



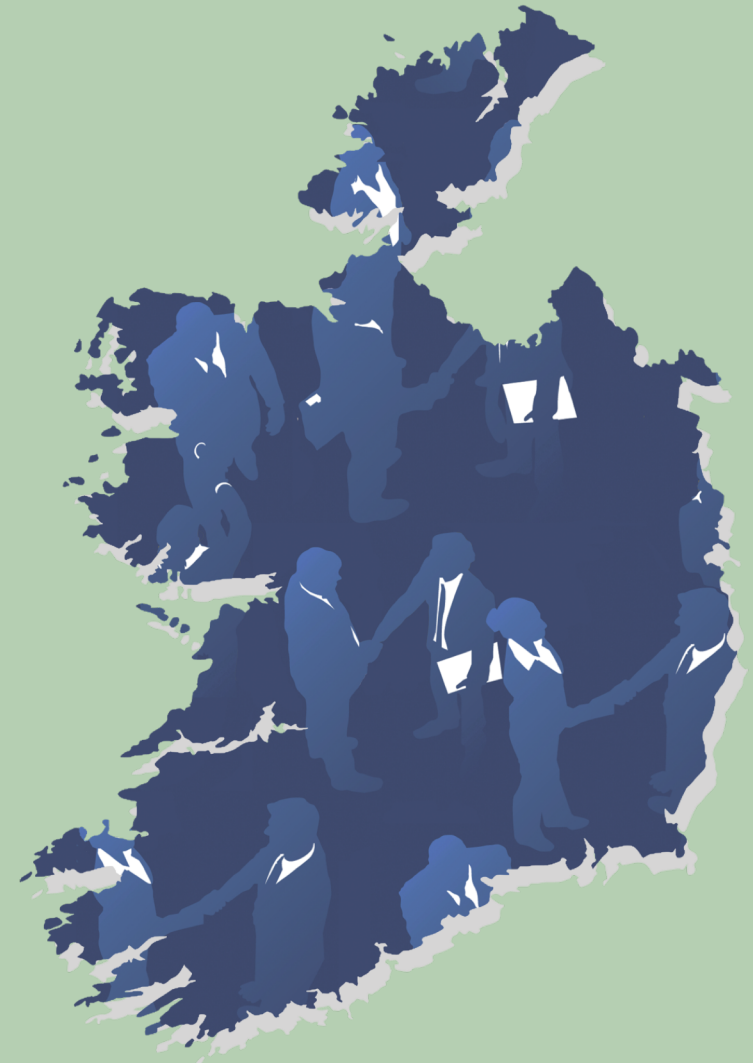
**UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS**  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

# State of University- Business Cooperation

# IRELAND

## University Perspective

Study on the cooperation between  
higher education institutions and  
public and private organisations



**Science Marketing**  
Science-to-Business Marketing Research Centre

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**CIT** Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Chorcaí  
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**UIIN**  
University Industry  
Innovation Network



**ingenio** CSIC-UPV  
Instituto de gestión de la innovación  
y del conocimiento







## The State of Irish University-Business Cooperation: the university perspective

### Partners



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# Executive summary

## Summary

This report provides the findings of a study on the university-business cooperation (UBC) in Ireland from the perspective of higher education institutions (HEIs). Examining the perceptions of academics, HEI managers and knowledge transfer professionals (KTP) provides positive signs for the future, with 99% of all respondents currently cooperating with businesses planning to maintain or increase their cooperation in the future. Yet, more can be done, for example, in supporting academics in their cooperation efforts, including the development of dedicated academic UBC networks, as well as the development of incentive systems for academics engaging in UBC.

## About the study

The results presented in this report reflect the perceptions of academics, HEI managers and KTP in Ireland with respect to cooperation between HEIs and business. Data was collected by means of an online survey distributed via email to a university database that was developed based on publicly available information, leading to a total of 323 Irish HEI responses. The study measured the perceptions of respondents with respect to their cooperation efforts, barriers, drivers, supporting mechanisms and perceived capabilities.

## University-Business Cooperation

Academics responding to this survey are involved in a variety of different cooperation types, with joint R&D and mobility of students emerging as the most prevalent ones. However, around 60% of Irish academics do not engage in these activities at all.

The third most developed UBC activity for Irish academics is a business consulting, however only 13.1% report a high level of development.

Respondents see themselves as proactive initiators of UBC, with 65% of respondents stating that they usually or always initiate such cooperation. Contrary, only 16% of respondents perceive current students as usually or always initiating cooperation.

Academics in Ireland focus on collaboration with regional and national businesses. Furthermore, almost 60% of cooperating academics in Ireland collaborate with small and micro-sized companies.

## Resourcing is key

Independent of whether academics are currently cooperating with business or not, insufficient work time allocated for UBC activities is identified by all academic respondents as one the major barriers to UBC. In addition to time, academics also perceive limited funding from business, including SMEs, as well as government as further hindering factors. While cooperating academics identify resources and funding related factors as especially hindering, non-cooperating academics are concerned with the differences in motivations between two organisations.

Barriers most strongly perceived by HEI management relate primarily to monetary resources, such as limited resources of SMEs as well as lack of business and university funding. Aligned with the academic perception, they also rate insufficient work time for academics as one of the primary barriers. They also highlight business lack of awareness of university research.

**NOTE:** This report provides a university perspective on university-business cooperation UBC, drawing on a survey of European higher education institutions, academics and businesses. While acknowledging limitations relating to the generalisability of the results due to the non-random nature of the sample, the results provide positive signs both of the present and for the future, while also providing an indication as to areas that require future development.

# Executive summary

## **Relationships matter**

While funding to undertake cooperation emerges as one of the top five facilitators, relationship related factors are the most prominent drivers of UBC for both Irish academics and HEI representatives. It is the existence of a shared goal, the mutual commitment and the mutual trust alongside prior relations with a business partner that facilitate and thus drive cooperation, from the perspectives of all HEI respondents. These results confirm that any effort focussed on enabling and increasing cooperation between businesses and universities should focus on relationship development as a key UBC success factor.

## **Stakeholders have different motivations**

What motivates HEI respondents to engage in university-business cooperation? For HEI representatives, the motivators focussed on students and university are the strongest drivers, with the willingness to improve graduate employability and university reputation, as well as contribution to the university's mission ranking in the top three. Obtaining funding and applying university's research in practice emerge as further important motivators for this group.

While non-cooperating academics also view benefits for students and university as central motivators for UBC, cooperating academics focus on their research, including new insights from the collaboration and its application, while also recognising the benefits for the graduates and financial incentives.

## **Strategy first**

Universities in Ireland place a strong emphasis on developing supporting mechanisms for UBC. As evident in the data, high-level strategies such as top-level management committed to UBC and a documented mission/vision embracing UBC are perceived as the most developed. Yet, specific incentive systems, as well as the integration of UBC in the performance assessment and the reduction of teaching time in exchange for extended cooperation lag considerably behind.

Most highly developed structural mechanisms in the given sample include incubators and agencies dedicated to UBC. When examining the development of specific operational activities, a strong focus on students emerges, with the highest development reported in relation to student entrepreneurship courses, and UBC activities facilitating student interaction with business. Academic entrepreneurship courses and networks, on the other hand, are perceived as the least developed mechanisms.

## **Cooperating with conviction**

Academic respondents already cooperating with business have a very positive view of their own capabilities and roles in undertaking UBC. Indeed, academics report that they have the capability to exchange knowledge and technology with business. They also have a lot offer to businesses in research as well as in education and training. Yet, they still lack the knowledge as well as the general support to undertake UBC.

# Introduction

## About the study

The study focusses on the cooperation between higher education institutions (HEIs) and public and private organisations in the 28 European Union Member States and 5 associated countries.

The State of European university-business cooperation (UBC) study is executed for the DG Education and Culture at the European Commission (EAC/10/2015) by a consortium led by the Science-to-Business Marketing Research Centre (S2BMRC), in Germany from January 2016 until November 2017.

The aim of the study is to get a more profound, comprehensive and up to date understanding of the state of UBC in Europe: what is the state of play of a wide range of UBC activities in the different countries, what are the main drivers and barriers for the different stakeholders and at what levels; what is the regulatory framework and socio-economic conditions and what kind of measures/initiatives exist on a national level to support the development of UBC. The project investigates UBC from the perspective of both university and business.

## Main activities

The main components of the project were a series of expert interviews with 23 recognised UBC experts, 52 good practice case studies, a UBC policy and indicators review as well as a major quantitative survey of stakeholders within both HEIs and business. The survey was translated into 25 languages and sent to all registered European HEIs (numbering over 3,000) in the 33 countries during

October-November 2016. Through this, a final sample of 17,410 representatives from within HEIs and business was achieved. This makes the study the largest international study into cooperation between HEIs and business yet completed.

## Why care about university-business cooperation?

- UBC is considered to be the engine towards knowledge-based societies and economies
- UBC is specially needed in the European context, threatened by increased global competition, with ongoing economic and social problems and high levels of youth unemployment
- UBC helps to create a more connected and functioning relationship between government, business and HEIs, which is at the core of EU funding schemes, such as Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+.
- UBC direct outcomes include:
  - improving the competitiveness of business,
  - increasing the relevance and innovativeness of research and teaching in HEIs,
  - improving the future job prospects of students and graduates,which can in the longer term:
  - create jobs,
  - stimulate economic growth,
  - increase living standards,
  - reduce hindrances to good living.

## Study Objectives

The specific objectives for the study are:

- Chart the current state of play and provide an in-depth analysis of UBC in the countries covered by this study, from the HE and business perspectives;
- Deliver 50 case studies of UBC (representative sample, balanced distribution among countries and organisations, balanced distribution of HEI and business led cases);
- Review indicators measuring UBC and propose possible scenarios for the implementations of UBC monitoring in Europe;
- Provide policy conclusions and recommendations for the furthering of UBC and the best approaches to take.



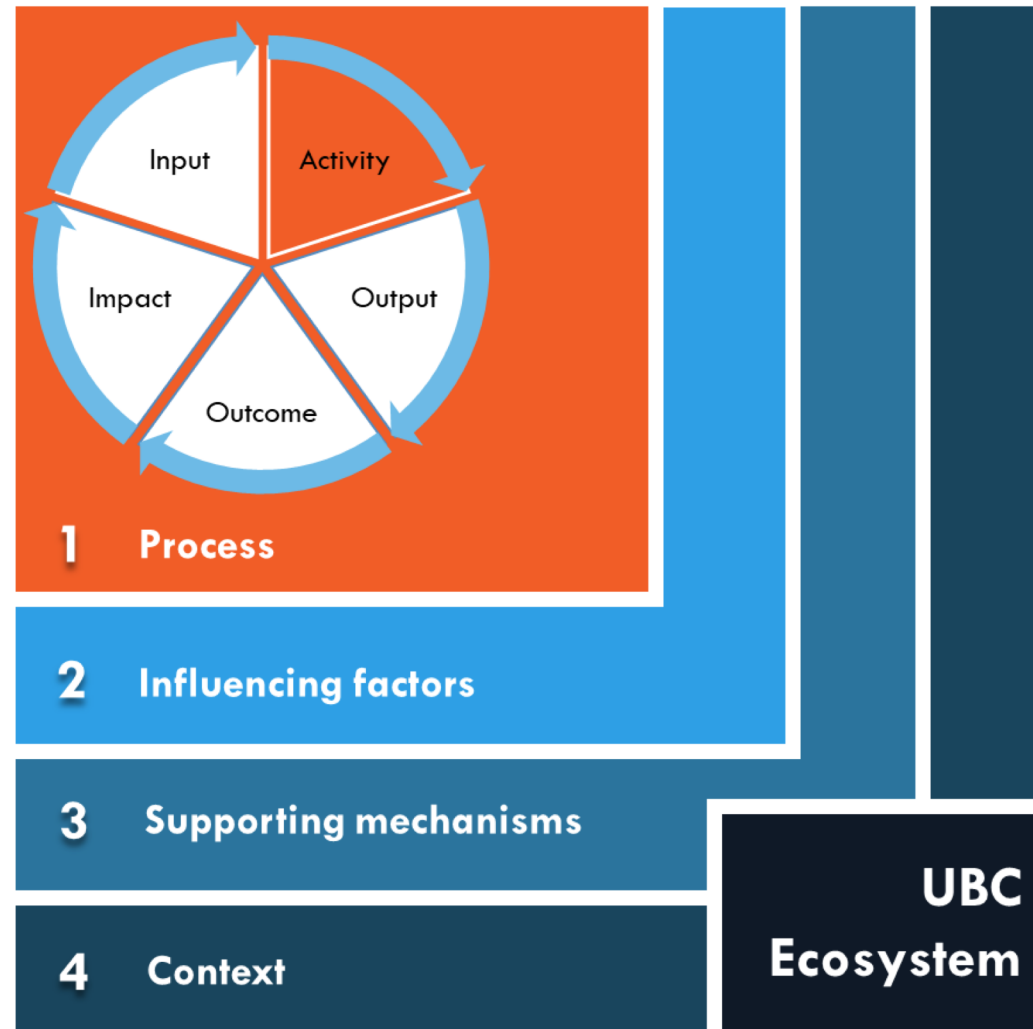
# UBC activities

## UBC Ecosystem Framework™

In order to best organise the project results, a project conceptual framework was chosen.

The UBC Ecosystem Framework has a number of interrelated elements including the process of undertaking UBC, factors that are influencing UBC, mechanisms supporting UBC and finally the context in which UBC occurs.

The framework ties together the respective project activities, providing a common thread for reporting results and making recommendations.



Source: Galán-Muros, V.; Davey, T. (2017) *The UBC Ecosystem: Putting together a comprehensive framework for university-business cooperation*. *Journal of Technology Transfer*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-017-9562-3>



# UBC Activities

Fourteen UBC activities are recognised and categorised into the areas of education, research, valorisation and management.

Area	Activity
<b>Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. curriculum co-<u>design</u></li><li>2. curriculum co-<u>delivery</u> (<i>e.g. guest lectures</i>)</li><li>3. mobility of students (<i>i.e. student internships/placements</i>)</li><li>4. dual education programmes (<i>i.e. part theory, part practical</i>)</li><li>5. lifelong learning for people from business (<i>e.g. executive education, industry training and professional courses</i>)</li></ol>
<b>Research</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. joint R&amp;D (<i>incl. joint funded research</i>)</li><li>7. consulting to business (<i>incl. contract research</i>)</li><li>8. mobility of professionals (<i>i.e. temporary mobility of academics to business and vice versa</i>)</li></ol>
<b>Valorisation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. commercialisation of R&amp;D results (<i>e.g. licencing/patenting</i>)</li><li>10. academic entrepreneurship (<i>e.g. spin offs</i>)</li><li>11. student entrepreneurship (<i>e.g. start-ups</i>)</li></ol>
<b>Management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>12. governance (<i>e.g. participation of academics on business boards and businesspeople participation in university board</i>)</li><li>13. shared resources (<i>e.g. infrastructure, personnel, equipment</i>)</li><li>14. industry support (<i>e.g. endowments, sponsorship and scholarships</i>)</li></ol>

# Development of UBC activities

Overall, most UBC activities are less developed for Irish academics than for their European counterparts.

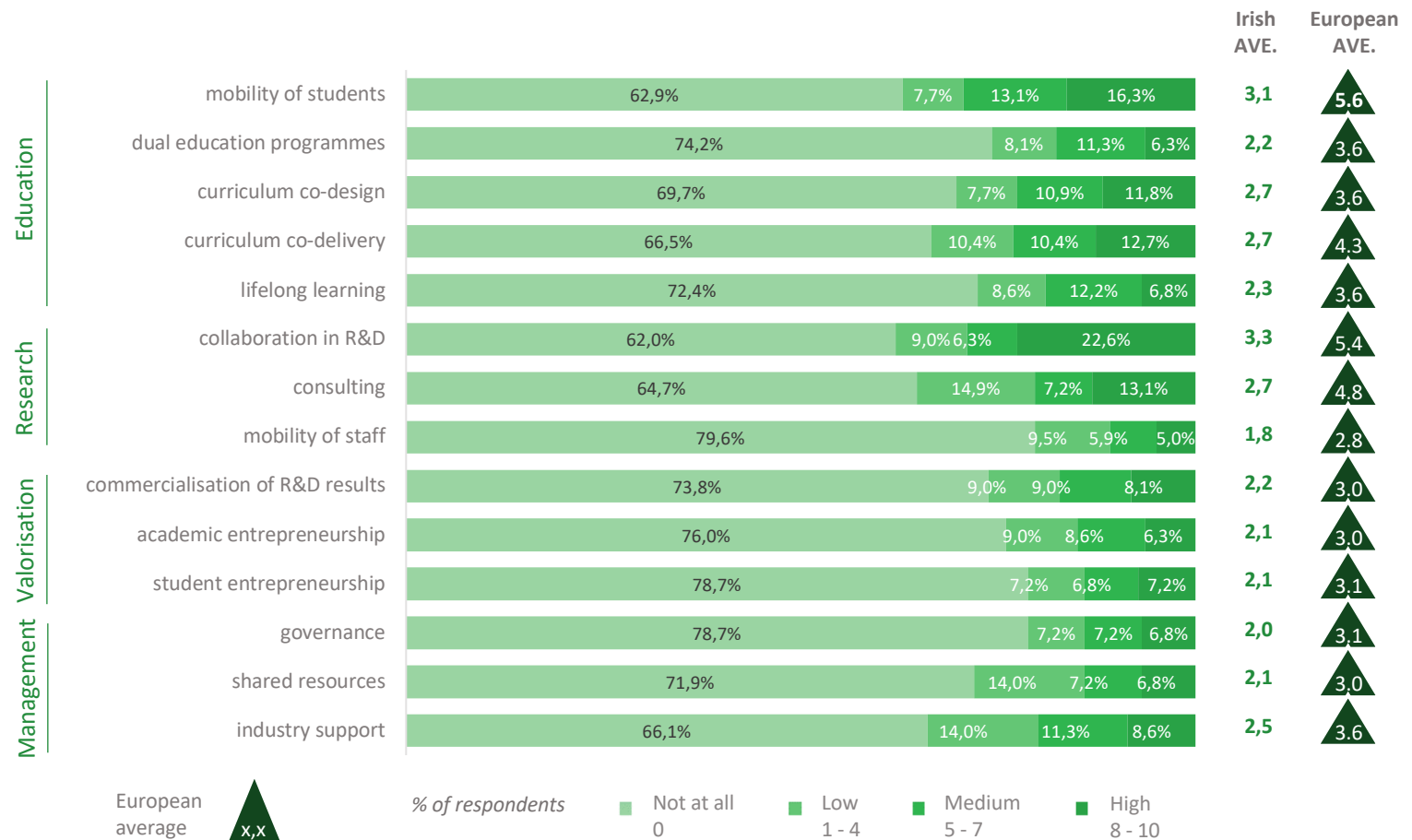
Irish academics most commonly engage with business in joint R&D (3.3) and mobility of students (3.1) and mobility of students (3.1). However, around 60% of Irish academics do not engage in these activities at all, which can be explained by the general lack of time to undertake any kind of collaboration.

The third most developed UBC activity for Irish academics is the business consulting. But while 13.1% report a high level of development, over 60% are not engaged in consulting at all.

All the UBC management activities and valorisation activities are not developed at all for more than 65% of the Irish academics.

## The extent of development of UBC activities

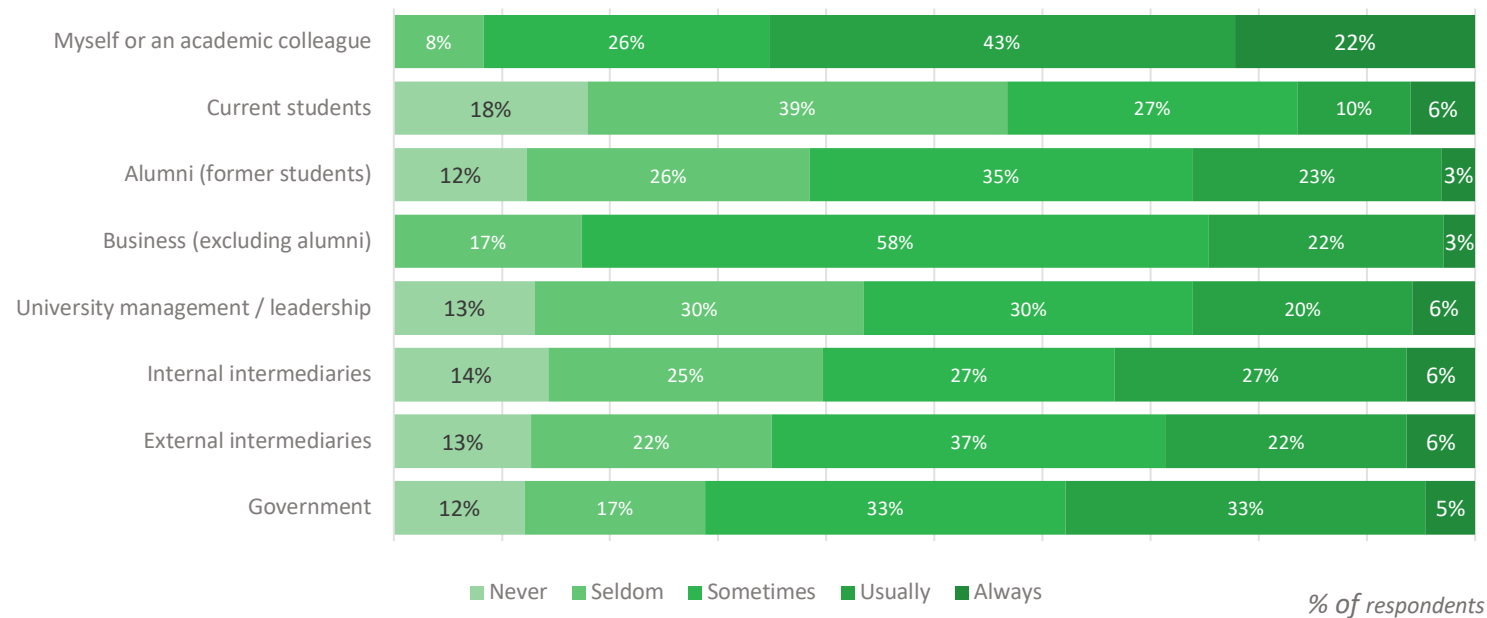
*'Which UBC activities do you collaborate with businesses in?' – as answered by academics*



# Initiation of UBC

## How UBC is initiated

*'How often various stakeholders initiate UBC activities' – as answered by academics*



Over half of Irish academics (65%) consider that themselves or their colleagues always or usually initiate UBC. This, however, does not align with the business managers' view, who also see themselves as the main initiators.

Government (38%) and internal intermediaries (33%) are also considered initiators most times. Intermediary organisations such as Enterprise Ireland provide structured funding opportunities to support interactions through innovation voucher and innovation partnership schemes<sup>1</sup> as well as employment-based research<sup>2</sup>.

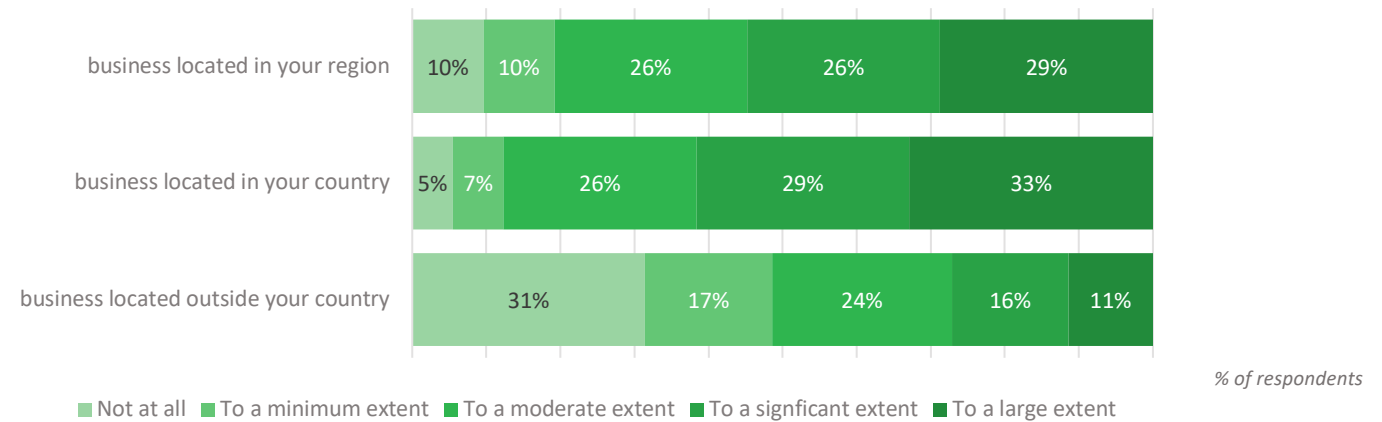
Contrary, academic perceive that current students are those stakeholders that less often initiate UBC, followed by alumni and university management.

<sup>1</sup> KTI schemes. URL: <http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/KTI-Reports/>

<sup>2</sup> The employment-based research opportunities. URL: <http://research.ie/funding/ebp/>.

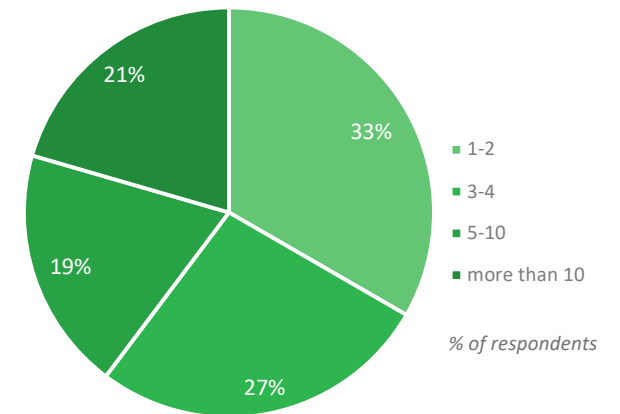
# Location of cooperating partners

## Location of business partners



Academics in Ireland focus on collaboration with regional and national businesses. They undertake a significant or high levels of cooperation with businesses at a national and regional level (63% and 55% respectively). Only 27% of academics indicate significant or high cooperation with international businesses.

## Number of business partners

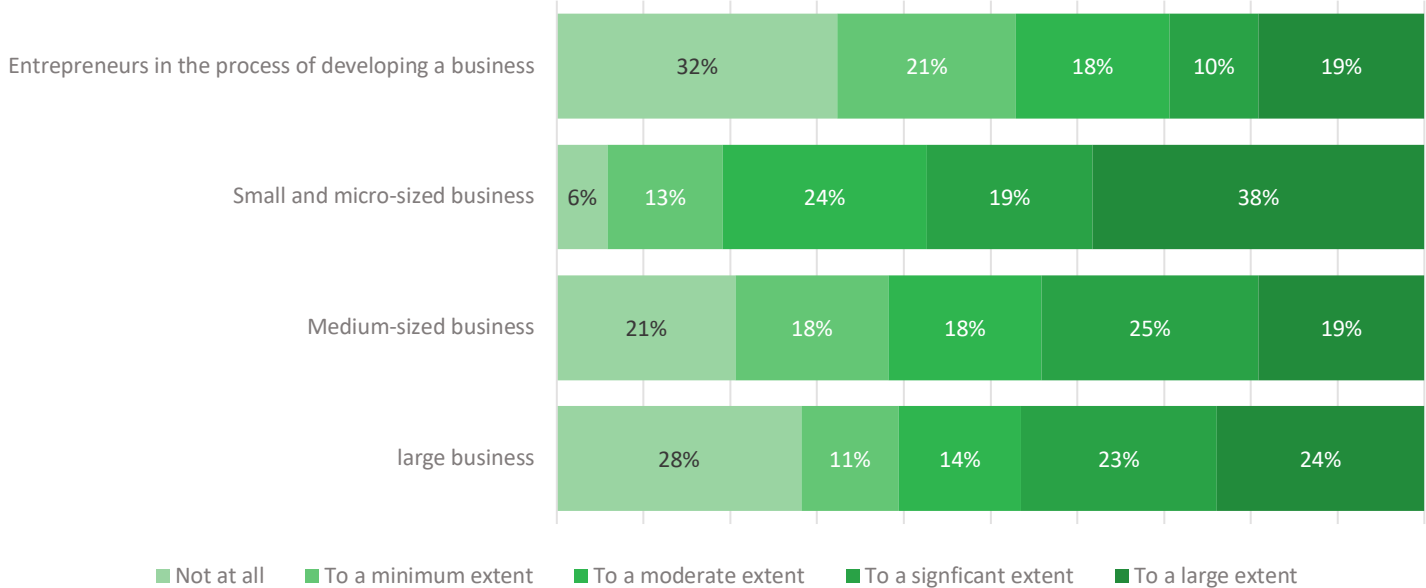


Over a half (60%) of Irish academics cooperate with 4 businesses or less while 21% collaborate with over 10 business partners.

# Size of cooperating partners

## Size of cooperating partner

*'With whom do you collaborate?' – as answered by academics*



57% of cooperating academics in Ireland engage to a significant or large extent with small and micro-sized businesses. This cooperation is reduced to 47% for large businesses, 44% for medium businesses and 29% for entrepreneurs. This should be considered in the context that 99.8% of business in Ireland are SMEs.

Enterprise Ireland has a number of measures to support entrepreneurs in Ireland – many HEIs provide incubators to support fledgling companies in developing short programmes to support business idea development.

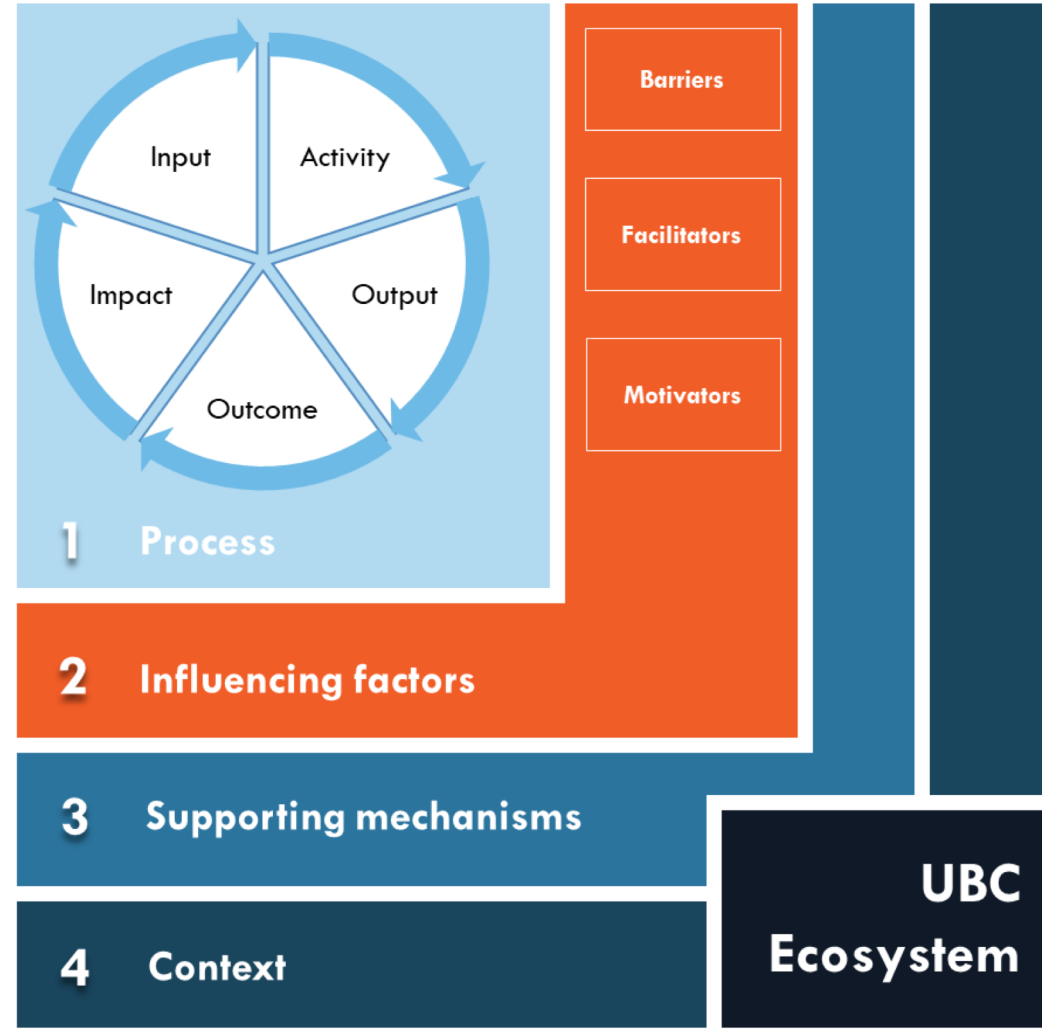
# Factors influencing UBC

This section outlines the extent to which various factors affect UBC.

Generally, a barrier provides a hindrance or obstacle to do something. Drivers comprise facilitators, which enable or ease the process, and the motivators, which trigger the starting of an activity and are often related to the expected outcome(s).

At the European level, this study has found that removing a barrier does not necessarily create UBC but rather it makes UBC possible. Instead, it is the facilitators and motivators (drivers) that initiate UBC.


For example, even when a lack of funds is often named as a major barrier to cooperation, the presence of funds may not be enough for cooperation to happen if the perceived facilitators or motivators are not sufficiently present.



# Barriers hindering UBC

## Barriers

*What is inhibiting your cooperation with business?’ – as answered by academics*



	Academics collaborating with business	Academics not collaborating with business
1.	Insufficient work time allocated by the university for academics' UBC activities	Differing motivation / values between university and business
2.	Limited resources of SMEs	Insufficient work time allocated by the university for academics' UBC activities
3.	Lack of university funding for UBC	The focus on producing practical results by business
4.	Bureaucracy related to UBC	Difficulty in finding the appropriate collaboration partner
5.	Lack of business funding for UBC	UBC conflicts with my teaching and research responsibilities
<i>Lowest</i>	No appropriate initial contact person within either the university or business	Frequent staff turnovers within my university or the business

The top five barriers to UBC for Irish academics relate to the resources, administrative and cultural issues.

Insufficient work time for UBC is the most relevant barrier for cooperating academics, followed by limited resources of SMEs.

Although their non-collaborating colleagues are also hindered by insufficient time allocated for UBC, the differing motivations between two organisations are more inhibiting for them.

While time is an issue for all academics in terms of the time that academics have to engage, there is a big difference in the contracts of academic staff in the Institute of Technology (IT) sector and the University sector – this means that staff in ITs tend to have significant contact hour workloads compared to their University colleagues<sup>1</sup>.

Overall, while collaborating academics are more hindered by the barriers related to funding and administrative issues, academics who do not collaborate recognise importance of cultural differences, time limitations and difficulties in finding appropriate partner.

<sup>1</sup> Optimising Resources in Irish Higher Education (2015). URL: <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Higher-Education/Higher-Education-Optimising-Resources-in-Irish-Higher-Education-Discussion-Paper-2-.pdf>

# Barriers hindering UBC

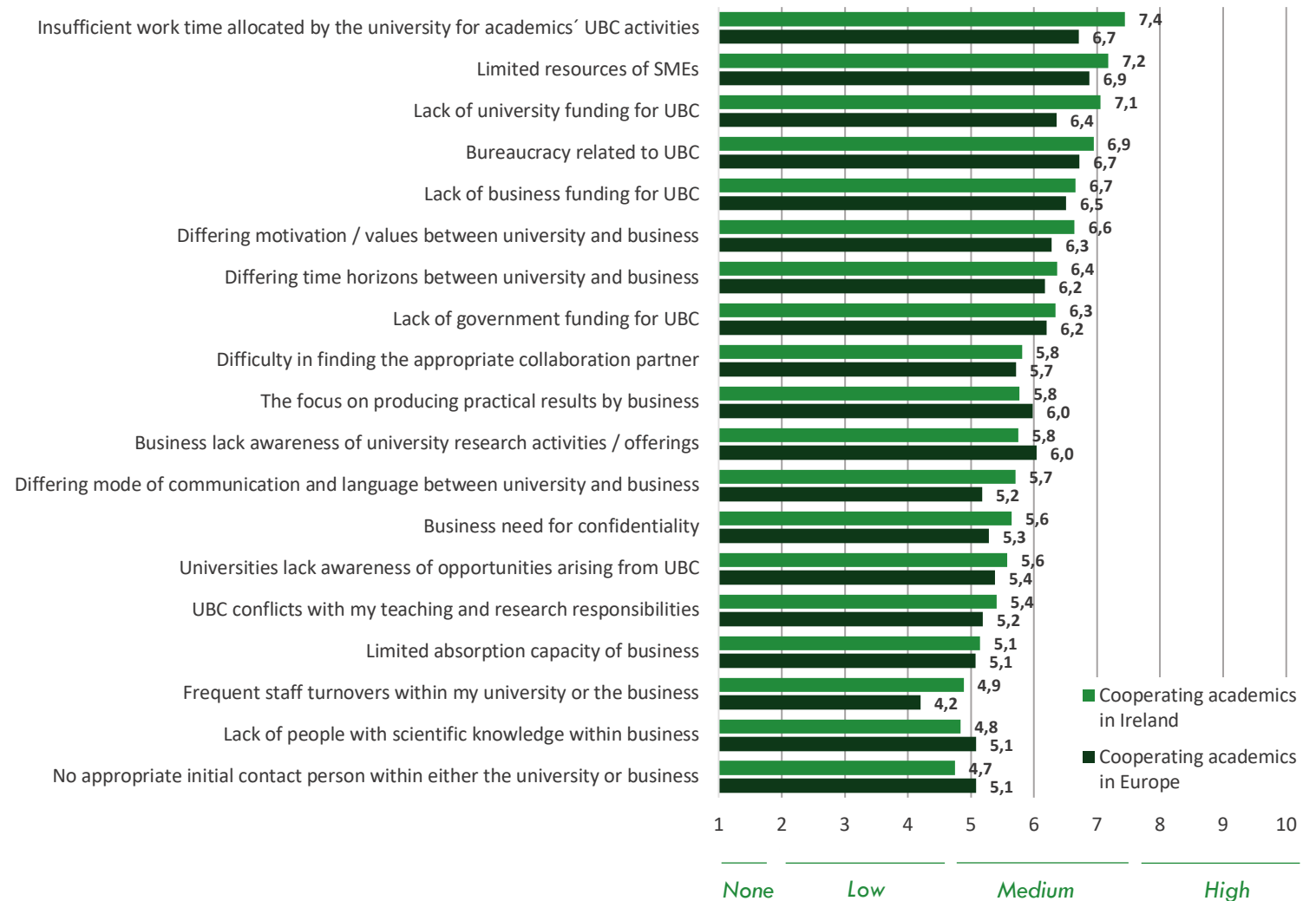
Irish academics and their European counterparts perceive most barriers similarly.

In Ireland in comparison to the European average, academics are more hindered by the insufficient time allocated for academics, the limited resources of SMEs and the lack of university funding.

However, they are less hindered than their European counterparts by the focus on practical results, and the lack of business' awareness of research activities.

## Barriers

*'What is inhibiting your cooperation with business?' – as answered by academics*

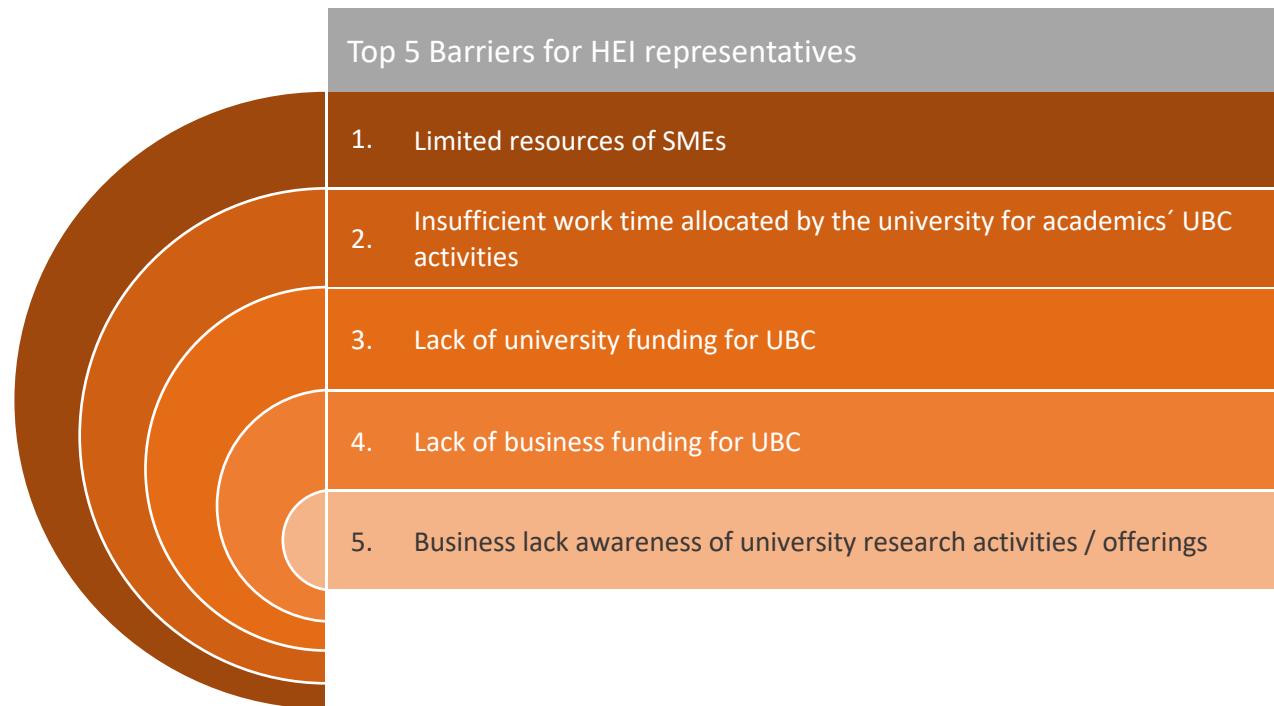




# Barriers hindering UBC

## Barriers

*'What is inhibiting your HEI cooperation with business?' – as answered by HEI representatives*



Irish HEI representatives are inhibited to engage in UBC by the limited resources and lack of awareness.

The lack of resources of SMEs and time allocated for academics are the largest barriers. This is consistent with the Irish academic perception.

HEI representatives recognise that the lack of university and business funding for UBC activities is also a major barrier.

At the same time, business' lack of awareness of research activities can also significantly inhibit UBC in Ireland.

# Barriers hindering UBC

Overall, Irish and European HEI representatives have different perceptions of barriers inhibiting UBC.

However, resources related factors are the most inhibiting for both Irish and European HEI representatives.

Insufficient time and lack of funding from both university and businesses are more hindering for Irish HEI representatives than for European ones.

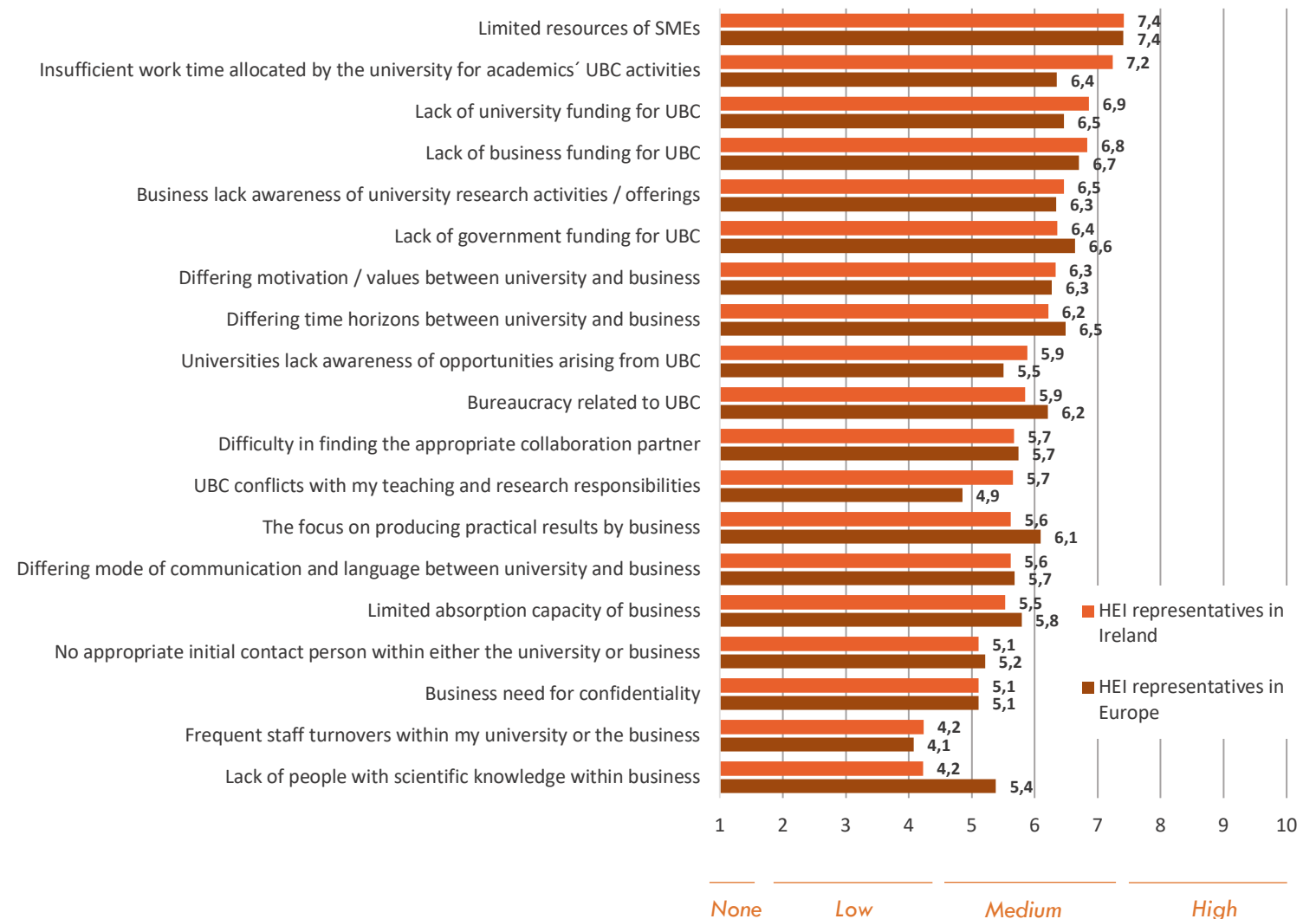
This could be explained by the fact that in recent years the funding for higher education in Ireland has been reduced while the overall number of students in third level has increased. This in turn has placed considerable pressures on the available funding and supports.

However, the lack of government funding, different time horizons, bureaucracy and focus on practical results are significantly less inhibiting for Irish HEI representatives in comparison to the European average.

The frequent staff turnovers within the university or businesses is the weakest UBC barrier for both groups.

## Barriers

*‘What is inhibiting your cooperation with business?’ – as answered by HEI representatives*



# Drivers stimulating UBC

*Drivers* are those factors that encourage businesses, academics or HEIs to engage in UBC.

Drivers of UBC are divided into two factors:

1. **Facilitators** – factors that enable or ease cooperation
2. **Motivators** – incentives or benefits that the respective stakeholders would like from the cooperation

Together, these two factors provide a comprehensive picture of what compels businesses to cooperate.

The 2010-11 State of European UBC study showed that for European universities the existence of strong UBC drivers can overcome the presence of barriers to UBC.

The main factors that facilitate UBC for both Irish academics and HEI representatives are similar.


The main facilitators focus on the relationship aspect of UBC, highlighting the importance of mutual commitment, shared goal and trust for successful UBC.

The existence of funding is another important factor driving UBC recognised by both groups.

Yet, while for academics the business' interest in accessing knowledge is another relevant facilitator, for HEI representatives it is important to have existing relations with the business partner.

## Facilitators

*'What is facilitating your cooperation with business?' – as answered by academics and HEI representatives*



	Academics cooperating	HEI representatives
1.	Existence of a shared goal	Existence of mutual commitment
2.	Existence of mutual commitment	Existence of mutual trust
3.	Existence of mutual trust	Existence of funding to undertake the cooperation
4.	Existence of funding to undertake the cooperation	Existence of a shared goal
5.	Interest of business in accessing scientific knowledge	Prior relation with the business partner

# Drivers stimulating UBC

European and Irish perceptions of UBC facilitators align. Yet, notably Irish academics perceive the drivers slightly weaker than European academics.

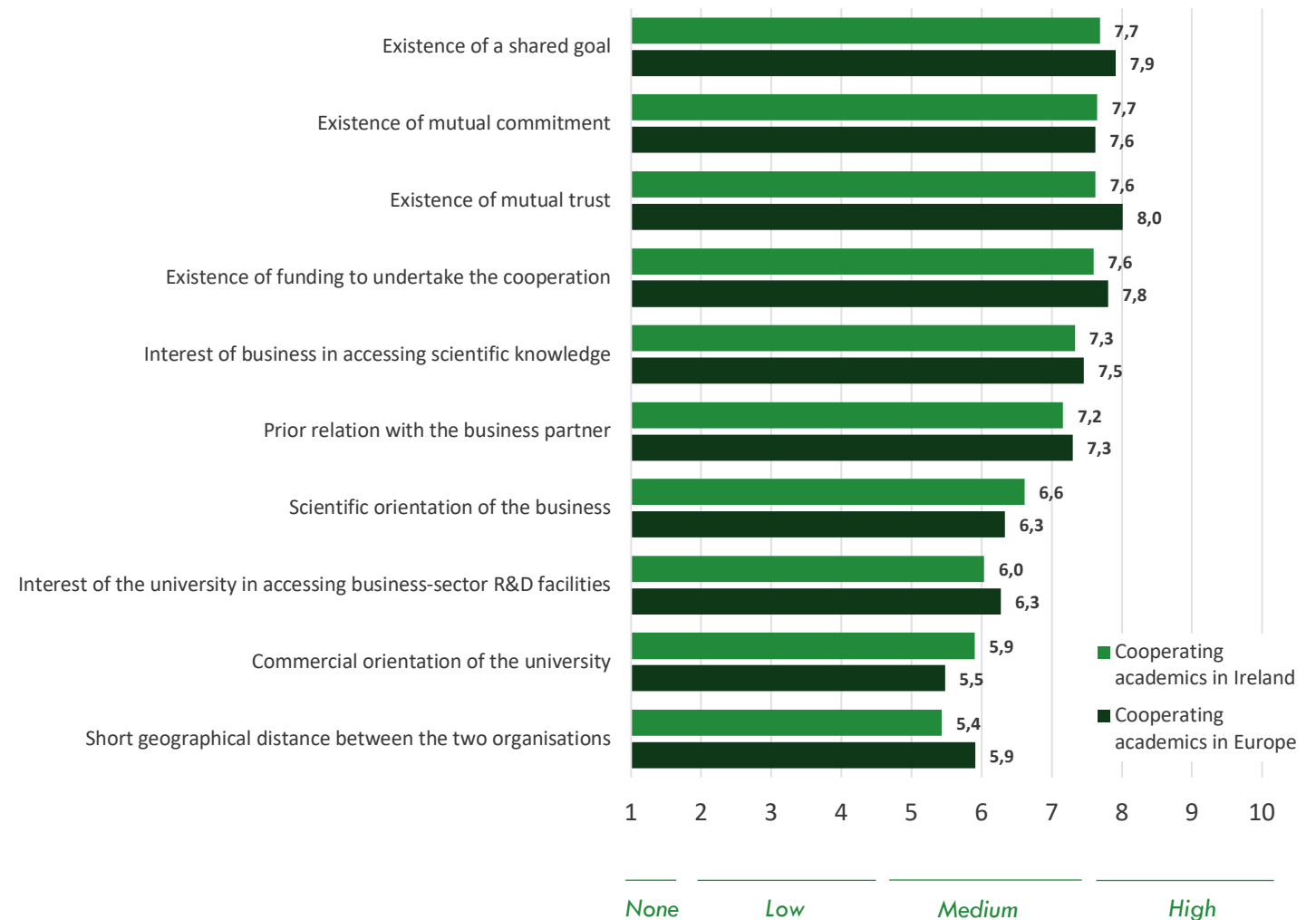
For both groups, the most important facilitators are those related to the relationship component of UBC. The academics highlighted the existence of mutual trust, a shared goal and mutual commitment among the most important facilitators positively influencing their cooperation with businesses.

In addition to the relationship facilitators, the existence of funding and the interest of business in accessing scientific knowledge also play important role for both.

The short geographical distance between the two organisations emerges as the weakest facilitator.

## Facilitators

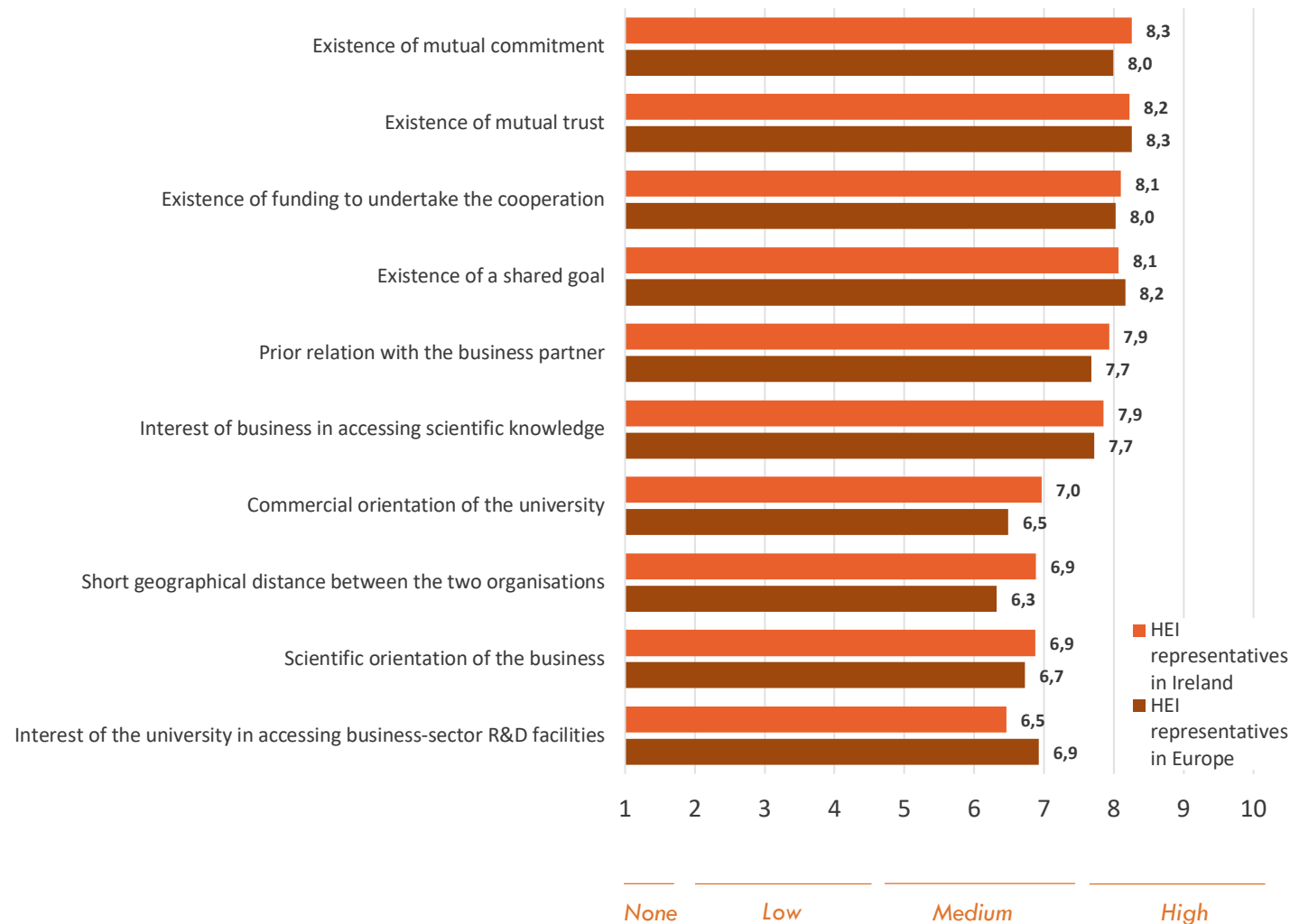
*‘What facilitates your cooperation with business?’ – as answered by academics*



# Drivers stimulating UBC

## Facilitators

*'What is facilitating your cooperation with business?' – as answered by HEI representatives*



Irish HEI representatives and their European counterparts perceive the facilitators in a very similar way.

For both groups, the most important facilitators also relate to the relationship aspect of UBC. The existence of mutual commitment and trust as well as the availability of funding are the most important drivers facilitating their cooperation with businesses. This is consistent with Irish academic perspective.

The existence of the shared goals and the prior relation with business partners also play an important role.

Scientific orientation of businesses and the interest of universities in accessing business facilities emerge as the weakest facilitators.

# Drivers stimulating UBC


Motivators of Irish academics who already cooperate with businesses and motivators of non-cooperating academics have certain discrepancies.

While cooperating academics highlight research motivations, such as gaining new insights and using research in practice, academics not yet cooperating recognise the potential benefits of improving graduate employability as well as the opportunity to address societal challenges through UBC.

Interestingly, non-cooperating academics rate motivators related to other stakeholders (e.g. employability of graduates, societal needs, mission of the university) more strongly.

## Motivators

*'What motivates you to cooperate with business?'- as answered by academics*

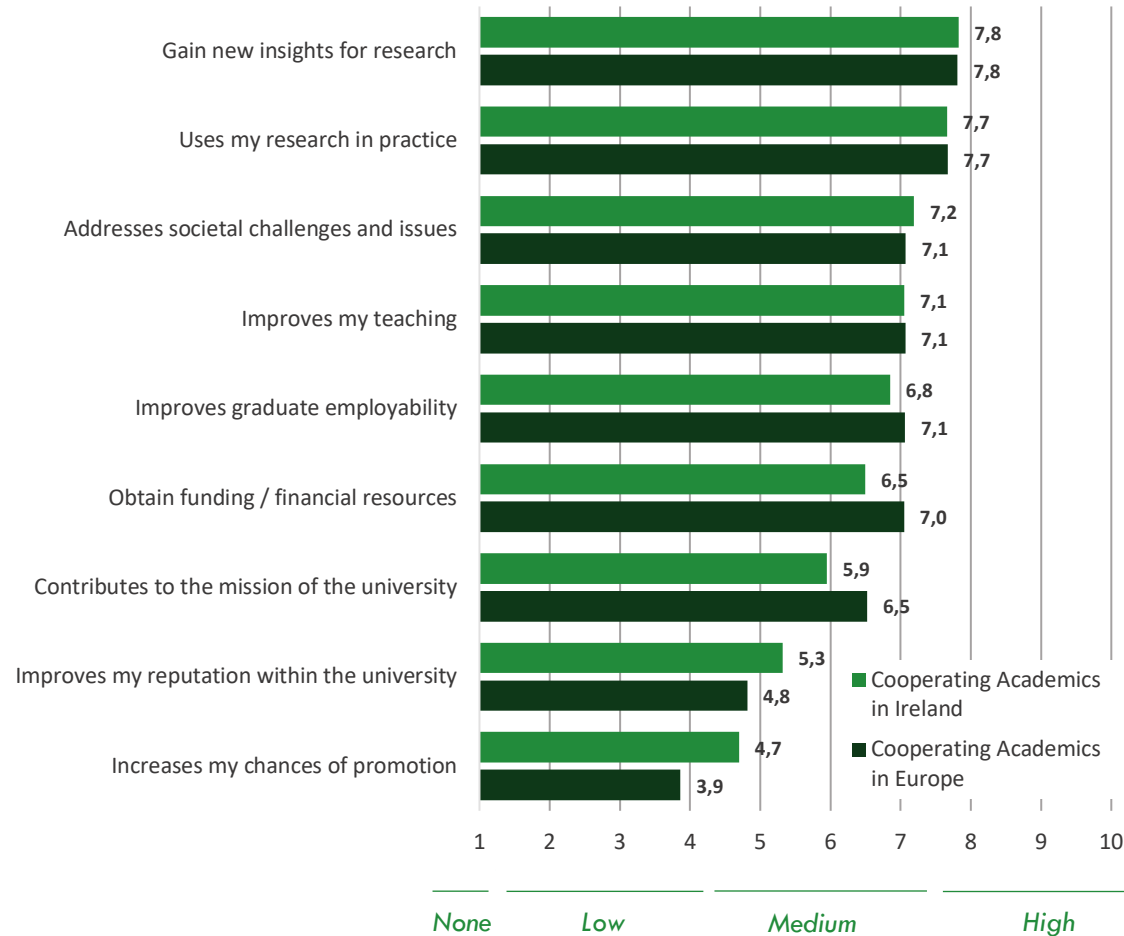


	Academics who cooperate	Academics who <u>do not</u> cooperate
1.	Gain new insights for research	Improves graduate employability
2.	Uses my research in practice	Addresses societal challenges and issues
3.	Contributes to the mission of the university	Contributes to the mission of the university
4.	Improves graduate employability	Provides funding / financial resources
5.	Obtain funding / financial resources	Uses my research in practice

# Drivers stimulating UBC

## Motivators

*'What motivates you to cooperate with business?'*- as answered by academics



The perception of UBC motivations of Irish academics mostly align with the view of their European counterparts.

The top three motivators, which are related to research and societal impact are perceived equally strong by both European and Irish academics in Ireland.

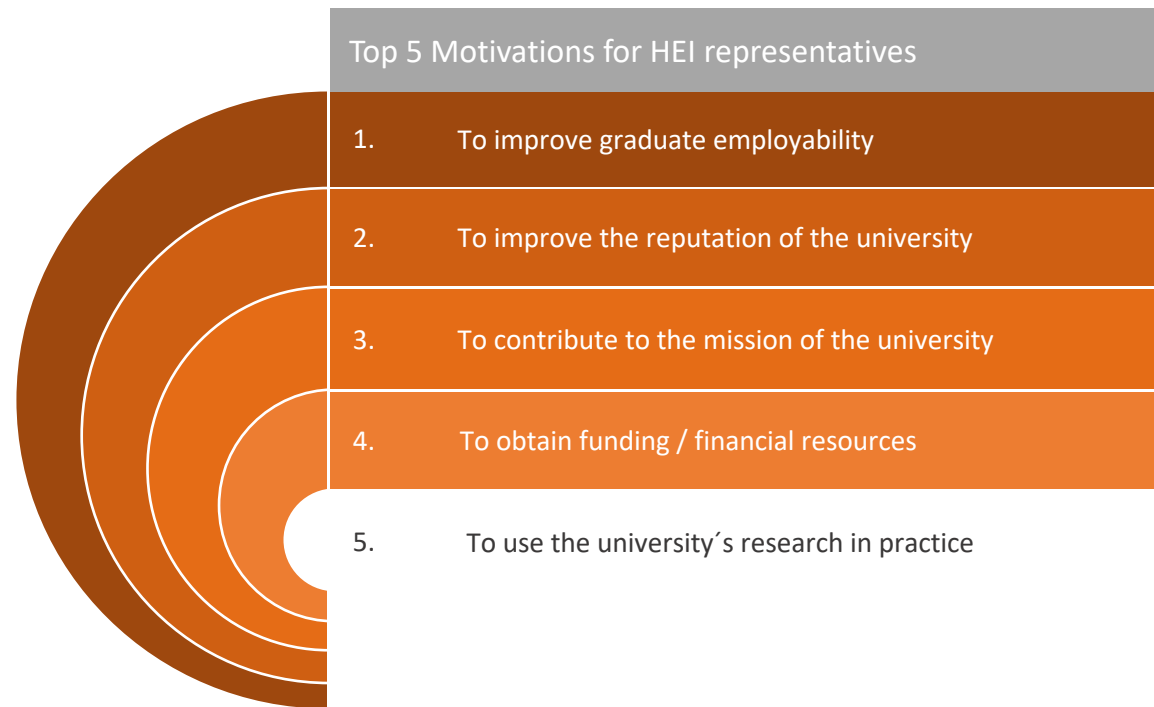
The motivators focused on funding and on the other stakeholders such as graduates and university have a lower importance for academics in Ireland.

Notably promotion and reputation related motivators are the weakest drivers stimulating UBC for both groups. This is clearly linked to the fact that there is a little or no reward for academics undertaking collaboration.

# Drivers stimulating UBC

## Motivators

*'What motivates your HEI to cooperate with business?' – as answered by HEI representatives*



HEI representatives in Ireland are more motivated by the benefits that their universities can get from UBC, such as the improvement of the graduate employability and university reputation as well as the contribution to its mission.

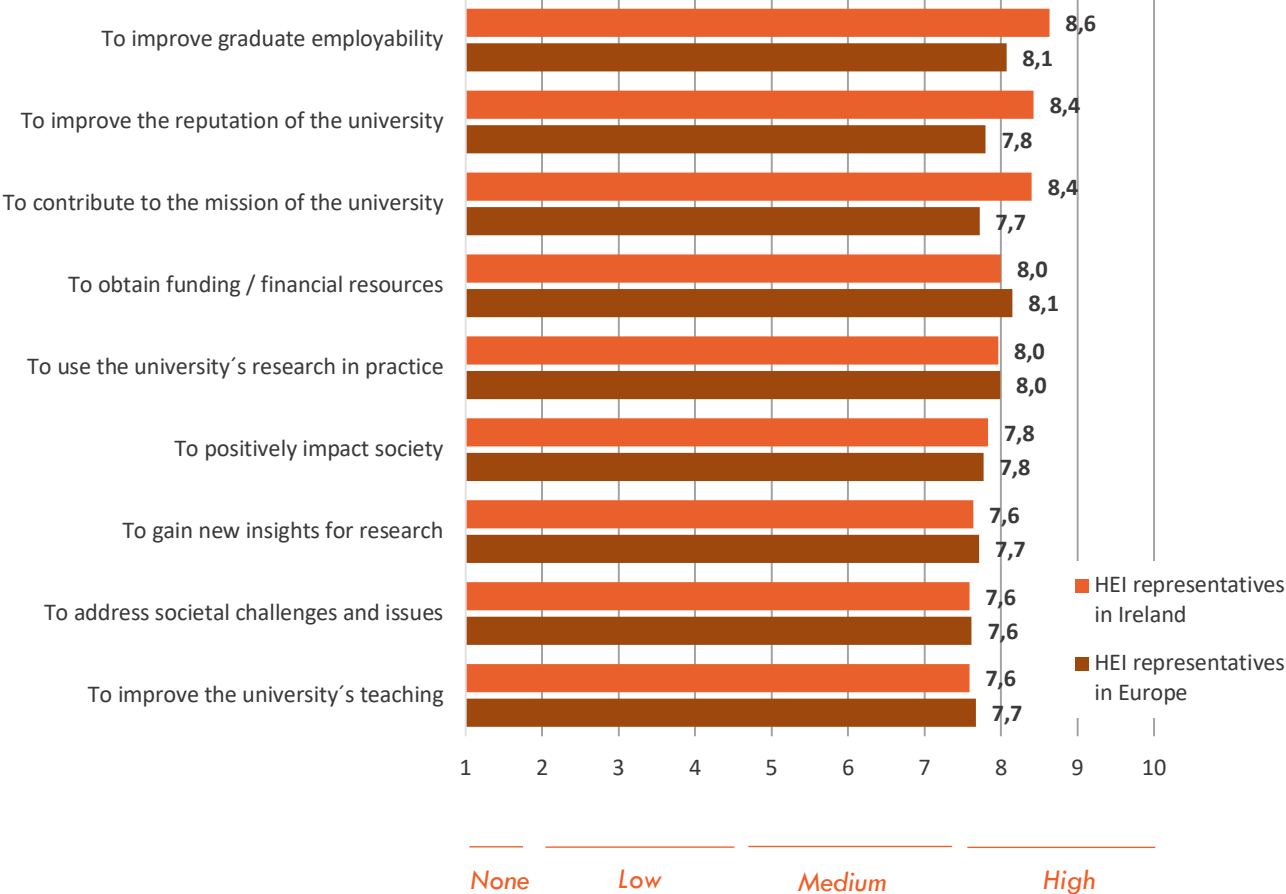
This is followed by motivators specifically related to obtaining resources and practical use of research.



# Drivers stimulating UBC

## Motivators

'What motivates your HEI to cooperate with business?'- as answered by HEI representatives



Irish and European HEI representatives perceive almost all motivators in a very similar way. Yet, the views of the both groups differ with respect to the level of importance of the top five motivators. For Irish representatives, graduate employability, university reputation as well as societal impact are the most important drivers, whereas for their European counterparts funding and practical use or research emerge as the biggest motivators.

More crucially, for both European and Irish HEI representatives all motivators are ranked of a nearly equal importance (from 7.6 to 8.6), which ultimately means that all these motives have a potential of stimulating UBC for universities.

# Benefits of UBC

Irish academics and HEI managers have similar perceptions about the stakeholders that benefit from UBC.

Businesses and universities are perceived by both groups as the stakeholder groups who benefit the most from UBC.

Students and academics are also seen as UBC beneficiaries, but to a lesser extent.


The Irish government and society are believed by both groups to gain little benefit from UBC.

**Benefits** are the perceived positive outcomes (financial and non-financial) from undertaking UBC as relevant for the different stakeholder groups that can potentially participate in UBC. The perception regarding who benefits from such cooperation can influence the decision to increase or decrease their participation or the involvement

of other groups. For example, if academics perceive their own *benefits* to be low, they may refrain from engaging in UBC. Yet, if they perceive *benefits* for students to be high, they might undertake actions that contribute to students' involvement in UBC.

## Benefits

*'Who receives the benefits of UBC?'* - as answered by academics and HEI representatives

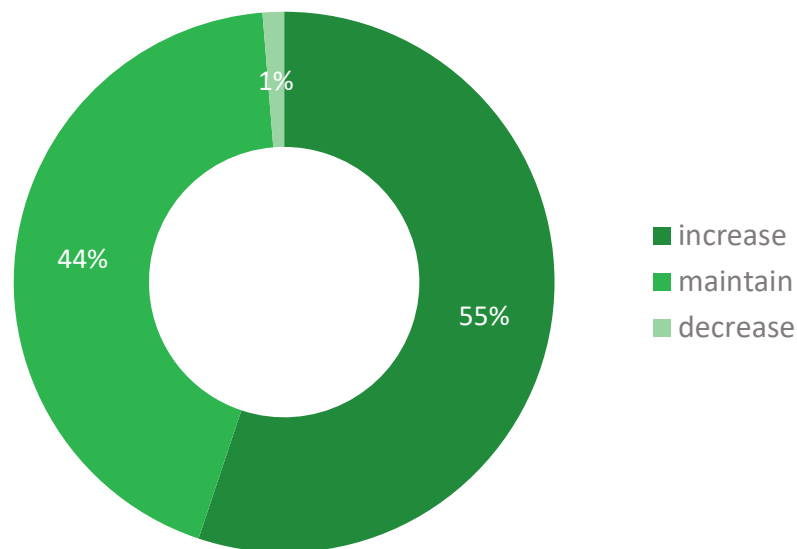


	Academics	HEI representatives
1.	Businesses	Universities
2.	Universities	Businesses
3.	Students	Students
4.	Academics	Academics
5.	Society	Society
6.	Government / public authorities	Government / public authorities

# Future intentions

## Future UBC intentions – Ireland

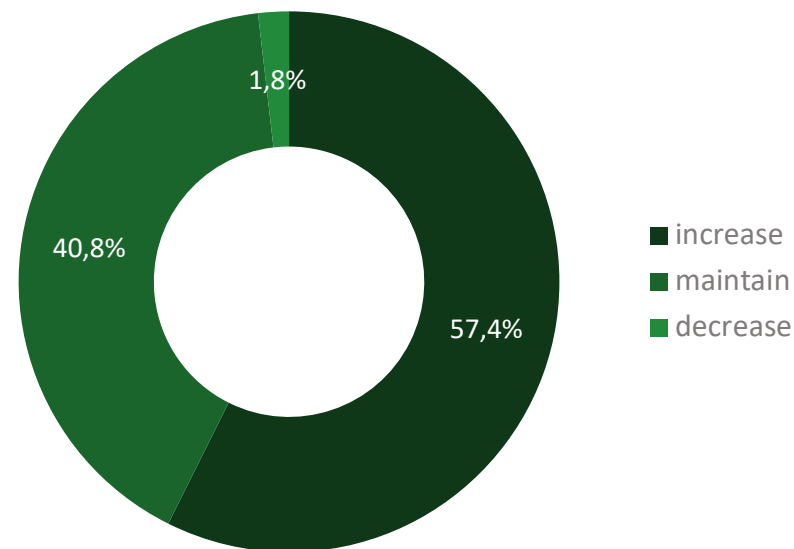
*As answered by Irish academics*



Irish academics show a very strong commitment to UBC. 99% of academic expect to maintain or increase their UBC activities. In this sense, Ireland proves to be an attractive country for UBC, with positive momentum for the future.

## Future UBC intentions – EUROPE

*As answered by European academics*



Academics in Europe also show a strong commitment to increasing UBC activities. 57.4% of cooperating academics expect to increase their cooperation and only 1.8% plan to decrease their collaborative activities with businesses. This shows a positive projection for UBC in Europe.

# Willingness to recommend UBC

The willingness of Irish cooperating academics to recommend to a colleague to engage in UBC highly varies depending on whether this cooperation is in research or in education.

Irish academics are even more satisfied with UBC in research than their European counterparts (NPS=23). While 49% of them will promote it positively, 26% would do it negatively.

Contrary, Irish academics are slightly less satisfied than their European colleagues in education-related UBC, even when none of them are very satisfied with their experience (NPS=-16 for Irish and -13.8 for European academics).

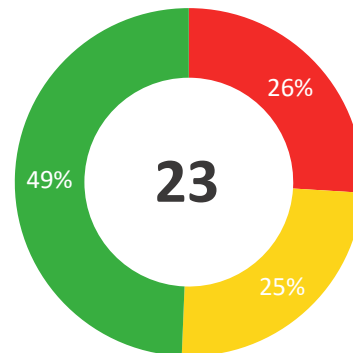
## Willingness to recommend to an academic colleague cooperation with business in R&D and education

As answered by academics

	Detractors	Passives	Promoters	Net promotor score
Academics cooperating in E&T	42%	32%	26%	-16
Academics cooperating in R&D	26%	25%	49%	23

## Satisfaction in cooperation with businesses (net promotor score)

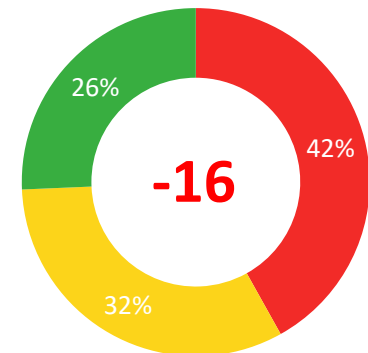
Academics cooperating in research



■ Detractors ■ Passives ■ Promoters

European academics' NPS result: 17

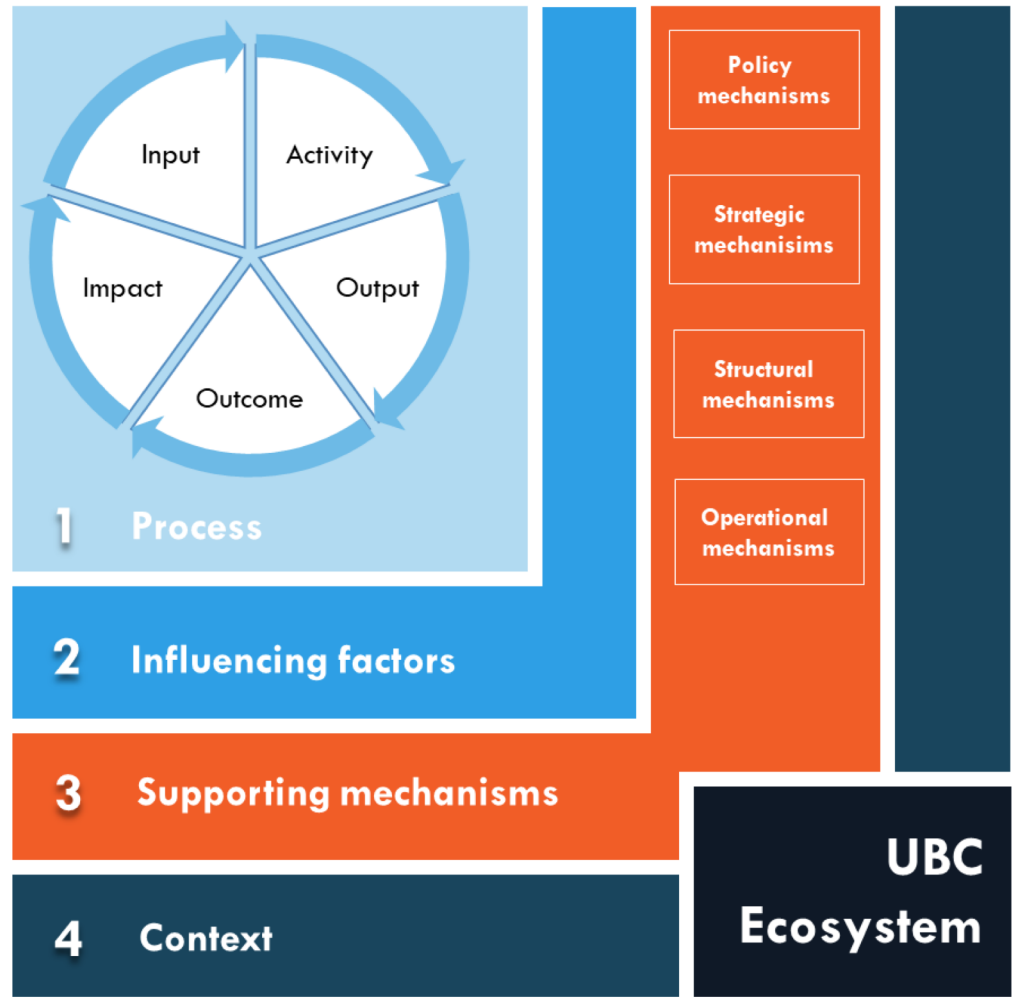
Academics cooperating in education



■ Detractors ■ Passives ■ Promoters

European academics' NPS result: -13.8

# Supporting mechanisms for UBC



Supporting mechanisms are interventions designed to support the development of cooperation between HEIs and business.

There are four types of supporting mechanisms:

- Policy
- Strategic
- Structural
- Operational

This section outlines the extent to which UBC supporting mechanisms are developed in this sample from the HEI perspective.

At the European level, the extent of development of all these mechanisms significantly influences the extent of cooperation.

# Supporting mechanisms for UBC

Irish HEI representatives perceive policy mechanisms to be developed to a medium level. These perceptions are a higher than their European counterparts have.

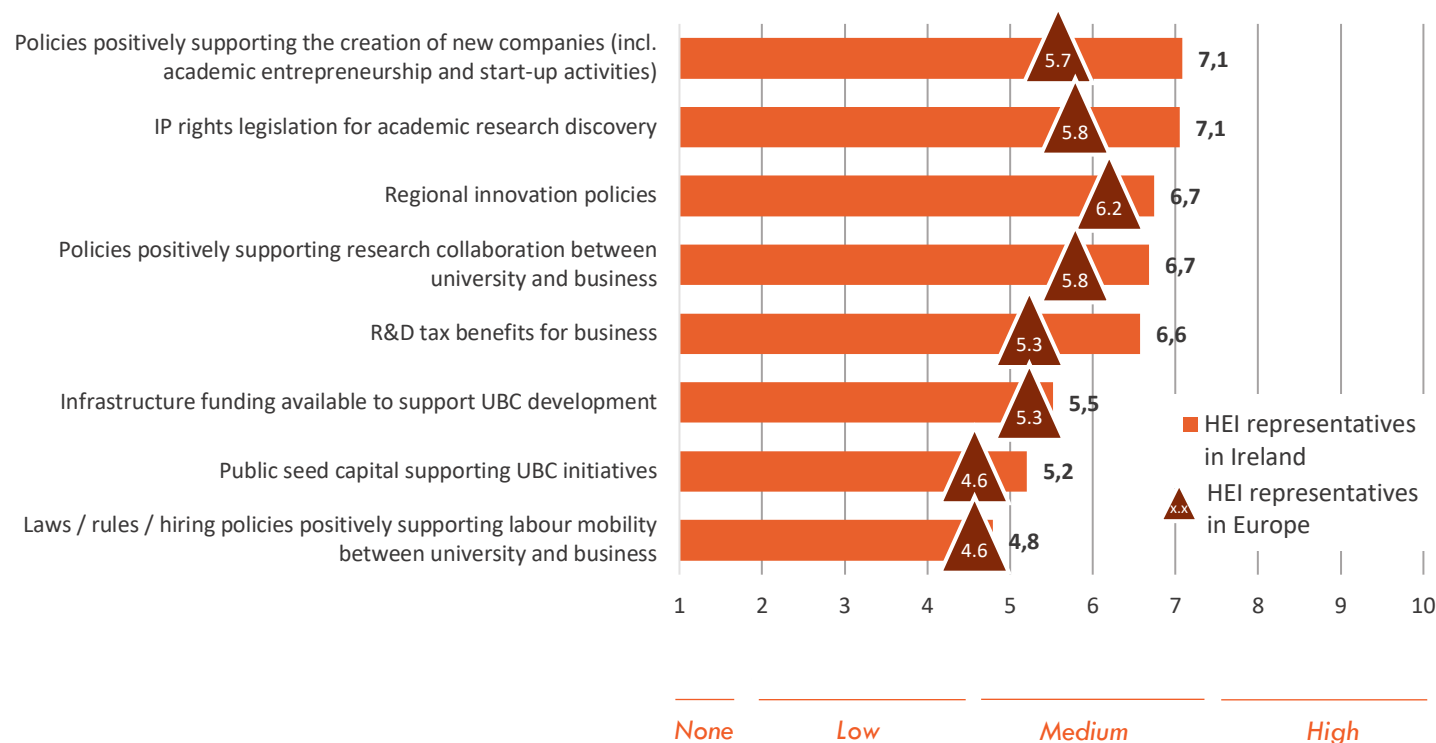
Policies supporting creation of new companies and IP rights legislation for academic research discovery (7.1 each) are the most developed supporting mechanisms. This may be related to the development by KTI over recent years of a number of model agreements and practical guides to support the collaboration process.

Regional innovation policies and those positively supporting research collaboration between university and business (6.7 each) are also relatively well advanced.

The least developed mechanism is the policy support to labour mobility between universities and business (4.8). This may be due to the relative inflexibility of the academic contracts (particularly in Institutes of Technology).

## Policy mechanisms

*'To what extent do these mechanisms support UBC in your HEI?' - as answered by HEI representatives*



<sup>1</sup> KTI schemes. URL: <http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Model-Agreements/Catalogue-of-Model-Agreements/>

# Supporting mechanisms for UBC

## Strategic mechanisms

'To what extent do these mechanisms support UBC in your HEI?' - as answered by HEI representatives



Overall, the development of the strategic mechanisms in Irish HEIs is generally lower than in the European HEIs.

Top-level commitment, strategic vision and UBC support are the most important mechanisms in Europe and Ireland, however lower in the latter.

Documented strategies are substantially more developed than implementation strategies, showing the official commitment of Irish HEIs to UBC above the actual dedication of resources.

The least developed mechanisms are related to the incentives for academic engagement (4.3), the recognition of their UBC activities (4.0), as well as assessment (3.8) and reduction of teaching (3.4).

# Supporting mechanisms for UBC

The development of that structural mechanisms is higher in Irish HEIs than in Europe.

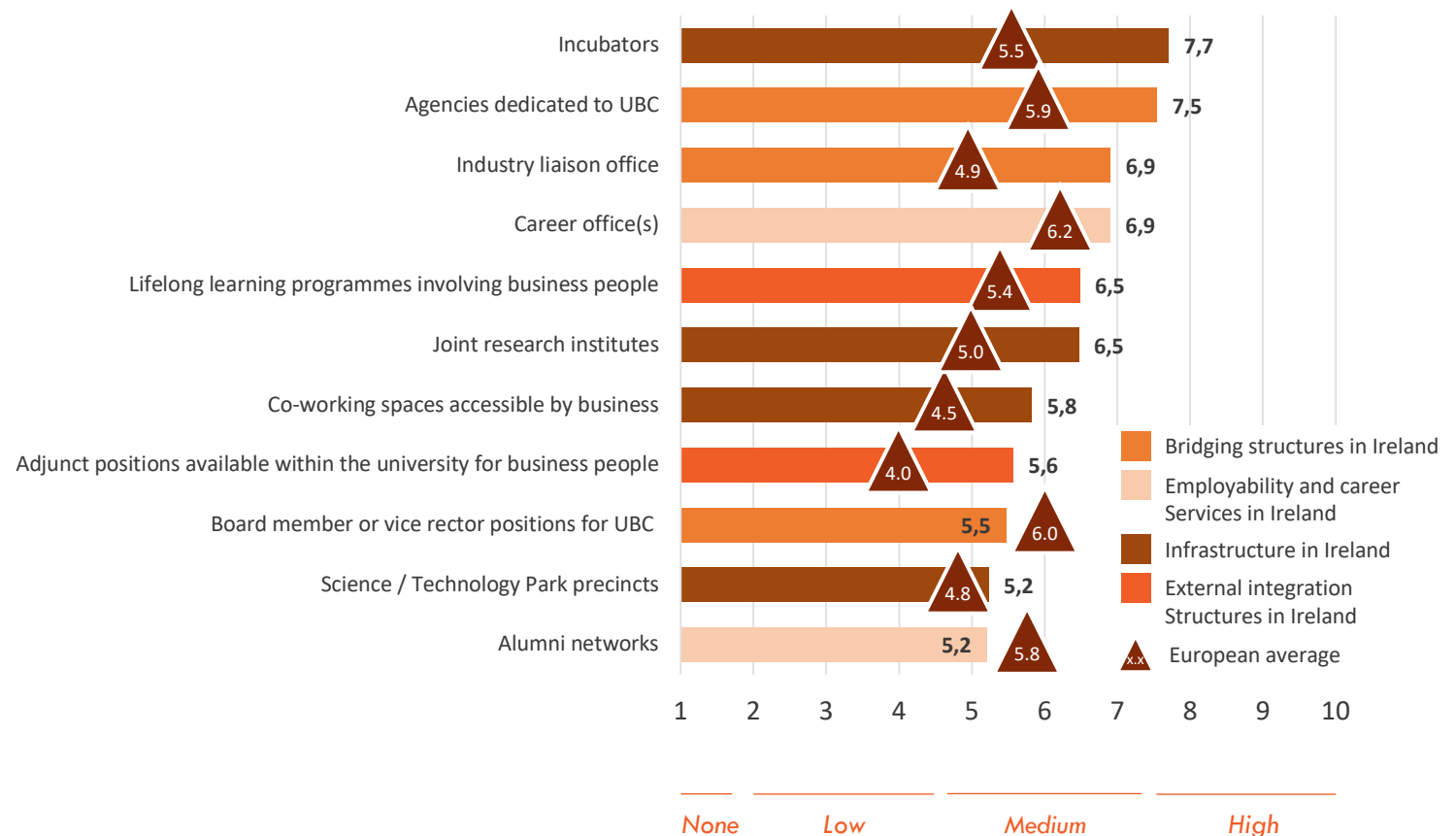
The top four structural mechanisms indicated by the Irish HEI representatives include incubators, UBC agencies, liaison offices and career offices.

Contrary, board member and rector positions together with alumni networks are better developed in Europe than in Irish HEI context.

Science or technology park precincts as well as alumni networks are the least developed mechanisms in Irish HEIs (5.2 each).

## Structural mechanisms

'To what extent do these mechanisms support UBC in your HEI?' - as answered by HEI representatives

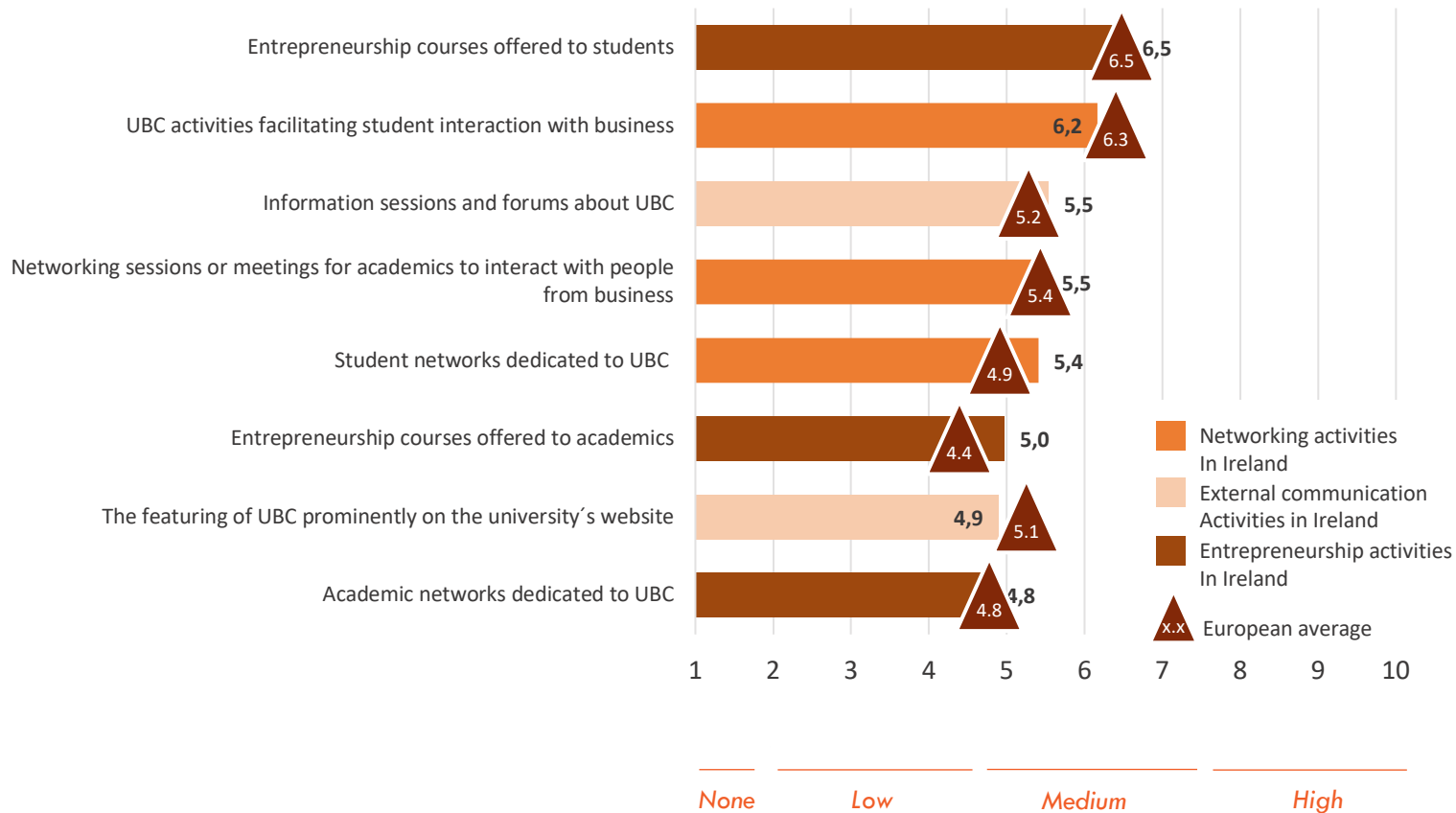




# Supporting mechanisms for UBC

## Operational mechanisms

'To what extent do these mechanisms support UBC in your HEI?' - as answered by HEI representatives



Overall, the perspectives of Irish and European HEI representatives align with respect to the development of operational mechanisms.

Student-centred activities are the most developed operational mechanisms, with UBC supporting mechanisms facilitating entrepreneurship courses offered to students (6.5) and student interaction with businesses (6.2) ranked the highest.

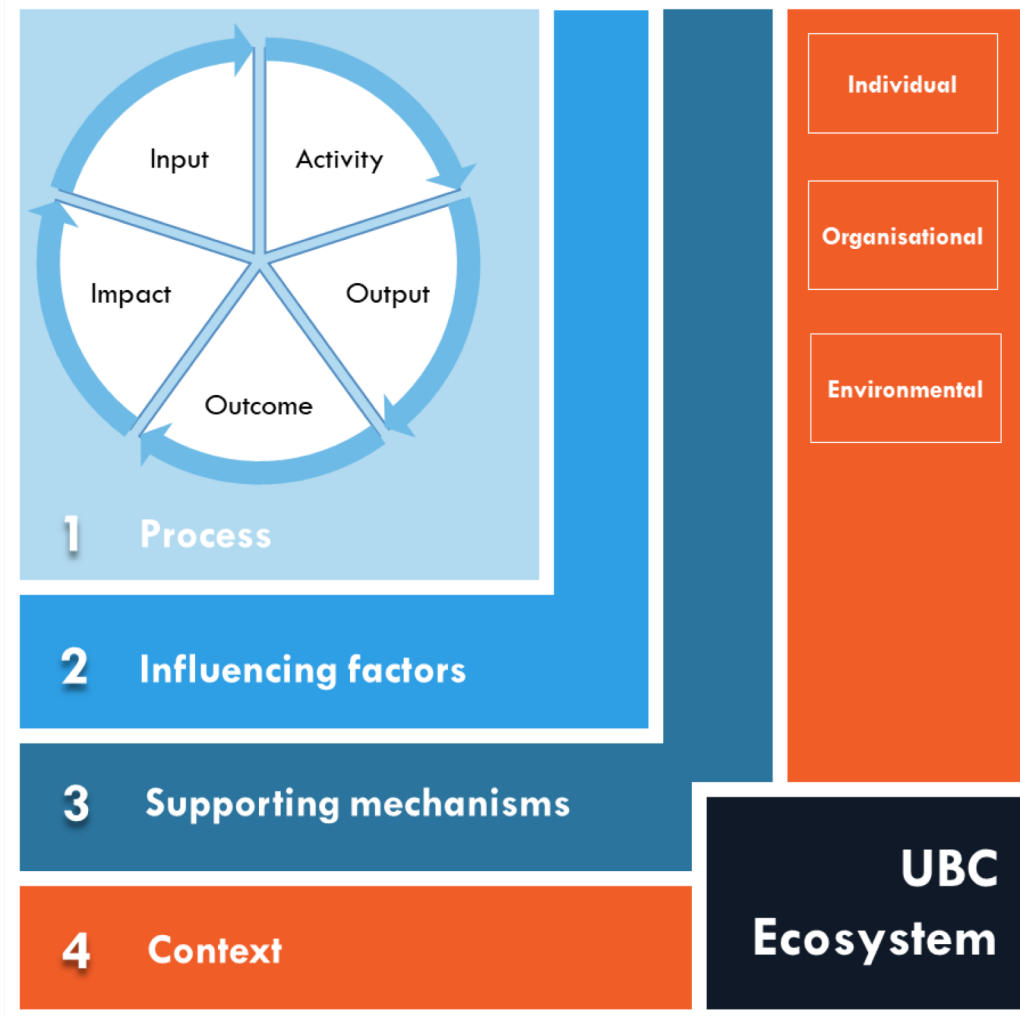
Among the activities focused on academics, both networking and information sessions are also well developed (5.5). Others, however, are perceived as less developed, such as academic networks dedicated to UBC and academic entrepreneurship.

# Context

The degree to which UBC takes place is influenced by a set of elements present in the context of the organisation that cannot be changed in short or medium term.

These include the characteristics of individual actors involved, the institutional factors relating to the university and business, as well as by a set of broader environmental factors (political, economic, social, technological, etc.).

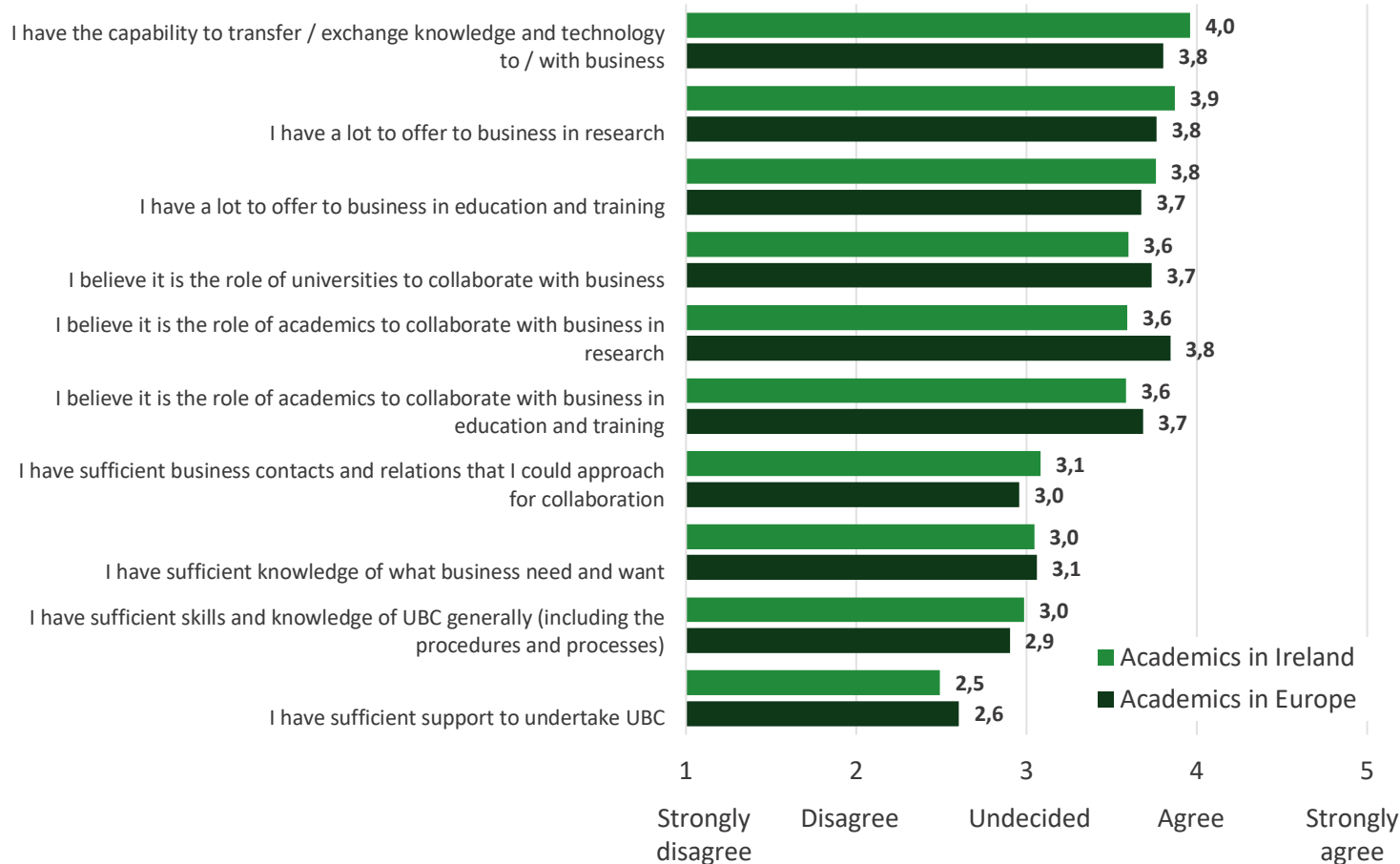
This section outlines how some contextual factors influence UBC in the country.



# UBC capabilities

## Capabilities for UBC

'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?' - as answered by academics



Irish academics identified moderate capabilities and beliefs about the role of UBC. For many of them they have a slightly more positive attitude than their European counterparts.

Irish academics identified their strengths in the ability to exchange knowledge (4.0), doing research for companies (3.9) and delivering education (3.8)

Yet, their beliefs that it is their role to collaborate with businesses in research, education and training are slightly more negative than in Europe.

They perceive they have insufficient knowledge and skills of UBC (3.0) and lack general support (2.5) to undertake UBC.

# Context

Although Irish and European academics perceive their contextual factors similarly, the perception of most contextual factors is slightly more positive in Europe than in Ireland.

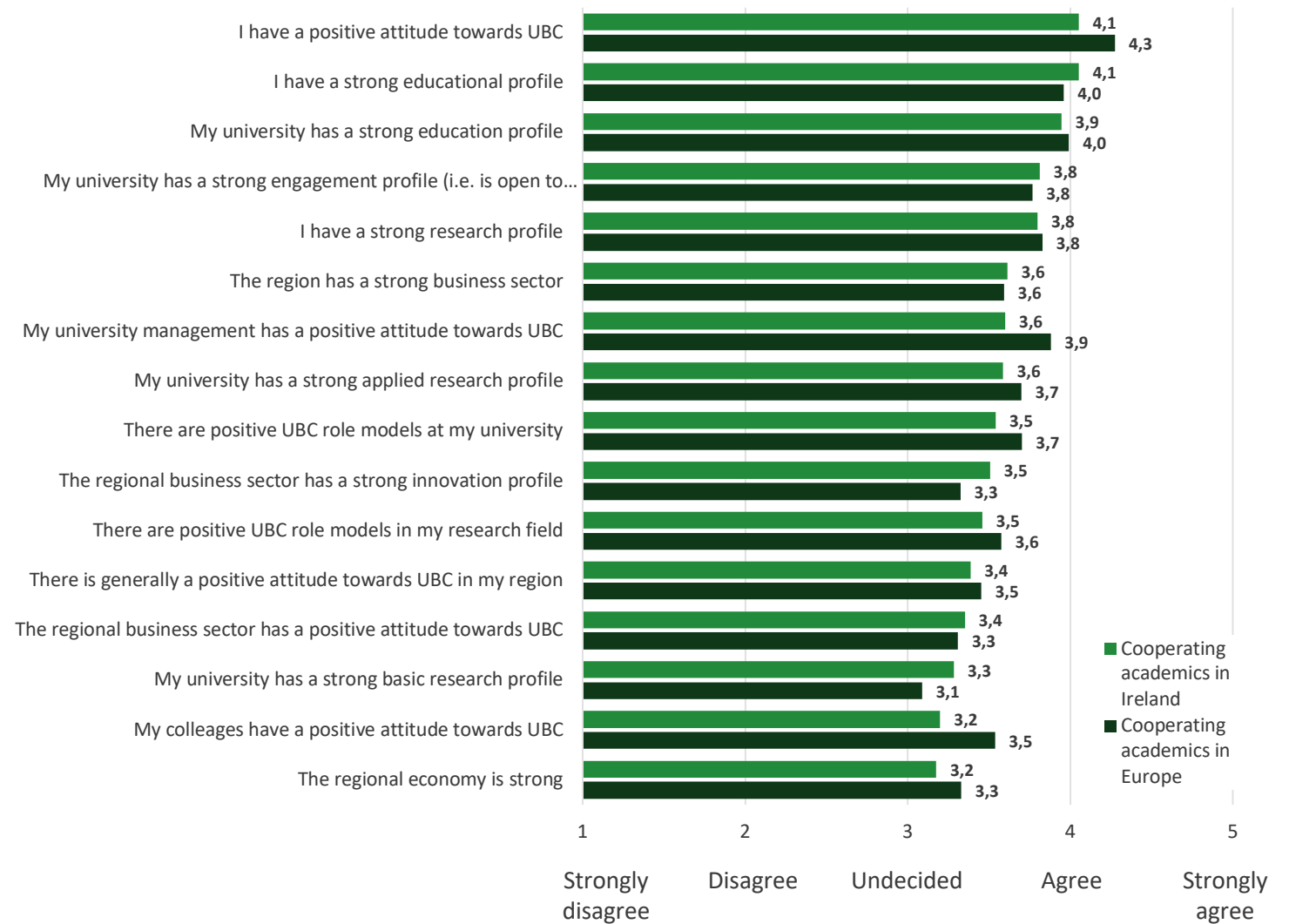
Irish academics perceive themselves and their universities to have a strong educational profile.

Both Irish and European academics have a positive attitude towards UBC (4.1 and 4.3).

Yet, compared to European average, the results report that Irish academics, the university management as well as their colleagues have a less positive attitude towards UBC.

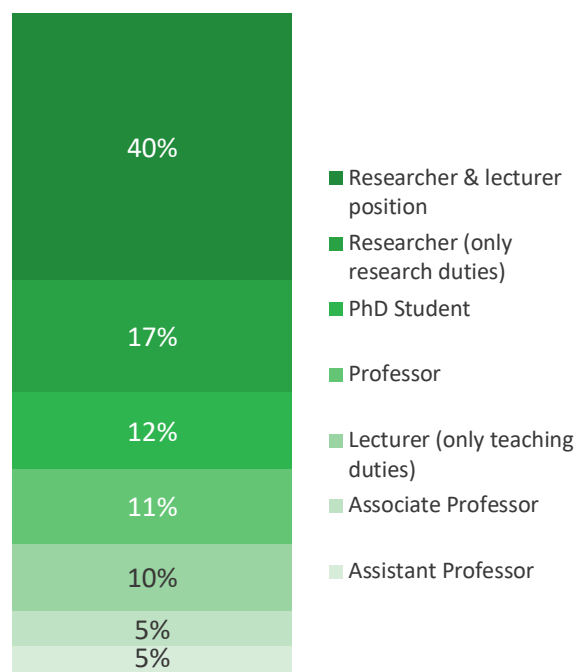
## Contextual factors affecting UBC

*'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?' - as answered by academics*



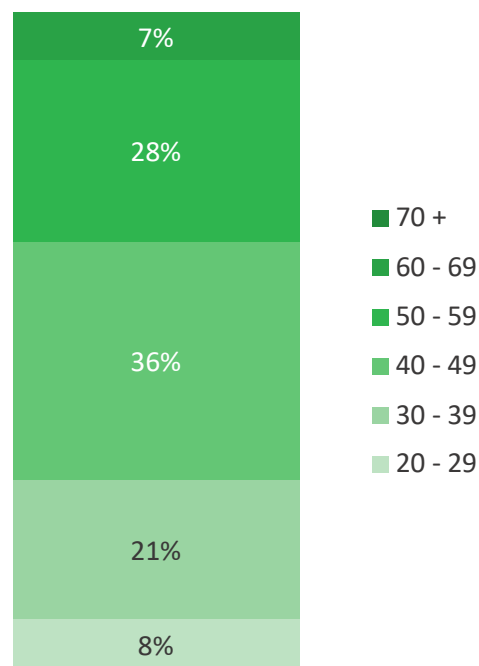
# Respondent profile – academics

## Position of respondent



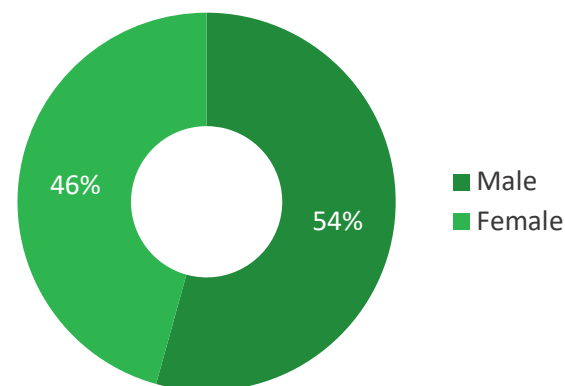
Researchers and lectures comprise the largest group (40%), followed by just researchers (17%). The remaining academics identified themselves as PhD students (12%), professors (11%), lecturers (10%) and assistant and associate professors (5%).

## Age of respondents



Most Irish academics in the sample are in the middle of their working life. A third of the academics (36%) in the sample are between 40 and 49. Other significant groups are those aged 30-39 (21%) and 50-59 (28%), followed by those aged 20-29 (8%). Academics older than 60 are 7%.

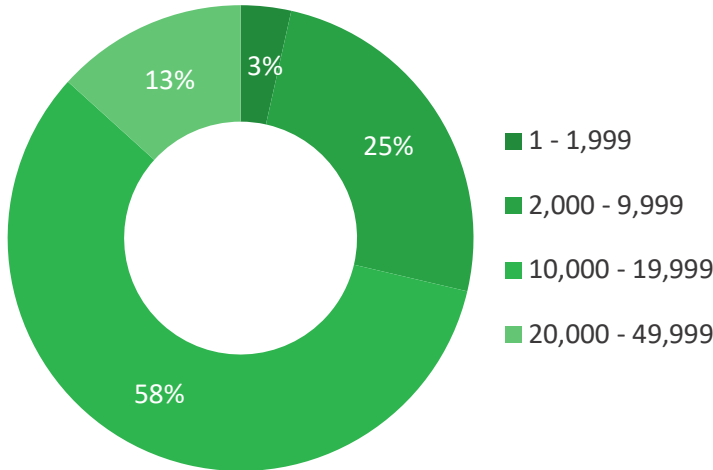
## Gender of respondents



The gender distribution in the academic sample in Ireland is skewed towards male respondents, with 54% of the total sample.

# Respondent profile – academics

## Number of students of the HEI

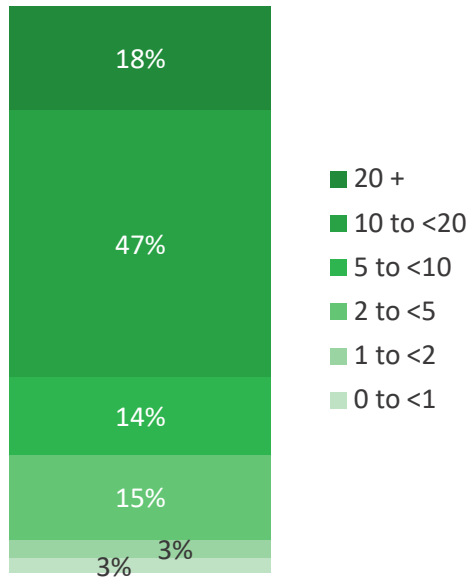


Sample Size	
Irish Academics	n=221
European Academics	n=10.836
Irish HEI representatives	n=102
European HEI representatives	n=3.482

More than half of the Irish academics (58%) in the sample work for medium-sized HEIs (10,000 to 19,999 students) and 25% of them work for small HEIs (2,000 to 9,999 students). Medium-large HEIs (20,000 to 49,999 students) are represented by 13% of respondents. Only 3% are employed at micro-sized HEIs (under 1,999 students).

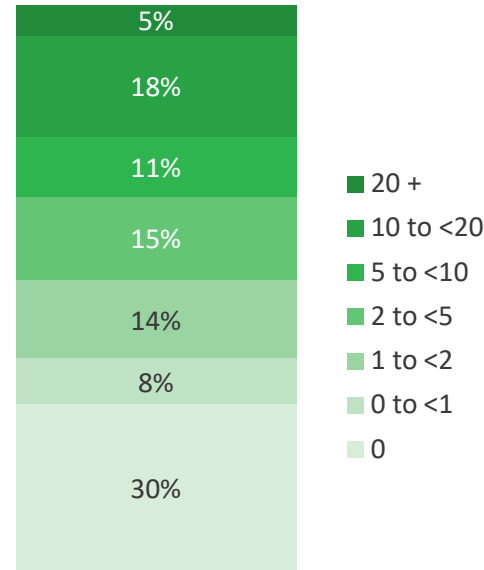
# Respondent profile – academics

Years working in university



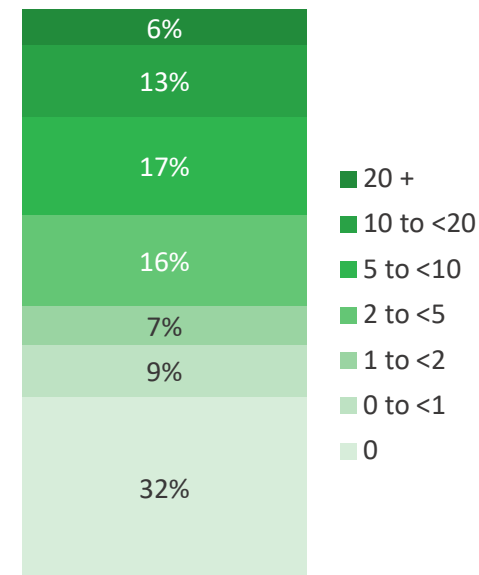
Most academic respondents have worked in academia for several years. Almost half of them (47%) have worked in academia for over 10 years. 18% have worked for more than 20 years. 14% have 5-10 years of experience and 15% have worked in academic for 2-5 years. 6% of the academics have less than 2 year of experience.

Years working in business



Academic respondents are experienced in businesses. Over two thirds (70%) of the Irish academic respondents have worked in industry before. 18% of them have done so for 10 to 20 years. 11% have 5 to 10 years and 14% between 2 to 5 years industry experience. Only 5% have worked in business for over 20 years.

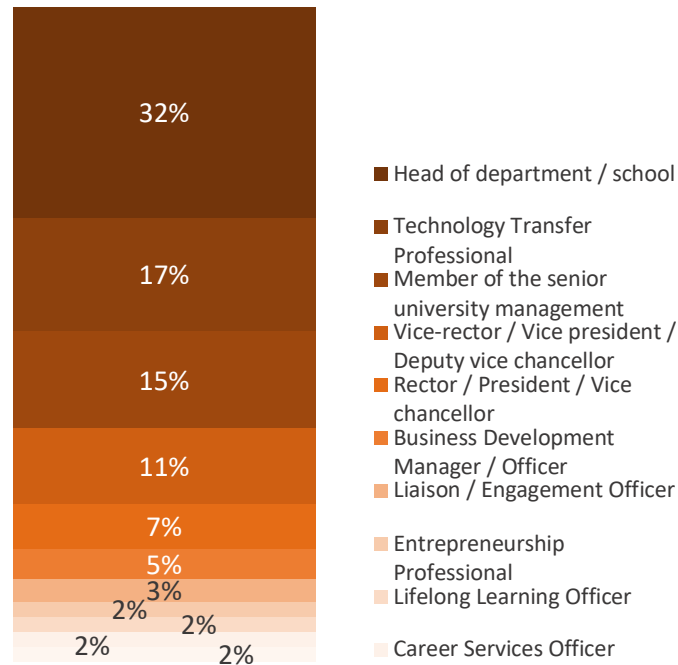
Years involved in UBC whilst working at a university or business



Most academic respondents in Ireland have some industry experience. Although only 6% have been involved in UBC for over 20 years, 46% have between 5 and 20 years of experience and 16% between 1 and 5 years of experience. 32% of academics in the sample have never engaged in UBC.

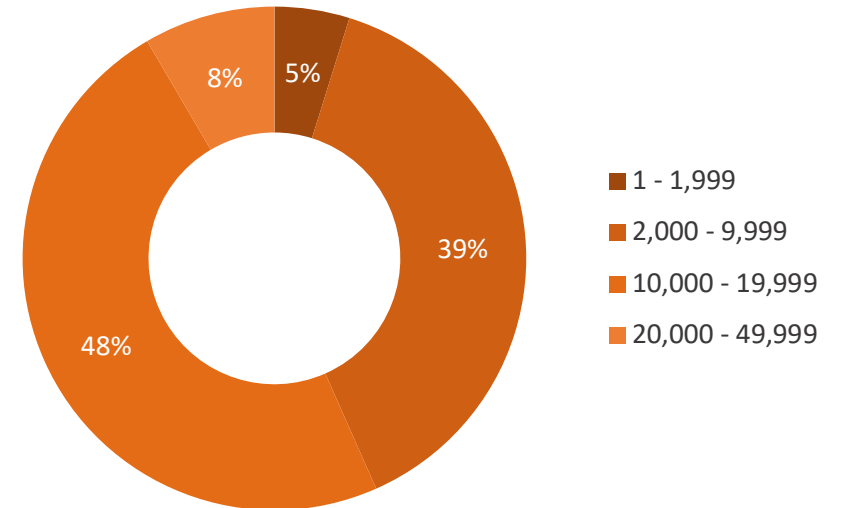
# Respondent profile – HEI representatives

## Position of respondent



Irish HEI representatives hold a variety of roles. A quarter of them are head of departments. Technology transfer professionals are the second largest group (17%), along with members of the senior university management (15%), and vice-rectors or vice-presidents (11%). The smallest groups are officers of different types (business developer, engagement, lifelong, entrepreneurship and career services).

## Number of students of the HEI



8% of HEI representatives work in institutions with 20,000 to 49,999 students. Almost half of the sample is employed by the HEIs with 10,000 to 19,999 students. The rest of HEI representatives work for rather small HEIs (under 9,999 students), from whom 5% of HEI of them work for very small HEIs (under 1,999 students)





# Contact us

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This report is part of the DG Education and Culture study on the University-Business Cooperation in Europe: drivers, challenges and opportunities in Europe EAC/10/2015. Further information can be found at [www.ub-cooperation.eu](http://www.ub-cooperation.eu)

This report is also part of the Global University-Business Monitor initiative, a global study into university engagement and cooperation between university and business. Further information can be found at [www.uni-engagement.com](http://www.uni-engagement.com)