

**Pilot implementation of DCIS strategy
in TANDEM project countries
(D.2.4)
Evaluation Report**



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1. Introduction

This report summarises the outcomes of the evaluation of pilot implementation of the modular DCIS system developed within the TANDEM project which took place within the five institutions involved in the project. Although results summarised in this report reflect only the initial phase of the implementation, as the project life span does not allow for the full implementation, they include several interesting findings about both benefits and limitations of the modular system and might be useful for the institutions considering the adoption of the system or its parts. They also prove that the modular system can be a useful tool for institutions with different level of experience in the DCIS and different availability of all types of resources. It offers the solution for institutions directly employing researchers as well as for those that provide the services to the former. Finally it is a useful tool for those responsible for the design of such services at their institutions as well as for the employees who need a first introduction into this kind of activities.

Initial phase of implementation followed the creation of the modules in the first half of the project. Process of the creation of the country specific module structure that started in the September 2013 can be marked as the starting point of this process. During the following months all institutions involved in the project used the modules to evaluate and develop their existing services and introduce the new ones. They also critically reflected on the limits of the particular modules in their contexts. During the second half of the project original structure was updated and extended with an aim to adapt it for the needs of the organisations that consider extending their hiring strategies towards their nationals living and working abroad.

2. What is modular system and how it works

Original DCIS Modular system is a set of thirty six possible DCIS measures described in the standardised form. Modular system not only suggests which activities could be implemented but also provides the guidelines on how to implement them effectively. In order to enable the institutions to pick up the right mix of DCIS measures, all modules are further defined by adding several criteria such as required resources, target group, time when the service should be provided or importance of the service for the integration. These criteria enable to use the measures in the most efficient and sustainable way. Besides the pool of possible DCIS measures, modular system also includes recommendation on institutional prerequisites that should help the research institutions establish the conditions for successful implementation of DCIS services. These include measures such as “data collection”, “internal guideline” or “recommended information content in English”.

Alternative strategy offers thirty two modules introducing different activities and measures which research institutions can launch in order to reverse the brain drain and support the brain circulation. Proposed modules build on the general DCIS modular structure developed also within the TANDEM project and adapt and complement it in order to contribute to the above mentioned goal. Since target group of the alternative strategy are primarily the institutions with little experience in the provision of this kind of services, alternative strategy is also complemented by the examples of the good practice. Alternative strategy also defines the minimum standard of the services provision that should allow also the institutions with very limited resources to adopt majority of the modules.

2. Methodology

The data collection methods for this report were selected with an aim to attain the answers to the following questions:

- How did the project partners update their services based on the experience with the modular system? Did the institution use the modular system to introduce new services or extend the existing ones? Do they intend to introduce further modules in the future?
- Who was involved in the implementation of the modules? Did the implementation of modular system lead to the development of new collaborations with both intra-institutional and external partners?
- Did the implementation of modules lead to the extensions of the new and existing services over the new target groups? Are the services available to the returning researchers?
- What were the main obstacles and limits that hindered the implementation of modules?
- How do the project partners perceive the usefulness of modules in their national and institutional context?

In order to ensure some level of comparability between the partners' common template including complete list of modules (altogether 43 modules from both general and alternative strategy) was prepared. Project partners evaluated each module against the set of standardised questions choosing the answer from the predefined offer. They were also requested to complement the answer if no of the offered options fitted their situation. Finally each partner was asked to write short summary of the implementation process.

3. Evaluation outcomes

The following section summarizes the main outcomes of the evaluation first in the common overview table and then for each project partner separately. Graphical form of presentation is used to display the general overview of the modules implementation. Short summaries refer to the main issues project partners considered to be important in the implementation process. Each profile is complemented by the short introduction of the institutional contexts with regard to the implementation of DCIS services as this is crucial information for better understanding of the evaluation results.

The common overview table uses the following colour key to display the project partners' answers on the question whether they have implemented or intend to implement the module within their institution in the near future.








Key	
	Yes, we fully implemented the measure before the project
	Yes, we introduced the measure during the project
	No, we do not implement the measure but we intend to do so
	No, we do not implement the measure and we do not intend to
	No, but we signpost the clients to other institution offering the service
	Other part of our institution implements the measure
	Others

Table 1: Summary overview of modules implementation

Modules/Measures	CERTH	UNI TARTU	ETH	UCPH	SAIA
Buddy system to support first and second hires and families and to build an internal network					
Career Coach for spouses/partners:					
Cooperation with EURAXESS Links and compatriots associations					
Cooperation with partners and employers in region (local, regional or national level)					
Cultural awareness training					
CV check offered to second hires/spouses and partners:					
Data collection on ALUMNI researchers (career tracking of alumni)					
Data collection/international researchers database					
Database for finding temporary or permanent housing, Information in English about local housing market, how to find an apartment:					
Database childcare facilities and schools for finding childcare; Information in English about schools and education system:					
Database: funding possibilities:					
Database of Job vacancies outside HEI					
Feedback on transition and integration, social event which includes the first hires as well as their spouses/partners and the buddies:					
Forum/Blogs:					
Information on local taxes, social security, health and other insurances in addition to working conditions in country X in English:					
Internal institutional guidelines (who does what?) for employees of host institutions assisting the international researchers					
International language standard, information in English about life and work in country X, forms for visa application and other administrative forms for employment and settlement purpose:					
Language training:					
Letter of reference for a spouse/partner written by the employer of the first hire:					

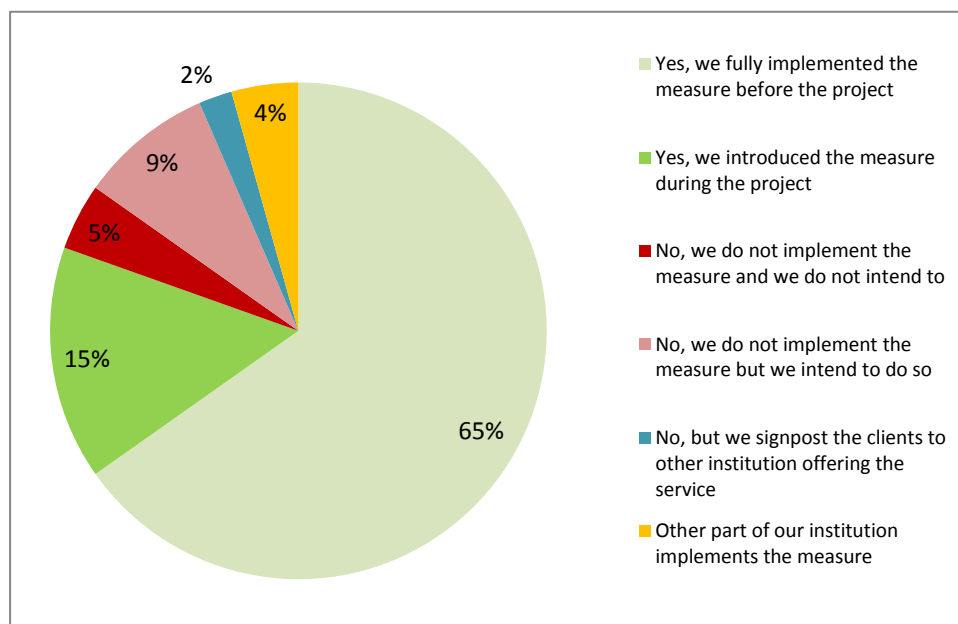
Mentorship programme for your researchers					
Monthly newsletter to first and second hires					
Newsletter for researchers abroad					
Newsletter with job openings					
Online tools with professional focus: webinars (for researchers' abroad)					
Open recruitment – registration to the portal:					
Personal assistance (with daily life issues), e.g. with local administration in the municipality:					
Personal assistance with visa/work permit/work contract					
Promote Euraxess jobs portal and national Euraxess portal					
Providing information on Reintegration funding possibilities					
Researchers Alumni Associations					
Social media groups and networking:					
Social spouse programme:					
Support with international, national, local and internal funding possibilities:					
Transparent Hiring policy and dual career strategy:					
Unemployment – what to do:					
Volunteering platform for spouses/partners:					
Website where the CV's of the spouses/partners are published:					
Website with national job search engines:					
Welcome event with first hires and spouses/partners, plus buddies:					
Welcome package					
Workshop: How to define career goals/assessment:					
Workshop: How to find relevant jobs in country X:					
Workshop: How to network in country X:					
Workshops and events abroad (general and professional)					

3.1. Denmark (University of Copenhagen)

University of Copenhagen joined the project as one of the partners with high extent of experience on dual career and integration services. University has been pursuing very active strategy towards attraction of the international researchers over the last few years. This has been reflected also in the considerable development of the whole spectrum of the services for international researchers and their spouses and its strategy in this field is currently considered to be an example of good practice by many institutions working with international researchers. This strategy is supported by the sufficient resources in terms of both money and personnel which enables for testing new services and approaches, and extension of the services over the very broad spectrum of international researchers and their partners and families, including the PhDs.

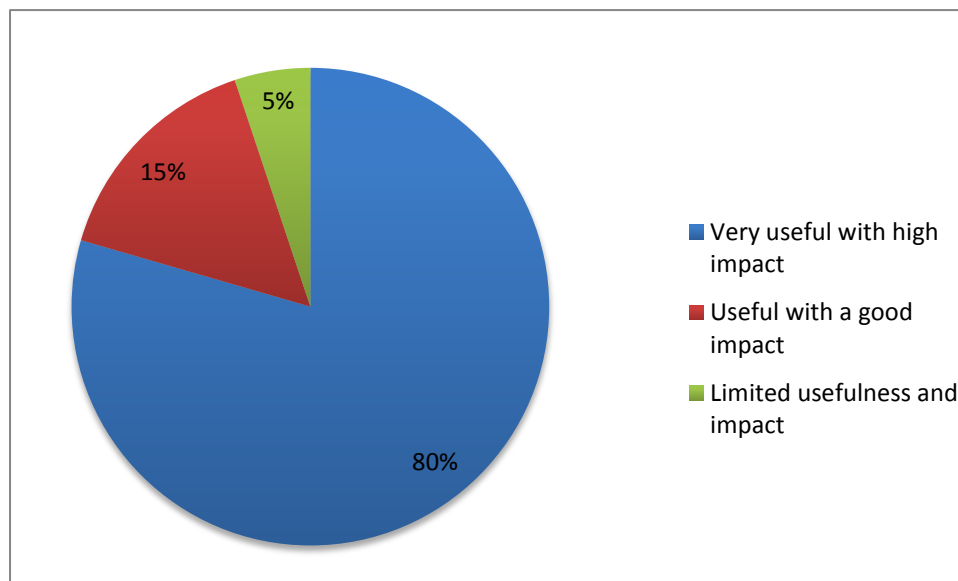
Based on this context, it is not surprising that majority of the services were already in place at the University of Copenhagen before the start of the project. Yet as the following chart shows Tandem project contributed to the introduction of several new services and several should be launched in the future. Despite the primary focus on the international researchers and their partners, the majority of services is available also to the returning researchers (83%) and introduction of measures targeting this specific group are also planned in the future. Majority of services is provided by the International Staff Mobility department, but in several cases another department offer the service. Signposting to other institutions is also used in the relevant cases. With the small number of modules (such as CV check, Career coach for spouses or “buddy system for second hires”) future implementation is not considered at all. The reasons for this are mainly that free alternatives are already easily available for the given services or the service is not applicable in the given context.

Chart 1 Implementation of modules at University of Copenhagen



Following chart shows that perception of the modules usefulness at UCPH is very positive and majority of modules is considered to be very useful and with high impact in the given context.

Chart 2 *Perceived usefulness of modules implementation at the University of Copenhagen*



Finally following text shortly summarises what the Danish project partners consider to be the main contributions of the module system implementation at their institution:

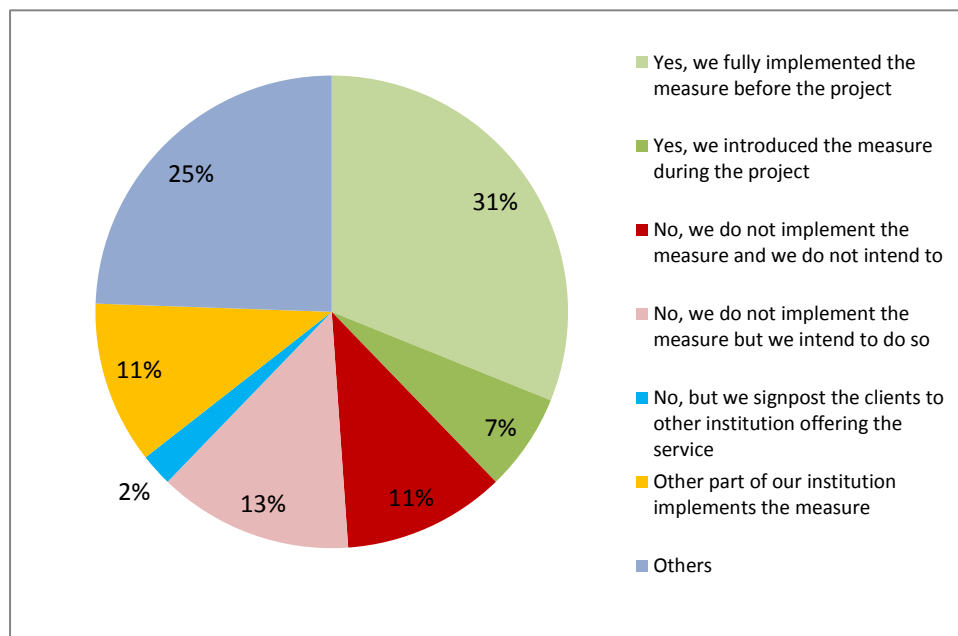
- **Possibility to exchange and learn:** Possibility to collaborate and exchange was considered to be the one of the main benefits of the common design and implementation of modular system. In this regard it has been especially interesting to look at other universities and compare the provided services; what services do they already provide? Why do they judge the same service with another colour?
- **Reassessment of existing services and identification of the existing gaps.** Besides looking at other institutions, it has also been very useful for UCPH to look at itself and critically review the services it provides. When is it necessary to provide the specific service? Do they really need to be given priority? Are these services equally useful for both researchers and the spouses?
- **Strengthening the EURAXESS identity:** Development and implementation of modular system led to the increasing the focus on the involvement of the Euraxess job portal and the focus on career development and career workshops for researchers.
- The feedback on the growing number of career seminars and workshops has been very positive. UCPH already organised job seeking workshops for spouses, but researchers are very much interested in these courses as well. The feedback provided by the participants indicates that they find the workshops to be extremely important in the middle of their contract period, and not in the end.
- **Modular system as an assistance tool for the new employees:** New employees at the universities HR department, get a good insight what we do and what we find important and when the services are provided. The modules help to inform them, but it is also a good starting point for discussion.
- Implementing DCIS needs to be an ongoing process with a lot of internal and external communication. Most of the proposed DCIS has been in place in Denmark even before the project started, but using the modules to compare and internally discuss the existing services has been very giving.

3.2 Estonia (University of Tartu)

Especially for the countries in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, University of Tartu can in many regards be considered an example of good practice on effective HR policies, including those targeting the international researchers. Its approach towards the HR development is strategic led by the clear and measurable goals¹ and supported by specialised HR staff. This strategic approach was also reflected in the TANDEM modular system implementation process.

The University of Tartu has offered basic support services to its staff and their family members several years before joining the TANDEM project. But these services were more targeted towards international applicants and researchers than their spouses, partners and children. Decision to join the TANDEM project was therefore motivated mainly by the development of the dual career aspects of the integration services. Several measures involving the researchers' partners and their families were introduced throughout the duration of project and others should be launched in the near future. Activities targeting the returning researchers and supporting the reintegration are also foreseen. Majority of existing services (62%) already are available for the returning researchers or might be available in the near future (23%). In case of the number of modules the introduction is not necessary or planned as other institutional or external capacities are identified and effectively used (these are mostly the measures from the category "others"). Implementation of several modules is currently impossible because of the lack of human resources and funding. In case of one module, impossibility to implement it in the given context was mentioned.

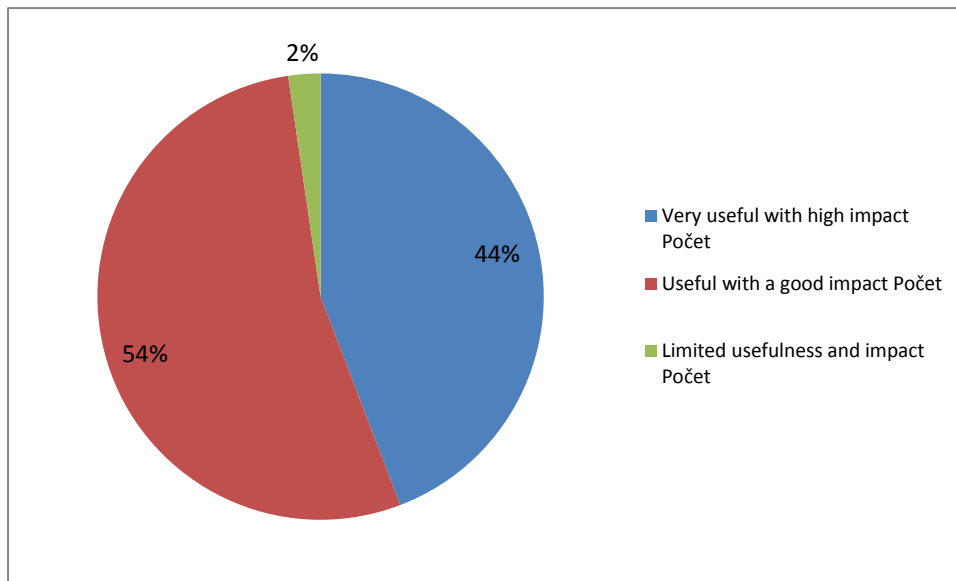
Chart 3 Implementation of modules at University of Tartu



University of Tartu perceives 98% of measures included in the TANDEM modular system to be useful or very useful.

¹ http://www.ut.ee/sites/default/files/ut_files/UT%20Strategic%20Plan%202015.pdf

Chart 4 *Perceived usefulness of modules implementation at the University of Tartu*



Following summary offers the key outcomes of the strategy implementation as identified by the University of Tartu:

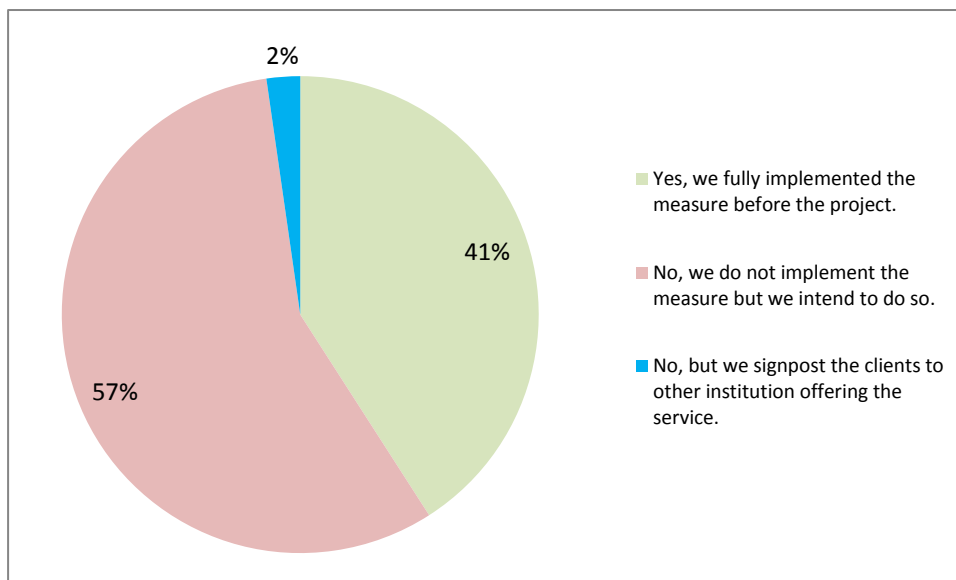
- **Reconsidering the scope and design of the provided services:** Thorough analyses of the needs of mobile researchers in Estonia during the project and learning from best practices of project partners and other outstanding academic institutions have helped the University of Tartu to reconsider the scope and design of the integration services they provide. Modular structure has also been helpful in prioritizing the services offered and also in pointing to new areas that need to be developed. As a result of the project, internal institutional guidelines for employees assisting international researchers were prepared.
- **Launching the new services and extending the existing ones:** University's international welcoming event was open to partners/spouses and children as well. University's mentoring scheme was extended to international staff. First international participants joined the university's leadership mentorship scheme during the project.
- **Developing collaborations and partnerships:** Improvement of DCIS has boosted cooperation between different units within the university and between institutions. Due to special attention to dual career and integration services during the project, a jointly organized series of social events for internationals and family members will be offered in Autumn 2014 in partnership with Estonian University of Life Sciences. Especially in case of low resources, developing and providing quality services in cooperation with local partners is something to consider. This might be one of the points to be stressed in final outcomes.
- **Identification of challenges ahead:** Critical look at the information channels, setting up a network of motivated and qualified buddies covering all mayor units are the challenges ahead. One of the current hot spots related to DCIS offered is easy access and availability of the services to all of our international researchers and their family members.
- **Raising awareness about the DCIS:** All in all, the project has helped to raise awareness about the importance of integration services offered, especially in terms of dual career not only at the University of Tartu but also in Estonia.

3.3 Greece (CERTH)

The Centre for Research and Technology Hellas has a unique position in the development of the integration services for internationals in Greece. As a BHO organisation of Greek EURAXESS network, CERTH is on the forefront of the development of such services in Greece and has an important “multiplier” role. The main motivation of CERTH in the TANDEM project was mainly to learn from the experienced partners and create the effective framework which will help to organise already existing services in the more comprehensive and effective way not only at CERTH but also at other research institutions and universities. On the other hand, implementation of the new measures is currently hindered by the external context, difficult economic situation and the heavy brain drain that Greek research institutions face.

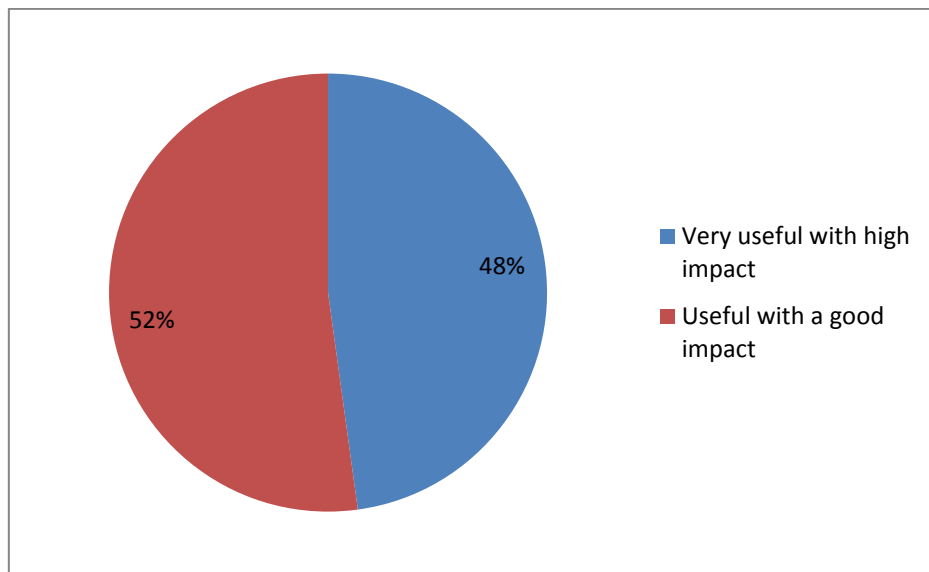
Evaluation outcomes reflect this situation. Number of services already provided by CERTH was available before the implementation of the TANDEM project. These services got more structured due to the framework provided by TANDEM project. Introduction of the new services is currently hindered by the external situation. The main reasons stated for why the modules cannot be implemented currently are lack of available personnel (31%) or lack of both human resources and financial resources. In some cases other service providers already exist. However CERTH intends to introduce new services mainly focusing on the integration of the family in the society and assistance with job opportunities search and career coaching for the researchers’ spouses as soon as possible. The services currently provided are mostly available also to the returning researchers. With the rest extension will be considered.

Chart 5 *Implementation of modules at CERTH*



CERTH perceives 8% of measures included in the TANDEM modular system to be very useful and 52% useful.

Chart 6 *Perceived usefulness of modules implementation at CERTH*



Finally following text shortly summarises what Greek project partners consider to be the main contributions of the module system implementation at their institution:

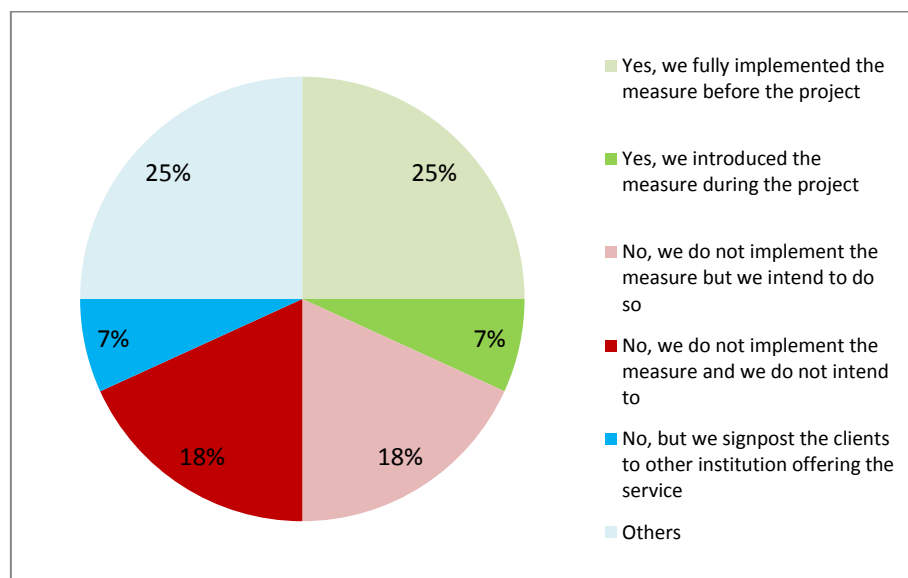
- **Framework for the existing integration services:** Before the implementation of TANDEM project, a number of services for international researchers was available but they were mostly offered on the ad hoc basis and a permanent framework structure was missing. TANDEM project provided such framework.
- **Gaining the motivation for the introduction of services for dual career couples:** There is a lack of services regarding Dual Career in both CERTH and in Greece. Most of the services provided to researchers are provided through EURAXESS network. Good practices, presented by the experienced partners such as ETH or UCPH gave CERTH the motivation to add some Dual Career services under the EURAXESS service centre operating on CERTH.
- **Raising awareness about the DCIS at CERTH and in Greece:** During TANDEM Workshop (May 2014) and TANDEM Info day (September 2014) organized in Athens it became obvious that main stakeholders are not aware of the Dual Career Services provided abroad and the possibilities to provide these kind of services also in Greece. EURAXESS Greece is cooperating with most of the main stakeholders and will keep them informed regarding the future improvements on Dual Career services and Modular system hoping for their support in the future.
- **Preparing CERTH for the role of good practice multiplier:** CERTH as the coordinator of the Greek EURAXESS Network has a unique opportunity to spread the methodology developed in the TANDEM project towards the other research institutions and universities in Greece. The first step will be a one day training on Dual Career Services and on Modular System organised within the annual meeting of the members of the Greek EURAXESS Network. This training session should motivate all Greek EURAXESS Service centres to include Dual Career Services in their activities and to use Modular System to organize their services.

3.4 Slovakia (SAIA)

SAIA is the only one from the project partners that does not employ researchers directly but acts as a service organisation for both international researchers and their employer instead. It is also a BHO of Slovak EURAXESS network. These institutional specifics influenced the whole process of the initial TANDEM modules implementation creating both limits and new opportunities for the strategy implementation. On the one hand SAIA used the TANDEM project as a good opportunity to act as a good practice multiplier and to encourage research institutions in Slovakia to introduce a more systematic approach towards the integration services for international researchers. Moreover TANDEM modules are a good tool for helping these institutions to learn about the importance of dual couples support and social integration issues, which are relatively new for them. On the other hand several modules could not be implemented by SAIA or could only be implemented indirectly.

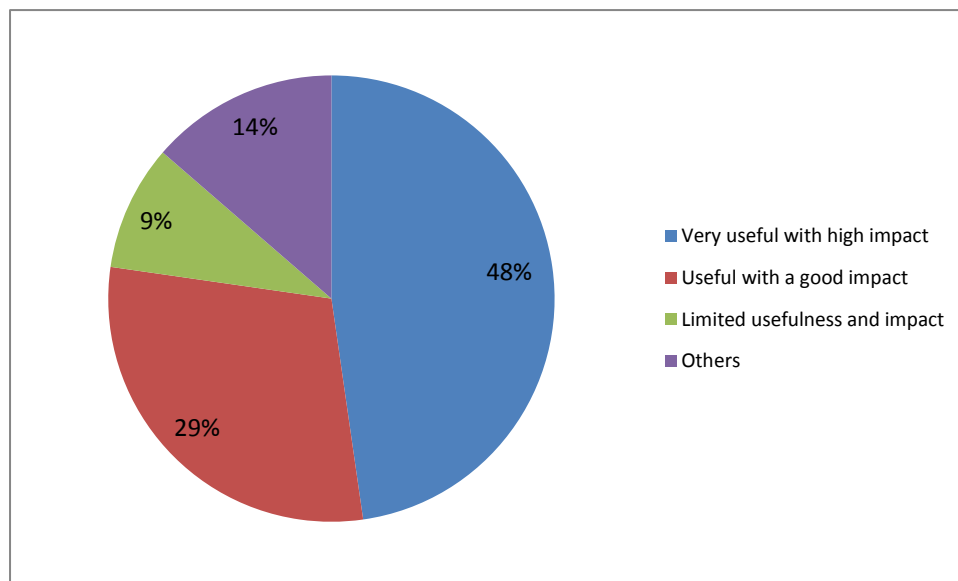
This has been reflected also in the results of the implementation evaluation which shows a more mixed picture than those of the other partners. SAIA has already offered a considerable part of the modules before the project start. Project itself contributed to the introduction of three new services throughout its duration. Eight more measures are in the pipeline. Some of the measures cannot be implemented mostly for the reasons such as unavailability of both human resources and funding (as SAIA is a small organisation). Option “others” has been selected for the number of measures. These are mostly the measures which need to be implemented by the institutions employing the researchers directly. However, also in the case of these modules, SAIA actively encourages their implementation at the research institutions and universities and is ready to provide them with a support in that.

Chart 7 *Implementation of modules at SAIA*



SAIA considers more than two-thirds of the modules to be useful or very useful. In case of 9% of modules their usefulness in current Slovak context is limited. Part of the modules cannot be implemented by SAIA directly; these were in the category “others”.

Chart 8 *Perceived usefulness of modules implementation at SAIA*



Following summary offers the key outcomes of the strategy implementation as identified by SAIA:

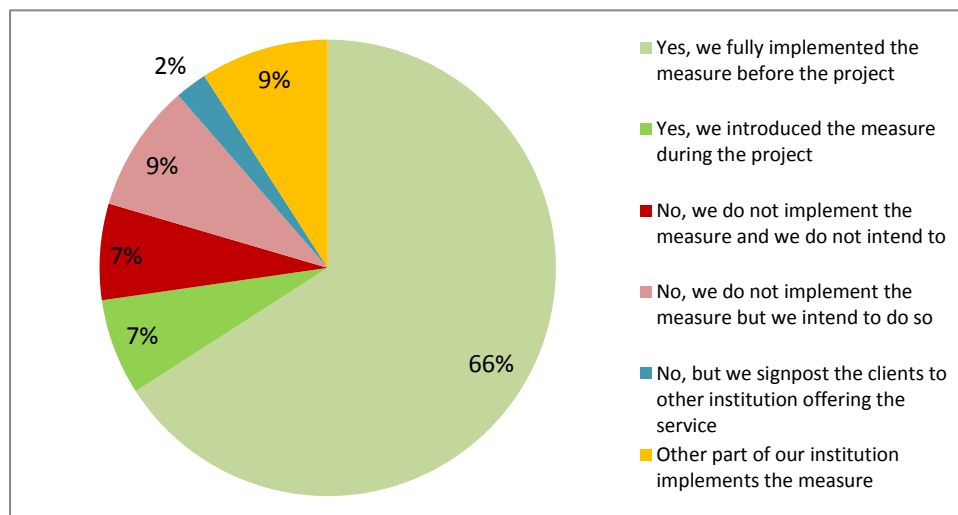
- **Introduction of new services and improvement of the existing ones:** New services were introduced (opening the networking meeting and other activities to researchers' partners and families, introducing new portal section, including information for partners and families on portal and in publications...) and quality of existing services increased in the process of the strategy creation and implementation.
- **Preparing SAIA for the role of the facilitator and good practice multiplier:** Due to the TANDEM activities we are now much better aware of not only what the limits and constraints for the implementation of DCIS services in Slovakia are but also where the windows of opportunities exist and are ready to overtake the role of facilitator of the development of DCIS services in Slovakia. As most of the research institutions and universities in Slovakia have neither the critical mass of international researchers nor the sufficient resources to introduce the full spectrum of integration services development of network collaboration and sharing of information and knowledge between them is crucial part of this facilitator role.
- **Mobilisation of internal resources** can be first and very effective step towards better integration support. Research institutions many times have internal resources to introduce some of the services (e.g. language courses) but they do not know that they could be demanded by the international researchers.
- **Raising awareness about the DCIS services is necessary.** Social and cultural integration is still strongly underestimated even by the professionals working with international researchers in Slovakia. Focus on the dual career couples is entirely new for most of them. Tandem project helped to raise awareness about these issues and provided number of arguments why this dimension of integration is also important.
- **Developing the "Institutional preconditions"** is a first step for the successful implementation of DCIS strategy. Before more advanced modules will be introduced, some fundamental conditions have to be fulfilled.

3.5 Switzerland (ETH)

ETH as an initiator of the TANDEM project has a very good structure and set-up of dual career and Integration services for international researchers and their families and services provided are of excellent quality. Dual Career office based on ETH is one of the oldest and most experienced in Europe. Existing services offered by the ETH Dual Career Office were also the main base for the development of the TANDEM modular structure.

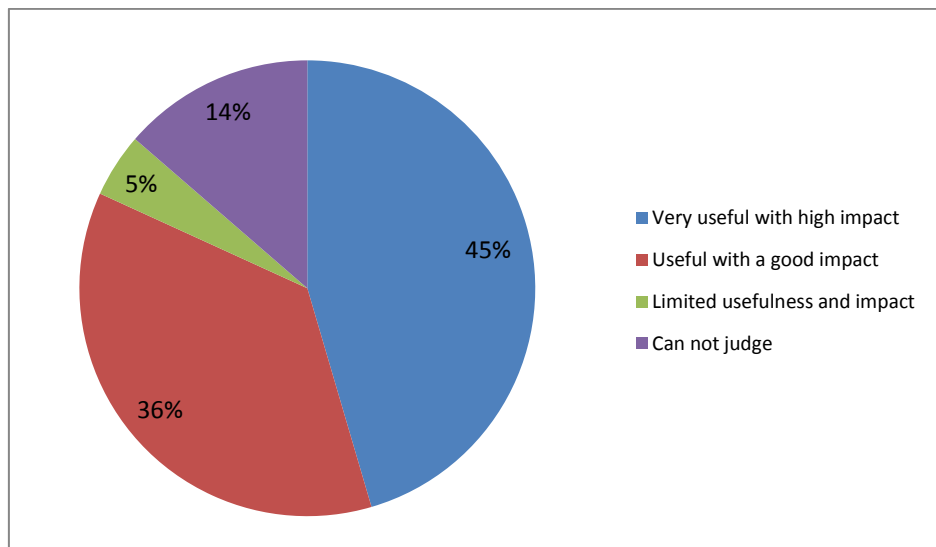
It is therefore not surprising that over two thirds of measures were implemented at ETH before the project start. But it is also surprising that in such an institution with lots of good practices and 20 years of experience in the provision of DCIS, there is still a space for improvement. Compared to e.g. Danish practice DCIS services are restricted to the group of the more experienced and prominent researchers. One of the main aims ETH followed in the TANDEM project was therefore fine-tuning of existing measures and preparing conditions for their extension towards new target groups, especially to the post-docs. Beside that three new measures were introduced throughout the project and four more are in the pipeline. In case of the measures that ETH does not plan to implement, specific hurdles were identified in the evaluation template such as difficulties with data protection. Despite the high attractiveness of ETH for internationals, possibility to attract the Swiss nationals back from abroad is also considered to be an interesting option. Majority of the services, available to international researchers is also available to the returning ones and for the several modules extension is considered.

Chart 9 Implementation of modules at ETH



Following chart shows that perception of the modules usefulness at ETH is very positive and majority of modules is considered to be useful and very useful. For the part of the modules that are not implemented directly by the involved departments possible impact has not been assessed (“cannot judge” option).

Chart 10 *Perceived usefulness of modules implementation at ETH*



Following summary offers the key outcomes of the strategy implementation as identified by ETH:

- **Internal networking with other organisational unit:** The project helped to a great extent in networking with other offices and parts of the ETH (International relations, Euraxess SC, DC Advice, Diversity services, Equal chances etc.).
- **New services:** The welcome office within HR department at the ETH Zurich has been opened at the beginning of 2014 and more services have been introduced (salary calculator; more practical information on life in Zurich).
- **Challenges ahead:** Key Offered services are fragmented and often targeted to specific clients (DC Advice – VIP service for appointed professors and their family only. Since Post Doc phase is the most difficult one for a mobile researcher and his/her family creating conditions for the extension of the existing services toward broader target groups remains one of the main goals ETH followed during the project. The mapping of the modules has also enabled to think ahead: what services could be introduced to offer a better service? The following should be looked at thoroughly: (1) Mentoring programmes, (2) Social programmes, (3) Dual Career assistance for PostDocs and (4) Career Development.
- **Networking approach:** A new element which is supportive not only for the career development of young researchers but also for the professional integration of spouses and partners of mobile researchers is a networking approach. ETH Zurich worked towards becoming a special strategic partner in the IDCN (International Dual Career Network) which includes mostly globally active companies. ETH Zurich as a partner is of particular interest because ETH Zurich offers an alternative job market to spouses of the network-partners and also a wide range of further education possibilities. The advantage of this network is in the fact that the spouses have a very active role and volunteer in many ways to organise the event and offer outreach and marketing elements. With ETH Zurich being member in this network, spouses and partners who are not working in academia could get much better support in their job search.
- **Strengthening the existing framework:** Apart from activities and programmes started during the project, existing regulatory and legal framework was strengthened by rephrasing and adapting the ETH Zurich Dual Career guidelines. Having clear and transparent guidelines helps all parties involved to find good solutions.

4. Conclusions and final remarks

Although the project countries differed in both extent and main goals of the pilot implementation phase, several aspects and experience from this exercise seem to be present in the majority of them. Following text includes the main topics and issues that are reflected in the feedback provided by the project partners.

- **Good adaptability to the various contexts:** The initial implementation phase proved that what should be the main strength of the modular system (its adaptability to different national and institutional contexts) indeed was successfully achieved. The project partners differed with regard to the number of characteristics such as their background, availability of all kind of resources and also the problems they hoped to address within the TANDEM project. But modular system created within the project enabled them to choose solutions fitting their specific needs. It is therefore reasonable to assume that it can be successfully used by other institutions and EURAXESS service centres all over the Europe.
- **DCIS Modular system as an effective assessment and planning tool:** By describing the minimum standard of the service provision, modules enable to identify the gaps between the existing and desired quality of the services and provide the good basis for the further development of existing and new DCIS services. All partners reported that they used the modules to review and evaluate their existing services with regard to their extent, targets groups and other criteria. Some of the partners reported that they used the modular structure as a basis for the clearer structuring of the existing services. Both organisations with developed services and institutions introducing the basic level services appreciated this aspect of the modular structure.
- **Mobilisation of internal resources:** Majority of project partners reported that they developed the cooperation with other parts of their institutions or identified and mobilised the existing institutional resources with an aim to provide more or better services. This is especially important with regard to the fact that introduction of majority of the measures must not require extensive additional resources if the existing ones are used efficiently.
- **Importance of collaborations and networking:** Majority of project partners developed various forms of cooperation with different actors in the strategy implementation process. Networking with external partners was not only mentioned as a mean to improve the services but also as an effective way how to directly broaden the (not only) job opportunities for researchers and their families.
- **Alternative DCIS strategy:** Using DCIS as part of the strategy for reattracting the researchers back to their country of origin is considered to be a meaningful activity by all project partners. Many of the existing services are already available to returning researchers in all project countries. Specific measures that could help to reattract researchers back to their country of origin are foreseen in most of them.
- **Project partners as good practice multipliers and facilitators:** All project partners actively overtook the role in facilitating the further development of DCIS in their countries. Especially in the countries without an extensive record of DCIS provision, module structure has been successfully used to demonstrate how DCIS services could be implemented into the system of the support services for international researchers. It can be also effectively used to introduce the DCIS to the new employees.