



Speaking notes for the Budapest and Vienna Ministerial conference, 11-12th of March 2010

2. Recognition and mobility

Recognition is a measure of trust and paves the way for realizing mobility, as the hallmark of the EHEA. In order to reach the 20% mobile graduates in the EHEA by 2020 benchmark, we need to address the two main causes for students not being mobile: recognition and funding. Recognition has many tools that should make it a reality: qualifications frameworks, ECTS, Diploma supplement and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

[CS] When it comes to qualifications' frameworks it has been said that it will make it easier for students to enter and exit educational pathways, which will make systems transparent and higher education access and completion rates higher. But they have proved to be largely unknown and unused by students, HEIs and employers alike. One cause for that is the closed doors design process. The map of student involvement in national qualifications frameworks design shows a gloomy picture of student involvement in the NQF design process, which surely had an impact on the awareness, dissemination and usage of NQFs.

[CS] The same lack of awareness is to be seen in the case of the Diploma Supplement. Our members warn that the employers and the general public are largely unaware of the Diploma Supplement and its benefits, which makes it a missed opportunity. The effort for promoting this tools would be highly awarded by the large scale acknowledgement of its benefits by not just HE experts and institutional leaders, but also by the societal actors with which graduates have to interact.

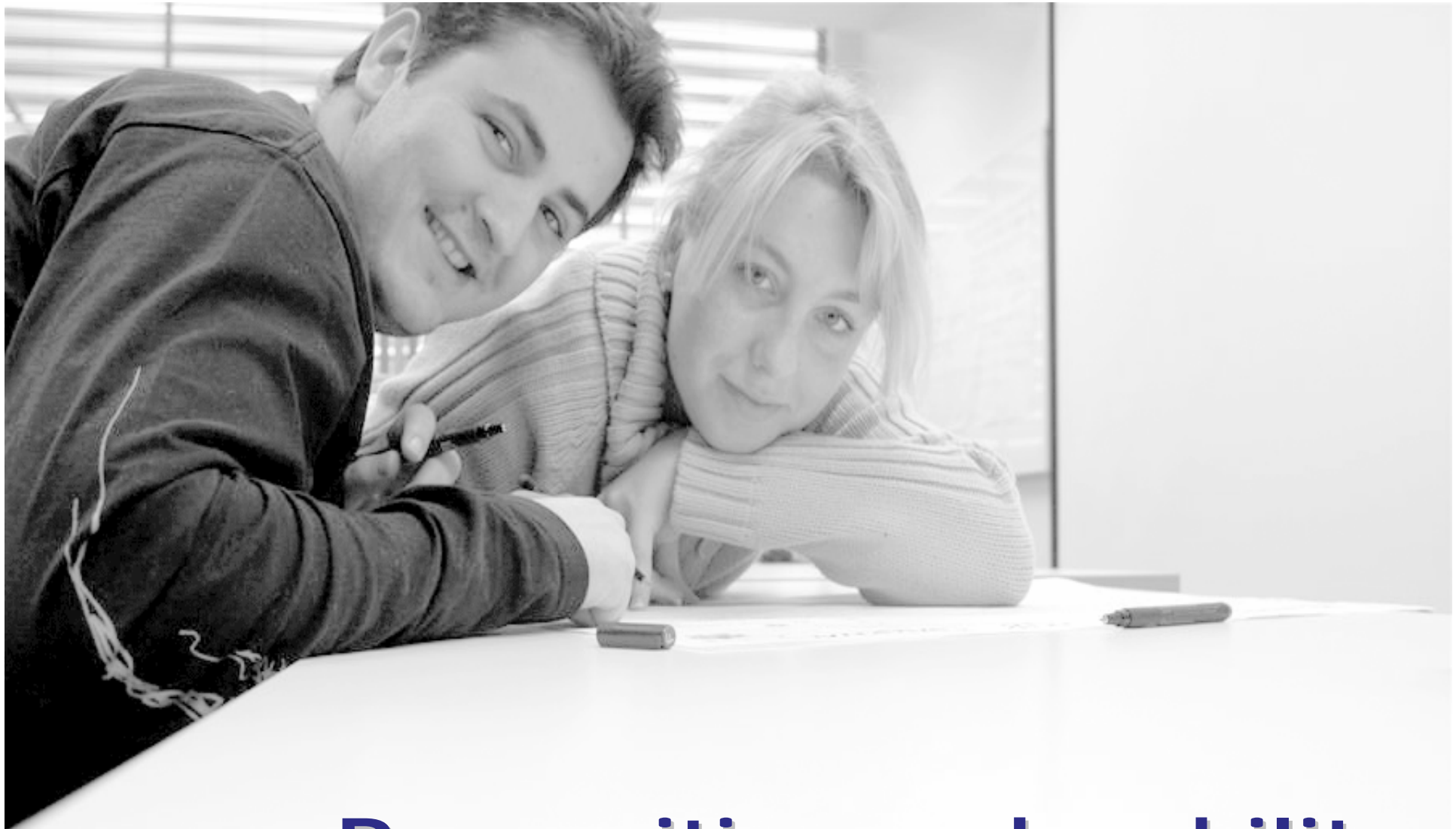
[CS] When we mentioned financing as one mobility obstacle, we have to remember that the one concrete ministerial commitment in this regard was to make grants and loans portable. The map before you shows how far we are from that goal. But is this just an unintended delay or is there a fear of brain drain underpinning the reluctance to make national grants and loans portable? There is no mobility without support and we argue that the well known benefits of mobility and of the "open border" policy should bring much more benefits to individual countries than the illusion that they will be able to keep students locked inside national borders through red tape and limiting support mechanisms. Due focus on the negative effects of brain drain should be paid though. A special attention should be given to systems that do not have a classical grant and loan system in place, which makes the ministerial commitment for their portability a strange statement for the ears of the students that feel disadvantaged in comparison to their European colleagues.

[CS] Credit recognition for mobility periods abroad seems to be a very far reality for students. The incomplete implementation of the ECTS system and the subjectivity of recognition procedures at the institutional level make the lack of credit recognition one of the most feared effects of credit mobility. If we aim at academically meaningful mobility periods abroad to be taken up by more students, the threat to fall academically behind your non-mobile colleagues should be erased from students' minds. And we can do that through transparent and fair credit recognition procedures that respect the institutional learning agreements.

[CS] Finally, we feel that it is safe to say that we have a clear discrimination situation when it comes to the treatment of non-EU/ EEA mobile students, which leads to unbalanced mobility flows. The rush to collect increasing financial advantages from mobile students as an additional income stream and their unequal status as a non-EU citizen sometimes makes non-EU students second-class citizens in the countries they aim at studying in. Mobility will not fully contribute to the build-up of the EHEA until its academic, cultural and societal value is fully treasured and not just its commercial advantage.

[CS] Thank you!

*The European Students' Union (ESU) is the umbrella organisation of 45 national unions of students from 37 countries and through these members represent over 11 million students. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at a European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow-Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.
ESU was formerly known as ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe.*



Recognition and mobility



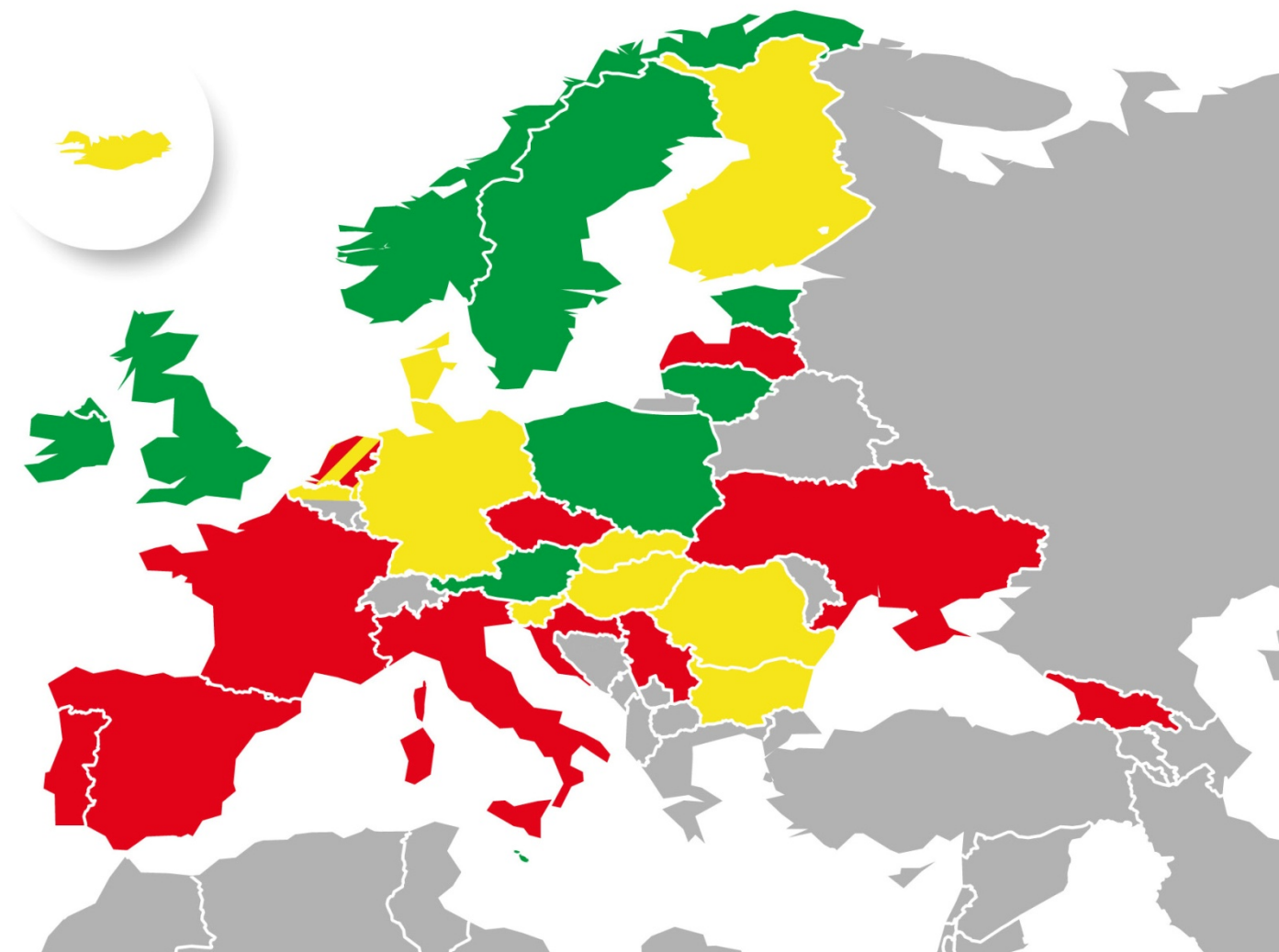
Ligia Deca, ESU Chairperson

Budapest and Vienna Ministerial conference, 11th of March 2010

Student involvement in the NQF design

fig. 31—Involvement of student unions in the work with a national QF for HE

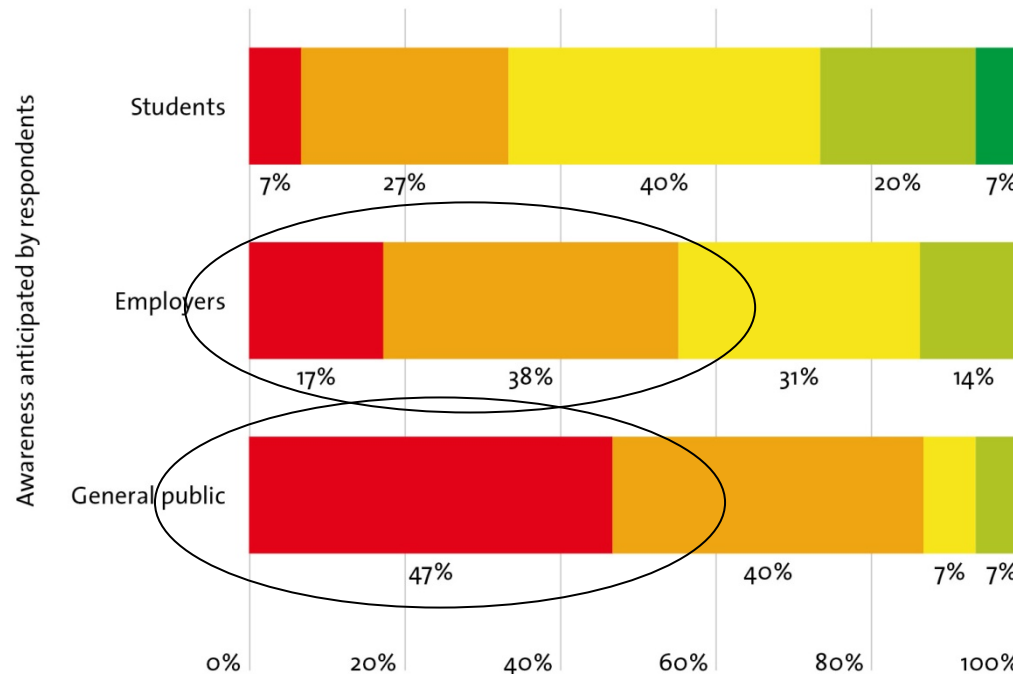
- Students fully consulted
- Only some consultation of students
- Students not consulted at all/not applicable



Awareness regarding Diploma Supplement

fig. 34—Awareness about the Diploma Supplement as anticipated by NUSes

- No awareness
- Little awareness
- Some awareness
- Some awareness and increasing
- Fully aware



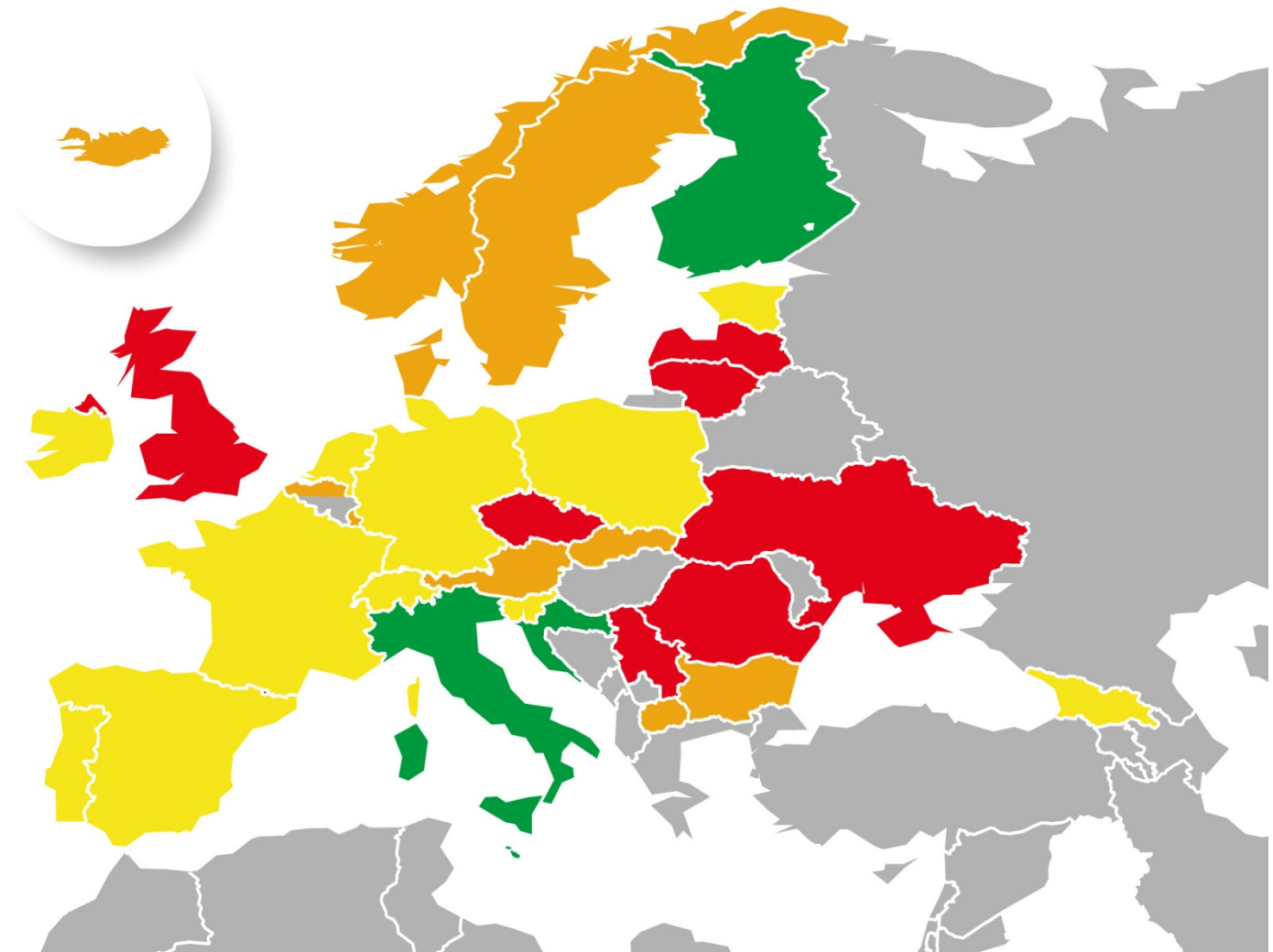
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Portability of grants and loans overview

fig. 17—Portability of grants and loans

- grants and loans are fully portable
- portability of grants and loans is possible with minor obstacles
- portability of grants and loans is possible with major obstacles
- portability of grants and loans is not possible

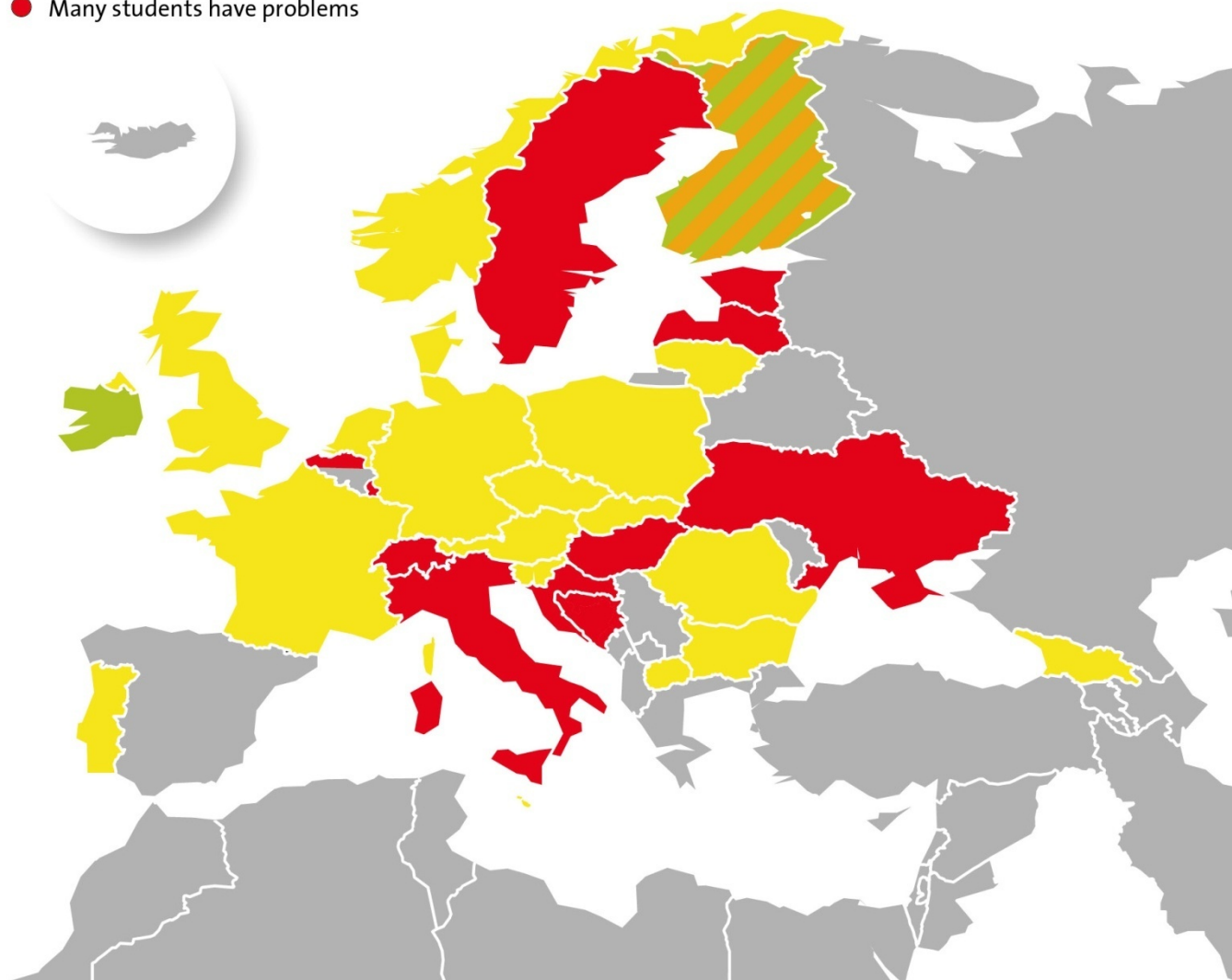


Credit recognition overview

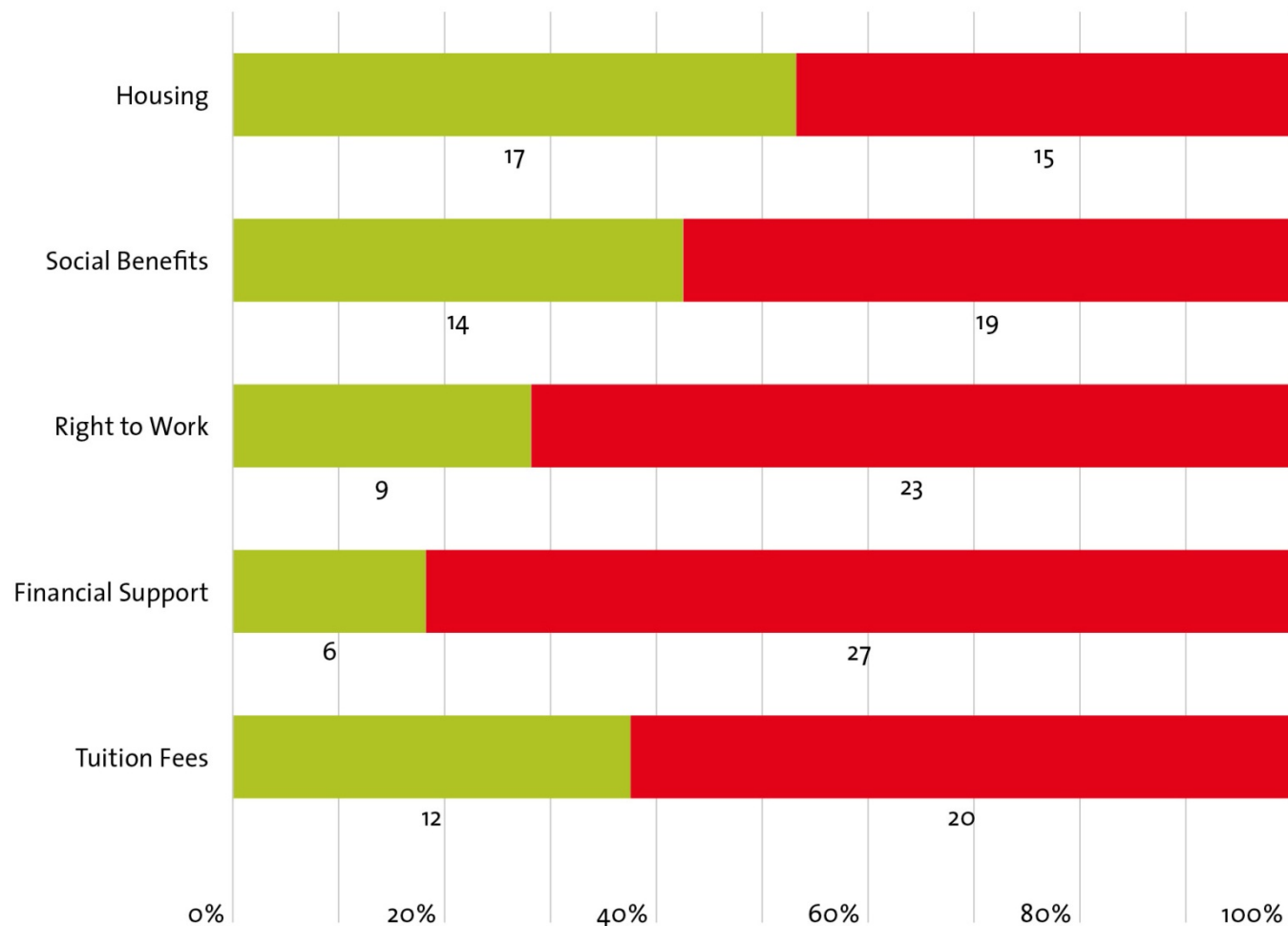


fig. 21—Situation of national students returning from a period of study abroad encountering problems with the recognition of their credits

- None or almost none have problems
- Some students have problems
- Depends on where they were studying
- Many students have problems



EU/ non-EU mobile student treatment



*fig. 58—Treatment of non-European/
non-EU students in home higher
education institutions*

- same
- different



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Thank you!



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