

# A New Roadmap for Internationalisation

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# Introduction

- Single roadmap for internationalisation at global level impossible
- Importance of local contexts and different cultural values
- However, there are some shared themes

## Key issues - as already discussed

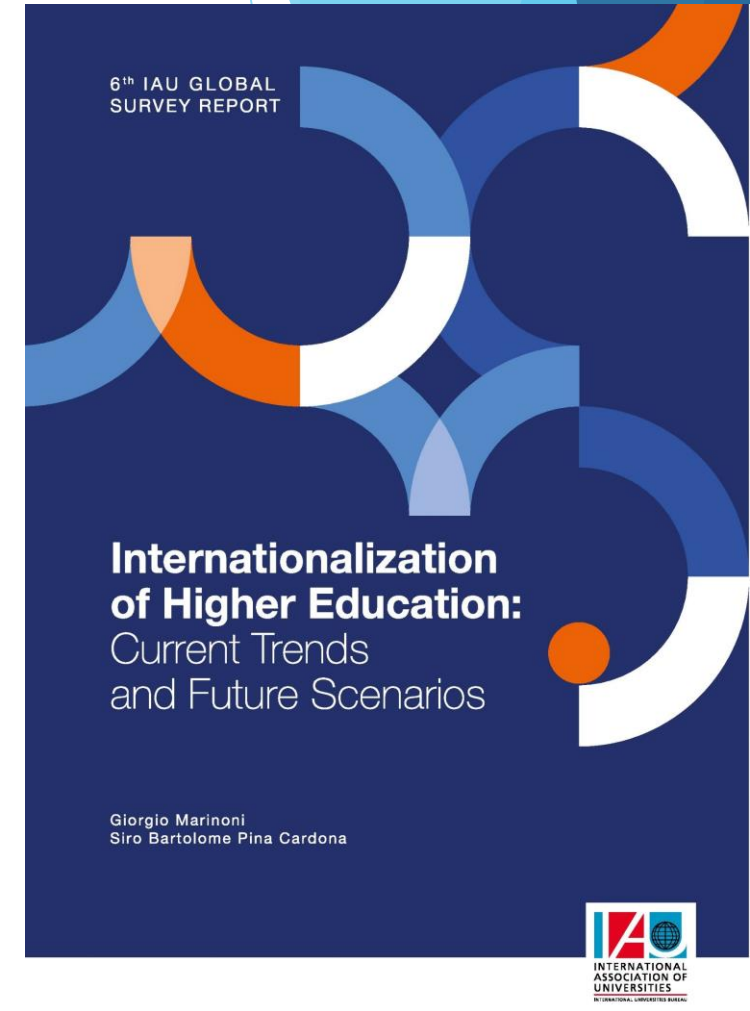
- Geopolitical tensions increasing
- Nationalism on the rise almost everywhere
- National security and knowledge security concepts becoming central - especially in Global North
- Shifting meaning of certain concepts: e.g. 'responsible internationalisation'
- Increased role of governments in higher education - risk of decreased institutional autonomy and academic freedom

# Some shared themes globally

1. Mobility
2. Curriculum
3. Partnerships
4. Research
5. Internationalisation and society

# Some data from the 6th IAU Global Survey

- Trilingual online survey (EN, ES, FR) open 15/1 - 15/6/2023
- Institutional survey: only one response per institution
- Responses from 722 HEIs in 110 countries and territories around the world
- Sufficient number of responses for a statistically relevant analysis at global and regional levels (6 world regions)
- Report and executive summary freely available on [IAU website](https://www.iau-ai.org/6th-global-survey-report)



# 1. Mobility

# Degree/long term mobility

In Global North countries - contrasting tensions pull mobility in different directions:

- Nationalism and protectionism vs. demographic trends demand increased student mobility to attract talent

This might lead to decreasing numbers globally, but not necessarily.

More probable is a geographical rebalancing in mobility flows:

- Increasing importance of some countries in the Global South as destination countries

# Credit/short term mobility

Possible contrasting evolutions:

- Nationalism and financial cuts lead to less credit mobility
- ‘Clusterisation’ might outbalance closure/protectionist tendencies - credit mobility can continue among ‘friendly countries’
- Increased regionalisation will have a similar effect

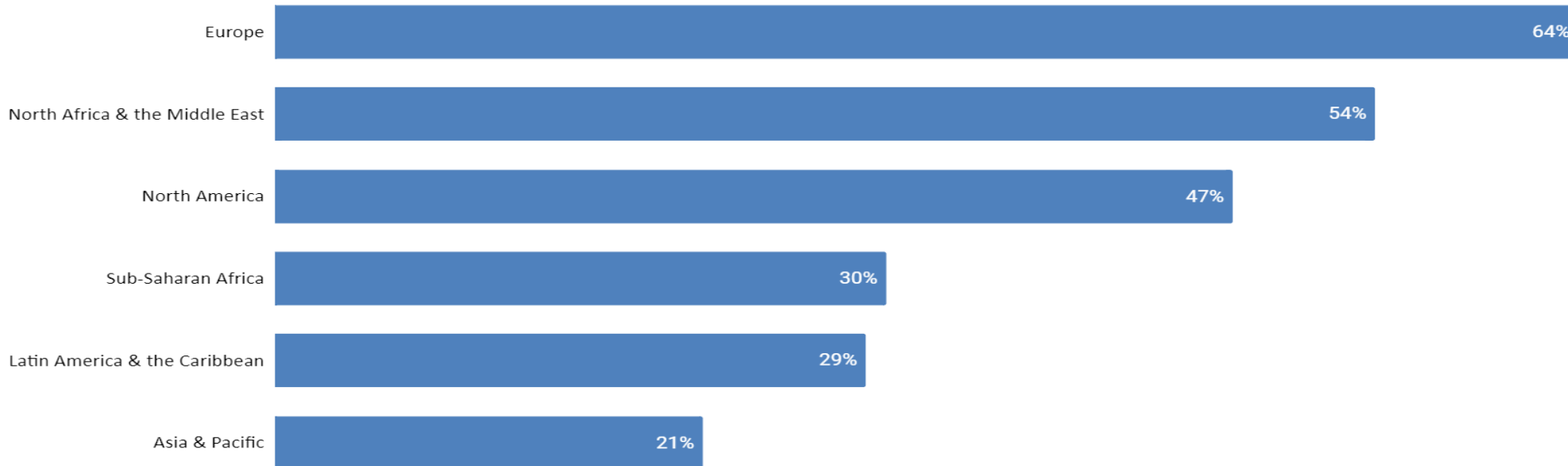
# Forced or coerced mobility

- According to UNHCR, in 2024 there were 122.6 million forcibly displaced people, highest number ever recorded
- Sub-Saharan Africa is first in terms both of origin countries and those where asylum is sought
- Middle East and North Africa is second in both
- Asia & Pacific - third region of origin
- Europe - third region of asylum
- Many forcibly displaced people were or want to be involved in higher education
- What are HEIs doing to respond to such an emergency?

# Institutional policies/measures for refugees and migrants

- Just under half of HEIs (46%) indicated they had implemented special policies or measures in the last five years to accommodate increasing numbers of refugees and migrants seeking enrolment in HE. Such measures are more common at public than private HEIs.
- Substantial regional differences: critical situation in some regions

Institutional adoption of special policies/measures in the last five years in response to the increasing number of refugees and/or migrants seeking to enroll in HE: regional results



## 2. Curriculum

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- Across all regions, predominant majority indicated increasing importance of internationalising curriculum at home in last five years
- ‘Online activities that develop international perspectives of students at home’ increased in importance at most HEIs in all regions of the world
  - virtual exchanges
  - COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning)
  - online collaborative international projects
  - virtual international internships
- Asia Pacific and North Africa & Middle East most advanced regions in terms of defining Institution-wide international, intercultural or global learning outcomes or graduate capabilities, but with different approaches, at the institutional or national levels.
- North America the region with the least development of such learning outcomes

## 3. Partnerships

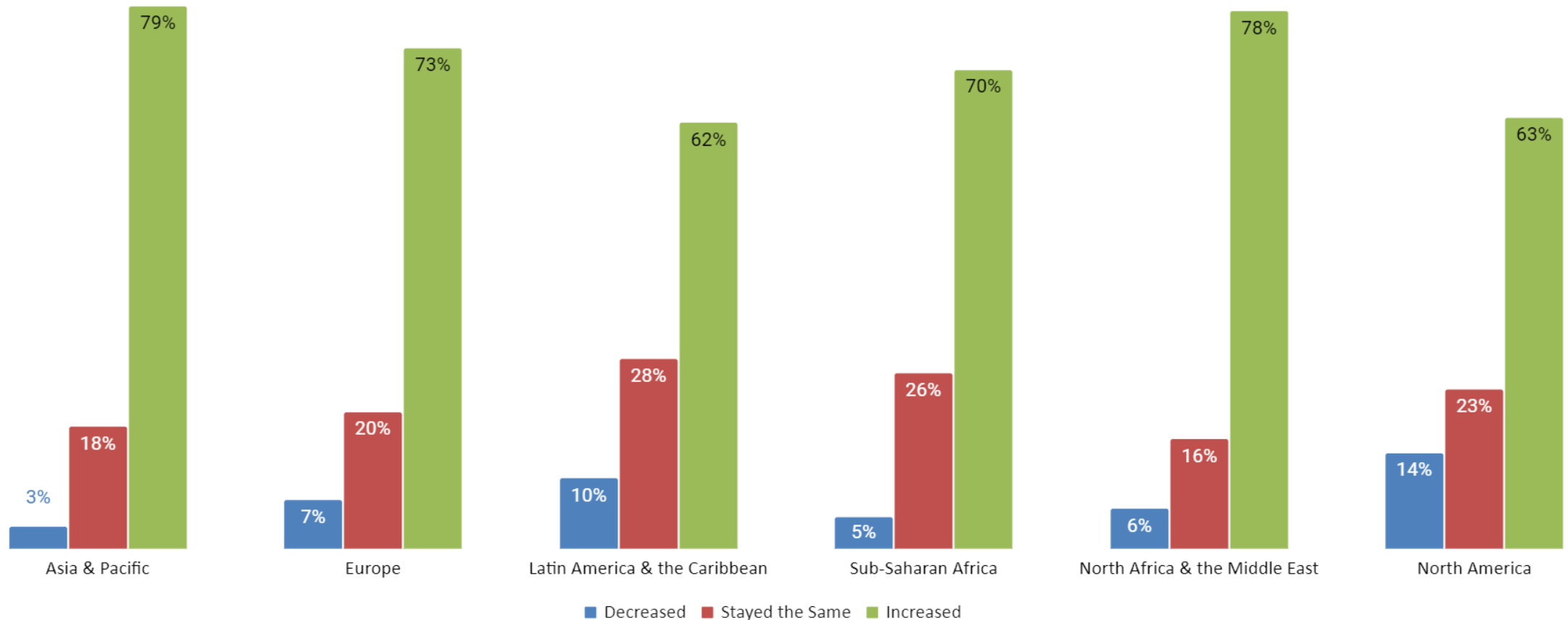
# 3. Partnerships

- Number has increased in the last 5 years in all regions of the world
- COVID-19 crisis played a role, but to a limited extent and mainly in certain regions, especially Global South. This could also be linked to the development of virtual internationalisation.
- International partnerships changing in nature:
  - Less focus on creation of partnerships to increase reputation
  - Better geographical balance - focus not only Anglophone countries in the Global North
  - Greater emphasis on mutual benefit, equity and complementarity of the partnership
- (New) critical criteria in partnership development:
  - Geopolitical considerations
  - Student needs
  - Effective resource management

# International partnerships

Number of international partnerships has increased at the majority of HEIs in all regions of the world in last five years

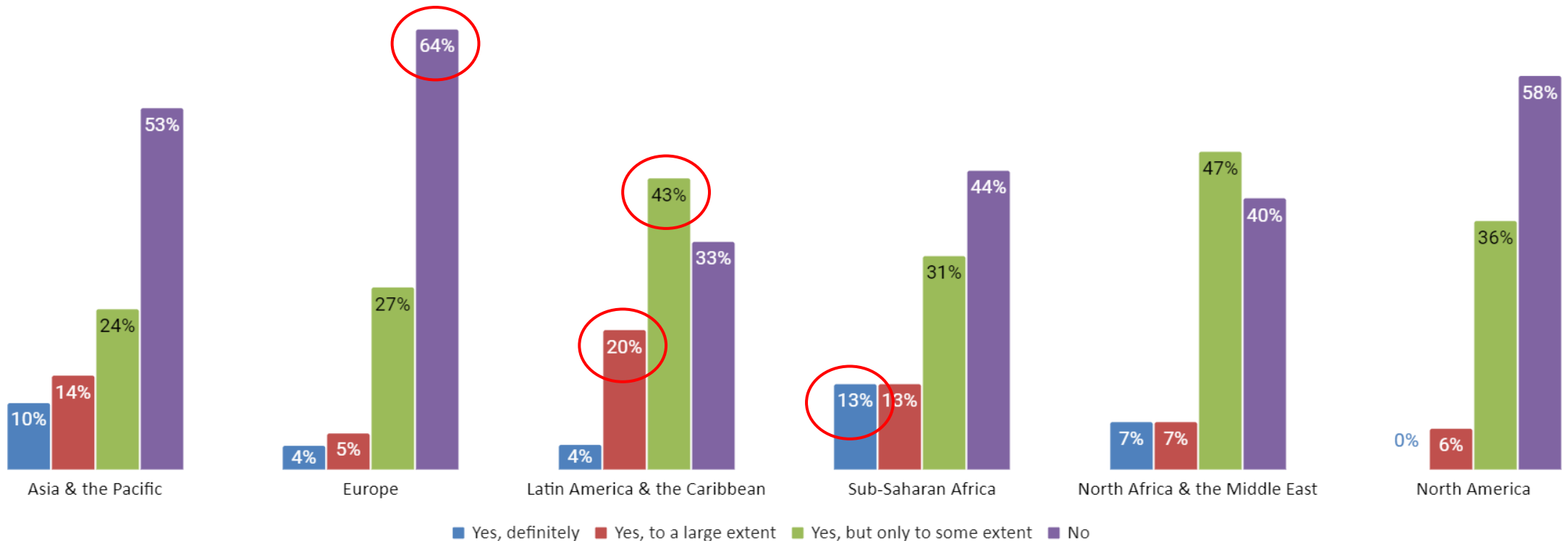
Change in the number of institutional international partnerships over the last five years by region



# International partnerships

- Globally, half of respondents (50%) indicated that changes in international partnerships were not primarily a result of the COVID-19 crisis
- Substantial regional differences

The role of COVID-19 on the changes in international partnerships by region



# International partnerships

Some results from qualitative research project following up 6<sup>th</sup> IAU Global Survey:

International partnerships are changing:

- Traditional objectives of partnering to enhance reputation less important
- Creation of partnerships in more geographically balanced group of countries - not only with English-speaking countries
- Greater emphasis on mutual benefit, equity and complementarity of partnership

Critical criteria in development of partnerships:

- Geopolitical considerations
- Student needs
- Effective resource management

# International partnerships

*‘We don't just build partnerships with the US and the UK, where our traditional research collaborations still exist [with most] funding .. and .. publications... So there is a significant effort .. to focus on the **Global South in terms of international partnerships.**’* (English-speaking Canadian HEI)

*‘when we look at international partnerships, we always want to make sure ... that there is a mutual benefit, right? We try to align ourselves with like-minded and like-sized institutions, so that there's not a David and Goliath kind of thing, but that **we can really benefit from collaboration and make sure that there are results,** that it's not just signed agreements that stay in a drawer.’* (Omani ISI)

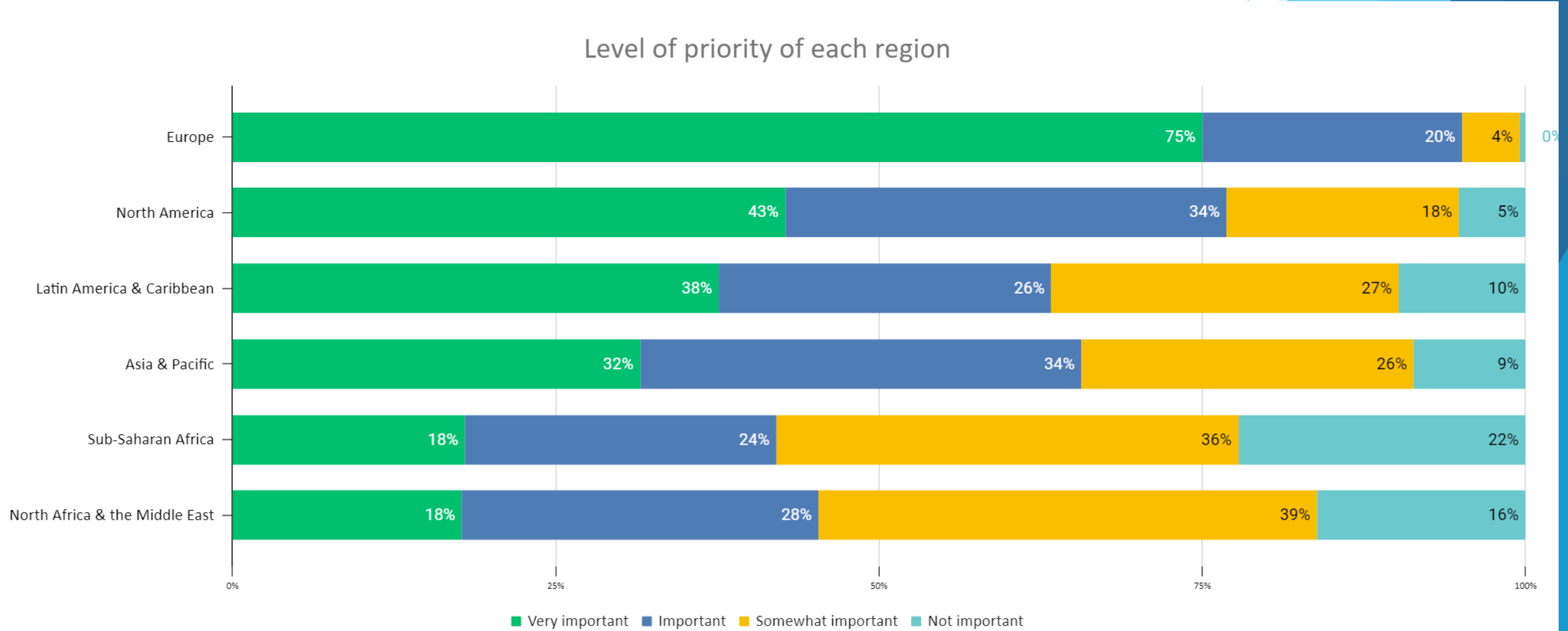
# International partnerships

*‘research security is a big issue in Canada, and so there are restrictions on who we partner with ... a public list.. prevents us from partnering with universities or organisations that have already violated certain principles or are a threat to national security.’* (English-speaking Canadian HEI)

*‘research strategy .. encourages our staff to engage globally .. in an Australian context, we're small, and so [this] allows us to explore new knowledge that we wouldn't be able to do on our own... so international collaboration [increases capacity].’* (Australian HEI)

# Geographic priorities

Globally (59%) the majority of HEIs have geographic priorities for internationalisation



# Geographic priorities

Regionalisation trend in Asia & Pacific, Europe, LAC and to a lower extent also in Sub-Saharan Africa

**Table 21**

Rows: geographical level of importance for internationalization (only “very important” %) Columns: regions of respondents	Asia & Pacific	Europe	Latin America & the Caribbean	Sub-Saharan Africa	North Africa & the Middle East	North America
Asia & Pacific	71%	28%	17%	37%	33%	71%
Europe	55%	90%	69%	63%	79%	39%
Latin America & the Caribbean	19%	17%	75%	16%	18%	43%
Sub-Saharan Africa	19%	17%	4%	58%	33%	43%
North Africa & the Middle East	23%	18%	6%	26%	44%	29%
North America	48%	34%	56%	37%	49%	21%

# Geographic priorities

South - South cooperation beside intra-regional one is not a priority.

The South looks North. but the North does not look South

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## 4. Research

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### **Pessimistic scenario**

- Fragmentation of research
- Creation of islands or clusters of HEIs in 'friendly countries'
- Increased competition between countries
- Multiplication of efforts and fewer synergies
- More difficult to tackle global challenges
- Increased inequality

### **Optimistic scenario**

- Global challenges still need global solutions, global cooperation will survive geopolitical tensions
- Shift from a strongly neo-liberal market approach might lead to new ways of research creation, dissemination and recognition (Open science, evaluation of research careers)
- Inclusion of marginalised voices
- Less inequality

## 5. Internationalisation and society

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

## Intercultural understanding, racism and xenophobia

Internationalisation policy/strategy and related activities take EDI into account at 80% or more HEIs in all regions of the world. However, target group differs by region:

- People with disabilities most important target group in Europe (at 73% of HEIs) North Africa & Middle East (64%) and also important in Sub-Saharan Africa (62%)
- People from low economic background most important target group in Latin America & Caribbean (71% of HEIs), Sub-Saharan Africa (65%) and Asia & Pacific (63%)
- Ethnic/cultural minorities most important target group in North America (78%) but not so important in any other region

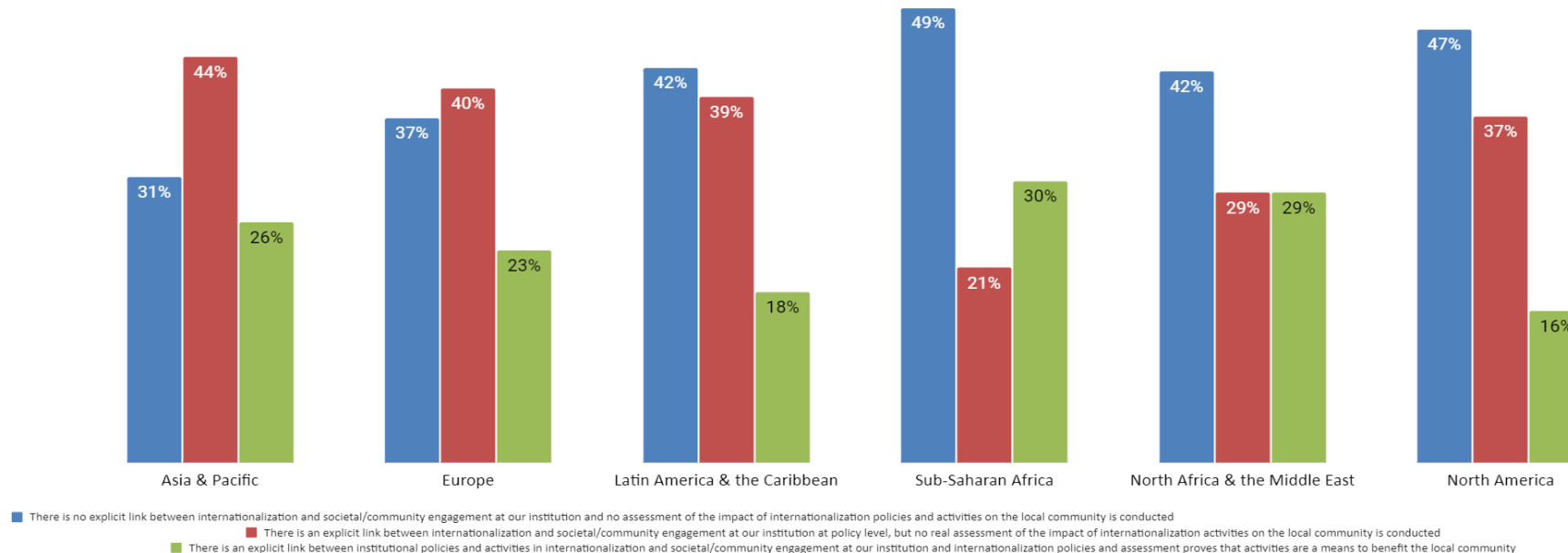
### Racism and xenophobia

- Majority of respondents indicated that internationalisation had a very positive effect on intercultural understanding and against racism/xenophobia at least inside their institutions but also in society

# Community/societal engagement

- Internationalisation and community/societal engagement are linked at 60% of HEIs but impact assessment conducted only at 22% of HEIs
- Substantial regional differences:
  - Asia Pacific is the region where this link is most present (69% of HEIs), Least present in Sub-Saharan Africa and North America (51% and 53%)
  - However, Sub-Saharan Africa is also the region with the highest percentage of HEIs linking internationalisation and community engagement and conducting impact assessment (30%)

Link between internationalization and community/societal engagement by region



# Looking ahead?

- Internationalised curriculum links with other institutional agendas?
- Sustainability?
- Competition or collaboration?
- Regionalisation?

# Internationalised curriculum and links with other institutional agendas

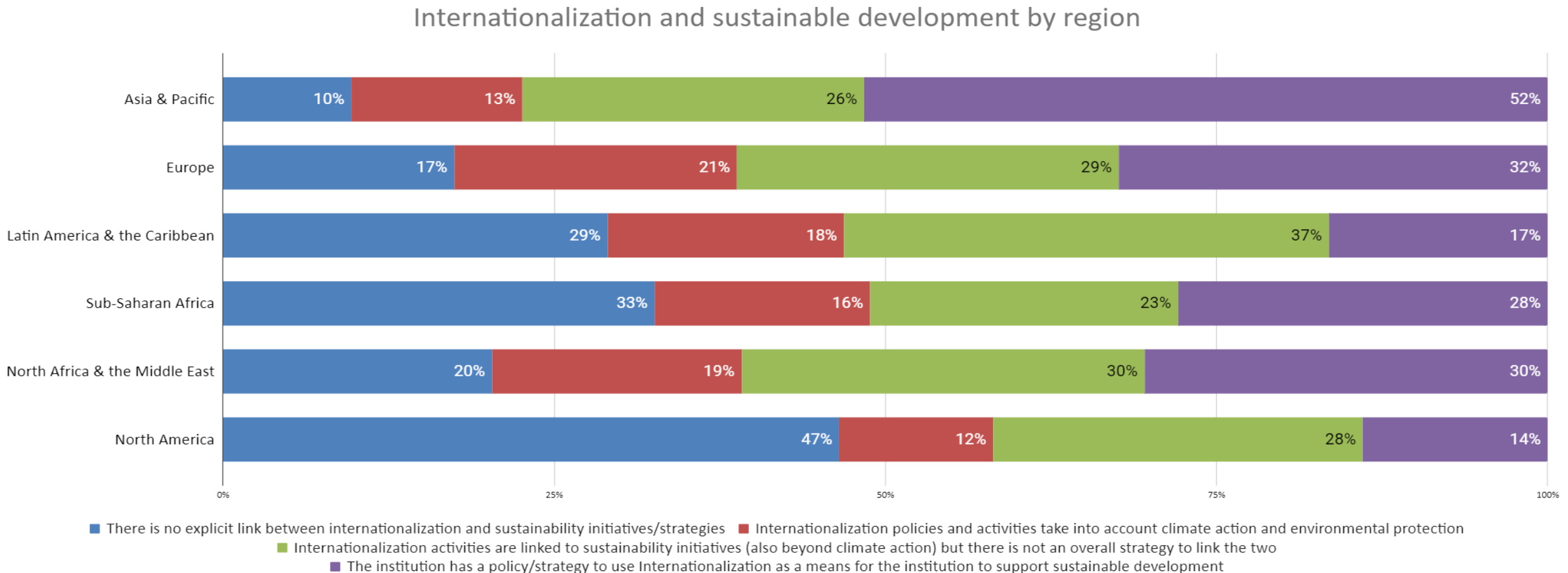
- Increasing emphasis on decolonisation of curriculum, epistemic and social justice
- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Widening participation in tertiary education
- Greater engagement with the experience and potential contributions of international students and others from diverse backgrounds - ‘interculturalisation’ (Jones, 2019)

# Sustainability

- How sustainable is internationalisation in light of geopolitical contexts?
- Sustainable travel challenge with physical mobility during climate crisis
  - Conference travel?
  - Partnership development?
  - Research?
- Role of global rankings
- Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

# Internationalisation and sustainable development

- Internationalisation and sustainable development are linked beyond climate action at more than half of HEIs globally
- Substantial regional differences: Asia & Pacific vs. North America



# Competition or collaboration?

- Challenge of attracting global talent vs. brain drain
- Financial imperative or future citizens?
- Changing nature of branch campuses and trans-national education
- Benchmarking opportunities
- Vital need for HE collaboration and cooperation to address climate crisis and global challenges as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals

# Regionalisation

- European university alliances
- Other regions following European lead e.g. regional cooperation in ASEAN countries
- May increase in importance in the face of parochialism and nationalism (Jones & de Wit, 2024)

# Final thoughts

- Continuing need to collect and review data to help move forward
- Being aware of what's happening in other parts of the world - continuous enhancement
- Contextualisation of own practice
- “Ownership” of internationalisation
- Role of internationalisation and societal responsibility  
(Jones, Leask, Brandenburg & de Wit, 2021)

Thank you for listening  
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