

A globe of the Earth is centered on the African continent. The globe is mounted on a dark metal stand. A semi-transparent green rectangular overlay covers the center of the globe, containing white text. The background behind the globe is a blurred bokeh of warm, golden and white lights.

The IRO way...

How to improve the exchange experience while in the office. Case study: Mobility Management

IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE OF INCOMING STUDENTS

Our focus: Comprehensive welcome program

So, we have just shown you some of the ice-breaking/get to know activities we do in our welcoming session, because we wanted to focus our attention on the **welcoming of incoming students.**





There is a huge set of skills that are associated with studying abroad...

Tolerance and
intercultural
awareness

Problem resolution

Self-knowledge

Matureness and
independence

Adaptability

Personal growth
and development

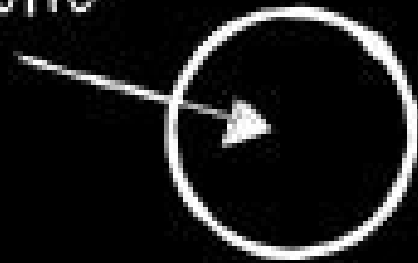
Resilience

Among many others...

...Why?



Your comfort zone

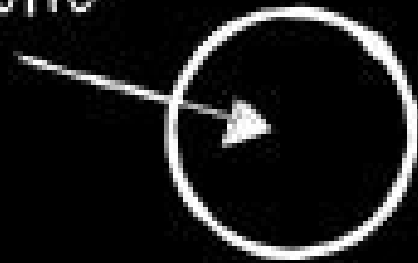


One of the main reasons is attributed to fact that when going on exchange you are...

stepping out of your comfort zone.

And as you may well know, stepping out of your comfort zone...

Your comfort zone



Where the
magic happens

...is where the
magic happens!

(and learning
happens as well –
at all levels!)



But, for students who have just:

- arrived to a different country
- a new institution
- who have to adapt to the new environment, culture, etc.

This also can suppose a great challenge.

Being out of their comfort zone also means they do not have their **social network of support:**

Family and Friends





May it be when dealing with:

- The adaptation to the new environment.
- The available resources at their disposal (help, know-how).
- Problems, whatever these may be (advice, help, support).
- An illness.
- Enjoying and making the most of these experience and having an unforgettable memory of it.

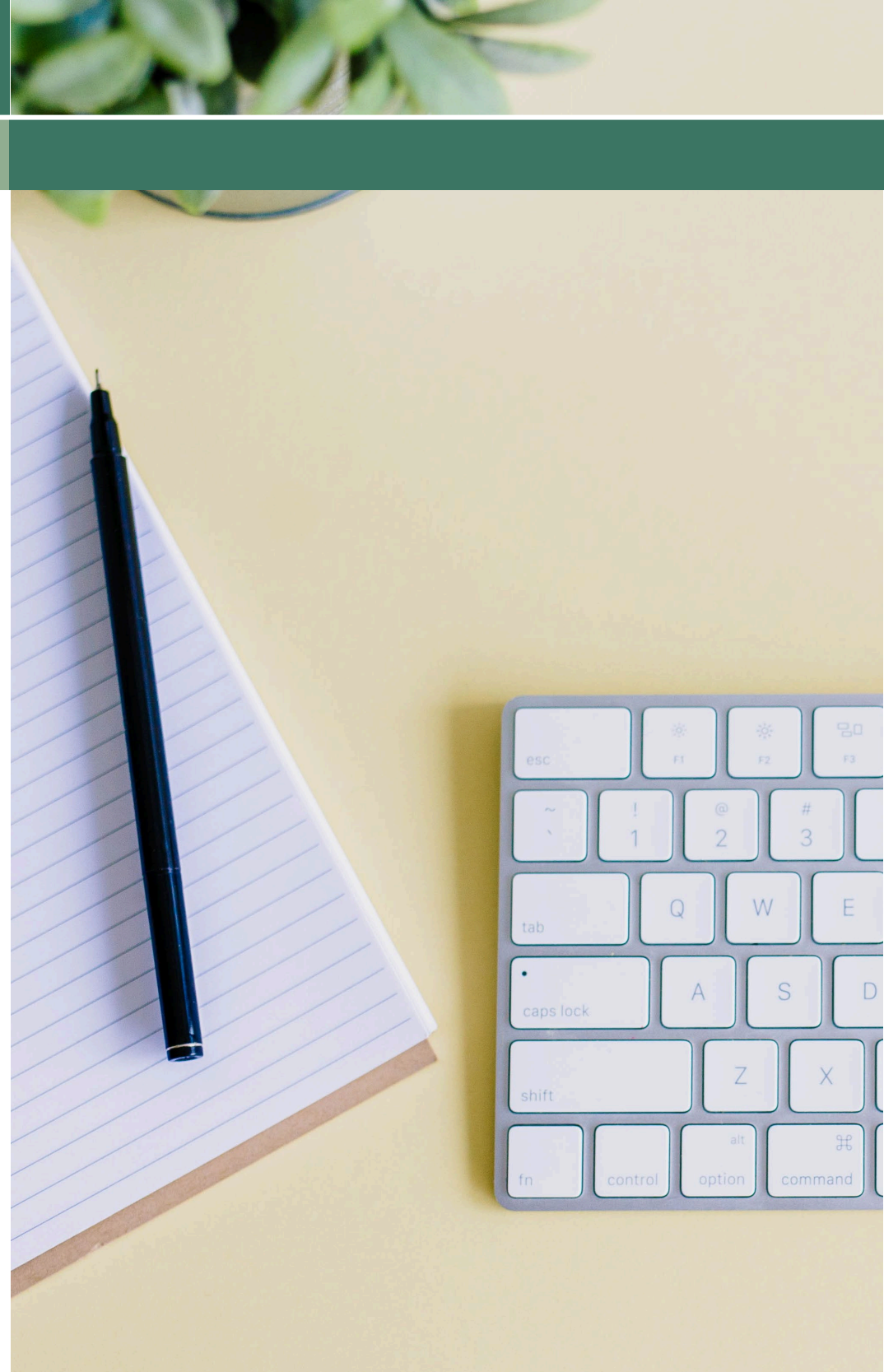
It is crucial they create their own social network of support.

Not to mention...

...the added advantage of not having them recurring to the IRO for anything they may need or may happen to them... which is always a good sign!

We are always there, but if they don't need us, better for everybody...

No news, good news!





So in the welcoming session, it is very important:

Ensuring, not only giving the most important information they may need, but also **providing time and space** for the social interaction.

Doing this in the first days of their mobility is a must do and can be a **game changing** dynamic.

It is very important that during the first days, when these **human bonds** are to **be created** we take into account we work with human beings and we have in mind what's most important above all:

That we are **social animals**
(at least most of us!)





After this, there are many other things that we shall be devoting our attention to, such as good psychological support services.


In any case, according to our experience, the majority of mobilities are a **SUCCESS** just by ensuring **social interaction**.





An example: the Welcome session

A good arrangement, for not an excessively demanding but yet effective, welcome session could be...

- **Presentations:** 1 or 3, depending on their length: Welcoming, IRO important information, academic information, university facilities and services, etc. (1h)
 - **Ice-breaking activities:** 1 or 2, depending on their length, it is always easier for students to start with not a highly demanding social activity (Kahoot is perfect for that end!) (15m)
 - **Get to know activity:** The stranger next to me, Find someone who, etc. (15m)
 - **Break:** Some free time, so they can also freely interact, now they have started to get to know each other, it's also important! (30m)
 - **Presentations:** 1 to 3: Cultural information (language, city, culture), Safety tips, ESN (1h-1.20h)
 - **Ice breaking activity and get to know activity:** Two truths and a lie, Who am I? (30m)
 - **Tour/Cultural activity:** Exhibition of a popular sport/tradition, tour through the university facilities, city tour... students have the opportunity to freely interact once more before everything officially finishes (30m to 2-3h). If it is 2-3h, give them time to eat!
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Finally, not only is it important students have a memorable experience while on exchange at your institution, for the value it has in itself, but this can also create positive dynamics and have long-lasting good effects for the internationalization strategy of your institution!





A positive exchange experience of incoming students at your university...



...makes of your institution a reliable and attractive partner.





Thank you!

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➤ Which of the activities below do you organize for welcoming exchange students?

- Check-in
- Welcoming pack
- Welcome Session
- Induction Week
- Get to know activities
- Cultural visits or all-day long activities
- Welcome dinners/lunches/meals

➤ Which are the activities you organize you think are more valued for incoming exchange students?

