

Travail de Fin d'Etudes

en vue de l'obtention du titre de

Bachelier Assistant de Direction

Année académique 2014-2015

To work and study abroad. What are the impacts on the people who decide to emigrate to the UK? (Focused on Scotland)

Présenté par

Julie DUYSSENS

Date de la défense

Juin 2015



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First of all I would like to thank everybody who helped me to get this dissertation done. Thank you to Mr Alen, my promoter, for his patience and his advice and to all my colleagues at the South Lanarkshire College who supported me during all the writing process.

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1 Introduction

I chose the subject of working and studying abroad because according to me, living such an experience is something that everybody should do at least once in their life. My dissertation will include a theoretical part in which I intend to develop the most important challenges of living abroad as well as a practical part in the form of a survey.

In the theoretical part, a lot of my own personal experience will appear because I lived abroad for four months. I will speak in general and sometimes by giving tips and direct information to the reader. This essay will therefore include a lot of personal observations.

A lot of people are interested in going to the United Kingdom, in particular Scotland, for studying or working. This is a really attractive place which gives a lot of opportunities in terms of career. I will try to develop every question a person may ask her/himself about travelling abroad in general and at some point in Scotland.

My End of Study Work may also be interesting for people who do not know if going to another country is a good idea or if they have any doubts. Knowing all the impacts this can have on someone may be less stressful and anxious for the most skeptical person.

I could not have been able to write this essay in such a complete way without being myself a “temporary emigrant”. That is why I was really confident and inspired to create it. I got some information directly from the source, like the Scottish words or the local food.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this essay and find some useful information that may help you in some way.

1 Definitions

First of all, I will define emigration and immigration because both words can be quite confusing sometimes. It is also to provide a better understanding of the contents within my essay.

2.1 Emigration

'The act of leaving one's own country to settle permanently in another; moving abroad'.¹ This term is less used than 'immigration' or 'immigrant'.

Example: *'The country's population was declining because of emigration.'²*

2.2 Immigration

'Immigration is defined as the process of relocating permanently to a foreign country or the area in an airport or at the border where officials check the entry permits and documentation of people who are coming into a country.'³

Example: *'Since the beginning of the 20th Century, some countries like France have experienced a growing rate of immigration'.⁴*

2 Travelling abroad

Since the dawn of time humans have been travelling to see the world. They are nomadic and not formed by nature to be sedentary, at least not for their whole life. That is why we cannot put a precise date regarding the beginning of people moving abroad because during centuries populations migrated from one country to another. However, there are some milestones and one of them definitely took place in 1997. Indeed, further to the Treaty of Amsterdam, the "Schengen Area"

¹ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/emigration> (viewed 09 April 2015)

² <https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20081021194340AA7LgCs> (viewed 15 April 2015)

³ <http://www.yourdictionary.com/immigration> (viewed 15 April 2015)

⁴ See table on this website: <http://projet.pcf.fr/23976> (viewed 15 April 2015)

came into life and was integrated in the EU framework.⁵ An area in which a person may move more freely, therefore pushes people to travel more than before since it is easier to cross borders.

3.1 Schengen Area

In the early 1980's, a discussion between Members of States about a free movement area for people took place. A number of Members of States wanted a free circulation for EU citizens but also to keep the borders to enable them to check the whereabouts of citizens between countries; the other Members of States wanted a free circulation for all people.

The United Kingdom and Ireland are not part of the Schengen Area. However, some exceptions may exist: *"In accordance with the protocol to the Treaty of Amsterdam, Ireland and the United Kingdom can take part in some or all of the Schengen arrangements, if the Schengen Member States and the government representative of the country in question vote unanimously in favour within the Council."*⁶

⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1428669814244&uri=URISERV:I33020>
(viewed 26 February 2015)

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1428669814244&uri=URISERV:I33020>
(viewed 26 February 2015)

3.2 Where?



<http://www.express.be/business/fr/economy/quelles-sont-les-destinations-du-monde-ou-les-gens-aimeraient-partir-travailler/208378.htm>

3.1.1 United Kingdom

As indicated in the above chart, the United Kingdom, and consequently Scotland, is one of those countries where the citizens are not willing to work abroad. It can be explained by a lot of factors:

3.1.1.1 NHS Scotland

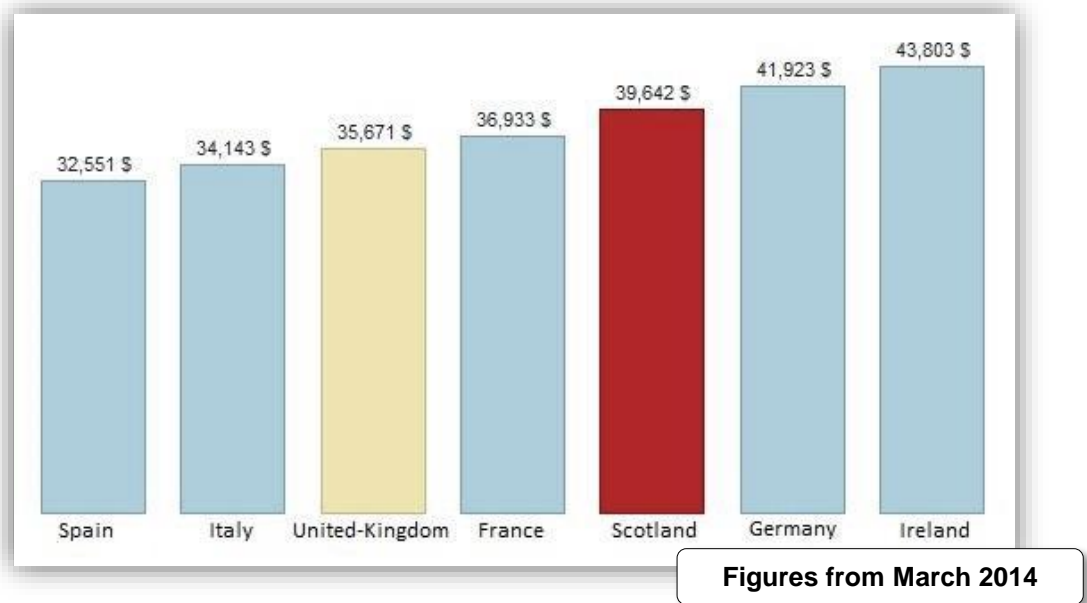
The country has its own healthcare system – the National Health Service of Scotland (NHS), which is highly developed. In the Medical Centre, consultations at General Practitioners' are free but usually an appointment has to be taken. Prescriptions are also free, you only have to give the paper signed by the General Practitioner to the chemist and you receive your medicines.

3.1.1.1 Richness

Scotland is one of the richest states of Europe. In the graph below we can see that the GDP⁷ by resident is high compared to other European countries. This is

⁷ Gross Domestic Product

partially due to oil deposits in the North Sea. Indeed, Scotland provides 72 % of the total production of hydrocarbon for the United Kingdom⁸.



3.1.1.1 Unemployment

The unemployment rate is one of the lowest in Europe with 5.7 % (18th March 2015)⁹ compared to 8.5% (January 2015, Eurostat)¹⁰ in Belgium.

3.1.1.1 Degree

As indicated in the graph below, Scotland has a high rate of graduated people. The Scottish educational system allows Scottish and European students to study in any of the nineteen Scottish Universities for free. Indeed, these students do not need to pay any tuition fees to be able to study in University. However, students must pay tuition fees for postgraduate education such as PhD or MSc.

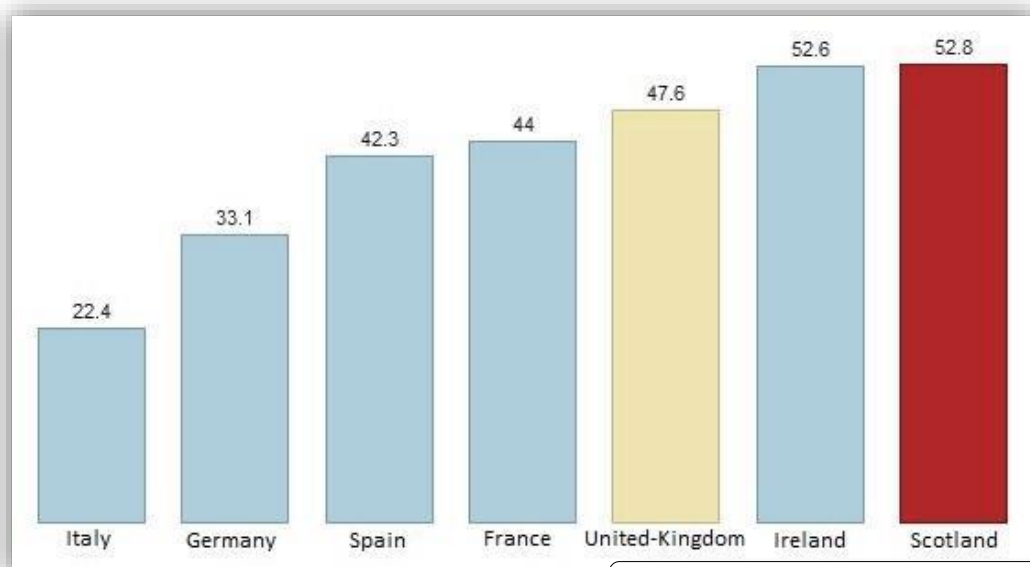
⁸ According to a "Natixis" study: <http://cib.natixis.com/flushdoc.aspx?id=77336> (viewed 09 March 2015)

Natixis: "Corporate & Investment Banking advises and assists companies, institutional investors, insurers, banks and public-sector organisations."

Source: <http://cib.natixis.com/presentation/default.aspx> (viewed 09 March 2015)

⁹ <http://www.forexagone.com/outils-forex/calendrier-economique-forex/taux-de-chomage-royaume-uni-341> (viewed 09 March 2015)

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=fr&pcode=teilm020&plugin=1> (viewed 09 March 2015)



Figures from July 2014 (Eurostat)

Regarding the number of British (Scottish people included) students who are willing to go abroad, it is quite a lower rate if we compare it with other European countries. According to the figures from the British Council¹¹, 28 185 British students went to study in another country, compared to 431 905 students from all over the world who came to the United Kingdom to study in 2012.

3.1.2 **Belgium**

The graph (Willingness to work abroad, by country) indicates that 50-60% of Belgians are more willing and ready to go and work in another country. This is a higher rate than Scotland and that could be linked to these following factors:

3.1.2.1 **Unemployment**

The unemployment rate in Belgium is 8.5 % (Eurostat source, from January 2015). This is less than France (10.5 %, Eurostat source, January 2015) but still quite a high percentage. People who do not find a job in Belgium are more willing to go to and work in another country. This is of course not a choice made by everybody, because leaving a home country can sometimes be more difficult for someone than being unemployed.

¹¹ <http://mobility.britishcouncil.kiln.it/> (viewed 17 April 2015)

3.1.2.2 Quality and way of life

In Belgium some people might be annoyed by the fact that there are three official languages (French, Dutch and German). To get a job, it is generally recommended to speak at least two of these three languages. Otherwise, it is really difficult to communicate (e.g in business matters) between regions.

The salaries may not be attractive for everybody and that could possibly be a reason why Belgians are more willing to work abroad. People want to have a chance to get a job in another country to earn more money.

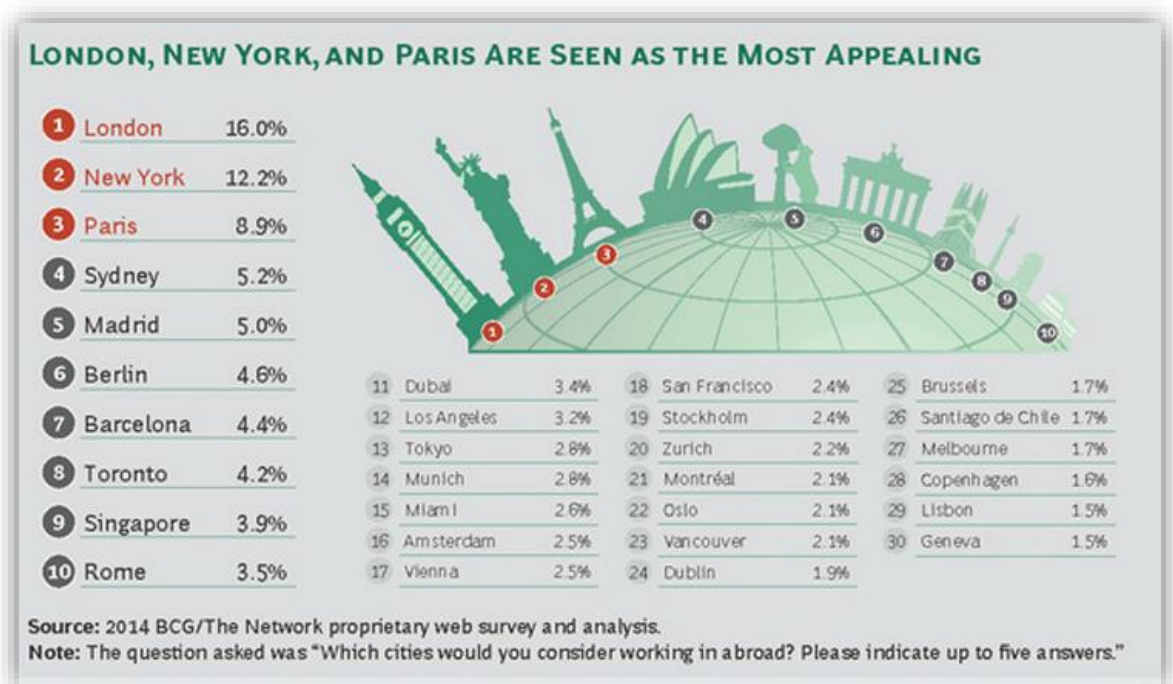
The atmosphere at work could be another factor. The mentality is very different from one country to another. I have experienced that when I was working as an intern in Scotland, the atmosphere at work was really enjoyable and relaxed. I never encountered any problems regarding the quality of relationships with my colleagues.

3.1.3 Popular destinations

The United Kingdom is one of the top three most popular destinations to travel to and to seek employment. The most appealing city to travel to is undoubtedly London, as indicated on the image below. It is an expensive city, one of the most expensive cities in the world. However, London remains the first choice for people. Why? Here are some possible reasons: its reputation, the diversity of the population

(44 % of London's population is made of a minority of ethnic origins¹²), it is a central place where a lot of businesses are developed, etc.

¹² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-31082941> (viewed 15 April 2015)



<http://www.express.be/business/fr/economy/quelles-sont-les-destinations-du-monde-ou-les-gens-aimeraient-partir-travailler/208378.htm>

4 What are the reasons that influence people to move abroad?

The main reasons why people would like to travel abroad are to get out of their daily routine, gather international experience, speak another language, to make new friends and to extend their contact network. In fact, while working or studying abroad you are immersed into a new culture and a new life style. By the time you travel home, you have extended your contact network with friends and co-workers. This is a really good experience to add to your CV and usually employers look for people with skills that are out of the ordinary. Is there any better asset than someone who has lived among another culture?

There are many other possible explanations for someone who would want to leave their country and move abroad. These explanations can include, to run away from a boring life we have now and to experience an adventure, to follow someone (family, friend) who left the country as well, to move to a country with low-rate of

unemployment etc. The populations' satisfaction is really important as well, if they do not agree with the government's measures for example or with the social system, they might consider emigrating.

4.1 Globalisation

Since the end of the 90's and the beginning of the 21st century, the world began to develop itself thanks to the introduction of new technologies. A common market has been created where all transactions, trades and businesses thrive easier. Because of this, employers can find the most qualified person and they can recruit that person from any other country, which increases their chances of finding the 'real gem'.

However, it is almost impossible for countries to be self-sufficient. The economic interdependence between countries is now so strong that they cannot develop themselves without each other. For example, Scotland has oil deposited in the North Sea and it is the first resource for the United Kingdom but Scotland is financially dependent on the United Kingdom that actually pays for that oil.

4.2 Experience

4.2.1 For a student

There are a lot of programmes that allow students to study in another country, such as Erasmus, Leonardo (only to do internships abroad), EF, ... The experience gained during the time spent abroad will help the student to improve their language skills, to be more open-minded towards other cultures, to meet people from different backgrounds ... and of course to find a job more easily. Students will also gain maturity thanks to the long period of self-management away from home. For example compared to other countries, the cost of living in the UK is rather high. The student will have to obtain a part-time job to cope with the charges of the accommodation, the food and various other expenses.

Finally, studying abroad will provide the student with long-lasting memories they will never forget.

4.2.2 For a worker

The experience gained for workers is quite the same as it is for students except that the worker gains work experience as well. The worker can bring fresh ideas from their own country to the company where they work. For example a concept that does not exist in the host country could be introduced by the emigrant to lead a new project. Having spent a period of time abroad is always a big asset to put on a CV. As the world is now compared to a unique business market, having multiple experiences in different countries can be really beneficial for the worker.

Managers are looking for new skills, called "soft-skills". These can be gained when you travel a lot in other countries because it shows that you have a manager spirit, that you can make tough decisions, that you can cope with stressful situations and that you are adaptable and flexible within the work place.

5 Impacts

5.1 On work quality

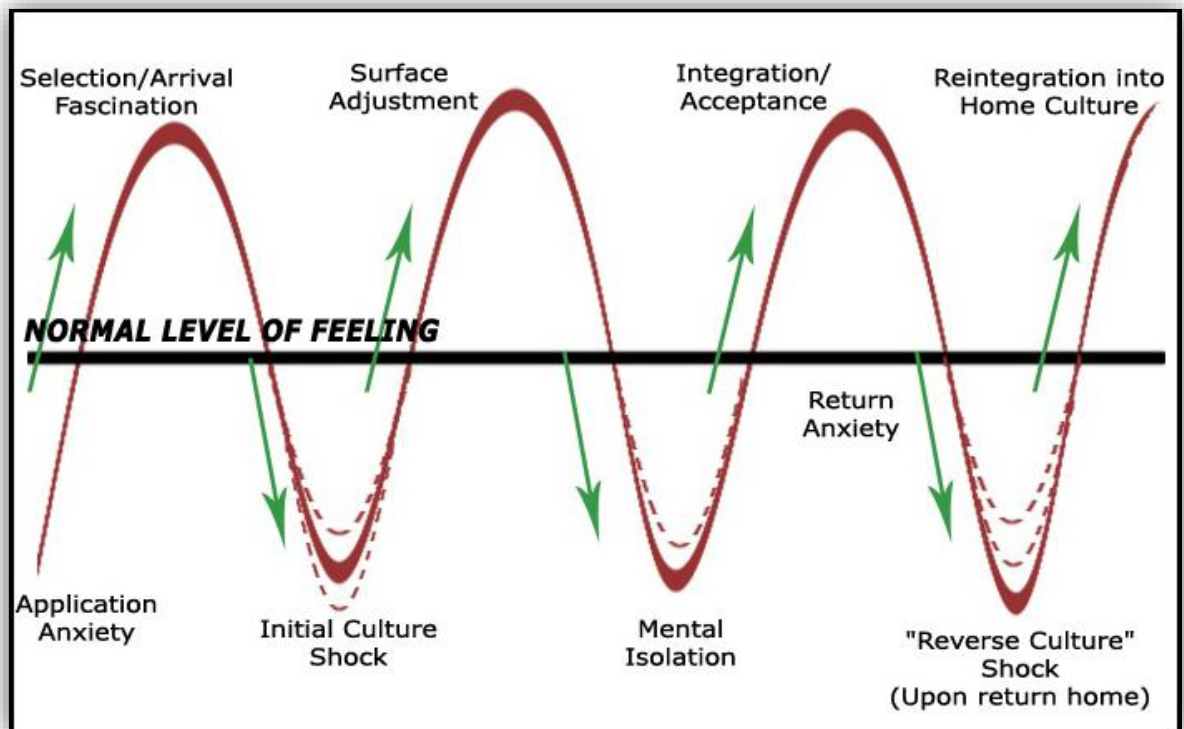
When a person emigrates to work in another country, a certain amount of negative points can appear which depend on different factors. Amongst other things, living without family can have a bad impact on the quality of work carried out by a worker/emigrant. Being away from family can be quite difficult at times. The emigrant could feel depressed; he/she can have the feeling that they have been abandoned and therefore can ultimately feel extremely lonely. These feelings can have a direct impact on the workman's quality of work. Indeed, if he/she feels depressed, the quality of his/her work may not be as good as if he/she felt well. The worker has to find a way to fulfil the lack of his family's affection and presence by meeting new people or visiting places in the host country for example.

To avoid any problems at work, companies have some psychological support for emigrants. Private or group sessions are organised to help the worker to fit in to his/her new job. Skype and Messenger on Facebook are also two ways in which emigrants can keep in touch with friends and relatives.

5.2 On emotions

Being away from our family and friends for long periods of time can have a negative impact on our emotional happiness. Distant relationships can also have some negative impacts on the emigrant such as depression or the feeling of being alone without anyone to talk to. However, with new technologies it is possible to communicate through many ways (Skype, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp ...). The "Emotions graph" below explains every step that an average person can feel when living abroad.

5.3 Emotions graph



http://icenter.stanford.edu/orientation/cultural_adj.html

5.3.1 Graph analysis

5.3.1.1 Application Anxiety

It is normal to feel anxious just before leaving your home country because you are about to face the uncertainty of an unknown country, a new culture and new people. A lot of feelings can be felt at this stage like excitement, happiness, joy

and also negative feelings such as fear, anxiety and sadness from being alone and away from home as well.

5.3.1.2 *Arrival Fascination or Honeymoon*

Everything you see is new, exciting and interesting. You have just arrived in a new country and feel like you are on a holiday, but all that you experience is just temporary. That is why it is called the "Honeymoon Stage", which is right after getting married and settled with someone.

You start to compare the similarities of the host country with your origin country in a superficial way. For example the shops, food and also the way people behave. This is the first contact with the new life you chose.

5.3.1.3 *Initial Culture Shock*

You start to face problems due to a random number of facts; you are continually living in an environment in which the language, food, transportation, people or even the weather can become a problem. Indeed, for example the language (which is usually not the same as your mother tongue), the efforts you make to speak it can cause fatigue, stress and sometimes even depression.

The absence of your friends and family starts to weigh upon you, wondering what they may be doing at the moment you think about them. Changes in your behaviour can be physical or psychological such as a lack of appetite or on the contrary an increased appetite, you sleep less because of stress and therefore you feel tired with an incapacity to concentrate, and you can be subjected to homesickness,...

From that moment, the expatriate should get some help from a specialist to talk about the problems he/she is experiencing. The symptoms may be difficult to associate with the culture shock, which is why the sooner the person gets some help the better he/she can work through resolving these troubles that he/she might be experiencing before they become unmanageable.

5.3.1.4 Surface Adjustment

The time period of reaching this stage can vary from one person to another; it could happen after four months or after twelve months. The adjustment is when you start to feel at the right place and when routine sets in. The foreign language begins to be easier for you to use. You can express yourself with more confidence and be more open to talking with people in their own language.

This is the moment you regain faith in yourself and you feel that you can accomplish whatever you wish to do. The "survival skills" are gained, to go shopping or moving around the city is no longer a problem. This is the most comfortable stage to go through seeing that you have a certain "healthy" way of living.

5.3.1.5 Mental Isolation or Values Shock

Being away from your family for quite a long time can create a feeling of loneliness. The same phenomenon as in the "culture shock" stage happens again. You start developing hostility against the host country and feel frustrated since you cannot express yourself as well as you would in your native language.

Once again you lose self-confidence because of the lack of ability to completely understand the other culture and the natives' behaviour.

"There is no place like home"¹³

5.3.1.6 Integration/Acceptance

The integration process is now complete. Habits, behaviours, food are finally fixed into your daily life. The new friends you meet in the host country are now helping you to counterbalance the absence of your family and friends from your home country. The host culture is no longer something you compare to your own. It is now a part of the person you have become, it has been accepted and welcomed.

¹³ Baum, L. (1900). *The wonderful wizard of Oz*. Champaign, Ill.: Project Gutenberg.

The knowledge of the foreign language is now complete (or at a high level), which gives you all the self-confidence and skills you need to achieve the most important purposes of your life.

5.3.1.7 *Return Anxiety*

Now that you are well integrated in your new country, it is already time to leave and go back to your home country. You start to feel anxious and afraid of leaving the host country forever. You have been away from home for such a long time that you start wondering if you will still fit in.

5.3.1.8 *"Reverse Culture Shock"/ Return Home*

This experience is just as daunting as the arrival abroad. When returning home, there is once again a culture shock experience, less intense than the first one of course but you will still need time (depending on the person) to get used to it again. A feeling of frustration can occur when you notice that your relatives will not share the same level of excitement regarding what you have lived, because they did not actually experience it.

5.3.1.9 *Reintegration into Home Culture*

This is the last stage where the expatriate goes back to their habits and manages to find themselves back to their own culture and way of living.

5.4 *Personal experience*

Right before I left for four months to Scotland for my internship, I had a mixture of emotions in my head. I was excited, happy, curious and anxious. A whole new experience with new people, new places, new culture... a lot of changes in a really short period of time is quite scary.

When I arrived at Edinburgh's airport, a colleague of the South Lanarkshire College (SLC) came to pick me up. The first element that shocked me was that in Scotland they drive on the left side of the road. I had already been in the UK but it is always disorientating to face it after a long period of time. I settled at the

Halls of Residence and I told myself 'so what now?'. I was lost with no idea of what to do; I did not dare to move from my room to the kitchen of the flat.

The next stage is the 'Honeymoon' stage. Everything is new, from the food you eat to the common transports. At first I was really enjoying comparing differences between Belgium and Scotland. I had five flatmates from different countries. It is a real pleasure to share your life with people from other background. The colleagues at work were really welcoming and kind, always ready to help me and to give some advice.

I did not have any 'culture shock stage' or at least I felt I was not disoriented too much. I kept myself busy with my internship at SLC and my End of Study Work.

Actually, the 'Surface adjustment' stage came right after the 'Honeymoon' stage. I felt comfortable with the environment I lived in, my flatmates, the transports, etc. The routine settles little by little without you even noticing it.

After two months, you start to have your habits; food shopping, laundry, cooking, parties, etc. It is at this exact time that you realise that living abroad is actually not as exciting as you expected it to be. However, I started to feel homesick over a brief period during my stay in Scotland. Luckily I had (and still have) good friends that helped me through this difficult time. This was the 'disintegration stage' or 'mental isolation'.

6 Differences and Culture Clash

6.1 Differences (according to my personal experience)

	Scotland	Belgium
Greet each other (formal)	'Hello' or 'Good Morning' when arriving in a room	'Hello' or 'Good Morning' when arriving in a room
Greet each other (informal)	'Hi' + waving (not always)	'Hi' + kiss on the cheek
Weather	Temperatures are quite low, there is a lot of wind	Temperatures are quite moderate, it rains a lot

	and it rains from time to time	
Landscapes	A lot of hills, mountains, lakes ('lochs'), islands, coasts	Small valleys, sea, forests, lakes
Language	English, (Gaelic) ¹⁴	French, Dutch, German
Food (specialities)	haggis, stovies, tatties ¹⁵ scone, Lorne sausage, ...	chips, "carbonnades flamandes", the "stoemp", salade liégeoise, boulettes,...
Social rules	Quite the same in both countries like the distance between two people during a conversation (Personal Zone = 1.5 to 4 feet ¹⁶).	
Communication	Quite the same in both countries, we can discuss anything as long as the topic is politically correct. For example if a problem occurs, there is no problem to talk about it with someone. Taboo subjects (sex, drugs, religion...) are treated in the same way in Belgium and in Scotland.	
Scottish words	In Scotland there are many words that are even different from the English. 'Wee' means 'little', 'tatties' means 'potatoes', 'breeks' for 'trousers', 'cludgie' for 'toilets' and a lot more.	

6.1.1 Personal experience

I did not really feel any big differences in both Scottish and Belgian cultures. However, I have noticed that in general Scottish people are really cheerful compared to Belgian people. Regardless of the numerous differences I mentioned in the table above, Scotland and Belgium felt very similar. Ultimately I did not feel

¹⁴ Gaelic is still taught in some schools but all Scots do not speak it.

¹⁵ Tatties is a Scottish word meaning 'potatoes'.

¹⁶ = 0.5 to 1.5 metres - http://changingminds.org/techniques/body/social_distance.htm (viewed 10 March 2015)

too disoriented in Scotland but maybe this depends on how people experience changes.

Since I lived in a multicultural environment (with international students from the University of the West of Scotland), I had quite a wide range of different cultures and habits. Most of the students had the opportunity to come to Scotland because their school offered them a chance to study at the University of the West of Scotland. Other students however came to Scotland by choice. I will analyse this last subject in my survey in the final section of this dissertation.

7 Psychology and Expatriation

7.1 Job loss

Even when you work abroad, the loss of your job is still an option. It can happen in different forms such as redundancy (reorganisation of the company's structure, serious misconduct, incompetence...), bankruptcy of the company, offshoring etc. To overcome these psychological shocks, different types of help are available so that the worker can be reintegrated back into the labour market with ease.

7.2 Outplacement

7.2.1 Definition

Assistance provided through a third-party company and paid for by a former employer to help a laid-off employee find new employment. Outplacement assistance may include career counselling and analysis, professional CV writing, cover-letter writing, interview practice, salary-negotiation advice and CV distribution to employment agencies and head hunters.¹⁷

7.2.2 In the UK

In the United Kingdom, there are many outplacement consultants' supports available. Different services are there to help the worker to go through the loss of

¹⁷ <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/o/outplacement.asp> (Viewed 13 April 2015)

their job more easily and to ensure this person will be properly reinstated in another company.

The 'One-On-One' support is an individual interview for a person willing to have personal and more targeted advice about their future reintegration in the market. A complete career review, coaching, giving information about the different options, fixing objectives, etc. are some of the support a consultant can give. The group sessions are similar to the One-On-One support but with more general tips, key facts and techniques to write a proper CV and covering letter as well. Another range of support and help are given to directors of a company with the same tools as 'One-On-One' and also group support but more specific to the Director's needs.

Outplacement services in the UK varies between £ 1 095 ex VAT for a 'Distance Outplacement support' and £ 10 000 ex VAT for a Director Outplacement programme' (the prices can vary from a service to another).

7.2.3 Belgium

In Belgium the outplacement support is quite different from the one provided in the United Kingdom. Indeed, in Belgium the system is more complex because it is the employer who offers the opportunity to the employee to take advantage of the outplacement services. The employee must therefore meet certain criteria.

Since 1st January 2014 the Belgian system concerning outplacement has been reviewed. Before that date, only the workers from the private sector could benefit from these services. They had to be forty-five years old when their contract ends; they could not have been made redundant on serious grounds, they had to have at least one year of service uninterrupted with the company, etc. Since 1st January 2014 all workers with at least a 30-day term of notice have been entitled to take advantage of the outplacement services. The 'age' criterion is no longer an application unless the worker has no right to have the 30-day term of notice.

From what I learned and according to what I already knew, I would conclude that the British system is much easier for the worker because even if he/she has to pay

on their own to get the outplacement services, at least they do not get restrictions of any kind.

8 Heritage

Every culture has its own cultural legacy. Humans are doing their best to keep our heritage which is why some common goods are registered on the list established by UNESCO¹⁸. It is their duty to keep the world's heritage safe for the future generations so that they can remember the past. Some events beyond our control due to nature like earthquakes, eruptions, etc. could cause a lot of harm to the goods. That is why UNESCO has to raise funds to restore some damages caused by time and nature.

8.1 United Kingdom

The richness of the United Kingdom's heritage is shaped by its landscapes, castles, cathedrals and also quite a few towns. Twenty-eight goods are on the UNESCO's list from both England and Scotland.

Living in England for foreigners is a cultural discovery every day. To take the example of Scotland, no less than five hundred and seventy-five castles, towers and fortresses are still either standing or in stage of ruin spread around the thirty-two Council Areas. For Belgian people who immigrate to Scotland and who like to plunge into something completely new, this is a very big change and amazement as well.

As far as I am concerned, I only visited Edinburgh and Culzean Castles two years ago. From my memories they are really magnificent edifices. I will probably visit more of them once my internship at SLC is over.

8.2 Belgium

In Belgium, the number of the World's Heritage Sites is lower than in the UK, with only eleven. Belgium and France's belfries are located in a cross-border site and

¹⁸ United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, definition available on <http://en.unesco.org/> (viewed 15 April 2015)

includes thirty-three Belgian belfries and twenty-three French belfries. Flemish Beguine convents are also part of the Heritage Sites together with the Cathedral 'Notre Dame de Tournai', Brussels' main square, the historical centre of Bruges, etc.

9 Constraints

9.1 Way of life

When living abroad, it goes without saying that you have to change your way of life. Even when the customs and culture are slightly the same, a few changes can sometimes occur without you noticing them.

It can be a constraint for people who have some trouble to adapt themselves to a new environment, for example driving on the right side of the road in Belgium and on the left side in the United Kingdom. It is a real challenge even as a pedestrian because when we are used to always looking on one side, changing this habit can be something quite tough so it could take some time to adapt.

To take another random example, buses in Scotland are expensive and the driver does not give the change back for security reasons. In Belgium, it is quite the opposite: the journeys are cheaper and the driver is allowed to give change back on the bus.

9.2 Adaptation

Every human being who emigrates needs to adapt themselves to the new culture. In this chapter I will enumerate the most relevant problems that a person can face when moving abroad, especially for long periods of time.

9.2.1 Language

The language is one of the most challenging issues to go through when you do not know the language before moving. In order to be able to communicate effectively and to express what you feel to another person in a language that is not yours is quite demanding. It requires a lot of effort to reach the point where you do not have to think about what you are going to say and translate it first in your own language. Even if you become bilingual, there will always be a kind of wall

between you (Belgian e.g.) and the other person (British, e.g.) because you will never lose your accent and will always be seen as a stranger.

9.2.2 Economic and political system

The United Kingdom is a unitary democracy which means that every citizen is submitted to only one power. There is a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy in place where the monarch (Queen Elizabeth II) is the head of State and the Prime Minister (David Cameron) is the head of the British Government.

Belgium is a federal state with a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy, formed by communities and regions. The king of Belgium is Philippe (head of State) and the Prime Minister is Charles Michel (head of the Belgian Government).

In general, both countries are quite similar regarding the political system. However this is not always the case, especially when somebody immigrates to another continent. The expatriate has to be aware of the political system in which he/she decides to live, if the voting system works the same way or if a political party is better than another.

The descriptions on the political system are really superficial but I felt it was not relevant for this dissertation to explore the explanations in depth.

9.2.3 Security

Security measures are very variable from one country to another. It depends on numerous factors like crime levels, state of mind of the citizens, if the economy is not on the decline, etc. The expatriate does not always feel safe in the host country because people do not have the same state of mind. For example, in poor countries stealing is vital for feeding the family. This is not a comfortable idea for someone who does not know about these habits. Of course in every country people steal to get something to eat but there are places where this phenomenon is rather 'normal'.

Concerning Scotland, I felt rather secure. I never saw any fights or any police interventions, there are many police patrols in big cities, etc. However, I would not

walk alone during the night even if the feeling of security is there, we never know what may happen.

9.2.4 Freedom of Speech

This is one of the most important human rights. Not long ago and still today in a lot of countries, this right was/is not incorporated into the customs. This could be included in the problems met by the expatriate when he/she is facing a situation where he/she cannot give their opinion. For example in the Arabic countries, women have almost no rights and above all no freedom of speech. In the case of United Kingdom and Belgium, this is not a problem to take into account so we cannot say there is a constraint of any kind.

9.2.5 Nutrition

To feed yourself in a foreign country is a challenge as well for some people, because sometimes the local food has a very special taste that you are not accustomed to in your own country.

In Scotland, there is this special meal called 'Haggis' made with sheep's liver, lungs and heart. If you do not know what is inside, it tastes good but once you know, psychologically you cannot eat this anymore. The national beverage in Scotland is the 'Irn Bru', a really sweet and sparkling drink which sells as well as Coca-Cola.

At the end everything is a matter of adaptation, which comes with time.

9.2.6 Homesickness

At some point after a long period away from home, you will start to feel that you are missing something. It is unavoidable because your roots belong to only one country; leaving it means you remove yourself from it and therefore after a long period abroad the expatriate starts to feel homesick. This constraint cannot go away; it can only ease with time. To overcome homesickness and to be sure the expatriate will feel at home in the host country, he/she has to build a friend network in which he/she can rely on. If at any time he/she needs support he/she will be able to rely on them to help them through difficult times.

9.3 Administrative procedures

This part of the dissertation will enumerate the procedures for both studying and working expatriates and more generally will deal with living in the UK. Prior to moving into the United Kingdom, people who are European just need to take with them a valid ID or passport.

9.3.1 Studying in Scotland

Within the United Kingdom, there are two grades: undergraduate and postgraduate grades which are managed by UCAS (University and colleges admissions service).

An undergraduate degree allows students to obtain a Bachelor degree (equivalent to the Belgium Bachelor) while a postgraduate degree grants a Master's degree.

To be able to study in the UK, students must have obtained good marks (and to provide evidence of such marks), a recommendation letter written by previous lecturers, fill in an admission request form and must show the evidence of a good English level.

There are two possibilities regarding the procedures of application: either the applicant is an Erasmus student or is a free student.

- The procedure for an Erasmus student is really simple: the recruitment is done by his/her teacher responsible for international relations. Either the teacher agrees and speaks with the institution, however if the answer is negative, the student cannot leave as an Erasmus student. In this case, he/she can then try to apply as a free student. In the case of an Erasmus, the student will have to apply online and fill in some administrative papers. He/she will have to complete these forms and send them to his/her sending institution at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of his/her degree.
- In the case of a free student, deadlines have to be met through UCAS: some universities require the full registration form between 1st September and 15th January. For Cambridge, Oxford and medical,

dental or veterinary schools, the deadline is 15th October while for art classes it is on 24th March.

The online application process of UCAS is really simple provided that the applicant has a good English level. The inscription is charging £ 12,00 (€ 15,60) for one institution or £ 23,00 (€ 30,00) for two until five institutions.

The applicant has to enter details on his/her civil status, desired universities or colleges and give information about previous studies (modules and marks). Besides, there is a personal statement to write, which is a kind of combination between the CV and the cover letter. The applicant has to give some information about extra-curricular activities such as jobs and social life, motivations regarding the desired degree, background, travel and areas of interest.

In the section 'track', the applicant will be able to see the decision from the schools as either refused, conditional or unconditional. Conditional means that the institution accepts the applicant with a conditional approval. Unconditional means you have been accepted to begin the course without any conditions. Oxford, Cambridge and King's College ask for example for an interview. It depends on the school.

Regarding the tuition fees, there are really expensive in England, between £ 4 000 and £ 9 000 (€ 5 200 to € 11 700) for an undergraduate degree, and up to £ 34 000 (€ 44 200) for a Master's degree.

In Scotland, the government pays for student's tuition fees via the SAAS (Student Award Agency for Scotland). Therefore they do not have to pay themselves. However, they will have to give back the money if they fail to complete the degree.

9.3.2 Working in Scotland

Under the principle of free movement for workers within the countries of the European Union (EU), visas and work permits are no longer required to be able to work in the UK. This principle allows workers who are EU nationals to profit of the same conditions of work as British nationals.

Once a person is seeking a job or is already working, he/she is affiliated to the British system of social protection (illness, retirement and unemployment). Two applications will be required: one for the Department of Social Security and another for the National Health Service (NHS).

Initially, when a person has found a job and starts to work, he/she has to make an appointment with their local Department of Social Security or the Benefit Agency. He/she has to bring his/her certificate of employment or an employment contract. The institution will give a temporary National Insurance number. The final one will be received within eight weeks after the application and then has to be given to the employer.

Regarding the remuneration, there is a national minimum wage, which almost every worker can earn in the UK regardless of the profession, the kind of employment contract or the size/kind of enterprise. It depends on the age of the employee. The exceptions are own-account workers, government members, directors without employment contract, children under sixteen years old, military, workers as au pair, volunteers, inmates, some apprentices....

The national minimum wage is fixed every year in October by the government with recommendations of the Low Pay Commission (LCP).

The wage is transferred to the employee's bank account and contributions for unemployment and retirement and the income tax are deducted from the wage following the Pay as You Earn system. Possible deductions such as contributions to a pension plan will be subject to an agreement between the employer and the employee.

Public holidays are New Year's Day, the 2nd of January (Bank Holiday in Scotland), 17th March (St Patrick's Day in Ireland), Good Friday, Easter Monday (except in Scotland), the first Monday of May (Early May Bank Holiday), the last Monday of May (Spring Bank Holiday), the last Monday of August (Summer Bank Holiday which is the first Monday of August in Scotland), Christmas Day and the day after Christmas day (Boxing Day).

10 Advantages

There are numerous advantages of living abroad to study or work. In this part of the dissertation I will include some points that are relevant to me and to any other source of information (persons holding blogs about their life abroad...) I could find out about these advantages.

This is an **adventure**. If you always dreamed of travelling and wondered if the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, you have to go for it. The chances to have the opportunity to go to work abroad are thin and not available for everybody. However, a lot of students are given the opportunity by their school to take a year or even a few months in another country and that is a chance the student has to take advantage of.

Your **skills** will increase and grow, in whatever area or domain. There is nothing better than being immersed in a foreign-language country to learn the language. You have to use it so that others will be able to understand you, so you have to make the effort to speak the language of the host country. At school you can communicate in your native language this is therefore easier and not the same level of intensity. You will gain self-confidence thanks to the creativity and problem-solving you will have to use when you need to find your way around or asking for information in the foreign language to a passer-by for example. You gain humility because you live in another nation and accept the culture and habits, states of mind of the host country. You will learn your country is not the centre of the universe.

You will come back with a unique **experience**. In the case of a person who works abroad permanently, the experience from his native country can be a good opportunity to find a job in the host country. In any case you will experience good and bad things such as really gloomy weather during your entire stay or unpleasant flatmates (provided you live in shared accommodation).

Regarding my own experience I had an amazing stay in Scotland especially for the internship and the skills I gained but also for all the new people I have met. For the

negative part I could not become accustomed to the Scottish weather which is sometimes really uncomfortable.

Another precious advantage is all the new people you will meet and therefore expanding your **networking** worldwide. It makes the world more accessible when we can say: "I have a friend in London, one in Germany, one in Ireland, one in China, etc".

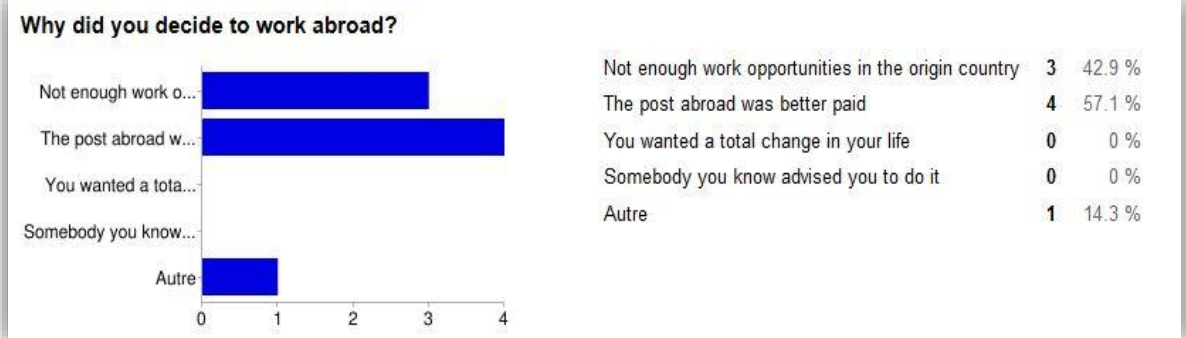
There are many more advantages of living abroad but based on every person's point of view this can be quite unique to an individual.

11 Survey

To complete this dissertation and bring a practical aspect, I carried out a survey in the form of a Google Drive questionnaire. You will find it in the appendixes. I created 6 questionnaires in total: three in English and three in French, in order to be able to reach more people and have a larger sample; studying, working and having an internship abroad. In total I received forty-three answers. I will not analyse the third one, 'internship abroad' because of the very low rate of answers and also because it would not be relevant to explain what is similar to the 'working abroad' part.

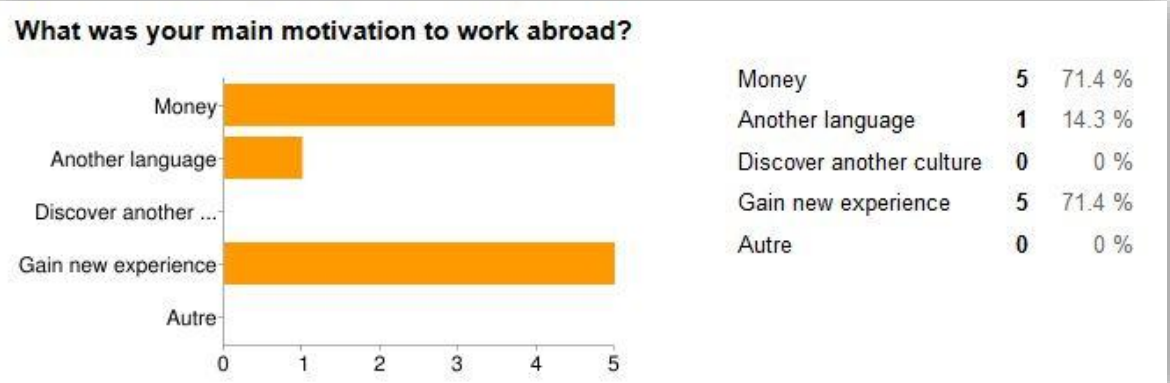
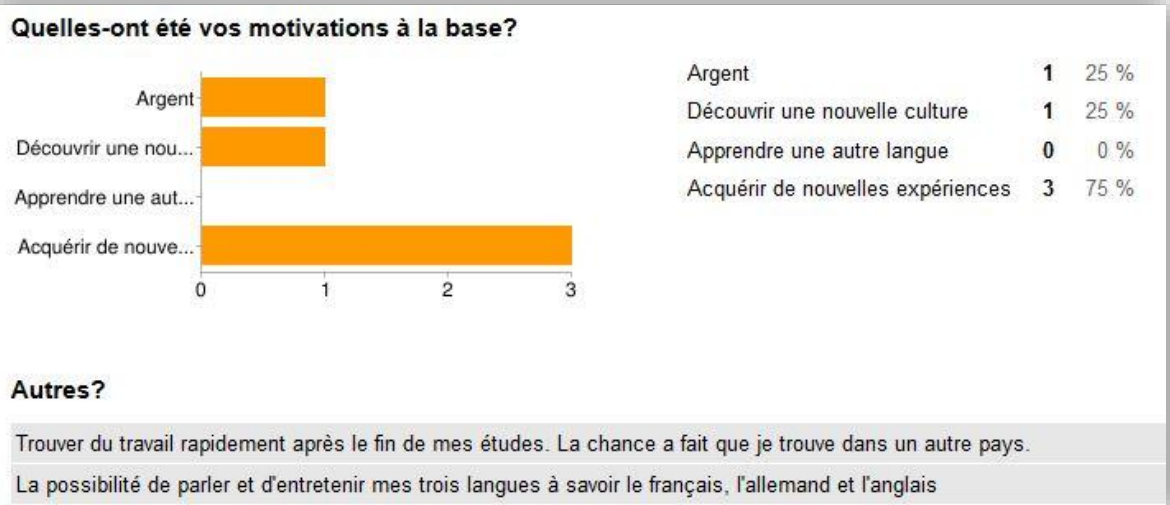
11.1 Working abroad



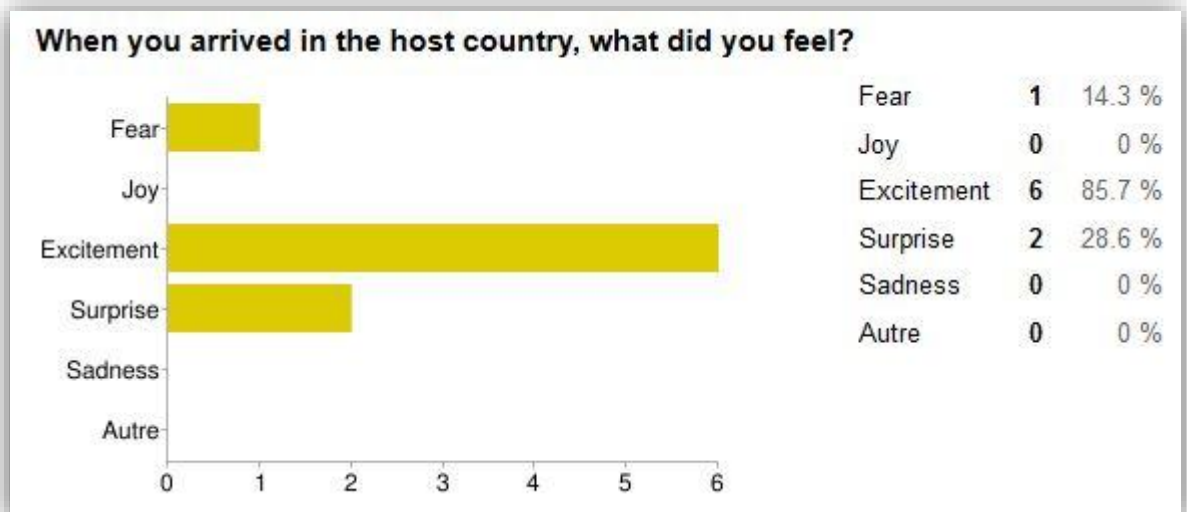
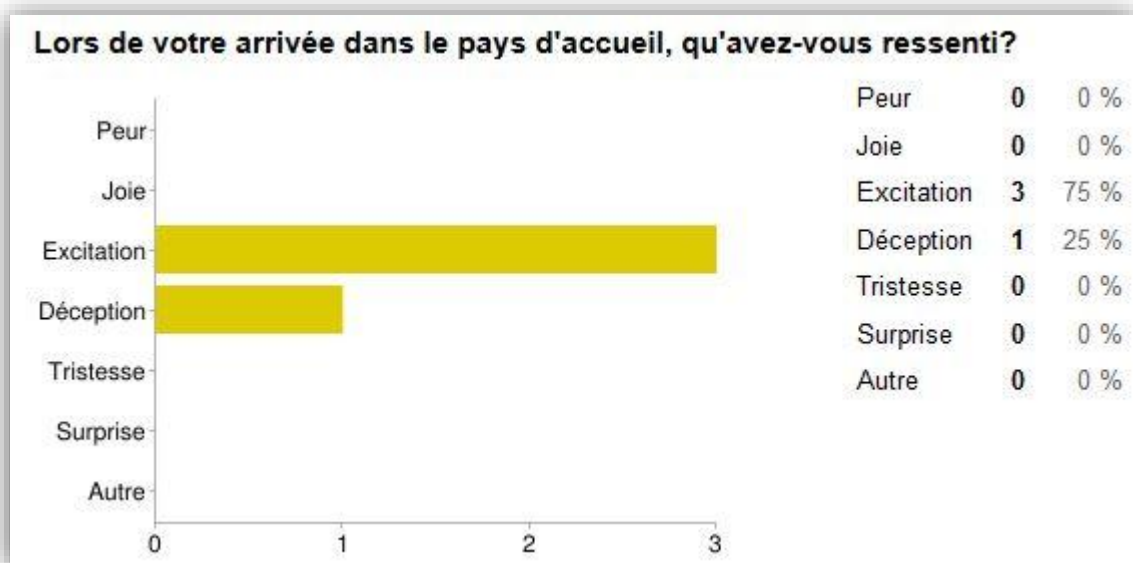


'The position abroad was better paid'; here we can see that money motivated these people to work abroad.

In second position is the lack of opportunity in the origin country. I cannot conclude this as a generality because the sample of people who answered is minimal. However, this is one of the main reasons why people travel abroad; money and job opportunities are more interesting elsewhere.



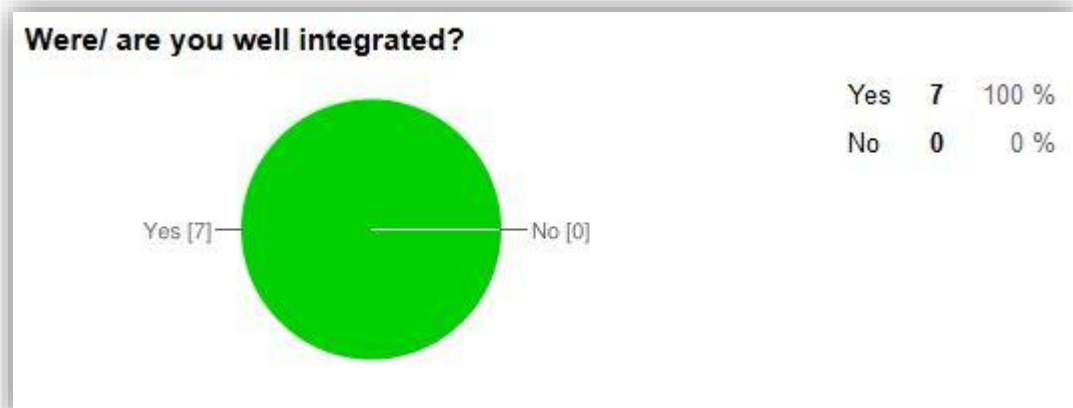
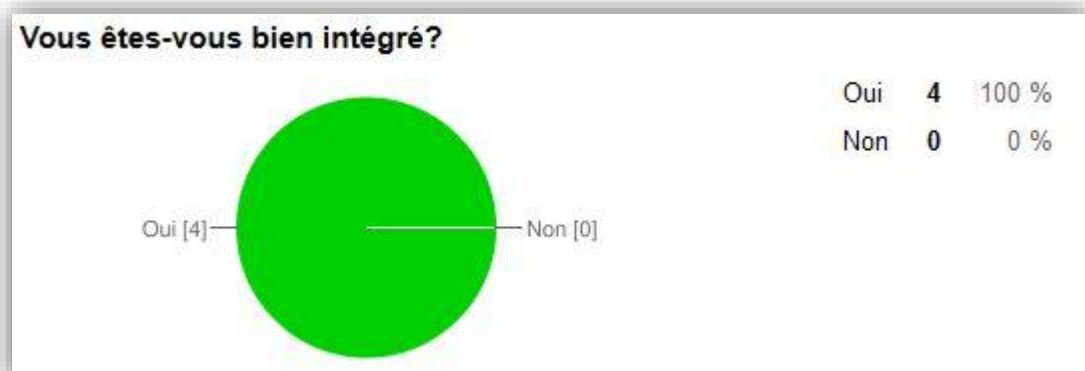
I have noticed that the 'money' factor appears again regarding the motivation to work abroad; among the sixteen people who answered this question, six people assumed they would earn more money in another country. Eight people believed they would get some new experiences, which is not very surprising since during a stay abroad we always gain something new due to the language, culture, religion, etc.



I was quite surprised to notice that only one person (among thirteen) felt fear when they arrived in the host country. Nine of them felt excitement, which is a completely normal feeling when you arrive in an unknown land. It is however not

surprising to notice that no one chose 'sadness'; during the Honeymoon Stage there was only the amazement, joy or excitement that matter.

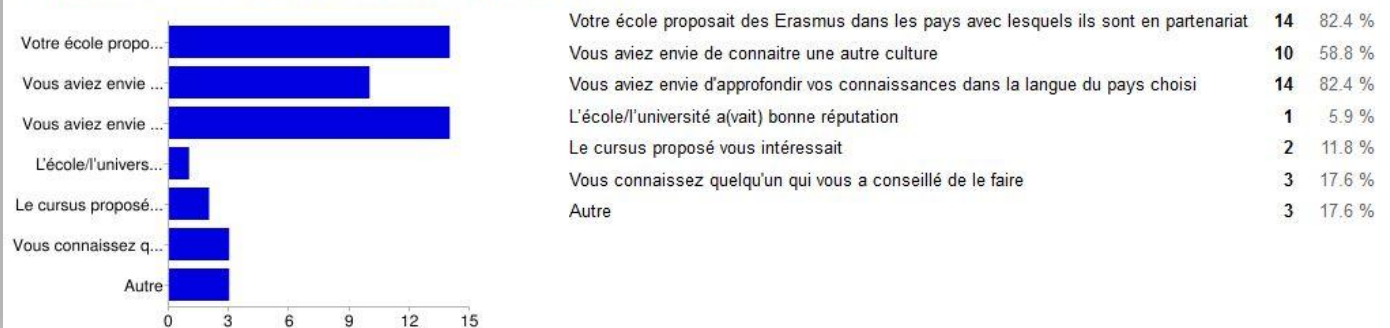
Personally, I was excited too but really nervous about everything; how was I supposed to manage all these new feelings? Change my habits? Speak another language all the time? At the end it appeared to be easier than expected because I integrated really fast (with friends, at work...).



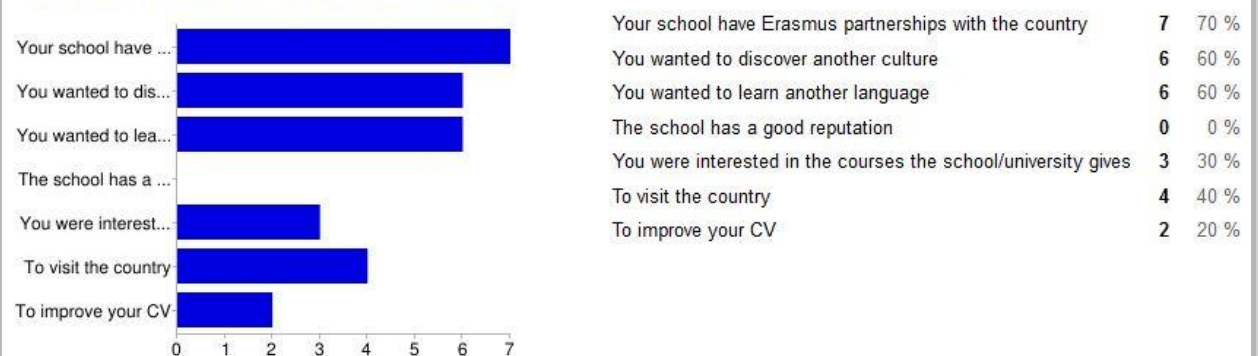
The answer is unanimous, every participant were/are well integrated in the host country. As I said before, it is only a matter of time to get used to habits and customs. Of course it depends on the person, some need more time than others but eventually we all end up being a full part of the host society. Once again this is a very small sample of the population I cannot say this is everyone's experience, there might be some exceptions.

11.2 Studying abroad

Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de partir étudier dans un autre pays?



Why did you decide to study in another country?



Other?

My boyfriend was studying here already.

To be with my girlfriend. To have fun. To do something different.

According to these answers the main reasons that push students to study abroad are learning another language, another culture and because some schools (Universities) often have partnership with schools in other countries.

Only one person chose the school for its reputation and I have a mixed opinion about this; on the one hand, prestigious schools with good reputation are more likely to impress your future employer/recruitment consultant when looking at your CV. On the other hand, these schools are sometimes really expensive, for

example the University of Oxford has a tuition fee of £ 9 000¹⁹ (€ 12 111.16²⁰) but as a UK or EU student you can get a loan from the UK government.

In the 'Other?' category I observed that two people went to study abroad because of their boyfriend/girlfriend. It may be the only reason why they went to study abroad but I think this is unlikely because they have to be somewhat motivated to go and study in another country.



I am surprised to notice the 'not at all' answer. This is quite unusual to stay at the same level of skill after a journey abroad. If you are in a community of native speakers, your level should become better or at least you should learn even just a few words more. Even within one month, some words could be gained even if we

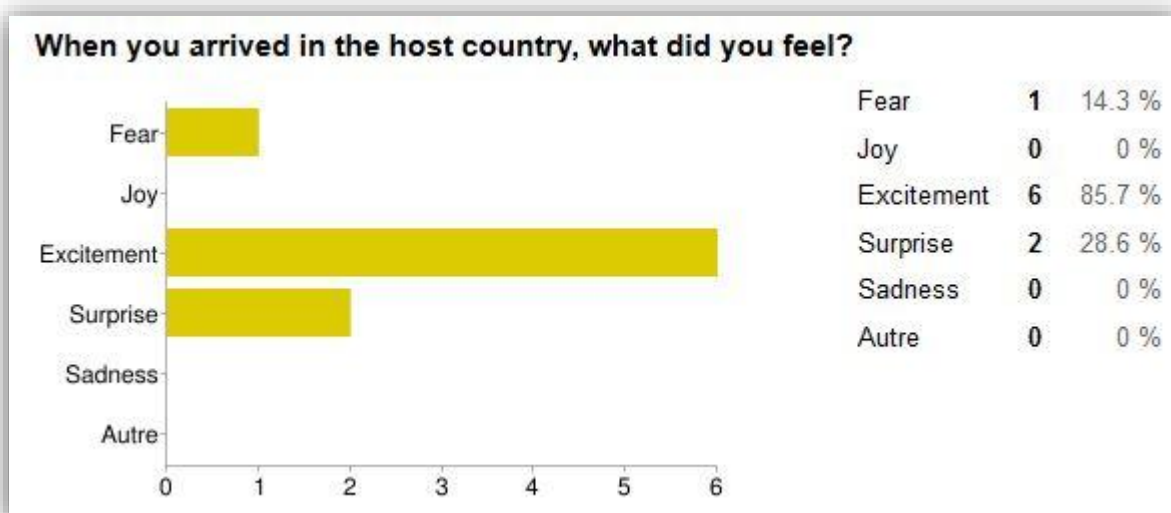
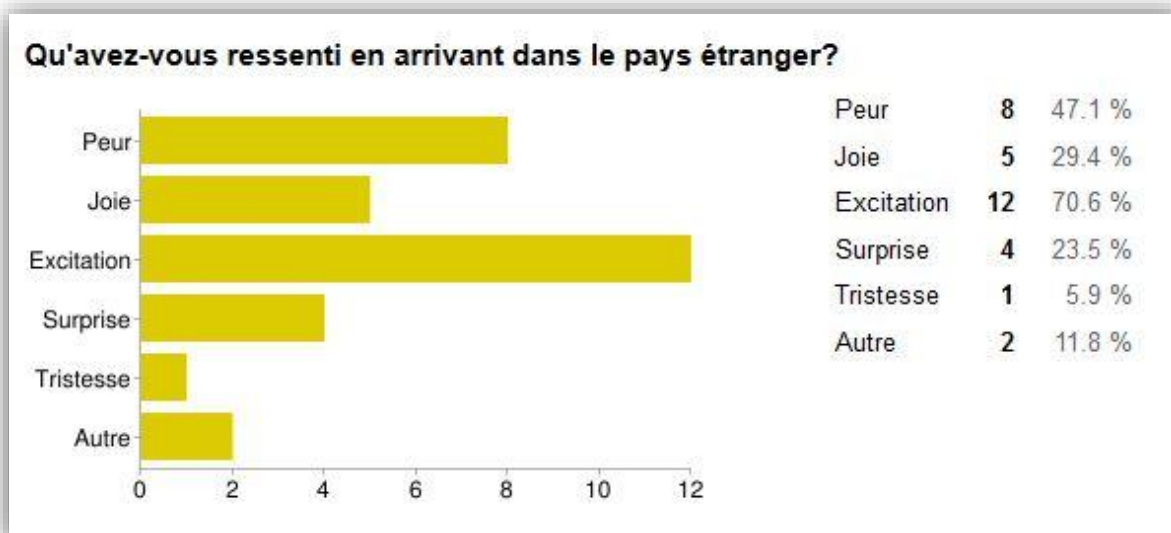
¹⁹ <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/tuition-fees>

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²⁰ <http://www.xe.com/fr/currencyconverter/convert/?Amount=9000&From=GBP&To=EUR>

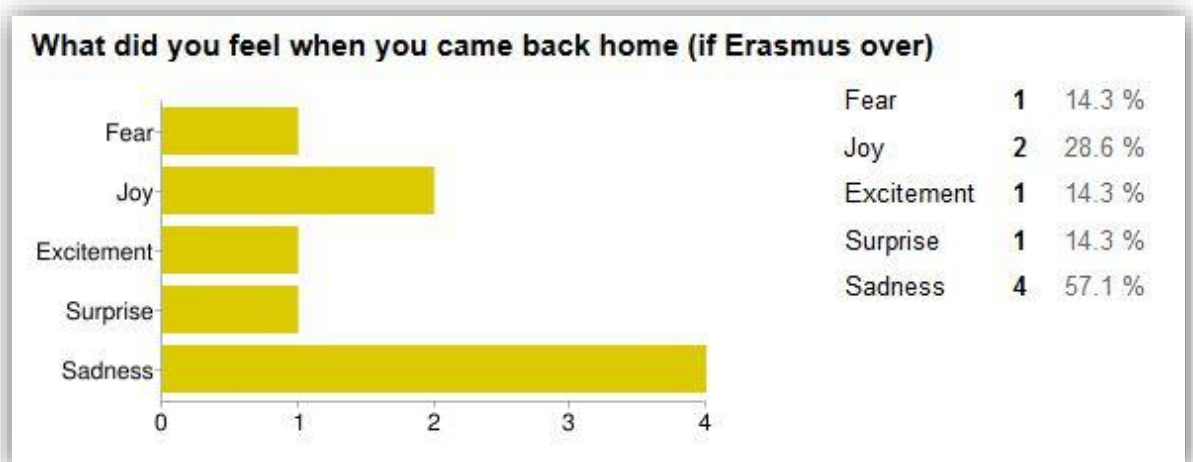
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do not notice it. The majority have seen their level rising 'very much' during their stay abroad which is quite normal when speaking (or trying to speak) another language all the time.



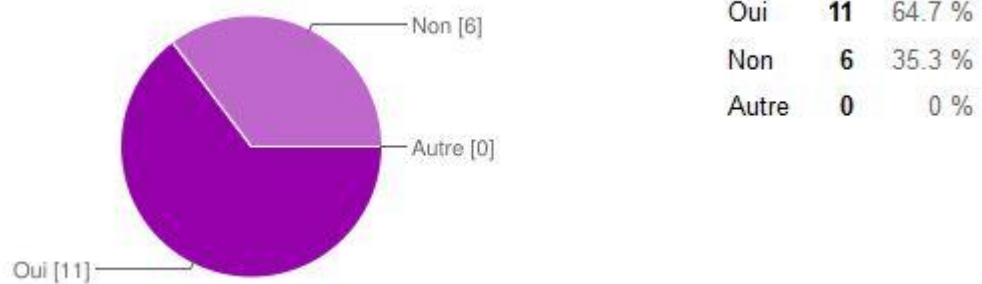
In relation to 'working abroad', I observed that a lot more people felt a feeling of fear when arriving in the host country. It may be because the students leaving to study abroad are younger or have less experience in travelling for long periods of time or else they do not have the ability to control their emotions. The 'excitement feeling' is once again in first position with eighteen answers together with 'joy' – five – and 'surprise' – six. As far as I am concerned I felt exactly the same as most

people: fear, excitement and some sort of sadness to leave my country for four months.

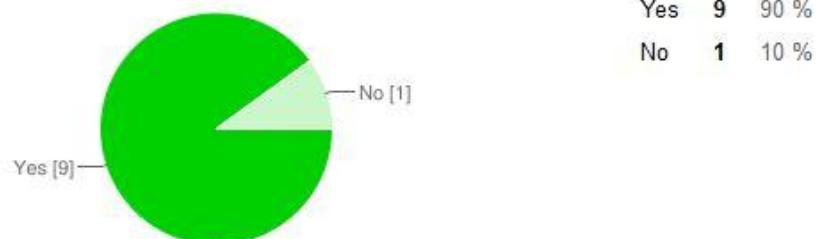


When it is time to go back home there is always this feeling of sadness because you may never see the friends you met during your stay due to the fact that they live quite far away from your country. Usually the Erasmus is an experience you will never forget and that you have only once in your lifetime, therefore when you go back home you have the impression of leaving something behind you that you may never be able to get back.

Pensez-vous trouver un travail plus facilement après cette expérience?



Do you think it would be easier to find a job after this experience?



If not, why not?

I already have a good job

The expected answer for the above question would be 'yes' but I think those who answered 'no' do not think that an Erasmus will help them to find a job or maybe they already have one. As for me, if the student applies for a job that requires languages it would be easier for this person to get the job because of the Erasmus, this would imply that the person is able to speak one or more languages properly.

11.3 Survey conclusion

To conclude the analysis of my survey I can say that a lot of answers are similar to what I learned during the research process for the theoretical part. Indeed I can link the 'Honeymoon stage' to the 'what did you feel when you arrived abroad?' question because all the feelings match together. I have the same observation with the departure question which is close to the 'Return anxiety' stage when people feel sad and are afraid of not being able to fit in at home anymore.

It is really enriching to gather all these kinds of information about people from all around the world. However at the end of my experience I noticed that wherever we come from, we have the same feelings despite our different backgrounds or cultures.

12 Conclusion

When I started to write this dissertation, I did not know that I would learn so much about fascinating, interesting and curious topics. This work is the result of a real personal point of view. Indeed, I included a lot of personal experiences and commentaries. My goal was to make the reader feel or become aware of how things stand in real life. Therefore I really enjoyed writing it.

There are many impacts on people that decide to study or work abroad. The emotions are a considerable part of them but more practical ones can appear like the following; the social and professional life, the change in point of view or opinion about certain topics, the gain of maturity and experience, etc.

Emotionally, a human being feels things differently from another human being. In relation to my survey I could see that some of the emotions felt during a stay abroad are often the same for people. The social life the emigrant had before may completely change, depending on the environment he/she lives in.

The most interesting aspect was actually personally experiencing what I have discussed throughout this dissertation. I could compare and talk to people from different countries and it helped me at some point by giving me inspiration. I gained maturity, self-confidence and a lot of other practical skills related to my internship.

My English skills were improved thanks to these four months abroad and I am really glad to have had this opportunity at SLC. From now on I will not be afraid to travel abroad on my own. My work experience helped me to take all the opportunities I might have. If one day you have the chance to live that kind of trip, I highly recommend you to do it without any hesitation.

I hope you found this work interesting and thank you for taking the time to read it.

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14 Appendixes

Questionnaire pour personnes ayant travaillé/travaillent à l'étranger

*Obligatoire

De quel pays venez-vous? *

Dans quel pays êtes-vous/êtes-vous allé? *

Pourquoi avoir décidé de partir travailler à l'étranger? *

- ☐ Pas assez de travail dans le pays d'origine
- ☐ Le poste à l'étranger était mieux payé
- ☐ Vous aviez envie de "changer d'air"
- ☐ Vous connaissez quelqu'un qui vous a conseillé de le faire

Autre raison?

Quelles-ont été vos motivations à la base? *

- ☐ Argent
- ☐ Découvrir une nouvelle culture
- ☐ Apprendre une autre langue
- ☐ Acquérir de nouvelles expériences

Autres?

Pour ceux qui travaillent en ce moment à l'étranger, depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous à l'étranger?

- ☐ Moins d'un an
- ☐ Plus d'un an/un an
- ☐ Plus de cinq ans
- ☐ Plus de dix ans

☐ Autre:

Pour ceux qui ont travaillé dans le PASSÉ, combien de temps êtes-vous restés?

- ☐ Moins d'un an
- ☐ Plus d'un an/un an
- ☐ Plus de cinq ans
- ☐ Plus de dix ans

☐ Autre:

Lors de votre arrivée dans le pays d'accueil, qu'avez-vous ressenti? *

- ☐ Peur
- ☐ Joie
- ☐ Excitation
- ☐ Déception
- ☐ Tristesse
- ☐ Surprise

☐ Autre:

Si vous avez travaillé à l'étranger dans le PASSÉ, qu'avez-vous ressenti en repartant dans votre pays d'origine?

☐ Peur

☐ Joie

☐ Excitation

☐ Déception

☐ Tristesse

☐ Autre :

Vous êtes-vous bien intégré? *

☐ Oui

☐ Non

Si non, pourquoi?

Êtes-vous parti... *

☐ Seul

☐ En famille

☐ Avec des amis

☐ Autre :

Envoyer

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Questionnaire pour personnes étudiant / qui ont étudié à l'étranger

*Obligatoire

De quel pays êtes-vous originaire? *

Dans quel pays êtes-vous allé? / êtes-vous? *

Pour combien de temps êtes-vous parti /partez-vous? *

Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de partir étudier dans un autre pays? *

- ☐ Votre école proposait des Erasmus dans les pays avec lesquels ils sont en partenariat
- ☐ Vous aviez envie de connaître une autre culture
- ☐ Vous aviez envie d'approfondir vos connaissances dans la langue du pays choisi
- ☐ L'école/l'université a(vait) bonne réputation
- ☐ Le cursus proposé vous intéressait
- ☐ Vous connaissez quelqu'un qui vous a conseillé de le faire
- ☐ Autre :

Quelles ont été vos motivations à la base? *

- ☐ Découvrir une nouvelle culture
- ☐ Faire la fête dans un autre pays
- ☐ Apprendre la langue
- ☐ Visiter le pays
- ☐ Enrichir votre CV
- ☐ Autre :

Si votre Erasmus s'est passé dans une langue étrangère à la vôtre, pensez-vous que votre niveau s'est amélioré? *

- ☐ Pas du tout
- ☐ Un peu
- ☐ Beaucoup
- ☐ Fortement
- ☐ Je suis bilingue
- ☐ Autre :

Qu'avez-vous ressenti en arrivant dans le pays étranger? *

Dans la case autre, expliquez si possible dans quelle(s) mesure(s) vous avez ressenti cela

- ☐ Peur
- ☐ Joie
- ☐ Excitation
- ☐ Surprise
- ☐ Tristesse
- ☐ Autre :

Qu'avez-vous ressenti en repartant/ rentrant chez vous si Erasmus terminé? *

Dans la case autre, expliquez si possible dans quelle(s) mesure(s) vous avez ressenti cela

☐ Peur

☐ Joie

☐ Excitation

☐ Tristesse

☐ Autre :

Pensez-vous trouver un travail plus facilement après cette expérience? *

☐ Oui

☐ Non

☐ Autre :

Questionnaire for people who worked/are working abroad

*Obligatoire

Which country were you born in? *

In which country did you work/ are you working? *

Why did you decide to work abroad? *

- ☐ Not enough work opportunities in the origin country
- ☐ The post abroad was better paid
- ☐ You wanted a total change in your life
- ☐ Somebody you know advised you to do it
- ☐ Autre :

Other?

What was your main motivation to work abroad? *

- ☐ Money
- ☐ Another language
- ☐ Discover another culture
- ☐ Gain new experience
- ☐ Autre :

Other?

For those who are working abroad, for how long have you been working abroad?

- ☐ Less than one year
- ☐ more than one year/ one year
- ☐ More than five years
- ☐ More than ten years
- ☐ Autre :

For those who DID work abroad, how long did you work abroad for?

- ☐ Less than one year
- ☐ More than one year/ One year
- ☐ More than five years
- ☐ More than ten years
- ☐ Autre :

When you arrived in the host country, what did you feel? *

☐ Fear

☐ Joy

☐ Excitement

☐ Surprise

☐ Sadness

☐ Autre :

If you worked abroad in the PAST, what did you feel when you came back home?

☐ Fear

☐ Joy

☐ Excitement

☐ Sadness

☐ Autre :

Were/ are you well integrated? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, why not?

Did you go... *

☐ On your own

☐ With your family

☐ With friend(s)

☐ Autre :

Questionnaire for people who studied/are studying abroad

*Obligatoire

Which country were you born in? *

In which country did you study/ are you studying *

For how long did you go/are you abroad? *

Why did you decide to study in another country? *

- ☐ Your school have Erasmus partnerships with the country
- ☐ You wanted to discover another culture
- ☐ You wanted to learn another language
- ☐ The school has a good reputation
- ☐ You were interested in the courses the school/university gives
- ☐ To visit the country
- ☐ To improve your CV

Other?

If your Erasmus was in another language, do you think your level of language improved (so far if not finished)? *

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ A little
- ☐ Very much
- ☐ I am bilingual

What did you feel when you arrived abroad? *

- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Excitement
- ☐ Surprise
- ☐ Sadness

Other?

What did you feel when you came back home (if Erasmus over)

- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Excitement
- ☐ Surprise
- ☐ Sadness

Other?

Do you think it would be easier to find a job after this experience? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, why not?

Envoyer

N'envoyez jamais de mots de passe via Google Forms.