however, were the most likely to *strongly agree* with this statement (69%).

Higher education graduates recruited in the last 3-5 years have the skills required to work in respondents’ companies



Q3.1. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “Higher education graduates recruited in the last three to five years have the skills required to work in my company”.

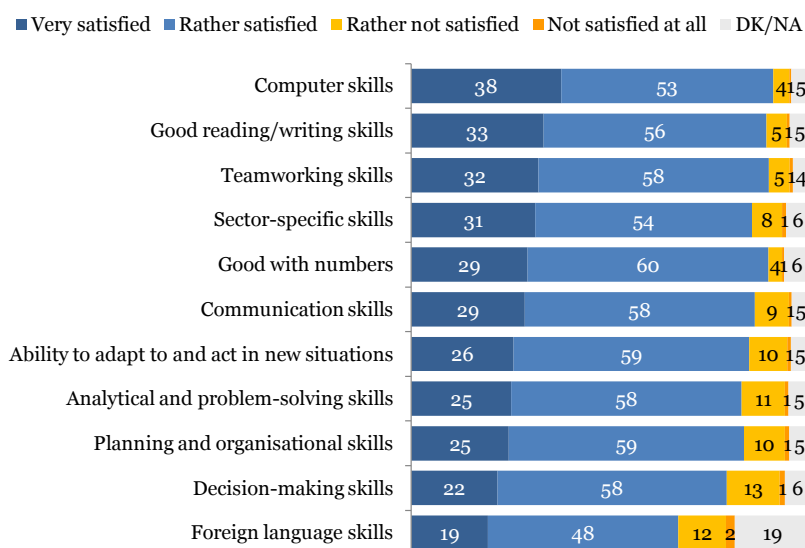
Base: companies that have recruited higher education graduates, % by country

Employers – who had recruited higher education graduates in the past five years – were also asked to rate their satisfaction with new graduates in their company in terms of having the skills and capabilities as listed in section 2.1.

A large majority of employers appeared to be at least *rather satisfied* when evaluating the skills and capabilities of the higher education graduates that their company had hired in the past three to five years. The overall satisfaction levels (i.e. the sum of “very satisfied” and “rather satisfied” responses) ranged from 80% for decision-making skills to 91% for computer skills. Graduate employers’ satisfaction with their employees’ foreign language capabilities was lower as just two-thirds (67%) said they were *satisfied*.

Looking only at the proportions of respondents who reported being *very satisfied*, however, showed a different picture; for only one of the skills and capabilities listed in the survey – computer skills (38%) – did more than a third of graduate employers answer that they were *very satisfied* with the higher education graduates recently hired by their company.

Satisfaction with higher education graduate recruits in terms of their various skills and capabilities - TOTAL



Q3.3. Can you rate your satisfaction with the higher education graduates that your company/organisation has recruited in the last three to five years in terms of each of the following skill and competencies?

Base: companies that have recruited higher education graduates, % TOTAL

Graduate recruiters with international contacts appeared to attach the highest value to foreign language skills, and they were also the most likely to be *very satisfied* with higher education graduate recruits in terms of their foreign language skills (28% for those with more than 50% of “international” day-to-day operations, compared to 14% for those with no international contacts).

3. Importance of graduates’ educational establishment

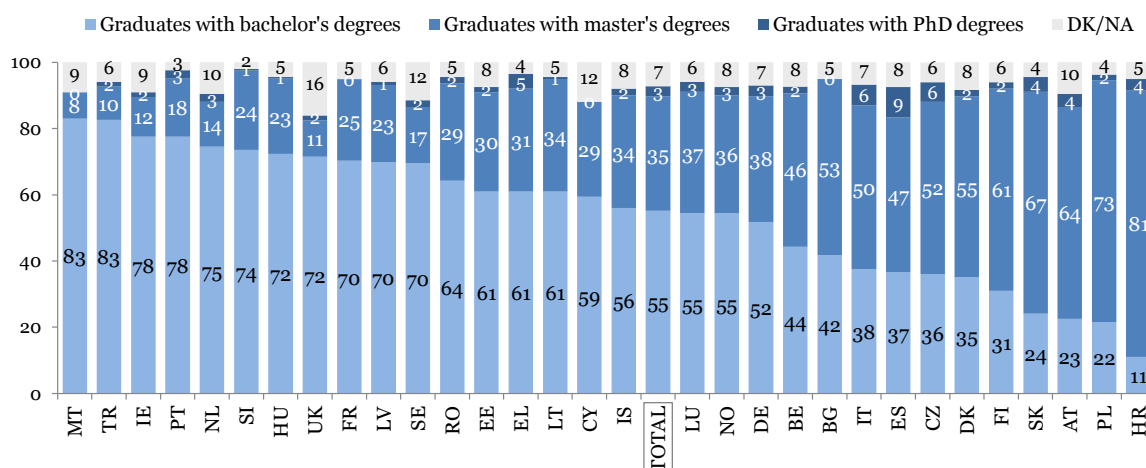
3.1 Level of graduate that would best match the skill requirements in respondents’ companies

A slim majority of employers (55%) answered that graduates with bachelor’s degrees would best match the skill requirements in their company, while 35% said that graduates with master’s degrees would be a better fit. Just 3% of respondents answered that their company would need graduates with a PhD.

Graduate recruiters in medium-sized companies and those in the private sector were more likely to answer that graduates with bachelor’s degrees would best match the skill requirements in their company (56%-57% vs. 51%-52% in large companies or in public organisations). Graduate recruiters in large companies and those in the private sector, on the other hand, more frequently said that graduates with master’s degrees would be a better fit (37%-38% vs. 34%).

Respondents in Malta and Turkey were the most likely to answer that graduates with bachelor’s degrees would best fit the skill requirements in their company (both 83%); just 8% of the former and 10% of the latter said that graduates with master’s degrees would be a better match. The corresponding result for Croatia was almost a mirror image: while 81% of graduate recruiters in this country expressed a preference for graduates with master’s degrees, just 11% opted for those with bachelor’s degrees.

Level of graduate that best fit the skill requirements in the company



Q3.5. Which level of graduate would best fit the skill requirements for the positions in your company in the future?
Base: all companies, % by country

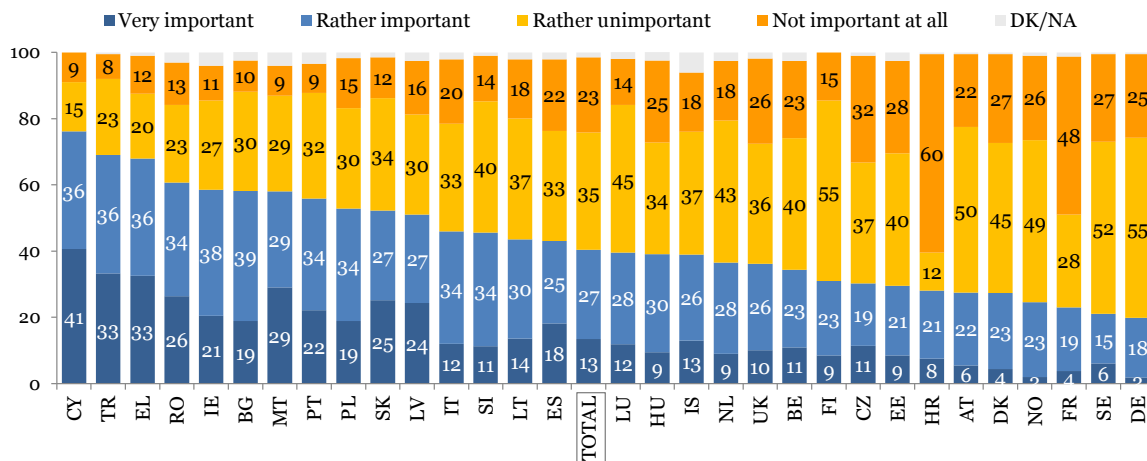
3.2 Importance of a qualification from an institution with a good international reputation

While about one in seven (13%) graduate recruiters said that it was *very important* for their company to hire graduates from higher education institutions with high international rankings and a good reputation, somewhat more than a quarter (27%) just felt that this was *rather important*. A majority of respondents, however, disagreed with this proposition: 35% said it was *rather unimportant*, and 23% said it was *not at all important*, to recruit graduates from higher education institutions with a good international reputation.

Graduate recruiters with international contacts more frequently said that it was *very* or *rather important* for their company to hire graduates from higher education institutions with high international rankings and a good reputation (48% of those with “frequent” international contacts vs. 32% with no such contacts).

The proportion of employers who said that it was *very* or *rather important* to recruit graduates from higher education institutions with high international rankings and a good reputation ranged from less than a quarter in Germany, Sweden and France (20%-23%) to more than two-thirds in Greece, Turkey and Cyprus (69%-77%). Respondents in the latter countries were also the most likely to say that that a qualification from an institution with a good international reputation was *very important*: 33% in Greece and Turkey and 41% in Cyprus.

Importance of employing graduates from higher education institutions that have a good international reputation



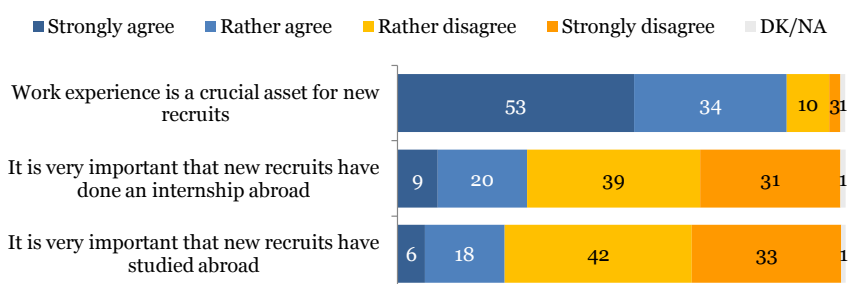
Q4.2. How important is it for you to employ graduates from higher education institutions with high international rankings (with good reputations)?
Base: all companies, % by country

4. Importance of new employees' past experience

Graduate recruiters emphasised the importance of new employees having work experience: 53% of respondents *strongly agreed* and 34% *rather agreed* with the statement that **work experience** was a crucial asset for new recruits.

These graduate employers did not agree, however, that it was very important for graduates to have **studied or worked abroad** before joining their company. About 3 in 10 (31%) respondents *strongly disagreed* and 39% *rather disagreed* that it was very important that new recruits had done an internship abroad. The corresponding proportions for the importance of having studied abroad were similar (33% “strongly disagreed” and 42% “rather disagreed”).

Views about new recruits' work experience - TOTAL

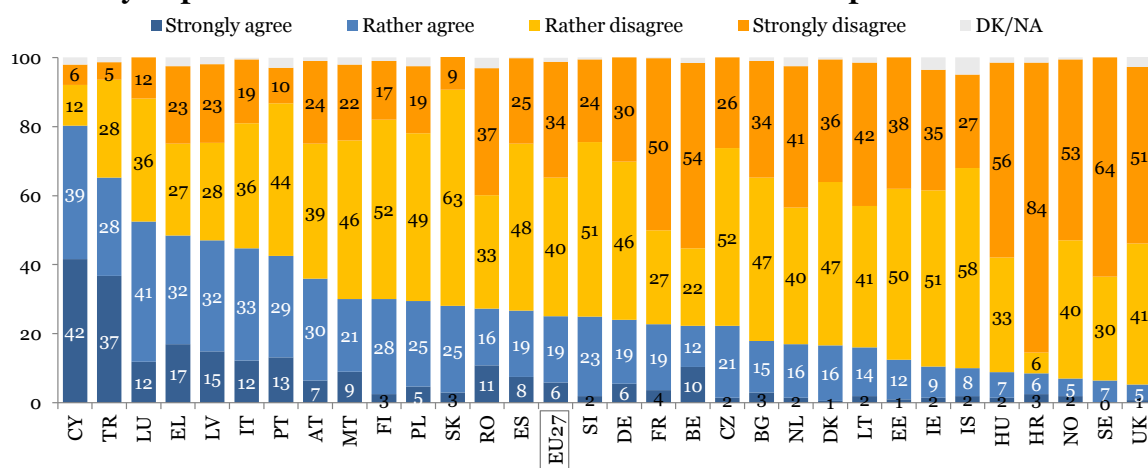


Q4.5. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Employers in the industry sector were most likely to agree that it was necessary for graduates to have studied or worked abroad before joining their company. For example, while 38% of employers in this sector *strongly agreed* or *rather agreed* that it was very important that new recruits had completed an internship abroad, this proportion was 23%-25% in the other sectors. Graduate recruiters with international contacts were also more likely to value international mobility. For example, while 32% of employers with more than 50% of “international” day-to-day operations *strongly agreed* or *rather agreed* that it was very important that new recruits had studied abroad, this proportion was 17% for those with no international contacts.

Graduate employers in Cyprus and Turkey were the most likely to highlight the importance of having studied, or having had a work-placement, abroad. For example, 81% of respondents in Cyprus and 65% of those in Turkey agreed that it was very important that new recruits had studied abroad; in comparison, this view was shared by less than a tenth of respondents in the UK, Sweden, Norway, Croatia and Hungary (6%-9%).

It is very important that new recruits have done an internship abroad



Q4.5. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: all companies, % by country

5. Training activities for graduate employees

5.1 Percentage of graduate employees participating in training

A third (34%) of graduate employers reported that more than 50% of their employees with higher education degrees had received training to update their skills in the past two years; a similar proportion (33%) said that less than 10% had received such training.

Almost 4 in 10 (38%) respondents from large companies, and a similar proportion (39%) of those working in public organisations, said that more than 50% of their employees with higher education degrees had received training to update their skills in the past two years; the corresponding proportion for medium-sized companies and companies in the private sector was 33%.

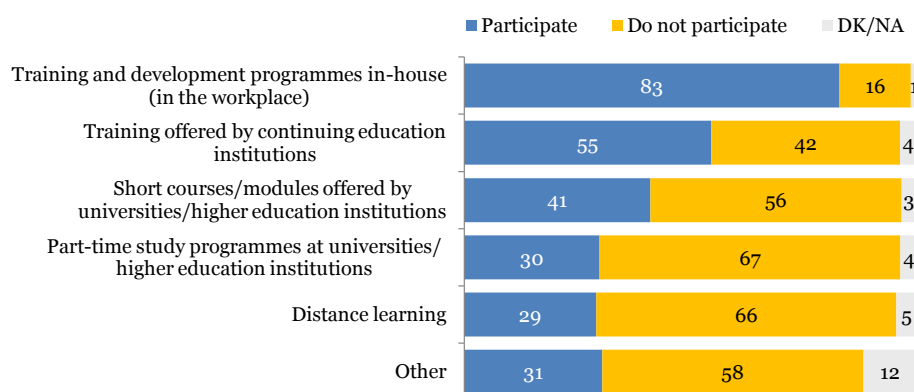
More than 6 in 10 employers in Austria (63%), and about half of those in Iceland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (50%-55%) answered that more than half of their graduate employees had received training in the past two years; this proportion was the lowest in Romania (11%) and Bulgaria (17%).

5.2 Training activities for graduate employees

A large majority (83%) of respondents said that their employees with higher education degrees had participated in training and development programmes organised at their workplace; 55% mentioned training offered by continuing education institutions.

Other training activities listed in the survey were mentioned by less than half of graduate employers. For example, 41% said that their employees with higher education degrees had participated in short courses offered by universities and other higher education institutions and 30% mentioned part-time study programmes at such institutions.

Training activities that employees with higher education degrees have participated/participate in - TOTAL



Q3.7. Which of the following training activities do/have your employees with higher education degrees participate(d) in?
Base: all companies, % TOTAL

The most frequently cited training and development programmes across all countries included in this study were those offered in-house; the proportion of employers mentioning this type of training ranged from 60% in Bulgaria to 94% in Ireland, Austria and Finland.

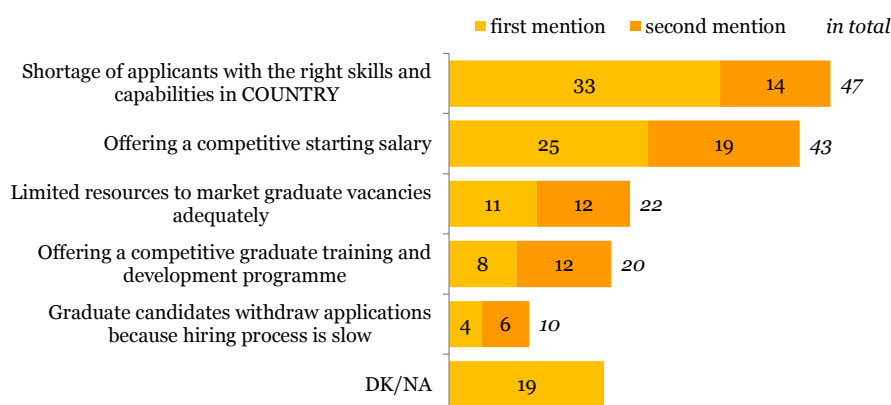
Distance learning programmes were the least frequently mentioned type of training (among those listed in the survey) in more than half of the countries surveyed; the proportion of employers mentioning this type of training ranged from 13% in Slovakia to 62% in Estonia.

6. Challenges to fill graduate vacancies

Asked to identify the greatest challenges they faced in filling their vacancies, almost half (47%) of graduate recruiters selected a shortage of applicants with the right skills and capabilities, in their country, to do the job; a somewhat smaller number of respondents (43%) saw a difficulty in being able to offer a competitive starting salary.

All other challenges were mentioned by less than a quarter of graduate employers: 22% referred to limited resources to allow adequate marketing of graduate vacancies and 20% found it difficult to offer a competitive graduate training and development programme. Just 10% of respondents said that one of the greatest challenges in filling graduate vacancies was that candidates withdrew applications (because the hiring process was slow).

Greatest challenges in filling vacancies - TOTAL



Q5.1. What are the greatest challenges you face in filling your vacancies? Please select the two most important ones.

Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Please note that due to rounding, the percentages for “first mention” and “second mention” do not always add up exactly to the total percentages

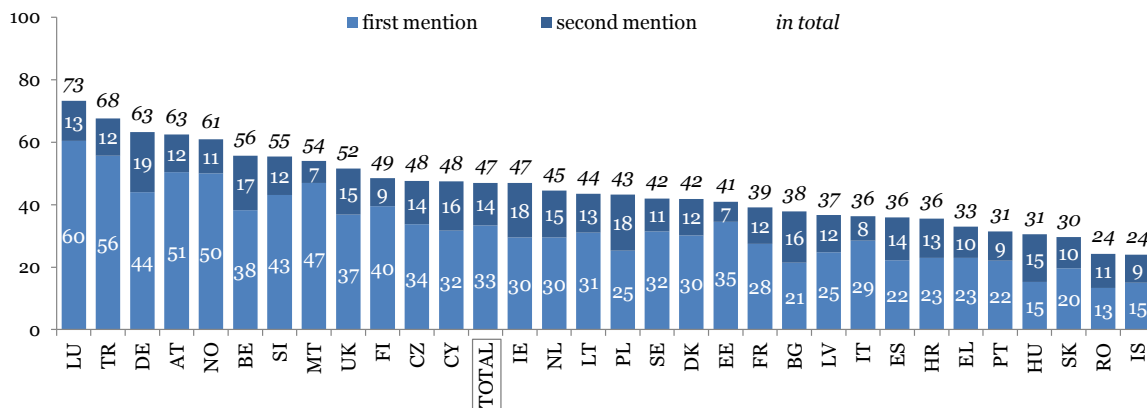
A **shortage of applicants with the right skills and capabilities**, in their country, was most frequently mentioned as one of the greatest challenges in filling graduate vacancies by graduate recruiters with international contacts (54% of those with “frequent” international contacts vs. 38% with no such contacts).

A shortage of applicants with the right skills and capabilities, however, was less frequently seen as an obstacle by respondents working in public organisations (38% vs. 49% in the private sector); respondents in such public organisations, however, were more likely than their counterparts to refer to other obstacles listed in the survey, such as limited resources to allow adequate marketing of graduate vacancies (29% vs. 21%).

A shortage of applicants with the right skills and capabilities, in their country, was most frequently mentioned as an obstacle for companies trying to fill graduate vacancies in Luxembourg (73%), Turkey (68%), Germany, Austria and Norway (61%-63%). In Iceland and Romania, on the other hand, just about a quarter of respondents saw this as an obstacle (both 24%).

Greatest challenges in filling vacancies

Shortage of applicants with the right skills and capabilities in respondents’ countries



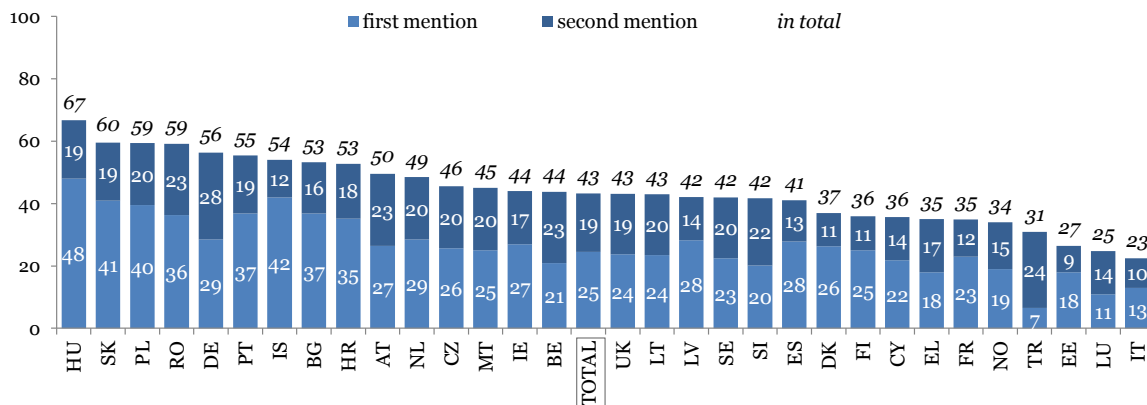
Q5.1. What are the greatest challenges you face in filling your vacancies? Please select the two most important ones.

Base: all companies, % by country

The proportion of graduate employers who saw a difficulty in **being able to offer a competitive starting salary** as one of the two main challenges ranged from less than a third in Italy (23%), Luxembourg (25%), Estonia (27%) and Turkey (31%) to twice as many respondents in Hungary (67%). Respondents in Romania, Poland and Slovakia shared the Hungarians’ concern (59%-60% saw this as a challenge).

Greatest challenges in filling vacancies

Being able to offer a competitive starting salary



Q5.1. What are the greatest challenges you face in filling your vacancies? Please select the two most important ones.

Base: all companies, % by country

7. Recruiting graduates from other countries

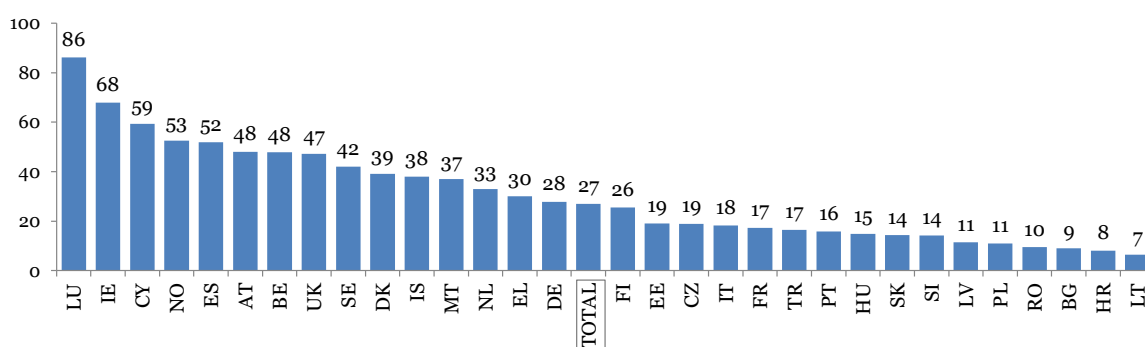
7.1 Recruitment of graduates from other countries

More than a quarter (27%) of respondents answered that they had recruited higher education graduates from other European countries and about a sixth (18%) had recruited such graduates from countries outside of Europe.

It was noted in chapter 1 that large companies (with at least 250 employees) and those in the non-public services sector were more likely to estimate that more than a fifth of their employees were higher education graduates. Furthermore, the likelihood that at least some of these graduate employees were recruited from other countries was higher for this grouping of companies than for other types.

Respondents in Luxembourg were the most likely to say they recruited graduates with higher education degrees from other European countries (86%). In a further four countries, a majority of employers had recruited higher education graduates from other European countries: Ireland (68%), Cyprus (59%), Norway (53%) and Spain (52%). In sharp contrast, in Lithuania, Croatia and Bulgaria, the corresponding proportions were between 7% and 9%.

Situation regarding recruitment of higher education graduates from other European countries



Q4.4a. What is the percentage of employees with higher education degrees who are recruited from other European countries?

Base: all companies, % of 'Recruit' shown by country

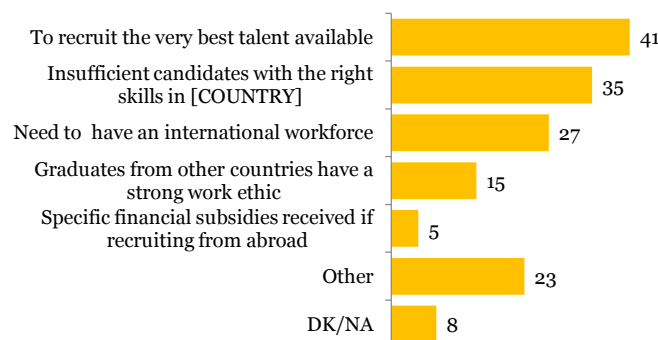
In accordance with the results for graduate recruitment from other European countries, respondents in Ireland, Cyprus and Spain most frequently reported having recruited graduates from non-European countries (39%-40%). These three countries were joined by the UK where 39% of companies had employees recruited from countries outside of Europe.

7.2 Reasons for recruiting graduates from other countries

Although 47% of graduate employers said it was difficult to find applicants in their country with the right skills and capabilities (see above), only 35% of graduate recruiters – who had actually recruited higher education graduates from other countries – said they had done so because there were insufficient candidates in their country.

A larger proportion (41%) of respondents said they had recruited graduates from other countries because they wanted to hire the very best talent available, while 15% said this was because graduates from other countries had a strong work ethic. Somewhat more than a quarter (27%) of respondents said they had recruited higher education graduates from other countries, because they needed to have an international workforce. Just 5% of respondents said they had recruited graduates from other countries, because this meant they would receive subsidies.

Reasons for recruiting higher education graduates from other countries - TOTAL



Q4.4c. What is your reason for recruiting graduates who are not resident in [COUNTRY]?

Base: companies that recruit higher education graduates from other countries, % TOTAL

About 3 in 10 (31%) respondents in the industry sector said they had recruited graduates from other countries, because there were insufficient candidates in their country; in comparison, in the other sectors, more than a third of respondents gave this response (35%-37%).

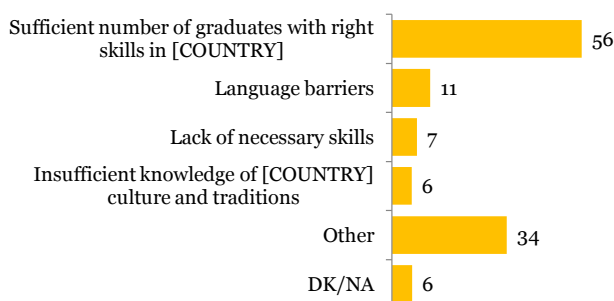
Four in 10 respondents with more than 50% of “international” day-to-day operations said they had recruited higher education graduates from other countries because they needed to have an international workforce; this proportion decreased to 12% for respondents without international contacts.

7.3 Reasons for not recruiting graduates from other countries

A slim majority (56%) of employers – who had not recruited higher education graduates from other countries – said there was no need to hire such graduates, or in other words, there were enough graduates with the right skills in their own country.

About a tenth (11%) of these employers had not recruited graduates from other countries, because of language barriers, 7% thought that graduates from other countries did not have the necessary skills and a similar proportion (6%) saw problems due to an insufficient knowledge of their country’s culture and traditions.

Reasons for not recruiting higher education graduates from other countries – TOTAL



Q4.4d. What is your reason for NOT recruiting graduates from other countries?

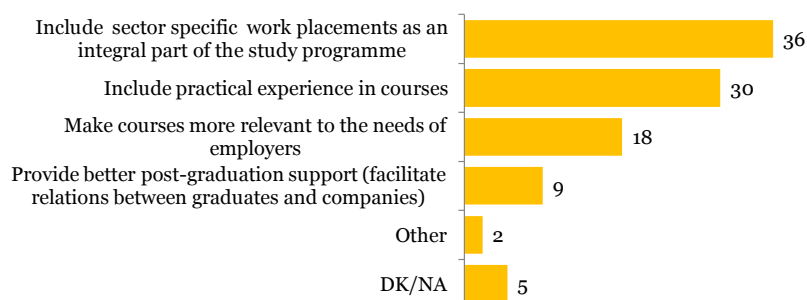
Base: companies that do not recruit higher education graduates from other countries, % TOTAL

About one in two (49%) respondents working in public organisations said that there were enough graduates with the right skills in their own country; in comparison, in the private sector, 57% of respondents gave this response. In terms of activities, the proportion of respondents selecting this response ranged from 48% in the public services sector to 61% in the trade, accommodation and food services sector.

8. Improving the employability of new graduates

When asked to choose one action that higher education institutions should take to improve the employability of their graduates, 36% of graduate employers said that sector-specific work-placements should be included as an integral part of study programmes. Including practical experience in such programmes was selected by 30% of graduate employers and 18% said there would be most benefit if courses were more relevant to employers’ needs.

Actions that higher education institutions should take to improve the employability of their graduates – TOTAL



Q7.1. Which actions should higher education institutions take in order to improve the employability of their graduates? Choose one of the following choices.

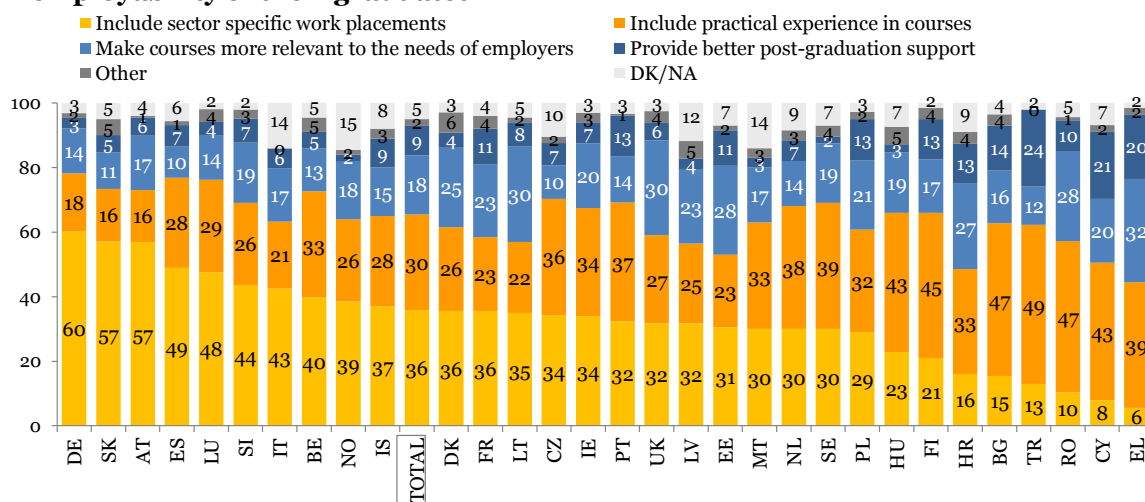
Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Across almost all types of companies surveyed, graduate recruiters were most likely to think that graduates’ employability could be improved by sector-specific work-placements; for example, this response was selected by 40% of respondents in large companies and by 38% of respondents in the non-public services sector. Providing better post-graduation support, on the other hand, was selected by the smallest proportion of respondents across all types of companies (between 7% and 11%).

In three countries, a majority of respondents said that sector-specific work-placements should be included as an integral part of study programmes, if higher education institutions wanted to improve their graduates’ employability: Germany (60%), Slovakia and Austria (both 57%).

Making courses more relevant to graduate employers’ needs was most frequently mentioned by respondents in Lithuania, the UK and Greece (30%-32%), while respondents in Turkey were the most likely to mention providing better post-graduation support (24%).

Actions that higher education institutions should take to improve the employability of their graduates



Q7.1. Which actions should higher education institutions take in order to improve the employability of their graduates? Choose one of the following choices.

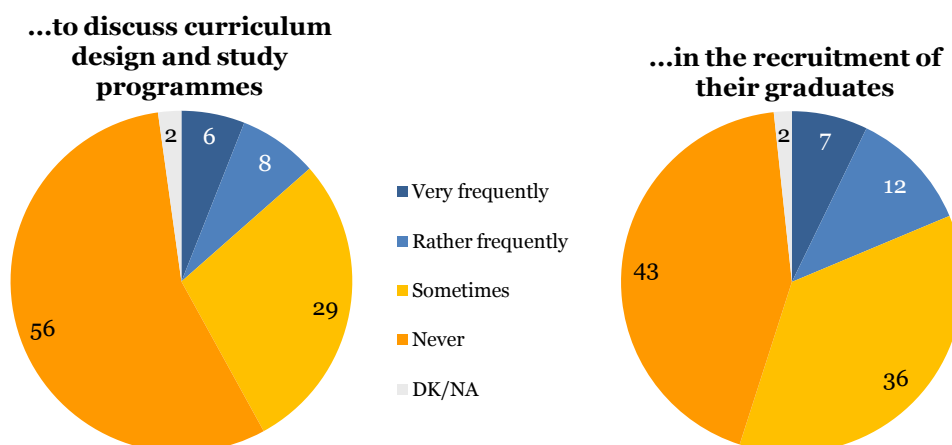
Base: all companies, % by country

9. Cooperation with higher education institutions

9.1 Frequency of cooperation with higher education institutions

Somewhat more than a tenth of graduate employers said they cooperated with higher education institutions to discuss curriculum design and study programmes; 6% said they *very frequently* cooperated, 8% said this happened *rather frequently*. Cooperating with higher education institutions in the recruitment of their graduates, on the other hand, appeared to happen more frequently (12% “rather frequently” and 7% “very frequently”).

Frequency of cooperation with higher education institutions...



Q6.1. How frequently do you cooperate with higher education institutions to discuss curriculum design and study programmes?

Q6.4. How frequently do you cooperate with higher education institutions in recruiting their graduates?

Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Across almost all countries surveyed, less than a quarter of respondents said they *very* or *rather frequently* cooperated with higher education institutions to **discuss curriculum design and study programmes**. In Malta and Turkey, on the other hand, slightly more than a quarter of graduate employers said they *very* or *rather frequently* had such cooperation (26%-27%).

Turkish respondents were also among the most likely to answer that they *very* or *rather frequently* cooperated with higher education institutions in **the recruitment of their graduates** (27%); employers in Spain and Belgium, however, were the most likely to report such cooperation (28%-31%).

In terms of activities, it was noted that graduate employers in the industry sector and those in the sectors of public and non-public services were more likely to have cooperated with higher education institutions in curriculum design (13%-18% vs. 9% in the other sectors). Finally, respondents with international contacts were almost twice as likely as their counterparts without such contacts to cooperate with higher education institutions.

9.2 Importance of cooperation with higher education institutions

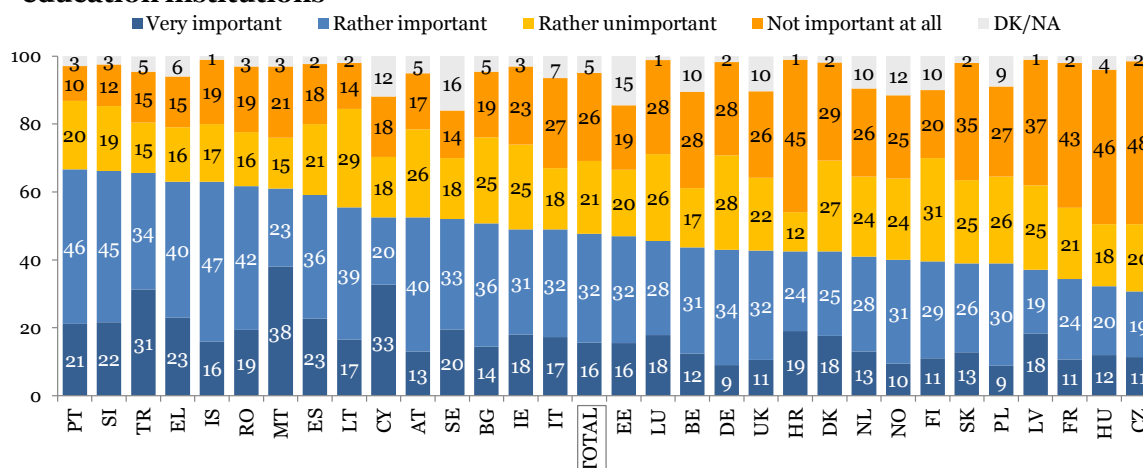
Graduate recruiters were divided on the importance of cooperation with higher education institutions in the design of curricula and study programmes: 48% considered such cooperation to be important for their company and 47% said the opposite.

In terms of activities, graduate employers in the industry and public or non-public services sectors were more likely than their counterparts in other sectors to value cooperation with higher education institutions (for example, 50% of “very” and “rather important” responses in the industry sector vs. 39% in the construction, transport and ICT sector).

While 38% of respondents without international contacts thought that it was *very* or *rather important* for their company to cooperate with higher education institutions in the design of curricula and study programmes, this proportion increased to approximately 50% for those with international contacts (for example, 55% for those with between 10% and 49% of “international contacts” in day-to-day operations).

The proportion of graduate employers who thought it was *very* or *rather important* for their company to cooperate with higher education institutions in the design of curricula and study programmes ranged from roughly a third in the Czech Republic, Hungary and France (30%-35%) to about two-thirds in Turkey, Slovenia and Portugal (65%-67%).

Respondents’ opinions about the importance of cooperation with higher education institutions



Q6.2. How important is the cooperation for your organization? Please rate the importance of cooperating with higher education institutions in the design of curricula and study programmes.

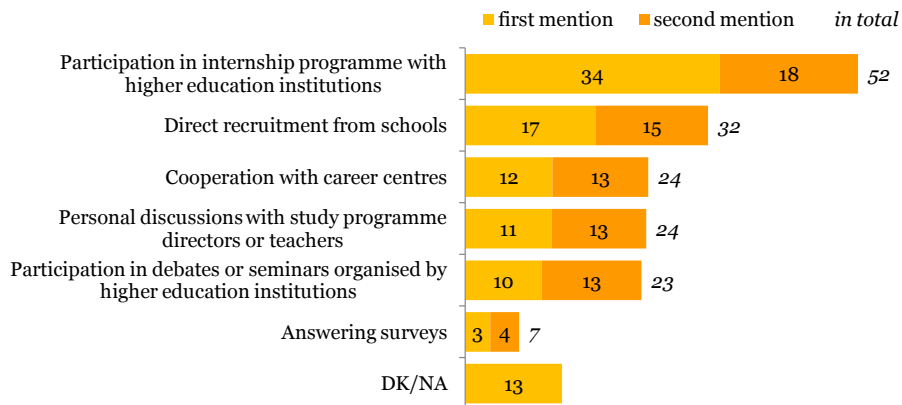
Base: all companies, % by country

9.3 Best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment

Roughly one in two (52%) graduate employers said that one of the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment was their participation in internship programmes and about a third (32%) selected direct recruitment from schools.

Other topics were selected by a quarter or less respondents: 24% thought that personal discussions with study programme directors or teachers would be a good way to cooperate, 24% selected cooperation with career centres and 23% opted for participation in debates or seminars organised by higher education institutions. Just 7% of graduate employers thought that answering surveys was one of the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment.

Opinions about the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment – TOTAL



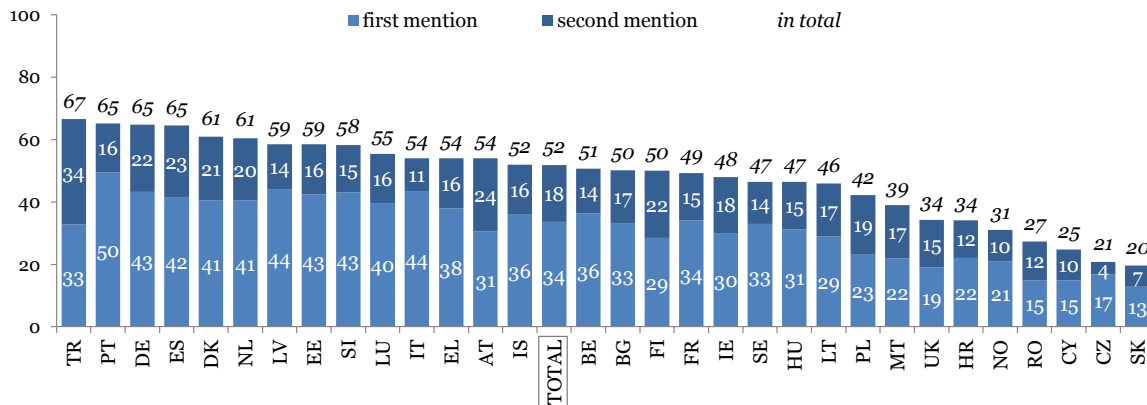
Q6.5. What do you think is the best way to cooperate with higher education institutions on recruitment? Please select two from the six items I am going to read to you.

Base: all companies, % TOTAL

Please note that due to rounding, the percentages for “first mention” and “second mention” do not always add up exactly to the total percentages

The proportion of graduate employers who said that one of the best ways to cooperate with higher education institutions on recruitment was their **participation in internship programmes** ranged from approximately a fifth in Slovakia and the Czech Republic (20%-21%) to roughly two-thirds in Spain, Germany, Portugal and Turkey (65%-67%). Participation in internship programmes was the most frequently selected method of cooperation in almost all of the countries surveyed.

Opinions about the best ways of cooperating with higher education institutions on recruitment
Participation in an internship programme with higher education institutions



Q6.5. What do you think is the best way to cooperate with higher education institutions on recruitment? Please select two from the six items I am going to read to you.

Base: all companies, % by country