

Do we create career-ready graduates?

Students' Perspective on Professional Identity Formation in Intelligence Education



Talking points

- 1. The imperative of a Professional Identity Formation (PIF) approach to Intelligence & Security education**
- 2. Research results of the exploratory survey:**
 - The current Professional Identity of students in the field**
 - Whether they feel universities are doing enough to prepare them for a career**
- 3. Way forward? Bridge the gap between university and career with the Integrated CONNECT PIF strategy & curriculum (Poster)**

The PIF imperative

Professional Identity Formation (PIF) is the dynamic process by which students internalise the:

- values, norms, and behaviours of a professional community,**
- so that they “think, act and feel” like aspiring members of that profession.**



Research questions



- 1. How do students view themselves as future professionals in the security & intelligence field using the PIFFS?**
- 2. How do they view the role of universities in shaping their professional identity?**

PIFFS 5 dimensions

- 1. Knowledge of the profession**
- 2. Having the professional as a model**
- 3. Experience with the profession**
- 4. Preference for the profession**
- 5. Professional self-efficacy beliefs**



Participants per country

Country	Participants	Percentage
United States	51	48.1%
United Kingdom	14	13.2%
Nigeria	13	12.3%
Netherlands	7	6.6%
Romania	5	4.7%
Australia	4	3.8%
Sweden	4	3.8%
Indonesia	2	1.9%
Somalia	2	1.9%
Kenya	1	0.9%
Italy	1	0.9%
South Africa	1	0.9%
Poland	1	0.9%

Findings

Demographics

- 106 participants from 25 universities
- 13 countries, across 5 continents (North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia)
- Mostly undergraduates, but postgraduates are also well represented
- Equal gender distribution
- Ages 18-35 (most 21-26)

Trends

- Moderately strong PI (M=3.99 SD = 0.57)
- Master's & final undergrad lowest – transition?
- The weakest dimension globally is “Practical experience”
- “Preference for the profession” had the highest variance
- University support for PIF is haphazard & incidental

PIFFS results

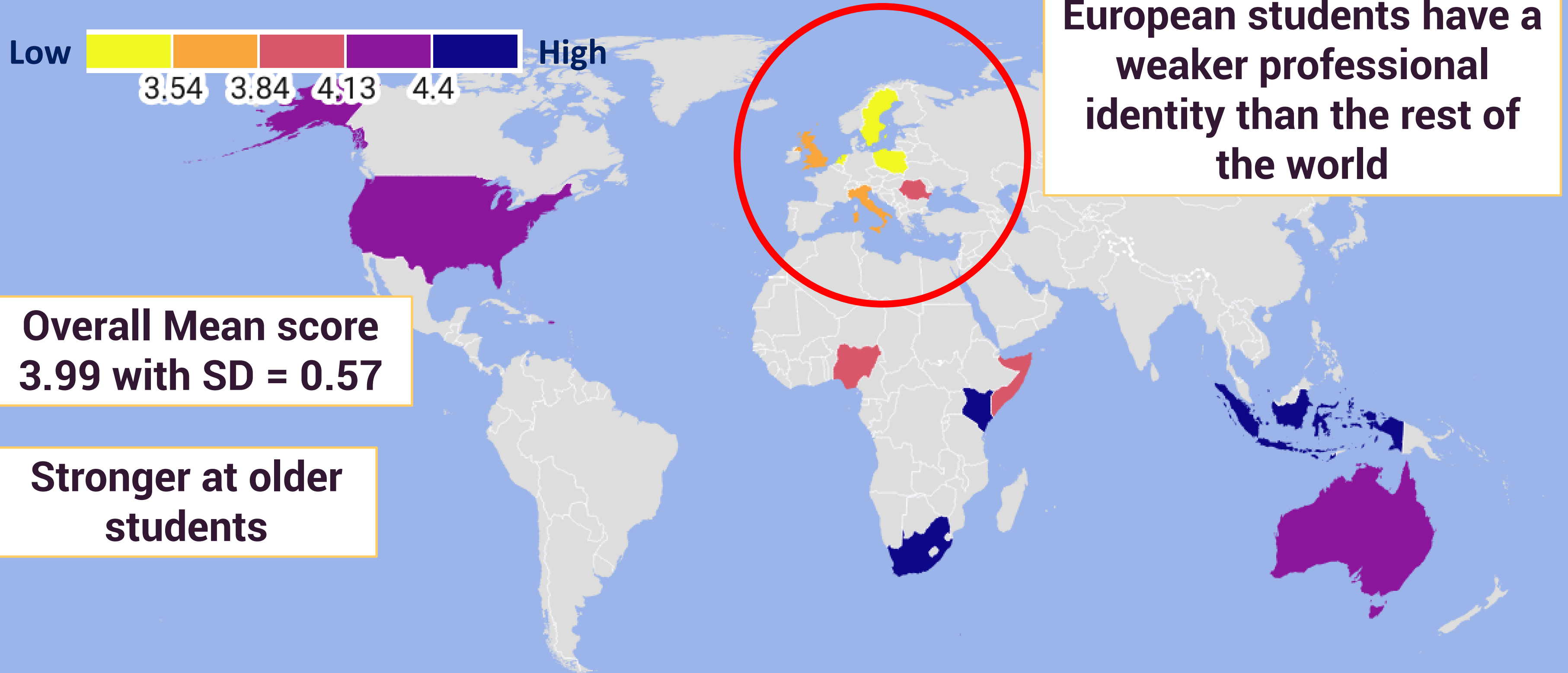
PIFFS score



**Overall Mean score
3.99 with SD = 0.57**

**Stronger at older
students**

**European students have a
weaker professional
identity than the rest of
the world**



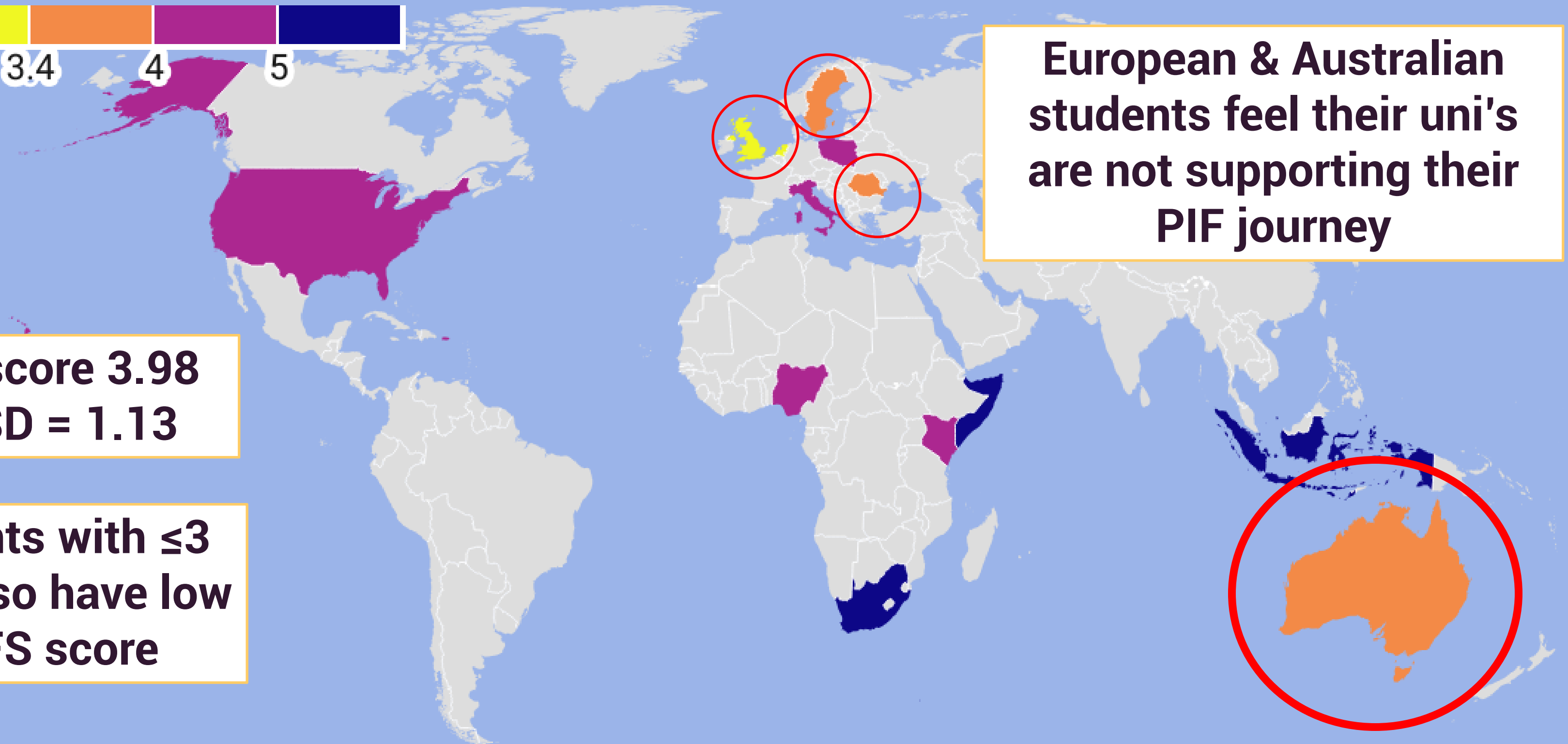
I feel my uni provides me with sufficient career exploration opportunities



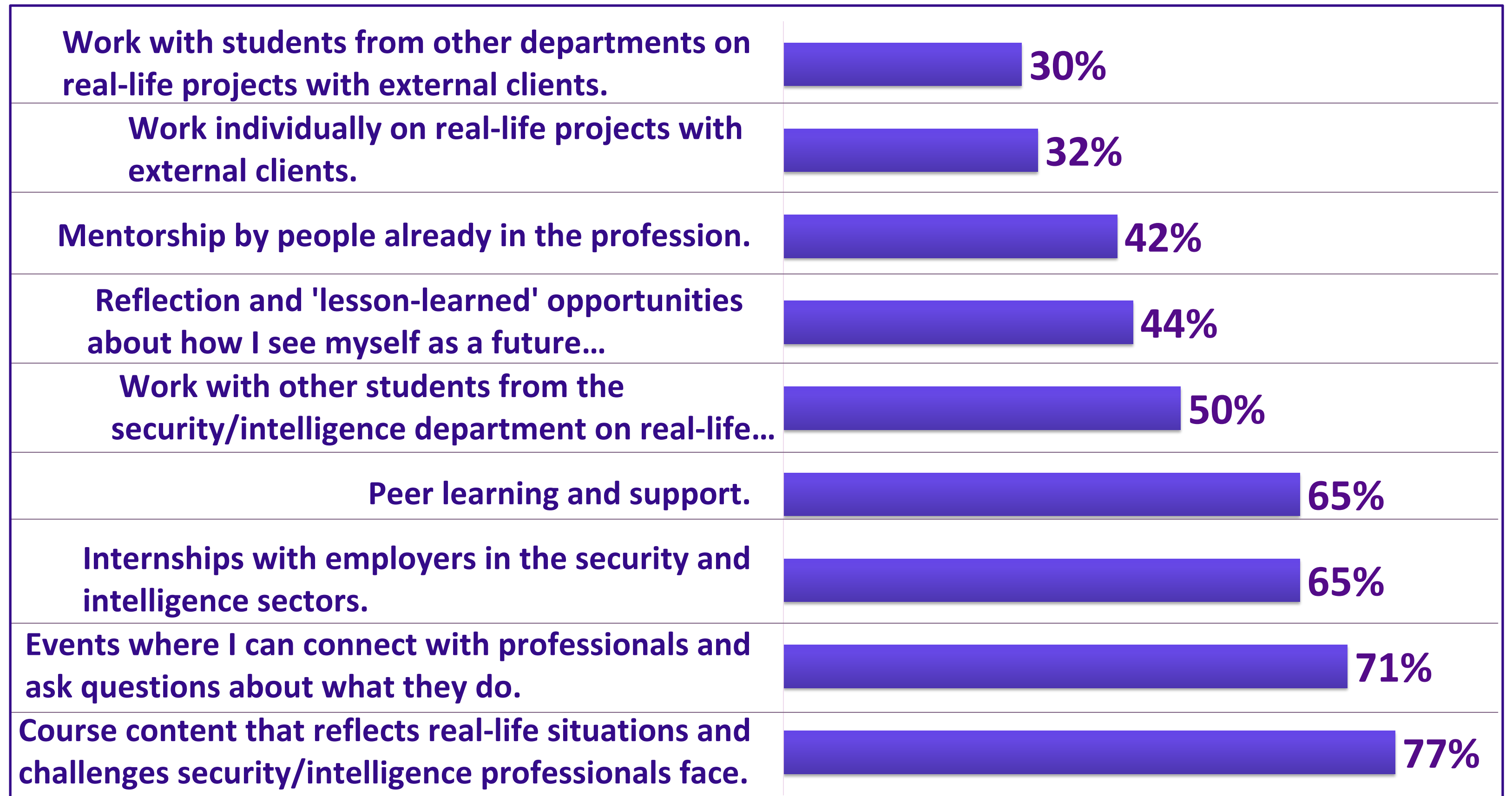
European & Australian
students feel their uni's
are not supporting their
PIF journey

Mean score 3.98
with SD = 1.13

Students with ≤ 3
here, also have low
PIFFS score



Overall PIF activities reported



Benefits for university & intelligence education



01

**Purposeful,
effective
education**



02

**Strengthening
of alumni &
professional
links**



03

**Approved test
beds of new
technologies &
methodologies**



04

**Gap btw
academia &
practice
reduced**

Conclusion

1. **Universities are not yet systematically producing career-ready graduates and see PIF as “side shows”.**
2. **PIF is uneven & depends on institutional culture, pedagogic strengths of faculty, visibility and availability of opportunities.**
3. **An integrated PIF strategy, like our CONNECT PIF Strategy, is necessary to strengthen the career-readiness of our students.**

