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**Abstract**

Despite the wealth of literature on study abroad, little is known regarding factors impacting the decision to participate in such programmes. The current paper aims to analyse the variables that predict participation in the Erasmus Programme. The sample included 200 University of Bari (Italy) students applying to the programme during 2010/11; their data was tested against a control group of students. Both groups answered a self-report questionnaire divided into three different sections: socio-demographic, personal characteristics (expectations, self-efficacy, intercultural competences) and contextual variables (academic and social integration). The findings showed participation in mobility programmes as not only connected with personal profiles, but also with other contextual factors, familiar and academic, which may promote or inhibit this decision. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)