

HOMESICKNESS AMONG INTERNATIONAL FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS: Exploring its Background and Effects

Although studying abroad is a life-changing event, academic and cultural relocation may increase the level of homesickness among international first-year students.



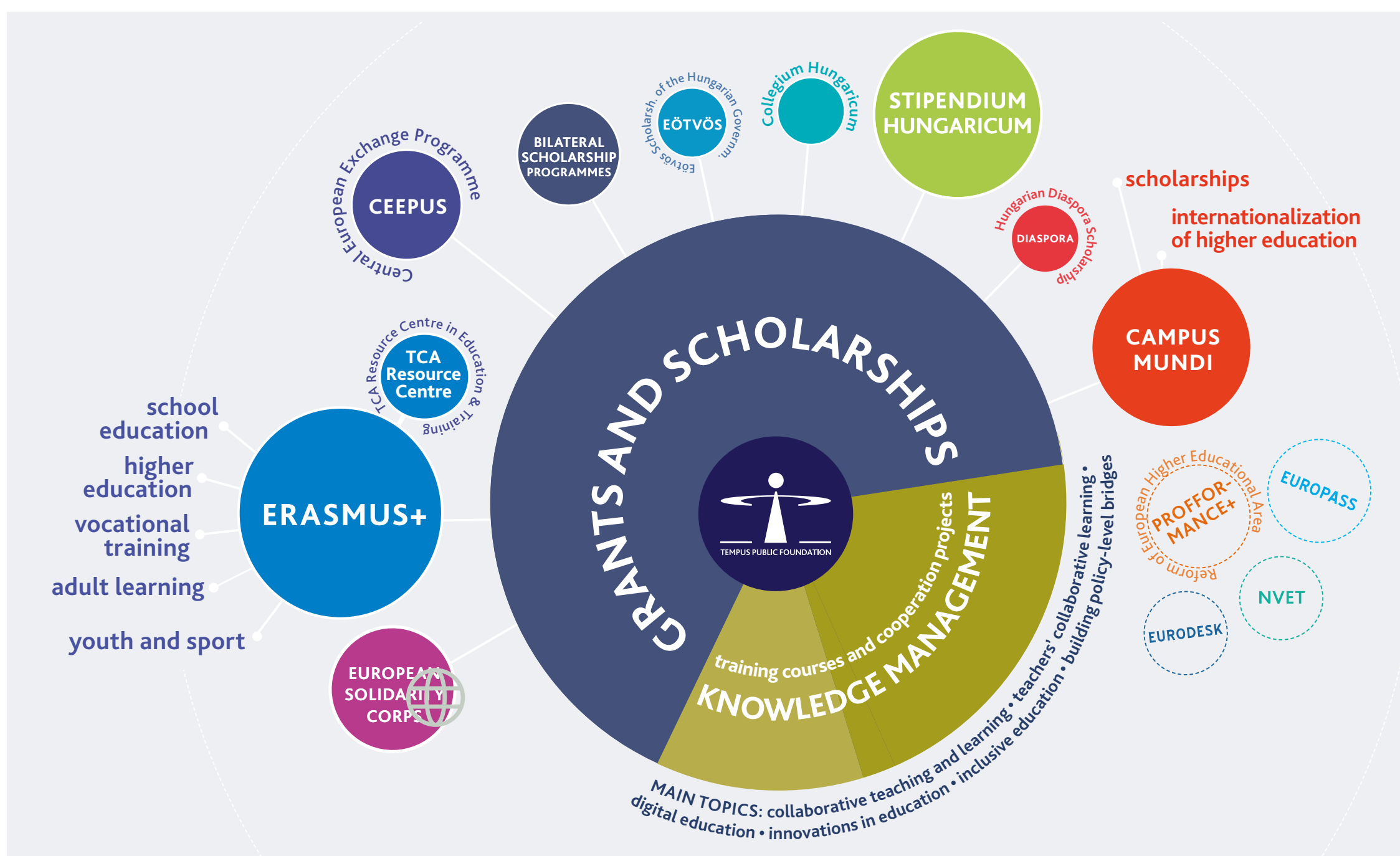
RESEARCH BACKGROUND



The aim of the research project is to explore the educational journey of international degree-seeking students studying at Hungarian universities under the framework of Stipendium Hungaricum Program.

- **QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH:** longitudinal study on international students (data collection in every semester for two years)
- **ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE** among first-year international students in 2023
- Utrecht Homesickness Scale (Stroebe et al., 2002) to study homesickness among first-year international students
- N=1816 (response rate: 46%)

The research focuses on the background of homesickness and its effects on studies, and shares data-driven knowledge with student services and mental health professionals.



TEMPUS PUBLIC FOUNDATION'S ACTIVITIES

TEMPUS PUBLIC FOUNDATION is a non-profit organisation established in 1996 by the Hungarian Government. It manages international cooperation programmes and projects in the field of education, training, youth and EU-related issues. It is the national Erasmus+ agency and coordinates programmes such as the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarships for inbound students and the Study in Hungary initiative.



RESOURCES:
www.oktatas.hu The official website of Educational Authority in Hungary provides statistical data (Higher Education Information System) on higher education.
tka.hu/english The official website of Tempus Public Foundation provides both general and detailed information on internationalisation of Hungarian higher education.

tka.hu/english/info@tpf.hu

studyinhungary.hu
studyinhungary@tpf.hu
stipendiumhungaricum.hu
stipendiumhungaricum@tpf.hu

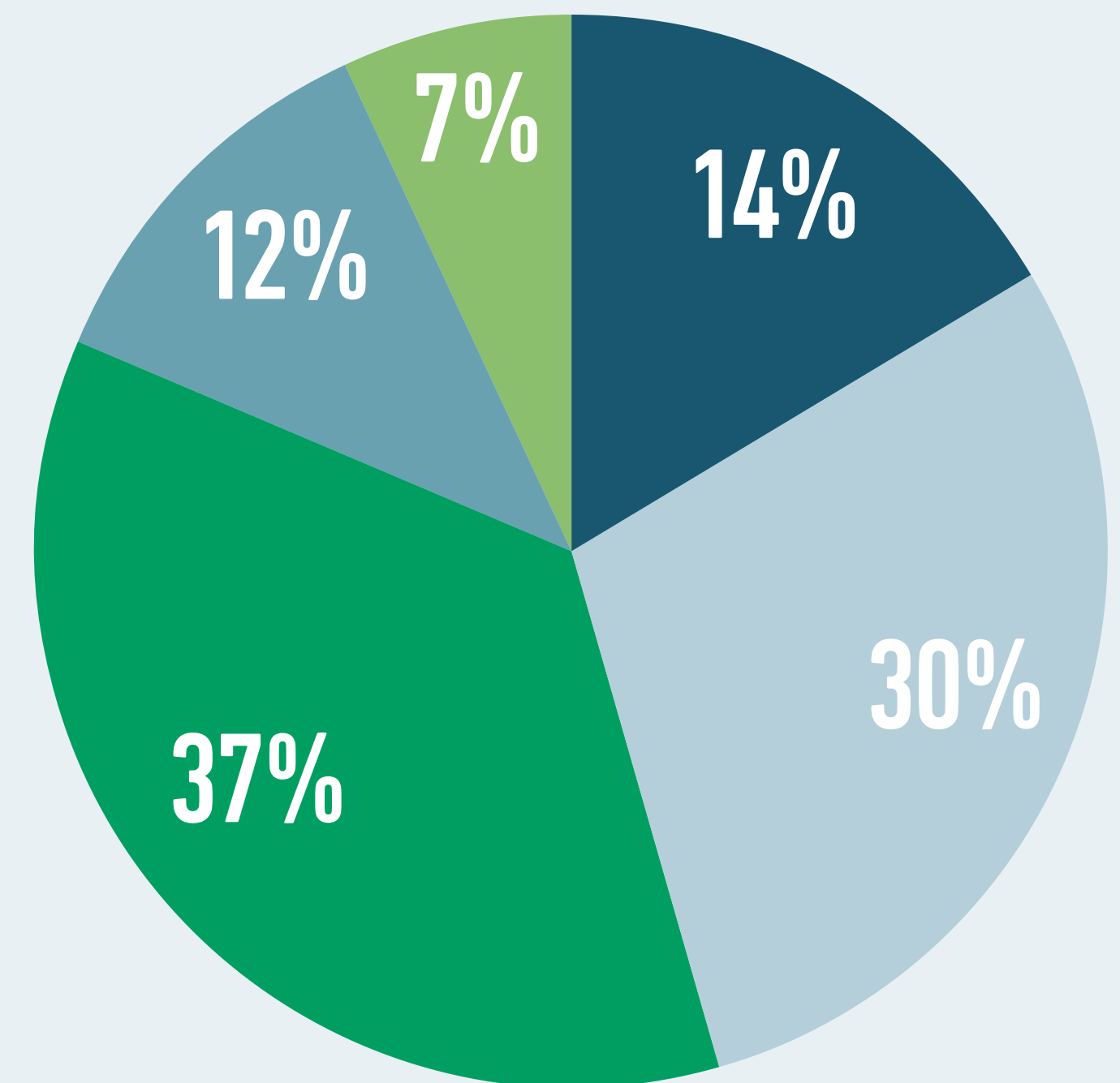
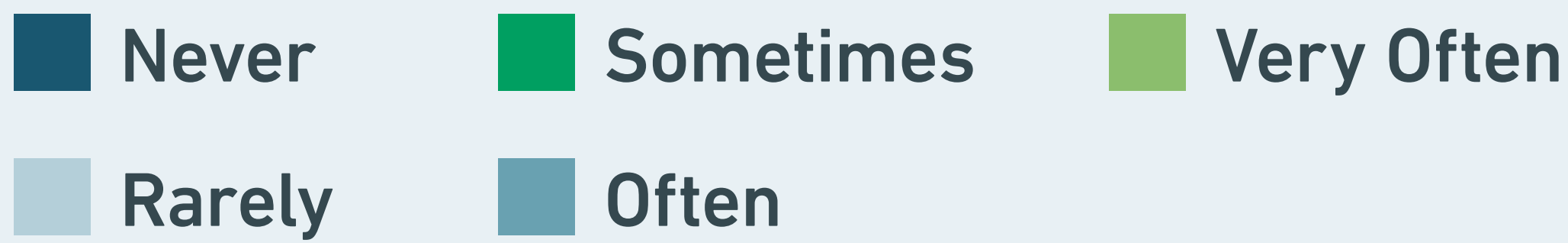
STUDY IN HUNGARY



RESEARCH RESULTS

How often have first-year international students experienced homesickness in the four weeks before the survey?

(n=1816, SHTrack survey)



To what extent have first-year international students experienced in the four weeks before the survey?

(n=1816, SHTrack survey)



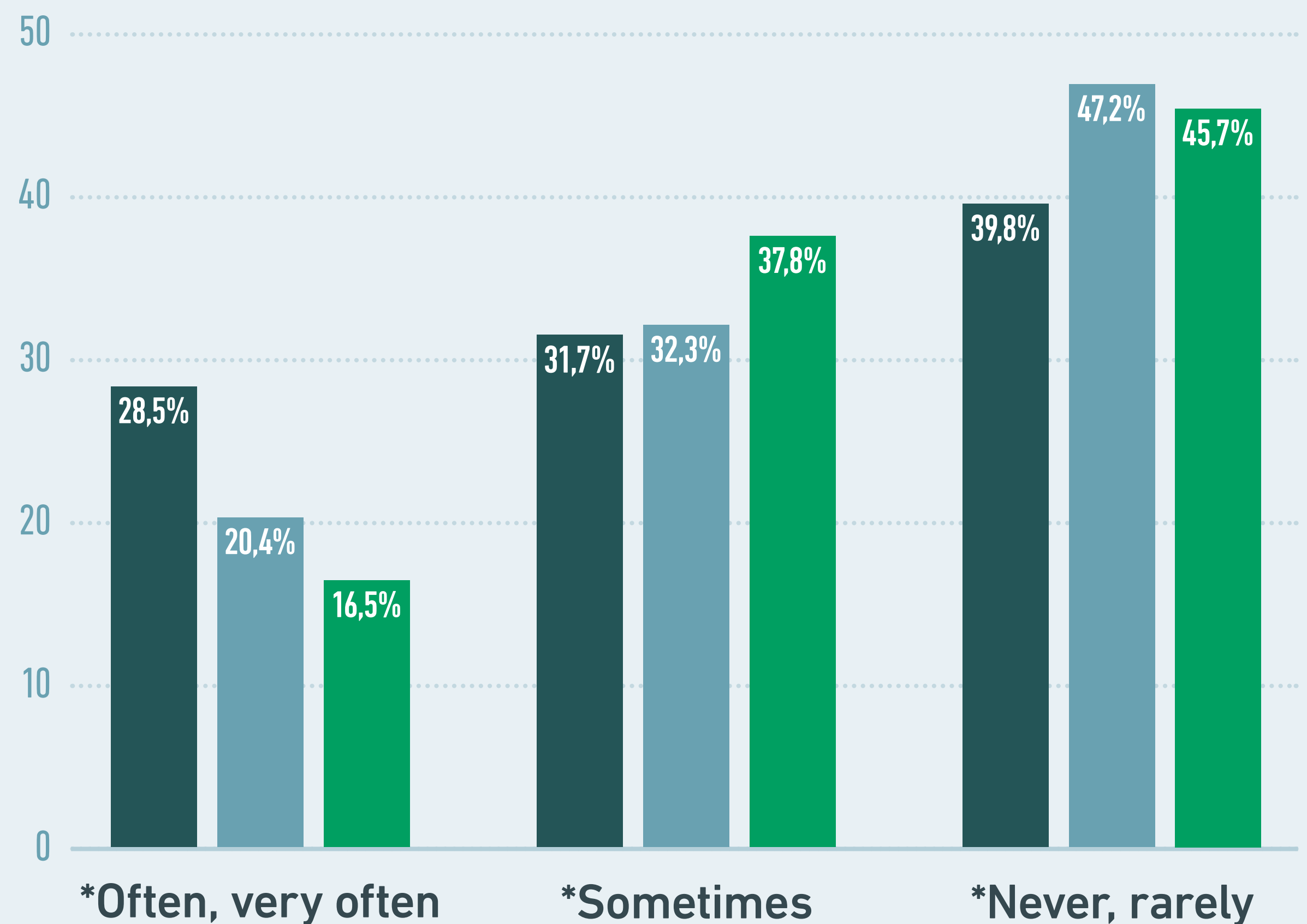
Homesickness and international students' satisfaction with studies

(n=1816, SHTrack survey)

How often have first-year international students experienced homesickness in the four weeks before the survey?*

If international students could choose again, would they attend the same university?*

- No
- Possibly
- Yes



→ CONSEQUENCES



Homesickness is listed as one of the top challenges of first-year international students;



Nevertheless, this phenomenon is practically a universal experience to any person, differences in the level of homesickness can be explored by gender, country of origin and specific personal traits (self-confidence e.g.);



Nearly 20% of international students reported high level of homesickness after half year of their arrival;



Homesickness has a crucial impact on students' well-being that influences their study journey.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Integration of international students could be the best strategy to support adaptation to the new environment and increase the level of sense of belonging;



Mentoring degree-seeking international students is crucial throughout the first academic year;



Developing counselling and mental health services at universities.

Find Study in Hungary at booth 541