

SWITCH TO
SWEDEN

VINNOVA

LINKÖPING
SCIENCE
PARK



TALENT MAP REPORT:

ACADEMIC INTERNATIONAL TALENT
AND COMPANIES IN SWEDEN

2022

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1. About Switch to Sweden

About Switch to Sweden

-Project description and report introduction

Switch to Sweden is a three-year project funded by Vinnova (Sweden's innovation agency), and has the goal to increase the number of qualified matches between international talents in Sweden and recruiting companies.

Main goals

Improve the match between highly skilled international academic talent and Swedish organizations. This is done through a facilitation process between key actors in academia, international students, and Swedish companies.

One of the specific activities of the project is to map the needs, challenges, and opportunities to understand more accurately the situation among the target groups. This report is the final result of the mapping process carried out at a national level.

Based on the main findings of this need analysis, a clear description of barriers and opportunities was defined. According to the final results, some recommendations are suggested to increase successful talent matches between international students and Swedish companies.



Target group and scope

The main target groups are international master's and doctoral students in STEM* fields who are already in Sweden, and knowledge-intensive companies in Sweden.

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*



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2. **Executive summary**

Executive summary

Need analysis goals and general process

The creation of this needs analysis report has been carried out to understand the current state of the match between Swedish companies and international academic talent. Based on the needs, obstacles, and opportunities some recommendations to improve this process have been made.

General recommendations

Specific actions have been proposed to improve the preparation process for successful matching between Swedish companies and international academic talent. Essentially, replicating and learning about success stories from students and companies that have already carried out this process is essential as supporting examples.

Key findings from the perspective of students and companies

The essential findings of this report are the need to support companies and students in three specific areas:

- ❖ Language and culture
- ❖ Migration and administration
- ❖ Retention and integration

3.

Aim of the need analysis

Aim of the need analysis

The purpose of the need analysis is to understand specifically the current situation of the target groups. Therefore we want to understand why there's a gap between qualified international academic talent available in Sweden and current companies looking for these specific skills. Based on the results it will be possible to shed some light on the main barriers, experiences, and possibilities of facilitating and enabling successful talent matches.

Specific questions to solve from the perspective of international students and companies

- ❖ Why do international students come to Sweden?
- ❖ What is the experience of STEM students when they look for jobs in Sweden?
- ❖ What do students need the most help with to be able to stay after graduation?
- ❖ What are the attitudes towards recruiting international master and research talents?
- ❖ What support do companies need to be able to increase the recruitment of international students?
- ❖ What's the general perspective of both target groups regarding the Global Goals when it comes to exploring a career?

4.

Process and study scope

Process and study scope

-General description of the research process

In order to understand the different perspectives of international academic talent and Swedish companies, two consulting firms were selected to conduct surveys, in-depth interviews and do specific research and analysis of each target group. Each consultancy firm has a specialized background and expertise of the assigned target groups.

Terminal 5 - Focused on companies in Sweden

- ❖ Terminal 5 aims to attract, and retain the best talent in Sweden by offering comprehensive personal and professional relocation and work visa services.

Future Place Leadership - Focused on international students

- ❖ FPL is a development and marketing agency that empowers places – cities, regions and countries – to attract and retain people and businesses.



Terminal 5 - Need analysis process

- ❖ The data collection was performed through an online questionnaire which was distributed to companies within the Linköping Science Park network, Terminal 5's network, and mailings, with a reminder, to approx. 7,000 recipients all over Sweden followed by in-depth interviews with selected companies.
- ❖ Terminal 5 carried out a data collection process during the period of April-May 2022. Emecs Consulting AB, a consultancy firm, has assisted with the analysis of collected data and the compilation of the report of the companies. In summary, great survey fatigue was experienced from recipients and reluctance to click on links (in this case applicable digital survey) that was sent via email. Therefore, only 116 from around 7,000 recipients answered successfully the survey and 25 in-depth interviews were conducted to companies.



Future Place Leadership - Need analysis process

- ❖ Firstly, a primary resources list was analyzed to make sure to have a solid baseline of the current situation. It also allowed identifying gaps in data that helped form both the strategic direction of the survey scope, the development of the actual questionnaire, and the strategy around prioritized target groups as ideal respondents. Lastly, 504 international academic talents from all over Sweden answered the survey that lead to the final analysis and report.
- ❖ The data collection process was conducted through several students and academic networks all over Sweden. This was done during a period from April-June 2022.
- ❖ Primary resources list:
 - ★ Svensk Näringsliv: Utländska masterstudenter och doktorander lämnar Sverige (December 2021)
 - ★ Tillväxtanalys: Svenska lärosäten som verktyg för att attrahera utländsk högkvalificerad arbetskraft (May 2018)
 - ★ Tillväxtanalys: Den globala jakten på kompetens – statens roll (september 2018)
 - ★ Expat Denmark Study 2020 / Berlin 2021/22 (Comparison / inspiration)

General reach and performance of the surveys and interviews (students and companies)

- ❖ During the first semester of 2022, both surveys were shared multiple times through several networks. These networks included Linköping Science Park business community and Linköping University's international student communities and associations.
- ❖ To ensure a national scope and reach of this study, the business networks of Blue Science Park, Ideon Science Park, Kista Science City, Luleå Science Park, and Lindholmen Science Park beside the entire community of Swedish Incubators & Science Parks (SISP) were reached out to spread information about Switch to Sweden and the companies' survey. In total 116 survey answers from small, medium, and large organizations were received, and 25 in-depth interviews were conducted.
- ❖ From the international student side, several contacts were made with student organizations, teachers, and program directors of international master programs to share information about Switch to Sweden and the students' survey. The main focus was made in Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (KTH), Chalmers Tekniska Högskola, Lunds Universitet, Stockholms Universitet, and Göteborgs Universitet. An emphasis on STEM programs and universities was made due to the urgency of the skill shortage in the Swedish tech industry. In total 504 survey answers from international students and alumni were received.



5.

Key insights from the company survey

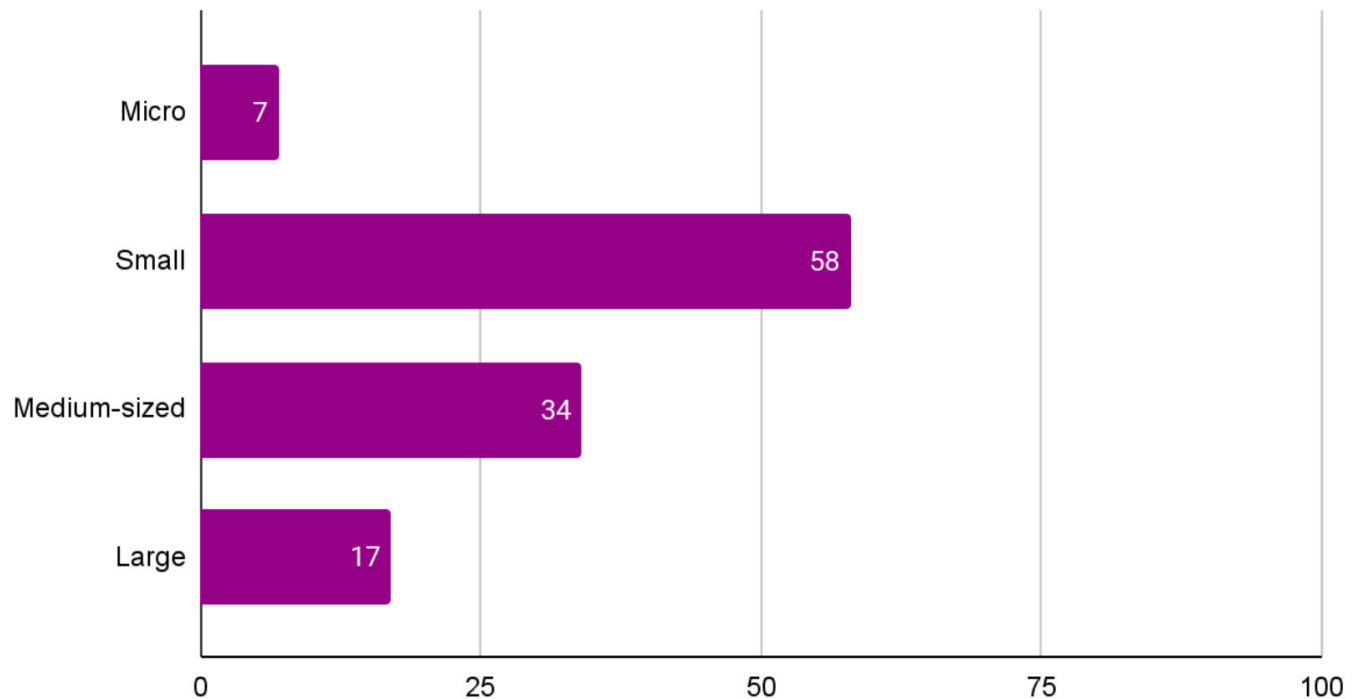
Key insights from the company survey and in-depth interviews

Who has completed the questionnaire?

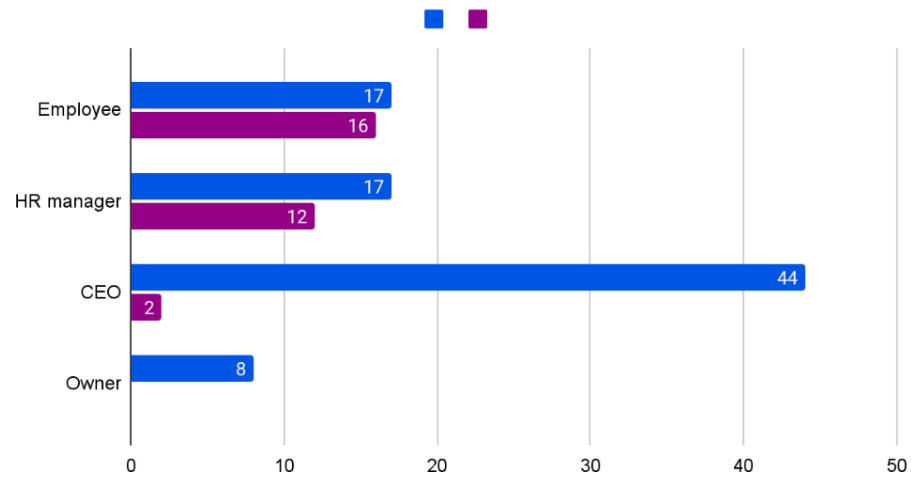
The number of companies that have completed the questionnaire after size class is based on the number of employees and follows the criteria used by the EU: microenterprises (0-9 empl.), small enterprises (10-49 empl.), medium-sized enterprises (50-249 empl.) and large enterprises (250+ empl.).

We note that most of our sample consists of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which account for 73% of the completed questionnaires.

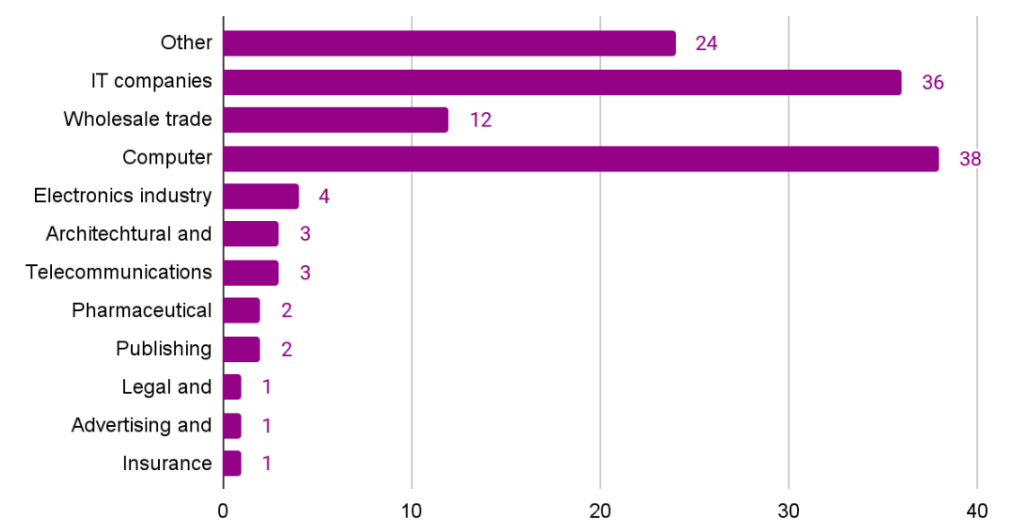
Number of companies after size class



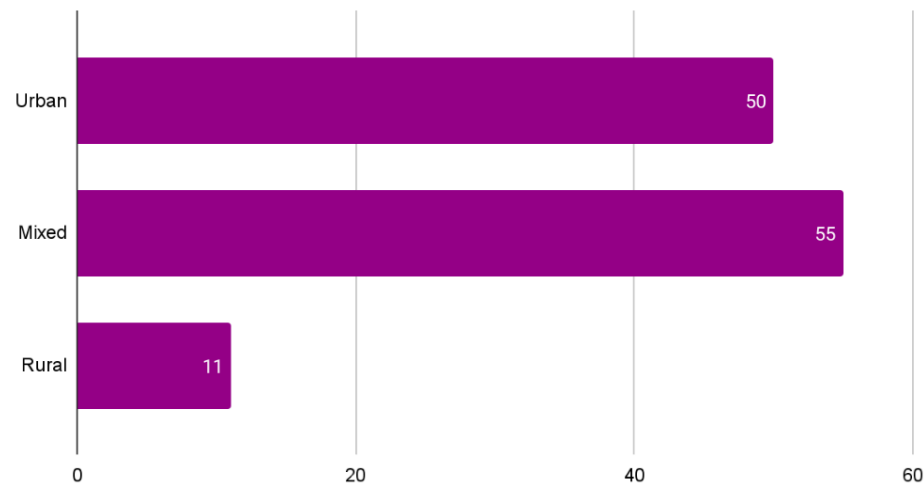
Respondents' position within the company



Main industry



Companies after location in different municipality types



Attitudes toward international talent and conditions for recruitment

The majority of respondents are positive about recruiting international talent and the majority also wish that more international students and researchers would remain and work in Sweden. However, 69 % of the respondents agreed to some extent that most of their employees needed to be fluent in Swedish, which suggests that there are substantial language barriers.

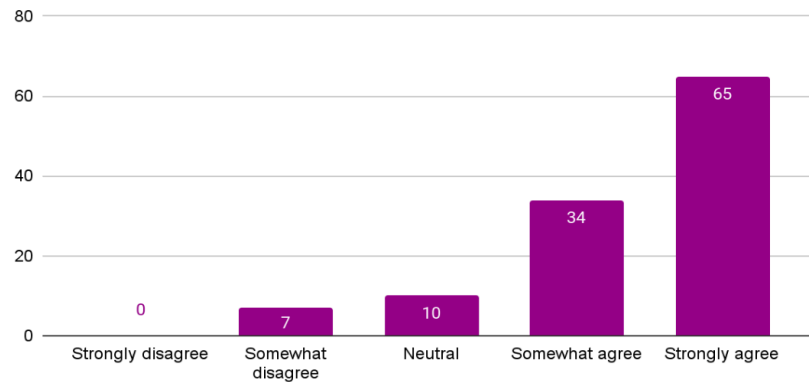
- ❖ The results of the interviews are affected by the fact that 24 of the 25 companies that were interviewed were positive towards recruiting international talent. The only company that did not have a positive attitude toward international recruitment lacked relevant experience and did not conduct international business.
- ❖ Most of the companies that had experience with international recruitment managed the process in-house, but a few companies had to some extent outsourced the recruitment process to external actors. One company had been able to recruit through connections with a master's program. The main reasons for recruiting international talent were the lack of available competence (i.e. skilled workers) in Sweden, and in some cases the company was international and it, therefore, was natural to widen the search to a larger international market.



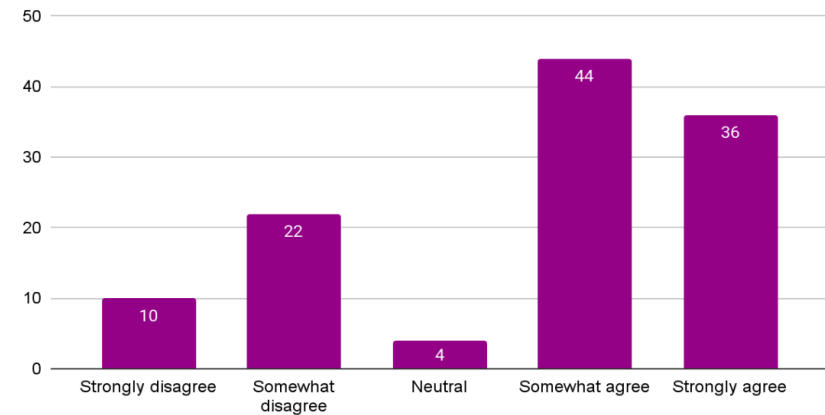
Attitudes towards international talent and presence of language barriers

In our company...

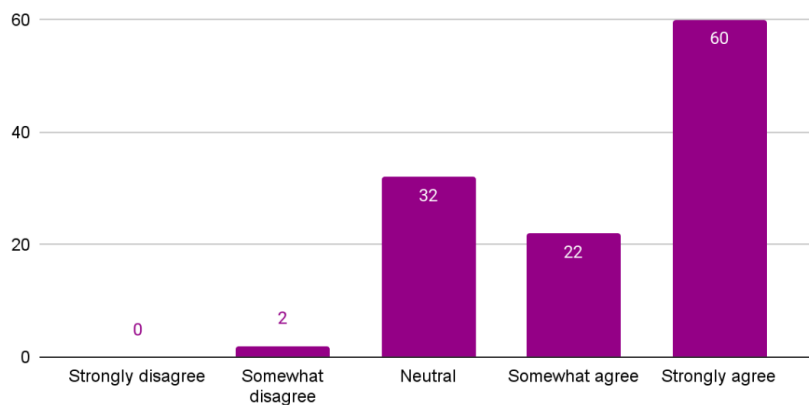
...we are positive towards recruiting employees from countries outside Sweden



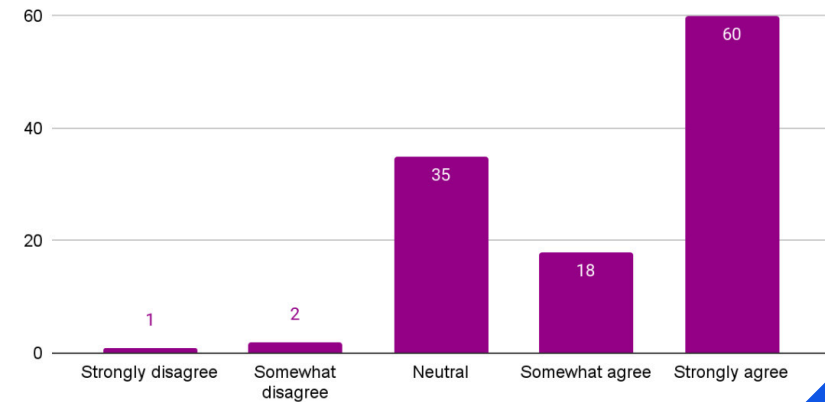
...most employees need to be fluent in Swedish



...we wish that more international students would remain and work in Sweden after their studies

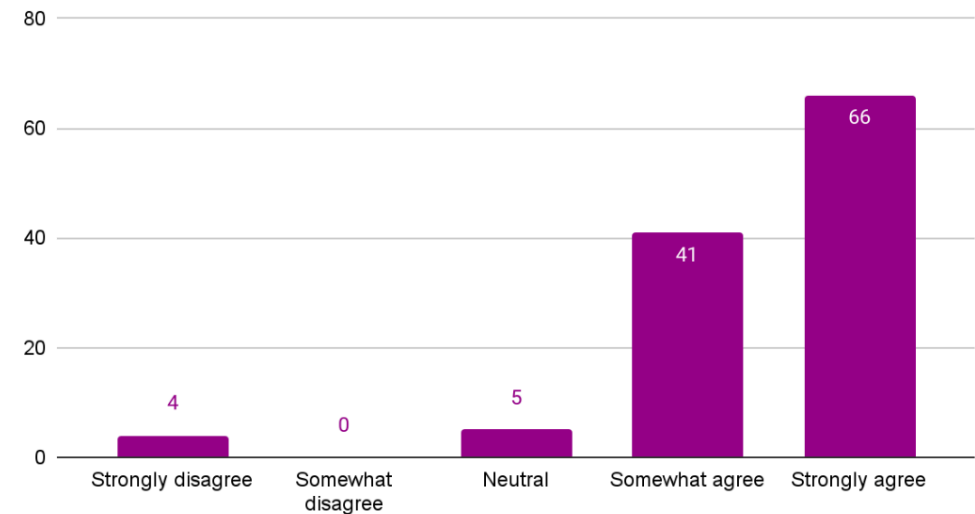


...we wish that more international researchers would remain and work in Sweden after their research education

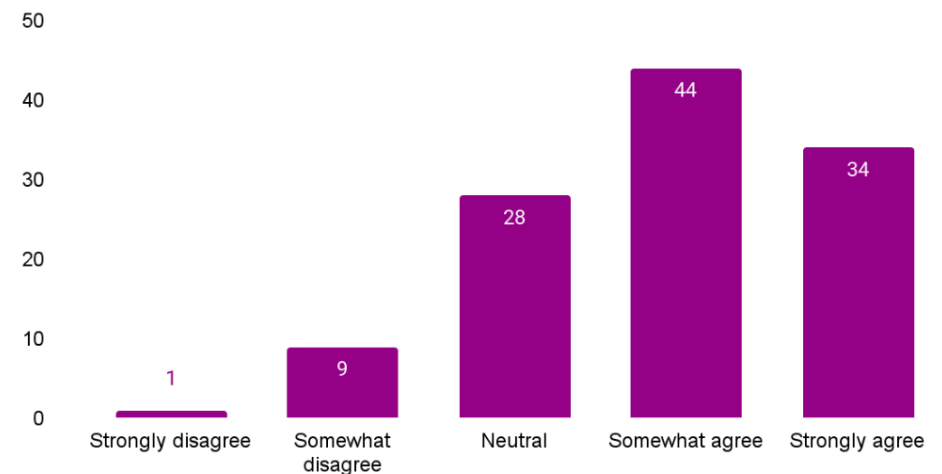


- ❖ Among companies that lacked knowledge and experience with international recruitment, more than half of the interviewees stated that the competence they needed had been available in Sweden but believed that there would be a future need for international talent.
- ❖ The main distinguishing feature between companies that had recruited international talent and companies that had not, seems to be whether they operate in an international market or not. In some cases, the companies needed to hire specialists that were not available in Sweden.
- ❖ Respondents were asked to mark which potential obstacles they believed impeded other companies from recruiting international talent, and also which obstacles they felt impeded their own company from international recruitment. Challenges related to language barriers seem to be the most prominent obstacle, followed by long processing times for work permit applications.

...we sometimes find it difficult to recruit



...we expect that it will become more difficult to recruit the competence we need during the next few years.

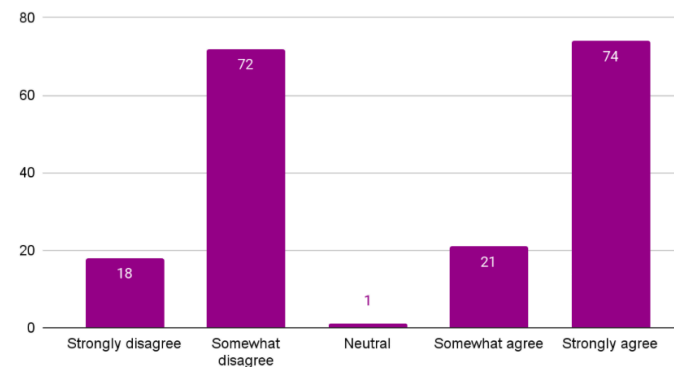


❖ There is also a tendency to rate obstacles as more important for other companies, compared to their own organization. One example is language barriers, which 74 % of the respondents believe is an obstacle for other companies, while only 59 % of respondents feel that it impedes the own organization from recruiting international talent.

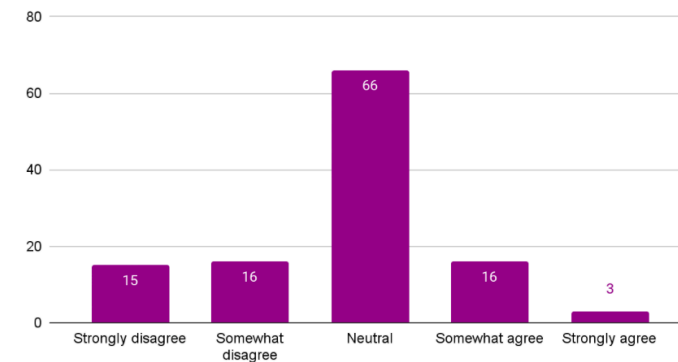
❖ Nevertheless, language barriers seem to be an important obstacle. Another notable difference is cultural challenges, which 43 % believe is an obstacle for other companies, while only 17 % feel that cultural challenges impede their own organization from recruiting international talent.

In our company...

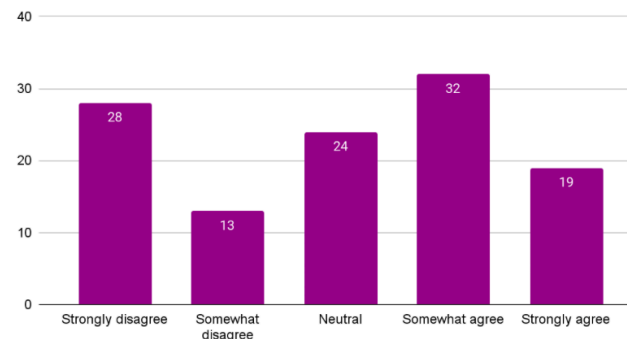
...we have employees from countries outside Sweden



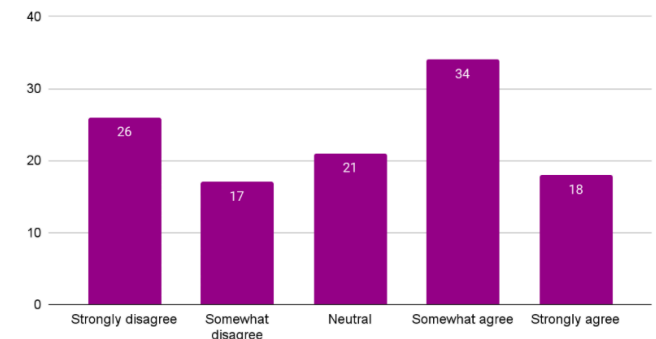
...we sometimes find it difficult to retain our foreign employees



...we have experience with international recruitment



...we have knowledge about how we can recruit internationally

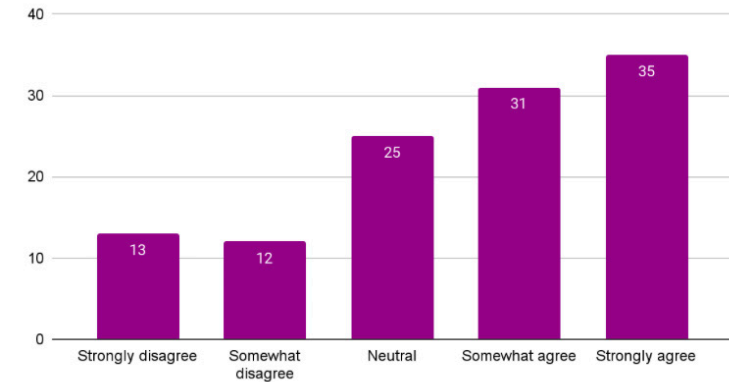


Internationalization

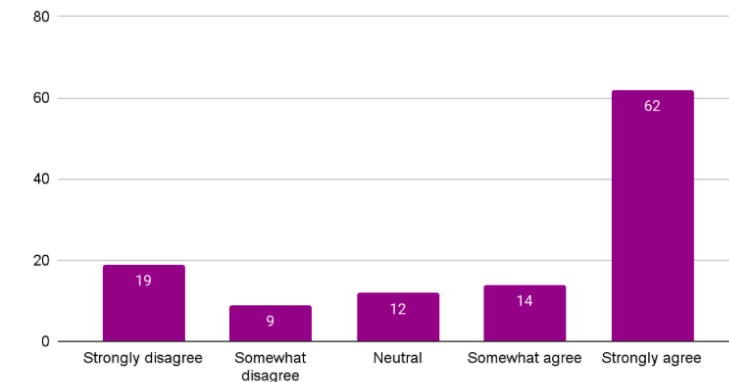
- *Qualitative answers*

- ❖ General comments regarding the lack of networks, clear career support, or knowledge to connect with the labor market in Sweden are very common answers among the companies.
- ❖ “Homesickness” and relative disinterest to work in Sweden also seemed to be the main thought on why international students don’t start working after their studies.
- ❖ The lack of knowledge, resources, and interest to recruit international students seemed to be another common answer to understanding why companies think that it’s difficult to recruit international academic talent.

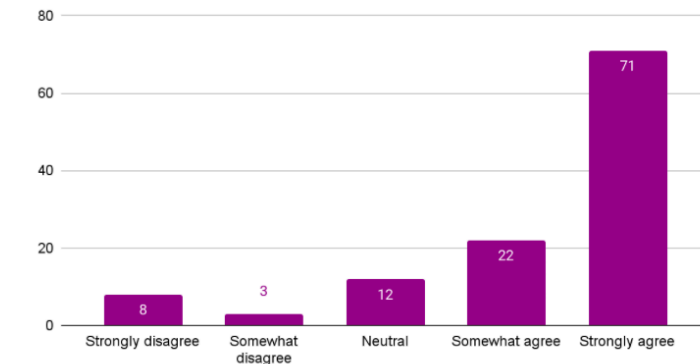
...we often cooperate with foreign organizations/companies



...we have important foreign customers



...we have important foreign suppliers



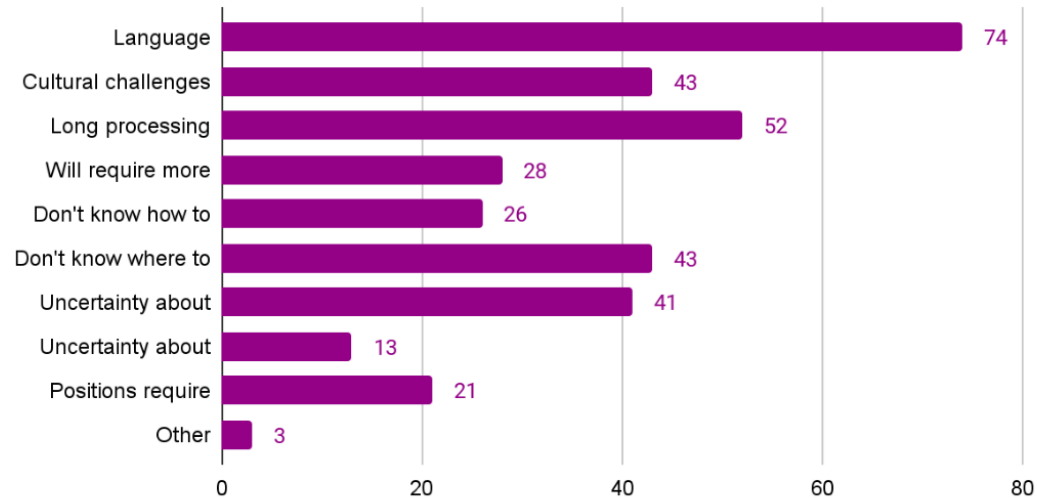
In-depth interviews

-Who were interviewed?

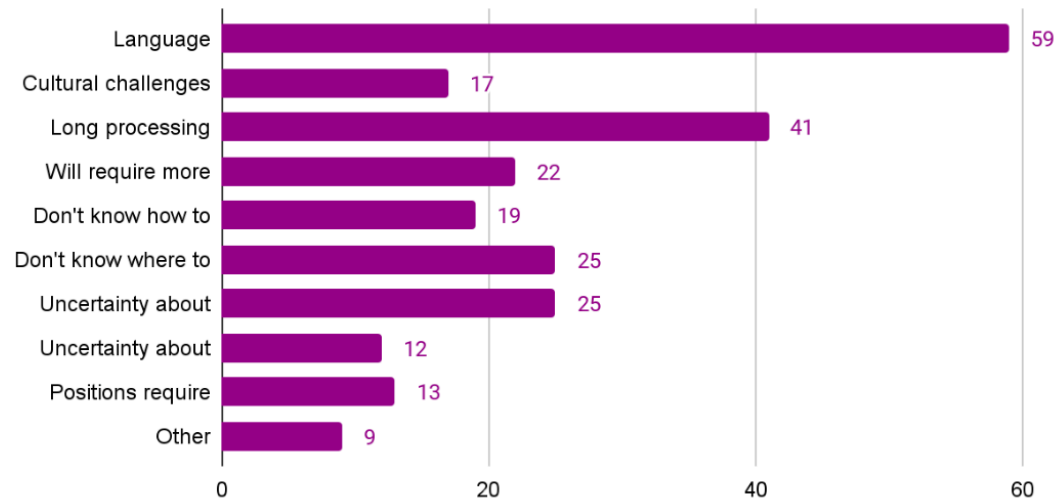
- ❖ A total of 25 companies that were located in different parts of Sweden and operated in a variety of industries were interviewed as part of the survey. The interviewees were mainly different managers within their respective companies: 5 were CEOs; 7 were "hiring managers", and an additional 7 were human resource managers. The remaining 6 interviewees were employees.
- ❖ The interviews highlighted two main obstacles to international recruitment: language barriers and the administrative process. Among the interviewees, language barriers were cited as an important obstacle mainly by companies that lacked experience with international recruitment. Examples of language-related obstacles included difficulty to understand and complying with Swedish regulations. One interviewee also noted that it would be difficult for companies that send their employees on customer visits/assignments to hire staff that does not speak Swedish. "If you don't know Swedish, the language is a barrier."



Share who believes that the following impedes other companies from recruiting international talent



Share who believes that the following impedes their own company from recruiting international talent

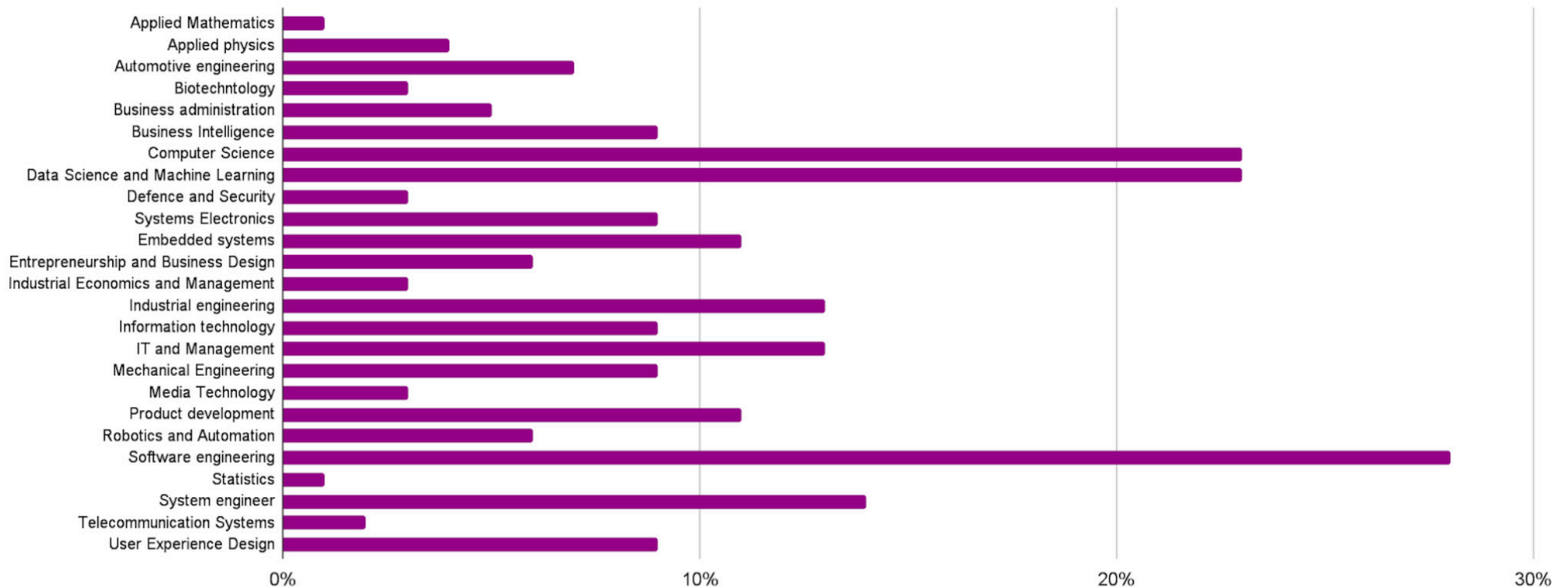


- ❖ The interviews also addressed how the companies worked with integrating the international talent they had recruited. Among companies that had experience with international recruitment, about a handful stated that they offered help with finding accommodation and that they provided information about various administrative aspects. Several companies also mentioned undertaking efforts and initiatives to help their foreign employees learn Swedish.
- ❖ Examples included helping and encouraging individuals to take part in Swedish courses, and one company also offered Swedish courses during working hours. One interviewee summarized the typical efforts as: "...to help with accommodation and training in Swedish relatively immediately" Some companies organized social activities during and after working hours as a way of integrating their international talent.
- ❖ Among companies that lacked experience with international recruitment, there was a positive attitude towards integrating individuals through training, language courses, and providing information about Sweden and cultural differences.
- ❖ One interviewee mentioned that their municipality had organized a special function which provided guidance and information to new arrivals. Another interviewee said the following about the process of integration: "If the competence moves here, you have to build networks and establish channels of cooperation to facilitate the process of integration."



Need of international talent after field

Share that needs international talent with education in the following fields



Need of international talent

In a multiple-choice question, survey respondents were asked to indicate if they needed international talent in different fields of education. Mainly, individuals with educations in computer science/software development seem to be in demand. It should also be noted that about 29 % of the companies were mainly active in IT and computer consulting, as shown previously.

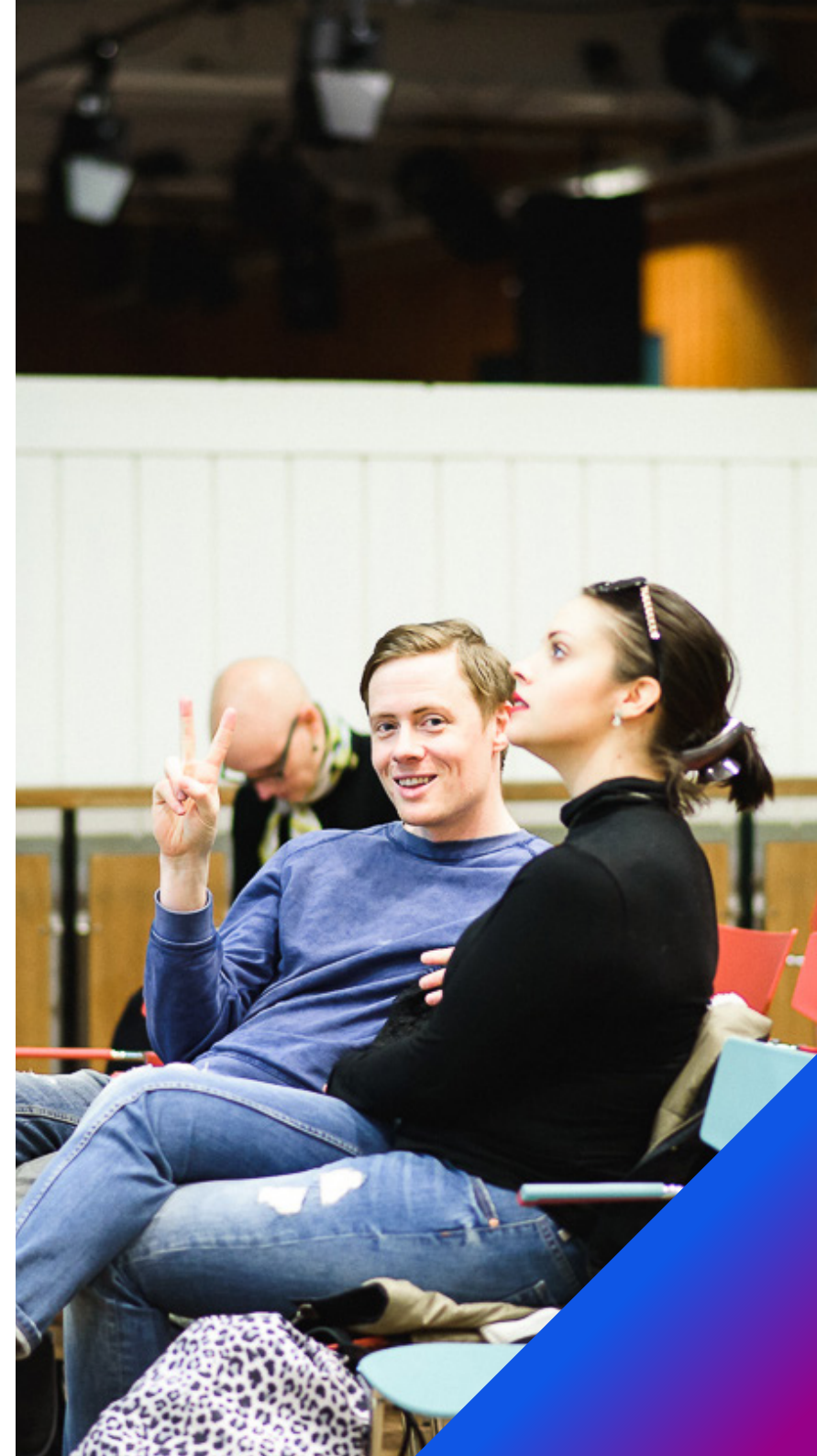
Need of knowledge support around international recruitment

The survey asked respondents if they needed more knowledge about recruitment of international talent. As shown about 45 % of the companies indicated that they needed to improve their knowledge.

Follow-up interviews

The majority of the interviewed companies expressed a need for support with international recruitment. The most frequently mentioned types of support were:

- ❖ Information about the recruitment process
- ❖ Support with finding, evaluating and matching candidates
- ❖ Contact person to help during the whole process



6. Key insights from the student survey

Key insights from the student survey:

“Retention is the new attraction”

- ❖ This survey indicates that two value propositions do stand out: The quality of Swedish education and career prospects.
- ❖ Despite a fairly high rating of life satisfaction in Sweden and interest in staying upon completion of a degree, the actual settling in experience is an important challenge for the target group.
- ❖ The main driver for staying in Sweden after graduation is “Living in Sweden in general” followed by “Long-term career opportunities” and “Employment after graduation”. A high salary level scores significantly low.
- ❖ Reasons to leave are clearly specified around companies as either not being open enough to internationals, not having sufficient knowledge of regulations or simply not wanting to hire internationals.



- ❖ Sweden's three largest cities, Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö, seem the most attractive as they are all places where people want to relocate to upon graduation the most, and want to leave the least.
- ❖ Although awareness of SDGs admitted by the respondents is somewhat moderate they do perceive Sweden as a sustainable country. Data also shows that the commitment to sustainability is rated high by the target group. This applies both to the place where they will live and the employer they will work for.
- ❖ Improving conditions for residence permits is clearly the most frequent highest ranked response on both what the government and universities should do.
- ❖ The main suggestions to the government are improving conditions for residence permits, developing a national strategy to improve Sweden's attractiveness, and creating collaboration bonuses for universities, that cooperate with businesses. The message to universities on average measures activities towards an improved company collaboration taking slight precedence ahead of residence permits and Swedish language education.
- ❖ A variety of career-related assistance services are mentioned including amongst others getting to know the Swedish labor market and better exposure to job opportunities in their professional areas. Permits, general legal rights, and better administrative processes as well as improved cultural integration pointing specifically at the Swedish language and meeting people are also areas of need.



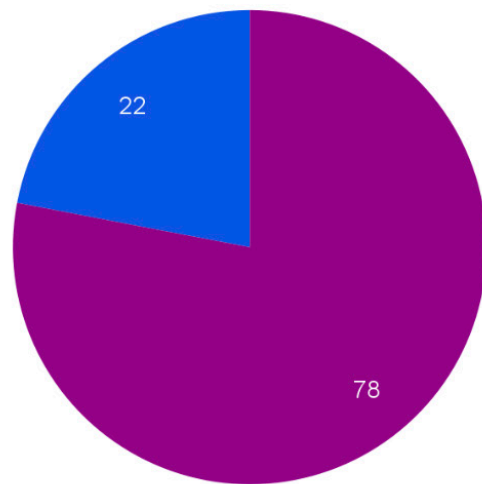
The respondents: key demographics and facts

- ❖ The dataset has 80% of respondents who already live in Sweden which provides an interesting population outside of Sweden who has gone through the experience. Their reasons for not deciding to be retained will prove relevant for both future attraction and retention activities.
- ❖ Approximately 7 out of 10 have studied a STEMs field, which is in line with the intended scope. It is a somewhat young population that has recently moved to Sweden. 50% have lived in Sweden for 3 or less than 3 years, and 25% arrived in 2021. Particularly the latter segment improves the relevance of the analysis as respondents have experienced the product as is today and thus subsequent recommendations are based on current market conditions.
- ❖ With 6 out of 10 respondents being master's degree students this intended sub-segment is overrepresented in particular in comparison to the intended Ph.D. segment, where 20% work in academia, either as Ph.D. students (17%) or in other positions such as professors or researchers.
- ❖ A vast proportion of the respondents are either from Asia or Europe with Africa in third place. Existing data shows that in particular international PhDs in Sweden have a higher proportion of Asian researchers, which needs to be taken into consideration as our data have a more equal representation.
- ❖ Overall biggest cities in Sweden also offer the largest number of respondents. Stockholm, Linköping and Gothenburg are the main hubs where respondents reside followed by Uppsala, Malmö, Karlskrona, Lund, and Jönköping. Linköping stands out due to the strong local network of the project owner and is thus overrepresented in comparison to the size of the place in comparison to Sweden at large.

A newly established population

Proportions of respondents living in Sweden

504 resp.

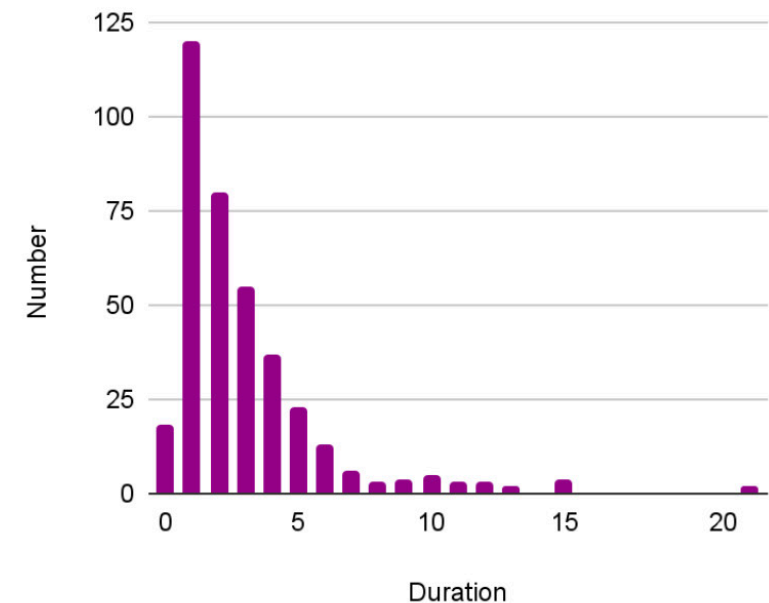


Do you currently live in Sweden?

- Yes
- No

Duration of residence in Sweden (year)

392 resp. (currently living in Sweden)

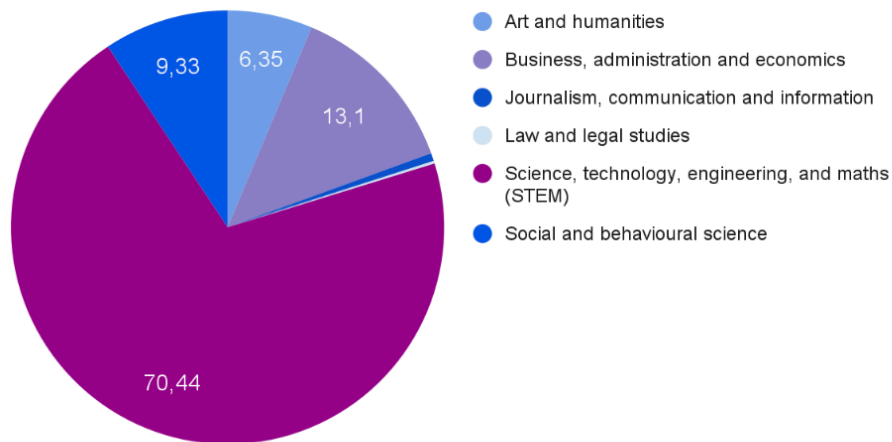


A large majority (80%) of respondents already live in Sweden. This group is a newly established population as 50% of them have lived in Sweden for 3 or less than 3 years, and 25% arrived in 2021.

A majority of STEM's and international students

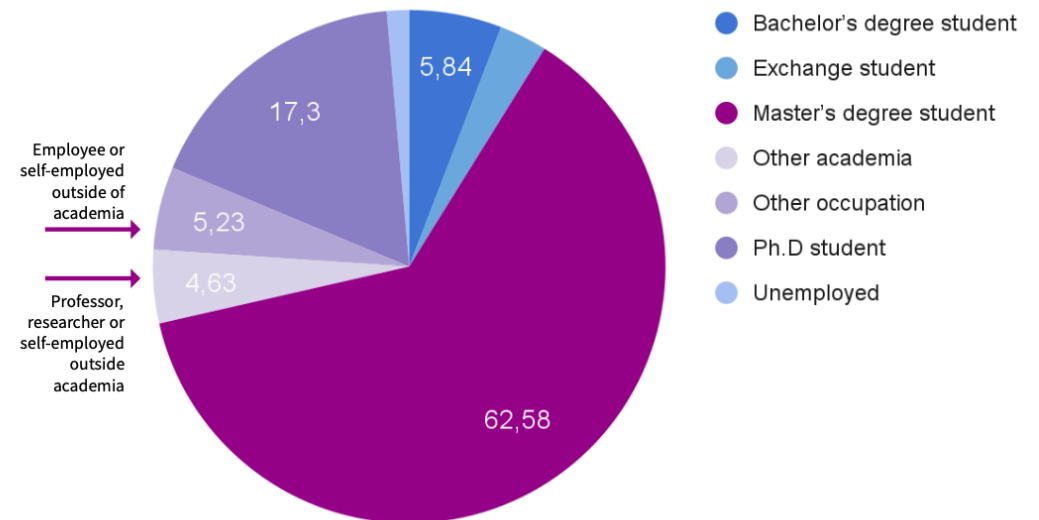
Respondents' academic field

504 resp.



Respondents' occupation while living in Sweden

497 resp.



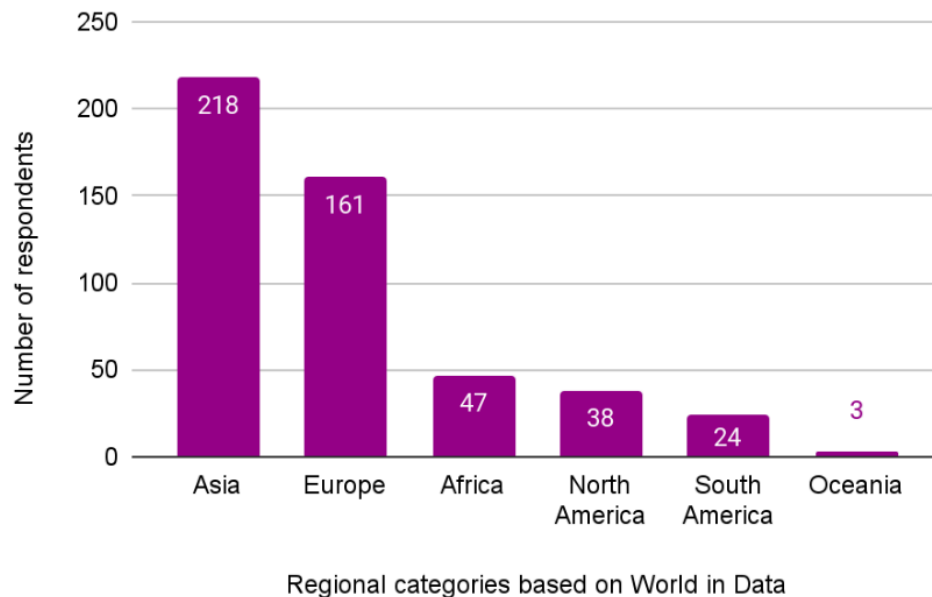
The field and occupation of respondents are in line with the demographic figures. 70.5% of them have studied a STEMs field, which was the target group for this study. The second most common field is Business administration and Economics with 13%, and Social and behavioural science with 9%.

A majority of them are current international students, either in their bachelor's (5.8%), as exchange students (3%), and master's degree students (62.6%). 22% work in academia, either as Ph.D students (17%) or in other positions such as professors or researchers.

Respondents are mainly from Asia or Europe and live in the bigger cities of Sweden

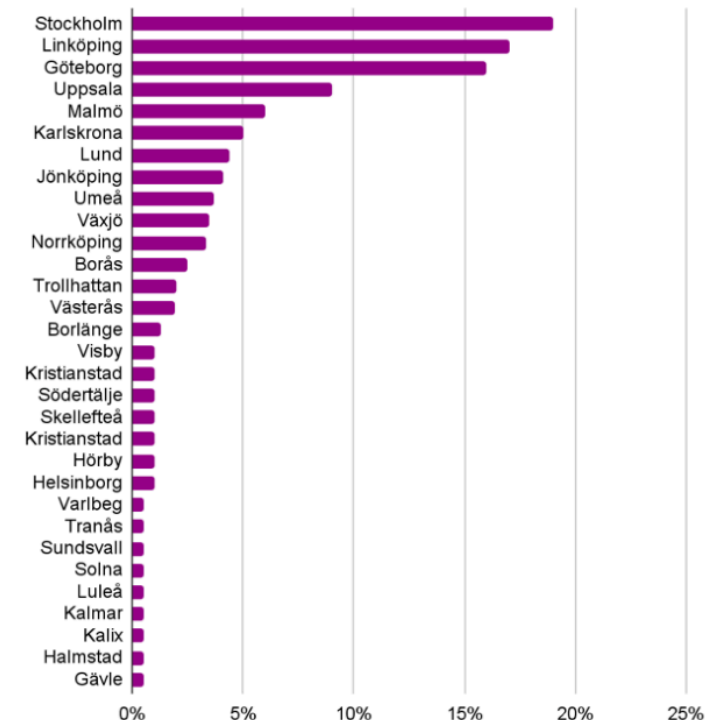
Origins

476 resp.



Place of residence in Sweden

385 resp. (Respondents living in Sweden only)



A vast proportion of the respondents are either from Asia or Europe with Africa in third place.

Stockholm, Linköping and Gothenburg are the main hubs where respondents live, followed by Uppsala, Malmö, Karlskrona, Lund and Jönköping. This corresponds to the main university towns in Sweden, while Linköping obviously stands out due to strong local network of project owner and thus is overrepresented.

Swedish attractiveness: main indicators



8,1

Average rating of life satisfaction in Sweden



5,5

Average rating of settling experience in Sweden



8,3

Average score on interest in staying in Sweden after their degree

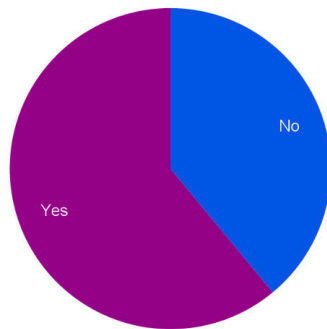
Despite a fairly high rating of life satisfaction in Sweden (Score of 8.1 out of 10) in general as well as interest in staying in Sweden upon completion of a degree (8,3 out of 10), the actual settling in experience is what seems to be the biggest challenge for the target group (5.5 out of 10). No significant variation among groups (occupation, academic field, gender) can be noticed, to the exception of exchange students, for whom the discrepancy between life satisfaction (one of the highest rating group: 8.1) settling experience score (one of the lowest score: 4.9) is high.

Mobility within Sweden

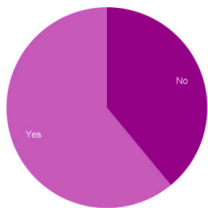
Proportions of respondents who want to relocate

495 respondents

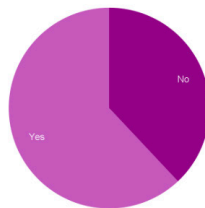
If you stayed in Sweden would you like to stay in the same location?



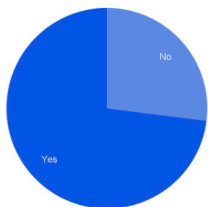
Male



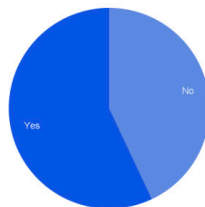
Female



Ph. D students

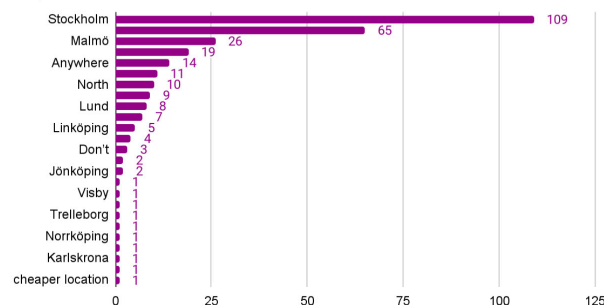


Master's degree students



Place where respondents would relocate

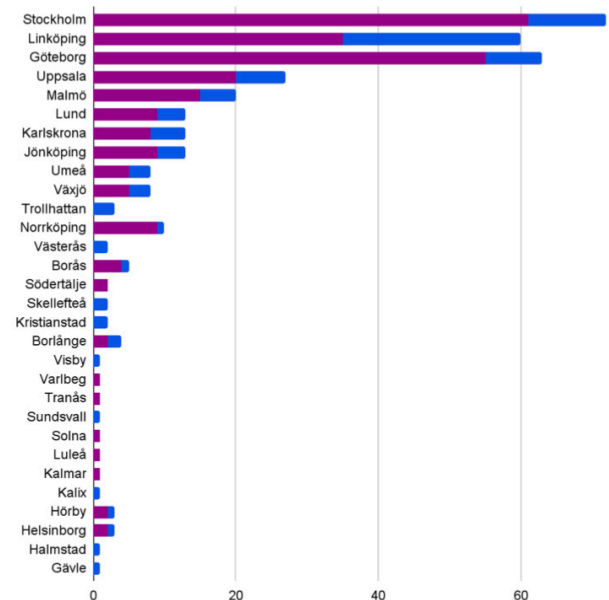
231 resp. 300 locations mentioned



Relocations by places

If you stayed in Sweden, would you like to live in the same location?

Yes No



A majority of students want to stay in the same location if they were to stay in Sweden (61%). This is particularly the case for Ph.D students (73%) while Master's students are more likely to want to relocate (43%). In terms of destination, Sweden's largest cities (Stockholm, Göteborg, and Malmö) seem the most popular. These cities also have few respondents wanting to leave. Respondents also cited wanting to live in "a big city" (11). and a "diverse and well connected city" (4). A large share of respondents don't know where they would prefer to live, but favour "where opportunities are".

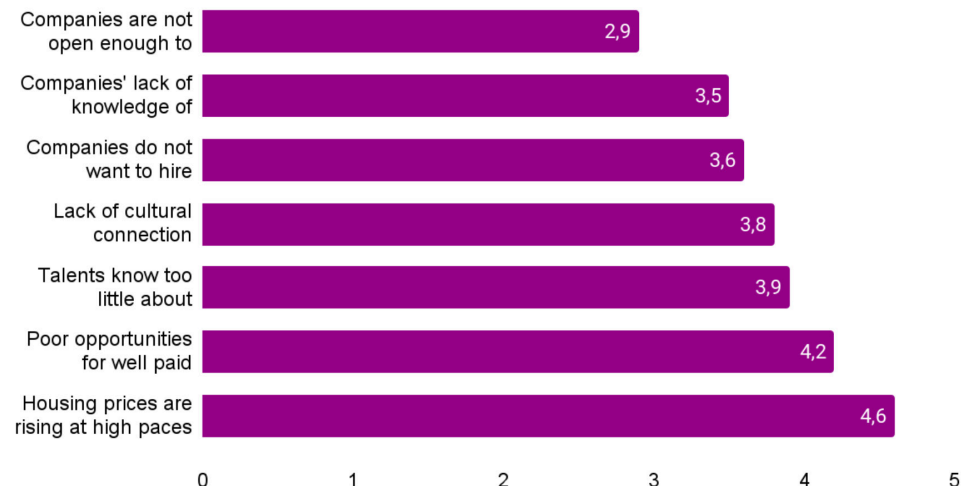
Why are they leaving?

Why internationals leave Sweden

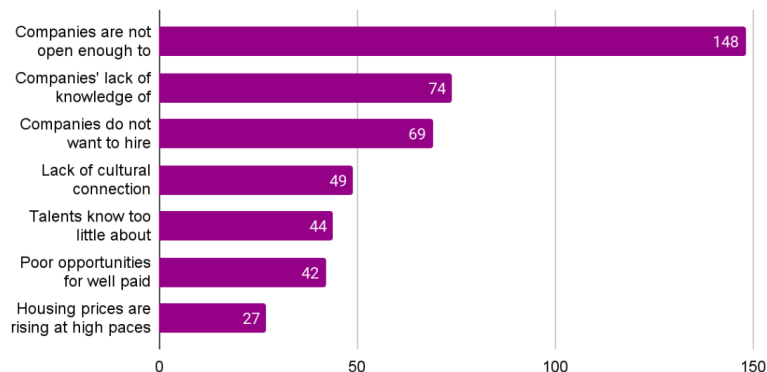
As the respondents have ranked reasons to leave with 1 as most important /critical and 7 the lowest, reasons to leave are clearly specified around companies as either not being open enough to internationals, not having sufficient knowledge of regulations or simply not wanting to hire internationals.

This is evident from a low average score (For example 2.9 for companies not open enough to internationals) as well as many citations as the number 1 reason (same issue listed as number 1 reason by 148 respondents.) On the other end of the spectrum, housing is a low priority of the respondents.

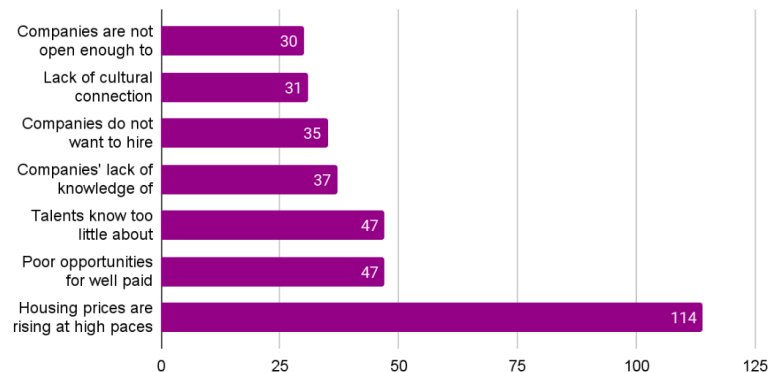
Mean ranking score (1-7) of each challenge



Number of respondents who ranked the proposition 1st (high importance)



Number of respondents who ranked the proposition 7th (low importance)



Challenges with integrating socially and culturally

436 challenges categorised post-survey

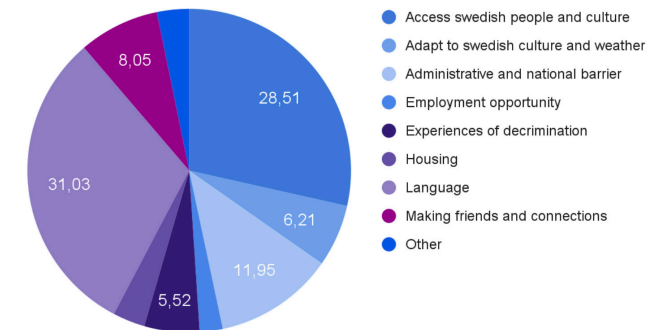
The issue mentioned the most frequently by respondents is language (31% of responses mention language). Even though swedes speak english fluently, respondents recall feeling rejected, or being excluded because they were not able to speak swedish, both at the workplace and in the private sphere.

Respondents notice that swedish is the - unofficial - preferred language in different circles, and therefore not speaking swedish can limit job opportunities as well as preventing them from truly connecting with swedes. They also describe a lack of information in english, whether it is from institutions (Migrationsverket, Health Care Centers for instance), or general and local news outlets.

Some have experienced difficulties to learn swedish, either because of the lack of time while studying or working, but also because swedish people tend to switch to english when meeting a foreigner. It is also mentioned that there is a lack of adequate structure to learn the language, with courses being either too expensive or low quality.

The second most mentioned issue is the difficulty to get access to swedish people and culture (28.5% of responses). This differs from the 4th issue "Making friends and connections", which include more general statements about making friends in Sweden, and targets less the swedish culture specifically.

Open mic: what do you find the most challenging to integrate socially and culturally in Sweden?

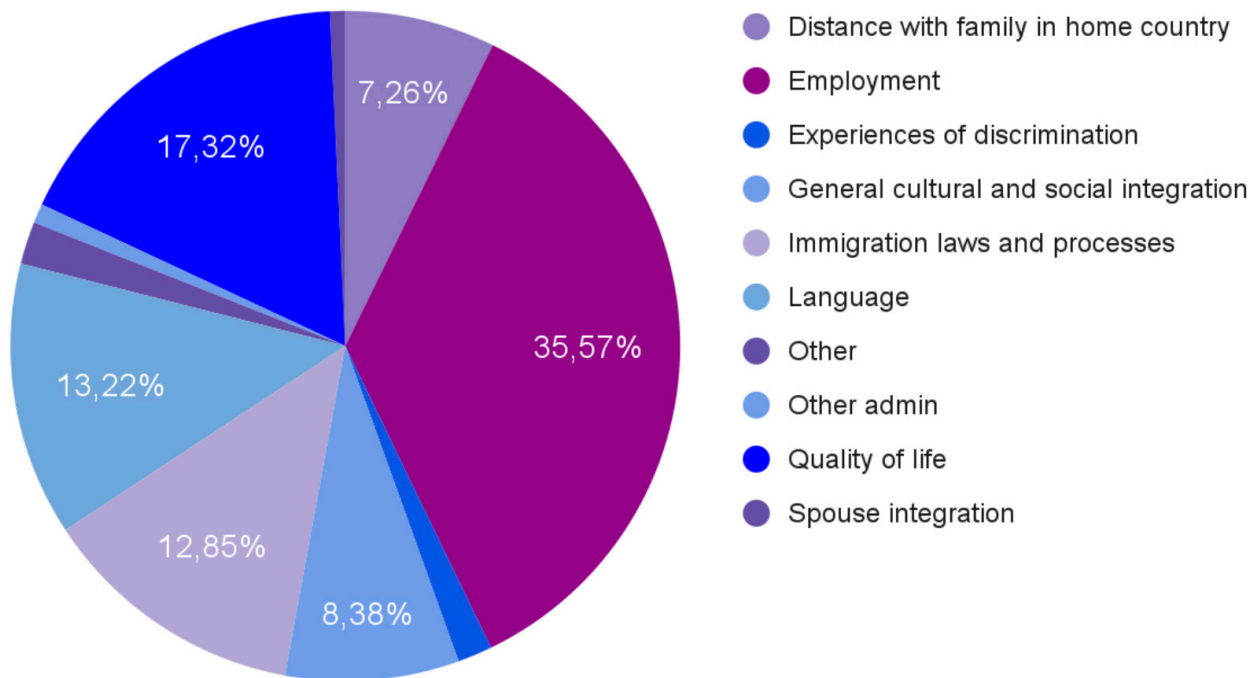


"The language is a problem. Even when speaking fluently you get rejected for not having swedish as your mother tongue. Especially for jobs that require you to work in English?!"

"Being proficient in swedish I think would give me a better access to social life in Sweden."

Challenges to stay long term in Sweden

What are the main challenges for you to stay in Sweden?



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7. General analysis

General analysis based on the perspective of companies and international talent

- ❖ There's a general disconnection between key organizations that can improve the transition process for international academic talent to work in Swedish organizations. A stronger cooperation to support the career development of international students among universities, the business community and governmental organizations such as Migrationsverket is necessary to facilitate this process.
- ❖ Skills supply is an important challenge. 9 out of 10 companies sometimes find it difficult to recruit, while 84 % of the respondents often find it difficult to recruit. In addition, 67 % of the respondents expect that it will become more difficult to recruit during the next few years.
- ❖ Language challenges seem to be the most important obstacle to recruiting international talent. About 59 % state that language barriers/challenges impede the own organization's international recruitment. In line with this, 69 % indicated that most of their employees need to be fluent in Swedish



- ❖ There is a lack of knowledge about migration processes, as well as a lack of resources to manage the process for companies and students. The interviews show that some companies consult external specialists to overcome this barrier.
- ❖ There is a lack of knowledge about where companies can find suitable candidates and uncertainty about legal issues. We also note that 43 % of the respondents believe that cultural challenges impede other companies from recruiting international talent, while only 17 % believe that this poses an obstacle to their own organization's international recruitment.
- ❖ Extra efforts to help train the Swedish language and culture are necessary to facilitate integration into Swedish companies.
- ❖ Facilitating the migratory and administrative processes to settle in Sweden is key to reducing the risk of losing possible selected talents in the recruitment processes.
- ❖ Companies have a low interest in recruiting researchers and doctorates. Extra support to help this student group is especially necessary.



- ❖ Companies need mostly talent with competencies with education in computer science/ software engineering.
- ❖ Aligning international talent attraction of students that fit the labor market needs can facilitate the right supply of incoming students to graduates that can supply the talent demand in the country.
- ❖ International academic talent prefers to settle in the main cities of Sweden. One of the main reasons is that there are more work opportunities in larger cities. However, remote work could be a good strategy to attract talent to live in smaller cities.
- ❖ An ambassador program where students that became employees in Swedish companies can serve as a general guideline and support to help new students go through the same process



8. How can we increase successful matches?

❖ Language and Culture

- ★ Students need to learn and practice Swedish from an early stage since they arrive in Sweden. However, their level of fluency needs to be supported by Swedish companies. Companies can support further language learning possibilities.
- ★ Companies can review what level of Swedish is required for different job positions and increase the chances to hire an international student.
- ★ Working culture and general information on how the labor market and industry work in Sweden it's important to explain to students.

❖ Migration and Administration

- ★ Learning and getting support about migration and settling-in processes is necessary for both students and companies. Having an easy roadmap and support to do this process can increase the chances of success in a recruitment process.

❖ Retention and Integration

- ★ Further work regarding retention and integration of international talent in Swedish companies is necessary to ensure a good experience for both talents and companies.
- ★ Further knowledge and support to go through the onboarding process and further activities can be improved for both companies and talents.

How can we increase successful matches?

-Focus and approach to support main challenges:

Based on the results and analysis of both reports, some common barriers and insights were very similar. Therefore, in order to facilitate the matching process between international academic talent and companies based in Sweden, three main areas of focus need to be addressed to improve the processes for both target groups.

1. Language and Culture
2. Migration and Administration
3. Retention and Integration



Before, during and after the match-making

- ❖ The supporting activities focused on the mentioned three focus areas can increase the possibility of having successful matches between talents and companies.
- ❖ Several matching activities organized by area of knowledge, region, or at the national level will be made in order to increase the probability to match as many students and companies as it is possible.
- ❖ Good preparation for the whole process and ongoing learning among companies and talents can really increase the chances of replicating successful matching processes over time.



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9. General recommendations

General recommendations

Concrete suggestions to improve the process from the side of the companies are:

- A domestic campaign about the value international talent brings and that they are already here.
- Develop a toolbox for companies on how they can market themselves to international talent. Find in this argument for and around wage levels, cultural, and practical issues.
- Since it is usually the recruiting line manager who makes the final recruitment decisions, a greater receptivity of this target group should have the fastest effect.
- Work should be carried out internally at the companies to investigate whether knowledge of Swedish is really a requirement in all positions and how the company can adjust to enable non-Swedish-speaking employees.
- Highlight good examples where companies have succeeded in recruiting and retaining foreign competence and let these companies talk about their journey with challenges and opportunities.
- Support companies in finding ways to connect with international students both early in and throughout their study periods.

Concrete suggestions to improve the process from the side of the students are:

- A key challenge of retention is the fact that international talent in this survey does not want to stay outside of the big cities of Sweden after graduation. Hence a tier two city retention program in smaller cities is suggested as an explorative project.
- Initiate more and better matchmaking pilot projects like Career Days for international talent and companies.
- Working with universities and aligning further how they can be increasingly measured on company partnerships and job support for international students.
- Consider aligning international talent attraction of students to fit labor market needs of in-demand skills forecast (Recruit the right people for retention).
- Highlight Swedish language and cultural integration opportunities from an early stage.
- Explain the student-working visa policies and procedures including in particular the Aliens Act which makes it difficult for researchers to obtain residence permits after completing their PhDs.



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10.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the people and organizations involved in the creation of this report.

From the Science Parks network, the business community, and each representative of the companies that took the time to respond to the surveys and participated in the interviews. We also want to thank all the student associations and universities that helped us communicate this initiative.

We are very grateful to every student and alumni who took the time to answer this survey, your input has been essential in improving the match between international academic talent and organizations in Sweden. Likewise, each professor and program director who helped us share this initiative with the students has been essential in the process of this project.

Lastly, we would like to thank Terminal 5 and Future Place Leadership. Without their advice and continued collaboration, the creation of this final report would not have been possible.

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10. Appendix and reference list

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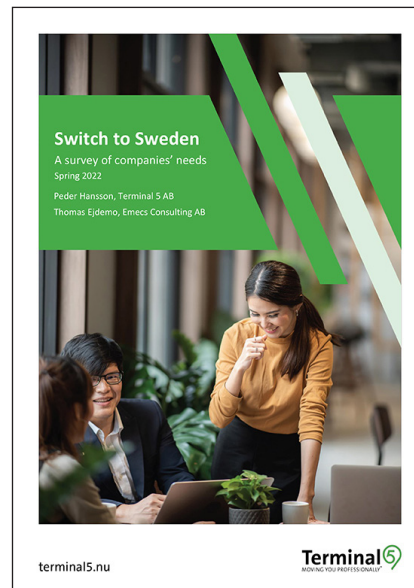
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SCIENCE
PARK

Appendix and reference list

Access here the original reports of Terminal 5 and Future Place Leadership

(click on the image below)



Reference list:

Terminal 5 and Emecs Consulting AB 2022, Switch to Sweden. A survey of companies' needs.

Future Place Leadership 2022, Switch to Sweden - Final Report.