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Support mechanisms for exiled students in Higher Education

A seven European country level synthesis

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List of Abbreviations

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Abbreviations	Description
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution

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Executive Summary

In this document, we present the support mechanisms for exiled students at HE institutions in all partner countries of the AGILE consortium, according to responses collected through an online survey. The analysis compares some of the challenges in the different countries' HEIs and the ways they cope with them, in order to build sustainable institutional resilience when welcoming exiled students.

The AGILE project

This publication is a result of the EU-funded AGILE project ("Higher education resilience in refugee crises: forging social inclusion through capacity building, civic engagement and skills recognition", <http://www.agileproject-erasmus.eu/>), whose aim is to increase resilience of HE systems to address the ongoing needs of refugees through social participation and skills recognition. The AGILE project aims to enrich HE curricula by proposing new pedagogical designs that encourage grassroots and digitally-enhanced actions in both formal and informal learning environments.

The project is coordinated by the University Paris 8. The consortium is made up of six universities (University Paris 8, Bordeaux Montaigne University, University of Hamburg, University of Ljubljana, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Kaunas University of Technology), one think-tank (Polish Rectors Foundation) and one business partner (Web2Learn) who specializes in open recognition systems and social learning.

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

This report was created in the scope of the WP5 of the AGILE project, called "Impact and sustainability". This work package addressed the specific objective of "using digital innovation, social participation and impact assessment to build strong academia-society cooperation for resilience and sustainability" (as stated in the project proposal). It specifically focused on the impact of refugee crises on European HE systems in order to learn from them and take measures to increase resilience of HEIs in Europe in the future.

In order to reach our goal, the AGILE consortium created a questionnaire, which was filled by HE actors in the inclusion of exiled students across the member countries. After the questionnaire was produced in French (by the partner institutions University Bordeaux Montaigne, University Paris 8 and University of Hamburg), it was translated into the several languages of the partners involved in AGILE, and in English as well. The online implementation was done through the EU survey tool (<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/home/welcome/runner>) in the different languages. The participants were then contacted by the national coordinators of AGILE and invited to answer the questionnaire in one of the languages of the project. A maximum of 4 answers by institution were allowed, to cover internal diversity of perspectives.

The questionnaire was structured in three parts (see table 1; also annex 1), skills recognitions, capacity building and civic engagement, including open and closed questions. The length of each part was varied.

Section	Description	Questions
skills recognitions	7 questions, regarding the mechanisms and tools developed by universities to recognize previously acquired skills (academic, linguistic or other) and the challenges in their institutional implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your university have procedures for recognizing the qualifications acquired by exiled students before arriving in the host country? • Do exiled students who enroll in your university's various courses continue their studies where they left off, or do they generally have to repeat one or more years? • What are the criteria for registering exiled students at your university? • If proficiency in the local language is a prerequisite for enrolment in one of your university's courses, how does your institution assess this proficiency among exiled students? • If there is a procedure for this, it is a formal procedure... of the university / of the various

		<p>components/departments / I don't know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the university recognize the skills of refugee students (linguistic, subject-specific, etc.) acquired outside university courses (via MOOCs, Open Badges, training in associations, work experience, etc.)? • Does your university encounter any obstacles in recognizing the skills of exiled students?
capacity building	8 questions about the mechanisms and tools developed by the institutions to support exiled students before, during and after their academic lives in the host institutions. It also included answers related to challenges in the implementation of such mechanisms and tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your university offer training courses for its staff to prepare them to welcome exiled students? • Does your university have specific resources to help exiled students with the administrative formalities before they enroll at university? • Does your university have any measures in place to support exiled students during their studies? • Does the university offer specific language courses for exiled students? • Does your university offer courses, workshops or support to help exiled students learn about university methodology? • Is there a system in place to welcome exiled students and introduce them to the various student life services available at the university? • Does your university face any obstacles in setting up support systems for exiled students? • Has your university set up a specific follow-up system for exiled students after they have finished their studies?
civic engagement	7 questions on how HEIs encourage and support exiled students to participate in the academic, civic and community lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your university inform exiled students about the possibility of getting involved in civic and/or community life?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is civic engagement recognized in the academic career of exiled students (open badges, internships, bonus points, certificates, optional/open courses, etc.)? • Is there an association or collective of exiled students or for exiled students at your university? • Are exiled students represented in the university's decision-making bodies? • Does your university work with external organizations (companies, NGOs, associations) to promote civic engagement and/or socio-cultural inclusion of exiled students? • Does your university support projects (cultural, artistic, academic, etc.) proposed by exiled students? • Based on your experience, what suggestions would you make to improve the responsiveness of universities in receiving exiled students?
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Table 1. Structure and questions of the survey.

The questionnaire was introduced by a short text stressing the context of data collection (and protection) and its aims:

“This questionnaire, designed as part of the [Erasmus+ Agile project](#), aims to gather information on the strategies and practices put in place at your university to support exiled students and make it easier for them to be welcomed and included, both academically and in socio-linguistic terms: recognition of their skills, capacity-building for university staff and facilities, and support for students' civic engagement.

This questionnaire is intended for managers and coordinators of courses for learning the language of the host country (DU Passerelle in France), Vice-rectors/presidents for International Relations, Campus Life Department officers, people responsible for the Validation of Professional and Personal Experience (VAPP), and any person working in a Higher Education Institution responsible for welcoming and supporting exiled students”.

We collected a total of 141 responses, distributed as follows: 38 responses from Poland, 35 responses from France, 27 responses from Germany, 21 responses from Ukraine, 7 responses from Greece and Slovenia each, and 6 responses from Lithuania. To see the individual national reports, we suggest consulting the reports available at: <https://agileproject-erasmus.eu/> (section: Results)¹.

This report is organized in two main parts. First, we present a description of the quantitative data obtained across all the partner countries, highlighting direct consequences whenever we consider them appropriate. Second, we present some elements for a comparative analysis of the implementation of support mechanisms for exiled students. It should nevertheless be noted that there are disparities in the number of replies from one country to another. This can be partly explained by the fact that countries like Lithuania and Slovenia do not have many universities. Also, exiles who are initially welcomed in a country such as Greece tend to be transient and quickly leave the country to settle in a Western European country. However, despite these contextual explanations, our sample does not cover all the HEI that welcome exiled students. For this reason, we prefer to state that this report focuses on tendencies and not on statistical relevance.

¹ The description of the survey was created by the German partner and reproduced in all international reports, for coherence among all the national surveys.

2. Overall results

2. Overall results

2.1 Skills recognition

In terms of recognition of qualifications previously acquired by exiled students, 107 participants in the survey answered affirmatively to the question “Does your university have procedures for recognizing the qualifications acquired by exiled students before arriving in the host country?” (Figure 1). This means that 76% of the HEI respondents to the questionnaire have implemented different measures to acknowledge skills and competences developed previously to the arrival in the host country. Nevertheless, this means that around 25% of responding institutions do not have such mechanisms.

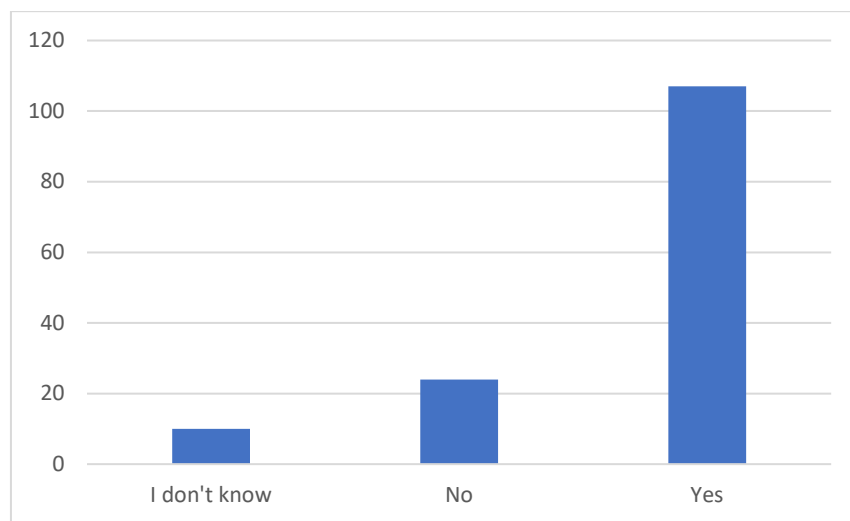


Figure 1. Existence of mechanisms of qualifications' recognition.

However, the fact that 25% of institutions lack such mechanisms might present significant challenges. Exiled students at these universities may face difficulties in having their previous education recognized, potentially leading to delays in their studies, the need to retake courses, or even the inability to access higher education altogether. This could result in frustration, financial stress, and a waste of previously acquired knowledge and skills, ultimately reducing their prospects of educational, social, and economic mobility.

On the question “Do exiled students who enroll in your university's various courses continue their studies where they left off, or do they generally have to repeat one or more years?”, the scenario shows a great variability, as HEIs have very different procedures (Figure 2).

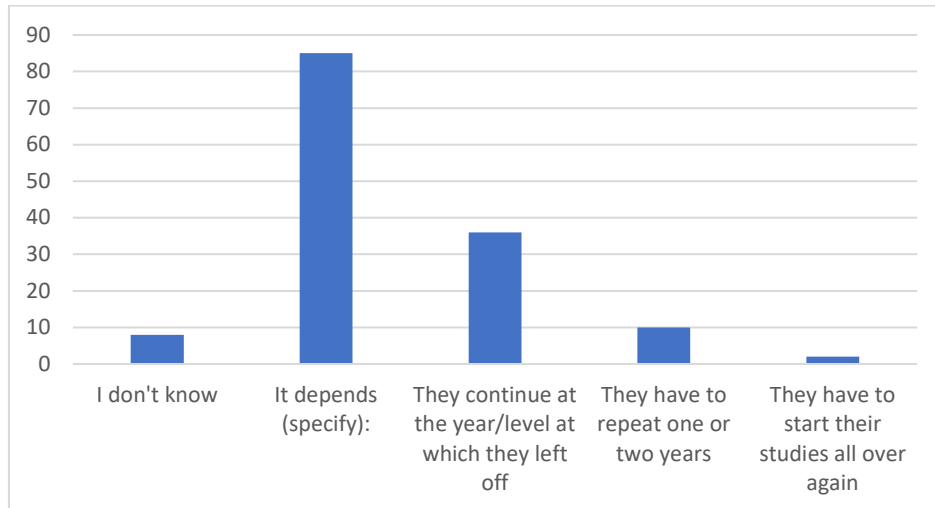


Figure 2. Paths to reentering higher education.

Results show that only 25,5% of HEI's allow exiled students to continue their studies at the year/level at which they left off. Usually, the continuity of the path is dependent upon several constrains, usually connected to recognition of degrees, universities in the home country or the students' legal status. This suggests a major barrier to academic continuity, as the majority of exiled students may face setbacks in their education, requiring them to repeat coursework, take additional assessments, or even start from a lower level.

To the question "What are the criteria for registering exiled students at your university?", most of the HEIs respond with linguistic criteria, which are usually cumulative (Figure 3): in 20 cases, both proficiency in English and proficiency in the language of instruction (usually, the official language of the host country) are required. Only two participants declared that English-only would be sufficient, and 8 declared that only competencies in the language of the host country would be enough.

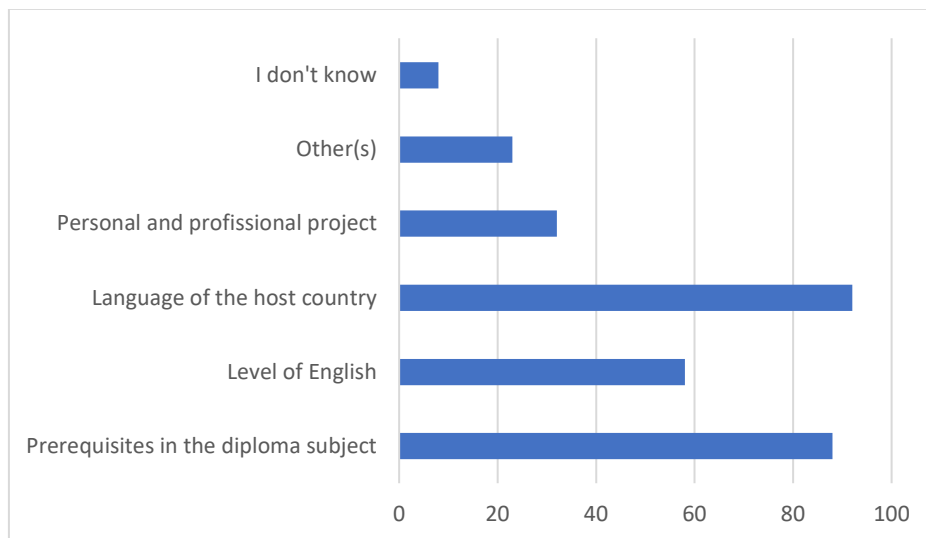


Figure 3. Criteria for enrolling exiled student in HEIs.

The most common combination of criteria to enroll exiled student was the linguistic skills in both English and the official language and the fulfillment of prerequisites in the intended academic diploma. In terms of conditions to access HE, these results suggest that exiled students must often demonstrate strong linguistic abilities and prove their prior academic qualifications to gain admission. Particularly the acquisition of skills in the language of the host country might be problematic, differentiating exiled and non-exiled and national students. Language barriers could therefore prevent capable students from continuing their studies, requiring them to first complete language courses or additional preparatory programs, which take a long time of concentration and preparation. Additionally, difficulties in proving academic prerequisites, especially if documents are lost due to forced displacement, could further complicate, delay or block enrollment of exiled students.

Still in terms of skills recognition, Figure 4 shows that HEIs are rather skeptical recognizing competences (linguistic, subject-specific, etc.) acquired outside of HE, as via MOOCs, Open Badges, training in associations, and work experience.

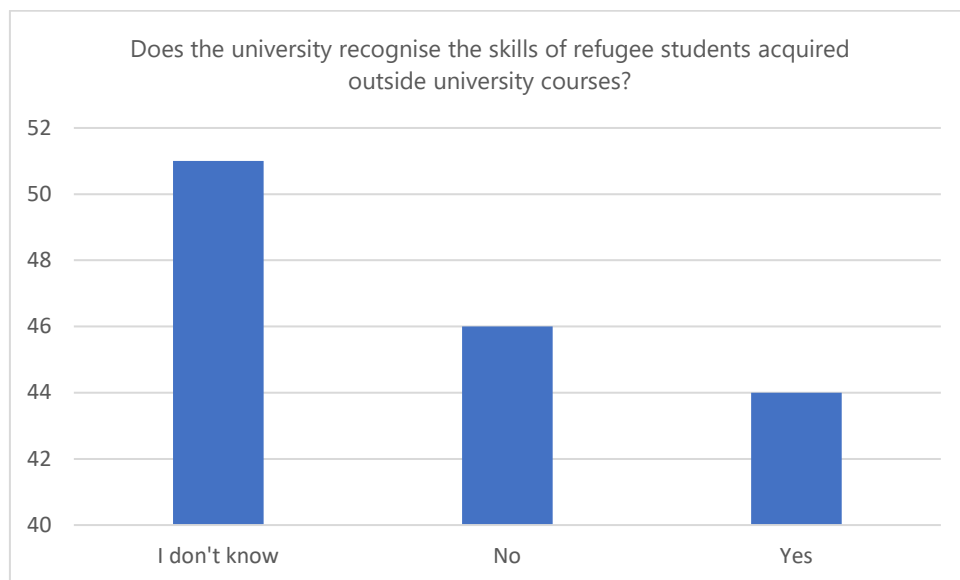


Figure 4. Recognition of skills acquired outside HE.

This skepticism in acknowledging skills acquired outside HEIs can pose significant challenges to exiled students. Indeed, many may have developed valuable skills through non-formal education, volunteer work, or professional experience. This lack of recognition could force students to repeat training already completed, possibly delaying their integration into HE and the labor market.

From the above results, it does not come as a surprise that 50 respondents declare facing obstacles in the process of recognizing exiled students' skills (Figure 5).

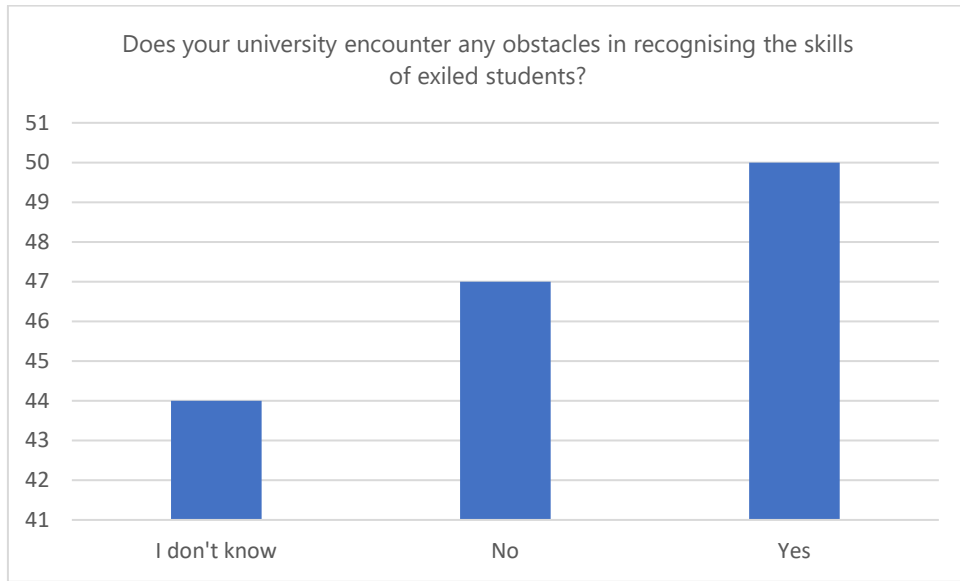


Figure 5. Frequency of challenges in recognizing exiled students' skills.

In the next section, we will see in which AGILE partner countries these difficulties are the most frequent.

2.2 Capacity building

In terms of capacity building, almost 50% of the HEIs that answered the AGILE survey offer training courses for staff, usually related to intercultural issues.

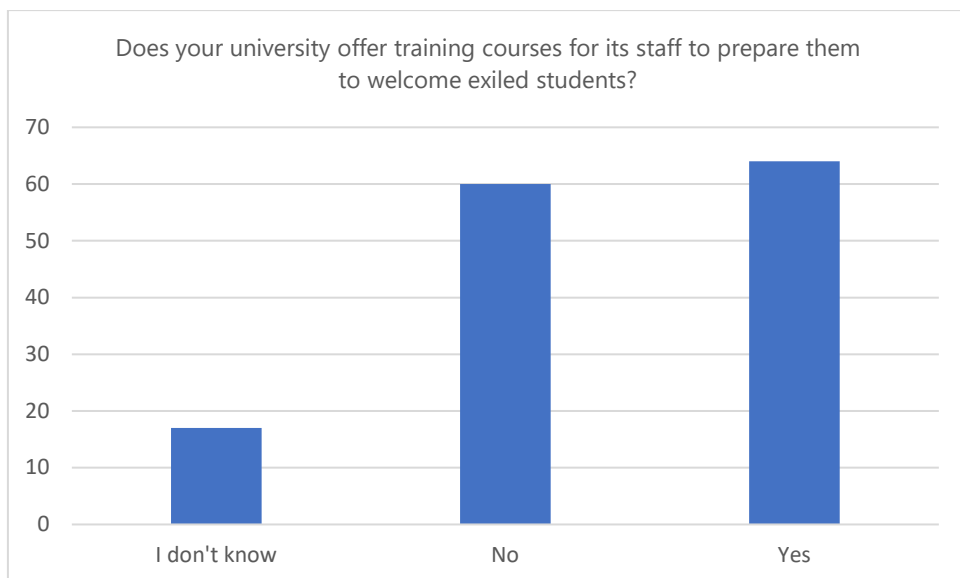


Figure 6. Staff capacity building.

To the question “Does your university have specific resources to help exiled students with the administrative formalities before they enrol at university?”, 92 representatives of HEIs answered affirmatively. In terms of HEIs governance, the fact that a significant number of them have specific resources to assist exiled students suggests a level of institutional commitment to facilitating their integration. This indicates that many universities are aware of the bureaucratic challenges exiled students face (that might encompass visa issues, residency permits, and document validation). As we will see later on, HEIs also usually offer legal aid to exiled students.

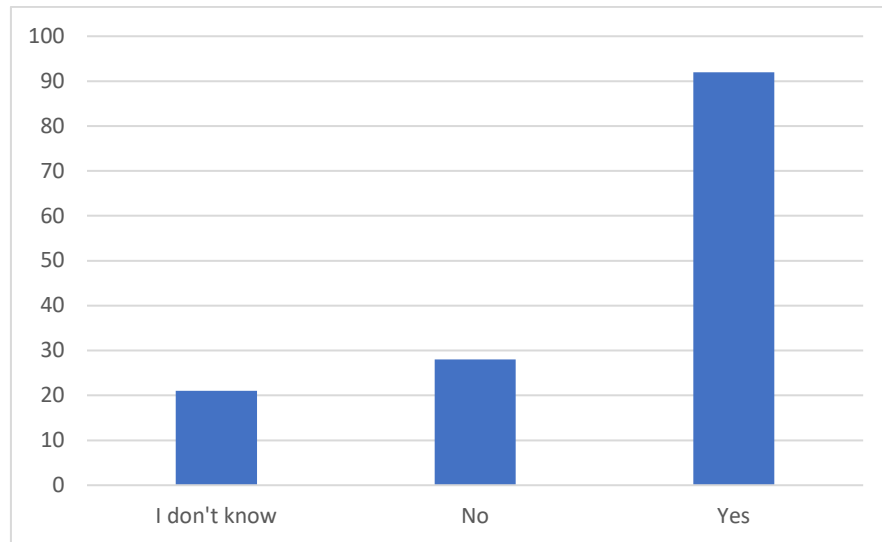


Figure 7. Existence of specific resources to help exiled students with administrative formalities.

105 respondents declared having measures in place to support exiled students during their studies (Figure 8). This means that across the participants, support during the studies, i.e. after the burdens related to the enrollment, is more frequent than before entering the institutions.

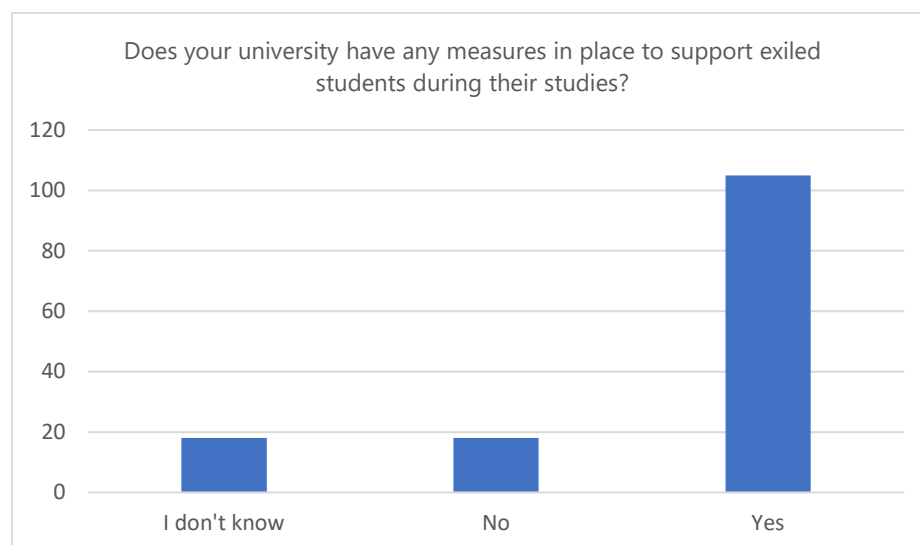


Figure 8. Existence of specific resources to help exiled students during their studies.

In terms of academic support mechanisms, this finding suggests that once exiled students are enrolled, they are more likely to receive institutional support to help them succeed in their studies. And indeed, Figures 9 and 10 show that 96 and 97 HEIs out of 141 have specific language courses and workshops on academic culture, respectively, specifically addressed at exiled students.

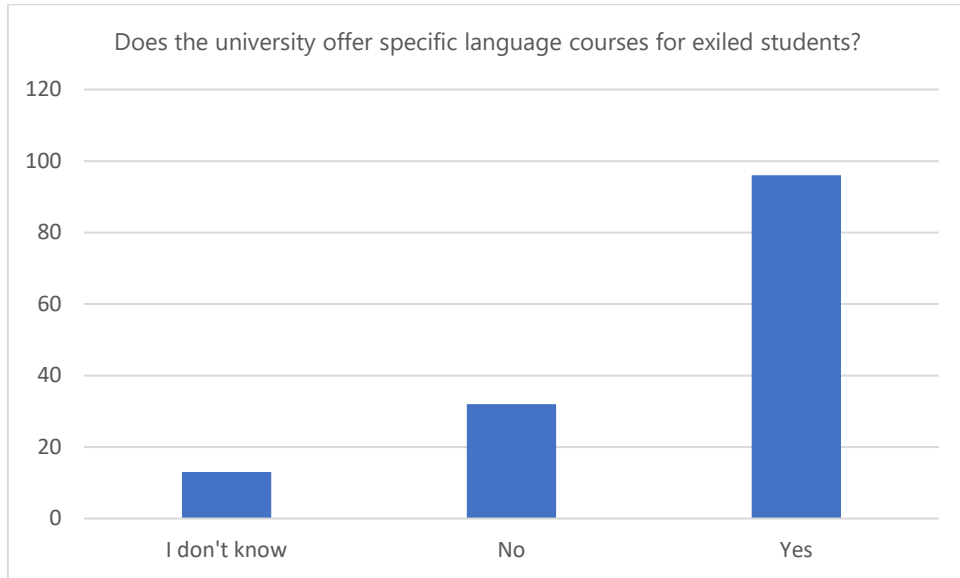


Figure 9. Existence of specific language courses for exiled students.

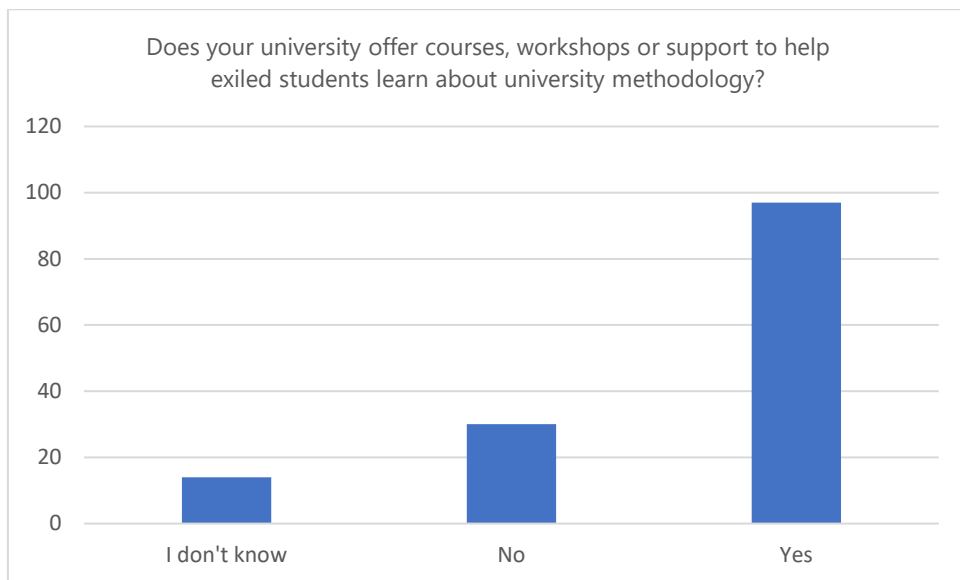


Figure 10. Existence of specific mechanisms to inform exiled students about academic culture in the host country.

Because HEIs have several mechanisms in place, even if not always specifically addressing exiled students, to the question "Is there a system in place to welcome exiled students and

introduce them to the various student life services available at the university?”, 117 participants answered affirmatively (Figure 11).

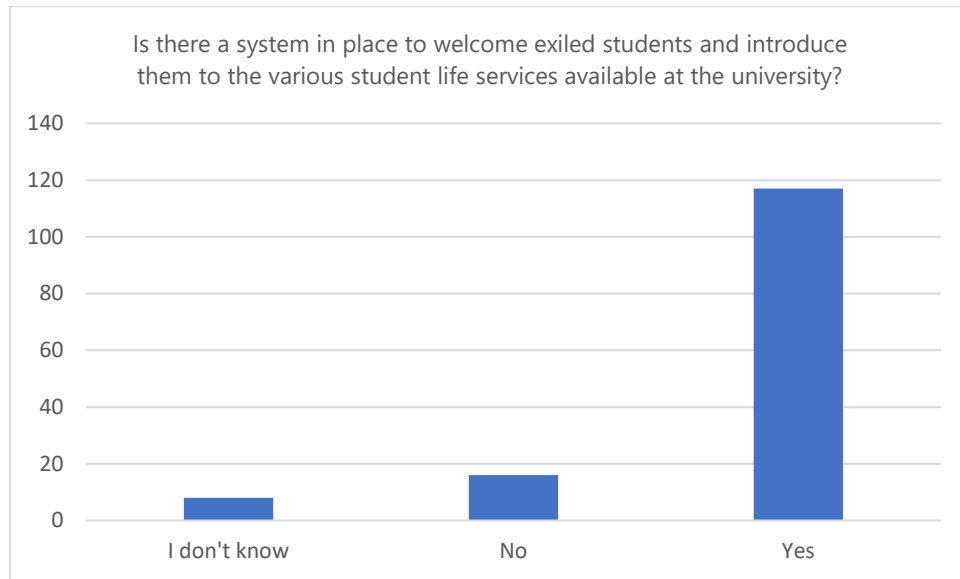


Figure 11. Existence of specific system in place to welcome exiled students after enrollment.

The results let us perceive a difference between pre-enrollment and post-enrollment support mechanisms, raising an important issue: while many HEIs help after students begin their studies, fewer institutions seem to offer structured help with the complex administrative and legal processes required to enroll in the first place. This gap could mean that some exiled students struggle to even reach the point where they can benefit from academic assistance. This conclusion, which need further studies on prevalence and impact, allows us to suggest that strengthening pre-enrollment support could enhance overall access rates for exiled students.

When exiled students are already enrolled, HEIs answering the AGILE survey have several support mechanisms in place (Figure 12), two of them directly connected to the complex navigation of a new academic structure: 89 HEIs refer to “information and guiding services” and 113 refer to “administrative support”.

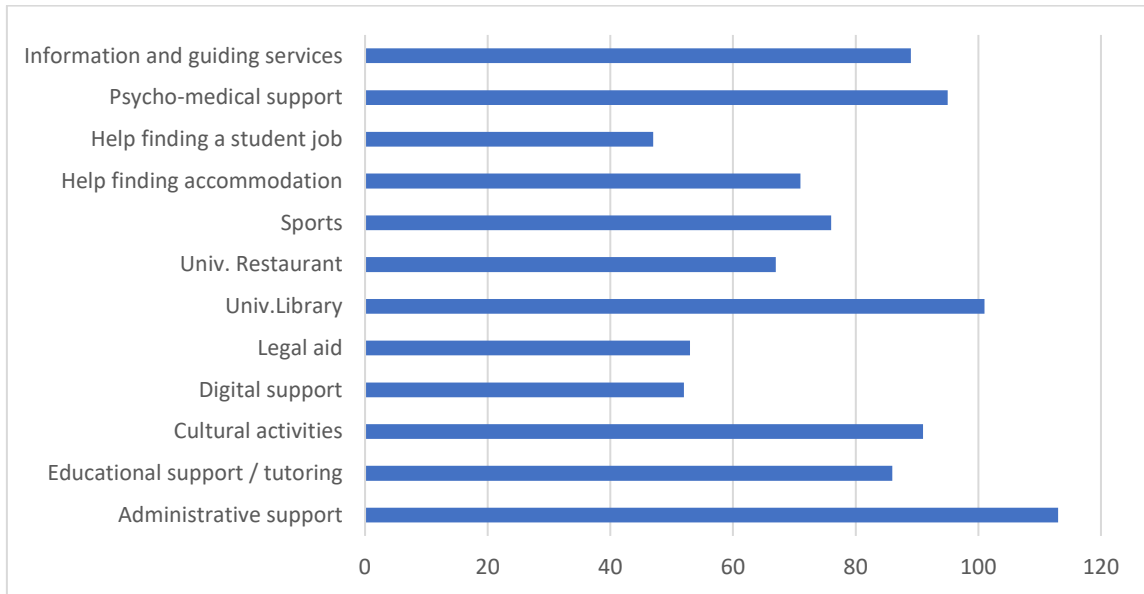


Figure 12. Services in place to support exiled students in HEIs.

Despite legal burdens and financial precarious situation of exiled students, only 53 HEIs referred to offering legal aid and 47 referred to offering support finding a student job. These results across participant institutions suggest that some gaps in support mechanisms in HEIs still exist and could lead to stress, financial insecurity, and even dropout risks for exiled students who cannot navigate legal hurdles or face financial problems (sometimes while also supporting the family in the home countries). It highlights the need for integrated institutional policies and partnerships to provide more comprehensive legal and economic assistance, ensuring that exiled students have the necessary stability to focus on their education. The fact that those gaps exist might be explained by the fact that 77 respondents (around half of the responses) declared facing obstacles in setting up support systems for exiled students (Figure 13).

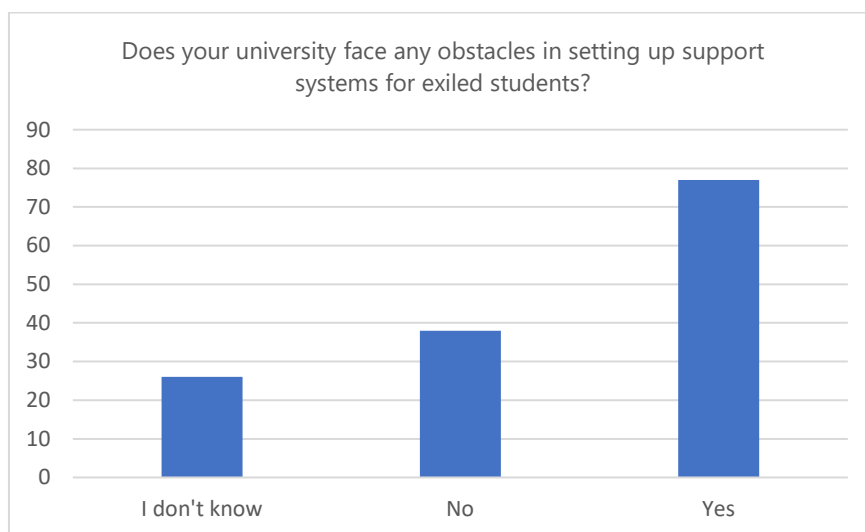


Figure 13. Are HEIs facing difficulties in implementing support mechanisms?

In terms of such difficulties, the selection of options in the close question made it clear that financial obstacles are the most frequent (64 answers), followed by lack of human resources (what might be connect to the previous one, 48 answers), organizational difficulties (27 answers) and policy constraints (22 answers).

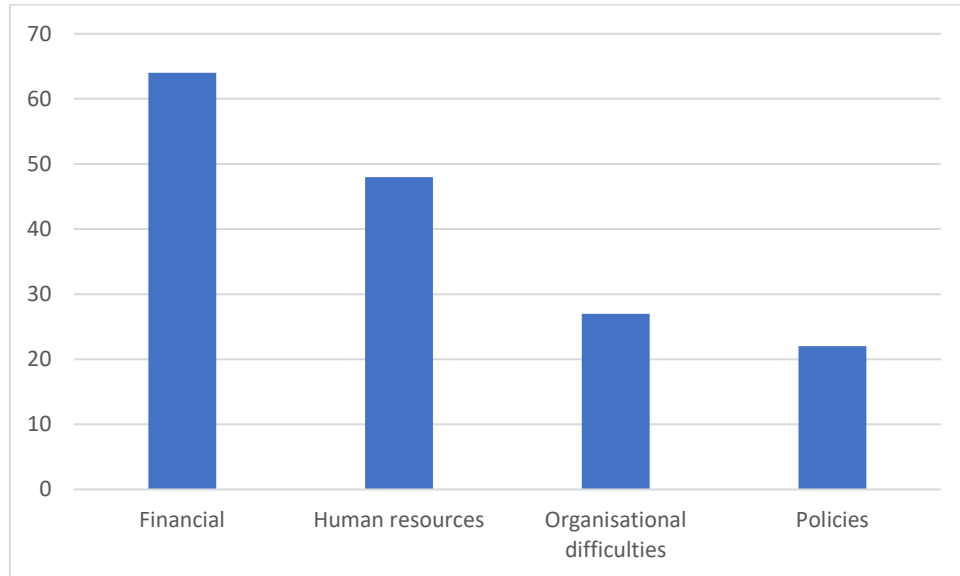


Figure 14. Typology of difficulties faced by HEIs.

The last question of this section of the survey was related to the existence of follow-up mechanism to support exiled students after they leave the HEI (Figure 15). 85 respondents answered with a "no", making 60% of the respondents.

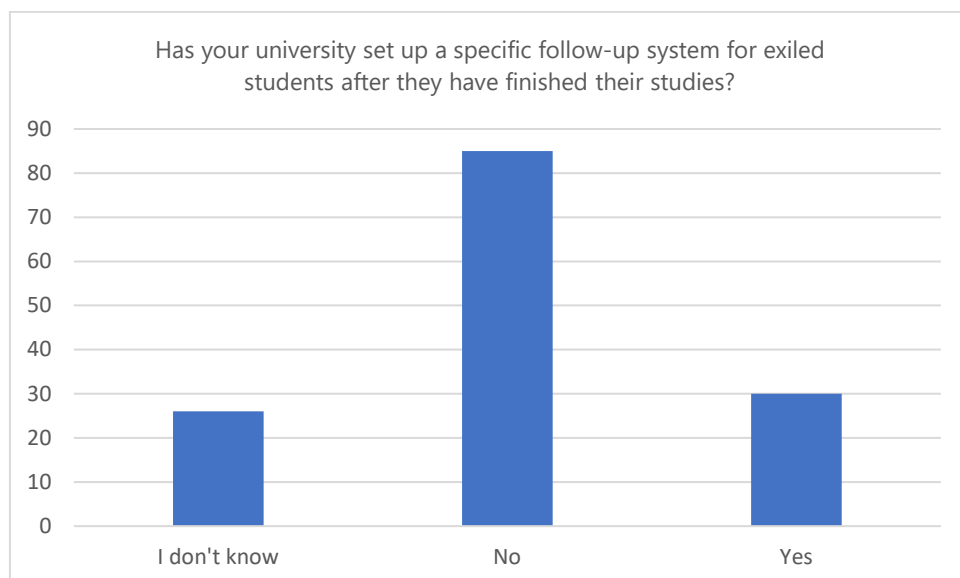


Figure 15. Existence of follow-up mechanisms for exiled students.

This finding means that once students graduate or drop out, they often lose access to institutional support, which could make it more difficult for them to transition into the job market, further studies, or stable residency situations. In the long-term, without follow-up mechanisms, exiled students may struggle with post-graduation challenges (if they want to further develop academically), securing employment and housing, navigating legal status requirements, or integrating into the labor market. A consequence of this lack of long-term support could limit exiled students' ability to benefit from the education levels they achieved in the host country and even actively contribute to their host society. Strengthening post-graduation follow-up initiatives by HEIs seems therefore important, in order to support integration in the host society.

2.3 Civic engagement

Civic engagement was the topic of the third part of the survey and, according to Figure 16, HEIs are aware of its importance and inform their exiled students about their initiatives in this field. 99 participants answered affirmatively.

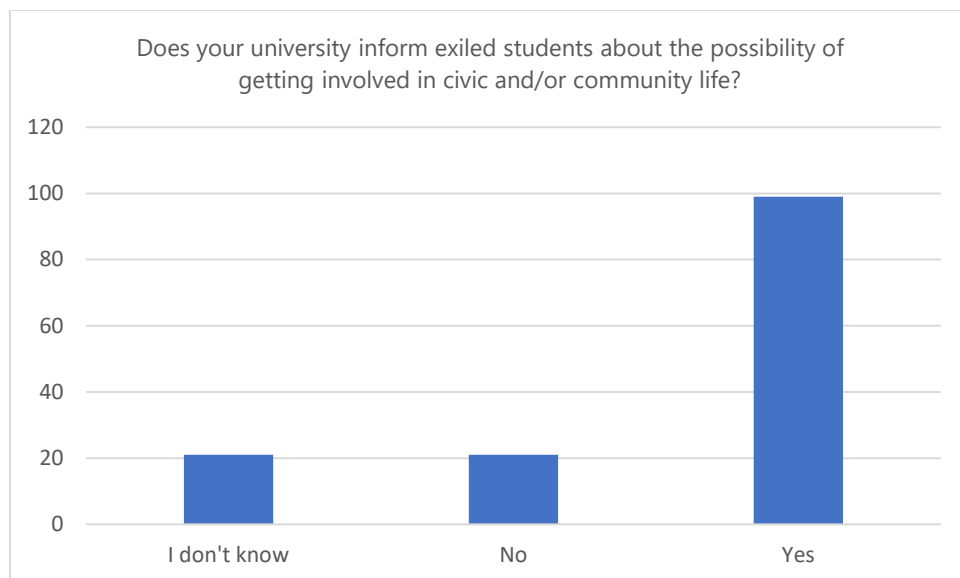


Figure 16. Information provided to exiled students about civic and community life.

Despite the widespread circulation of information about civic engagement and community life, there is no coinciding institutional recognition. Only 64 respondents (45%) answered with "yes" about the recognition of civic engagement (Figure 17). This gap between information and recognition suggests that HEIs do not systematically recognize these activities in a formal or institutionalized way, passing the implicit message that they do not value or integrate civic engagement into their academic frameworks (through credits, certifications, or other forms of acknowledgment). This lack of recognition implies that civic participation (such as volunteering, activism, and community service) is seen rather as an extracurricular or personal

endeavor and not that much as a component of student and citizen development, discouraging participation. Strengthening institutional recognition of civic engagement could, in our opinion, enhance the role of HEI's as socially responsible.

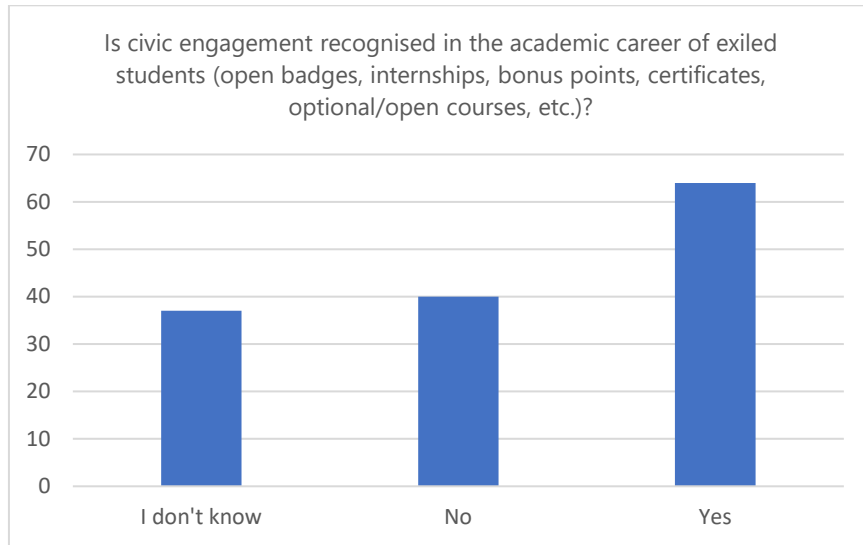


Figure 17. Recognition of civic engagement by HEIs.

This lack of recognition of civic engagement can explain why there are so few associations or collectives of exiled students (Figure 18), with only 30 participants (21%) acknowledging their existence.

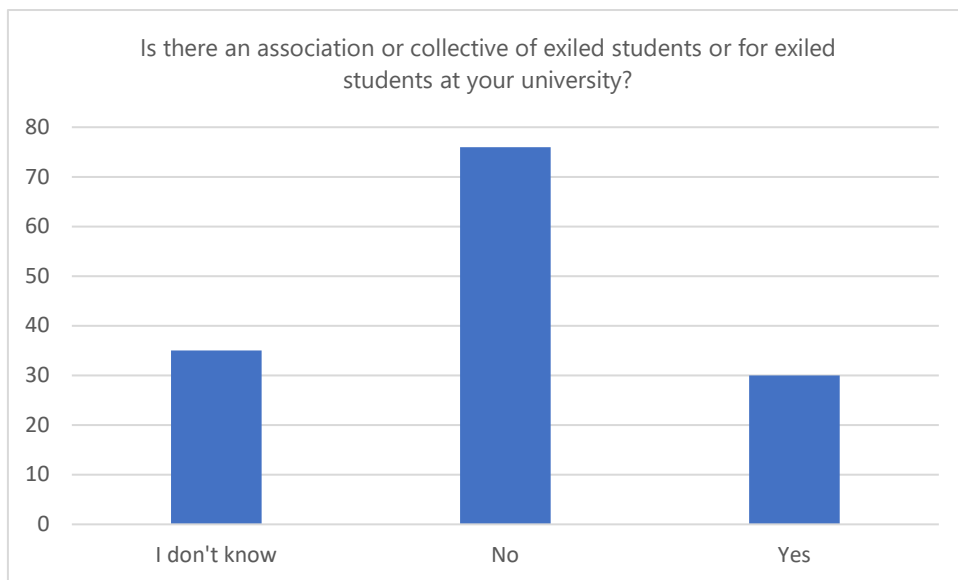


Figure 18. Existence of associations or collectives of exiled students.

Another indicator of lack of support for civic engagement and community life is the fact that only 26 participants declare having exiled students in their decision-making bodies (Figure 19), making 18% of the total respondents.

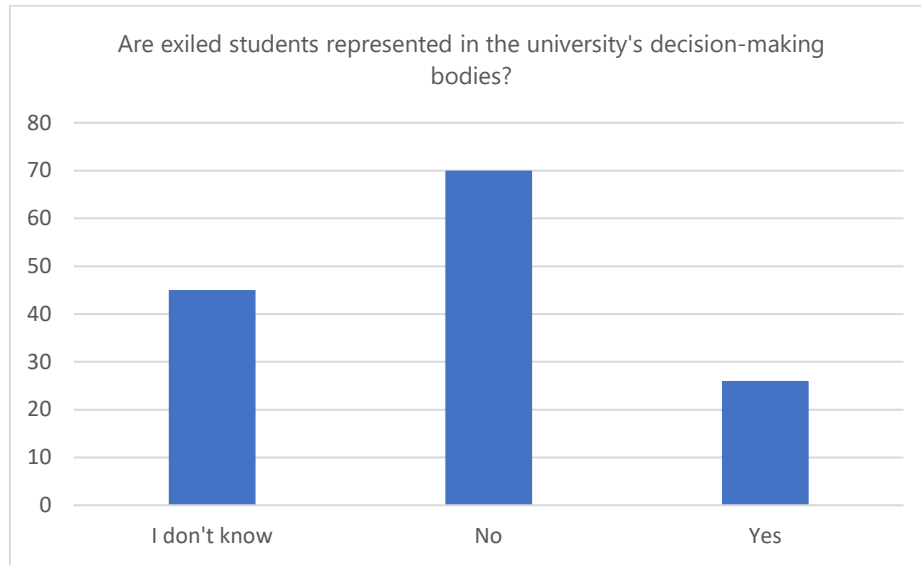


Figure 19. Representation of exiled students in HEI's decision-making structures.

In practical and organizational terms, this indicates that exiled students are largely excluded from HEI's decision-making processes, with only 18% of institutions including them in governance structures. This state of the affairs suggests that exiled students have little to none influence over policies and programs that directly affect their academic and social integration.

Another closed-question in the survey related to civic engagement was connected to the collaborative work HEIs develop with third parties. 79 respondents answered with "yes" to the question "Does your university work with external organizations (companies, NGOs, associations) to promote civic engagement and/or socio-cultural inclusion of exiled students?" (Figure 20).

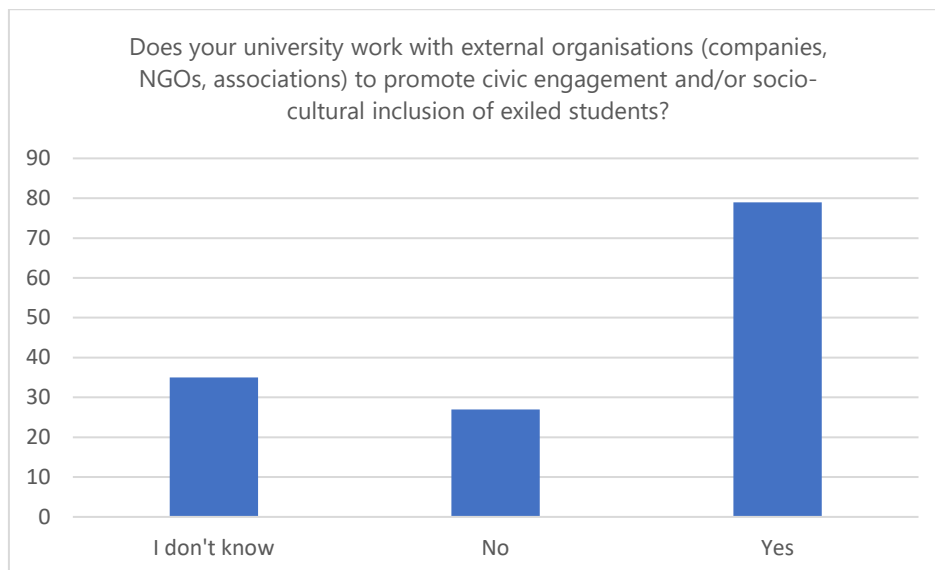


Figure 20. Cooperation of HEIs with third-parties.

This evident pursuit of collaboration with external organizations shows that many HEIs are actively seeking to create opportunities for exiled students to engage with their communities through initiatives involving companies, NGOs, and associations.

Finally, the last closed question of the survey was related to HEIs' support of exiled students' project. 81 respondents (57%) answered with "yes" (Figure 21).

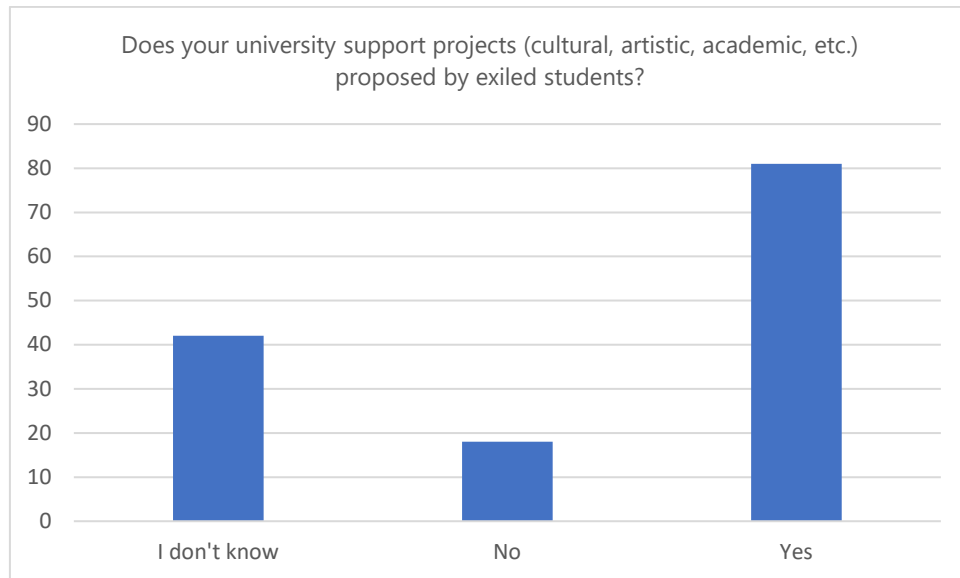


Figure 21. HEIs' support of exiled students' projects.

Almost all the indicators of support for civic engagement and community life are rather low, in comparison to skills recognition and capacity building. This final result suggests an imbalance in support priorities in HEIs across the participants in the survey and that HEIs prioritize academic and professional development over social and civic integration.

3. Comparative analysis of selected results

3 Comparative analysis of selected results

3.1 Skills recognition

In the answers to the question “Does your universities have procedures for skills recognitions?”, all German participating institutions answered with a “yes”. Most answers with “no” came from France (nine “no”, making 25,6%), Poland (seven “no”, making 23,7%), Ukraine (four “no”, making 19%), Lithuania (two “no”, 33%) and Slovenia (one “no”, 14%). While the results suggest that universities are equipped to face the demands and challenges of welcoming exiled students, they also show that some HEIs might be struggling to cope with these demands.

Different countries also seem to have different approaches and challenges while recognizing skills acquired outside the university. Ukrainian respondents are the ones with less problems doing that recognition because, at the time of the inquiry, they were welcoming mostly internally displaced students. 50% of the Polish respondents declared having problems with such recognition, followed by 26% of the French and 18,5% of the German respondents. These results suggest that, for example, Germany, while having well established mechanisms for skills recognition, is the country, among the participating countries (and we need to recall issues of representativity and comparability), facing more challenges in the recognition of skills. Among the 28 participants declaring lack of resources for more straightforward and diligent skills recognition, 12 out of 28 are based in Poland, 4 out of 35 are based in France, 3 out of 27 in Germany, 3 out of 21 in Ukraine, and two each in Lithuania, Slovenia and Greece.

These answers suggest that participant HEIs, as proxy to analyze different national welcoming strategies, may have different systemic challenges in recognizing prior learning and qualifications.

3.2 Capacity building

In our analysis, an important issue that emerged from the data was the lack of follow-up mechanisms, with only 30 participants answering on the existence of such supports with “yes”. The implementation of follow-up mechanisms, despite rare, is more visible in France (nine “yes”), Ukraine (seven “yes”) and Poland (six “yes”). Only three German participants answered affirmatively. Results for Greece, Lithuania and Slovenia are not commented because of the low amount of answers obtained in those contexts (7 for Greece and Slovenia and 6 for Lithuania). The fact that France, Ukraine, and Poland reported more affirmative responses might indicate that these countries may have recognized the importance of providing ongoing support to exiled students and have established more robust frameworks for such initiatives. In any case, a more representative sampling, including issues of comparability, are needed to support this observed tendency.

The notably low response from German participants (only three) raises questions about the effectiveness of follow-up support in a country that otherwise appears to have strong mechanisms for skills recognition. This discrepancy, while just diagnosed and without being representative of the universe of HEI's in the country, can suggest a potential oversight in addressing the long-term needs of exiled students after they graduate: in other words, initial support seems to be strong, but continuity and sustainability of that support is weak.

The overall low number of participants (only 30 out of 141) affirming the existence of follow-up mechanisms suggests a significant gap in support for exiled students after they leave HEIs. This lack of structured follow-up can hinder students' transitions into the workforce or further studies.

3.3 Civic engagement

In terms of civic engagement, only 26 participants declared integrating exiled students in governance bodies. Among them, nine in Poland, eight in Ukraine, four in Germany, followed by two in France. Results for Greece, Lithuania and Slovenia are not commented on because the low amount of answers obtained in those contexts, as already stated. This limited involvement can hinder the ability of exiled students to communicate their needs, concerns, and perspectives, which are crucial for co-constructing and enacting policies that directly affect them.

4. Conclusion

4. Conclusion

Our results and interpretation underscore the challenges of drawing comprehensive conclusions about the support landscape across all participating countries because of issues of representativity. It highlights the need for more robust data collection to ensure that the experiences of exiled students in these countries and the welcoming HEIs are adequately represented and understood in future studies.

Despite these issues, some take away messages from the individual national reports (Table 2), that are emphasized by this umbrella report, could be systematized as follow²:

Country	Main conclusion
France	The surveyed universities have made notable progress in developing and implementing skills recognition and capacity building initiatives (namely through specific language courses), but significant gaps remain in establishing effective civic engagement and follow-up mechanisms. Suggestions for improvement of the situation include adopting a whole university approach to welcoming exiled students.
Germany	In HEIs in Germany, while the dimensions of skill recognition and capacity building seem to have already been developed and implemented in the participant HEIs, with exception to follow-up mechanisms, there are still gaps in terms of implementing civic engagement. Sustainability of support mechanisms is necessary to avoid losing skilled human resources.
Greece	In the Greek context, it emerges that little or sporadic measures of support have been applied by HEIs for the benefit of refugees, and that such measures are not always visible or widely communicated to Greek HE communities.
Lithuania	Lithuanian universities demonstrate some structured efforts to support exiled students, but there are gaps in policy standardization, student representation, and national coordination. A government-led initiative could unify and strengthen these efforts.
Poland	The national report shows that the diversity of support for exiled students at most Polish HEIs covers all the needs within existing support services for international students, sometimes failing to address specific needs related to their status such as war trauma, legal uncertainties, and disrupted education. Institutional preparedness varies, with financial and staffing constraints hindering progress. A strategic, well-funded approach will be essential in ensuring that exiled students not only gain access to HE but also succeed in their academic and professional journeys. While

² For detailed national reports, in the national languages and English, see AGILE website under <https://agileproject-erasmus.eu/> (section « Results »).

	progress is evident, systemic improvements are needed to ensure a more inclusive and responsive HE system for exiled students.
Slovenia	In Slovenia, many formal procedures and support services are well established. However, recognizing skills can still be challenging at times, and staff awareness of available resources and measures needs improvement. Respondents also offered several recommendations to enhance existing measures, particularly in the areas of the pre-arrival phase, accommodation support, integration into a network of exiled students, and specialized language courses.
Ukraine	In the Ukrainian national context, which remains under constant threat due to the ongoing war, there is a pressing need for continuous monitoring of skill recognition and the effective integration of exiled and internally displaced students. Additionally, it is essential to continuously adapt to emerging challenges and identify gaps in the implementation of civic engagement mechanisms within HE.

Table 2. Individual take-away messages.

In global terms, this seven European country report nevertheless shows the tendency of strong and well-represented mechanisms of skills recognition, with a rather non-existent follow-up mechanisms and support for civic engagement. Particularly the lack of representation of exiled students in decision-making bodies suggests that they have little to none influence over policies and programs that directly affect their academic and social integration. This could mean that decisions regarding support services, inclusion policies, and academic pathways are made without input from the very students who experience these challenges firsthand. As a result, policies may fail to address their specific needs effectively. Indeed, in a previous production of the AGILE project already diagnosed some mismatches (see Melo-Pfeifer, Brinkmann & Gerwers, 2024³). Strengthening their involvement in decision-making could improve institutional policies, foster a sense of belonging, and promote more inclusive governance in HEIs, while at the same time closing eventual gaps between support mechanisms in place and desired support by exiled students.

The imbalance of support mechanism, which privilege skills recognition and capacity building over civic engagement, transpires the idea that HEIs are not actively supporting civic engagement, potentially leading to feelings of isolation and disconnection, which can affect their mental well-being and academic success. In terms of civic engagement, a more expanded collaborations with external institutions could lead to HEI's programs that enhance students' skills, provide networking opportunities, and facilitate community integration. A holistic approach, such as represented in Figure 22 would be a way forward.

³ Melo-Pfeifer, S., Brinkmann, L.M., & Gerwers, F. (2024) *Promoting and sustaining the transition of refugee students to higher education*. AGILE consortium. URL: <https://agileproject-erasmus.eu/> (section « Results »). Doi : 10.25592/uhhfdm.16520.

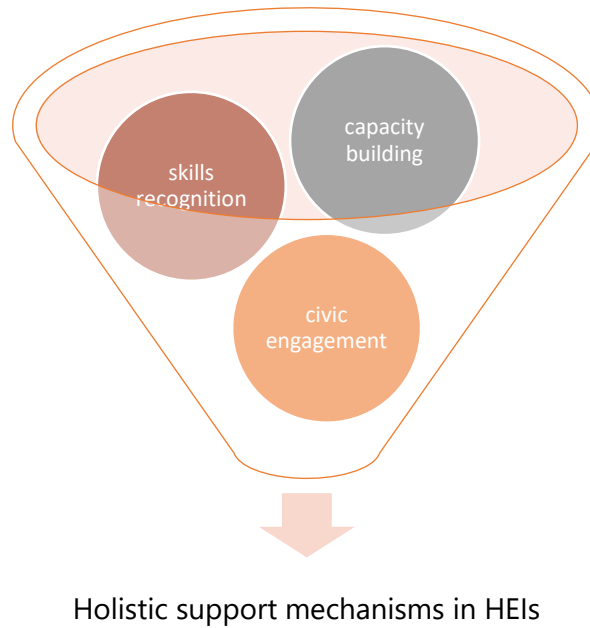


Figure 22. Conceptualizing holistic support mechanisms in HEIs to welcome exiled students.

To wrap up, the analysis of the answers to the AGILE survey highlights significant gaps in follow-up support for exiled students, with some geographical disparities and a need for further development of these mechanisms to enhance long-term student outcomes. This study serves as a call to action for HEIs to develop and strengthen follow-up mechanisms as part of their commitment to supporting exiled students. By including post-graduation support in their portfolio of support mechanisms, HEIs can help students navigate their futures, fostering a more inclusive, innovative, holistic, and supportive educational environment, which goes beyond their time at the institution.

5. Annexes

5. Annexes (survey)

* Name of your institution

* Country of the institution

* Your position in this institution

Section 1: Skills recognition prior to enrolment at the host university

* Question 1. Does your university have procedures for recognising the qualifications acquired by exiled students before arriving in the host country?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If yes, is/are the procedure/s:

1. National

- Organisation for the recognition of foreign diplomas
- Tests/examinations
- Interviews
- Application/admissions platform
- Other(s)
- I don't know

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

2. Institutional (specific to the university):

- Tests/Examinations
- Application/admissions platform
- Interviews
- Other(s)
- I don't know

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

* Question 3. Do exiled students who enrol in your university's various courses continue their studies where they left off, or do they generally have to repeat one or more years? (For example, can a student who has obtained a Bachelor's degree in his or her own country go straight on to a Master's degree, or do they have to repeat at least one year of the Bachelor's degree)?

- They continue at the year/level at which they left off
- They have to repeat one or two years
- They have to start their studies all over again
- I don't know
- It depends (specify):

If you selected It depends, please specify:

* Question 4. What are the criteria for registering exiled students at your university?

- Level of English
- Language level of the country
- Prerequisites in the diploma subject
- A coherent personal and professional project
- I don't know
- Other(s)

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

* Question 5. If proficiency in the local language is a prerequisite for enrolment in one of your university's courses, how does your institution assess this proficiency among exiled students?

- Diploma or language certificate from a third party
- Language tests drawn up by your university
- In-house interviews
- I don't know
- Other(s)

If you selected Diploma or language certificate from a third party, please specify:

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

Question 6. If there is a procedure for this, it is a formal procedure...

- of the university
- of the various components/departments

I don't know

* Question 7. Does the university recognise the skills of refugee students (linguistic, subject-specific, etc.) acquired outside university courses (via MOOCs, Open Badges, training in associations, work experience, etc.)?

Yes

No

I don't know

If Yes, what type(s) of skills acquired informally or through personal or professional experience is/are recognised for students to be accepted into a university course?

* Question 8. Does your university encounter any obstacles in recognising the skills of exiled students?

Yes

No

I don't know

If Yes, what are the main obstacles encountered?

Section 2: Capacity building

* Question 1. Does your university offer training courses for its staff to prepare them to welcome exiled students?

Yes

No

I don't know

If yes, precise what type:

* Question 2. Does your university have specific resources to help exiled students with the administrative formalities before they enrol at university?

Yes

No

I don't know

If yes, precise which resources:

* Question 3. Does your university have any measures in place to support exiled students during their studies?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If yes, precise which measures:

* Question 4. Does the university offer specific language courses for exiled students?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 5. Does your university offer courses, workshops or support to help exiled students learn about university methodology?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 6. Is there a system in place to welcome exiled students and introduce them to the various student life services available at the university?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If yes, which services or actions are covered by this scheme?

- Administrative support
- Educational support / tutoring
- Digital support
- Cultural activities
- Help with finding accommodation
- Help with finding a student job
- Legal aid
- University library
- University restaurant
- Information and guidance service

- Sport
- Psycho-medical support service
- Community life
- Other(s)

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

* Question 7. Does your university face any obstacles in setting up support systems for exiled students?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If yes, specify the nature of the obstacles encountered:

- Financial
- Organisational
- Policies (municipal, departmental, regional, national)
- Human resources
- Other(s)

If you selected Other(s), please specify:

* Question 8. Has your university set up a specific follow-up system for exiled students after they have finished their studies?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Section 3: Civic engagement

* Question 1. Does your university inform exiled students about the possibility of getting involved in civic and/or community life?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 2. Is civic engagement recognised in the academic career of exiled students (open badges, internships, bonus points, certificates, optional/open courses, etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 3. Is there an association or collective of exiled students or for exiled students at your university?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 4. Are exiled students represented in the university's decision-making bodies?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 5. Does your university work with external organisations (companies, NGOs, associations) to promote civic engagement and/or socio-cultural inclusion of exiled students?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

* Question 6. Does your university support projects (cultural, artistic, academic, etc.) proposed by exiled students?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If yes, how?

- Administrative
- Communication/ Dissemination of information
- Financially
- Logistics

Other(s)

If you selected Others, please specify:

* Question 7. Based on your experience, what suggestions would you make to improve the responsiveness of universities in receiving exiled students?

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