IEASA 25 YEARS 1997-2022
International Education Association of South Africa

What future for internationalization of higher education around the world?

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1) How is internationalization evolving around the world?

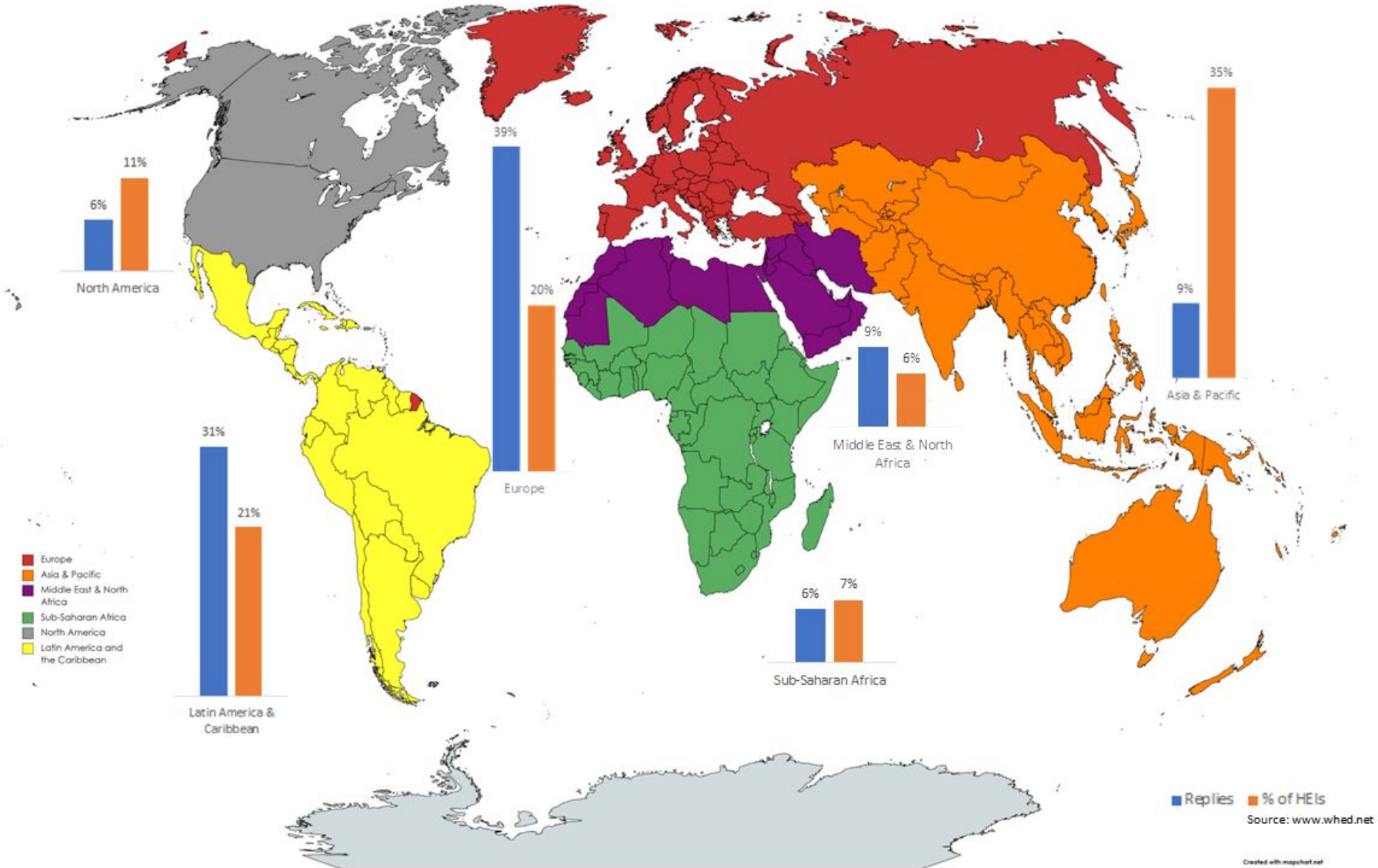
Some results from the 6th IAU Global Survey on Internationalization of Higher Education

6th IAU Global Survey

- Online trilingual survey (EN, ES, FR) open 15/1 – 15/6/2023
- Institutional survey: only one reply per institution
- Replies from 722 HEIs in 110 countries and territories around the world
- Number of replies enough for statistical relevant analysis at global and regional level (6 world regions)

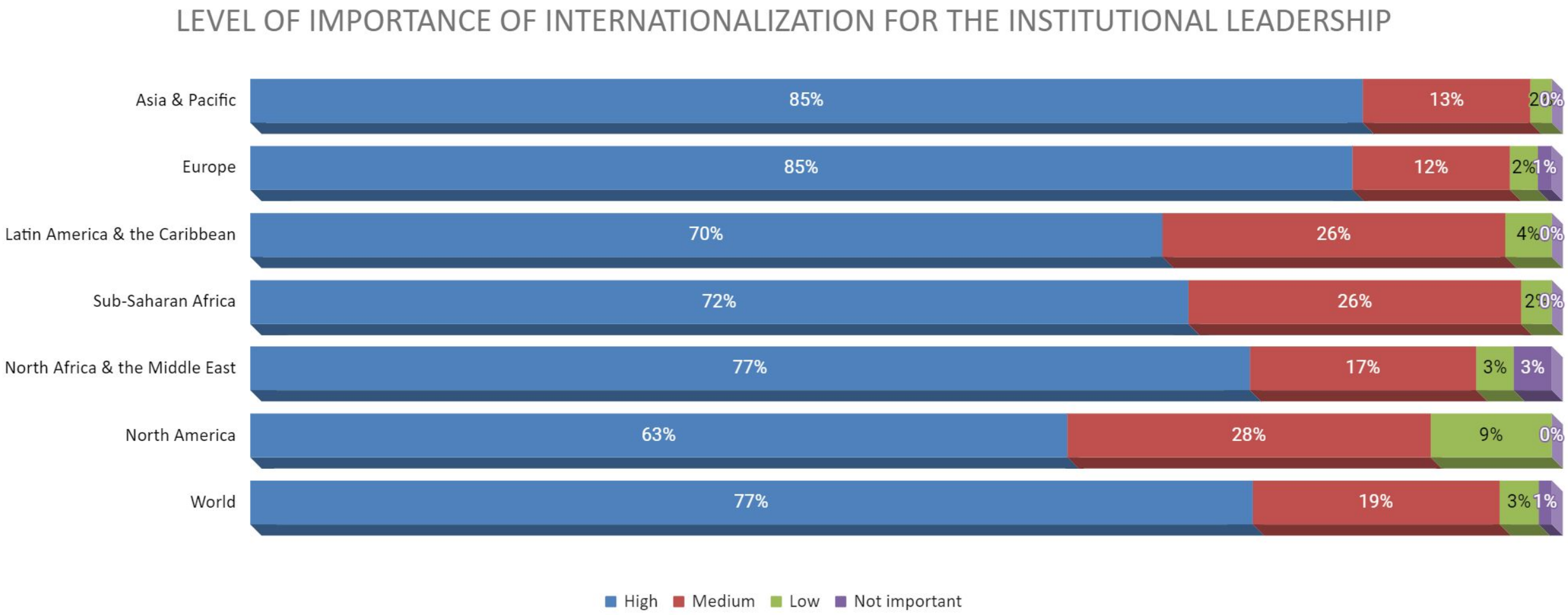
Regional distribution of replies

- Europe and Latin America & the Caribbean are overrepresented
- North America and Asia & Pacific are underrepresented
- Middle East & North Africa is slightly overrepresented
- Sub-Saharan Africa is in line with its weight



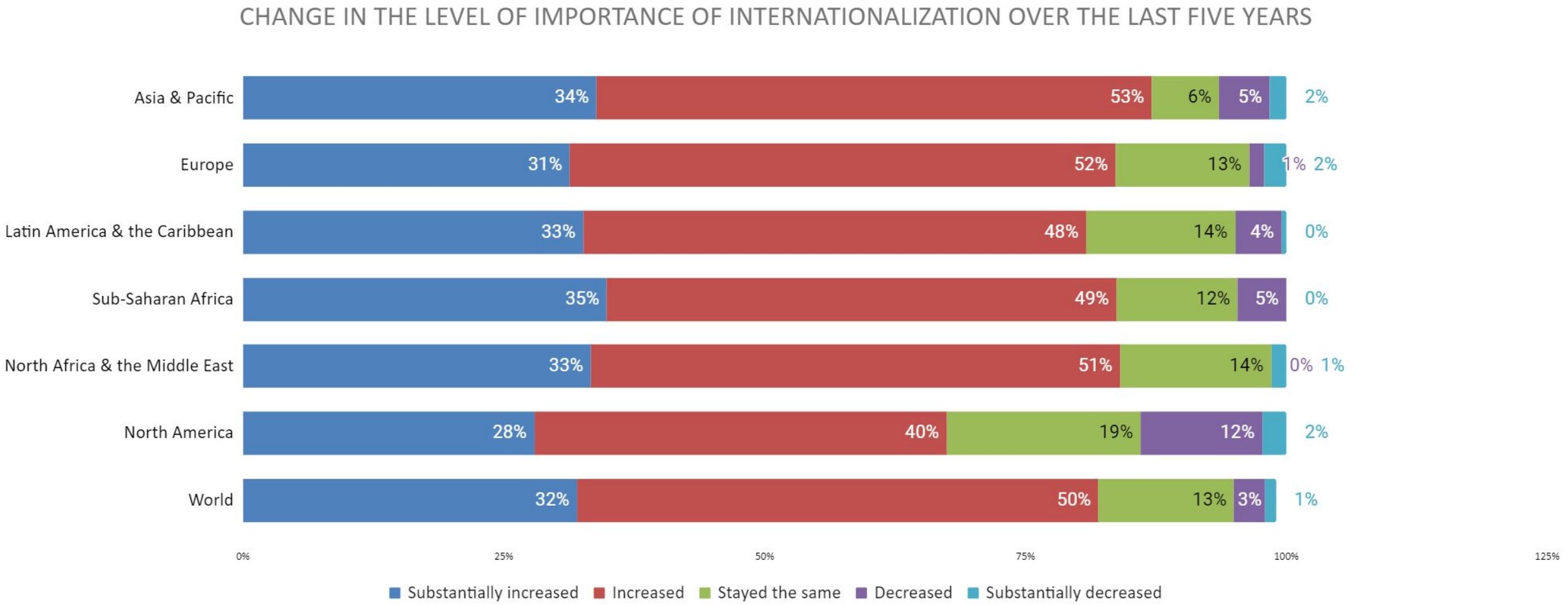
Importance of internationalization

- Internationalization is of high importance in all regions of the world



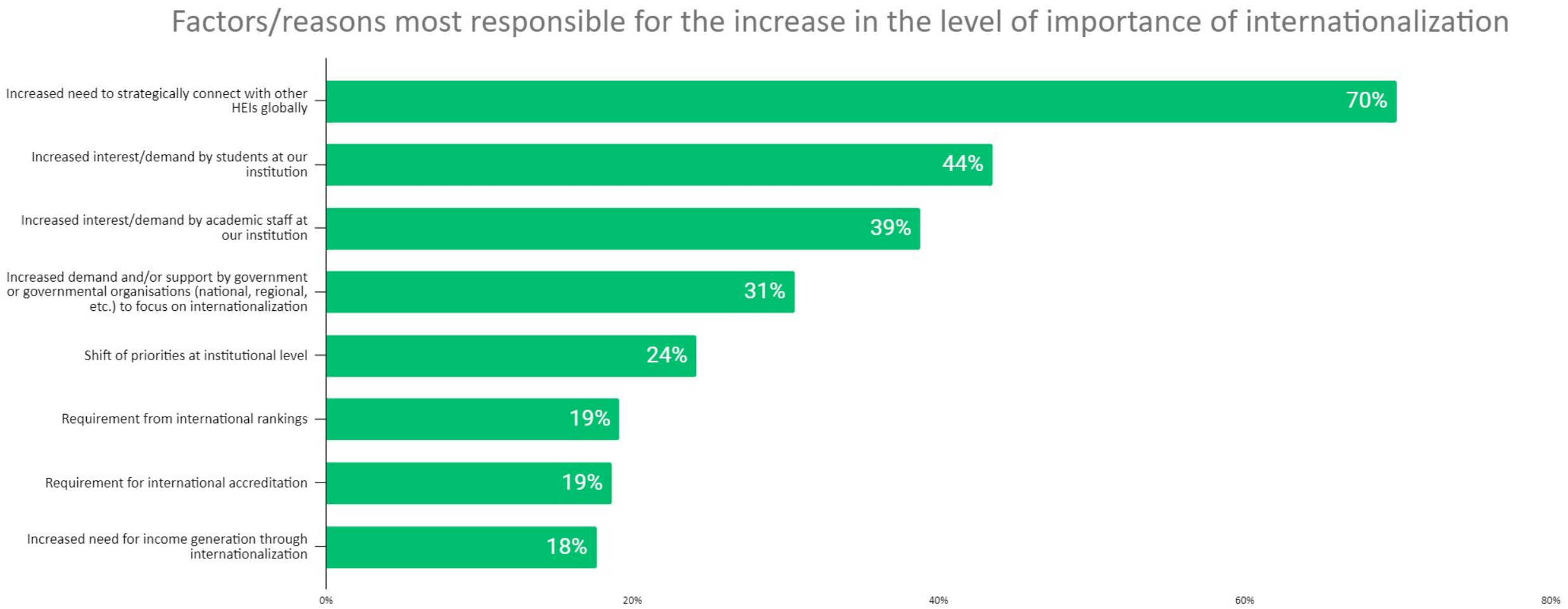
Importance of internationalization

- In the last 5 years internationalization has become more important in all regions of the world



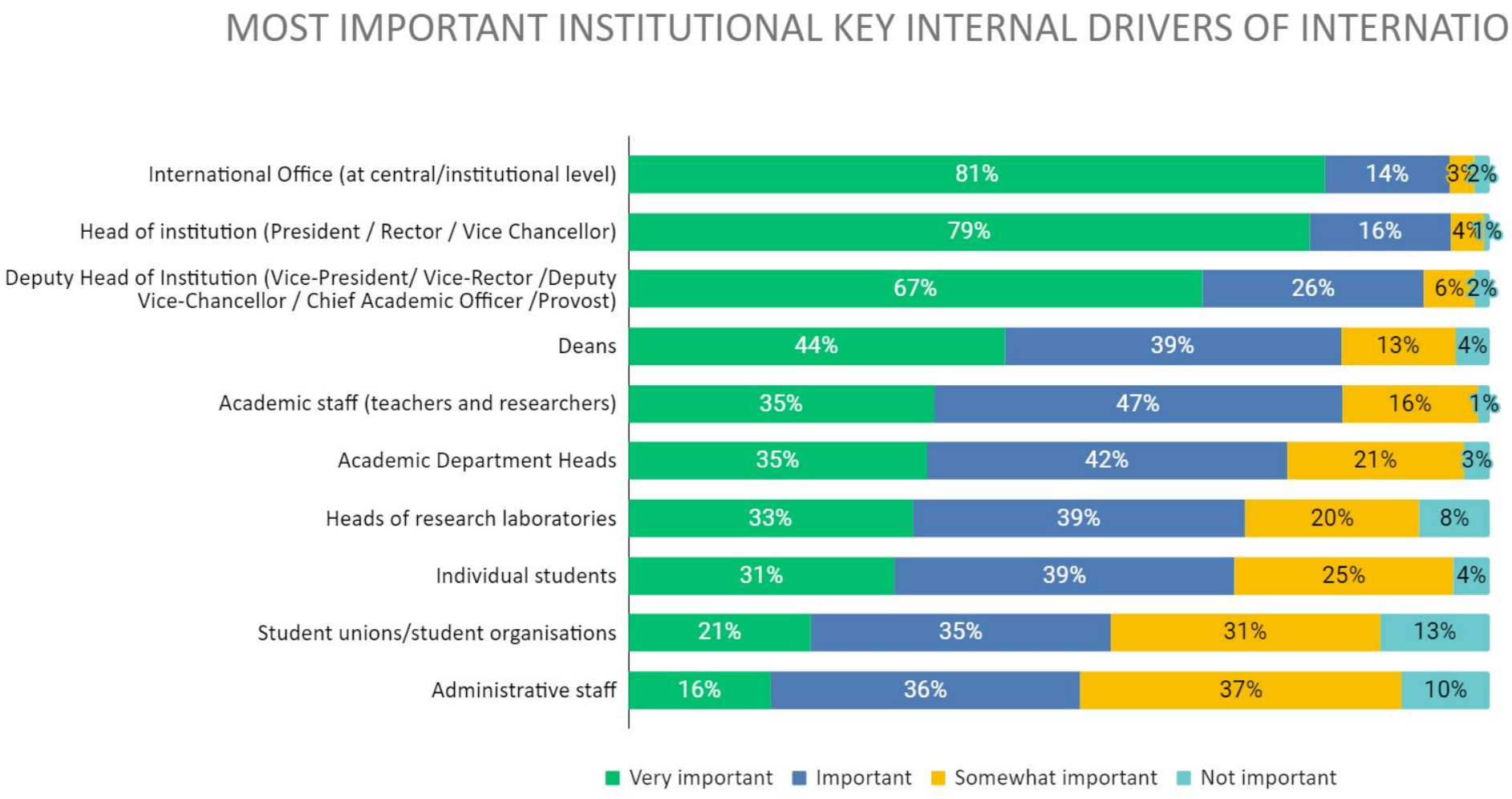
Importance of internationalization

- Need to strategically connect with other HEIs globally -> internationalization as a strategic choice



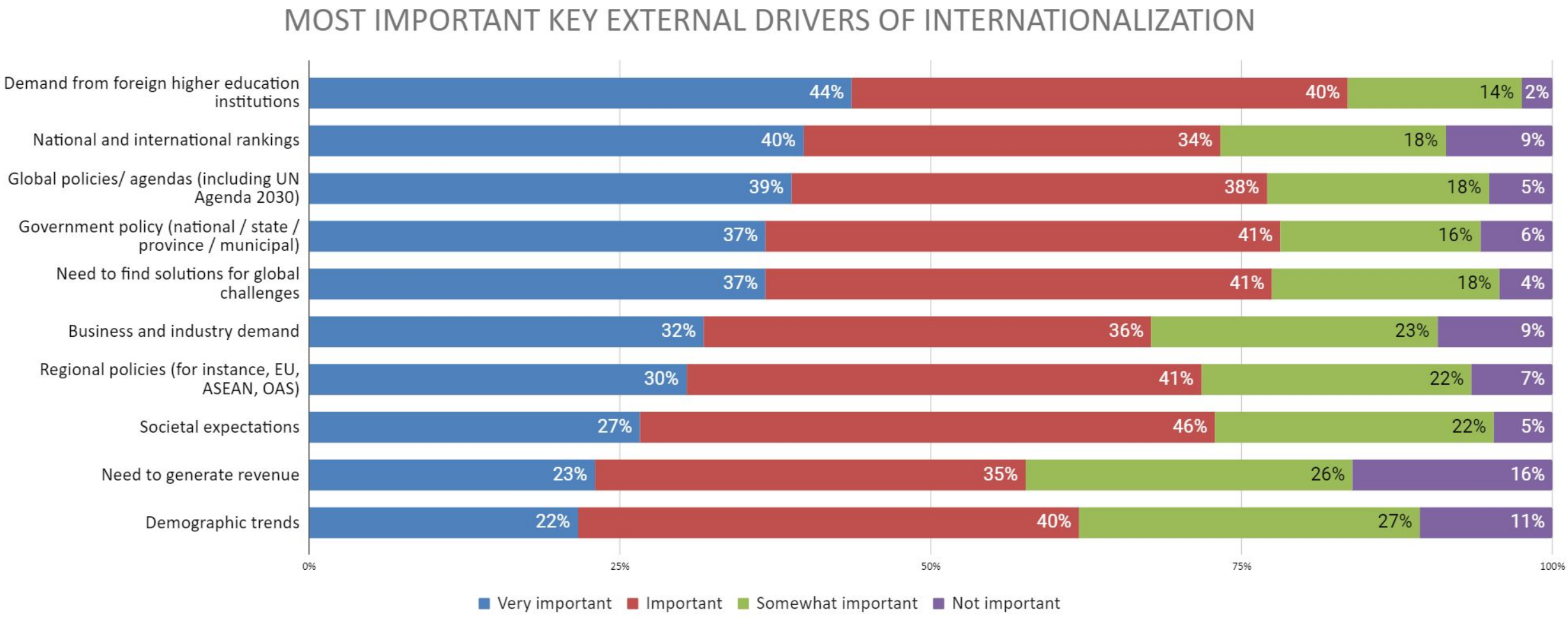
Drivers of internationalization

- International office and academic leadership are the key internal drivers



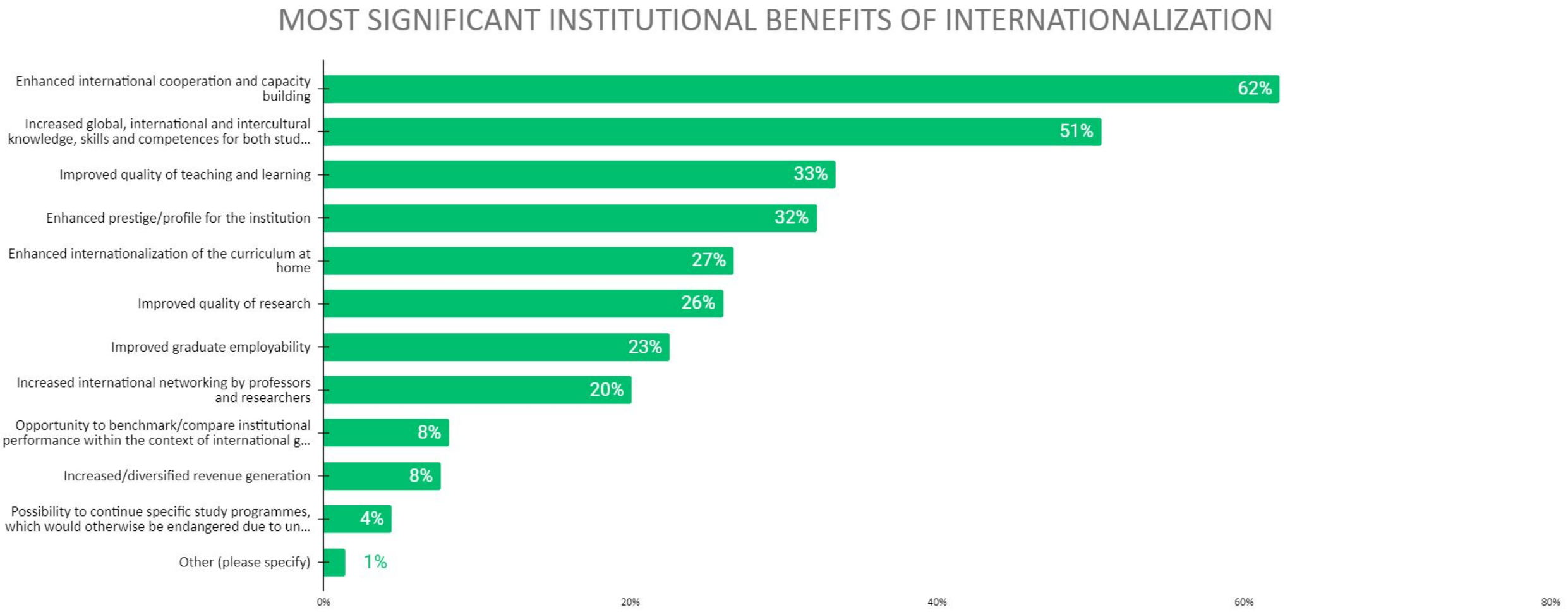
Drivers of internationalization

- Several external drivers are of high importance



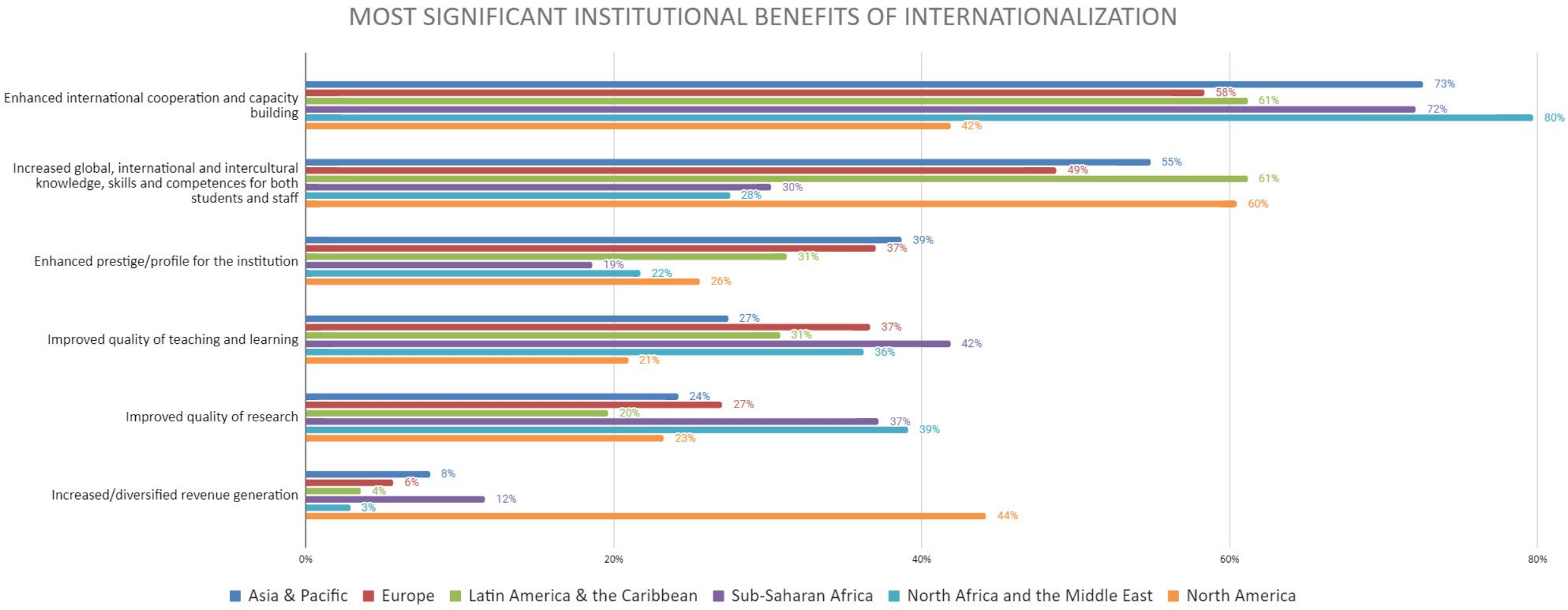
Benefits of internationalization

- Enhanced international cooperation and capacity building is the most significant benefit…



Benefits of internationalization

- …in all regions but North America



Risks of internationalization

- Institutional and societal risks of internationalization are very diverse
- There is **no common risk** for the majority of HEIs at global level

At regional level:

- **Increased workload for academic and administrative staff** is the most common institutional risk in Europe (61% of HEIs) and for half of HEIs in North America
- **Brain drain** is the most common societal risk in sub-Saharan Africa (74% of HEIs)

Obstacles/challenges of internationalization

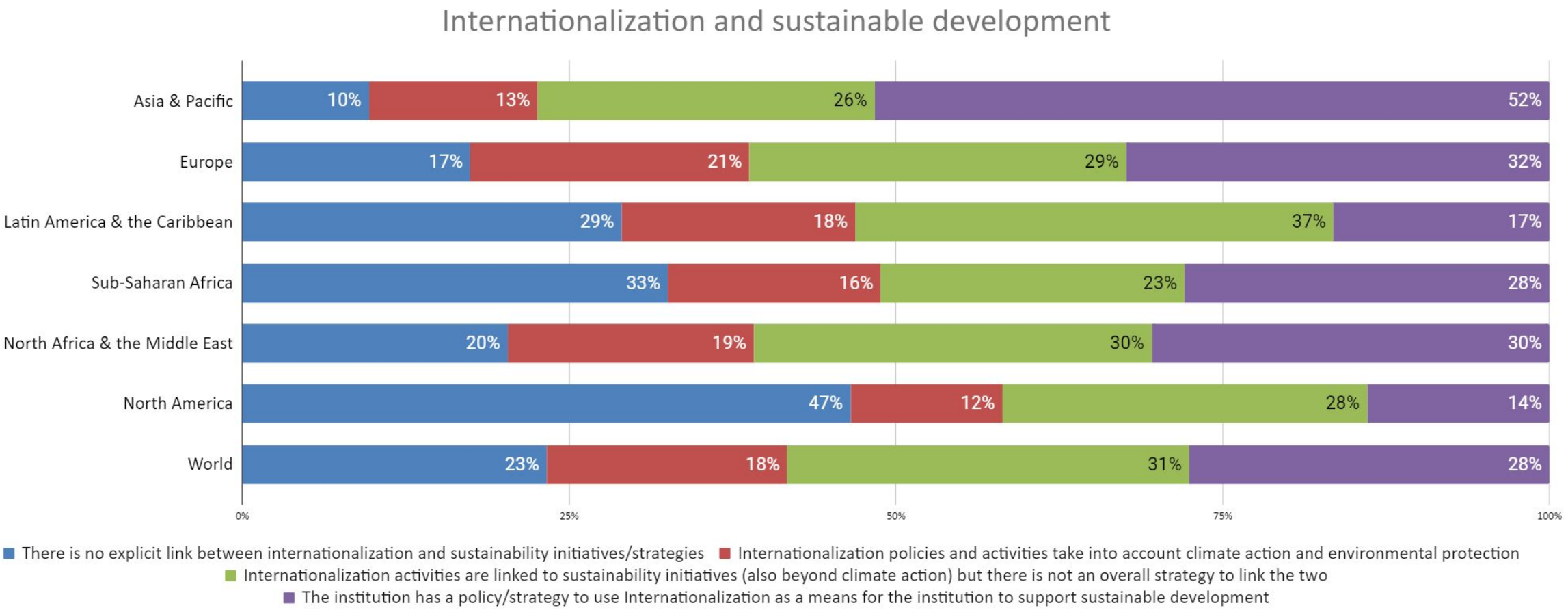
- **Insufficient financial resources and limited funding** are the most common internal and external obstacle/challenge at global level
- There is **no other common internal and external obstacle/challenge** at global level

At regional level:

- **Insufficient financial resources** is a particularly relevant in sub-Saharan Africa (77% of HEIs) and in Latin America & the Caribbean (70% of HEIs)
- **Competing priorities at institutional level** is relevant for more than half of HEIs in North America
- **Visa restrictions imposed by own country on foreign students, researchers and academics** is the most important external obstacle/challenge in North America (65% of HEIs)
- **Language barriers** is an important obstacle/challenge at half of HEIs in Latin America & the Caribbean

Internationalization and sustainable development

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



Diversity, equity and inclusion

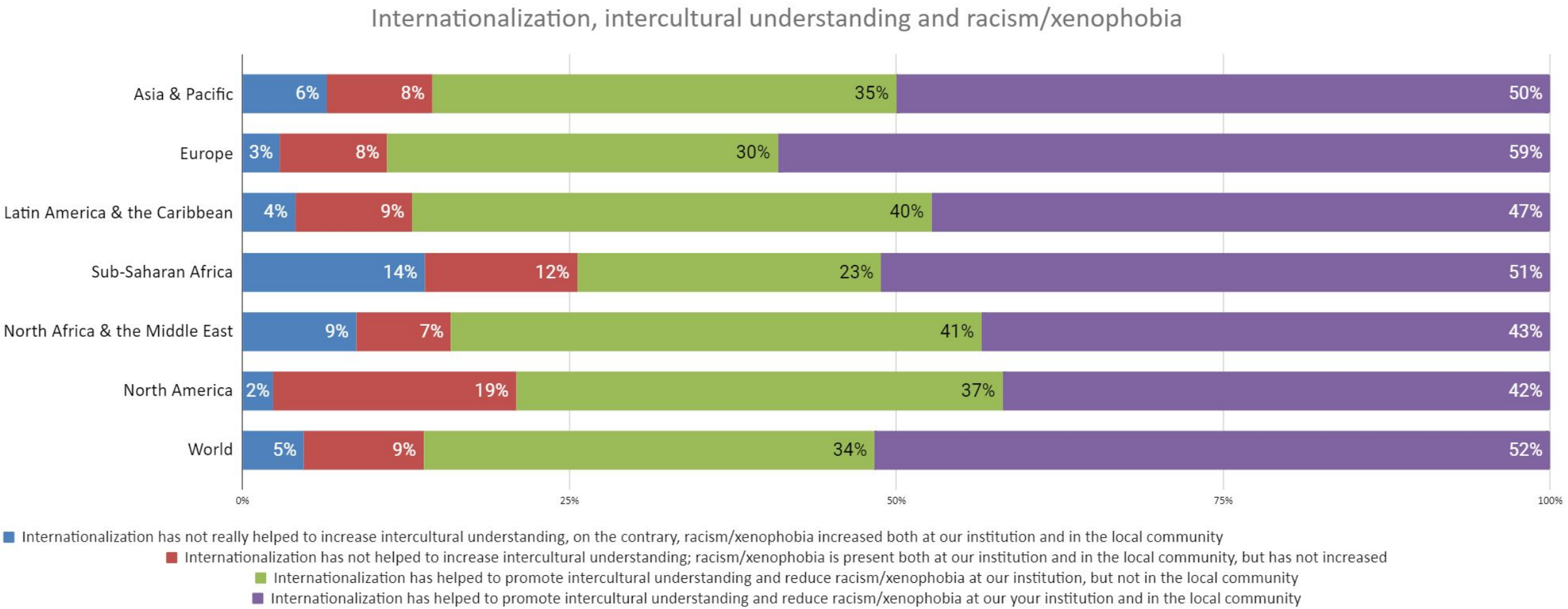
- Internationalization policy/strategy and related activities take into account diversity, equity and inclusion at 80% or more HEIs in all regions of the world

However the target group is different in different regions:

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

Internationalization, intercultural understanding and racism/xenophobia

- Very positive effect of internationalization on intercultural understanding and against racism/xenophobia in all regions of the world



Most pressing future priorities for internationalization

- There is **no common pressing future priority** for internationalization at global level

At regional level:

- In Asia & Pacific and Europe priorities are very diverse and there is not a common one
- **Academic staff training in international, intercultural and global competencies** is clearly the most pressing priority in sub-Saharan Africa (81% of HEIs) and in North Africa & the Middle East (67%) and also at half of HEIs in Latin America & the Caribbean
- **Internationalization and interculturalization of the curriculum at home for all students** is the most pressing priority at more than half of HEIs in Latin America & the Caribbean
- **Increasing the number of incoming degree-seeking international students** is the most pressing priority at more than half of HEIs in North America

Specificities of sub-Saharan Africa

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, national and International rankings are considered very important by 63% of HEIs compared to only 40% at global level
- Brain drain is the most significant potential societal risk in sub-Saharan Africa, selected by 74% of HEIs (41% at global level)
- Only 44% of sub-Saharan African HEIs have geographic priorities (59% at global level)
- Europe and sub-Saharan Africa itself are the most important regions for sub-Saharan African HEIs (over 75% of HEIs consider these regions important or very important)
- At global level only 42% of HEIs consider sub-Saharan Africa important or very important and sub-Saharan Africa is the region considered least important

Specificities of sub-Saharan Africa

- Over 60% of sub-Saharan African HEIs do not take into consideration foreign language skills in recruitment and promotion policies for both academic and administrative staff compared to about 30% at global level
- International research collaboration and outputs (e.g international co-publications) is clearly the most important internationalization activity for sub-Saharan African HEIs (65%) while there is no clear predominant activity at global level
- At 61% of sub-Saharan African HEIs international research is conducted mainly by individual researchers (40%) or there is little involvement (21%) while this is the case at only 40% of HEIs globally
- 57% of sub-Saharan African HEIs consider women as a target group for equity and inclusion compared to only 29% at global level

Specificities of sub-Saharan Africa

- Academic staff training in international, intercultural and global competencies is clearly the most pressing future priorities for internationalization at sub-Saharan African HEIs (81% of HEIs selected this priority compared to only 44% at global level)