



The New Role of the University on the Example of the University of the Best Programme Conducted by the University of Silesia in Katowice

Nowa rola uczelni wyższej na przykładzie programu Uniwersytet Najlepszych Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach


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Abstract

The article considers changes taking place at universities. As a consequence of these changes, universities are not only dedicated to student education or science a, but also proactively respond to stimuli from the external environment. As a result, the University of the Best programme for talented students of the region was created at the University of Silesia in Katowice. The assumption is that the programme will be the response of the University of Silesia in Katowice to the depopulation and brain drain related to this process. The purpose of this study is to present the way the Uni-

Abstrakt

Artykuł obejmuje rozważania dotyczące problematyki związanej ze zmianami zachodzącymi w uczelniach wyższych. W ich wyniku nie zajmują się one jedynie kształceniem studentów czy uprawianiem nauki, ale również proaktywnie reagują na bodźce płynące z otoczenia zewnętrznego. W efekcie tych zmian w Uniwersytecie Śląskim w Katowicach powstał program Uniwersytet Najlepszych skierowany do zdolnych uczniów regionu. W założeniu ma on stanowić odpowiedź Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach na proces depopulacji i związany z nim

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versity of the Best operates and the results of surveys carried out during Univeristy's activities. This programme may be a model solution that will be implemented in other academic centres in the future.

Keywords: changes in universities, a new role of the university, depopulation, brain drain, the University of the Best

drenaż mózgow. Celem autorów niniejszego opracowania jest przedstawienie głównych aspektów funkcjonowania Uniwersytetu Najlepszego oraz wyników badań ankietowych przeprowadzonych w jego trakcie. Program ten może się okazać modelowym rozwiązaniem, które w przyszłości zostanie wdrożone w innych ośrodkach akademickich.

Słowa kluczowe: zmiany w uczelniach wyższych, nowa rola uniwersytetu, depopulacja, drenaż mózgow, Uniwersytet Najlepszego

On Changes Taking Place at the University

The university is one of the oldest educational institutions. Over the centuries of its operation, it significantly impacted the development of science and culture. Originally, students acquired general knowledge at universities, and in the 19th and 20th centuries also studied technical disciplines related to the growing needs of flourishing industry. A significant impact on the shape of the modern university was exerted by, among others, Wilhelm von Humboldt, to whom this institution owes promoting the idea of concurrent pursue of student education and scientific research. Thus, the university has become a dual entity that is intended to serve society (Boguski, 2009).

In the reality of 21st century, universities are no longer merely transferring knowledge and thus educating. Neither are they an institution in which highly qualified competencies needed in the labour market are solely acquired. Nowadays, the university is not limited only to shaping attitudes or forming a worldview. Neither is the university just a place of conducting scientific research. It serves a much broader purpose.

Universities are characterised by high interactivity and quick response to changes taking place in the social environment. Thus, the basic characteristics of these entities is their ability to adapt to new conditions in which they have to operate (Fielden, 2010). In recent decades, universities have experienced a great increase in the number of students. Still, in addition to implementing the teaching mission, in accordance with the Humboldt concept, they have become a sort of research centres and significantly influenced the development of science. Universities strive to explain theoretical issues but also conduct practical work. In addition, they are increasingly interdisciplinary, which is essential taking into account new challenges posed by the changing reality which countries

and societies are facing nowadays. It seems that flexibility and adaptability are currently the most important characteristics of universities (Boulton & Lucas, 2008).

In some respect, the university naturally has a dual mission regardless of the changes taking place in social reality. First of all, a civic mission consists of shaping elites, and secondly, a cultural one, whose essence comes down to fostering universal values. By its very nature, a university is open to universal values, and the central position among them should be attributed to the truth (Denek, 2013). The quest to discover the truth was at the heart of the first universities. It is one of the many areas connecting the current functioning of the university with the historical one.

In recent decades, universities have undergone fundamental changes on an unprecedented scale. These changes resulted from social transformations, including primarily the creation – in Norbert Wiener’s opinion – of a new type of society, namely the knowledge society. In the knowledge society, new theories underpinning development and innovation play a fundamental role. Acquiring new knowledge and generating innovation significantly affects economic growth. This, in turn, exerts the pressure on universities that have taken on the leading role in the development of science. The only question that can be raised is, whether they will create such knowledge that can be treated utilitarianly and will primarily serve the needs of economic growth and social development (Sellman, 2015).

Adapting universities to the requirements of the knowledge society while maintaining the constitutive pursuit of the academic community to discover the truth is currently one of the biggest, if not the greatest, challenges posed to these institutions. This challenge already implies a greater opening of universities to the environment and external stakeholders. This trend is visible in the higher education reform currently implemented in Poland (Act, 2018). Under this Act, to some extent, cooperation with external entities, for which universities can be a source of know-how and innovativeness, is required.

However, one should not forget that in reality, universities, just like in any other sphere of public life, go into competition. Universities compete, on the one hand, on a scientific level and, on the other, a teaching level, as they want the best students to join their ranks, i.e. those whose final exam results (which is a high school final exam in Poland) significantly exceed the average. As a result, the dilemmas posed to universities are compounded by problems related to strengthening the scientific potential, teaching at the highest level in the social, substantive, methodological, and utilitarian sense (Ciechanowska, 2012).

Changes in the modern world, including social changes, have also forced universities to seek new solutions for teaching at the academic level. In this context, more and more universities are, so to speak, returning in the teaching process to the traditional model of education based on the master-student rela-

tionship, which may take the form of tutoring. This is the case in the prestigious world recognised universities, such as Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard, and it is also implemented in the Polish context (Ratajczak, 2016). The search for new solutions in the field of education or a return to previously proven methods is an example of a university's proactive approach to social transformations.

Demographic Challenge – Depopulation

One of the most crucial problems that higher education institutions have to face is the consequence of the depopulation phenomenon, which will determine the university's activities in the upcoming years. This article attempts to characterise the challenges associated with the problem of depopulation and presents one of the tools to solve it, the University of the Best program.

Depopulation is the process of population dwindling in the specific area, i.e. the reduction of the population, and the reason for this condition is associated with the occurrence – jointly or separately – of two factors: negative birth rates (excess of deaths over births) and negative migration balance.

The researcher of depopulation processes, Anna Runge, indicates that the sources of depopulation phenomenon should be sought in the combination of the several processes consequences (Runge, 2017):

1. the beginnings of the second demographic transition and the associated real level of reproduction, which no longer guarantees simple replacement for generations that results from processes of deliberate delaying the age of procreation, a significant reduction in fertility along with a decline in fecundity, an increasing number of informal relationships and the spread of alternative patterns of family life, or the longevity;
2. acceleration of the social changes indicated above as a result of faster reception of Western models;
3. deepening the decline in the level of births by delaying reproduction – the phenomenon of fluctuating demographic declines and booms, i.e. the variable of boom-age groups concerning decline-age groups in the population age structure, including in particular:
 - entering the post-war baby boom into the demographic old age – migration processes in 1950–1988 in the Silesia Province meant that this baby boom is significant;
 - a long and deep demographic decline (establishing a family by the generation of the 1960s demographic decline) that should expire in the mid-1990s (the baby boom generation from 1974–1983 began to enter reproductive age) and it continued until the beginning of the 21st century;

- since 2004, the new wave of a very weak echo of the baby boom from 1974–1983 with a small and short-term increase in the number of births due to growing social changes as well as economic transformation on the labour market;
4. economic emigration of young people outside the province and even the country, which resulted from the situation of economic uncertainty. On the one hand, this phenomenon influenced the postponement of the decision to start a family, and on the other, it was conducive to decisions on emigration. Establishing one's position in the country of immigration resulted in the decision to start a family, which could not be infinitely postponed.

A fundamental problem of the Silesian Province concerning the depopulation phenomenon is the out-migration of the population. The total migration balance for permanent residence in 2018 was over -5.000 people (Figure 1). However, most of the migrating people remained in the country. Shortly after the final exams, the outflow of mainly young people is a challenge for both the region's province authorities and higher education institutions. Slowing down this process by implementing effective instruments to keep young people in the region should become a priority of development policy.

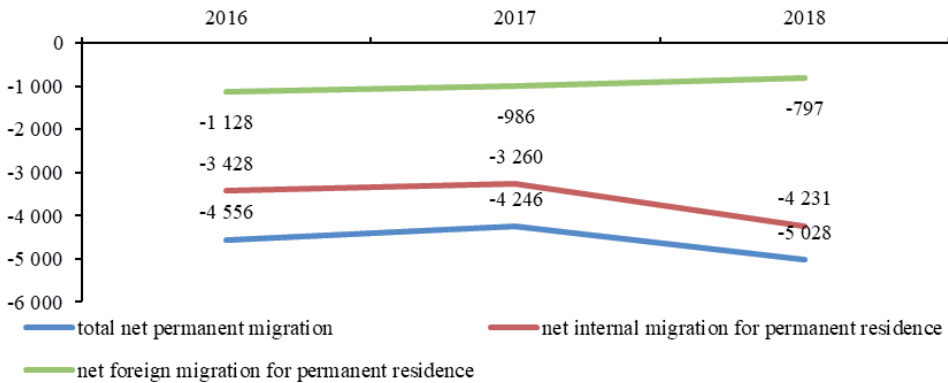


Figure 1. Internal and international migration of the population for permanent residence in the Silesia Province in the years 2016–2018

Source: Own elaboration on GUS Warszawa. Downloaded from: http://swaid.stat.gov.pl/Demografia_dashboards/Raporty_predefiniowane/RAP_DBD_DEM_13.aspx (access: 20.05.2021).

The qualitative changes taking place are the consequence of the outlined quantitative changes. With the decrease in the number of births and the continued low-level trend (Figure 2) as well as the migration outflow of young people, the ageing process of the urban population is more clearly marked, which further reinforces the reversal of urban-rural migration trends.

The projected migration outflow of young people of the Silesia Province for the period 2020–2050 is almost 68 thousand people (Figure 3), which, combined with the growing demographic ageing process, poses multifaceted challenges to the local and regional higher education authorities. Depopulation and ageing processes alone cannot be reversed. One can only influence their slowdown and counteract potential adverse effects. The deepening differences between the decreasing youth population and the educational potential of higher education institutions (facilities or academic staff) will also lead to the need to create and implement new forms of scientific activity and undoubtedly cause a departure from the massification towards the elitism of studies.

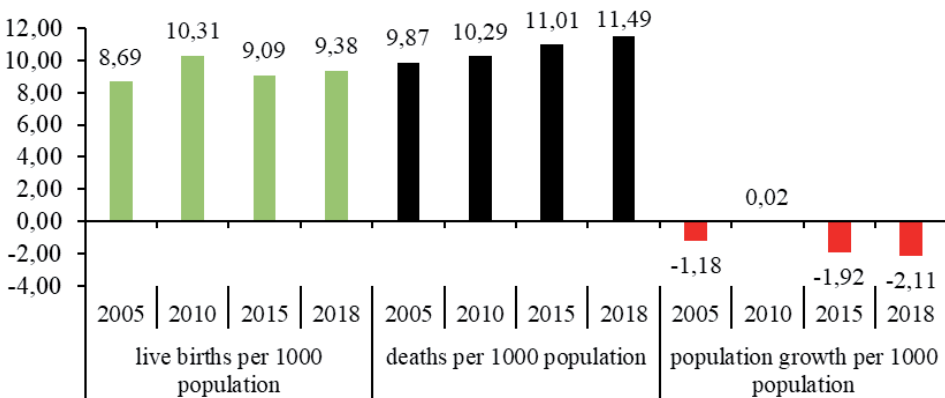


Figure 2. Live births, deaths and population growth per 1 000 population in the Silesia Province in the years 2005–2018

Source: Own elaboration on Bank Danych Lokalnych. Downloaded from: <https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/BDL/start> (access: 20.05.2021).

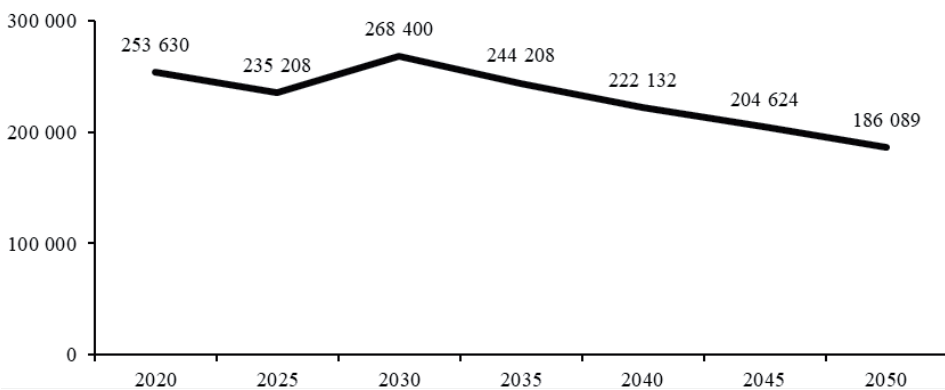


Figure 3. Demographic forecast of population aged 19-24 for Silesia Province until 2050

Source: Own elaboration on Bank Danych Lokalnych. Downloaded from: <https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/BDL/start> (access: 20.05.2021).

The University of the Best as an Example of the New Role of the University

The willingness to be proactive in the face of socio-political changes taking place in a knowledge-based society, while adhering to universal values, among which the truth plays a key role, were the main reasons for implementing a national-wide innovative for an educational programme called the University of the Best at the University of Silesia in Katowice.

The programme aims at developing the passions of the most talented students in the last grade of primary and secondary schools. The programme supports them in building cognitive activity, stimulates innovativeness and creativity. This means that the assumptions underlying the programme meet the needs of the knowledge society. Therefore, it is one of the ways how the University of Silesia in Katowice responds to changes in the external environment of the university.

The University of the Best offers the most talented students of the region a unique opportunity to work individually with scientists and academic teachers of the University of Silesia in Katowice. This type of learning is mainly unavailable to students in the mass education model adopted in Poland. The programme's added value is to provide students with a rich educational offer of the University of Silesia in Katowice and encourage students to study in the Silesia Province. Thus, the University of the Best implements objectives of a demographic nature in a region increasingly experiencing the phenomenon of depopulation. The programme may also remedy a substantial problem that the province is facing and which is associated with depopulation, namely the so-called brain drain. In the context of universities, brain drain should be treated as the outflow of the most talented school graduates to other academic centres – both domestic and foreign. Implicitly, students taking up academic work with academic staff are expected to pay off to the University and to the region by studying on the University of Silesia after graduating the high school. In the future, however, it is likely to contribute to the increase in the number of highly qualified specialists residing in the Silesia Province, who by working here influence its social and economic development.

The primary method of performance in the University of the Best programme is personalised education based on tutoring. This the opposite of mass teaching, which dominates in the general education system and at universities. The Prussian mass teaching model created in the 19th century in order to meet the industry's needs to recruit qualified employees in the 21st century does not seem to be effective. Of course, it is justified for social and financial reasons. It enables the acquisition of basic knowledge, including reading and writing skills, or making simple calculations for generations to come. Combined with compulsory education, it resulted in eliminating illiteracy in highly developed countries of

the world in the second half of the 20th century. It is also the cheapest per student, making it affordable for the state budget. However, its effectiveness in acquiring specialist knowledge or developing scientific passions seems to be very limited. As a result, many educators postulate a partial, in extreme cases even complete, departure from mass education and its replacement with personalised education, including tutoring (Master, 2019).

Were it not for the willingness of the academic staff of the University of Silesia in Katowice to take on an entirely new challenge, which often involves going beyond one's own comfort zone, it would not be possible to implement the University of the Best programme. Academic teachers, who decided to participate in the programme, had to learn how to work with students, the vast majority of whom had not yet reached the age of majority. At the same time, their professional experience to date is related in most cases to activities undertaken with adults and students with at least secondary education. Therefore, special training is organised for them to prepare future tutors well for a new role before starting work with students under the University of the Best programme. During these training sessions, they also gain knowledge about tutoring. According to the programme's assumptions, the tutor at the University of the Best is a tutor who helps find the optimal scientific path and adapt it to the student's interests. During tutorials, academic teachers work with students, attempting to accurately recognise their potential and help discover and develop their talents. A tutor and a tutee establish the path of development and motivate long-term cooperation in personal and scientific development.

The University of the Best programme was launched in October 2018, but work on its creation had begun about a year earlier. The city of Katowice became involved in this activity, thus becoming the co organiser of the programme together with the University of Silesia in Katowice. The Organisational and Programme Council and the Programme Coordinator were established. The University of the Best regulations were drawn up to develop acceptance rules and tutors' work with tutees. This process took place until the end of May 2018, and in June began the acceptance of interested students into the programme. Of course, it was also preceded by a large-scale advertising campaign prepared by the Promotion Department of the University of Silesia in Katowice.

Acceptance into the University of the Best programme is a two-step process. First, students complete an application form, which can be found on the programme website (www.uniwersytetnajlepszych.us.edu.pl). One out of the three preferred areas of science – mathematics and natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, or art – should be selected on the application form. In addition, the candidate must provide a short written statement (between 2 and 5 thousand characters including spaces) of self-presentation or a link to another form published on the Internet: video material (from 2 to 5 minutes), audio material (from 2 to 5 minutes), multimedia presentation (containing from 4 to 10 slides). A can-

didate applying to the programme within the field of art or displaying literary talents is required to submit one selected form of self-presentation: from 3 to 5 photos of artistic works made in any technique, link to a video or audio recording lasting 3 to 5 minutes showing talents, fragment of a literary or poetic text or a screenplay up to 10,000 characters including spaces. Applications are then checked and assessed independently by selection committees (which include academic teachers) in terms of formal (completeness of the form and attachment of relevant documentation) and substantive (substantive assessment of the content of the application) criteria. On this basis, the candidates are shortlisted and the best of them are invited to interviews, which constitute the second stage of recruitment. A maximum of 150 applicants may participate in this stage of acceptance process. The decision on who will participate in the programme is made after the interviews conducted by the committees. It applies to those candidates who scored the most significant number of points during the acceptance process.

Thirty most talented students living in Katowice participated in the first edition of the University of the Best programme. They were selected from over 60 candidates and began their education under the tutelage of 23 tutors in the 2018/2019 academic year. During the programme one person decided to cancel it, thus 29 people participated. In addition to working with tutors, students participated in lectures, classes, laboratories conducted at the University of Silesia in Katowice. These classes could have been indicated by tutors subject to the prior consent of the teacher. Programme participants also had the opportunity to participate in group meetings dedicated to them, led, among others, by career advisers and psychologists. During the first programme the workshops called 'Design your success' (conducted by employees of the Career Centre of the University of Silesia in Katowice), 'Verbal and non-verbal communication' (conducted by an employee of the University of Silesia in Katowice), 'Effective self-presentation', 'Stress-resistant' and 'Team strength' (conducted by employees of the Psychological and Pedagogical Counselling Centre No. 5 in Katowice) were conducted. The University of the Best participants were also presented with an offer of modular classes available so far only for the elite group of students of Interdisciplinary Individual Studies at the University of Silesia in Katowice. They also took part in meetings with extraordinary personalities of Polish culture (outstanding personalities of literature, fine arts, journalism) organised as part of the 'ISM gives the floor' series. The students worked individually and had the opportunity to acquire social competences or to learn how to work in a group. This is particularly important from the point of changes in the modern world where interpersonal skills are becoming increasingly important. Currently, teamwork is a driving force of business and scientific achievements. Great scientific discoveries are rarely a success of one scientist, as evidenced by the Nobel Prizes awarded in recent years in economics, physics, chemistry, physiology, or medicine.

The first programme of the University of the Best was summarised during a special conference. Programme participants presented their achievements as part of their work with tutors. Notably, the formula and programme of the follow-up conference were developed by students themselves, partly during group workshops entitled 'Team strength'. Most of the tutees prepared a short presentation for the conference, some of them were displayed. The conference gathered over 200 participants, including the University of Silesia in Katowice authorities, authorities of the city of Katowice, representatives of schools of participants of the programme, and their families and friends.

The first programme's success resulted in expanding the list of organisers to include other academic cities, i.e., where the University of Silesia in Katowice is established. In this way, Chorzów (10 participants) and Sosnowiec (10 participants) joined the program. In addition, the university authorities decided to raise funds for the participation of another 10 people regardless of their place of residence. Thus, ultimately, the University of the Best in the academic year 2019/2020 was to receive 60 participants (Katowice retained the model of the first edition of the programme with its 30 pupils).

In the end, 57 participants took part in the second edition of the programme University of the Best, selected from 83 candidates. They worked with 49 tutors. Following the first programme, the second one was to be crowned with a follow-up conference. However, the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic thwarted the programme organisers' plans. Overnight, Polish authorities closed nurseries, kindergartens and schools. Classes at universities have also been suspended. Therefore, starting from 12 March 2020, changes to the scheduled meetings within the University of the Best had to be introduced. Most tutors decided to continue tutoring online, conducting video conferences with the students. Unfortunately, this was not always possible. These classes will be resumed as soon as the pandemic restrictions are lifted. Before the university's suspension, as in the first edition of the programme, students had the opportunity to participate in university classes, and three group workshops entitled "The art of savoir-vivre," "What am I good at? Your resources," "Biographical cube" were held. They were run by employees or associates of the University of Silesia in Katowice. Unfortunately, conducting the subsequent group classes as part of this programme is not possible. The decision taken by the organisers of the University of the Best programme also changed the formula of the follow-up conference planned for May 2020. Organising an event during which over 200 people would gather in one place is not only not allowed at present, but above all would be extremely risky. Thus, the participants summarised the second programme preparing short film materials in cooperation with tutors. During the presentation, they talked about their achievements and presented the effect of their activities within the University of the Best.

To ensure high quality of the University of the Best programme assessment system is involved. Not only do the participants express their opinions about the

program, but also tutors by completing survey forms. The assessment enables ongoing response to emerging issues and provides an opportunity to implement modifications at the end of the programme and before the next one. The results of the survey are the subject of further analysis in the article.

The University of the Best programme is an example of the new role of universities in the 21st century. Its implementation is to ensure the achievement of broader than merely educational goals. It is a response to depopulation problems of the Silesia Province, in particular brain drain. As a result, a unique role is to be played by the possible attachment of programme participants to the University of Silesia in Katowice, which can be fostered by showing them the scientific potential of the university teachers. Group workshops are an essential aspect of the University of the Best. These workshops enable students to acquire social competence and learn to work in a group. This is particularly crucial because many of them are mavericks, and furthermore, Polish schools very often overlook this aspect of young people's development. The school is focused on its individual success, as exemplified by external exams. In this way, in accordance with the assumptions of the University of the Best, programme graduates will be able to meet the demanding requirements imposed by a knowledge-based society.

The University of Silesia in Katowice undertaking, together with its partners from university cities, implementing an innovative programme to support the most talented students, has become part of a group of universities that proactively react to changes in social reality. Perhaps, the university creates model solutions for other Polish universities in this way. In addition, an important effect of the implementation of the University of the Best programme is the closer cooperation of the University of Silesia in Katowice with the external environment by bringing into play university cities in the implementation and co-financing of the programme.

Conclusions from the Assessment of the University of the Best Programme

The programme assessment was prepared in the form of a survey carried out via a questionnaire filled in by tutors and programme participants. An ex-post assessment model was adopted, indicating the moment of implementation of the study after the programme was completed. The organisers' primary objective was to assess the activities' quality and effects. This assessment was based on the following criteria (Bienias et al. 2012):

1. relevance, i.e. the degree of adequacy of the assumed, planned objectives of the programme and methods of implementing it to social problems and challenges that have already been diagnosed. The analysis of this criterion

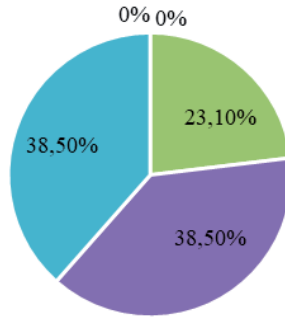
- was carried out before the beginning and in the first stages of programme implementation. The phenomenon of depopulation became the fundamental challenge that inspired the programme's creation.
2. effectiveness, i.e. the degree of implementation of the objectives, the effectiveness of the means and instruments used, and the role of external factors affecting the final effects.
 3. efficiency, i.e. the relation between the expenditure incurred (including the financial, administrative or human resources involved) and the achieved programme effects.
 4. utility, i.e. the whole of the real effects caused by interventions, referring them to social challenges. The utility assessment was carried out after closing the first programme, and the achieved results influenced the decisions on including further programme partners.
 5. sustainability, i.e. the ability to maintain effects, their continuity both in the medium and long-term time horizon.

Each assessment question was closely related to the indicated criteria and allowed for a precise assessment. On the one hand, the use of an appropriate scale and, on the other, determining the value of a given phenomenon or process based on proper criteria revealed that something was functioning properly or not. The requirements also directed the evaluator's attention to the issues most relevant to the programme.

Twenty-six respondents from 29 programme participants took part in the survey questionnaire addressed to the tutees. Assessment questions were divided into five parts, in which questions were generally asked about various elements of the programme.

The first part referred to tutor meetings, both organisational issues and the subject areas of the course itself. Most participants indicated that the logistic support of the classes is correct (cumulative results of responses about the process of organising classes – rather convenient and very convenient – at 77%) (Figure 4).

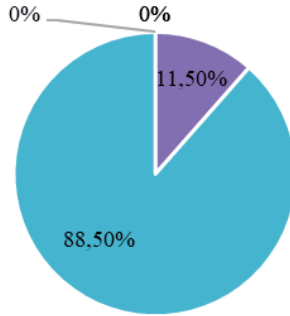
During the tutoring process, the participants may experience intense experiences, resulting even from a kind of 'clash of worldviews,' therefore it is extremely important to provide the right atmosphere during classes that promotes this process. The vast majority of tutees declared that the atmosphere of the meetings supported the tutoring process, and none of them indicated negative feelings resulting from the meetings with the tutor (Figure 5). Similarly, the responses were shaped in terms of subject areas of the meeting, which for over 92% of participants (cumulative percentage of answers – rather interesting and very interesting) met their requirements regarding the substantive scope (Figure 6) or technical aspects of communication with the tutor (Figure 7).



■ very inconvenient ■ rather inconvenient ■ no opinion ■ rather convenient ■ very convenient

Figure 4. Organisation of tutoring process – logistic support of classes

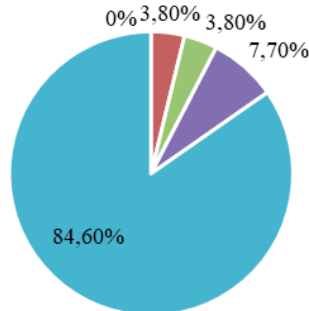
Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



■ very not conducive ■ rather not conducive ■ no opinion ■ rather conducive ■ very conducive

Figure 5. Atmosphere during classes

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



■ very uninteresting ■ rather uninteresting ■ no opinion ■ rather interesting ■ very interesting

Figure 6. Subject areas of tutor-tutee meetings

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

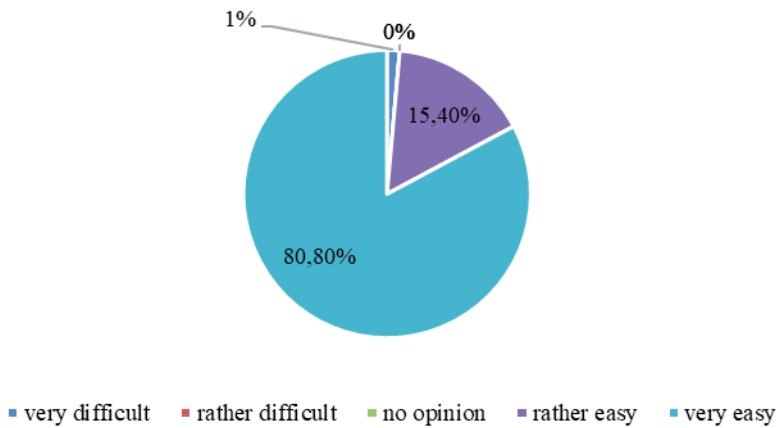


Figure 7. Communication with the tutor

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The second part of the questions concerned programme participants' opinions about the tutor himself. One of the basic principles of tutoring is building a supportive relationship based, among others, on the principle of authenticity, i.e. the transfer of knowledge, skills and competences that the tutor himself has. In this regard, the tutees pointed out that substantive preparation (Figure 8) as well as working methods, including transparent and coherent message (Figure 9) characterised the way of tutors' work.

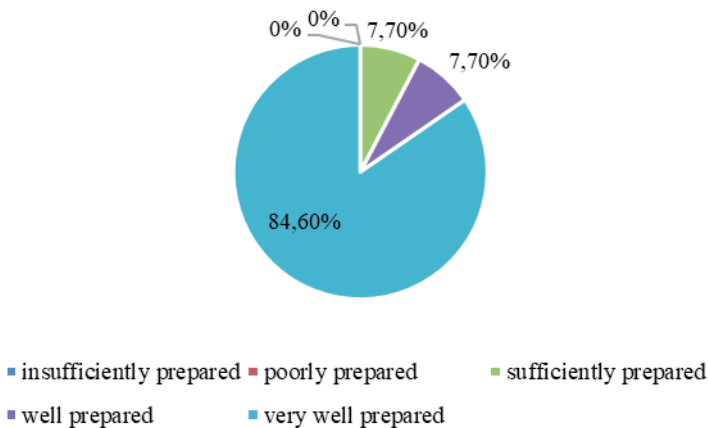


Figure 8. Opinion on substantive preparation of tutor

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

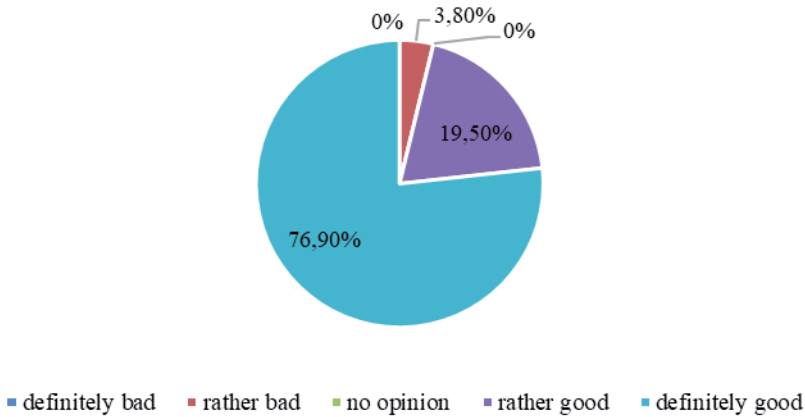


Figure 9. Opinion on tutor's working methods in terms of transparency and consistency of activities

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

An essential asset of the tutors indicated by programme participants was their ability to select many instruments that, while enriching the meetings, simultaneously supported the tutoring process (Figure 10).

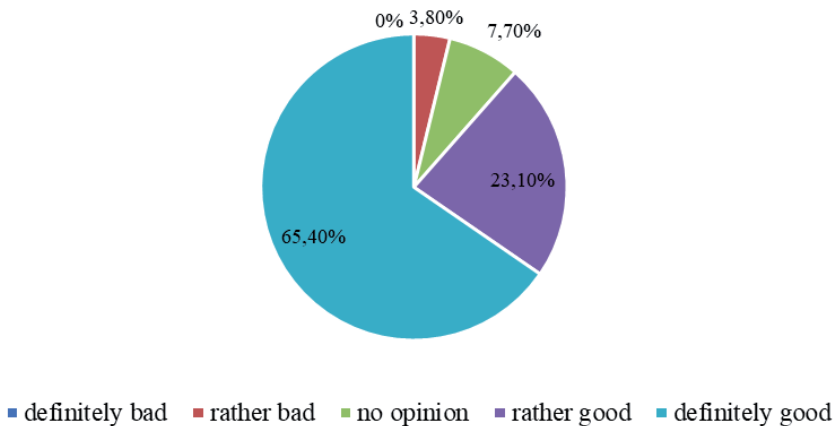


Figure 10. Opinion on tutor's working methods in use of many instruments

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The confidence in conducting meetings is noticeable because the tutors knew how to conduct classes and what activation methods to use, indicating the correct substantive preparation and, on the other hand, the adequate process of selecting tutors for the tutees (Figure 11).

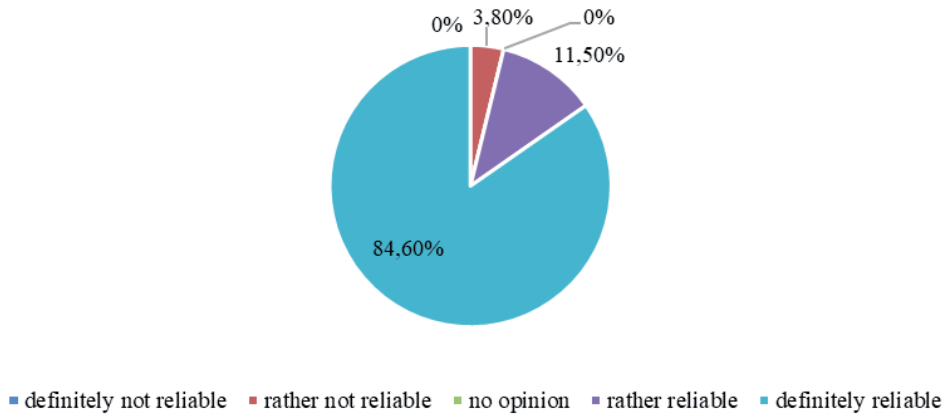


Figure 11. Opinion on conducting meetings - tutor reliability

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

Equally important was meeting the tutees' expectations they had towards the programme. Respondents' indications allow to conclude that the programme in over 92% (cumulated answers – rather yes and definitely yes) met the expectations placed in it, which proves both the adequacy of tutoring methods and the preparation of the tutors themselves and logistic support of the process.

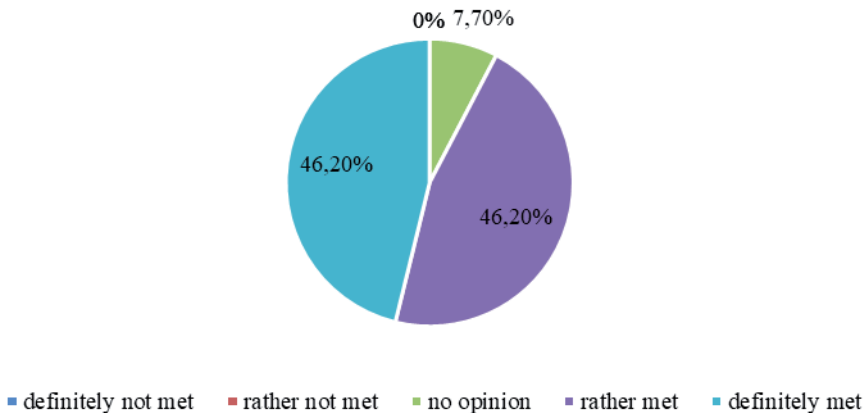


Figure 12. Opinion on meeting expectations towards programme

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

An aspect that was equally important in the results of the assessment surveys was the planning (Figure 13) and the individual adaptation of the tutor to the organisation of the charge's work (Figure 14). With many additional obligations of programme participants, this allowed proper time management to play a significant role in achieving the programme's effects, which required a kind of discipline of tutors towards the participants and *vice versa*.

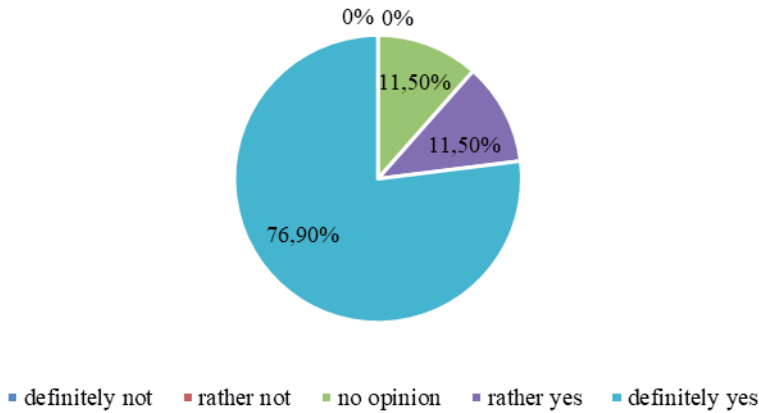


Figure 13. Classes were held according to predefined schedule

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

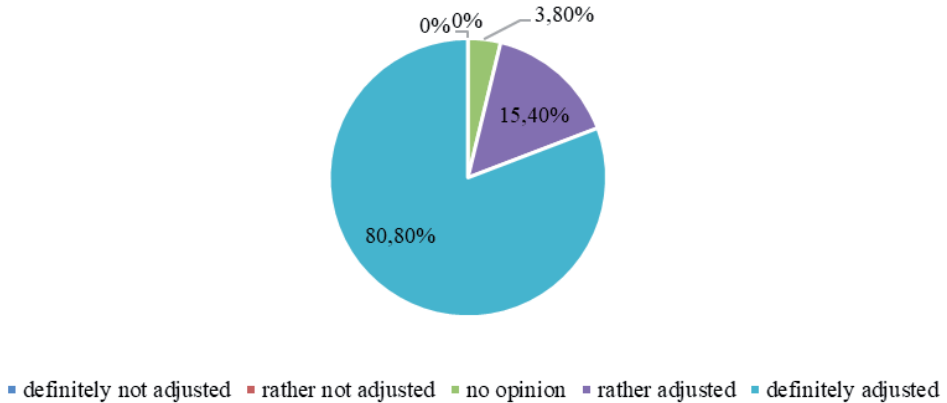


Figure 14. Adjusting date of classes to tutee's availability

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The third part of questions concerned the course and effects obtained from the meetings. First of all, the assessment focus was on the substantive level of the tutoring process, communication with the tutee stimulating presentation of one's position on a given matter, own opinion, view or belief. To a large extent, the participants pointed to a high and a very high level of requirements imposed on them during meetings and individual work (Figure 14), which resulted in developing their own interests and passions (Figure 15). A derivative of proper master-student relationship was also the high substantive preparation of the tutees (Figure 17) and their engagement during classes (Figure 18).

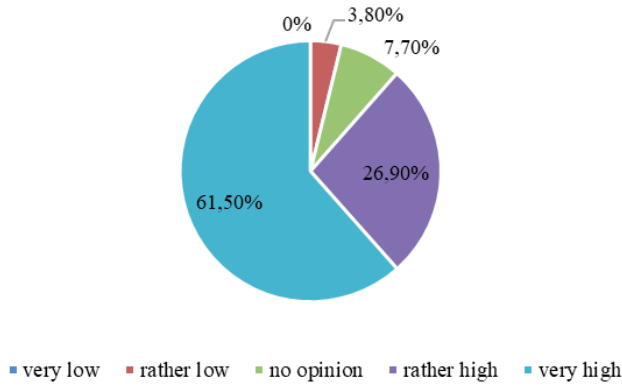


Figure 15. Level of requirements posed by tutor

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

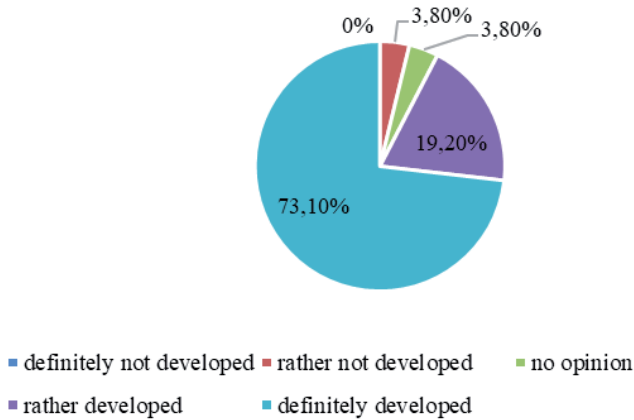


Figure 16. Opinion on development of interests as result of programme participation

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

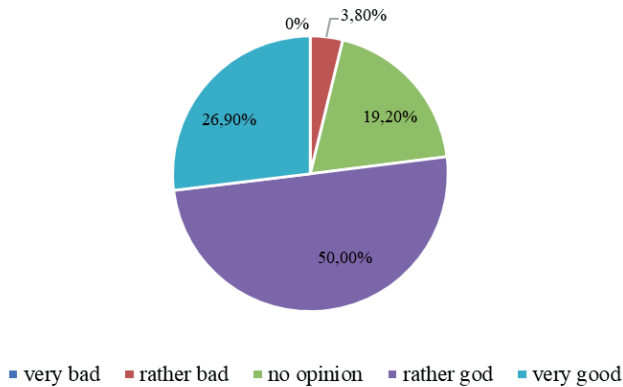


Figure 17. Opinion on level of own preparation for meetings

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

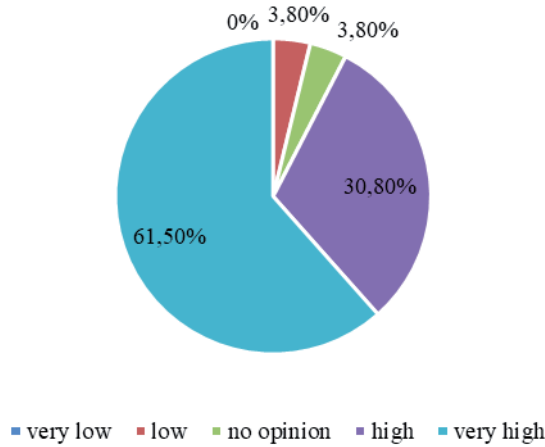


Figure 18. Opinion on level of own engagement during meetings

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The fourth part of questions covered the assessment of promotional instruments undertaken by the Organisational Office, whose purpose was to inform about the programme and its objectives. The participants were asked about sources of knowledge about the programme. One of the most common indications was the school environment (teacher) and the Internet. The contact with schools was mainly carried out through mailing, while in the case of Internet sources the use of Google Display Network, where the number of views reached 562 393, was indicated.

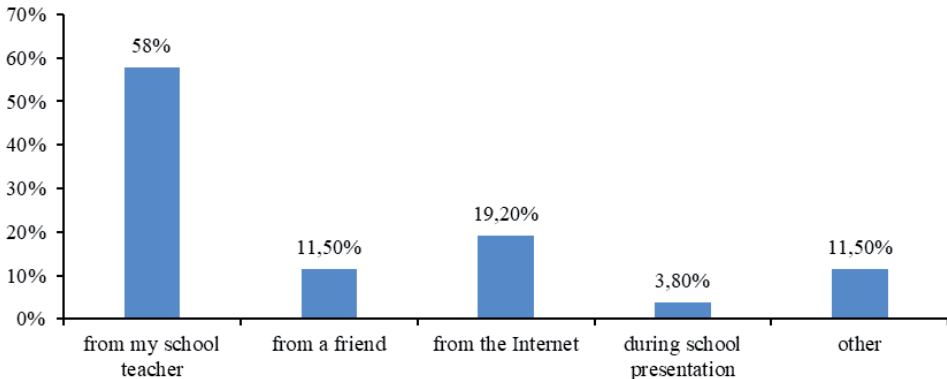


Figure 19. Source of information about the University of the Best programme

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The fifth part of assessment questions covered issues of tutee communication with the organisational office and the programme’s ‘communication policy’

itself carried out through the website in many ways, and whose transparency and ease of access to information (Figure 20) was indicated by 68% of the participants surveyed (good and very good cumulative answers).



Figure 20. Website transparency

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The process of communication and exchange of information with the organisational office was assessed by the vast majority of tutees as correct (Figure 21). It included day-to-day project management and preparations for a follow-up conference or exchange of information on the subject of classes conducted in the form of group workshops, which were considered an essential element of building community among project participants (Figure 22).

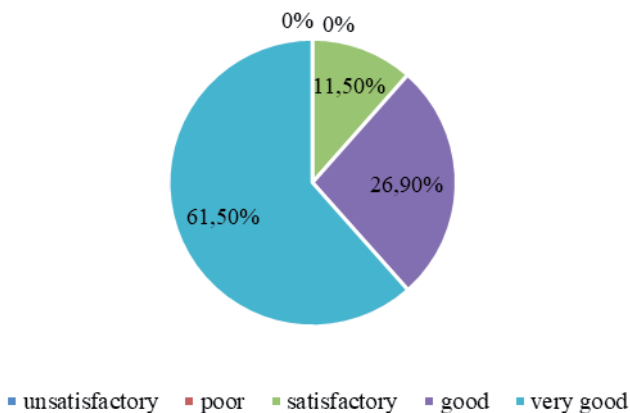
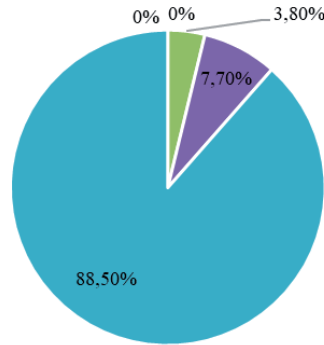


Figure 21. Communication with organisational office

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



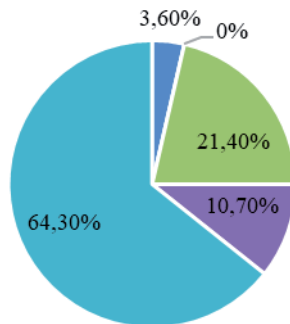
■ very poorly selected ■ rather poorly selected ■ no opinion ■ rather well selected ■ very well selected
 Figure 22. Subject areas and accessibility of workshop classes

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The assessment process of the University of the Best programme also involved the work of tutors. Bearing in mind the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and potential durability, the program manager sent questionnaires to 23 tutors, receiving 28 answers – the difference was due to the fact that under the regulations one tutor could conduct a tutoring process for a maximum of two people.

The questionnaire sent to tutors was divided into five parts as with programme participants.

The first part concerned opinions on the tutees themselves, especially regarding communication with them (Figure 23) and preparation for classes (Figure 24), where the answers provided in both cases indicated the participants' particular engagement in the tutoring process.



■ unsatisfactory ■ poor ■ satisfactory ■ good ■ very good

Figure 23. Communication with programme participant

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

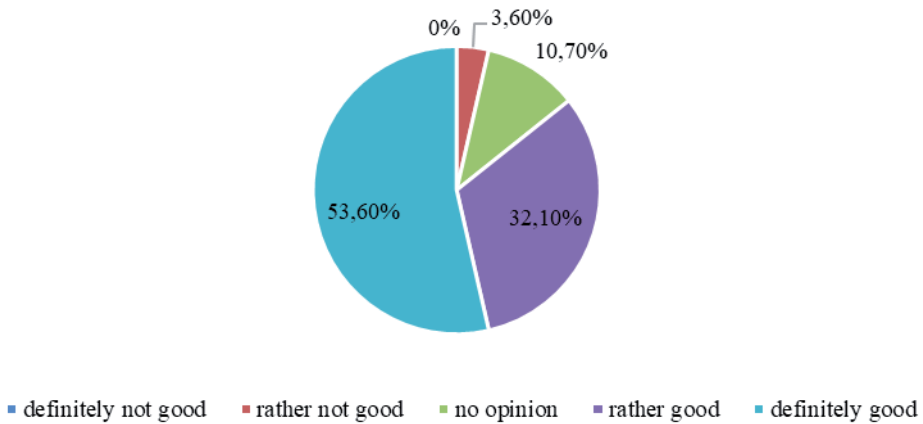


Figure 24. Preparation for classes

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

An essential element of the tutoring process is the tutee's engagement in the work process itself (Figure 25) and its regularity. The indicated aspects, as in the case of the answers given by programme participants, were also appreciated by tutors (Figure 26), although it should be reiterated that in many cases time management was a significant challenge, also for tutors, who, despite this problem, thought that their expectations for those under their care have been met (Figure 27). It should also be stressed that in the opinion of tutors, the decision to accept a tutee to the programme was confirmed in almost 93% (Figure 28).

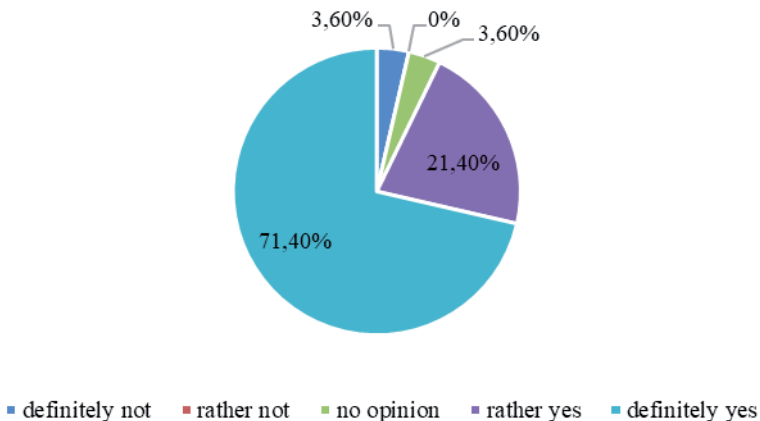
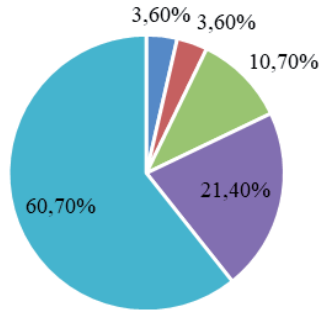


Figure 25. Tutee demonstrated commitment

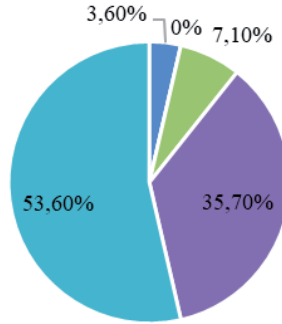
Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



■ definitely not ■ rather not ■ no opinion ■ rather yes ■ definitely yes

Figure 26. Classes were held in accordance with predefined schedule

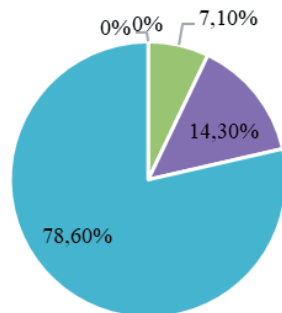
Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



■ definitely not ■ rather not ■ no opinion ■ rather yes ■ definitely yes

Figure 27. Meetings with programme participant met tutor's expectations

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme



■ definitely not ■ rather not ■ no opinion ■ rather yes ■ definitely yes

Figure 28. Rightness of decision to accept tutee to programme

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The second part of questions regarded the tutoring process and meetings. As in the case of participants, the tutors also indicated that the atmosphere during the classes was conducive to work and allowed for free exchange of thoughts (Figure 29), as a result of which the pupils expanded the scope of knowledge in the selected scientific discipline – according to the tutors, it happened in almost 95% of cases (Figure 30).

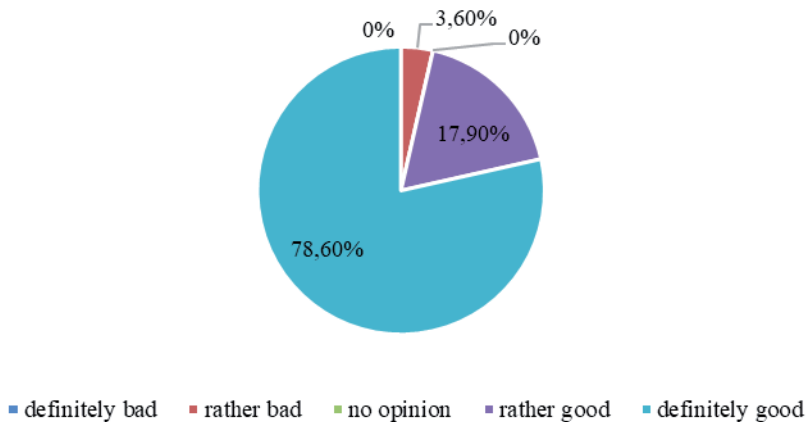


Figure 29. Atmosphere during tutoring process

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

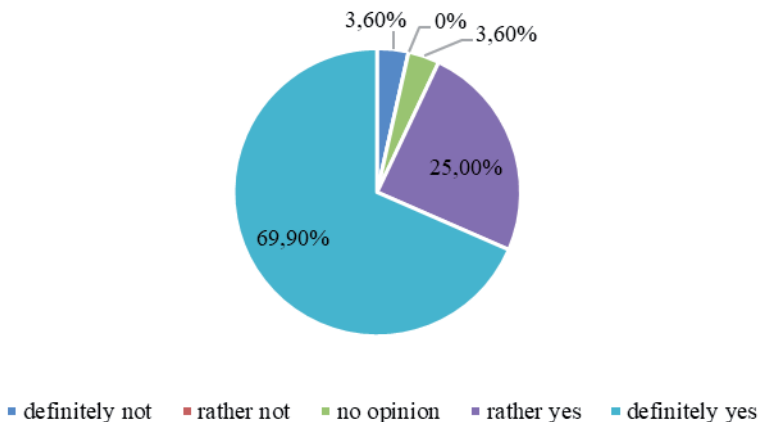


Figure 30. Tutoring helped broaden knowledge of programme participant in selected discipline

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

Tutors were also asked to assess their preparation for the tutoring process and work with young people. In this regard, 100% of respondents indicated that they were well or very well prepared for meetings, which proves the adequacy

of the selection of tutors in the process of their recruitment to the programme (Figure 31).

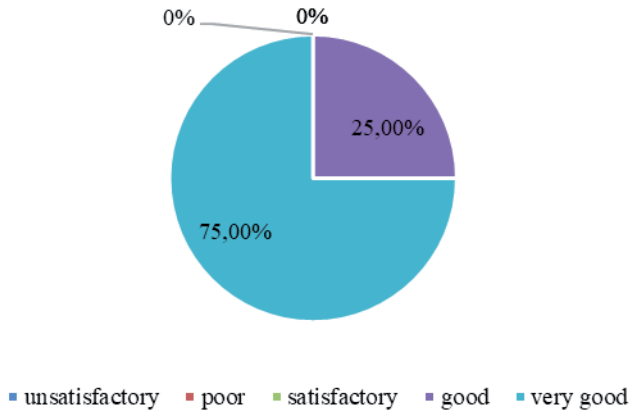


Figure 31. Own preparation for meetings

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The strong commitment of tutors, their selection of various topics in the tutoring process and the high level of requirements posed by the tutees (Figures 32, 33, 34) also supports the argument of the correct selection of tutors. This can be further supported by the opinion of the tutors themselves about the correct matching with the charge (Figure 35), which resulted in developing in over 83% of cases (cumulative answers rather yes and definitely yes) the master-student relationship (Figure36) that is the most complete implementation of the idea of tutoring.

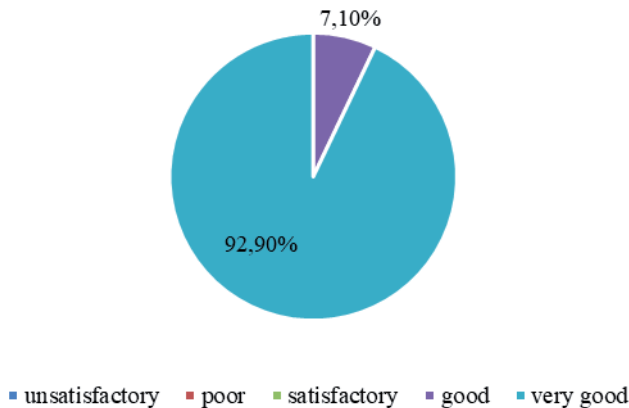


Figure 32. Own commitment during meetings with programme participant

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

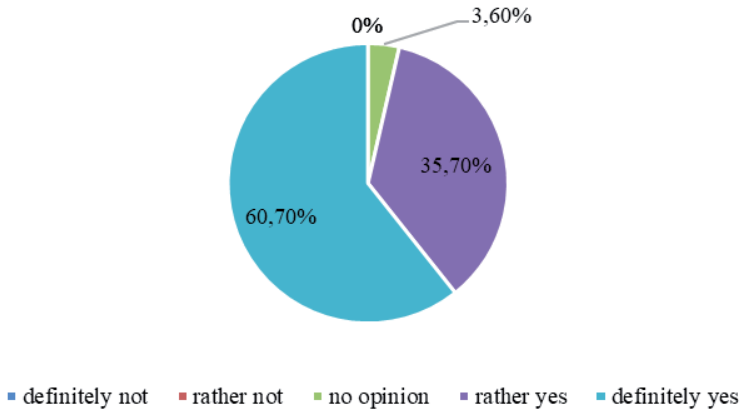


Figure 33. Meetings and their subjects were varied

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

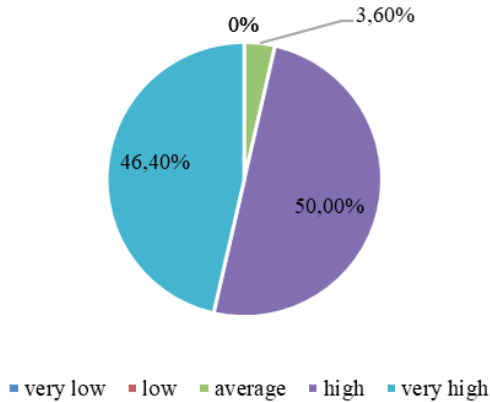


Figure 34. Level of requirements for programme participant

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

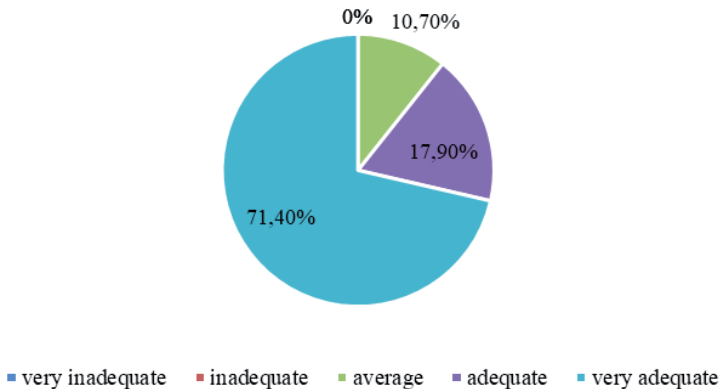


Figure 35. Matching in terms of scientific interests

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

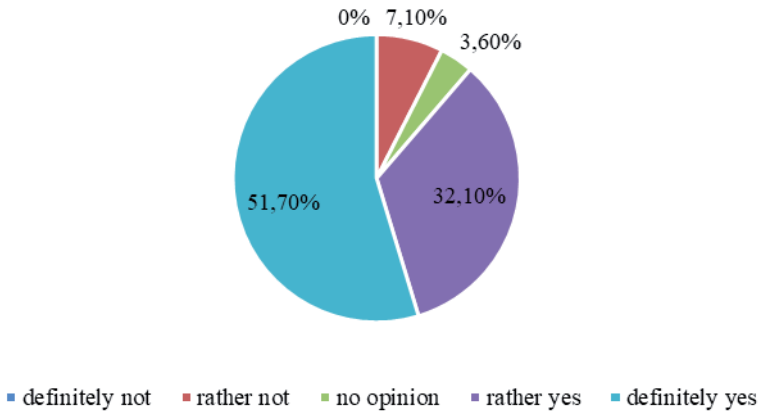


Figure 36. Meetings built tutor's relationship with programme participant
 Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

The last part of questions, as was the case with tutees, concerned issues related to the general question about meeting the expectations of the programme (Figure 37), to the website (Figure 38) and communication between the tutor and the organisational office (Figure 39). These were assessed high by tutors, confirming the effectiveness of the methods adopted.

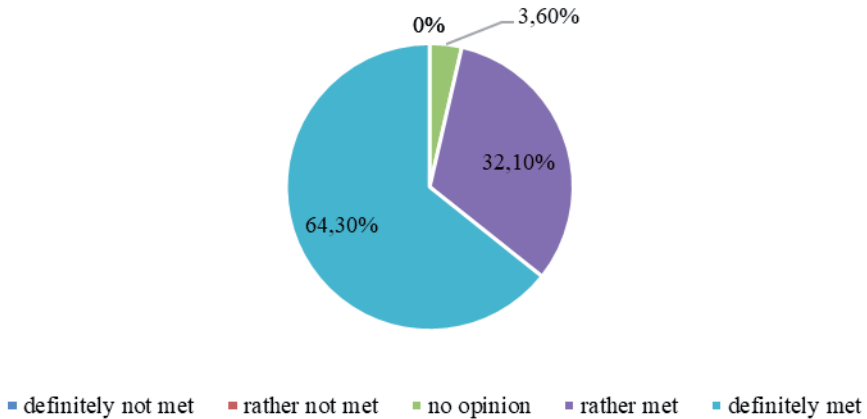


Figure 37. Meeting tutor's expectations towards programme
 Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

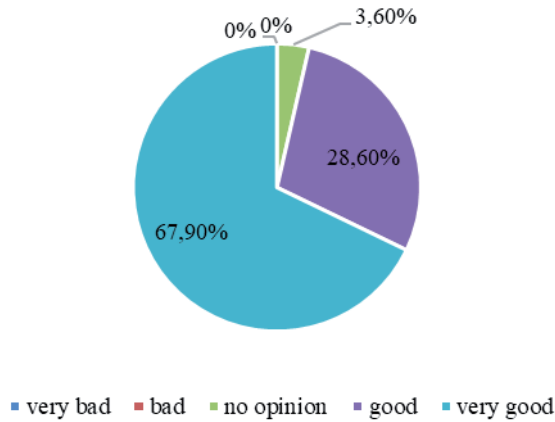


Figure 38. Website transparency

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

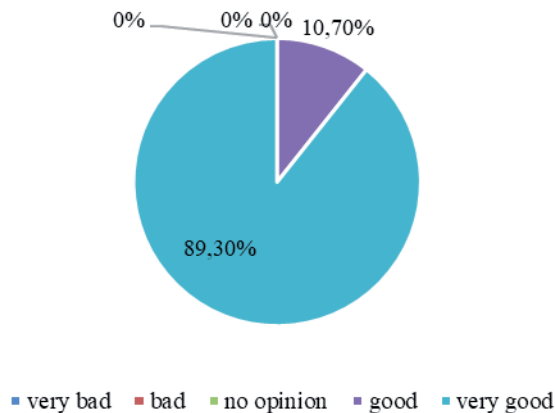


Figure 39. Communication with organisational office

Source: Own elaboration based on assessment surveys of the University of the Best programme

It is worth noting that one of the fundamental goals of the assessment was the acquisition of knowledge about the real effects of the University of the Best programme. The evaluation was a successful attempt to find the answer to the question whether the implemented actions brought the assumed results. The assessment, as demonstrated, was not limited to measuring the effects of intervention because an attempt was made to determine the cause-and-effect relationships between the actions taken and the results achieved. The assumption that the logic of the programme is correct has been proved by the survey. Measuring the effects of interventions and explaining the mechanism of actions used allowed for gathering knowledge useful for planning and implementing the next edition of the programme. This knowledge was used to formulate recommendations

and then make decisions based on them, which improved the quality of taken actions, thanks to which the principle of resource efficiency was implemented.

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