



Università  
degli Studi  
di Catania



# REALISE

Realising the potential of the international  
mobility of staff in higher education

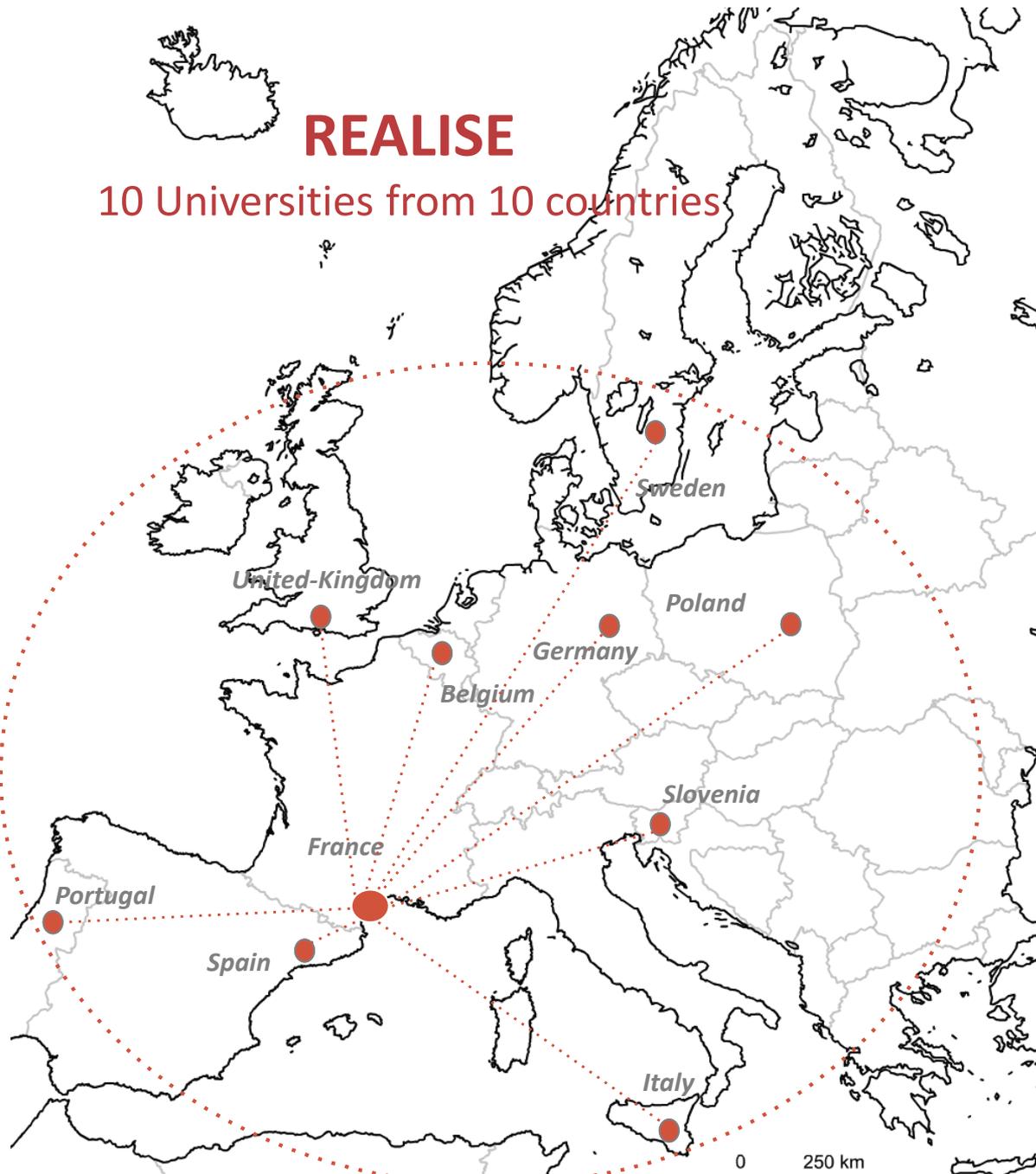
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Steering Committee, Realise Project  
IRO Coordinator

**International  
Mobility  
Office**



# REALISE

10 Universities from 10 countries



**Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier**  
Coordinator

**Middlesex University of London**  
Partner

**Universiteit Gent**  
Partner

**Uniwersytet Warszawski**  
Partner

**Univerza Ljubljani**  
Partner

**Università degli Studi di Catania**  
Partner

**Linköpings Universitet**  
Partner

**Universidade de Coimbra**  
Partner

**Universitat de Barcelona**  
Partner

**Humbolt-Universität zu Berlin**  
Partner

# THE MAIN OBJECTIVE

REALISE is a Strategic Partnership that aims at **improving the implementation and recognition of staff mobility**, in order to maximize its **impact** on both **individuals** and **institutions**.

Project number: 2016-1-FR01-KA203-024267

# THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1

Identify and develop innovative practices regarding the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme for staff mobility

2

Foster the recognition of mobility in the career development of academic, administrative and technical staff in HEIs

3

Raise institutional awareness about the added value of staff mobility and promote its contribution to HEIs' internationalization strategies

# The development phases

DEVELOPMENT

TEST

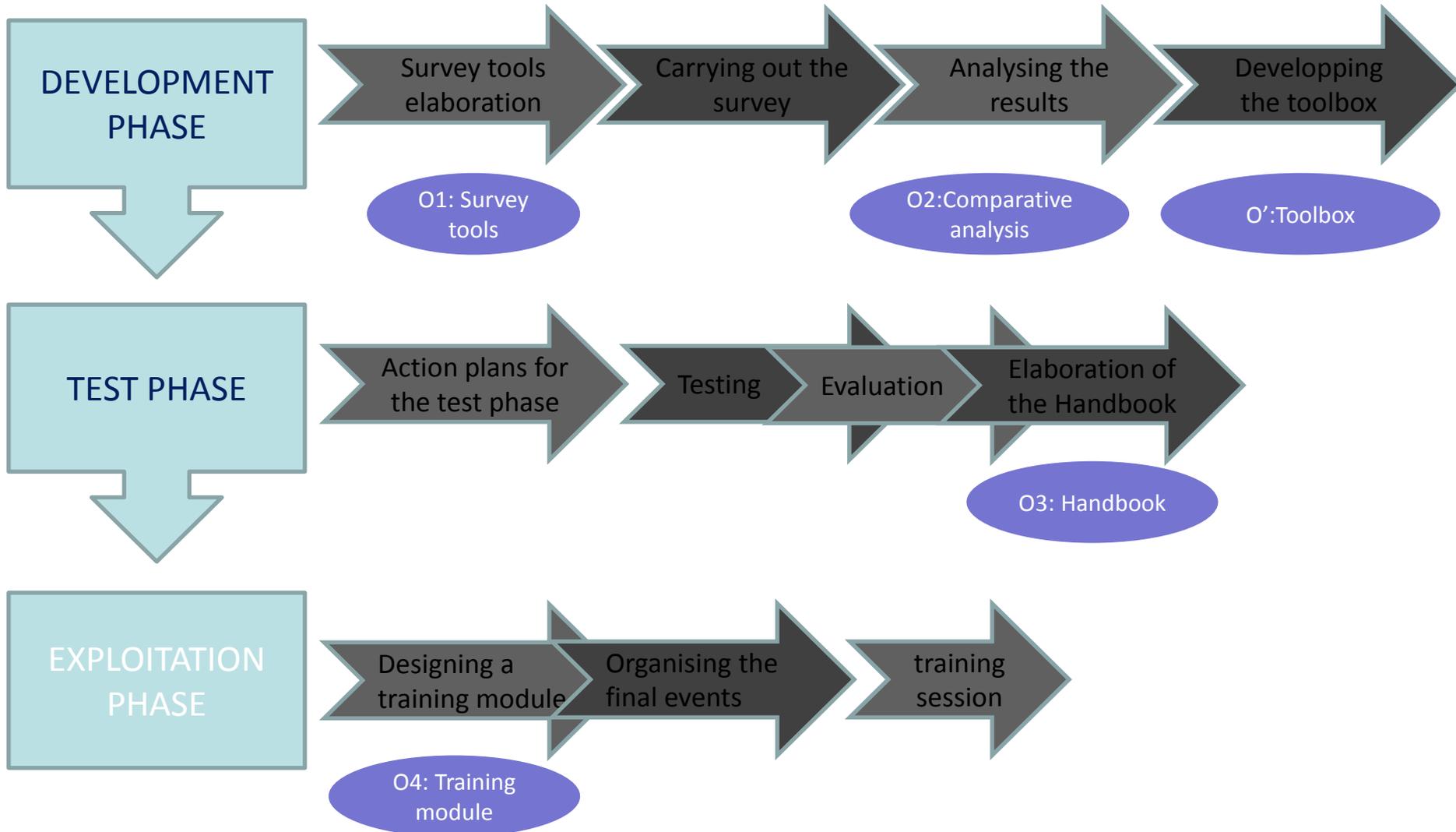
EXPLOITATION

CONSULTATION & POLICY DIALOGUE

COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & COORDINATION

# Sequential activities



# Transversal activities

## CONSULTATION & POLICY DIALOGUE

dialogue at partner organisation level

dialogue with local/national stakeholders

dialogue with European stakeholders

O5:  
Conclusions  
of the policy  
dialogue

## COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION

Information & Promotion

Dissemination of the results

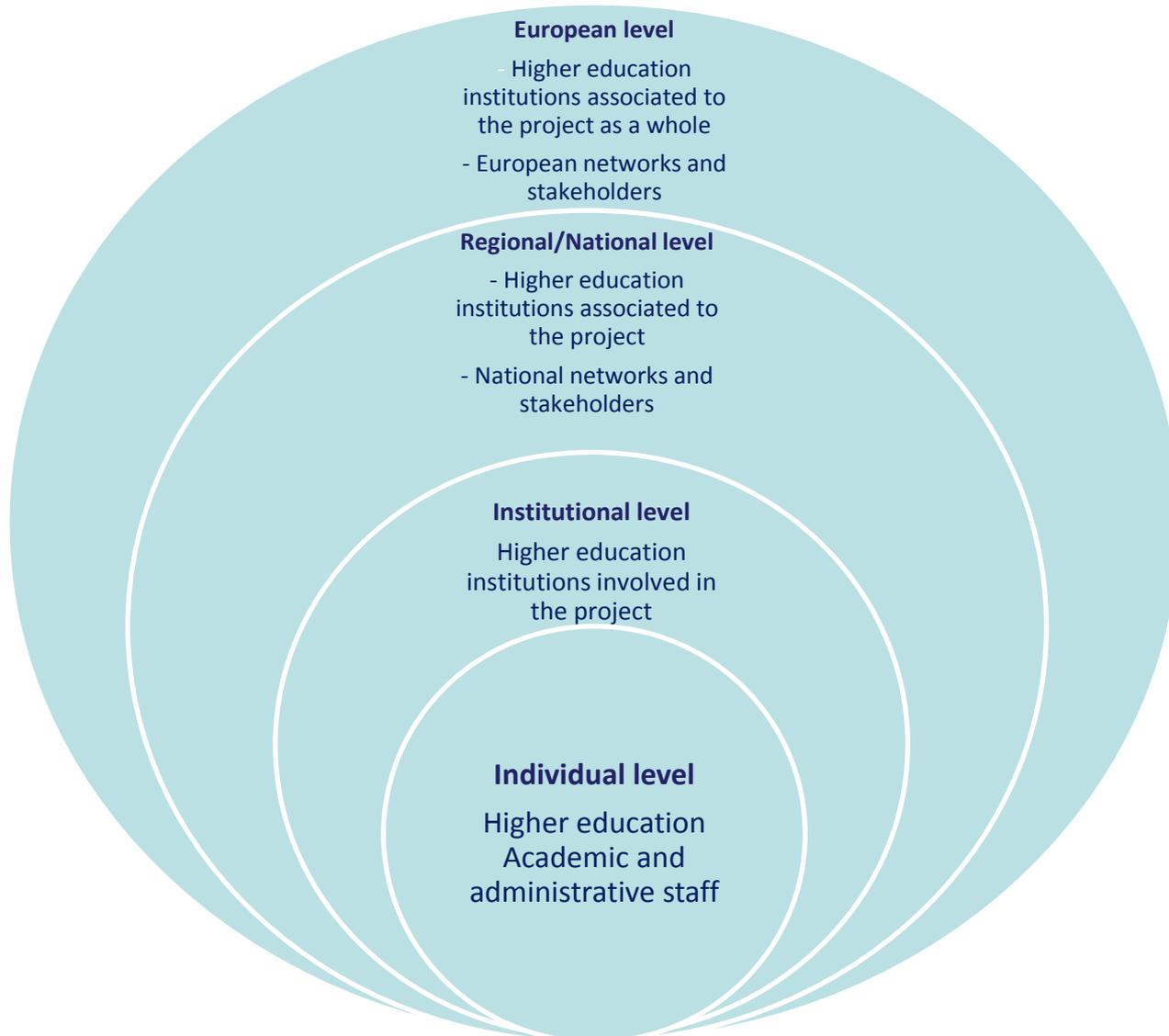
## PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

Coordination of the project activities

Administrative & financial management

**Quality monitoring**

# THE TARGETS



FROM THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS  
KEY FINDINGS  
TO THE TOOLBOX

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - demographics and activities

- 1 in 3 respondents across 50 European higher education institutions have **participated** in European mobility in the past 5 years.
- There has been a 10% **increase in participation of administrative staff** in staff mobility in the past 5 years (one third of the administrative staff who went on mobility are International Relations (IR) staff).
- The number of **academic staff in Humanities and Social Sciences** going on mobility has slightly increased. Non humanities scientific subjects may be less represented in mobility due to the availability of other funds covering research trips.
- The great majority of all staff who went on mobility have worked at a university for **6+ years**.
- 2 in 3 staff who went on international mobility are female. The initial **gender gap** affecting mobility has decreased over the past 27 years.
- 9 in 10 staff amongst those who went on mobility are confident about their strongest **foreign language**.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - Management

- A range of factors are found to encourage the take up of mobility. These include **providing more recognition through pay rise and job promotion, linking mobility with university strategy** and, generally, showing support for staff mobility (by management). Other factors include simplifying administrative procedures, providing family support and sensible work arrangements, increasing the length of the visit, and raising awareness of the emotions associated to the mobility experience, such as curiosity and fear. A key reason for not taking up mobility once an application has been made is **funding being insufficient** to cover costs.
- Mobility's discouraging factors include **problematic work arrangements** (not being able to find replacement at work and too high a workload) and **poor promotion**: respondents lamented the lack of information about partner universities and about the programme.
- Additionally, the **key experienced individual** problem associated with mobility is **insufficient funds**, whereas the **key institutional** obstacle to mobility concerns working conditions, particularly the lack of possibility of having a replacement at work.
- The vast majority of respondents are **satisfied** to have achieved all their set goals during mobility, and the remainder have achieved them partially. Overall, 99% of people who went on mobility thought that their participation in this Erasmus staff mobility programme **met their expectations** to the fullest.
- In terms of **impact**, mobility is strongest with regard to professional development. In practice, mobility opened up a new platform for teaching observation, provided research opportunities and exposed administrative staff to different systems of management.

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - Promotion and dissemination

- The main source of information about the programme is through word of mouth.
- **Informal dissemination**, such as the sharing of information about the visit with colleagues, is the most popular means for disseminating the results of mobility.
- The key mobility output is in **problem-solving** i.e. using the new knowledge learnt on mobility to solve problems in an enhanced way once back at the home institution.

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - Recognition

- 84% of staff who know colleagues who have been on mobility recognise that Erasmus staff exchange has **helped them professionally**.
- However, **overall perceived recognition is rather low**: barely more than 1 in three people who have gone on mobility in the past 5 years feel their experience has been highly valued and acknowledged by their institution, with administrative staff feeling that their experience is slightly better valued than academic staff.
- It has been recognised that mobility's value is in enhancing the university's educational mission and improving society's sustainability, contributing to emotional well being, providing opportunities for personal development and collaboration, enhancing skills, reaching specific targets (e.g. administrative staff), and favouring problem-solving.
- Obstacles to the recognition of mobility include administrative staff themselves not being aware of the benefits of mobility. Also, the appropriateness of mobility to researchers constitutes a grey area with disagreement from the point of view of management over whether mobility has value for researchers or not.

## Comparative analysis - Conclusions

- The aim of the survey was to test the experiences and attitudes of university staff regarding Erasmus staff mobility.
- The participants were academic and administrative staff working in HEIs in the ten European countries of the project partners (6202 questionnaires, and 48 interviews).
- Benefits and obstacles have been explored.
- It has been recognised that international staff mobility bears several benefits - enhancing the university's educational mission, improving society's sustainability, contributing to emotional well-being, providing opportunities for personal development and collaboration, enhancing skills, helping to reach specific targets and, overall, favouring problem –solving.
- The study has also identified obstacles to mobility: insufficient funding and difficult working conditions, dissatisfaction around the visibility of opportunities and partner universities.
- The study can be an important starting point for any future discussions about the promotion, support and development of staff mobility programmes and there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the number of staff who would go on a mobility can be increased by addressing some of the issues identified in the toolbox described below.

## **From the Comparative analysis to the toolbox (1)**

The Realise Toolbox includes 11 innovative tools with one or more related actions (25) to be tested by partners and associated partners in order to set guide-lines and procedures to enhance universities' practices in the implementation of the Erasmus+ staff mobility.

The actions are divided into four categories – Strategic issues, Management issues, Encouragement and Recognition issues and finally Promotion and Dissemination issues. Each participating university or department has set up its own action plan to test the tools.

## **From the Comparative analysis to the toolbox (2)**

After having tested and evaluated the results of these tools and related actions will be presented in the “REALISE Handbook on higher education staff mobility” that will be a unique tool to be widely promoted among mainly European HEIs but also outside Europe.

The main object of the Handbook can be summarized as:

- Identify and develop innovative practices regarding the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme staff mobility
- Help staff beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ programme to make the best of the programme's potential
- Foster the recognition of mobility in the career development of academic, administrative and technical staff in HEIs
- Raise institutional awareness about the added value of staff mobility and promote its contribution to HEIs' internationalisation strategy.

**ERASMUS+  
STAFF MOBILITY  
HANDBOOK OF GOOD  
PRACTICES**

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**REALISE**  
Realising the potential  
of the international mobility  
of staff in higher education



<https://realise-erasmusplus.fr/content/handbook-good-practices>



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*Thank you for your attention*

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