A joint international project co-ordinated
by the Higher Education Information System (HIS), Germany

Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe

Synopsis of indicators | Final report | Eurostudent III 2005–2008

eurostudent.eu

HIS Hochschul Informations System GmbH

SPONSORED BY THE
Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Education and Culture
Socrates

wbv

Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe

A joint international project co-ordinated
by the Higher Education Information System (HIS), Germany

Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe

Synopsis of indicators | Final report | Eurostudent III 2005–2008

eurostudent.eu

HIS Hochschul Informations System GmbH

SPONSORED BY THE
Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Education and Culture
Socrates

wbv

Editor
Dominic Orr
HIS Hochschul-Informations-System GmbH

Authors
Dominic Orr
Klaus Schnitzer
Edgar Frackmann

Project coordinators
Dominic Orr
Viktor Dick
Elke Middendorff
Klaus Schnitzer

Publishing House
W. Bertelsmann Verlag GmbH & Co. KG
Postfach 10 06 33, 33506 Bielefeld

Phone: (+49-5 21) 9 11 01-11
Fax: (+49-5 21) 9 11 01-19
E-Mail: service@wbv.de
Internet: www.wbv.de

Design
Marion Schnepf, www.lokbase.com

Printed in Germany
Order no.: 6001920
ISBN 978-3-7639-3662-5

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

EUROSTUDENT report structure

The Synopsis of Indicators is a key element in the reporting concept of the EUROSTUDENT project:

Synopsis of Indicators: The foundation of this report are the key indicators, which are highlighted in the National Profiles. These key indicators are then used to provide a comparison between the participating countries.

National Profiles: National Profiles focus on the data from individual participating countries. They provide both an introduction to each of the national higher education systems and the context data behind the key indicators used in the comparative report, the Synopsis of Indicators. The National Profiles include comments on the data from a national perspective. These reports may be consulted and downloaded from the EUROSTUDENT website.

EUROSTUDENT data sheets: Summary data sheets including key data on all 63 subtopics and individual data sheets for each subtopic are available on the dedicated website (see: www.eurostudent.eu).

Final Report
An Interim Report with preliminary data was published in April 2008. This current report is the final and conclusive comparative report for EUROSTUDENT III. The authors took account of data adjustments provided by the participating countries until 1 June 2008.

The overall objectives of EUROSTUDENT are:

- To deliver comparable key data and basic information in order to describe and map out the socio-economic living conditions of students in Europe.
- To provide a structured and standardised monitoring system with which the effects of structural measures and changes can be identified for specific student groups.
- To describe the current situation and with the aid of international comparison to identify obstacles to an inclusive and effective European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Country abbreviations

All figures will use the following abbreviations to refer to the participating countries.

AT	Austria	FI	Finland	PT	Portugal
BG	Bulgaria	FR	France	RO	Romania
CH	Switzerland	IE	Ireland	SCO	Scotland
CZ	Czech Republic	IT	Italy	SE	Sweden
DE	Germany	LT	Lithuania	SI	Slovenia
E/W	England/Wales	LV	Latvia	SK	Slovak Republic
EE	Estonia	NL	Netherlands	TR	Turkey
ES	Spain	NO	Norway		

SPONSORED BY THE

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

This project was commissioned and supported with funds by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF) (grant agreement number: M 1672.01).

Education and Culture

Socrates

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission (Socrates Programme agreement no. 2006-0095/002-001 SO2-81AWE). This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

HIS Hochschul Informations System GmbH

This report was prepared by the Higher Education Information System (HIS), Hanover. HIS also co-financed the project. Every effort has been made to assure the reliability of the data used in this report. Sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors.

Contents

Foreword

The massive and continuing expansion of education in recent decades, in almost all societies, points to the centrality of education in contemporary society. Increasingly in almost all countries public policy targets have evolved from that of achieving universal completion of primary education to achieving universal completion of secondary education towards achieving mass enrolment in higher education. In the European context, the expansion, reform and alignments of national education systems are seen as vital to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy which aims to make the EU the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. While higher education has always sought to fulfil a wide range of purposes including personal development, cultural enrichment and the development of active citizenship, recent discourses have centred on its contribution to economic policy in the context of rapid technological change, globalization and increased international competition. This focus on economic and knowledge-economy objectives has been complemented by a concern with the social agenda which focuses on social justice and ideals of democratization.

It is evident that all national governments are under great pressure to enable them to meet the growing expectations which citizens have for their educational systems. It is in this context that comparative research has assumed a growing importance, as evidenced by the impact of some OECD research, such as the PISA studies and the annual publication of *Education at a Glance*. Comparative research enables policy makers to place the experiences, successes and achievements in their own country within the context of what is happening in other countries. The EUROSTUDENT project represents an important contribution to this comparative research effort. This importance has been acknowledged in the *London Communiqué* (17 May 2007) on the Bologna Process, which called on the European Commission in conjunction with EUROSTUDENT to develop comparable and reliable indicators and data to measure progress towards the overall objective for the social dimension, including participative equity, staff and student mobility as well as employability of graduates.

The present EUROSTUDENT *Synopsis of Indicators* report is the third to be completed following earlier reports in 2000 and 2005. This report presents data from 23 countries and represents an impressive development on the earlier reports which were confined to eight and eleven countries, respectively. The focus of the study is on the social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. It covers a broad range of data on: the demographic characteristics of the student body; modes of access and attendance and types of higher education; social make-up of the student body; types of accommodation; funding and state assistance; living expenses and student spending; student employment and time budgets; and internationalisation and mobility. This publication on indicators is complemented by a series of National Profiles on each participating country which are published separately and can be downloaded from the website. These national profiles provide an introduction to each of the national systems and relevant contextual data on the indicators. The dual publication strategy reflects the methodology adopted. The project is centrally coordinated by HIS, Hanover, Germany, assisted by an International Steering Board which includes members of the EUROSTUDENT network, representing participating countries. Each participating country is responsible for its own national survey; country participation is dependent on the adoption of core questions, central data conventions and agreed time lines in data delivery.

The EUROSTUDENT project is an evolving one with a commitment to a fourth survey in 2011. The planned continuity is an important feature of the project. At present its main rationale is its comparative focus, allowing for comparisons to be made between countries. Looking to the future each new round will allow us to monitor changes over time within individual countries as well as between countries. Thus we can expect that each new survey will bring an additional dividend. As well as provid-

ing a snapshot in time of the social conditions of student life in Europe it will allow us to monitor change over time. The quantum of this extra dividend, as well as the value of the comparison across countries at a given point in time, will be a function of the methodological rigour with which the survey is conducted in each country. In this context the leaders of the project are to be commended for the establishment of a *Task Force for Quality* to improve data collection and analysis. The present methodology allows for variety in data gathering, ranging from on-line surveys (in 12 countries), to face-to-face interviews (in 7 countries), to paper and pencil questionnaires (in 3 countries) to telephone interviews (in 1 country). It is to be hoped that such variety in data collection will stimulate separate academic papers dealing with the relative effectiveness of the different methods. Other methodological issues which might warrant examination might be the use of different sampling techniques, differential response rates and the intractable problems of measuring parents' social background. Researchers will also want to explore how the demographic characteristics of each national sample compares with student population data compiled from other national sources and where differences exist, how these can be explained. It is clear that the authors of this report are fully aware of these methodological issues and they are to be commended for the commitment and professionalism they bring to resolving these issues.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the results brought together in this report is the demonstration of the heterogeneity of the student population. This is evident within each individual country and more especially between countries. In over half of the countries more than one quarter of all students are over 25 years of age. While in most countries the majority of students are single, in several counties less than half of all students consider themselves to be single (i. e. not in a long-term partnership or married) while in four countries more than 10% of students have dependent children. While the proportion of students with official part-time status is not very high, ranging from zero in three countries (Austria, Finland and Turkey) to more than 30% in the Slovak Republic and England and Wales, the percentage of students who are defined as *de facto* part-timers (spending not more than 20 hours per week on their studies) is significantly higher, exceeding 20% in eight countries and exceeding 30% in three countries. Variation in study-intensity is related to student employment which is frequent in all countries. In eleven counties more than half of the students work and in two countries (the Netherlands and Estonia) more than two-thirds of students work in tandem with their studies. In 13 countries, income from employment accounts for more than one third of student total income, the balance coming from parents or the state. While much of the heterogeneity is related to the age distribution of students, national funding regimes and the social background of students are also significant. The report uses two indicators of social background – parents' occupation, with a special focus on 'blue-collar' occupations, and parents' education. Taking account of the scores on both indicators it appears that countries such as Finland, the Netherlands and Scotland have made significant progress in reducing social inequalities. In contrast, social background is a more significant determinant of access to higher education in several countries, notably Bulgaria, Latvia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. These findings on inter-country differences in the levels of social inequality in access to higher education make an important contribution to the research literature on the role of higher education in the reproduction of the class system, a longstanding focus of interest within the sociology of education.[1] Findings on this aspect of the 2005 EUROSTUDENT survey have already been incorporated into this literature.[2] The documentation of large differences between countries in levels of inequality challenges comparative researchers to find an explanation for such differentials. The authors suggest one partial explanation when they show how highly stratified secondary school systems are associated with higher levels of inequality by social group in access to higher education.

1 *Shavit, Y. / Arum, R. / Gamoran, A. (eds.) (2007): Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.*

2 *Clancy, P. / Goastellec, G. (2007): Exploring Access and Equity in Higher Education: Policy and performance in a comparative perspective, in: Higher Education Quarterly, vol. 61, no. 2: 136–154.*

Further indications of the heterogeneity of the student experience are provided by the details on the living arrangements of students, their expenditure patterns and their experience of mobility. In ten countries private rented accommodation is the dominant type of student residence; for a further five countries, the largest percentage of students are living with parents/relatives, while in only two countries (Bulgaria, and Slovakia) are halls of residence the dominant form of accommodation. Housing costs represent students' biggest financial burden in the majority of countries, representing on average about one-third of student expenditure. In contrast tuition and other fees paid to higher education institutions represent a much smaller percentage of student expenditure. Fees paid to higher education institutions exceed 20% of total expenditure in only one country (Turkey). In a further ten countries these fees represent between 10% and 20% of total expenditure. In the remaining countries for which we have data, there are no fees paid to institutions (in 4 countries) while these fees represent less than 10% of total expenditure in six countries. Foreign study-related experiences were undertaken by more than 10% of students in about half of the countries for which we have data while the percentages who reported definite plans for foreign study-related experiences were somewhat larger, ranging from 45 % for Turkey to 4% for Spain. Details are provided on the different types of foreign experiences, ranging from enrolment in university courses, to participation in language courses, to work placements/internships. Some of the correlates of mobility include students' socio-economic background and field of study.

The EUROSTUDENT project is a highly significant and increasingly important contribution to comparative research in higher education in Europe. It provides a fascinating data set on the social conditions of higher education students in Europe. A major strength of the report and of the overall project is the level of detail with which the findings are reported. The present report is supplemented by the 23 national reports which are available online. These comparative data are of crucial relevance to policy makers in higher education both at national and European level. In the final chapter of the report the authors point to some of the possible policy considerations which arise from the findings. Their considerations of higher education access, study conditions, international mobility of students and graduation point to the way in which their findings can stimulate policy analysis. These data also provide researchers with a rich potential for secondary analysis and are certain to promote further research. The authors of the report, the project management team at HIS, the Steering Board, and the national survey teams are to be congratulated on the successful completion of this third EUROSTUDENT survey.

Patrick Clancy
University College Dublin, Ireland

The future has already arrived; it is just not evenly distributed (William Gibson).

Introduction

Collecting data on the social dimension

The purpose of this report is to provide comparative data on the so-called 'social dimension' of higher education in Europe. It is the product of a network of academics and representatives of ministries responsible for higher education in twenty-three countries, who have contributed over the past three years to the EUROSTUDENT project. This is the third round of a continually developing project. The next EUROSTUDENT report is planned for 2011.

All participants of the project are interested in providing data on various aspects of students' living and studying conditions in order to better understand the national situation and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their respective frameworks in international comparison with a view to maintaining or improving effectiveness. Such discussions are not only occurring within the EUROSTUDENT Network. One of the most prominent international fora for the exchange of ideas and higher education reforms currently is the Bologna Process, a common initiative for higher education reform in forty-six countries (2008) with an influence on higher education reform in even more regions of the world (e. g. Latin America and Asia). After many years of discussion, the European ministers responsible for higher education have recognised the social dimension as a central concept – even as a leading comparative advantage – for European higher education. The first concrete measure which ministers have agreed on is to collect more data in order to assess this issue as well as differences and similarities between countries.[1] This is an initiative in which EUROSTUDENT is involved and it will be contributing data from the current – third – round of the project.

Higher education is an expensive business with countries spending on average € 5422 per student on tuition (EU-27, 2003),[2] but the recognition of its importance for the development of both society and industry is leading many countries to undertake initiatives to increase the share of the population participating in higher education courses. Even for countries with a comparatively low participation rate, the share of a national population undertaking higher education has risen between 1998 and 2005 (EU-27: by 27%) and the increases by country are significantly higher (participation in Lithuania and Romania has more than doubled > *Appendix*). These increases have, in general, not led to over-qualification and therefore to mismatches between graduates and the labour market, but are adequate responses to changes in both society, in the labour market and indeed in education and training systems.[3] They have nevertheless had significant implications for the expectations of higher education from society and industry as well as for the make-up of the student body, which is now much less socially and economically homogenous than in the past.

1 *London Communiqué 2007, section 3.4.*
2 *Eurydice/Eurostat (2007): Key data on higher education 2007. Brussels.*
3 *Cf. OECD (2007): Education at a glance 2007. Paris: pp. 11-15 (editorial).*

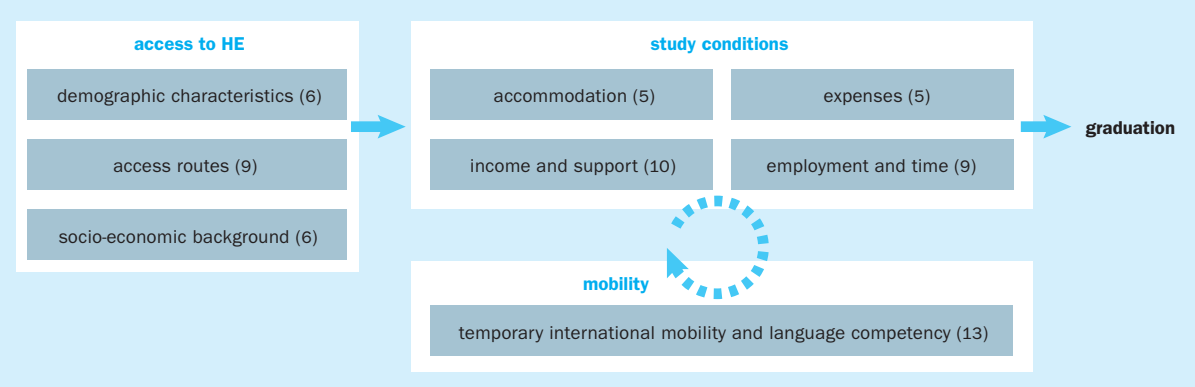
In view of both the importance and the expense of higher education provision, one clear objective of policy is to provide effective higher education. That is, to organise and execute higher education to the maximum benefit of both participants themselves (one could speak here of private benefits) and of society as a whole (... and here of public benefits). Such goals include assuring an appropriate participation rate as well as fair access to higher education and subsequently to assure that students are offered study conditions conducive to their successful graduation. In this scenario, high attrition rates during studies would be seen as wastage, since either inappropriate candidates entered into the higher education system or these were the appropriate candidates, but the study conditions proved obstructive to successful graduation.

The use of the word effectiveness instead of efficiency is really a nuance, and both terms are often used synonymously. However, the nuance is important: whilst efficiency tends to mean finding the correct balance between input and output in the short-term (e. g. How much does a graduate of higher education cost?), effectiveness looks into the long-term balance (e. g. Can the graduate obtain an adequate job? What is the graduate worth to society?). The emphasis is, therefore, also on quality and outcomes, instead of outputs, which are harder to judge with a commonly accepted objectivity. In this study we are looking at a qualitative aspect of higher education – the social dimension – with exactly this character. The analysis, however, is based on quantitative statistics on a highly aggregated level. That means that many phenomena are only imperfectly reflected in the statistics and that important contextual information is not considered. The advantage is, on the other hand, that a certain degree of comparability can be offered between twenty-three very diverse systems. In other words, the study provides a broad view, but not an in-depth view. Three initiatives have been undertaken in an effort to reduce the disadvantage of this broad view.

- *The aggregate indicators have been developed within a network and over time:* The current round of EUROSTUDENT is the third full round since its inception. Each time the results from the previous round have been discussed with the network and adaptations or more precise specifications have been implemented. Three large workshops have also been organised during this third round (Berlin, Lisbon and Bucharest) in order to encourage discussions and set common conventions between network members.
- *National data delivery is complemented by national data interpretation:* Using the data delivery interface via the internet, national contributors are asked to input their data for a particular subtopic (e. g. share of students living in student halls) and then to interpret this data from a national standpoint. In doing this, they should assure that the most important contextual information is re-linked to the data (e. g. Who provides student halls).
- *Separate National Profiles for all countries:* Besides this Synopsis of Indicators, a national report – the so-called National Profile – can be viewed on the internet and downloaded as a full paper report for each country. These reports include more detailed national data than are presented in this report and contain the national commentaries on the national data for each subtopic. Furthermore, each National Profile includes a general introduction to the structure of the respective higher education system.

Fig. 1

Scope of report based on a learner's biography



The numbers in brackets refer to the number of subtopics by topic area, i. e. 10 subtopics concerned with students' income and support. See the National Profiles on www.eurostudent.eu.

Despite these efforts, the limitations of such a report should be recognised and the authors hope, in particular, that this report will lead on to more in-depth studies which focus on fewer countries and/or fewer topic areas.[4] The purpose of this report, then, is to provide an overview of the social dimension of higher education, which will stimulate policy debates and further research.

The authors of this study recognise that higher education, in general, and the social dimension, in particular, remain tied to multifarious national issues. The structures and processes of a higher education system and the integration of this system into the structures and processes of a national educational and training system, its relationship with the labour market and indeed the traditional expectations of higher education within society differ between countries. One motivation of the national contributors to EUROSTUDENT for entering the comparative study is, however, the recognition that many of the challenges facing higher education are similar and the value added by participation is to be able to compare solutions to common policy dilemmas. We hope that our publication will aid this process.

Scope of the report

The eight main chapters included in this report reflect eight topic areas covered by the EUROSTUDENT dataset. Figure 1 gives an overview of these topic areas and the number of subtopics ascribed to each subtopic area. In essence, the EUROSTUDENT dataset attempts to describe a student's learning biography from entrance into a higher education system, to study conditions during studies, and finally to exit from the higher education system. These three "moments" in a student's biography are shown in the overview. Temporary mobility is indeed a separate activity, but strongly dependent on study conditions.

4 *One report has already been published using the new EUROSTUDENT III data: Schwarzenberger, A. (2008, ed.): Public / private funding of higher education: a social balance. Higher Education Information System (HIS). A further report, which will provide a Swiss reflection on the EUROSTUDENT data, is planned for 2008.*

Fig. 2

Differences in "moments" of participative equity

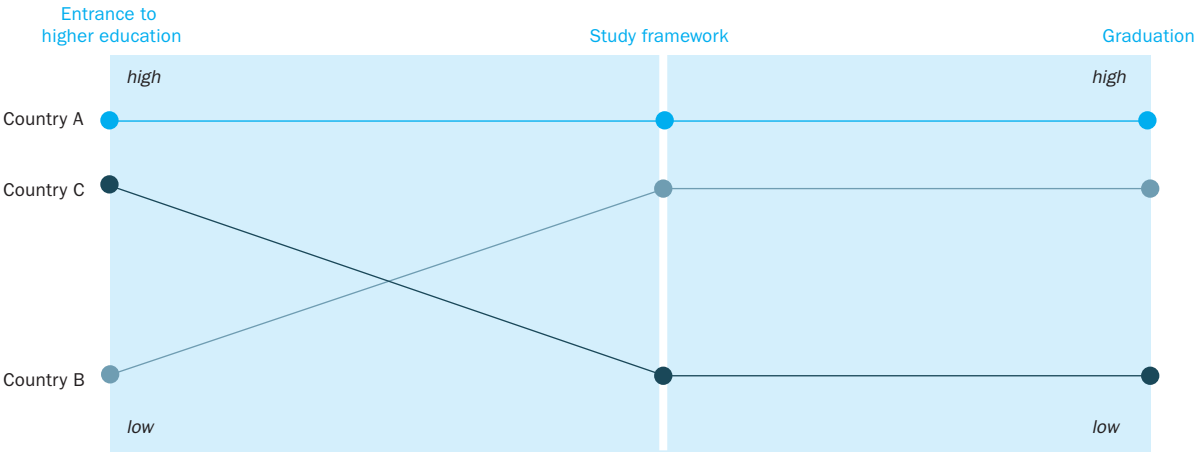


Figure 1 also shows a blind spot in EUROSTUDENT's assessment of the social dimension – there is no data available for student graduation. This is due to the fact that the surveys carried out within the EUROSTUDENT project collate responses from a cross-section of students during their study period and it is not possible to know anything about their graduation. Whilst we have no information on graduation, the EUROSTUDENT dataset does include topics, which are likely to have implications on graduation (e. g. time budget for students).

Ideally an analysis of the social dimension should cover all three central moments of a student's learning biography before passing a final judgement on the level of equity and effectiveness in a national higher education system. Figure 2 illustrates this fact for three fictional countries. The criterion which should be used to assess a country's position is "participative equity". This term has been defined within the Bologna Process to mean:

"(...) the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations."[5]

Figure 2 shows Country A to be successful in terms of participative equity – this country has a higher education system which has a high level of equity at entry, a high level concerning the study framework and a high level at graduation. That is to say that disadvantage by individual background – as opposed to merit – is minimal at all three "moments" of study.

Country B is a case, where the socio-economic restriction at entry is high (i. e. low participative equity), but all those students who do enter experience the same framework conditions. That is to say that the participative equity during studies and at graduation is high.

5 *Extract from: BFUG Working Group Social Dimension and Data on Mobility of Staff and Students, 2007.*

The third case, Country C, shows a higher education system which is characterised by an open system of entry. Such a wide access system leads to a high level of heterogeneity in terms of the requirements for study conditions (e. g. necessary support from the state). Here Country C is less successful at providing conducive conditions for successful graduation.

These examples show that the assessment of the positions of countries B and C is difficult unless all moments of a course of study are considered. On the one hand, Country B appears better than Country C, because of the high level of participative equity for all participants. On the other hand, Country C may have adopted new initiatives to provide an open higher education system, but the initiatives have yet to work through the system and support the new recruits. Both countries have the chance of reaching Country A's performance in the future.

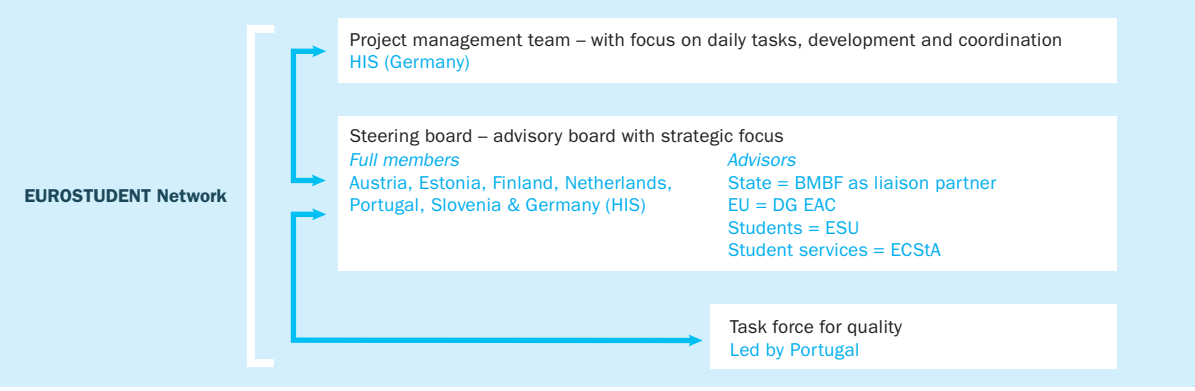
Organisation of the project

The EUROSTUDENT Network is open to all European countries. Currently, twenty-three countries are active participants and have delivered data for this third round of the study. A further six countries (Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Georgia, Greece and Hungary) are observers in the current round and will potentially join the project in the fourth round, which begins in 2008.

The EUROSTUDENT project has a decentral structure, which sees the project participants as members of a network. The EUROSTUDENT is centrally coordinated by the Higher Education Information System (HIS), Hanover, Germany. The coordinators' work is aided by an International Steering Board involving members of the EUROSTUDENT Network as full members and certain agencies relevant to the policy area as advisors (see Figure 3). As quality assurance in terms of comparability and data reliability is such an important topic for EUROSTUDENT, one of the first initiatives of the Steering Board was to establish a Task Force for Quality, which proceeded to organise

Fig. 3

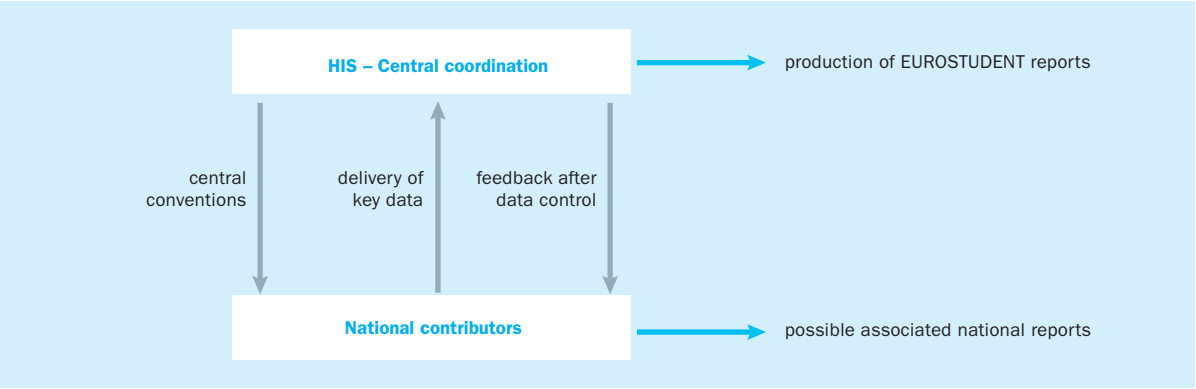
EUROSTUDENT Network



BMBF = German Federal Ministry for Education and Research DG EAC = Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission
ESU = European Students' Unions ECStA = European Council for Students' Affairs

Fig. 4

Organisation of tasks and responsibilities



a workshop on paths to improved quality in data collection and analysis in March 2007 attended by over 40 delegates from 21 countries and opened by the Portuguese State Secretary for Science, Technology and Higher Education, Prof. Manuel Heitor. A further workshop on collection and interpretation of data on the social dimension in higher education took place in November 2007 and was opened jointly by the Romanian Minister for Education, Research and Youth, Cristian Mihai Adomnitei, and the Director of UNESCO-CEPES, Jan Sadlak. This workshop was attended by 50 delegates from 20 countries. The topic of this workshop was the preparations necessary in order to produce adequate country comparisons.

The EUROSTUDENT Network is organised on the basis of shared responsibility – see Figure 4. The implementation of the national surveys lies within the responsibility of each participating country. However, participation in the EUROSTUDENT project is dependent on the adoption of the EUROSTUDENT core questions and central data conventions. The coordinators remain in close contact with members of each participating country to assure common understanding and the adherence to data conventions. Common timelines must also be observed. Once the data is received by the EUROSTUDENT coordinators, it is evaluated and only after further discussions and cross-checking to assure quality, is the data used for analysis.

Method and EUROSTUDENT conventions

The first EUROSTUDENT reports were based on already existing national surveys which covered the same topic areas, but otherwise differed in methodological approach. Although this is true for the third round of EUROSTUDENT in a minority of cases, the EUROSTUDENT study remains the product of a decentralised network. Therefore, the coordinators of the network have adopted an output harmonisation approach to the execution of the study.

The aim is therefore to obtain high quality results through a harmonised list of variables and indicators, together with their related definitions. These definitions of indicators require the use of the set of core questions to assure the “fit” of collected data

Fig. 5

Countries' methods of data collection

	Online survey	Face-to-face interview	Paper and pencil	Telephone interview
Countries	AT, BG, CH, CZ, EE, FI, IE, LV, NL, RO, SI, TR	ES, E/W, LT, NO, PT, SCO, SK	DE, FR, SE	IT
Total	12	7	3	1

(31 core questions >*Appendix*). Methodological guidelines provide additional guidance on the target population, sampling frames, sampling design, survey instruments etc. that should be respected in the national survey methods.

They should, on the one hand, help countries to improve and align their national survey methodologies. On the other hand, countries that are newly introducing student surveys can find orientation regarding how to implement such surveys at national level.

The main instrument of the output harmonization approach is the Data Delivery Module which is the interface for data transfer from national production to central assembly. It constitutes the mould into which all data are poured. The corresponding Handbook of Data Conventions and Data Input Templates gives instructions for the definitions and demarcation of data for the predefined tables of the Data Delivery Module. Countries, therefore, do not provide the international coordinators with raw micro data, but with calculated aggregate indicators for 63 subtopics.

By outlining the preferential methodological approaches it is expected that an input harmonization approach, based on a uniform questionnaire and survey method, will evolve as the project develops. Figure 5 shows that the majority of countries used online surveys in the third round of EUROSTUDENT (>*Appendix*).

The statistical unit in this study is the single individual pursuing a formal education at ISCED 5A level as a home student on the reference date. In detail these conventions are:

- EUROSTUDENT gathers information on academically-orientated tertiary education (ISCED-level 5A). The focus is on publicly funded higher education, i. e. according to Eurostat definitions, public or government-dependent private institutions (only those institutions of higher education which obtain over 50% of their funding from public sources are included, i. e. not private higher education).
- The total target population of the EUROSTUDENT statistics consists of all individuals pursuing an education at ISCED 5A level. This includes both students studying their first degree and those studying their second degree or continuing programmes (e. g. second cycle master students). Students in study programmes of ISCED level 5B (practically oriented / occupationally specific) and ISCED level 6 (doctorate students) are not included. In some cases, the indicators differentiate between students studying Bachelor courses and the whole population with a view to observe the effect of changes to study organisation within the framework of the Bologna Process.
- This global population of students is divided into national and foreign population. Only national or permanent resident students are considered the target population of national surveys in each country. Resident students in a particular country, who do not have the respective country's citizenship, are only included in the target population, if they have obtained their higher education entrance certificate in this

Box 1

Summary of central EUROSTUDENT conventions

The survey is restricted to students who are
1. studying courses at the ISCED level 5A
2. national or permanent resident students.

The survey includes all students enrolled at higher education institutions studying at ISCED level 5A. This comprises both students studying their first degree and those studying their second degree or continuing programmes (e. g. master students). Students in study programmes of ISCED level 5B (practically oriented/occupationally specific) and ISCED level 6 (doctorate students) are not included.

country and study in this country. By contrast, students of foreign nationality are not included, if they also obtained their higher education entrance certificates abroad.
- The target population consists of all matriculated students; no matter if they are registered with full-time or part-time status. In some cases, the indicators differentiate between age groups. In particular, "21-year-olds" are used as a normative category in order to control for the effects of age.

How to read this report

Five issues should be considered whilst reading this report:
- This report includes comparative data concerning all eight topic areas covered by the EUROSTUDENT dataset (fig. 1), but not necessarily data covering all 63 subtopics. Commented data from all countries for each subtopic can be found in the individual country reports entitled National Profiles, which are available via the internet. In each figure used in this synopsis report a reference is made to the subtopic number from which the data for the chart was generated.
- Since the aim of this report is to give a comparative overview of the structures in the European Higher Education Area, trends and country clusters are the focus of the analysis. Small differences in the data between countries should not be over-interpreted due to the variety of methods used to collate the data (fig. 5). See also the appendix for information on any other special notes on data sources per country (> *Appendix*).
- To aid the recognition of country groups, the data in many charts is ordered by the strength of a particular characteristic (e. g. from high to low values). This should not be misinterpreted as a suggestion for a strict ranking of countries from top to bottom.
- Occasionally, average values (mean or median) are used in charts as reference values. These, too, should not be over-interpreted. The values are affected by differences between countries in terms of survey method, size of sample etc. and by the fact that not all countries provide data for all subtopics.
- Finally, this report is the output of a developing project and is therefore subject to a learning process. In particular, the introduction of more countries to the project, but also the uniqueness of an international data set on the social dimension of higher education and the current period of higher education reforms make every compari-

son strained. In the cases where data from country participants was available, but the reliability of the data for comparison could not be assured, the data has not been included in this report. It should, however, be highlighted that differences in population coverage, data collection methods and weighting systems remain constraints on the comparability of the data included in this report.

Acknowledgement

The international coordinators of the EUROSTUDENT project from the German Higher Education Information System (HIS) would like to conclude this introduction by thanking all national contributors to the project (> *Appendix*) and especially the members of the EUROSTUDENT Steering Board: Vladimir Vajda (chair), Richard Deiss, Peter Greisler, Virpi Hiltunen, Susana Martins, Achim Meyer auf der Heyde, Lennart Nooij, Allan Päll, Roberta Schaller-Steidl, Kim Størksen, Martin Unger. We are grateful to Dr. Edgar Frackmann for his co-authorship of this report and to Prof. Patrick Clancy for his insightful forward. Furthermore, we would like to thank Christina Kruschwitz and especially Nicole Rohde, without whose expertise in data processing and data analysis programmes this report would not have taken shape and form. Important input in the final phase was also provided by Andrea Riedel and Dr. Stefanie Gundert. The data programming behind these analyses was implemented by Viktor Dick to whom we are particularly grateful.

Dominic Orr, Elke Middendorff, Klaus Schnitzer
September 2008

Chapter 1:
Demographic characteristics of the student body

Information about students' demographic characteristics is of importance not only for knowledge about the social composition of the student body, but also as it constitutes substantial background information for the reception and interpretation of the EUROSTUDENT dataset. In some cases, the student sample used by contributing countries does not represent the general student body in the respective country perfectly. Deviations will be noted in this chapter and can also be found in the Appendix.

Key findings

- **The average age of students ranges widely between 21 and 27, but most European students are aged 25 or younger. The biggest group of students within this age range is to be found in Turkey, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Italy and Ireland.**
- **The age of first year students also ranges widely – between 19 and 26. Here two groups are visible: Those countries in which most students commence their studies before their twentieth birthday (e. g. France and Italy) and those in which the majority of students begin between the ages of 20 and 25 (e. g. Slovenia and Finland).**
- **Sweden, England/Wales and Spain seem particularly successful at re-engaging prospective students long after they have left secondary schooling.**
- **The share of single students diverges widely between countries and does not appear to be related to students' average age. The highest shares of single students without partner are to be found in Italy and Portugal. The lowest in the Czech Republic, Germany, Romania and Slovenia, where students are more often in long-term relationships.**
- **In most countries less than one in ten students has a child and there are signs that balancing studies with parenthood remains an obstacle. Finland seems to be particularly successful at integrating parents with young children into studies.**

1

Main issues

In this first section of the set of EUROSTUDENT indicators, basic characteristics of the EUROSTUDENT sample are described. They present a profile of the students in each country's higher education system and provide important background information for the further analysis of issues related to access, study conditions, living conditions and mobility (> *Box 1.1*). Each of the three topic areas below can be considered as context factors which are relevant for both policy design and the assessment of policy implementation.

Age

Many aspects of the social dimension of higher education are age-related and, in some specific cases, gender-related. Examples are entry routes to higher education (> *Chapter 2*), accommodation (> *Chapter 4*) and student financing (> *Chapter 5*). For this reason, differences and similarities between countries' student age profiles are presented comparatively in this chapter. The age profiles of both the total student body and first year students are shown by gender. In some higher education systems the age profile is relatively homogeneous, whilst in others two or more groups (e. g. young and mature students) can be picked out.

The size and the significance of the respective 21-year-old student population in each country is especially emphasized as this group is used in this and other chapters to facilitate a comparison between countries, which is not influenced by age differences.

Students' relationships and dependent children

Single students are subject to study conditions that are especially different from those of married students. Located between both ("extreme") groups, students in long-term relationships are likely to be more independent of their parents, but may themselves be financially dependent on a partner. Equally, they themselves might have dependents. Family status may be affected by cultural propensities, such as marrying or entering a long-term partnership early on in life. However, the relevance of the issues is based on an increasing interest in improving study conditions for students with children and in facilitating starting a family for students.

Countries may aim to provide family-friendly higher education for at least two reasons. In some countries research has shown that students are postponing families and children until much later in life and therefore are affecting society's demographic balance (e. g. due to lower fertility rates and later timing of births). Additionally, a shrinking number of young people and the need to increase the share of highly qualified people in the workforce make it imperative to look beyond the typical university clients to, for example, mature students. Often, these mature students already have a family and their successful completion of higher education relies on higher education provision which facilitates a balance between family and academia.

Physically-disabled students

In many countries, policy or national law stipulates that prospective students should not be deterred from entering or completing their studies due to disabilities, in particular, physical disabilities. This subtopic is based on the self-assessment of students

Box 1.1

Special note on national samples

In some cases, the student sample used by EUROSTUDENT countries is not a perfect representation of the general student body in the respective country. Moreover, with regard to certain indicators some countries report data from different sources than the national surveys, e. g. from official statistics. Below we will briefly summarize the most important deviations. Deviations are also noted in the Appendix of this Synopsis Report as well as in the National Profiles.

- Bulgaria: Distance students are included in the national sample.
- Ireland: The Irish survey includes information on full-time students only.
- Italy: The national survey of Italy only refers to students enrolled in programmes that have already been reformed in accordance with Bologna principles and only includes Masters students on one-cycle Master courses (i. e. no Bachelor phase). In this way, it represents 70% of the student population in Italy (i. e. no pre-reform courses and no separate Master courses).
- Norway: Part-time students, who dedicate less than 50% of their time to their studies, are not covered by the national survey.
- Slovakia: Male students are over-sampled in the national survey.
- Turkey: The national sample is restricted to Bachelor students.
- England/Wales: In addition to the national survey England/Wales used further data sources for information on certain indicators (> *Appendix*).
- Scotland: Scotland also complemented its survey by data from alternative sources (> *Appendix*). Information, e. g. on students' family status and children, is restricted to full-time Bachelor students in second year or above.

and, therefore, gives a first indication of the situation. Physically-disabled students are more likely to require counselling and support during their studies than their counterparts.

A comparison of the situation between countries must be undertaken with care, since countries have very different traditions of defining disabilities and categorising those particular disabilities which lead to additional support from the state.

Broadly speaking then, the aim of this chapter is to provide contextual information for the subsequent chapters. Although some of the data presented here would be available from other sources (especially Eurostat), it is necessary to refer to the national datasets provided by EUROSTUDENT, since these will be used to describe other aspects of the national student bodies which are not covered by Eurostat. In a short excursus (Box 1.2), the difference between Eurostat and EUROSTUDENT data are highlighted.

1

Data and interpretation

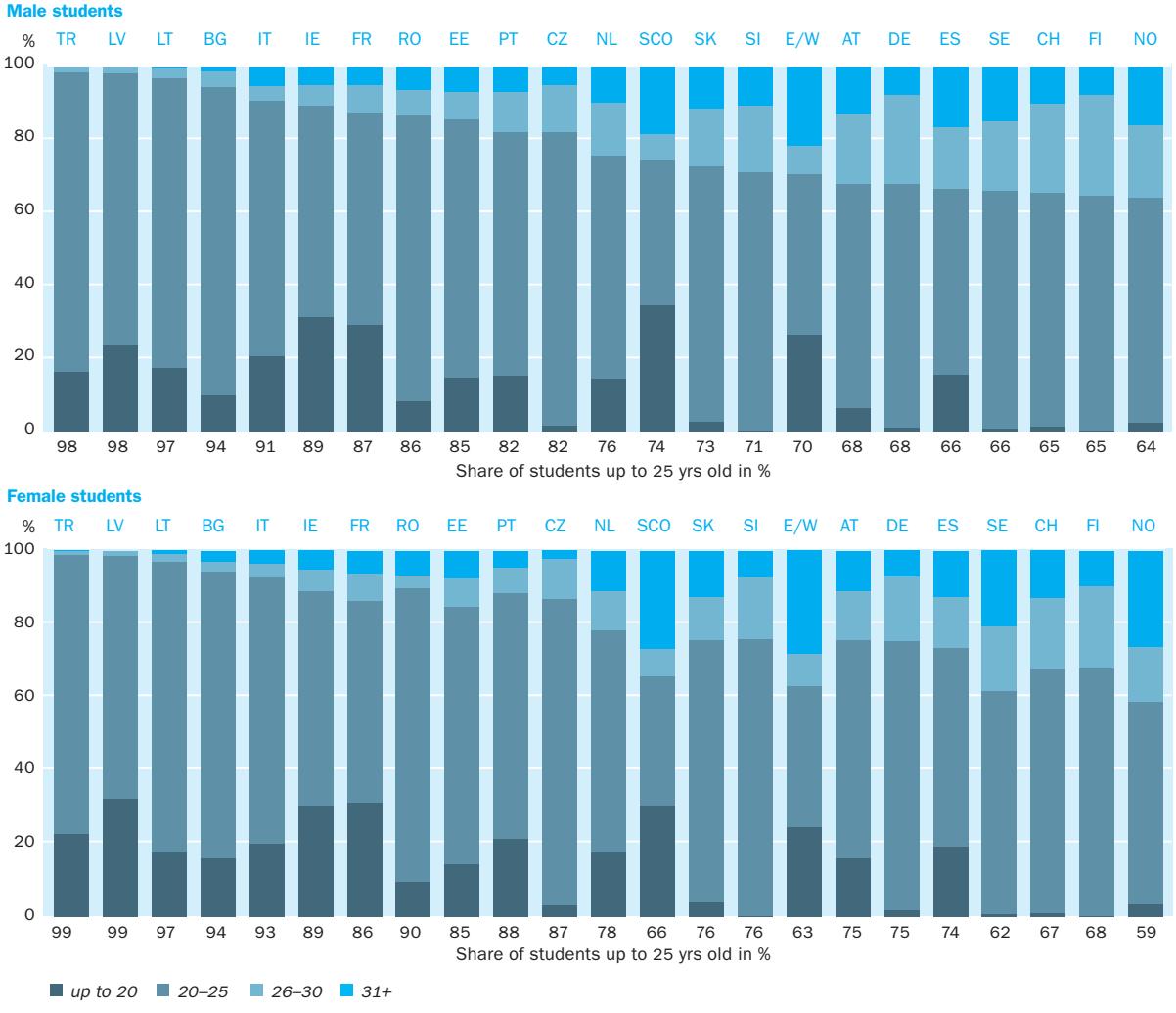
In the majority of countries most students are aged 25 or younger, but older students are also well-represented

The data in Figure 1.1 shows that the majority of students in all observed countries are 25 years old or younger. In six countries – Turkey, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Italy and Ireland – at least 90% of students can be found in this age group, irrespective of their gender. In over half of the countries more than one quarter of all students are over 25 years of age (right hand of Fig. 1.1).

There are also striking gender differences in students' age profiles in these countries. Looking at women instead of men the share of students over 25 years decreases from 32% to 25% in Austria and Germany. The fact that female students are often younger

Fig. 1.1

Age profile by gender – All students (age groups in %)



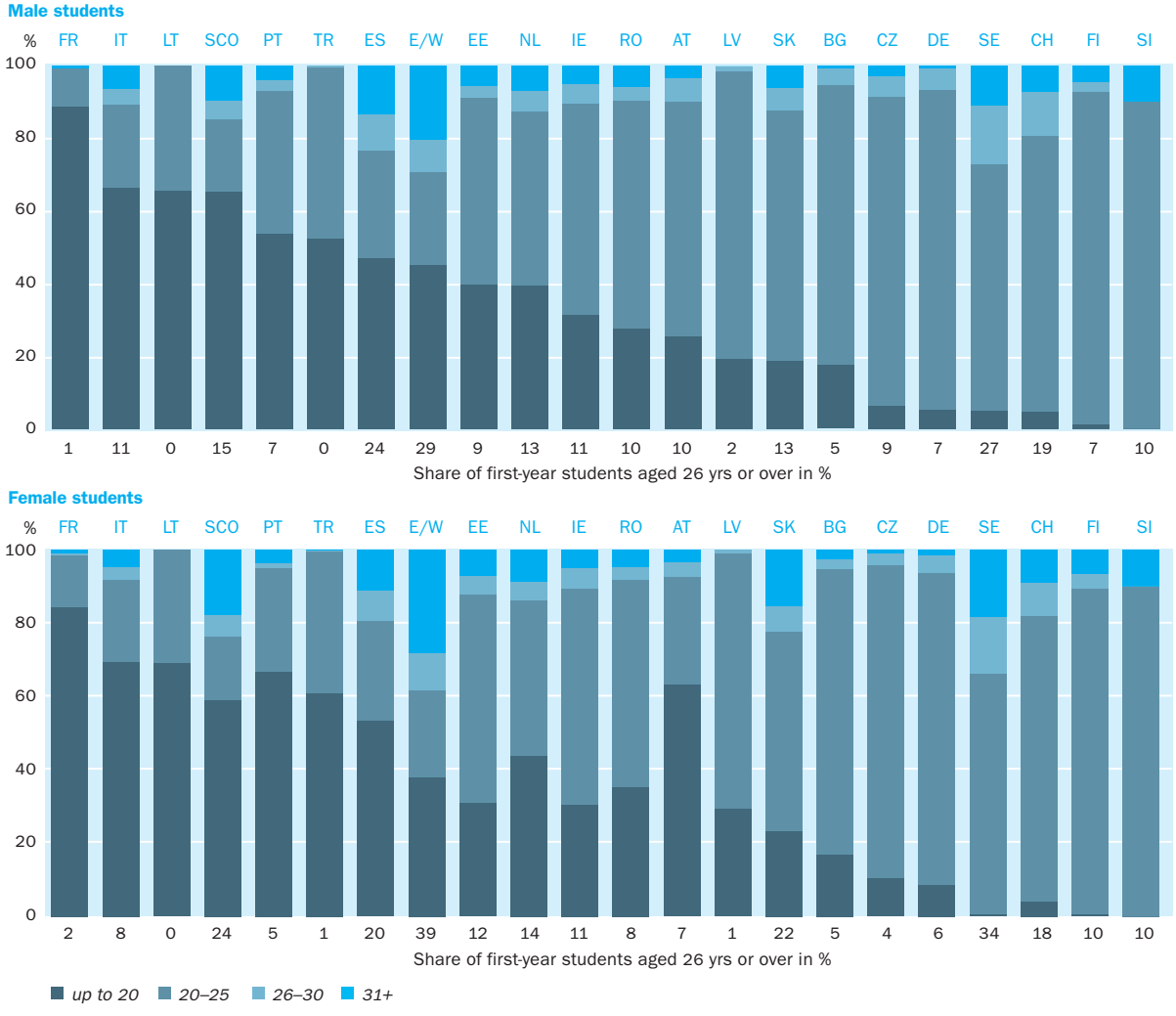
Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1.*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age in years", 1.2 "Gender"

than their male counterparts reflects a tendency for males to postpone the start of their studies in order to take up vocational training and/or absolve compulsory military (or civil) service. By contrast, in Norway and Scotland the share of older students rises from 36% to 41% and from 26% to 34%, respectively, when looking at females instead of males. In Scotland, England/Wales and Norway the larger share of older female students may reflect a success in recruiting older female students through non-traditional routes (>*Chapter 2*).

In Figure 1.2 the age profiles of first year students are ordered according to the share of first year students, who are 20 years old or younger. Note that by definition the number of first year students includes students in their very first year of enrolment to higher education – i. e. in Bachelor programmes or in comparable country-specific programmes, but not those in Master programmes (second cycle). The values shown

Fig. 1.2

Age profile by gender – First year students (age groups in %)

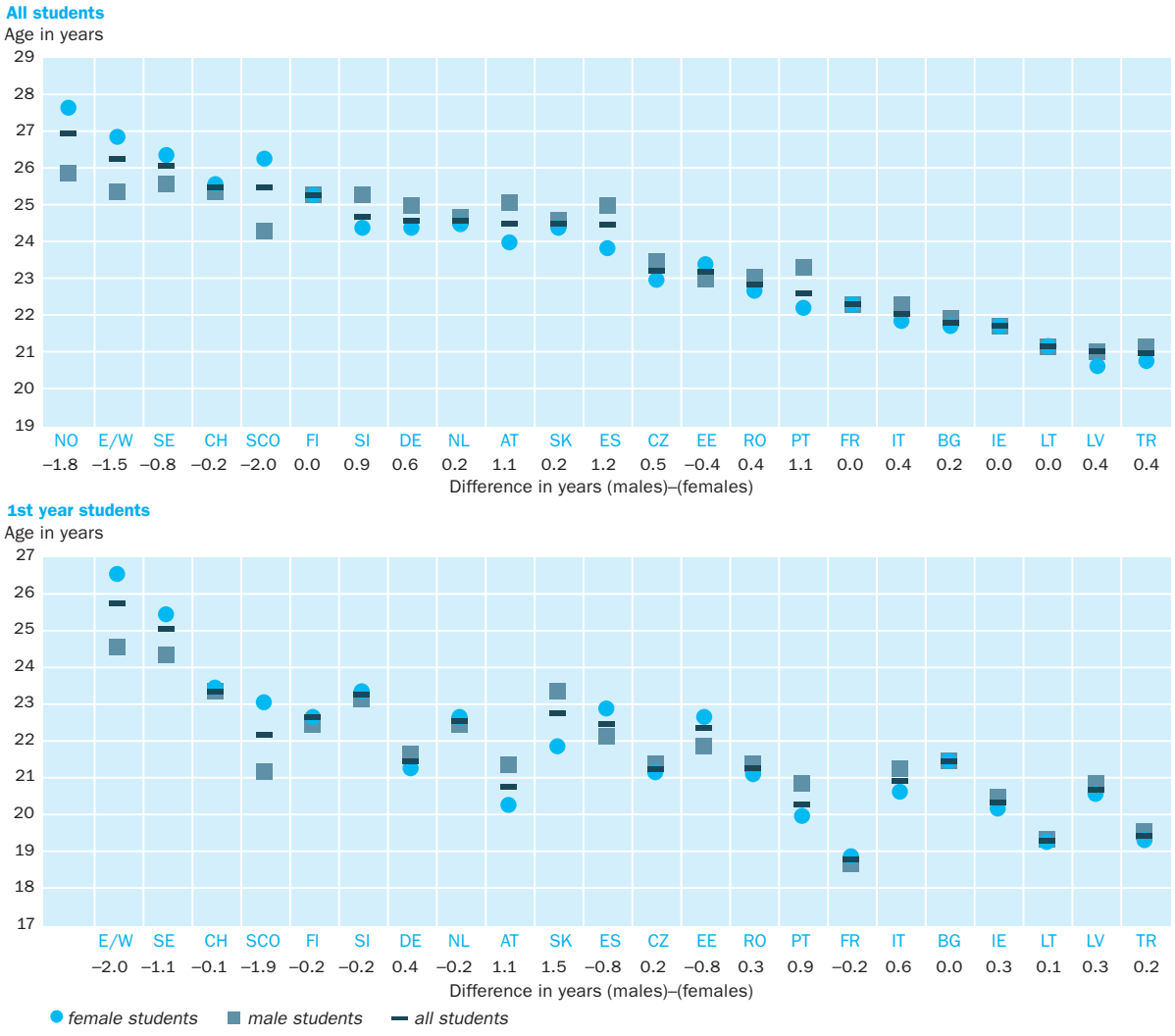


Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 3. No data NO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age in years", 1.2 "Gender", 3.2 "For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?"

Fig. 1.3

Average age – All students and first year students



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1 & 3. Bottom chart: no data NO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age in years", 1.2 "Gender", 3.2 "For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?"

for each country, in contrast, represent the exact share of first year students aged 26 years or older as this is a relevant age group for discussions on the recruitment of older (often called "mature" or "adult") students.

The data broadly highlights two systems: Those in which the majority of students commence their studies before their twentieth birthday – in particular France, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland, Portugal and Turkey (for both men and women) – and those in which the majority of students begin their studies between the ages of 20 and 25. Over one fifth of female first year students in Sweden, Slovakia, England/Wales, Spain and Scotland are 26 years old or above at the beginning of their studies. Apparently, the educational systems of these countries are successful at re-engaging prospective students in educational processes long after they have left secondary school. However, this success is less pronounced with regard to the male student body, where only Sweden, England/

Box 1.2

Comparing demographic characteristics in EUROSTUDENT and Eurostat datasets

Where a direct comparison was possible, differences between demographic characteristics of the datasets from Eurostat and EUROSTUDENT were investigated. The gender distribution shown by Eurostat and EUROSTUDENT data are very similar. The comparison shows that data from the EUROSTUDENT national surveys in Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Lithuania and Turkey have the highest shares of students under the age of 25 years. Concerning Italy and Turkey, this is an over-estimation because the sample only includes students in Bachelor courses. In the national dataset from Lithuania there appears to be an over-representation of female first year students.

As mentioned above, information on demographic characteristics can be obtained from both Eurostat and EUROSTUDENT. However, most topics covered in this study could not have been covered solely using the standard Eurostat data source. Eurostat collects data annually on the basis of administrative statistics on the basis of UOE (Unesco-OECD-Eurostat) conventions. Even though this form of data collection provides reliability and stability, it is limited in terms of flexibility. Furthermore, for certain kinds of analysis it is necessary to use data from EUROSTUDENT. EUROSTUDENT provides self-reported data from the perspective of students. Thus it is possible to address questions concerning students' subjective experience regarding their studies. Furthermore – in contrast to the highly aggregated Eurostat information – individual data from EUROSTUDENT can be used for detailed analyses concerning subgroups of students by connecting students' demographic information to other characteristics. For instance, information on students' satisfaction with aspects of their living conditions or data on international mobility by students' social origin are not available through Eurostat.

Wales and Spain recruit so many male students who are 26 years old or above at the start of their studies.

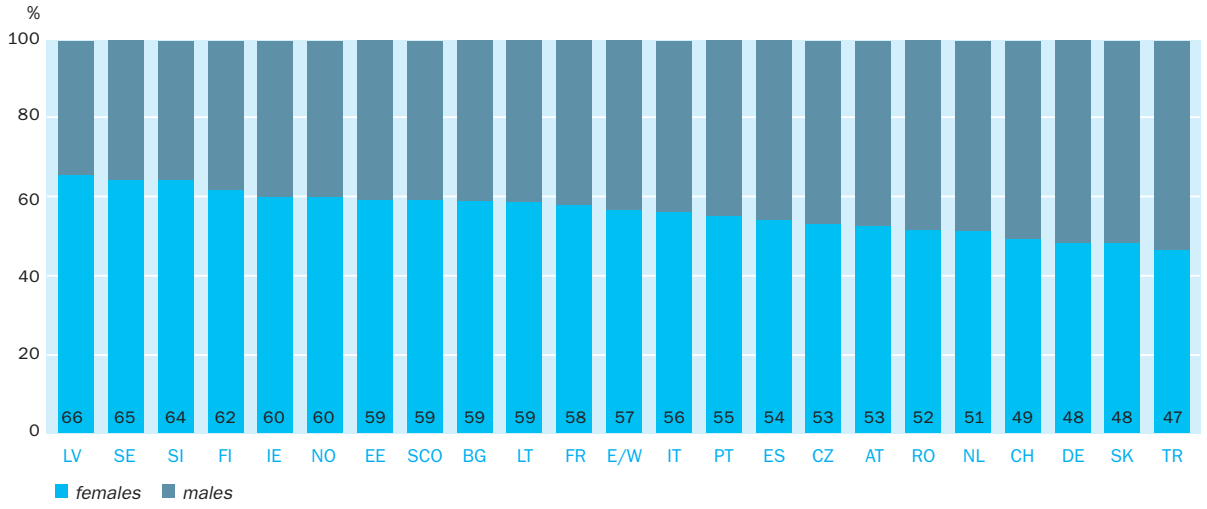
The average age of all students and first year students shown in Figure 1.3 confirms the tendencies viewed by age groups in the previous paragraphs. The youngest students by average age are to be found in Turkey and the oldest in Norway. Note that the average age of Norwegian students is influenced by outliers, i. e. respondents aged 40 years or above (for details see Norway's National Profile). Referring to the median age (24 years) instead of the arithmetic mean would have led to a different ranking of countries in Figure 1.3, since the median is less influenced by extreme values.

The majority of students in European higher education are female

Data in Figure 1.4 on the share of students by gender show a tendency visible across the whole of Europe – in general more women enter higher education than men. In Latvia, Sweden and Slovenia women's proportion is near to two-thirds of the whole student body. According to the data presented here, only four countries have not yet joined this trend: Turkey, Slovakia, Germany and Switzerland. Except for Slovenia this is confirmed by Eurostat data for 2006, which can be used here for comparison and

Fig. 1.4

All students – Share of male and female students (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1 & 3.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.2 "Gender"

which also shows these countries to be apart from all other 24 European member states. The picture for Slovakia is the result of an over-representation of men in the EUROSTUDENT sample.

In some countries 21-year-old students are at the beginning of their study career, in others they are more advanced

As mentioned above, 21-year-old students will be used later in this and subsequent chapters to provide an age-neutral comparison by country, so it is interesting to look closer at this group regarding its make-up and the relative position of this group at different stages in the course of study. Figure 1.5 (top chart) shows that they constitute at least one fifth of the first year male student population in Finland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Sweden and Slovenia. With the exception of Bulgaria, 21-year-olds make up a much lower share of the total male student population in these countries. The difference is particularly pronounced in Finland (33% vs. 8%) and Germany (31% vs. 10%). The fact that 21-year-olds make up a much larger share of the first year population than they do of the total student population suggests that 21-year-old males are usually at the start of their study career in these countries (compare Figure 1.3). This is not the case for Bulgaria as a result of very divergent starting ages (cf. National Profile for Bulgaria).

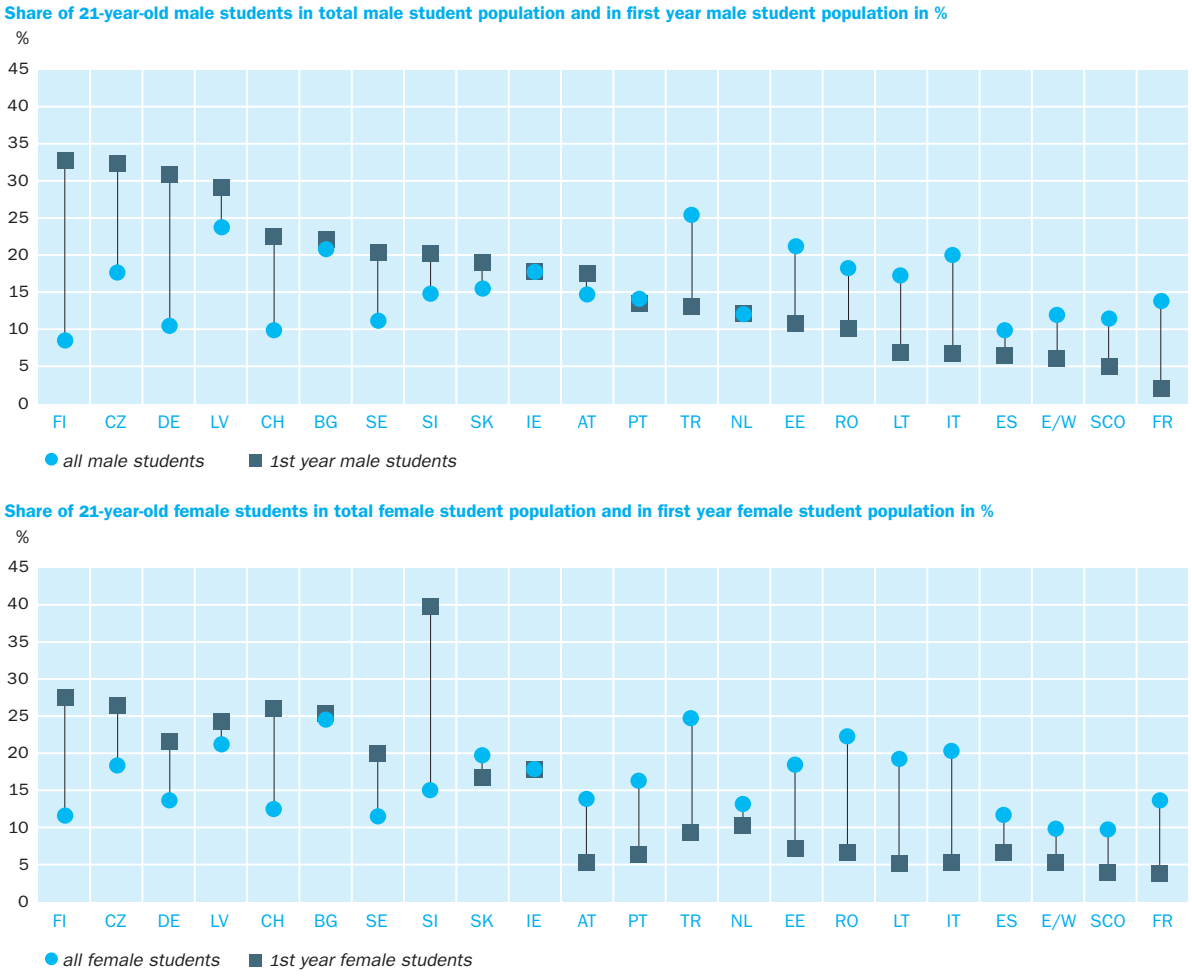
There is a second group consisting of Turkey, Estonia, Romania, Lithuania, Italy and France, where 21-year-olds are likely to be more advanced in their studies. This picture remains broadly the same in respect of female students (bottom chart).

The share of single students diverges widely between countries

The fact that students are in a stable relationship or married may affect the way they engage with their studies, how they live and their international mobility. It is, therefore,

Fig. 1.5

21-year-old students – Position in course of studies by gender



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1 & 3. No data NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age in years", 1.2 "Gender", 3.2 "For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?"

interesting to look at differences in students' family status in cross-country comparison.[1] The vast majority of students in each country are not married.

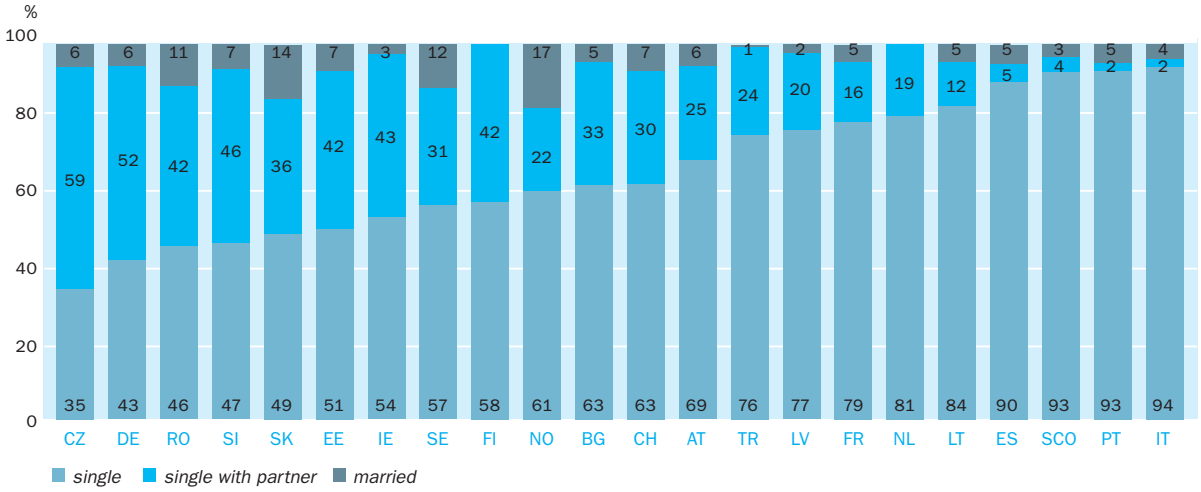
Figure 1.6 shows very large differences in the student bodies of different countries. In the Czech Republic, Germany, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia less than half of all students consider themselves to be single, i. e. not in a long-term relationship or married. On the other end of the scale, over 90% of the students in Spain, Portugal and Italy consider themselves single.

The simple hypothesis that this difference is related to the varying age profiles of the respective national student bodies seems disproved by Figure 1.7. It shows the share

1 Note that the reference group for Scotland is full-time students instead of all students (also compare Box 1.1). This also holds with regard to other figures reported by Scotland, e. g. the share of students with children, and has to be kept in mind when comparing data between countries. In addition, Scottish data on students' family status are restricted to Bachelor students and hence not comparable.

Fig. 1.6

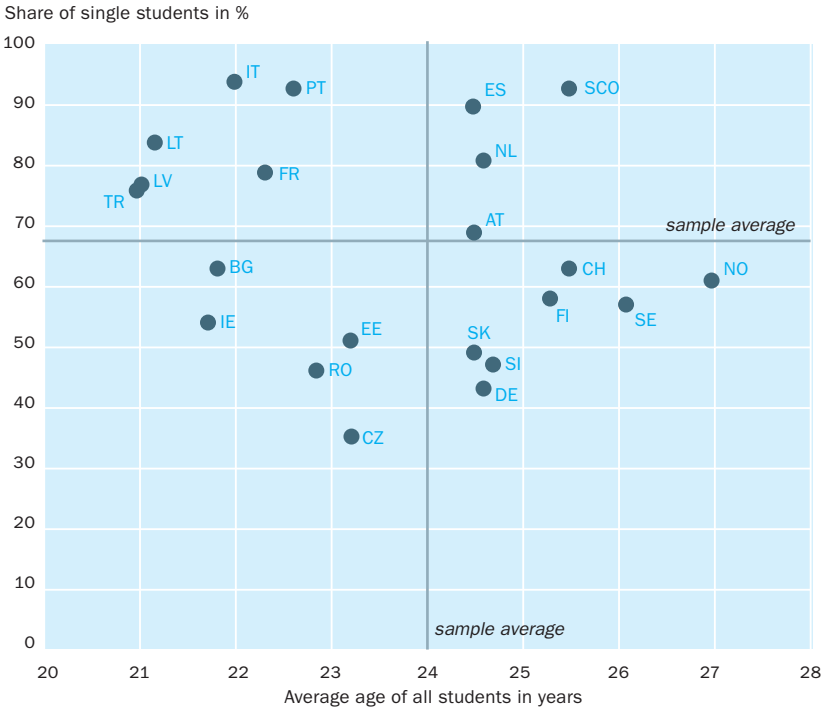
Students' relationships – Share of single students (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 4. No data: E/W
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.3 "Family status"
Note: The Dutch survey does not differentiate between the categories "single with partner" and "married"

Fig. 1.7

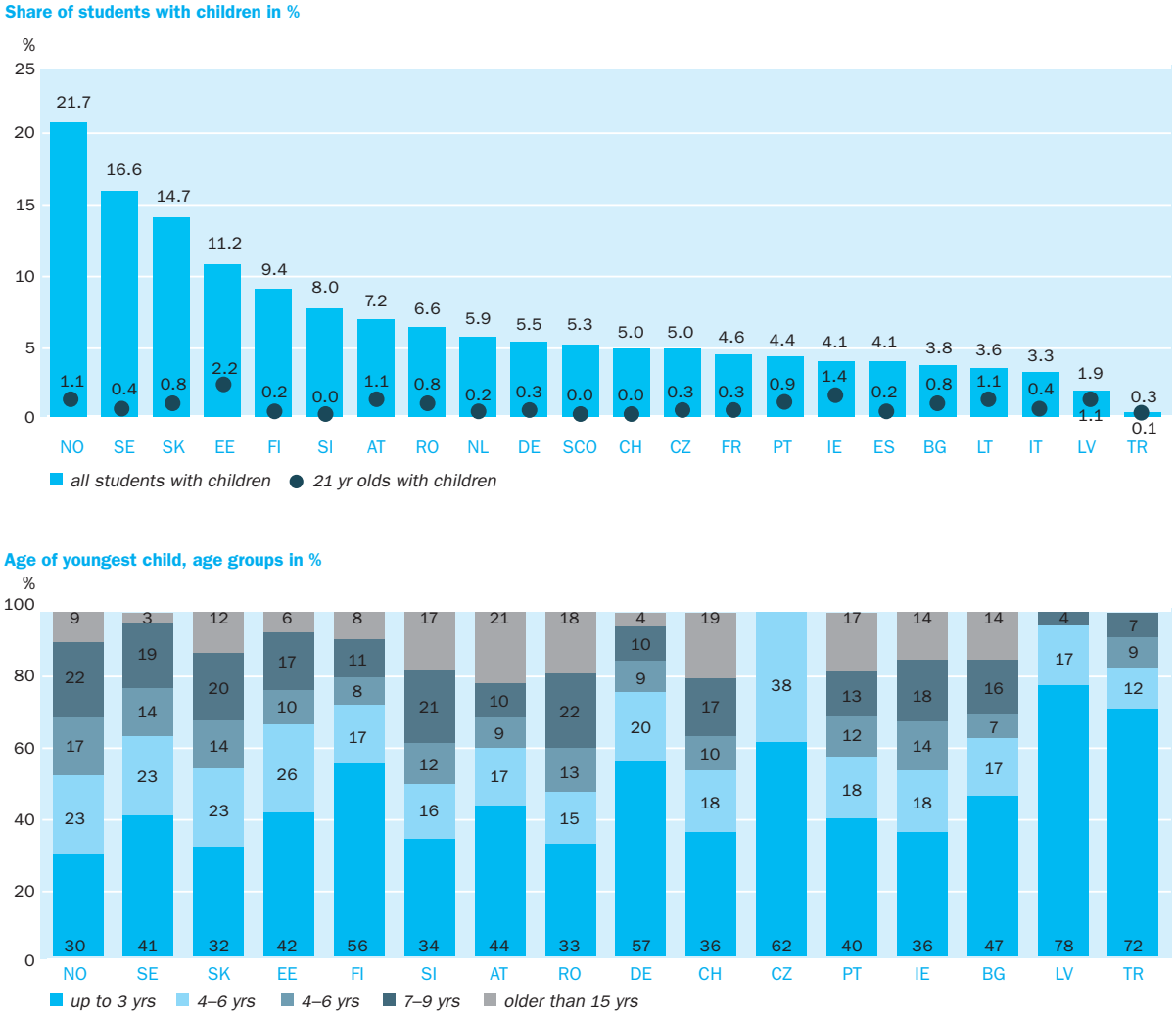
Students' relationships – Share of single students by average age of all students



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1 & 4. No data: E/W
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 1.3 "Family status"

Fig. 1.8

Share of students with dependents – Share of students with children and age of youngest child



Source: *Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 5. Top chart: no data E/W. Bottom chart: no data NL, SCO, FR, E/W, ES, LT, IT*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.4 "Number of children", "Age of youngest child, if any"

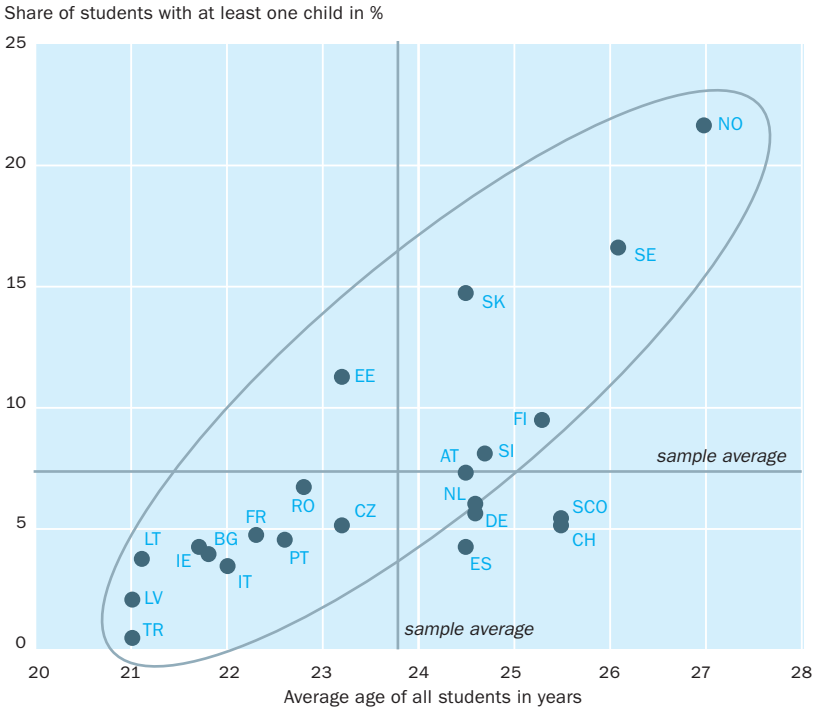
of single students against the average age of all students in each country. Amongst other factors, it is likely that the form of relationship that students ascribe to themselves and that they are willing to report in a survey is related to cultural expectations of independence and attachment, and participation in higher education itself may have an effect.

In most national systems less than one in ten students has a child

In most national systems less than one in ten students has a child. The share tends to be related to students' age. Students with children have to balance their studies with caring for their dependents. This is not an easy task, especially if the study structure is very strict and allows little flexibility in the modes of study (i. e. study periods of low and high intensity). Viewing having children as an obstacle to efficient study progression may be one reason why students postpone starting a family until after graduation.

Fig. 1.9

Share of students with dependents – Share of students with children and average age of total student population



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 1 & 5. No data: E/W
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 1.4 "Number of children, if any"

The fact that the same arguments can be made against having children at the start of a working career implies that these students would postpone having children until their late twenties or – in some countries – even until their late thirties. Indeed, Eurostat data shows that the average age of mothers at childbirth in the general population of EUROSTUDENT countries is 29 years (Eurostat data from 2006).

In order to enable students with children to complete their studies successfully while increasing participation rates in higher education, it is therefore necessary to make the university experience more "child-friendly".

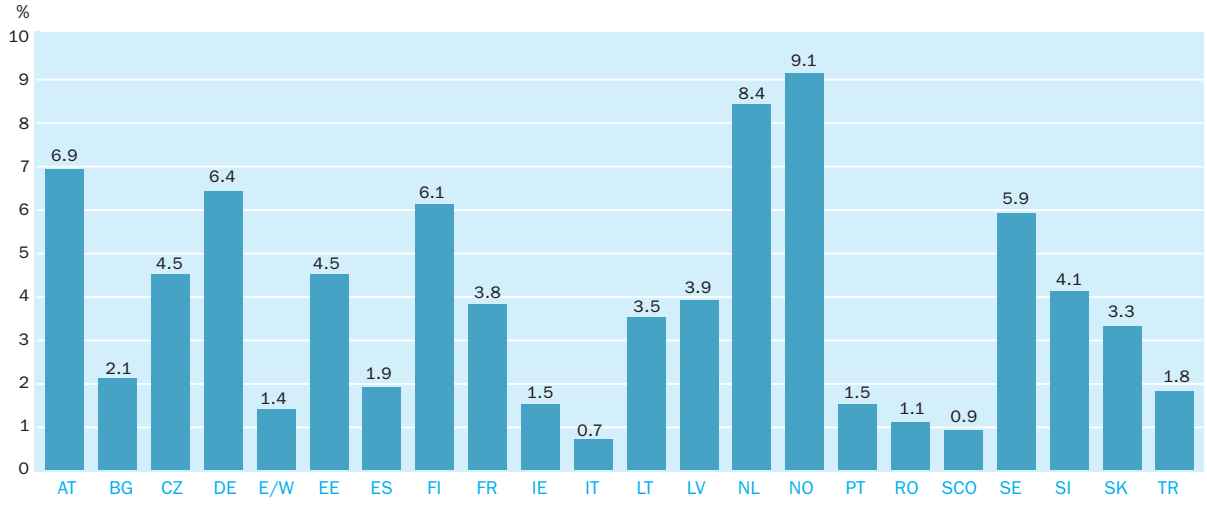
The data in Figure 1.8 show that only four countries have student bodies in which more than 10% of students have children – Norway, Sweden, Slovakia and Estonia. It is interesting to note that these are also countries in which the share of young children (up to 3 years old) is comparatively low (particularly for Norway and Slovakia).

This suggests that parents here also wait until their children reach an age after which they can be looked after at kindergarten or sent to school. Finland is a particular exception in terms of providing young parents with the opportunity to study: nearly one in ten Finnish students has at least one child and in over half of these cases, the youngest child is three years old or younger.[2]

2 In Finland parents who study full-time utilize municipal child care. In addition, it is possible that parents study part-time and look after their children themselves.

Fig. 1.10

Share of students whose physical disablement and chronic disease impairs their learning (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 6. No data CH
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.5 "Do you have any physical handicaps or chronic diseases that impair your studies?"

Figure 1.9 confirms for most countries that age is related to having children. It shows that the higher the average age of the student population, the more likely it is that students have children. This leads to the conclusion that recruiting older students (e. g. via non-traditional routes > *Chapter 2*) leads to a higher requirement for a "child-friendly" organisation of university studies.

Disability remains an obstacle to higher education, but it is difficult to find an internationally comparable method of measurement

In a study on the social dimension of higher education it is appropriate to include an indicator on the topic of disability. Prospective students should not be deterred from entering or completing their studies due to disabilities. The EUROSTUDENT dataset fulfils this expectation by collating data on students who feel impaired in their learning because of a disability. The indicator used focuses on self-reported physical disabilities as well as chronic diseases which impair students' studies (e. g. deaf/hard of hearing, blind/partially sighted, motoric difficulties ...); mental health problems and general learning difficulties are not included.

Although the results of this indicator are presented in Figure 1.10, no further attempt to analyse this data will be made. Discussions within the EUROSTUDENT Network have shown that comparability of the data is limited due to different traditions and divergent contextual factors – especially the way disability is defined in order for a student to receive particular state support. However, those countries which commented on their own national data in their respective National Profiles generally argue that increasing the share of disabled students remains a priority issue for policy (e. g. Bulgaria, Estonia and France).

Chapter 2:
Access to higher education and structural characteristics of higher education studies

Key findings

- On the basis of a narrow definition of non-traditional routes to higher education based on the accreditation of prior learning between 10% and 15% of students take this route in five countries – England/Wales, Scotland, Estonia, the Netherlands and Slovenia. In contrast, there are eight countries without any students who take this type of non-traditional route into higher education: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey.
- Work experience prior to entry into higher education is evident in all countries. Over 40% of the student body has this experience in Sweden, Finland and Spain. In all but two countries more students from lower education backgrounds have work experience than students whose parents attained a higher education degree.
- Through relating the ratio of students enrolled in Bachelor and Master programmes to those in special national (pre-Bologna) programmes it is possible to see how advanced the implementation of the Bologna two-cycle study structure is in each country. From this data Portugal, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Bulgaria appear well advanced in the process of Bologna implementation, while Austria, Slovenia and Germany seem less advanced. These advanced countries tend to have lower study durations across all programmes, although duration also varies by subject area.
- The share of students studying part-time either by status or by study intensity is high. In eight countries, the share of full-time students studying less than 21 hours a week (i. e. de facto part-time) is above 20%. The shares are particularly high in Estonia, Slovakia, Finland and Latvia.

Main issues

In this second section of the set of EUROSTUDENT indicators, the focus turns to the question of how students enter higher education systems. Therefore we ask which type of degree and which mode of study they choose. As in the first section, this section provides both background information on student profiles and a first insight into the effects of education policy.

Entry route

In the past, one of the functions of school education has been to prepare pupils with the founding knowledge necessary for the next level of education (propaedeutic function) and to afford a certain pre-selection of appropriate candidates through a final examination. This route to higher education through an academic examination at the close of secondary school might be seen as the traditional route. In many countries, evidence shows that secondary education systems have a tendency to reinforce social, cultural and economic differences between pupils, which might impair equal access to higher education. One way of counterpoising this effect is to introduce measures which provide prospective students with a "second chance" of entering higher education through a "non-traditional" route. Since these routes are national and embedded to some part in traditions, contextual information is necessary for a full assessment of the implementation of any policy initiatives.

The level of work experience prior to entering higher education may be seen as evidence of the life-course prior to studying or the character of higher education access. Therefore, depending on the circumstances, this might be the result of an individual strategy on the part of the student or due to national context factors. An example of the former is the attainment of vocational training as a personal strategy to secure job chances even before starting higher education studies. An example of the latter might be systemic capacity-restraining instruments, such as "numerus clausus", which then require an unsuccessful candidate to wait before renewing his/her application. A further example might be a flexible labour market, which enables students to "dip in" and "dip out" of higher education.

Type of degree studied

Despite the success of the Bologna Process and the established categories for classifying higher education courses by their orientation, length, entry and exit conditions, there remain large differences between countries as to what constitutes higher education. Within the EUROSTUDENT dataset we focus on the typical university degree, which is classified as ISCED 5A, since this provides the most even and established definition of a typical higher education course.

The Bologna Process has encouraged European higher education to adopt Bachelor and Master qualifications as standard certificates for higher education and all countries within the EUROSTUDENT dataset offer such courses. One of the arguments for this reform is international comparability, but another is to focus more on the teaching and learning aspects of higher education, by providing a transparent and flexible study structure. Currently, however, many countries are on a route to reform, away from their traditional structures to these Bologna structures. In particular, many countries contin-

ue to provide a certain share of students or indeed students in certain subject areas (e. g. law, medicine) with the traditional long courses. The data shown in this Synopsis Report describe the basic study framework within which students are progressing towards graduation and give an insight into the amount of years needed to complete a course. Both of these factors partially affect the average age of national students (> *Chapter 1*).

Thus, the data provide both a picture of the study framework and the situation in terms of structural reform. Of particular interest within this process is the role being played by Bachelor courses in making higher education more accessible for students who are disadvantaged by social background (> *Chapter 3*); although the data for the time being are of limited comparability.

Modus of study

Provision of higher education on a part-time basis is one way of facilitating a balance for students between their general living and their study conditions. Whilst a very large share of students opts for this mode of study in some countries, other countries currently do not offer this as a formal status. Therefore, a second approach to part-time studies looks at students' effective workload for study-related activities per week. If this is under 20 hours per week, it can be said that students are studying *de facto* part-time irrespective of their formal status.

It is also important to capture the share of part-time students for an assessment of some of the study conditions, such as how students fund their studies. It can be assumed, for instance, that part-time students are more often gainfully employed than their full-time counterparts (> *Chapter 7*).

Data and interpretation

There are many non-traditional routes into higher education, but no common definitions

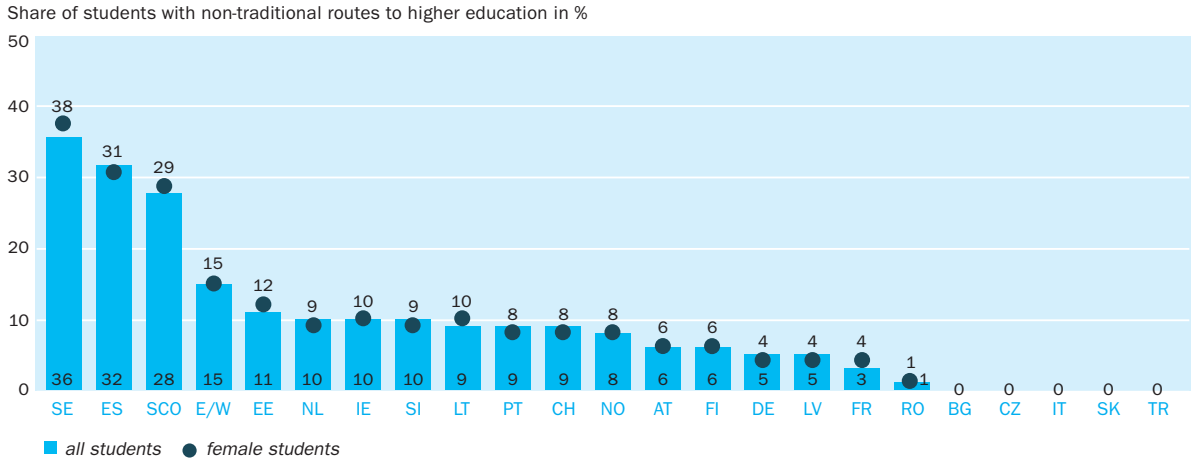
The EUROSTUDENT investigation of patterns for access to higher education focuses on the "non-traditional" routes to higher education.

- While the "traditional" admission to higher education is based on the upper secondary school certificate, EUROSTUDENT indicators analyse the non-traditional routes, i. e. the extent to which those students who have not graduated with the usual upper secondary final examination have benefited from "second-chance" opportunities to access higher education.
- While students usually proceed more or less directly after upper secondary education to higher education enrolment, there is a proportion of students who go – for whatever reason – through some kind of work experience before they enrol at higher education institutions. Or, instead of having attended general upper secondary education, a certain share of students participate in vocational education programmes and with this qualification might work before seizing a "second chance" to enrol in higher education.

"Non-traditional" access patterns are often the focus for higher education policy, when widening access to higher education is on the policy agenda. That is why EUROSTU-

Fig. 2.1

Share of all students with non-traditional routes to higher education (in %) – National definitions



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 7
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.1 "What was your route to higher education entry?", 1.2 "Gender"

DENT has made an effort to shed some light on the relevant international comparative data. While work experience before studying will be the topic of the next section, this first section will deal with "second-chance" access to higher education.

In the third round of EUROSTUDENT countries were asked to define what "non-traditional" means in their context and to report the proportion of students with non-traditional access routes accordingly. This makes sense, as traditions are country-specific, and thus to decide what deviates from the tradition is based on what is deemed to be the tradition in the respective country. The result of this data delivery is shown in Figure 2.1. All countries are included in the chart, even if their proportion of non-traditional students is zero, i. e. they do not have non-traditional routes.

The chart also shows the difference between all students and female students, which the data show to be only slight. There are only eight countries, where more female students have chosen non-traditional access routes than males: Sweden, Scotland, England/Wales, Estonia, Ireland, Norway, Lithuania, and France.

The median percentage of students with non-traditional access is 8.4% (Norway/Switzerland). On both sides there are noteworthy outliers: Sweden (36%), Spain (32%) and Scotland (28%)[1] have about four times more students, who utilise non-traditional routes, than the "median" country, whereas the Czech Republic, Italy, the Slovak Republic, Bulgaria and Turkey report not to have any non-traditional routes to higher education at all.

1 *Note that non-traditional routes in Scotland include entry to university (at ISCED 5A level) via "Higher National Diploma" or "Certificate". These ISCED 5B level qualifications are typically obtained in further education colleges, and some universities recognise them for entry straight into the second or third year of a degree course.*

Information from the National Profiles is useful for finding a common definition of "non-traditional route" across all EUROSTUDENT countries. By comparing the profiles of some selected countries it is possible to distinguish different types of non-traditional access routes to higher education:

- *Vocationally-oriented upper secondary certificates:* Sweden is an example of a country, where holders of vocationally-oriented upper secondary certificates (9% of all students) are considered to be students who took a non-traditional route to higher education. In Austria, by contrast, 36% of higher education students have attended vocationally-oriented secondary education, but they are regarded traditional students, because they are holders of an upper secondary certificate. And in Bulgaria, which reports to have no non-traditional students at all, more than three-quarters of all students (78%), hold a certificate from specialised or vocational upper secondary education.
- *Upper secondary certificate through attending adult secondary education:* In Sweden, students holding this kind of certificate are entitled to enrol in higher education, but the path to achieving higher education access is considered non-traditional. Similarly, starting a higher education programme after having obtained upper secondary degrees through adult education is regarded as taking a non-traditional route in Germany. By contrast, in Switzerland graduation from adult upper secondary education is defined a traditional route to higher education. Accordingly, students who take this route in Switzerland are not included in the non-traditional category in the country's own definition.
- *Validation of work experience or validation of real competencies:* Students who neither hold general upper secondary certificates from school nor from adult education can take a non-traditional route to higher education through validation of prior work experience or competencies.

Obviously, national definitions and conventions regarding non-traditional pathways to higher education vary substantially. In order to obtain a classification which matches the diverse national concepts we decided to use a narrow definition, which was constructed after central data collection.

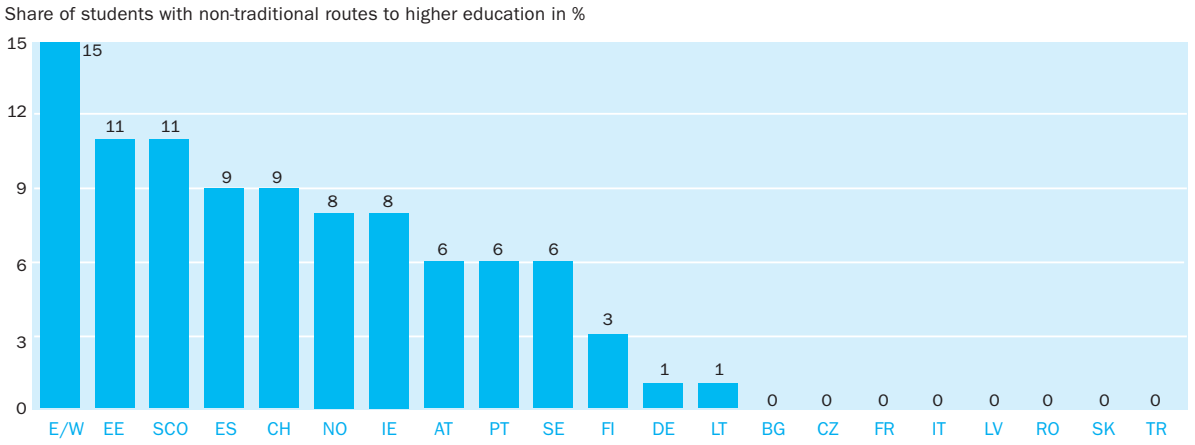
- *Narrow definition of non-traditional routes to higher education:* Access to higher education through the validation of prior learning and work experience – with or without a higher education entrance examination.

While Figure 2.1 displays data according to what the participating countries have defined as non-traditional, Figure 2.2 is based on the narrow definition. That figure should be interpreted with some cautiousness, as it is an attempt to transform the available data and information, which might, however, not have been complete or misinterpreted while being transformed.

Applying the narrow definition of non-traditional routes to the data leads to a somewhat different ranking of countries as the one depicted in Figure 2.1, in particular with regard to outliers with very high proportions of non-traditional students (Fig. 2.2). The size of the German non-traditional student population is only one fifth of Germany's own count, as in Figure 2.1. The Finnish proportion of non-traditional students is lower because the Finnish data contains graduates of vocationally-oriented upper secondary education, which do not count as non-traditional in the narrow definition.

Fig. 2.2

Share of all students with non-traditional routes to higher education (in %) – Narrow definition



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 7. No data NL, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.1 "What was your route to higher education entry?"

There is also considerable deviation between the share of non-traditional students as reported by Scotland (Fig. 2.1) and the proportion according to the narrow definition. That is probably due to students who access academic higher education by obtaining tertiary level vocational qualifications (ISCED 5B > National Profile for details). In Scotland, these are considered non-traditional students.

On the basis of the narrow definition, we can conclude that between around 10% and 15% of students utilises non-traditional routes into higher education in five countries: England/Wales, Scotland, Estonia, Spain and Switzerland.

Weak connection between the net participation rate and the share of students entering higher education via non-traditional routes

Assuming that offering non-traditional routes into higher education might be one way of increasing higher education participation rates, Figure 2.3 cross-references the EUROSTUDENT data with OECD net entry rates. The figure suggests that there is only a weak link between the two policy strategies with some countries above the OECD average net participation rate with a share of students entering higher education via non-traditional routes of under 5% (Finland, Italy, Slovakia) and another group significantly above 5% (Sweden and Norway).

Clear link between the share of students entering higher education via non-traditional routes and the equity of a higher education system

Figure 2.4 shows a rather clear link between students' social background and the route they take into higher education. Here, social background is measured by fathers' education. Note that in the following chapters we will often refer to alternative concepts of social background, i. e. either to parental education (by also considering students' mothers' education) or to parents' occupational status (for more information on social background > *Chapter 3*).

In Figure 2.4 the share of students entering higher education via non-traditional routes is plotted against the *ratio* between the *share of students' fathers with low education* (among all students' fathers) and the *share of low-educated men aged 40–60 years* (among all men of that age group).

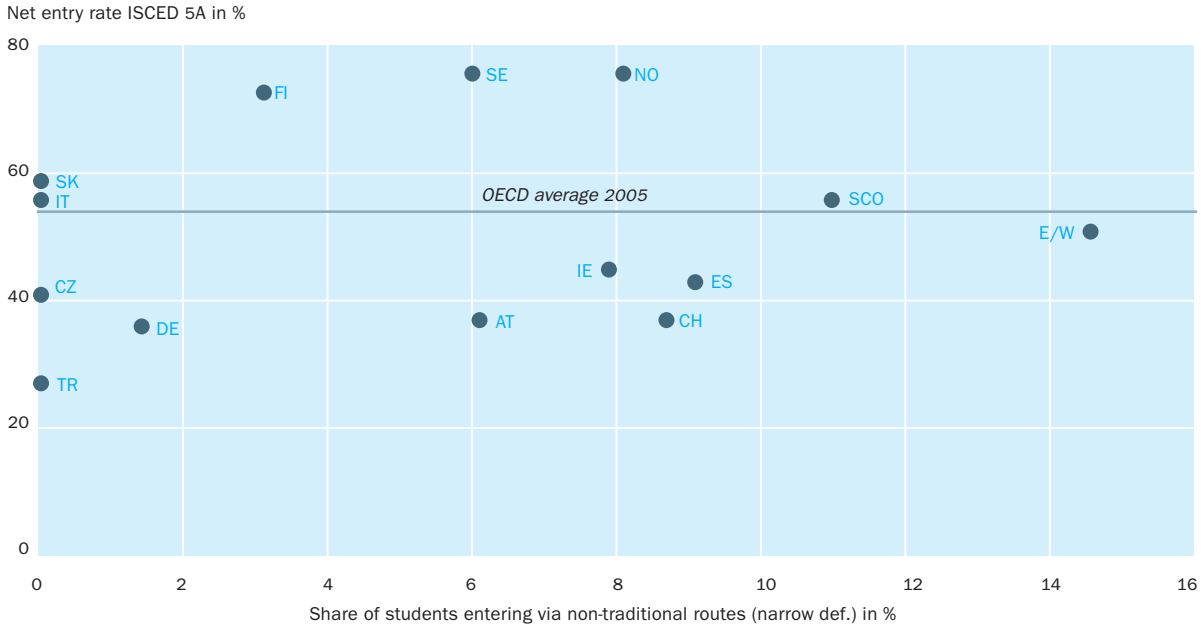
The ratio is displayed here, because it measures how adequately students from a low-educated background are represented in a country's higher education system. Thus, the indicator is more appropriate for international comparisons than, for instance, the share of students with low-educated fathers (> *Chapter 3* for a more detailed description).

As depicted in Figure 2.4, there is a tendency for the representation of students from a low-educated background in higher education to be more balanced in countries with a higher share of students who take a non-traditional route. That link is particularly evident in the juxtaposition of Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia and Germany with Spain and Switzerland.

The finding suggests that there may be a relationship between a country's degree of participative equity in higher education and the existence of non-traditional routes to higher education – though access through non-traditional routes is most probably not the only way to recruit students from a low-educated background. A more in-depth examination of the relationship between participative equity and non-traditional access routes to higher education within each EUROSTUDENT country can shed more light on this topic in the future.

Fig. 2.3

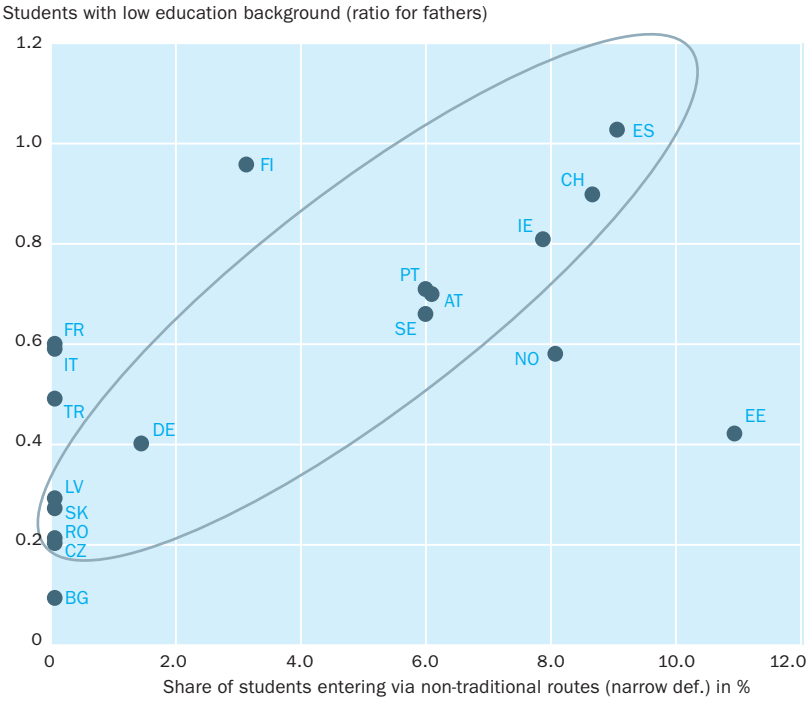
Non-traditional routes and net entry rates



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 7 & OECD EAG. SCO provided separate data for net entry rates compatible with OECD calculation. No data LV, PT, FR, EE, LT, RO, BG, SI, NL
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.1 "What was your route to higher education entry?"

Fig. 2.4

Non-traditional routes by fathers' education



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 7. No data E/W, LT, SCO, NL, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.1 "What was your route to higher education entry?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Work experience prior to entry into higher education is very common

It is remarkable that work experience prior to higher education studies plays an important role throughout the EUROSTUDENT countries – see Figure 2.5. In six countries (Sweden, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, Slovak Republic and Italy) between 39% and 56% (Sweden) of students have worked before enrolment in higher education. In another group of countries (Estonia, Austria, Ireland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania and Turkey) the percentage of students with prior work experience ranges from a quarter to one-tenth (Turkey). There are differences between male and female students in this respect. In Turkey and Finland the share of female students with work experience is clearly higher than the share for males. In Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Lithuania the opposite is the case: more men than women have work experience before entering higher education.

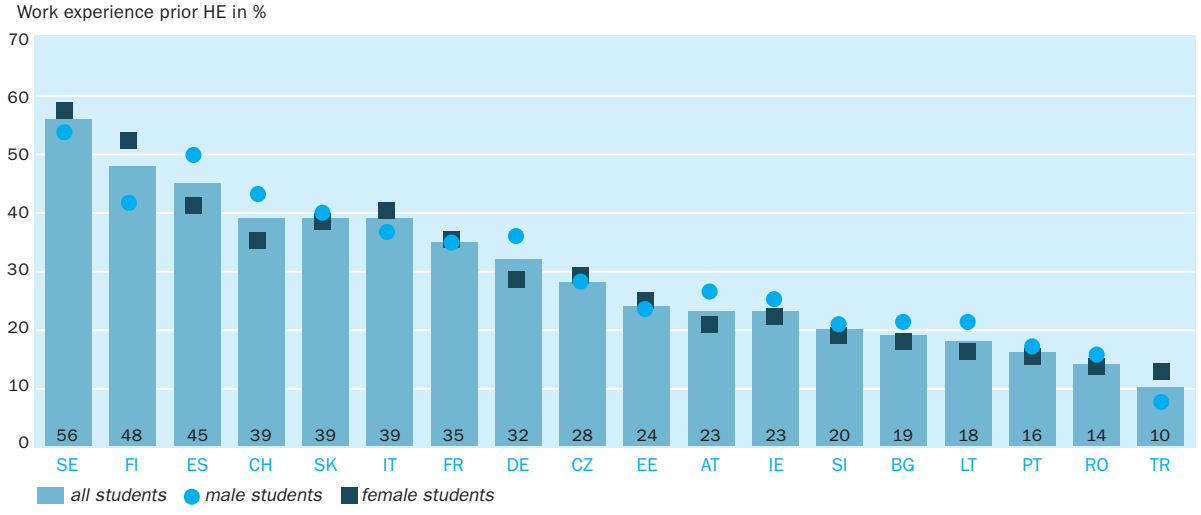
Work experience prior to studies in higher education institutions is only loosely related to non-traditional access to higher education. In only two cases does a high proportion of students with work experience correspond with a high proportion of students, who enter higher education via non-traditional routes (Sweden and Spain), and in only three cases does a low ratio of students with work experience have an equivalent in a low student number who entered higher education through non-traditional paths (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey). There are different types of work experience prior to higher education. Below, in order to understand to what extent work

experience may be related to non-traditional access, we will distinguish three typical pathways of entering higher education with work experience:

- *Higher education entry based on validation of work experience or validation of competencies:* One group of higher education students may have left school before upper secondary graduation. After having completed vocational training and having been employed in the labour market they are finally accepted for higher education based on the validation of their prior learning and work experience; or based on special entrance examinations designed for people without upper secondary education certificates. These students have prior work experience and can clearly be considered non-traditional students according to the narrow definition illustrated above.
- *Entitlement to higher education through adult upper secondary education:* There are some students who quit education before upper secondary examination and long before entering higher education. In the meantime, they have been through vocational education and entered the job market. While continuing employment, they accomplish adult courses for upper secondary education, which finally entitle them to enrol in higher education. Even though students who take this route to higher education have work experience, they are not considered non-traditional students according to the narrow definition.
- *Postponing entry despite qualification:* Some students may decide not to enrol in higher education immediately after upper secondary graduation despite their entitlement to do so. Instead they complete vocational education first, in order to secure their labour market perspectives, just in case they are not successful in their higher education studies. Students from a less advantaged social background may be particularly prone to postpone their studies for that reason. After having finished vocational training – possibly followed by a period of employment – students finally begin to study. In a number of countries, where vocational training is not only school-based, but also work-based, this kind of delayed access to higher education has never been

Fig. 2.5

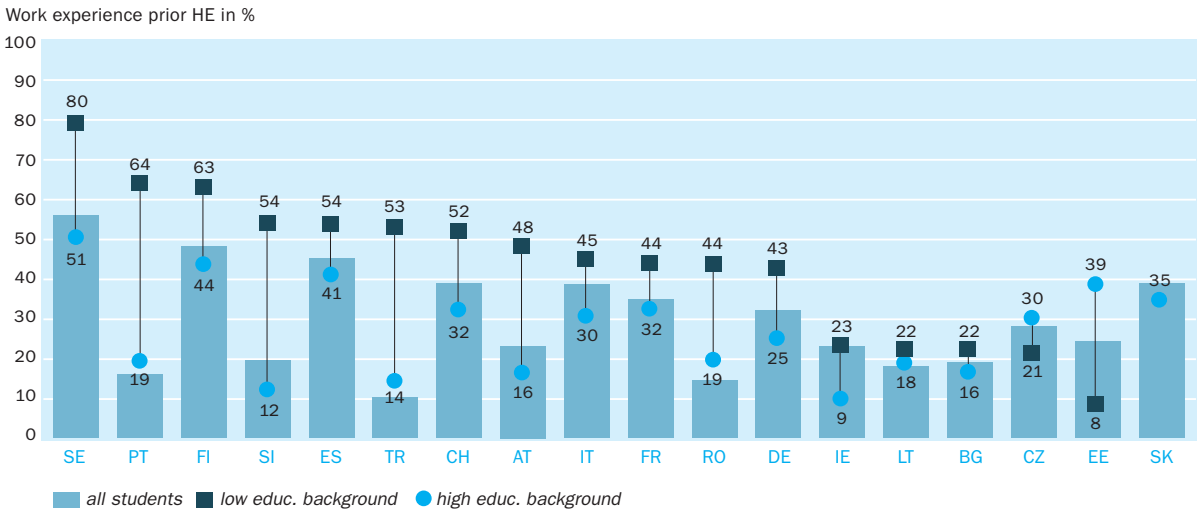
Work experience prior to higher education (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 8. No data E/W, LV, NL, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.2 "Before entering higher education, did you do vocational training or did you have a regular paid job?", 1.2 "Gender"

Fig. 2.6

Work experience prior to higher education entry by parents' education (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 8 & 9. No data E/W, LV, NL, NO, SCO; No data for low educ. background: SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 2.2 "Before entering higher education, did you do vocational training or did you have a regular paid job?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

regarded as non-traditional. Students enrol in higher education institutions based on their "traditional" upper secondary education certificate (even though it does deviate from the "tradition" of directly entering higher education after school).

The different ways of entering higher education with work experience clarify why there is only a loose link between countries' share of students with prior work experience and their share of students who took non-traditional routes to higher education: many students, who take traditional routes, have also taken the opportunity of getting some practical experience beforehand.

Clear link between work experience prior to entry to higher education and social background

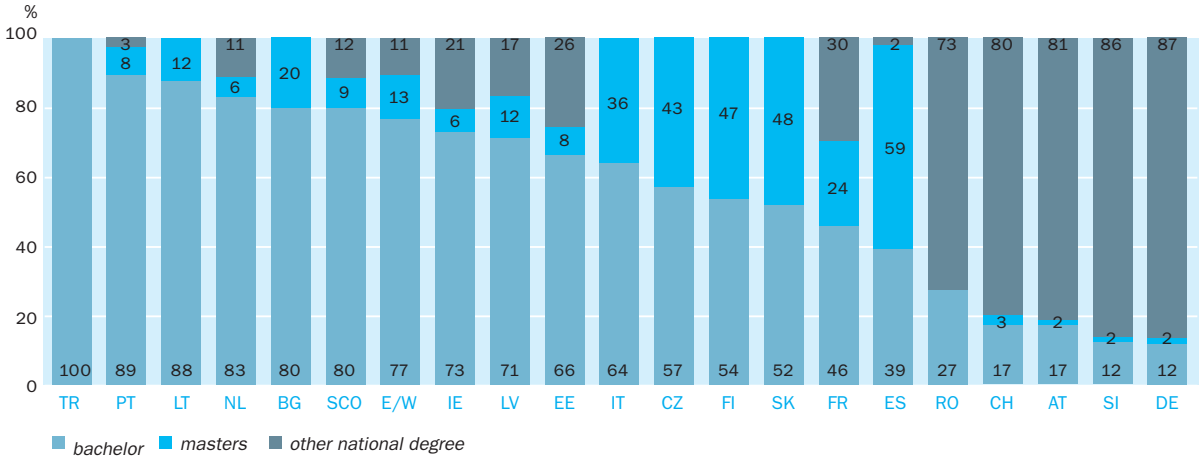
The link between work experience prior to higher education and students' social background (as measured by parental education) is striking. From the comparative data in Figure 2.6, it is clear that more students from lower educational backgrounds have work experience than those from higher educational backgrounds. There are only two exceptions, the Czech Republic and Estonia, for which no explanation is available, and where the proportion of students with work experience from low educational background is smaller than in the other countries.

The share of students studying according to the Bologna study structure reforms varies widely between countries

This section looks into the type of degrees which are being studied in the various higher education systems. According to the Bologna agreement two-cycle degrees, i. e. Bachelor and Master degrees, are distinguished from other national degrees. That third category includes national degrees that had existed before the implementation of the Bologna two-tier structures. These are, inter alia, long-duration equivalents of Master

Fig. 2.7

Degree being studied (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 10. No data NO, SE. Data for TR only cover Bachelor students.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.1 "Which qualification are you currently studying for?"

programmes and other alternative study programmes which do not correspond directly to the Bologna framework. In particular, these may include programmes, for which integration into the Bologna framework remains controversial (e. g. medicine, teacher education and law).

To a certain extent EUROSTUDENT data on degrees being studied should demonstrate how far the Bologna structure of study programmes has been implemented. One should keep in mind, however, that we are dealing here with a long and in many countries radical transformation process where "implementation" has two aspects. On the one hand, the implementation process could be declared as complete, when all programmes (maybe with the exception of the few above-mentioned ones) have been restructured, and no "old" programmes are offered for newly enrolling students. On the other hand, the process of implementation can be considered to be only then complete, when every single student is studying within a new programme structure. Thus a country might have been successful in restructuring more or all of the programmes, although many of this country's students remain enrolled in the old programmes, or a certain small proportion might be enrolled in Bachelor programmes, but none in Master programmes, etc. Figure 2.7 does not show the degree of achievement of restructuring according to Bologna, but the percentage of students who are enrolled in new and in old programmes.[2]

The Bologna Stocktaking Report 2007 also looked at the share of students enrolled in a two-cycle degree system in accordance with the Bologna principles.[3] In the report a traffic light scorecard system is applied, classifying the countries according to the advancement in the implementation process of the Bologna two-tier system. The scorecard system ranges from dark green (very advanced with regards to implementation) to yellow and orange for those countries not yet as advanced as the leading ones and

2 *Note that the data for Switzerland refers to spring 2005, when the Bologna reform was at the very beginning and only some fields of study had already introduced the Bachelor-Master programmes.*

3 *See: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/WGR2007/Stocktaking_report2007.pdf*

Box 2.1

First questions relating to the implementation of Bachelor courses

There are high expectations attached to the two-cycle degree system according to Bologna principles, and there are also some general questions and issues which should be scrutinized as soon as overall progress in implementation of this new study structure is sufficient:

- Does the new structure achieve the expected shorter overall study duration?
- Is the Bachelor degree accepted as a fully-fledged higher education degree in the European labour market?
- Does the new structure encourage more students from less advantaged social background to enrol in higher education due to the shorter study duration? (For first insights > *Chapter 3*)
- Does the Bachelor programme have "enough" academic characteristics or is it largely a vocational education programme?
- What is the effect of the new structure on international student mobility? (For first insights > *Chapter 8*)
- What does a Bachelor degree in humanities, teacher education or medicine mean with regards to employability?

to red for those countries which have not started the transformation process yet. The Stocktaking Report confirms more or less what EUROSTUDENT may present from its studies: Scotland, England/Wales and Ireland are among those countries in the dark green field, because they continue to "utilize" their traditional systems, which match the Bologna structures. Even "other national degrees" in these three countries are in accordance with Bologna, since these are post-graduate degree programmes equivalent to Master programmes. Also the Netherlands, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland and the Slovak Republic are coloured dark green in the Stocktaking Report, while Austria, Slovenia and Germany – in spite of the efforts undertaken in these countries – were assigned a yellow or even orange scorecard.

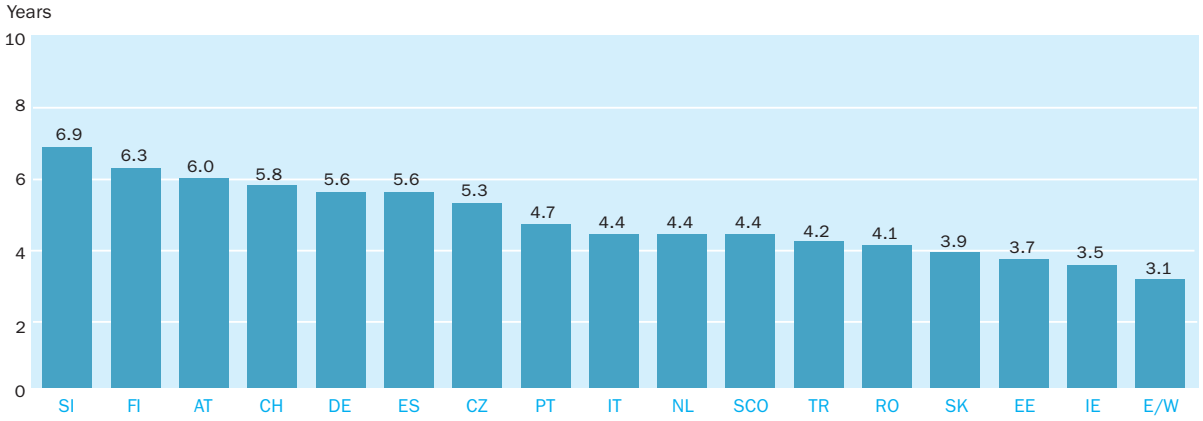
In most countries Bachelor and Master programmes, that are in accordance with the Bologna principles, are still in a transitional stage in terms of implementation. Thus we will leave the data presented in this section more or less uncommented and only use them to cross-reference other study framework conditions on a limited level. Eurostat data may facilitate future comparisons. Some preliminary questions which we view as most relevant for an assessment of the utility of this new structure within the framework of the social dimension have been formulated in Box 2.1.

The duration of study programmes varies in accordance with study structure, content and study intensity

In consideration of the fact that the implementation of new programmes is still at a preliminary stage, the data on duration of studies will be presented without a distinction between Bachelor programmes and Master programmes or between old and new programmes (see, however, National Profiles for country-specific information). Figure 2.8, which displays the duration of study programmes – and only refers to *university* programmes – shows that countries like Slovenia, Finland, Austria, Switzerland and

Fig. 2.8

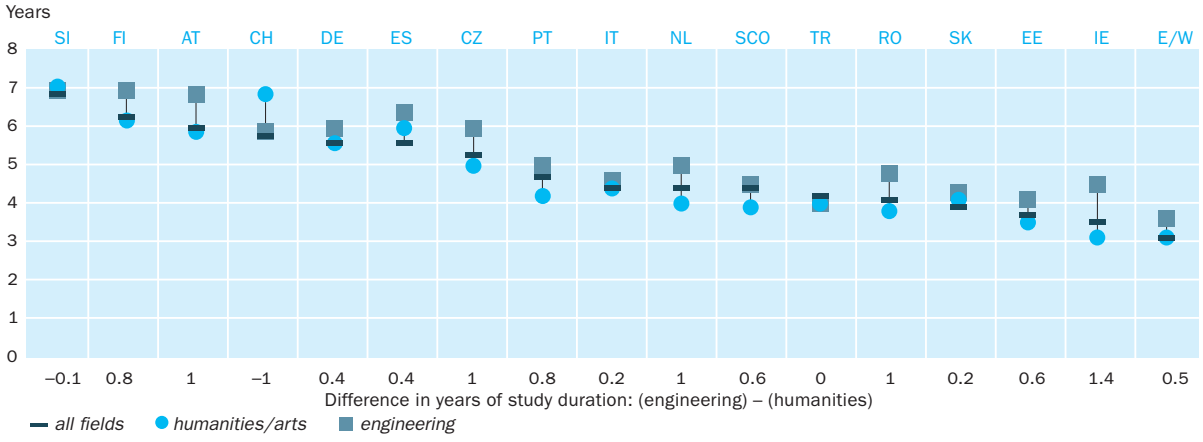
Duration of (all) study programmes at universities (in years)



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 12. No data BG, FR, LV, LT, NO, SE*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: [Data from national statistics]

Fig. 2.9

Duration of study programmes (all programmes) at universities, comparison of two major subject groups (in years)



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 12. No data BG, FR, LT, LV, NO, SE*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: [Data from national statistics]

Germany, which are at an earlier stage of implementation of the new two-cycle structure, are to be found at the upper end of average duration of studies, while countries in a more advanced stage of implementation are to be found at the lower end of length of studies, e. g. Ireland and England/Wales. This is, however, not surprising, as Bachelor programmes should indeed provide students with the opportunity to finish their studies and to enter the labour market after a shorter normal length of studies.

Altogether, we can identify eight countries with around 5 and more years of average study duration (Slovenia, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, Czech Republic and Portugal), seven countries with around 4 years of average duration of studies (Italy, the Netherlands, Scotland, Turkey, Romania, Slovak Republic and Estonia), and two countries with an average length of studies of about 3 years (Ireland, England/Wales).

By focusing on the average study duration across all fields, however, wide variations between subject areas are concealed. This is shown in Figure 2.9. In almost all countries engineering courses are longer than courses in humanities/arts by up to one year (Austria, Netherlands, Czech Republic and Romania). The two biggest deviations from this trend are to be found in Switzerland, where engineering courses are significantly shorter, and in Ireland, where they are significantly longer.

Such differences are usually related to real time taken to complete courses and not to differences in prescribed course duration. In the case of Switzerland, studies in engineering are more tightly structured than in humanities/arts. That has the consequence that students of humanities often use this flexibility to work in employment alongside their studies. Thus, the calculated duration of study for students in humanities/arts tends to be longer than for engineering.

Studying part-time is common among students in many countries – not only with an formal part-time status, but also as de-facto part-time students

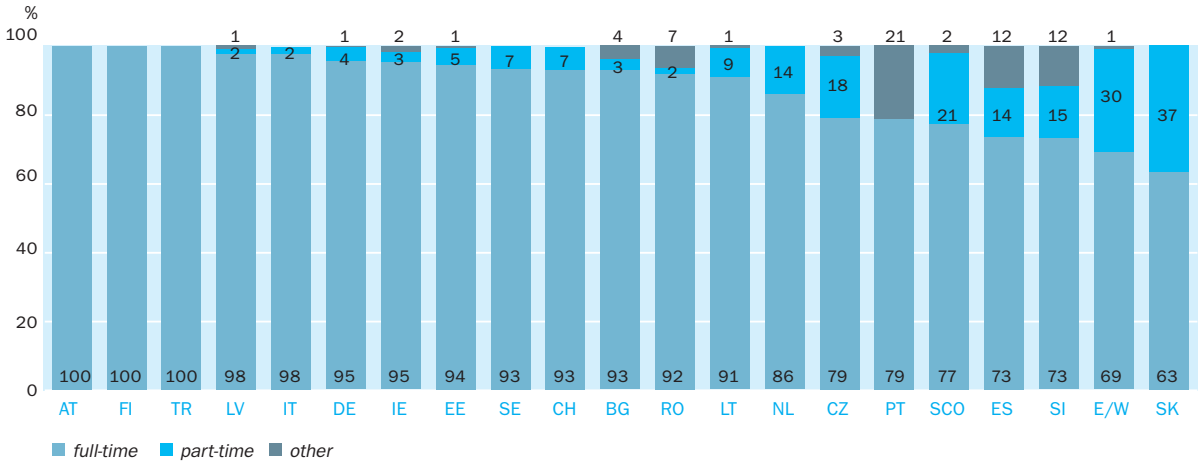
The analysis of modus of study is approached in two ways in EUROSTUDENT. In the first part of the analysis the formal status of students is considered and the focus is on whether students are matriculated with a full-time or part-time status (see Fig. 2.10). In the second part those students who spend more than 20 hours on study-related activities are defined as full-time students; other "full-time" students are considered to be de facto part-timers (see Fig. 2.11).

The proportion of students with formal part-time status is not very high in the EUROSTUDENT countries. Two main groups of countries can be identified (see Fig. 2.10). In one, close to ninety percent or more students have full-time status (Austria, Finland, Turkey, Latvia, Italy, Germany, Ireland, Estonia, Sweden, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Roma-

Fig. 2.10

Student status – Share of full-time and part-time students, all programmes (in %)

Ordered by share of full-time students



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 14. No data FR, NO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.3 "Which description best fits your current status as a student?"

Note: Columns do not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

Box 2.2

Various forms of "part-time studies"

Focusing on study status in international comparisons may conceal differences in modus of study and study intensity. It is possible to differentiate between at least four types of "part-time" studying:

- Students enrolled in distance education. These students usually work and spend only part of their time for higher education studies.
- Students attending evening courses and weekend courses at higher education institutions. These programmes are specifically designed for students who work, and therefore can only spend part of their time on their studies, mainly outside working hours. These courses are offered by higher education institutions in addition to the courses for full-time students, mainly on evenings and weekends.
- Students enrolled in "normal" programmes, but with an official part-time status. Usually this can be expected to "allow" students to take less than 100% of credits per year, compared with what is expected from full-time students. These students would attend "normal" courses, but as a result of dedicating only part of their time to studies, the time until graduation would be expected to take longer than for full-time students.
- Students who are enrolled as full-time students, but who actually spend only part of their time on study related activities.

In some countries one of the most significant differences is that part-time students, even if studying with the same intensity as full-time students, may have to pay higher tuition fees and/or receive less state support for their studies (e. g. in England/Wales, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic). Other countries (e. g. Germany, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic) have introduced special tuition fees for full-time students, who take considerably longer to graduate than the expected duration.

For those reasons, an attempt at a statistical definition of part-time students may be more useful for international comparisons. In the EUROSTUDENT dataset, full-time students who spend less than 21 hours a week on study-related activities are considered to be de facto part-time students – see Figure 2.11. This somewhat arbitrary concept is due to the difficulty of reconciling the diverse country-specific definitions. Moreover, by the specific method of data delivery (countries reported the numbers of hours spent for study-related activities by students in 10-hour-categories) the choice of certain cut-off-points – e. g. 25 hours – is rendered impossible.

nia, Lithuania and the Netherlands). Three countries report not to have any students with part-time status: Austria, Finland and Portugal. Besides these, a third group consists of countries with a proportion of full-time students ranging from about 60% to about 80% (Czech Republic, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Slovenia, England/Wales and Slovak Republic).

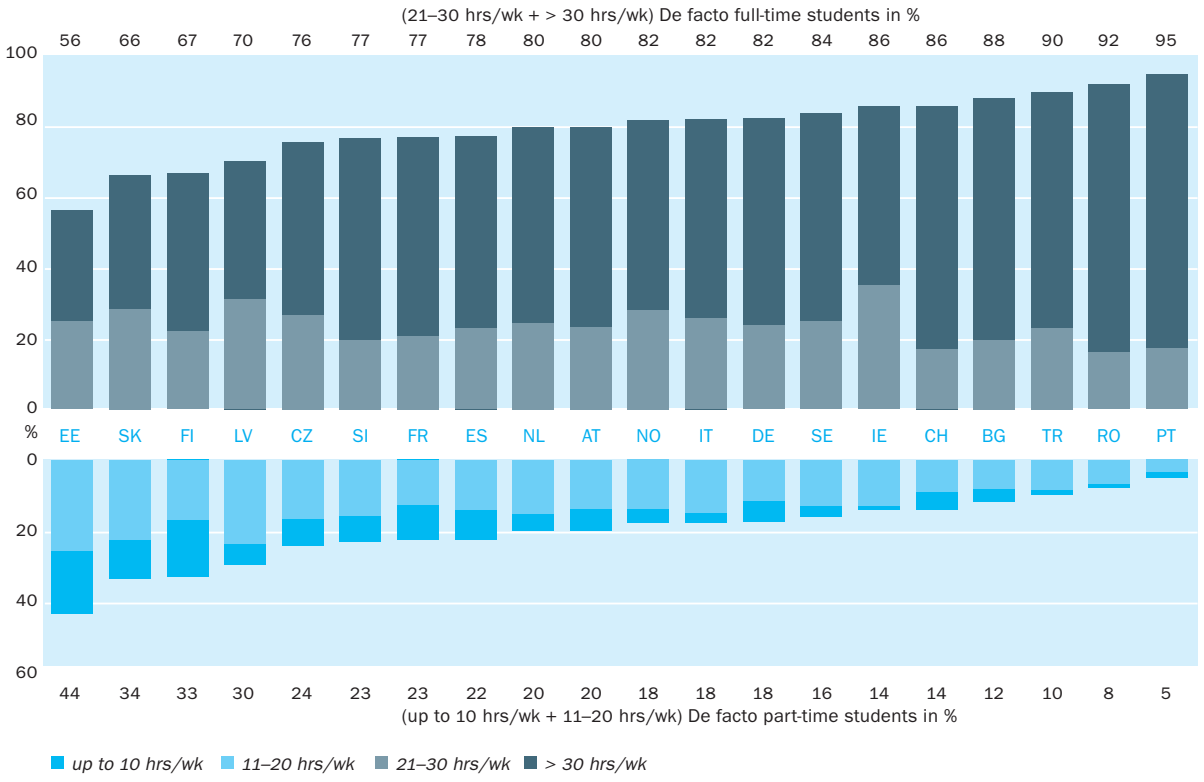
With around one-third England/Wales (30%) and the Slovak Republic (37%) have the biggest shares of students with a part-time status.

The data collection has shown that there is some ambivalence between countries as to what constitutes part-time students. This is a result of the variety of ways in which students may execute their studies and the different implications of study status (see Box 2.2).

Figure 2.11 shows how much time students spend on study-related activities. Those who spend not more than 20 hours per week for their higher education studies have been defined as de facto part-time students, those who spend more are considered full-time students. The data shows that whilst the share of students spending between 21 and 30 hours a week on study-related activities is very similar between countries, the share studying less than 21 hours is not. In three countries (Finland, Slovakia and Estonia) the share of students studying with full-time status, but de facto part-time, is between one-third and over 40%.

Fig. 2.11

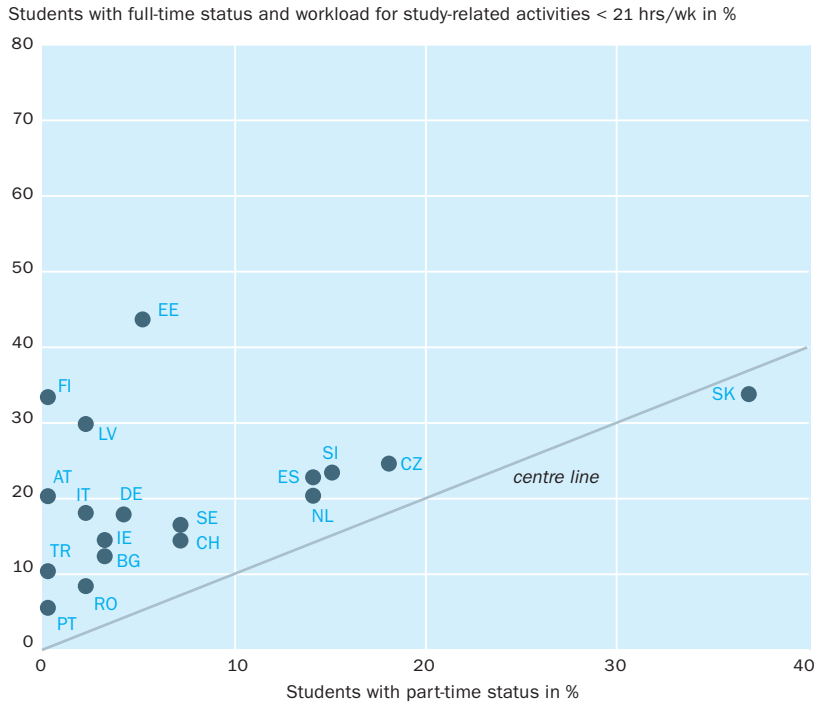
Students with full-time status by size of effective workload for study-related activities per week, all students



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 15. No data E/W, LT, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.3 "Which description best fits your current status as a student?", 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

Fig. 2.12

Part-time students according to status and according to effective workload for study-related activities



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 14 & 15. No data E/W, FR, LT, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.3 "Which description best fits your current status as a student?", 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

In Figure 2.12 both categories of part-time studies are related to each other and one might identify those countries where extending "official" part-time studies might be discussed, due to the phenomenon that they have a high proportion of de facto part-timers compared with a relatively low proportion of part-time students according to status, or even have no official part-time status.

Indeed the figure shows that there is only one country (Slovakia), where the share of part-timers outweighs the share of de facto part-timers considered to be studying full-time. This data gives rise to the issue of whether countries with a high share of de facto part-timers and low share of students with an official part-time status should consider encouraging more students to take on the official status (or – as in Finland – to introduce the status). With more programmes structured and credit-based in accordance with the Bologna agreement it might otherwise be difficult for "unofficial" part-timers to fulfil the requirements of their study programme. In many cases de facto part-time students are working alongside their studies to finance their student life and this flexibility is a condition for them to be able to study (> *Chapters 5, 6 and 7*).

Chapter 3:
Social make-up of the student body

Key findings

- **A snapshot of the current situation shows that an under-representation of low socio-economic groups prevails in all higher education systems. On both measures used here Scotland, the Netherlands and Finland appear to be the most open systems. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany and Estonia are the least open on both counts.**
- **In some countries the participation rate of students from a low-educated social background is relatively high – notably in the Netherlands, Finland, Spain, Switzerland and Ireland.**
- **Social selectivity within education systems is not simply a question of the systems' capacity. Comparing EUROSTUDENT countries we find the link between entry rates to higher education systems and social selectivity of students to be weak.**
- **A connection between structure of secondary schooling systems and entry to higher education is evident: a higher stratification of school systems appears to lead to a lower share of students from low socio-economic backgrounds in the respective higher education systems.**

Main issues

One of the main topics of higher education policy debates over the last few years has been the social make-up of the student population. Although this is not a new topic to policy debates, the improvement of social equity is now also seen to be a pre-requisite for competitiveness of labour markets in Europe. The quantitative demand for a highly skilled workforce can only be fulfilled in the long run, if countries recruit higher education students from all social strata. This chapter focuses on certain characteristics of students' parents in order to investigate how well the student population represents the general population or the extent to which higher education is socially selective, i. e. certain groups are over-represented or under-represented. The data presented here largely reflect policy initiatives to improve equity of higher education participation (so-called "participative equity").

The purpose of this chapter is to provide comparative data on the inclusiveness of various higher education systems. Under the assumption that intelligence is equally spread across the whole of society's strata the analysis will investigate whether all parts of society have an equal chance of entering higher education. That requires an explicit comparison between the social make-up of the student population and the general population in each country. The EUROSTUDENT dataset uses two proxy measures in order to obtain an insight into this situation: occupational status and highest educational attainment of students' parents. Since much of the data on student study conditions points to a social disadvantage related to the financial situation of students' parents, it would seem opportune to include comparative information on parental income in the assessment of equity. During the collation of data, countries were asked to include a question for students regarding their parents' income. This information is included in ten countries' National Profiles, but is not included here in the international comparison because of the difficulty in finding reliable comparative conventions for this issue. A further weakness concerning this data is whether students know enough about their parents' income levels to make a realistic and reliable assessment.

Occupational status of students' parents

The focal dimension here is the occupational status of students' parents in comparison to the whole population. The indicator focuses on parents with a so-called "blue-collar occupation", i. e. an occupational group which performs (skilled or unskilled) manual or technical labour. This group is chosen because of its relatively low chances of entering higher education. When possible, country data provides a more detailed breakdown of participation, since the blue-collar group is only one part – in some countries a rather small part – of the working population. Comparative figures for other status groups can be useful for a more comprehensive assessment of how open a higher education system is.

For a statistical description of the distribution of occupational status groups within a population we strove to use internationally comparable categories. National participants in EUROSTUDENT were asked to use, where possible, the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88), which is also applied by Eurostat and many other international statistics agencies (> *Box 3.1* for more information and an assessment of this scheme). However, due to different traditions concerning the definition

of groups who are "underprivileged" with regard to occupational status (especially for surveys), this classification could not be used in all countries. If countries were unable to adopt the ISCO-88 categories, they were asked to apply their own national definition of "blue-collar" to describe both the student population and the national population as a whole. Hence, the share of students defined as having parents with "blue-collar" status has only very limited value in international comparison. Therefore, we refer to another indicator for comparative purposes, namely the ratio between the share of students' fathers with blue-collar status (among all students' fathers) and the share of men aged 40–60 years with blue-collar status (among all men of that age group). The same indicator is also provided with reference to mothers. According to this indicator, a ratio of 1 indicates that the share of fathers with blue-collar status is the same among students' fathers as among all men aged 40 to 60 years (i. e. men, who might be fathers of potential students in the general population). Values below 1 indicate that the share of blue-collar workers among students' fathers is lower than it is in the general population of 40-to-60-year-old men. Comparisons of that ratio by country indicate how successful countries are at recruiting students from "underprivileged" groups as defined by the occupational status of their parents.

Highest educational attainment of students' parents

In international comparisons the educational attainment of students' parents is often viewed as an indicator for the impact of socio-cultural and economic factors on access to higher education. Using parents' educational background instead of their occupational status as an indicator of students' social background has the advantage of a greater reliability in international comparisons, due to the availability of an international coding scheme. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is accepted across most countries as an appropriate way of classifying different levels of educational attainment. Furthermore, using an educational indicator is thematically appropriate, since it can be assumed that parents' educational experiences and aspirations are passed on to their children's generation. In an in-depth national study, it has been shown that this indicator has considerable explanatory value for participation in higher education (cf. Isserstedt et al. 2007).[1]

As mentioned above, students' socio-economic background is examined by both fathers' and mothers' occupational status. Likewise, both parents' education is considered to determine students' educational background. In a few sections, despite the existence of data for both fathers and mothers, a particular focus is placed on fathers' educational attainment. That way of presenting the data rests on the common – though not uncontroversial – assumption that a family's socio-economic and social status is best reflected by the occupational status and educational attainment of the father. However, where educational background is used as a distinguishing characteristic of students in subsequent chapters the educational background of a student refers to the parent whose educational attainment is highest. Applying this method, instead of focusing solely on fathers, is also advantageous with regard to children of single mothers.

The analysis of students' educational background is focused on two groups, which represent two extremes on a social scale. On the one hand, the share of students whose

1 *Isserstedt, W. / Middendorff, E. / Fabian, G. / Wolter, A. (2007): Economic and Social Conditions of Student Life in the Federal Republic of Germany in 2006. See also: http://www.sozialerhebung.de/english.html.*

parents graduated from tertiary education (ISCED 5 and 6)[2] is analysed to assess the extent of social reproduction in a higher education system. On the other hand, the share of students whose parents have only completed lower secondary school (ISCED 0–2) is analysed to assess social disadvantage. As with occupational status, a comparison of social disadvantage across countries is calculated using a ratio of the share of low-educated parents among all students' parents and the share of low-educated adults aged 40 to 60 years among all adults of this age group.

The social make-up of a student body is influenced by social "filtering" which precedes entry into higher education. Thus it is a function of the organisation of secondary schooling, entry routes into higher education, the size of the higher education system, the perceived costs of higher education and the existence of alternative routes into the labour market. The OECD PISA study has shown that performance at school is influenced by pupils' socio-economic background in most countries. Therefore, for countries in which this is true, access systems based on a specific school qualification tend to be socially biased to a certain degree. The only way to limit this effect is to reform school systems or to provide alternative routes into higher education, which do not rely on this singular qualification. The extent to which social selectivity is or is not related to the capacity of a higher education system, i. e. its net entry rate, will also be addressed in this chapter. Essentially, the net entry rate to higher education reflects the share of individuals of a certain age range, who enter higher education (here: ISCED 5A).[3] Thus the net entry rate indicates the degree of openness of a higher education system. A high rate suggests that an educational system is relatively open, whereas a very low rate means that only a small proportion of society has access to higher education. In this chapter we will juxtapose net entry rates and the representation of groups from low-educated social background within higher education systems. Thus we try to shed light on the question of whether systems with a high capacity tend to be more socially inclusive than systems with a low capacity.

In contrast to secondary schooling, entry into higher education not only requires appropriate qualifications. It also depends on prospective students' decisions to participate, which – among other considerations – is made on the basis of assessing the costs and benefits of higher education in comparison to other routes to the labour market. For many students the decision to enter higher education is probably also influenced by their parents' considerations.

In view of the multifarious factors which may affect a country's ultimate success at providing an inclusive education system this chapter will largely concentrate on defin-

2 Note that in some countries this group might include a certain proportion of parents who obtained ISCED 5B level educational qualifications. ISCED 5B qualifications are usually obtained through tertiary (advanced) vocational education programmes, which are considered to be more practically oriented than ISCED 5A qualifications and in a position between ISCED level 3 and ISCED level 5A. ISCED 5B programmes do not require higher education entrance qualifications, but can be started on the basis of ISCED 3B vocational qualifications in combination with work experience. Due to the more advanced character of ISCED 5B qualifications in comparison to basic vocational qualifications, parents with this level of education are grouped together with those who attained higher education (ISCED 5A and 6) in this report. In general, "higher education" refers to ISCED level 5A and 6, whilst "tertiary education" refers to ISCED levels 5A, 5B and 6 – although these terms are often used synonymously. For a discussion of this issue in international comparative research see Schneider, S. (2008): The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97). An Evaluation of Content and Criterion Validity for 15 European Countries. Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung (MZES): Mannheim.

3 The net entry rate is a synthetic measure, which results from combining several age-specific entry rates. For a more detailed definition also compare glossary in: OECD (2007): Education at a Glance. Paris: OECD. (Also see http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/7/35325710.pdf).

ing the comparative position of different countries. Cross-references between EUROSTUDENT and OECD or Eurostat data will be used to provide some insights into the effects of selective schooling and participation rates. Furthermore, the data presented here describe only a snapshot at a point in time and cannot take account of changes over time, which may have been substantial. The causes for differences and developments over time are much better investigated through in-depth surveys that use case studies in order to encapsulate all the relevant context information.

It should be noted that entry into higher education is only one dimension of participative equity. The conditions during a student's period of study should also be conducive to successful studying irrespective of a student's social background. From this perspective, improvements in the inclusiveness of higher education entry may lead to new challenges for improving study conditions (in particular > *Chapter 5*).

Data and interpretation

Students with a blue-collar background continue to be under-represented in higher education

The data in Figure 3.1 show firstly the share of students' fathers who have (or had) a job with blue-collar occupational status (top chart). This can then be compared to the share of men in an assumed corresponding age group (40–60 yr olds) in the national population. The proportions differ considerably between the countries: In 11 countries over 50% of working[4] males aged 40 to 60 years execute (highly skilled or low skilled) blue-collar jobs (see also Box 3.1). In Bulgaria and Romania, indeed, over 70% are classified as such. In the Netherlands, Germany and Austria the size of this group is well below 40% (albeit Austria and Germany use national specific definitions for blue-collar occupations).

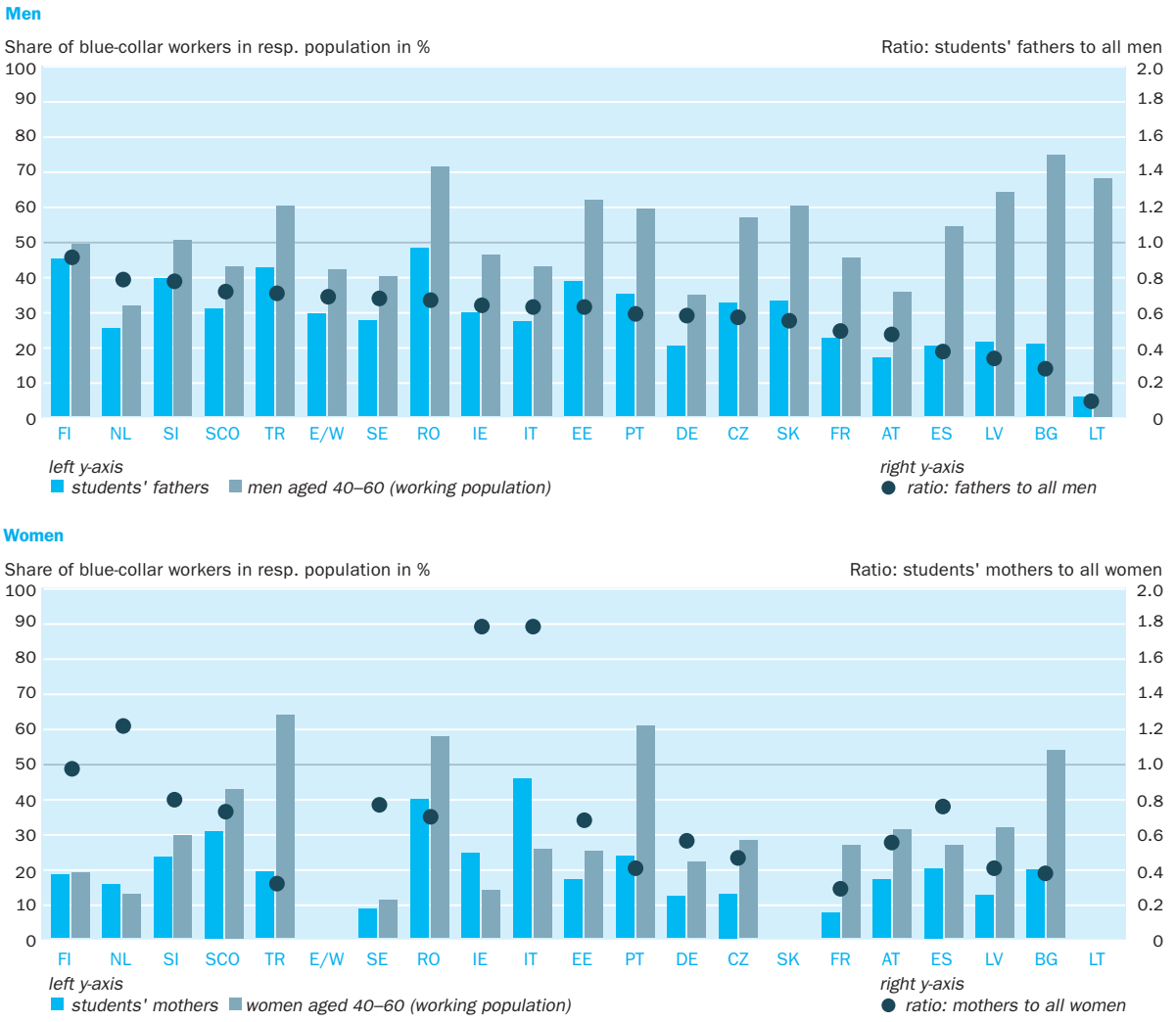
On the right-hand side of the y-axis the ratio of the shares of blue-collar workers between students' fathers and all men in the 40-to-60-year-old working population is shown. Finland, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Scotland have relatively high ratios on this measure. For Scotland, for instance, the ratio is 0.72. This means that, on average, for 100 male blue-collar workers in the 40-to-60-year-old working population there are 72 fathers of students with a blue-collar status. In contrast, the ratios for France, Austria, Spain, Latvia, Bulgaria and Lithuania are all below 0.5. That is to say that on this measure these countries appear to be the most socially selective because the share of students with this background is only half as high as would be expected in reference to the total population.

In total, and despite differences between countries, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as measured by their fathers' occupational status, are under-represented in higher education in each country. In Finland the share of students (children) whose fathers have blue-collar occupations comes closest to a perfect representation.

4 *Here, the term "working population" is a used as a synonym for "persons in employment", as defined by Eurostat with regard to the EU Labour Force Survey. Note that according to Eurostat persons in employment are those "... who during the reference week did any work for pay or profit ...". Hence, the group also includes self-employed persons (unless they do not meet certain criteria). For more detailed information see Eurostat website: http://circa.europa.eu/irc/dsis/employment/info/data/eu_lfs/LFS_MAIN/LFS/LFS_CONCEPTS_and_DEFINITIONS.htm*

Fig. 3.1

Respective share and ratio of students' parents with blue-collar occupational status compared to the general population



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 17 & 18. No data CH, NO. Bottom chart no data: E/W, LT, SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 6.3 "What are the most recent or former occupations of your father and mother?"
Notes: "blue-collar" is defined using the ISCO-88 categories 6, 7, 8 and 9. The following countries have used national specific definitions of "blue-collar": AT, DE, E/W, SCO. Data for E/W relates to main income earner. No data for this topic CH, NO.

Data is also presented here with regard to students' mothers' occupational status (bottom chart). However, there is no unique pattern concerning the representation of students whose mothers have blue-collar status. Whereas – similar to the findings reported above – in most countries the share of students' mothers with that status is lower than the share among 40-to-60-year-old women, there is an over-representation of mothers with blue-collar jobs among students in Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands. Nevertheless, this finding needs to be interpreted with cautiousness, because fathers' occupational status may be closer related to the socio-economic status of the family than mothers' status (> introductory notes at the beginning of this chapter). Since we lack information on family composition, we will refrain from further interpretations.

Box 3.1

The use of international categories to capture "blue-collar" workers

The International Standard Classification of Occupations was developed in the 1950s to facilitate international comparisons of labour market structure and has been used widely to analyse social strata. The current coding was revised in 1988 and a further revision will lead to a slightly altered coding in 2008. ISCO-88 organises occupations in an hierarchical framework.

The unit of classification at the lowest level– a job – is defined as a set of tasks or duties designed to be executed by one person. Jobs are grouped into occupations according to the degree of similarity in their constituent tasks and duties. Although each job may be distinct in terms of the output required from the person who executes the constituent tasks, the jobs are judged to be sufficiently similar in terms of the abilities required as inputs into these tasks for them to be regarded as a single occupational unit for statistical purposes. A key concept then is the skill level required to fulfil certain tasks. On the top level there are ten occupational groups, which may be grouped for general purposes into "white-collar" and "blue-collar" occupations – see table below.

ISCO-88 Basic occupational groups	Eurostat hierarchy	EUROSTUDENT III
1: legislators, senior professionals 2: professionals 3: technicians and associate professionals	Highly skilled white-collar	(not applicable)
4: clerks 5: service workers and shop and market sales workers	Low skilled white-collar	
6: skilled agriculture and fishery workers 7: craft and related trades workers	Highly skilled blue-collar	Blue-collar
8: plant and machine operators and assemblers 9: elementary occupations	Low skilled blue-collar	
0: military	(not applicable)	(not applicable)

For the purposes of the EUROSTUDENT study, national contributors were asked to use this classification system for their national surveys. In each case, the national survey should contextualise the ten occupational categories, by giving students examples of occupations in their own country. The main focus of the comparison between countries – blue-collar workers – was defined widely to include both highly skilled and low skilled blue-collar workers.

In discussions within the EUROSTUDENT Network there was a general acceptance of this categorisation scheme. However, as in other international studies intent on using this scheme to reflect social strata, a number of critical issues have been raised which limit the value of the statistical picture drawn by it. The first is whether students are able to classify their parents' occupations in such abstract terms (e. g. craft and related trades workers vs. elementary occupations). For this reason, the Higher Education Information System (HIS) – for instance – is considering introducing an open question on parents' occupations into its national survey for Germany. The responses would then be largely electronically analysed and categorised in order to minimise this type of respondent error. The second is whether such a complex list is really necessary. The categories on the right of the table above would suffice for the objectives of EUROSTUDENT and indeed would be more purposeful. In comparison,

capturing and using parents' educational attainment is much easier and more reliable for international comparability. For the next round of EUROSTUDENT it would be appropriate to follow discussions in this area concerning other approaches to capturing parents' socio-economic situation.

The countries which did not use the ISCO-88 coding to provide data on the occupational status of students' parents were: Austria, Germany, England/Wales and Scotland.

In some countries the disadvantage of a low education background has been minimised although inequality prevails in general

In this section we turn to educational attainment of students' parents (here: students' fathers)[5] as an alternative proxy for social background. In contrast to occupational status, there is a general agreement on the most appropriate categories within this field between countries and international actors and therefore the international comparison is more reliable. In the subsequent chapters, as explained in more detail above, we will look at students' background as established by both their mothers' and fathers' educational attainment instead of focusing on fathers.

The charts in Figure 3.2 show the calculated ratios based on a comparison between the highest educational attainment of students' fathers and men of corresponding age in the whole population. The first chart shows the ratios in reference to a low education level. This low level corresponds to pre-primary, primary and secondary education (ISCED 0, 1, 2). As in Figure 3.1, the Netherlands and Finland are seen to be relatively open systems, with a near-to perfect representation of the low education group in the student body. Spain, Switzerland and Ireland also belong to this cluster of countries.

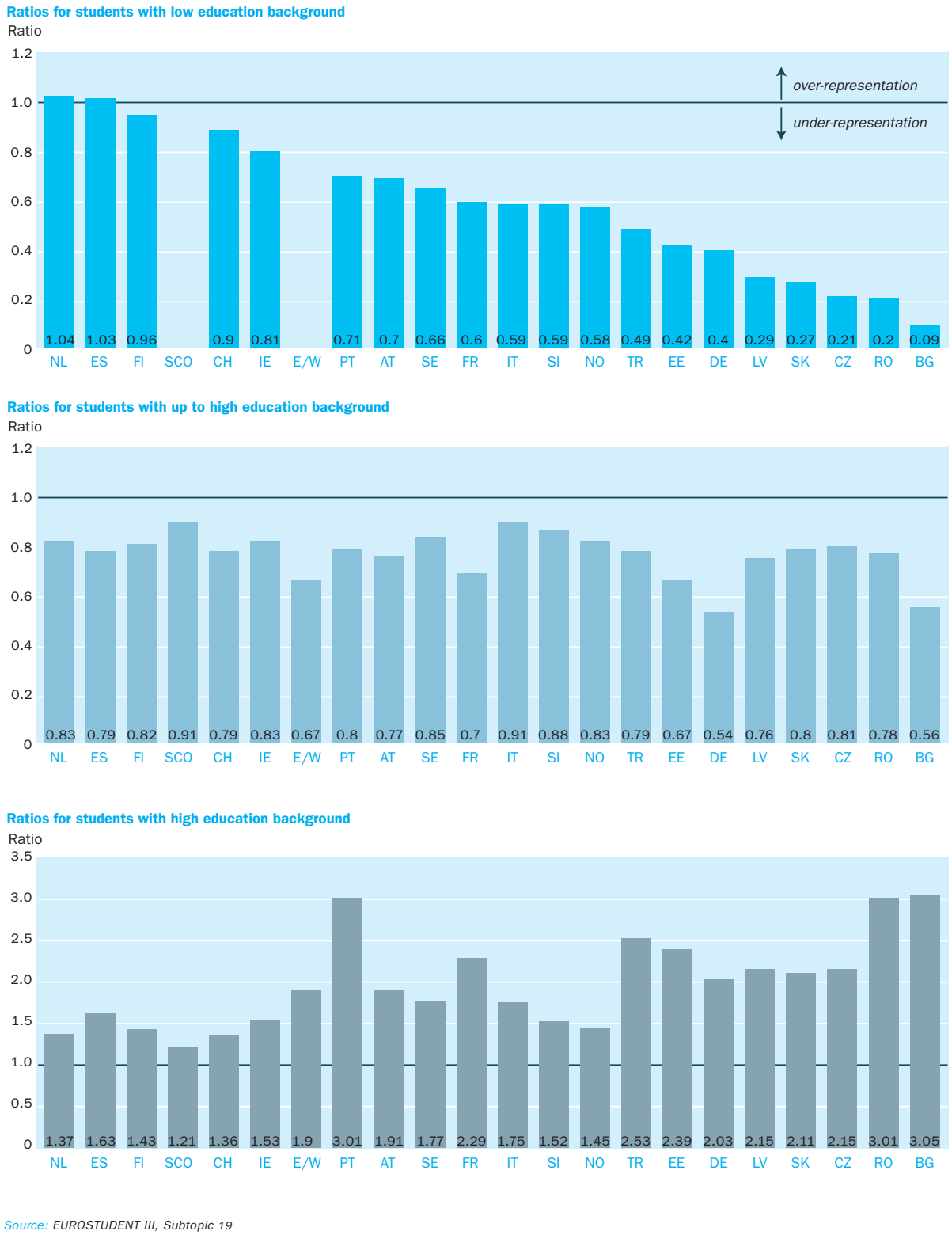
The number of countries only representing half of the corresponding age group from the low socio-economic group through students' fathers has increased between Figure 3.1 (blue-collar status) and Figure 3.2 (low education) from six to eight and includes some different countries (see also Box 3.2): Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Germany, Estonia and Turkey. In addition, it may be noted that Bachelor programmes appear more inclusive than other study programmes in over one third of the countries shown here. However, such a comparison is constrained due to the transitional period regarding study structure reform in most countries (> *Chapter 2*).

In the first cluster of countries with open systems of higher education (left-hand side of chart) it is apparent that the disadvantage of the low education group concerning access to higher education is very low. If we now turn to a comparison between student and general population based on the wider category of all qualifications up to higher education (i. e. all levels below ISCED 5 and 6) we see that inequality prevails. This is due to the fact that having parents, who themselves have obtained tertiary qualifications – in particular higher education degrees – remains an advantage in every country viewed here (see bottom chart). It is therefore interesting to look at the spread of disadvantage (i. e. lower chances of participating in higher education) between the narrow group

5 *Results based on the educational attainment of students' mothers can be seen in the National Profiles.*

Fig. 3.2

Ratio of highest education attainment of students' fathers compared to the general population (men 40–60 yrs., %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 19

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

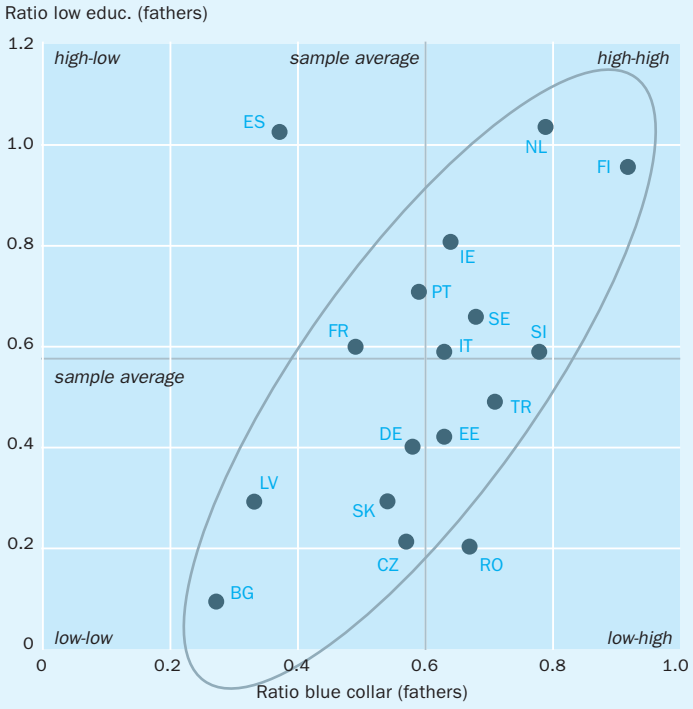
Notes: Data for E/W show highest educational attainment of mother and father together. No data for low education for E/W and SCO. No data LT.

Box 3.2

Measuring social background either by parents' occupational status or by highest level of parental education produces similar results

In this chapter social background is measured by two alternative concepts: parents' occupational status and parents' education. It has to be kept in mind, though, that these indicators measure slightly different phenomena and the respective shares of each group are not the same among students and in the general national populations. Nevertheless, the x-y chart below, which compares results of the representation of different social status groups in the student body using both indicators, reveals that a certain correlation is apparent for almost all countries. A low score on the measure concerning educational background is matched by a low score concerning blue-collar occupational status, and vice versa. The only clear exceptions to this are Spain and Romania. Due to its higher reliability for comparison, the educational background will be used as singular proxy for socio-economic background in the rest of this study.

Link between ratio of students' fathers with blue-collar occupational status and students' fathers with low education background



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 17 & 19. No data CH, E/W, LT, LV, NO. Data for SCO is not included since it refers to fathers with "up to high education background".
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?", 6.2 "What are the most recent or former occupations of your father and mother?"

(top chart) and the wider group (middle chart). On the one hand, it appears that the Netherlands, Spain, Finland, Switzerland and Ireland have achieved relatively high participation rates for the low education group – possibly through targeted action plans. On the other hand, the middle group remains at a disadvantage in comparison to the

group whose parents are tertiary education graduates (bottom chart). Finally, it should be pointed out that despite the above-mentioned inequalities in higher education participation, the over-representation of students from high-educated families in higher education is relatively small in the Netherlands, Finland, Scotland and Switzerland. This is particularly true in comparison to Portugal, Romania and Bulgaria, where the proportion of students' fathers with relatively high educational qualifications is about three times higher than among men between 40 and 60 years in the general population.

The link between one education groups' benefit to the detriment of other groups varies between countries. For instance, regarding the Netherlands and Finland, it is clear that a higher education background provides children with an advantage since this group is over-represented in the respective higher education systems. On the one hand, for every 100 adults in a corresponding age group in the general population there are roughly 140 students in the student body whose fathers have attained tertiary qualifications (Figure 3.2, bottom chart). On the other hand, for every 100 adults of corresponding age with low education there are also nearly 100 students whose fathers have this background (Figure 3.2, top chart). The advantage for the high education group must be to the detriment of the middle group. By contrast, this disadvantage lies predominantly with the low education group in Romania and Estonia. This is a difficult predicament for these post-communist countries, which have reformed their systems of higher education and, whilst expanding quantitatively, are concerned with the social dimension as well. The problem is that supporting this low socio-economic group requires significant public funding (>*Chapter 5*).

It is likely that having parents who themselves have undertaken higher education will remain advantageous in the future, because the benefits to prospective students are multifarious, including simply a stronger motivation on the part of the parents to send their children to university. The critical question, which will remain a policy dilemma, is how strong should this advantage, respectively the disadvantage of the social counterparts, remain. EUROSTUDENT cannot answer this quandary.

Social selectivity is not just a question of capacity

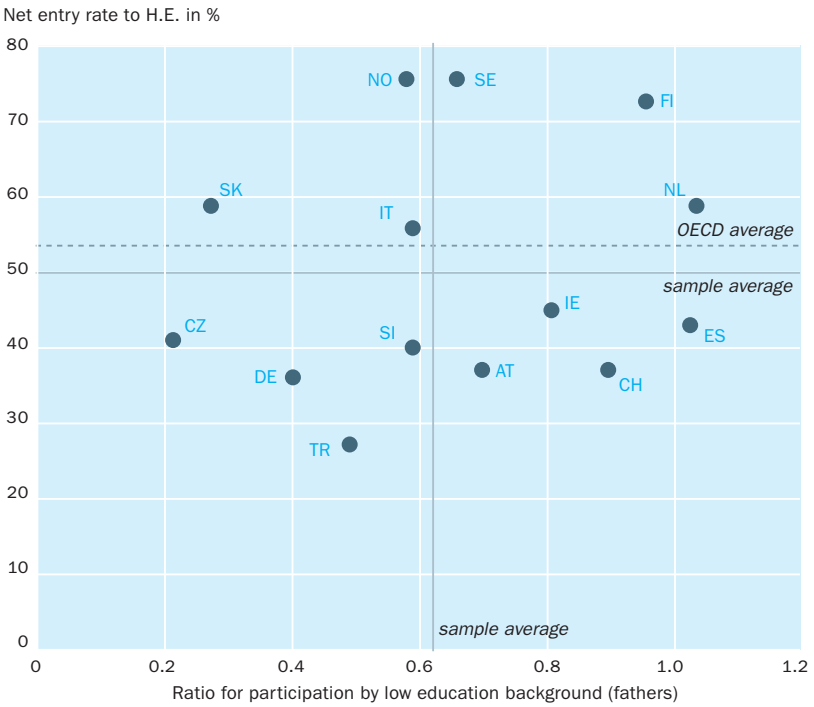
In Figure 3.3, for each EUROSTUDENT country, the net entry rate to higher education is plotted against the ratio which measures how well children from low-educated families are represented among students. Thus, the question of whether large systems also tend to be socially inclusive, whereas small systems tend to be rather exclusive, is addressed. Clearly, there is no simple link between entry rates and the degree of social inclusiveness of higher education systems. Countries that are on a comparable level regarding net entry rates – e. g. Germany (36%) and Switzerland (37%) – can differ a lot regarding the representation of students from low-educated backgrounds. Indeed, of the seven countries with above-average representation of students from low-educated families only three (Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands) have an above-average net entry rate.

The stratification of a secondary school system and representation of students from low-educated families in higher education are linked

In order to test the assumption that the level of a pupil's performance at secondary school will have an influence on his/her participation in higher education we require a

Fig. 3.3

Net entry rate and recruitment of students from families with low education (fathers)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 19 & OECD 2007 tab. C2. No data BG, E/W, EE, FR, LT, LV, PT, RO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

comparative source of data on pupil performance at secondary school level. The latest PISA study[6] does not simply compare pupils' scores on specially-designed comparative tests, but also looks into the effect of the stratification of educational structures at secondary level on pupils' scores. For this, an indicator was designed, which measures the difference in pupil performance between individual schools in a (national) school system. This measure is called the between-school variance.

The study found two basic types of school system. In one case, between-school variance is low and within-school variance is high. This type of school system has schools which tend to perform at comparable levels on aggregate and have different performance levels between individual pupils within each school. It is argued that this type of school system has the advantage that students may be streamed according to their current performance levels and differently by subject area. The contrasting highly stratified system of schooling sorts pupils early on into different schools, which have different performance profiles. The disadvantage is seen in the general character of performance grouping (for a whole school instead of for smaller groups) and the hurdle for pupils, whose performance is good in some subjects and not so good in others or who develop late.

Figure 3.4 shows a clear link between stratification of a secondary school system and success at recruiting higher education students with a low education background.

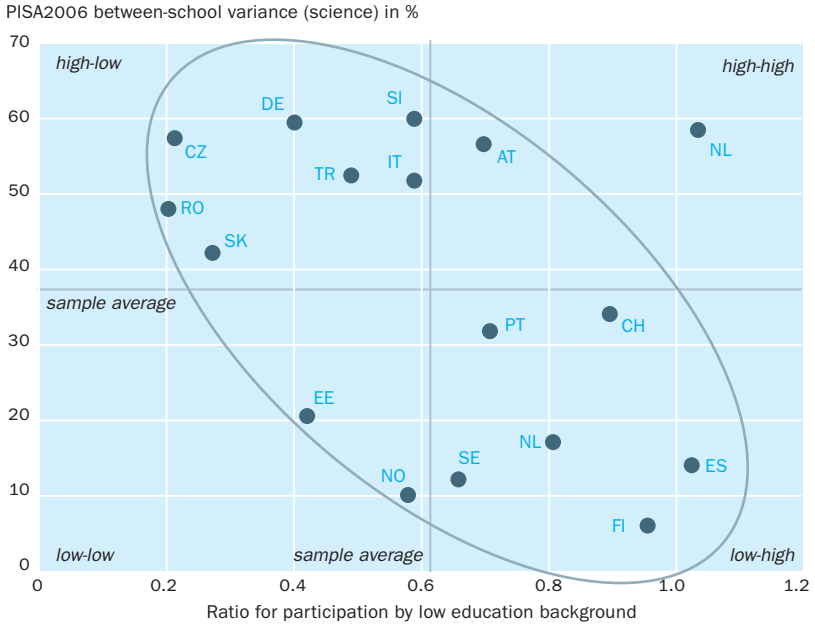
6 *OECD (2007): PISA 2006. Science Competencies for Tomorrow's World: Volume 1 Analysis. Paris: OECD.*

Countries with a high level of between-school variance recruit proportionally less students from low-educated families. The only exception to this seems to be the Netherlands. It is hard to draw conclusions here, but the case of the Netherlands may show the utility of offering non-traditional routes into higher education, which are less dependent on the school system (>*Chapter 2*).

For developing strategies to increase the share of students from low-educated families in higher education institutions it is crucial that countries not only focus on decreasing educational inequality at earlier stages of the educational process – even though this is a basic requirement for widening access to higher education. But widening access also refers to an improvement of lifelong learning opportunities. Findings from the previous chapter suggest that the relative "openness" of higher education systems towards students from low-educated families is dependent of the provision of "non-traditional" routes to higher education. Given that those who enter higher education through the validation of prior learning or work experience are comparatively old when starting their studies, the inclusion of students from low-educated families in higher education also requires an adaption of the study framework to the needs of older students (>*Chapters 4, 5*).

Fig. 3.4

Comparison of selectivity of secondary school structure and recruitment of students from families with low education – Ratio for low education background (fathers) and percentage variance in PISA scores between schools



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 19 & OECD PISA 2006 tab 4.1a. No data BG, E/W, FR, IE, LV, LT, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Chapter 4:
Accommodation

Key findings

- In most countries the most frequent form of student accommodation is living in a private flat or lodgings. This accounts for over two-third of students in Norway, Finland, Germany, Austria und Sweden.
- Many countries clearly use the provision of student halls to support students' independence. In countries like Estonia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Romania and the Netherlands over a fifth of students benefit from this form of accommodation.
- Beyond country differences, age plays a significant role in determining the accommodation form chosen by students. The older the students are, the more the share of family lodgers and dwellers in halls of residence decreases and the share of those students living in private lodgings increases.
- Student satisfaction with their respective accommodation form is high. Satisfaction rates appear to be related to differences in expectations by country – often the most popular form of accommodation is the form of accommodation with which students are most satisfied. For 12 of 20 countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ireland, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Romania, the Netherlands, and France) a high proportion of students living in their parents' home is accompanied by a high appreciation for this type of accommodation. This evidence suggests that in Europe parents' home will continue to play an important role as a framework condition for studying in higher education.
- Students who live in private accommodation pay a higher monthly rent on average than their counterparts in halls of residence in all but two countries (Spain and Ireland). The provision of this form of accommodation can therefore be seen as indirect student support. The share of students living in this form of accommodation and the discount rate in comparison to private rents is highest in Bulgaria, Latvia and Slovak Republic, where students pay less than a third of the market price. In the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia the rent in private accommodations is about double the equivalent in student halls of residence.

Main issues

Type of student accommodation

The choice of one form of residency over another is affected both by the availability and the individual utilisation of this provision. In some countries, where the societal role of the family is traditionally very strong, it is common to continue living with parents or relatives until a young person establishes his/her own family. In others, there is a strong tradition that personal independence comes with legal maturity (e. g. at eighteen). Such embedded societal expectations also affect the provision and choice of accommodation during studies. For instance, in the latter case, a large share of students will tend to live away from home during their studies. A further factor is age – older students are more likely to live away from home than their younger counterparts.

Irrespective of these aspects, adequate accommodation is – together with sufficient financing – a main framework condition for the "smooth operation" of studies. Furthermore, financial concerns with accommodation as part of students' living costs may have a negative impact on equity of access to higher education, especially for those potential students from families with lower income. For instance, students may have to make a choice between remaining with their parents/relatives and studying in the university nearest to this address or choosing an alternative study location, but having to work during studies to cover the costs of rent. This explains the relevance of the topic for policy-makers. In some of the national support systems support is topped up with a distance-bonus.

EUROSTUDENT makes the distinction between three categories of accommodation for students, which indeed should cover all alternative types of student accommodation:

- continue to live with parents or relatives
- living in a hall of student residence
- rent a private flat or lodging (maintaining own households)

All three categories of accommodation have their values; they have advantages and disadvantages, and whether advantages or disadvantages of each type of accommodation prevail not only depends on the general characteristics of the respective type of accommodation, but also on the conditions of the individual accommodation. Sharing a flat with other students might be as stimulating and conducive for studies as living in a hall of residence for individual students. In contrast, a private lodging might be as modest as just a room in another family's home. And depending on individual more or less favourable conditions, living with parents or living in a student hall of residence might be similar, and they might have the same standards as living independently in an own apartment. There is, therefore, no one single type of accommodation which is best for all students, and each type of accommodation has a sufficient number of adherents, e. g. those who are very satisfied with living at home during their studies, as EUROSTUDENT data demonstrate.

Living with parents or relatives

Living with parents has the advantage that no additional cost for accommodation incurs due to higher education enrolment. Furthermore, this type of residency usually includes meals, clothing and other provisions, which a student receives indirectly (i. e.

not as cash). The amount of direct subsidies, which parents provide are consequently often significantly lower than with the other types of accommodation. These benefits might be outweighed by the restricted choice of study location. Additionally, a certain independence of the studying "child" from his/her parents, which might indeed not be wished for by some students themselves, but which seems to be conducive to their educational careers, cannot be guaranteed for students, who continue to live in their parents' or relatives' homes.

Living in student halls of residence

Living in student residence halls is usually the least expensive alternative of the two types of accommodation that remain if students do not continue to live with their parents or relatives. The reason for lower accommodation prices is that student residence halls are usually subsidized by governments, institutions, charity or other organizations. While the lower cost is an advantage compared with living in private lodgings, there is another important characteristic of students halls of residence with which this type of accommodation excels compared to both other "private" forms of accommodation: living in student halls of residence enhances the integration and orientation of students, who might otherwise feel lost in big cities or big universities, or in academia in general. Living with fellow peers may be stimulating for intellectual development, be it in the context of respective studies or beyond, and this stimulation might be enforced by extra curricular services and offerings provided by the residence hall owner or management, or the related higher education institution. When living in student halls of residence it is likely that students see studying at a higher education institution as their main occupation in this period of their life.

Living in a private flat or lodging

Living in a private flat or lodging covers a wide range of accommodation forms, from sublet, flat sharing with other students to living in an apartment alone or with a partner or spouse. This type of accommodation best reflects the fact that the student is a young adult, independent and fully responsible for his/her life (if one does not consider parents' remaining financial responsibility). Even if a student has a preference for this type of accommodation, the final choice will be influenced not only by the financial resources available to the respective student, but also by the availability of flats at reasonable prices (even if this means that flats are shared with other students), which are not too far from the higher education institution.

It should be noted that aggregate data by country hides the fact that there may be striking differences in the same country between the cities in which higher education institutions are located.

Cost and general satisfaction with accommodation

The type of accommodation which a student ultimately chooses is not always the one he or she would prefer, but is influenced by availability and general utility. Therefore, it is interesting to view students' individual assessments of the accommodation form in which they reside.

Furthermore, in this subtopic, the cost difference between living in private accommodation and living in a student hall can be shown. Although it tends to be cheaper to live

in a student hall than in private accommodation (e. g. because of reduced travel costs in the case of campus universities), a look at the rent difference between halls of residence and private accommodation gives an insight into the effect of subsidies to student halls which reduces living costs of the students and, therefore, their requirement for income.

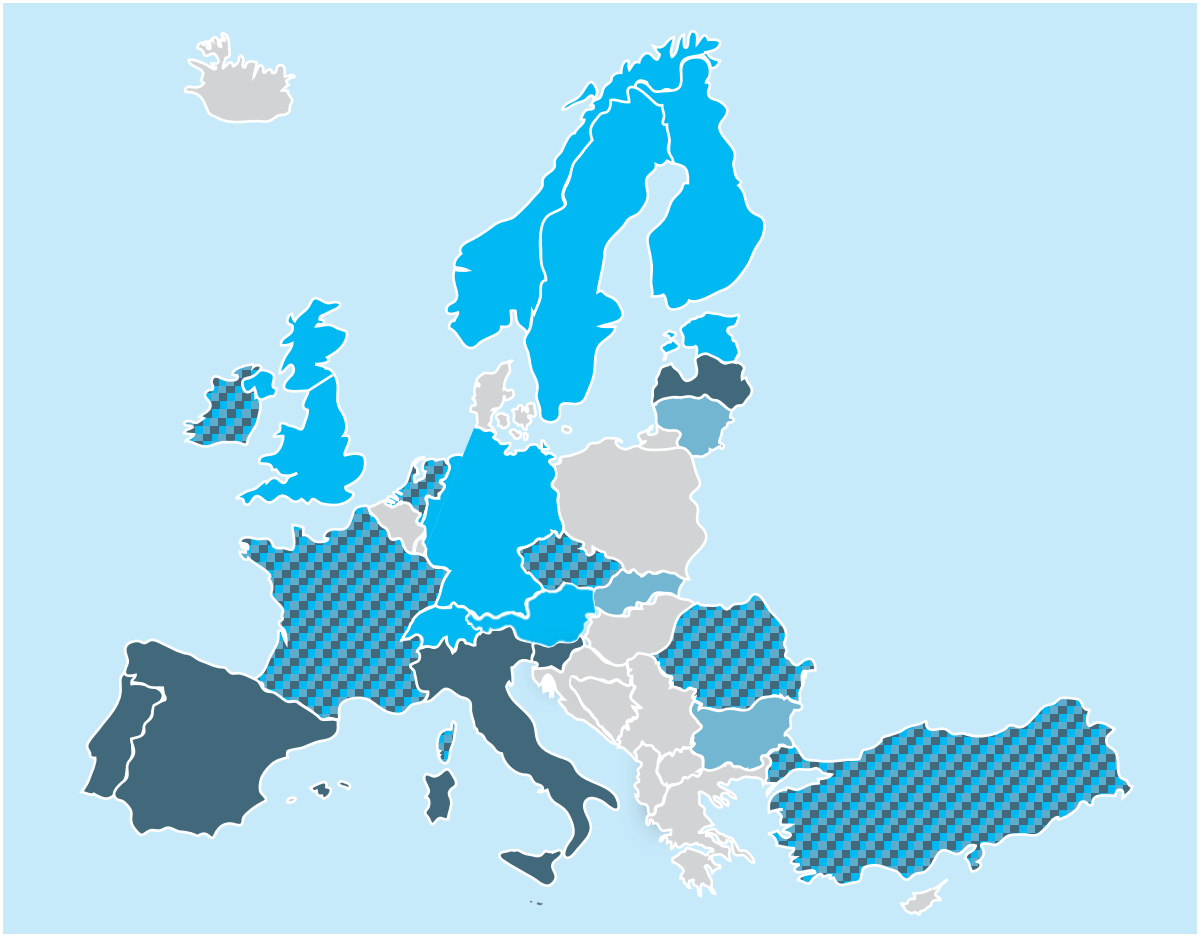
Data and interpretation

In most countries the dominant form of accommodation is private lodgings

In Figure 4.1 the biggest group of countries by dominant forms of accommodation consists of those in which the the majority of national students live in private accommodation. These countries are Switzerland, Scotland, Austria, Germany, England/Wales, Sweden, Norway and Finland. The next biggest cluster of countries have a majority of students, who live with their parents/relatives during their studies – Italy, Spain, Portu-

Fig. 4.1

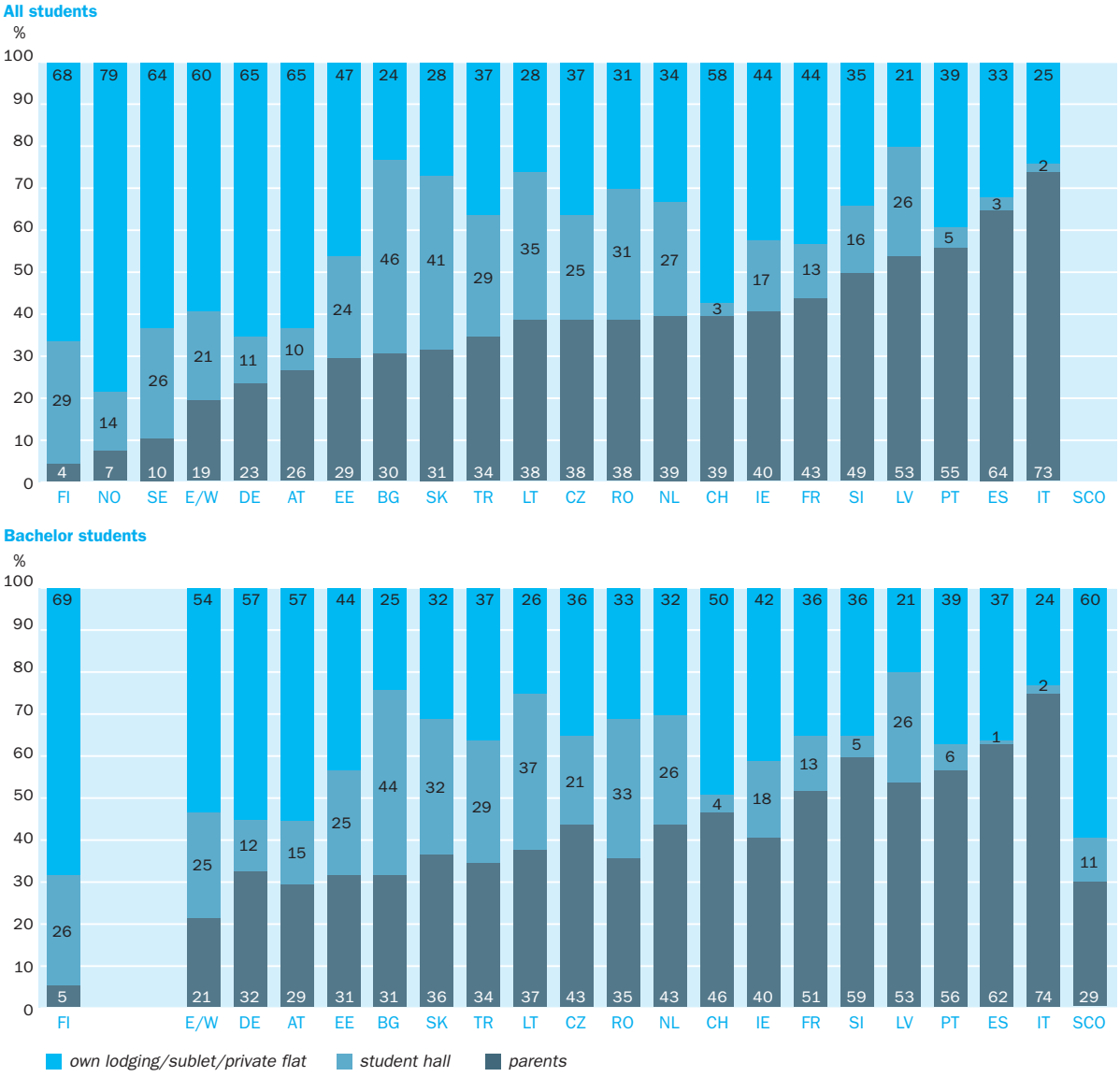
Most frequent type of residence by country in % (all students)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 22. Data for IT, SCO and TR refer only to Bachelor students.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: "Where do you live during study terms/semester?"

Fig. 4.2

Type of student residence by country (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 22. No data Bachelor students NO, SE. Data for SCO refer to Bachelor students only.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.1 "Which qualification are you currently studying for?", 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?"

gal, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia. In Bulgaria and Slovakia a clear majority lives in student halls of residence – albeit under the 50% mark. Figure 4.2 presents the same data as used in Figure 4.1, but emphasises the proportion of students living in independent forms of accommodation and the share of students living with parents/relatives.

With regard to Bachelor students (see Fig. 4.2) who tend to be younger, which affects their choice of type of accommodation, there are six countries in the cluster of prevailing private accommodation (Scotland, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, England/Wales and Finland). In six countries more than 50% of Bachelor students live with their parents or relatives (Italy, Spain, Slovenia, Portugal, France, Latvia).

Figure 4.2 shows that there is an overall tendency for students not to live with their parents in the observed countries. In terms of empowering students as critical consumers, this is positive because this group can 'vote with their feet' when choosing the most appropriate higher education provider. However, it inevitably results in increased student expenditure. It is interesting to note how many countries clearly use the provision of student halls to support students' independence. In countries like Estonia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Romania and the Netherlands over a fifth of students benefit from this form of accommodation.

It is striking that the highest shares of students living with their parents/relatives are to be found in the Southern European Mediterranean countries (with the exception of Latvia): Italy (73%), Spain (64%) and Portugal (55%), joined by Slovenia with 49%. At the other end of the scale Finland reports only 4% living with their parents/relatives, Norway 7% and Sweden 10%. Thus while the southern countries seem to stand for a continued close bind between students to parents, the Scandinavian countries stand for the opposite.

The Norwegian National Profile gives two main explanation for the situation there. The first concerns the location of institutions of higher education. Higher education institutions are located in regional cities and therefore students from outside these regions have to live away from home. This might be contrasted with Italy, where there are more urban agglomerations with universities in the vicinity of students' homes. For the low proportion of students in Norway living at home there is a second reason. The Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (NSELF) discourages students from living at home, by only providing grants to those students living in independent accommodations away from their parents.

In Finland the high share of students living away from their parents is particularly supported by halls of residence, where nearly one third of students reside. The National Profile for Finland notes that these halls of residence are of high standards. They do not simply provide rooms or shared rooms, but apartments for small groups of students, single students and even students with families.

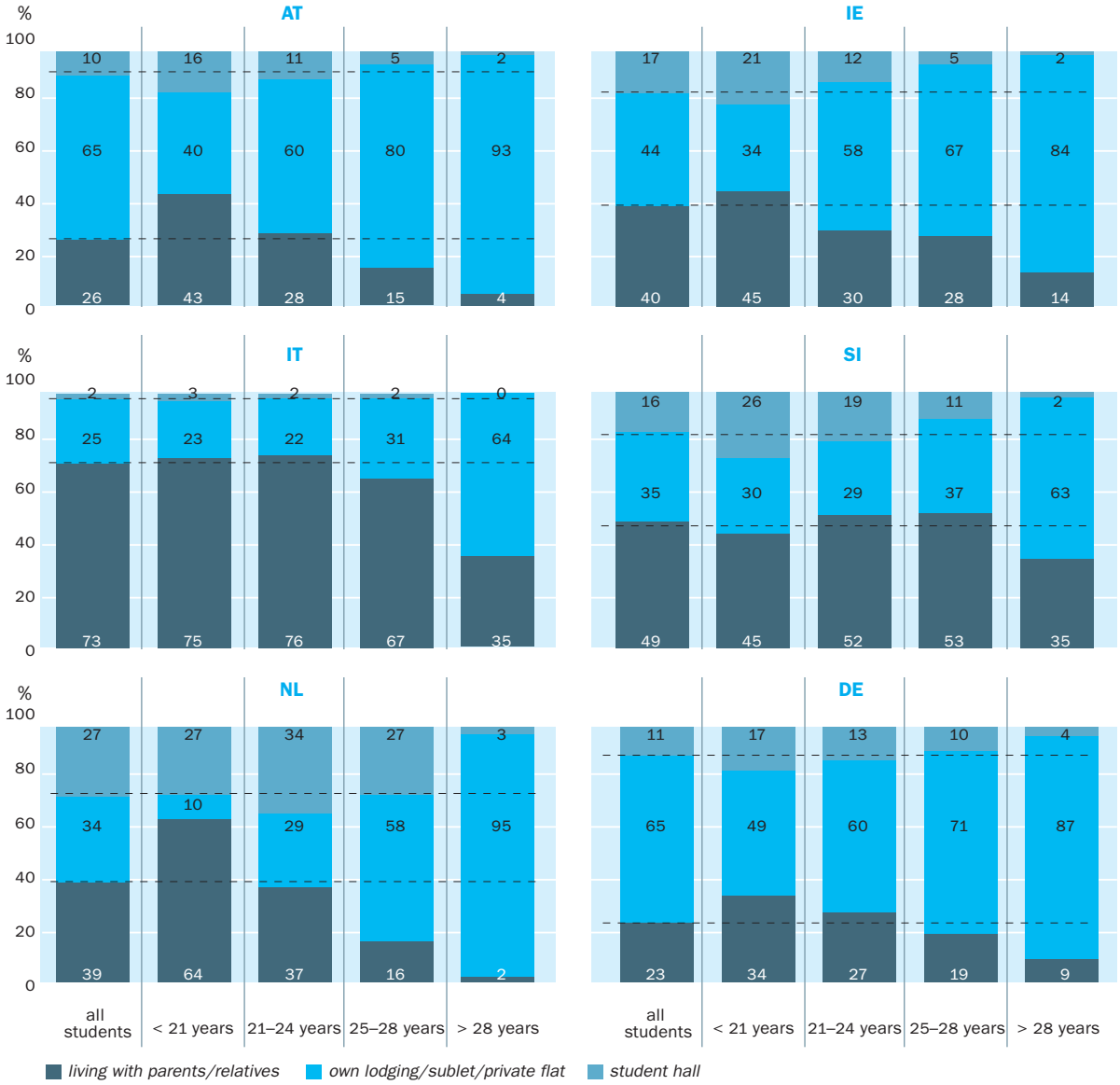
Large shares of students live in halls of residence in Bulgaria (46%) and the Slovak Republic (41%). The Bulgarian National Profile notes – in a similar vain to Norway – that many students have to move to cities when they enrol at the university. The student hall of residence is usually the least expensive alternative compared with private accommodation (see below), if indeed the latter is available at all. A further reason for high shares of students living in student halls in these former "planned economy" countries has to do with capacity. As a result of investments in the past many places in student halls of residence are available – although their quality might be rather low (see below).

The age of students influences their choice of accommodation type

A further analysis of the share of students living in the three accommodation types by age highlights the fact that the older students become, the more likely they are to live in their own flats. Figure 4.3 shows for selected countries the tendencies which can be noticed in all countries. Whilst students below the age of 21 tend to live with their parents/relatives, the most popular form of accommodation for students over 28 years

Fig. 4.3

Type of accommodation by age (in %), selected countries



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 22*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?"

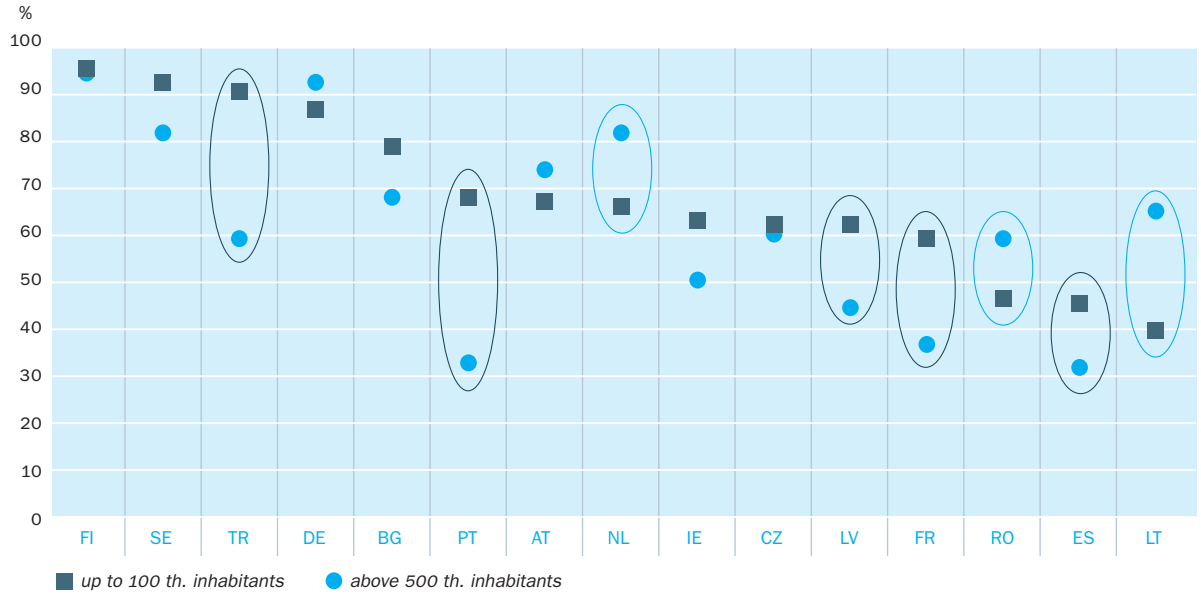
old is living in own lodgings, with the lowest shares of students in this form of accommodation at this age in Slovenia (63%) and Italy (64%).

Size of study location influences choice of accommodation type

A further factor, which may affect decisions on residency, is the size of study location (i. e. the town in which the university or college is situated). Figure 4.4 focuses on the share of students not living with their parents (i. e. living in own lodgings or halls of residence) and shows that there is an effect of size of study location in most of the selected countries; however, it is not always the same effect. In five countries (Turkey,

Fig. 4.4

Accommodation by size of study location – Share of students not living with parents/relatives (i. e. own lodgings or halls of residence (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 24. No data CH, E/W, EE, SCO, SI, SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.5 "Please name the location of the higher education institution you attend.", 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?"

Portugal, Latvia, France and Spain) the smaller study locations with a number of inhabitants under 100 thousand, have a lower share of students living with their parents (i. e. a higher share living in private accommodation or halls) than in the larger locations. This is probably related to the fact that students must move to these locations to study there. In the Netherlands, Lithuania and Romania, with a relatively high provision of student halls (see Fig. 4.2), the effect is the opposite. This may show that the provision of student halls also encourages students to move out of their home, even if their parents live nearby.

Students from "privileged" social backgrounds tend to live in private accommodation

Figure 4.5 investigates whether there is a link between the social background of students and their choice of accommodation type. In this analysis the highest level of educational attainment of students' fathers is taken as an indicator for students' social background (> *Chapter 3*).

The data presented confirm that there is a link between the share of students living in private accommodation and the share of students from relatively high-educated families for most countries. Assuming that parents' educational level and income level are positively related, it can be expected that highly-educated parents are able to support their children either directly through rent payment or indirectly through continued provision of free accommodation at home. Where the proportion of students with a high educational background is high, the proportion of students living in their own flats is also relatively high: Germany, England/Wales, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Austria and Scotland. And in Italy, Slovak Republic, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, Czech

Republic, and Portugal where the percentage of students living in own flats is low, the percentage of students from highly-educated families is also low.

Student halls provide discount accommodation away from home and the rent is often below market level

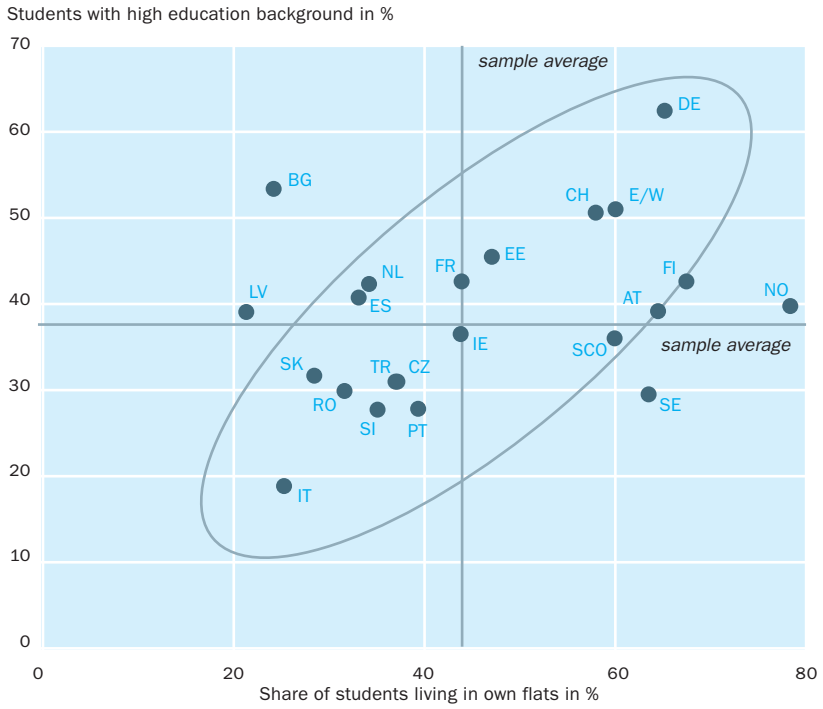
The cost of accommodation can only be investigated for students living in their own flats and living in halls of residence, as the costs which incurr through students living in their parents' or relatives' home is hidden. Figure 4.6 highlights the differences in average rent by type of accommodation. An analysis of rent as a proportion of student expenditure is carried out in another chapter (> *Chapter 6*).

In two countries the difference between rent for residence halls and rent for private accommodation is very high: In Bulgaria students pay only 23% of what their colleagues in private accommodation have to pay, in the Slovak Republic and Latvia it is 30%. In the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia the rent in private accommodations is about double the equivalent in student halls of residence.

The difference in price level shown in Figure 4.6 is related to two main factors: quality of provision and subsidy of real price by governments or other organisations. Countries where the rents for both categories are very close together (e. g. the Netherlands) or

Fig. 4.5

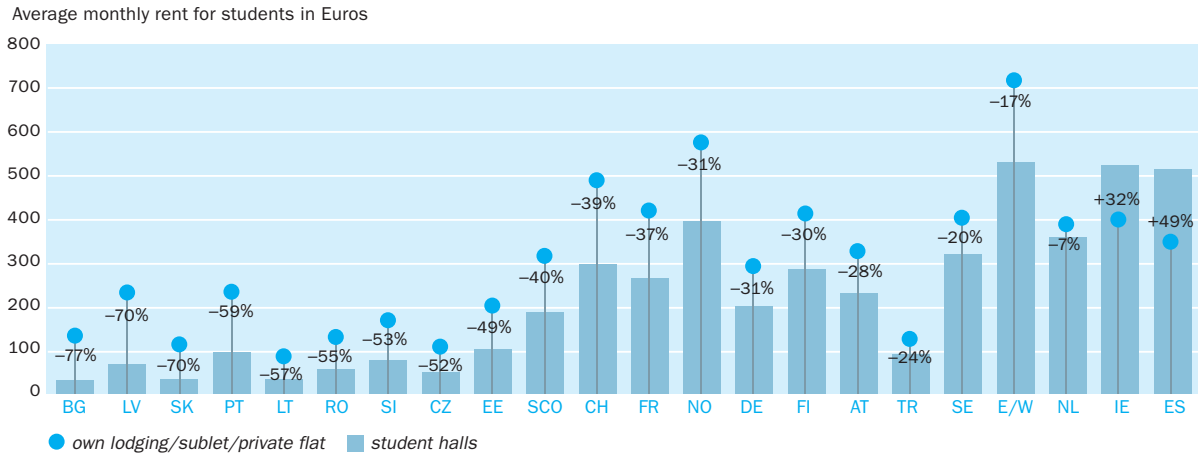
Students' choice of accommodation by social background – High education background and living in own flat



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 22 & 45. No data 4.6.1 LT, SCO, E/W
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Fig. 4.6

Cost of accommodation and price differences between own flats and halls of residence



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 25. No data IT.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"
Note: Percentages indicate the price difference between rent for halls of residence and rent for private flats, e.g. BG 77% less.

where halls of residence are even more expensive than private accommodations, indicate no or low subsidies and/or high quality of student halls. In the Netherlands the majority of halls of residence are privately organized and financed (see National Profile).

Students' overall satisfaction with accommodation high

The level of satisfaction among students in the EUROSTUDENT countries is considerably high, see Figure 4.7. Satisfaction is measured in EUROSTUDENT as the percentage of students who are satisfied or very satisfied with the respective type of accommodation they have chosen.

In eleven countries for which data is available, at least three-quarters of students are either satisfied or very satisfied with their chosen accommodation form. The overall average satisfaction ranges from 41% of students being very satisfied with their accommodation in Bulgaria to 87% in Spain.

These values are related to the prevailing form of accommodation in each country. In many countries, students are least happy with student halls, which is the prevailing form of accommodation in Bulgaria.

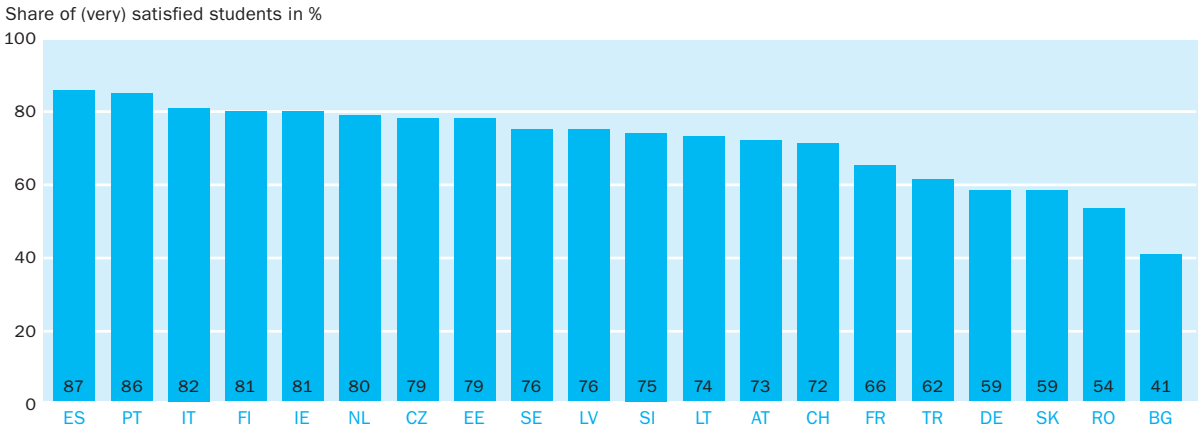
Living in own lodgings receives highest level of satisfaction, but not in all countries

A further analysis of the appreciation of types of accommodation focuses on the question of whether there are types of accommodations that receive prevailing satisfaction. This can be seen, if the share of students living in a particular form of accommodation is cross-referenced with the level of satisfaction with that form of accommodation. The results are shown in Figure 4.8.

The data show that, in general, the accommodation form in which the majority of students reside is also the accommodation form, which receives the highest level of

Fig. 4.7

Overall average satisfaction with accommodation



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 26. No data E/W, NO, SCO

Note: The satisfaction scale for each form of accommodation is weighted by the share of students residing in the form to calculate the overall satisfaction scale. EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

satisfaction. The only countries, in which this does not seem to be the case are those, in which student halls are a dominant accommodation form – in Turkey, Slovakia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Romania (bottom chart).

With regard to the accommodation type *living with parents or relatives* (top chart) for 12 of 20 countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ireland, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Romania, the Netherlands, and France) a high proportion of students living in their parents' home is accompanied by a high appreciation for this type of accommodation. In a contrasting five countries, lower appreciation is paired with lower representation of this type of student accommodation (Sweden, Austria, Germany, the Slovak Republic, and Bulgaria).

For *living in own private lodging* (middle chart) the picture is similar. In half of the countries students express a high level of appreciation (satisfaction level over 75%) for this type of accommodation, despite high private rents (>*Chapter 6*).

In most countries the satisfaction level for *living in student halls* is lower than for the other two accommodation forms; only the Netherlands and Spain seem to contradict this tendency. However, only 3% of Spanish students live in a student hall. In Bulgaria, Slovak Republic, Romania and Turkey a large share of students live in this type of accommodation and have a satisfaction level less than 50% (between 26% in Romania and 46% in the Slovak Republic).

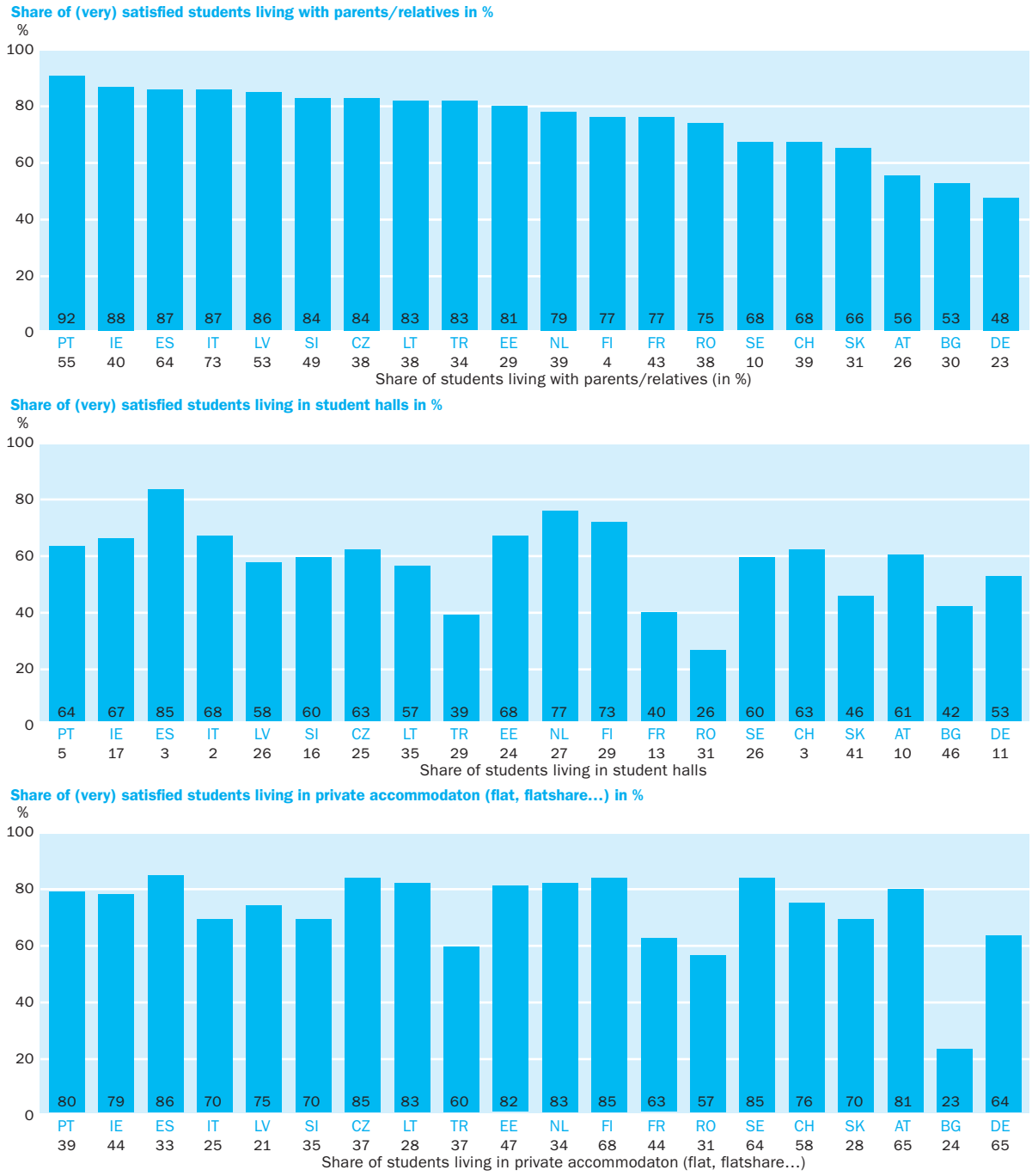
Student halls – lower satisfaction, but lower rents

As mentioned above, satisfaction is measured as the share of students who are satisfied or very satisfied with the type of accommodation they have chosen. The above analysis has highlighted two aspects concerning student halls: that they are subject to relatively low satisfaction levels, but that they offer students a form of affordable accommodation. Figure 4.9 combines these two aspects in one chart. Average rent prices on

Fig. 4.8

Level of satisfaction with chosen accommodation and share of students living in this accommodation type

Level of satisfaction of students living with parents/relatives and share of students living in this form



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 26. No data E/W, NO, SCO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

the private market are represented by the o-line in the chart and the triangles represent how much less students have to pay for halls of residence in comparison to private accommodation. The same is done for satisfaction levels. The level of satisfaction for

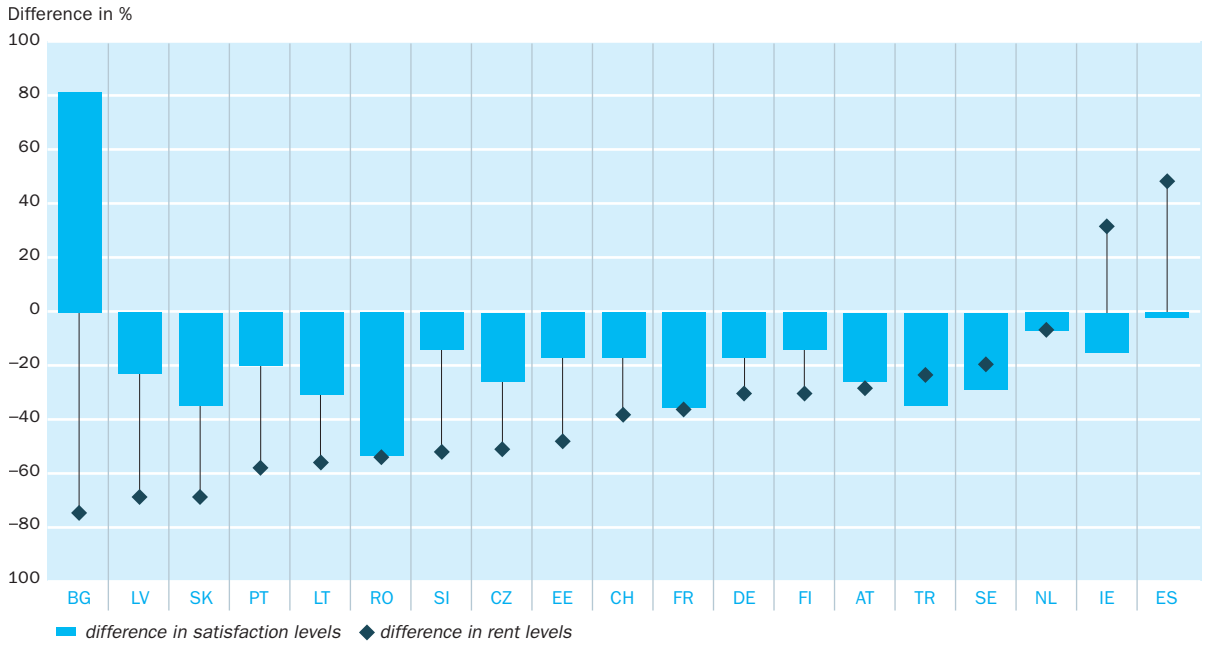
private accommodation is taken as the o-line and the percentage of difference in satisfaction levels between student halls and private accommodation is shown by the bar. If satisfaction with student halls of residence is closer to that for private accommodation than the price difference would suggest, there might be several explanations, e. g.: that halls of residence are considerably subsidized; or/and that the quality/standard of subsidized residence halls are closer to private accommodation than the prices are.

The comparison of price levels with satisfaction levels reveals a very interesting pattern. In about half of the countries for which data are available (Switzerland, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Portugal and Slovak Republic) the difference in satisfaction levels is about half of what one would expect from the difference in price levels. The following explanation for this phenomenon is suggested: Satisfaction with accommodation has many components, one of which is the level of rent. In judging their own conditions of accommodation students take into account the price difference between residence halls and own private flats. Students living in halls of residence might face lower standards, lower quality, less independency or other disadvantages compared to those living in private accommodation. Nevertheless, after considering the higher price for private accommodation they are overall relatively satisfactied with their halls of residence. This leads to the rather small "satisfaction distance" to private accommodation.

In one third of the participating countries with data available (Austria, France, Netherlands, Romania, Turkey and Sweden) the price difference between the two types of

Fig. 4.9

Rent difference and satisfaction difference between living in halls of residence and private lodgings



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 25 & 26. No data E/W, NO, SCO, IT*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

accommodation is close to the difference of the level of satisfaction with the respective accommodation form. Four countries deviate from these patterns, among them Spain and Ireland, where the rent for halls of residence is even higher then the rent for private accommodations. In Bulgaria students pay for accommodation in residence halls only 23% of what they have to pay for a private flat, but the level of satisfaction is higher than for private accommodation (although on a relatively low satisfaction level: only 23% of Bulgarian students are very satisfied with their private lodgings, but 42% of those living in halls of residence are very satisfied – see Figure 4.8.)

In summary, it seems that students are aware of this trade-off between price and expectations. This might explain the fact that student halls are often particularly popular during the first years of study and that students later progress on to private accommodation (see Figure 4.3).

Chapter 5:
Funding and state assistance

Key findings

- Total monthly income varies significantly by accommodation form and shows family provision of accommodation to be an indirect form of financial support.
- The range of income levels among students is broad in every country. It is widest in Ireland, Spain and the Czech Republic and narrowest in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. In Ireland, Spain and France, the poorest students have a monthly income significantly lower than the national legal minimum wage.
- Working alongside studies is a significant income source. Its contribution to total income lies over one fifth in all countries – except for Turkey.
- A focus on younger students (21-year-olds) shows direct family support to be dominant in all but four countries, where state support dominates.
- The composition of a student's income mix is influenced by his/her socio-economic background. Least affected by this factor are students in Finland, Sweden and Scotland, where state support is very strong.
- State support is not always based on need as expressed by socio-economic criteria. The countries in which these criteria seem to play the clearest role are Ireland, Bulgaria and Switzerland. In Finland, Slovenia and Estonia other criteria appear to determine state support allocations.

Main issues

One of the defining factors of study conditions is student financing. Tertiary education is an educational phase in which the student prepares him-/herself for society and the labour market and thereby becomes intellectually, socially and financially independent of his/her family. Therefore, this is always a phase of financial burden for the student. There are three main sources of student income which students utilise to finance their studies and living costs during college.

- Parents' or relatives' contributions: Despite a pedagogical assumption of independence, there is a general expectation in some systems of higher education that the major stakeholders in higher education remain the parents of students. In these countries, parents are also the "first stop" for financial support. In some cases the state supports parents by providing special benefits to them for the support of their children. These may be direct (e. g. continuance of child benefit) or indirect (e. g. tax rebates). In most other countries, parents continue to be seen as one of multiple sources of student funding.
- State support: A dependency on parents is also a dependency on their socio-economic resources. To alleviate this dependency, the state can introduce programmes to support students financially. These programmes are often targeted at those students in need of such support (e. g. based on their socio-economic background). Other approaches are to support all students based on the premise that they are independent young adults or to support the best students according to merit. This latter option is used in order to stimulate or reward students' efforts. Mixed approaches also exist.
- Income from employment: This form of income can be seen as a coping strategy used by students to top-up their other funding sources. Additionally, it is also a flexible source of income since it is based on the actions of the students themselves and not their parents or the state.

Patterns of student funding are influenced both by the provision of funding possibilities and by the utilisation of such possibilities. Since the information here is based on information from students, the focus is on students' utilisation of the resources and opportunities presented to them by their respective higher education system (e. g. possibly of working alongside studies).

This chapter focuses on two main issues. The first concerns differences in the composition of student income. This analysis shows the relative importance of different income sources for different student groups. The second is the provision of direct state assistance. A cursory look at amounts of state support hides quite significant differences in the design of support schemes. These differences will be highlighted in the ensuing analysis.

Student income

Concerning this issue, both differences in amounts of income and differences in the mix of the three income sources mentioned above are investigated. In a first step, the income level by form of accommodation is looked at. It can be seen that parents' or relatives' provision of accommodation is a way of reducing students' expenses and therefore their income needs.

After this initial analysis a focus is set on students maintaining their own households (i. e. students not living with parents/relatives). This is for the purposes of data robustness. For students maintaining their own households it can be assumed that their assessment of the income-mix is more robust because they are largely responsible for the management of their own finances. This situation cannot be taken as a given for students living with family/relatives since a large proportion of their support is intangible (free food and rent).[1]

The range of total monthly income in each country is then analysed in order to better understand the financial heterogeneity of the respective national student bodies. This exercise is also carried out by socio-economic background with some – at first sight – rather surprising results. One problem with viewing total income is how to assess the sufficiency for a national student. A comparison between average income of the students with the lowest income level and the legal minimum monthly wage (in countries with such regulations) provides a general insight into the objective financial situation of national students.

Each of the three major income sources has advantages and disadvantages for individual students and it is interesting to attempt to compare students' funding strategies. Of particular political relevance is the relative share of monthly income provided by parents and state support. In combination with an analysis of job income, it is possible to provide some insight into the utilisation of gainful employment alongside studies as a compensation for missing support from parents and the state.

State assistance

State assistance is an object of state policy, since its design, its amount and the share of receivers are all defined by the state to support specific groups. The terms "state" or "state assistance" are used in the following subtopics interchangeably and there is no difference between them. In either case, student support from any public source is meant, i. e. state, state-aided or state-initiated on national or regional levels. Student support is a financial contribution from this source, which a student receives directly precisely because he/she is a student.

Analyses of state support schemes on a European level are often based on differences in formal structures of various schemes. The EUROSTUDENT dataset is based on students' responses to survey questions and therefore has the advantage of capturing the reality as experienced (or at least perceived) by the students themselves. On the other hand, since the data is from surveys, it does not include any forms of indirect support. This means that the full state investment in state assistance and the multitude of support initiatives are underestimated (see Box 5.1).

In the following sections, state assistance is analysed by its key design features. Firstly, what is the share of recipients and how large a contribution to their monthly income does the support make? Secondly, is there evidence of targeting state support by socio-economic criteria or which alternative criteria are used to allocate funding?

1 *Such indirect support is also to be found for students not living with their parents/relatives. See expenses for rent in Chapter 6.*

The design and implementation of a student support scheme is influenced by at least two further (conceptual) factors: whether a student is primarily seen as a member of a family or as an independent person and whether support is primarily needs-based or merits-based. These differences go some way to explaining the differences seen in the comparative statistics.

Finally, the share of non-repayable student support is analysed and an attempt is made to assess this feature in view of the other characteristics of various student support schemes.

Data and interpretation

Rent for accommodation is a major component of student expenses and living at home is a significant indirect subsidy

The level of student income is closely related to the level of necessary expenses and one of the most significant costs for a student is accommodation (> *Chapter 4*). It is, therefore, interesting to compare the direct income of students living in their own household (i. e. student halls, flat, flat share) with students, who continue to live with their parents or relatives during their studies.

Figure 5.1 shows the absolute (nominal) total monthly income in Euros, which students have on average by accommodation form. These amounts are influenced both by income sources (e. g. whether a large share of the student body follows gainful employment besides their studies > *Chapter 7*) and by necessary expenditures (> *Chapter 6*). The analysis here focuses on differences by accommodation form. Comparing the countries, the data show a substantial range of income differences between students living with their parents/relatives and those in own lodgings or halls of residence. In Portugal, the former group has 58% less direct income at their disposal than the latter; in Latvia students living with their families have only 5% less direct income. This comparison shows the real monetary value of continuing to live with parents or relatives: the necessity for direct monetary support is significantly reduced.

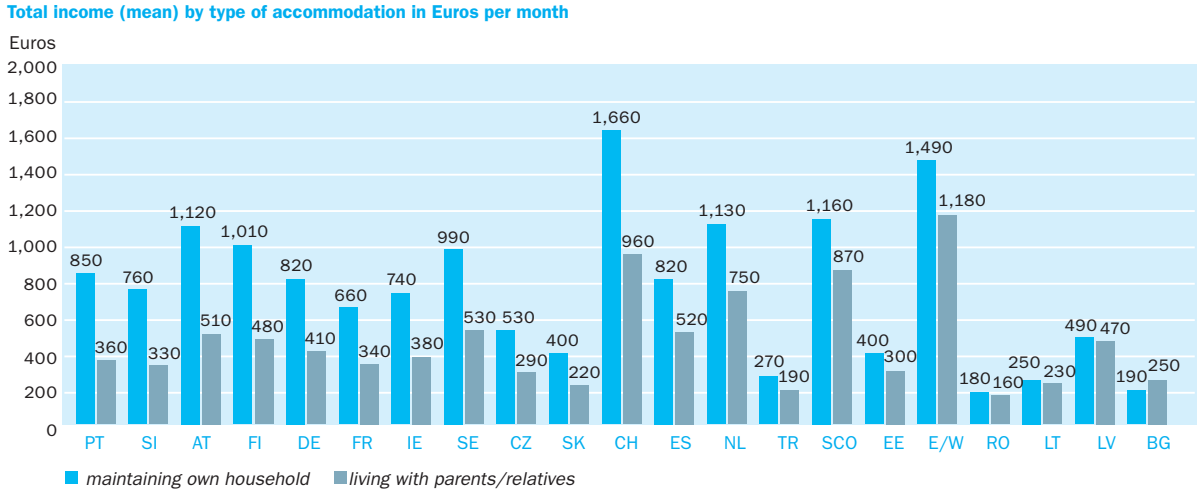
Seen from one perspective, the provision of accommodation by parents or relatives is a form of indirect support. In some countries and certainly for some student groups this is the only type of support which parents or relatives can provide. The disadvantage of this type of provision is, however, that students are tied to their parents' place of residence and hence are limited in their choice of study provider.

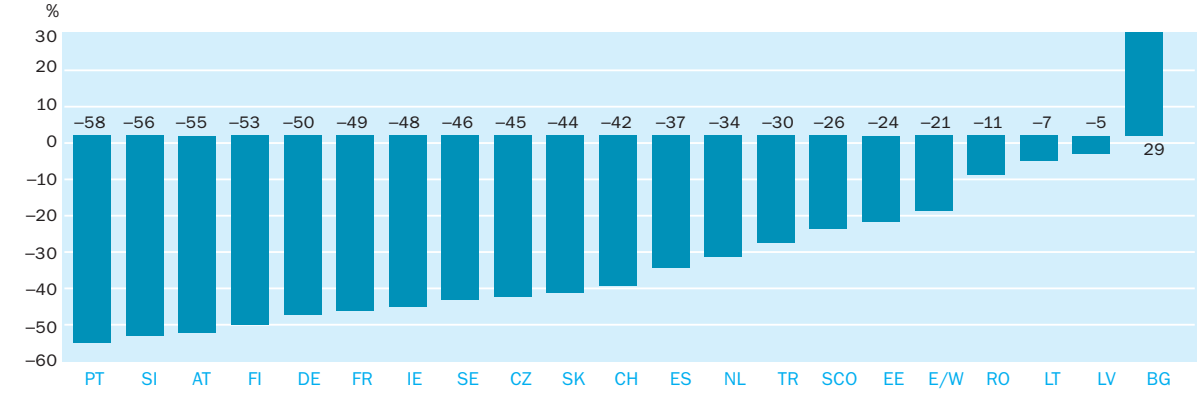
Remarkably, students in Bulgaria who live with parents or relatives have a higher income than their counterparts. The country report (National Profile of Bulgaria) explains this by the higher amount of income which these students earn to supplement other income sources. Interestingly, income from state support (on a low level) and family support (on a high level) are comparable for both groups. This example shows that it is important to investigate differences in the income mix by student group (see next section).

The difference between student groups by type of accommodation may also partly result from an underestimation of total monthly income on the part of students living

Fig. 5.1

Total income by type of accommodation – Difference in total income between students living with parents or relatives and students living in own households





Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 27 & 28. No data IT, NO.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."
Note: Financial amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10 Euros. Maintaining own household = flat, flat share, student hall.

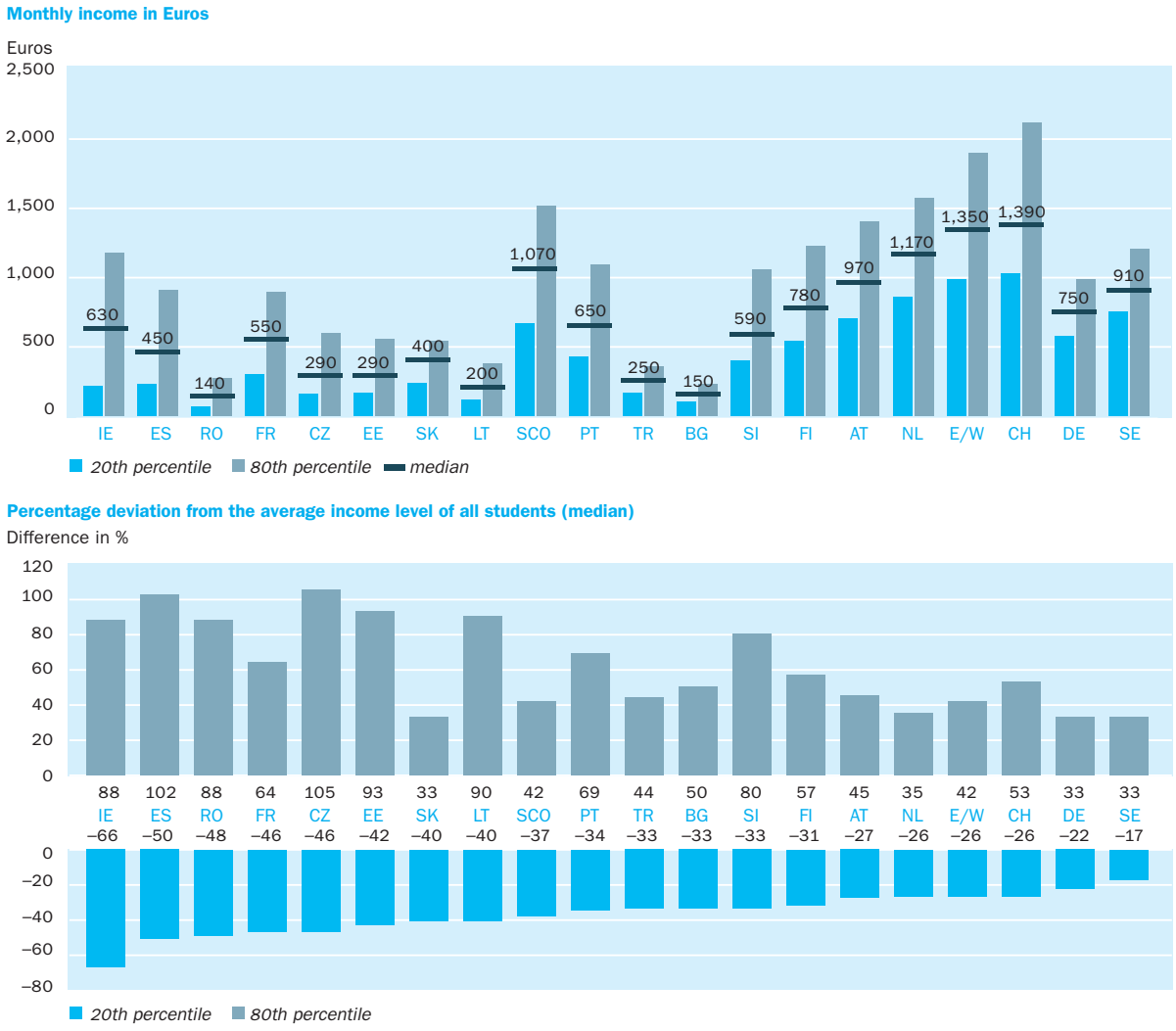
with their parents or relatives. In contrast to students who maintain their own households, the former group is not fully responsible for the management of its personal finances. For this reason, the following sections will focus on income issues related to the latter group – students maintaining their own households (i. e. living in flats, flat shares, student halls).

Total monthly income may be less than half of the average amount for certain students

The student body in different countries may be more or less homogenous in financial terms. In order to view the distribution of income levels between students in each country, each student's income can by ranked between the lowest and the highest levels and then ascribed to percentiles. The result is an inclining line from the first 10%

Fig. 5.2

Range of total income – Difference between median and 20th and 80th income percentiles of a student population in % (students maintaining own household)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 27. No data IT, LV, NO. Financial amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10 Euros. EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

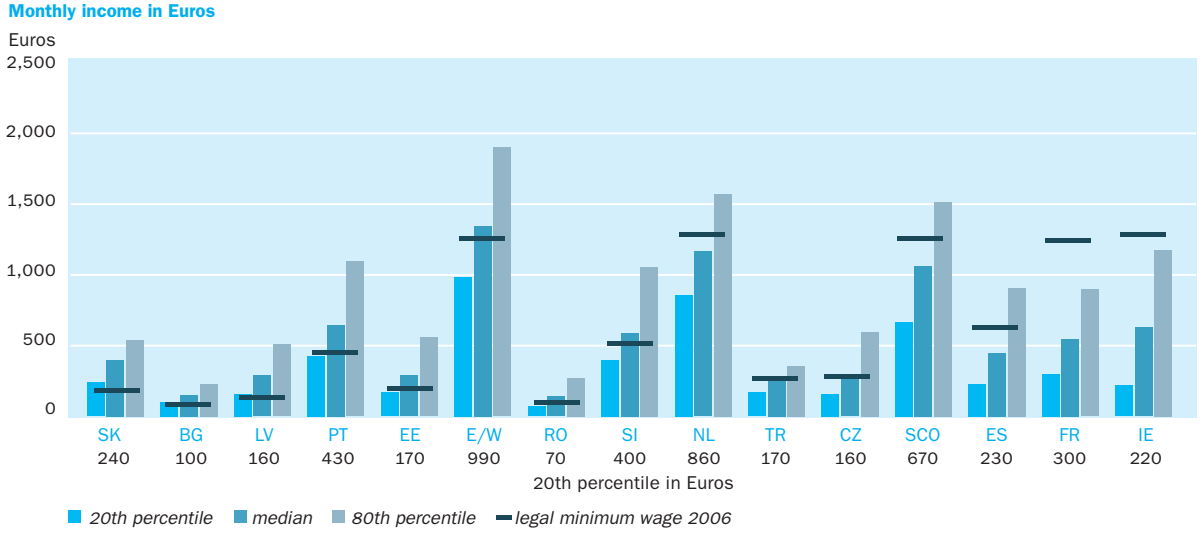
of students with the lowest income levels up to the last 90% of students with the highest levels. This data can be seen for each country in the National Profiles.

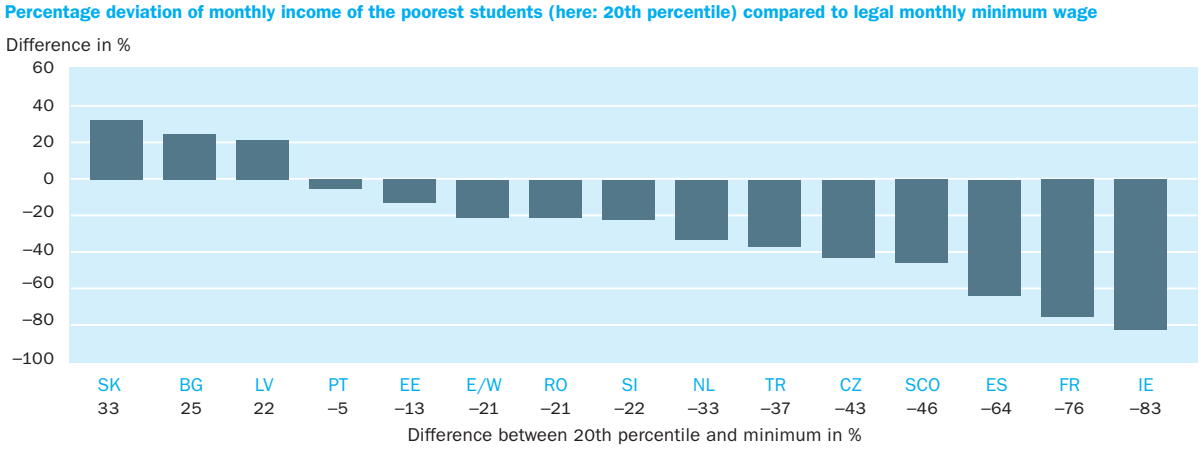
Figure 5.2 highlights the difference in income levels between three income groups for each country – the first 20% (20th percentile), half-way point between all income levels (i. e. the median value) and the 80th percentile. Data is both presented in Euros and as a percentage of deviation from the median income in order to facilitate a cross-country comparison.

In Ireland, for instance, those 20% of students, who are in the top income group (i. e. at the 80th percentile or beyond) have at least 88% more income than the average stu-

Fig. 5.3

Difference between legal monthly minimum wage and total income of students in 20th income percentile for selected countries (students maintaining own households)





Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 27 & Eurostat data for 2006. No data AT, CH, DE, FI, IT, LT, NO, SE.
Financial amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10 Euros.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

dent; those 20% of students, who are in the lowest income group shown here (20th percentile) have at least 66% less than the average student. The income difference between the median and the 20th percentile is highest in Ireland and Spain, followed closely by Romania, France, the Czech Republic and Estonia, whilst the smallest difference can be seen in Sweden and Germany, followed by Switzerland, England/Wales and the Netherlands.

It is difficult to gauge the effects of a large diversity in the financial means of students, but it can certainly be assumed that the larger the diversity, the more heterogeneous the university experience (study experience and daily life) will be for individual students.

This diversity reveals little about the sufficiency of income levels in the countries. One method of assessing sufficiency is to compare the level of income of the poorest students with the legal monthly minimum wage (for those countries with such regulations) as an expression of the level of income deemed necessary each month in a particular country. In general, minimum wages are set at less than half of the average gross earnings. Thus, whilst the national minimum wages in each country may be based on different criteria and assumptions, they can be seen as an indicator for an acceptable monthly income level in the respective country (figure 5.3).[2]

It is no surprise that the poorest students in all but three countries have a monthly wage level, which is lower than the national minimal wage. Additionally, it is possible to group the countries for which data is available into four clusters:

- Slovak Republic, Bulgaria, Latvia and Portugal: In these countries the poorest students have a monthly income near to or in excess of the national monthly minimum wage.
- Estonia, England/Wales, Romania, Slovenia and the Netherlands: In these countries the poorest students have a monthly income which is up to one third lower than the national monthly minimum wage.
- Turkey, Czech Republic, Scotland and Spain: In these countries the poorest students have a monthly income which is between one third and roughly two-thirds lower than the national monthly minimum wage.
- France and Ireland: In these countries the poorest students have a monthly income which is over two-thirds lower than the national monthly minimum wage.

Interestingly, if we instead compare the average monthly income of a student (median) with the minimal legal wage we find that students fall significantly below the minimum wage in only five countries, – the Netherlands, Spain, Scotland, France and Ireland – i. e. countries which have been shown (>*Chapter 3*) to have relatively open higher education systems.

In general, these figures (especially Figure 5.2) reflect the open or elite character of a higher education system, i. e. the more a system widens access to higher education, the more likely it is that it will have to deal with such huge income disparities. At the same time, one of the functions of state support is usually to attempt to put students on equal footing with one another in financial terms and the countries on the right-hand side of the figure seem the least successful at fulfilling this objective.

Students of low socio-economic backgrounds often have a higher monthly income

A look at the difference in total income by parents' highest level of educational attainment (as an indicator for social background and socio-economic resources >*Chapter 3*) also highlights the need for a better understanding of the characteristics behind such general categories as high and low educational background in international comparisons.

2 *It should be noted that only looking at state support as a direct cash flow to the student often leads to an underestimation of the total amount of state support. One part of state support for students may be provided in the form of non-cash (e.g. cheaper accommodation), which has the effect of reducing a student's monthly financial requirement. See also Box 5.1, below.*

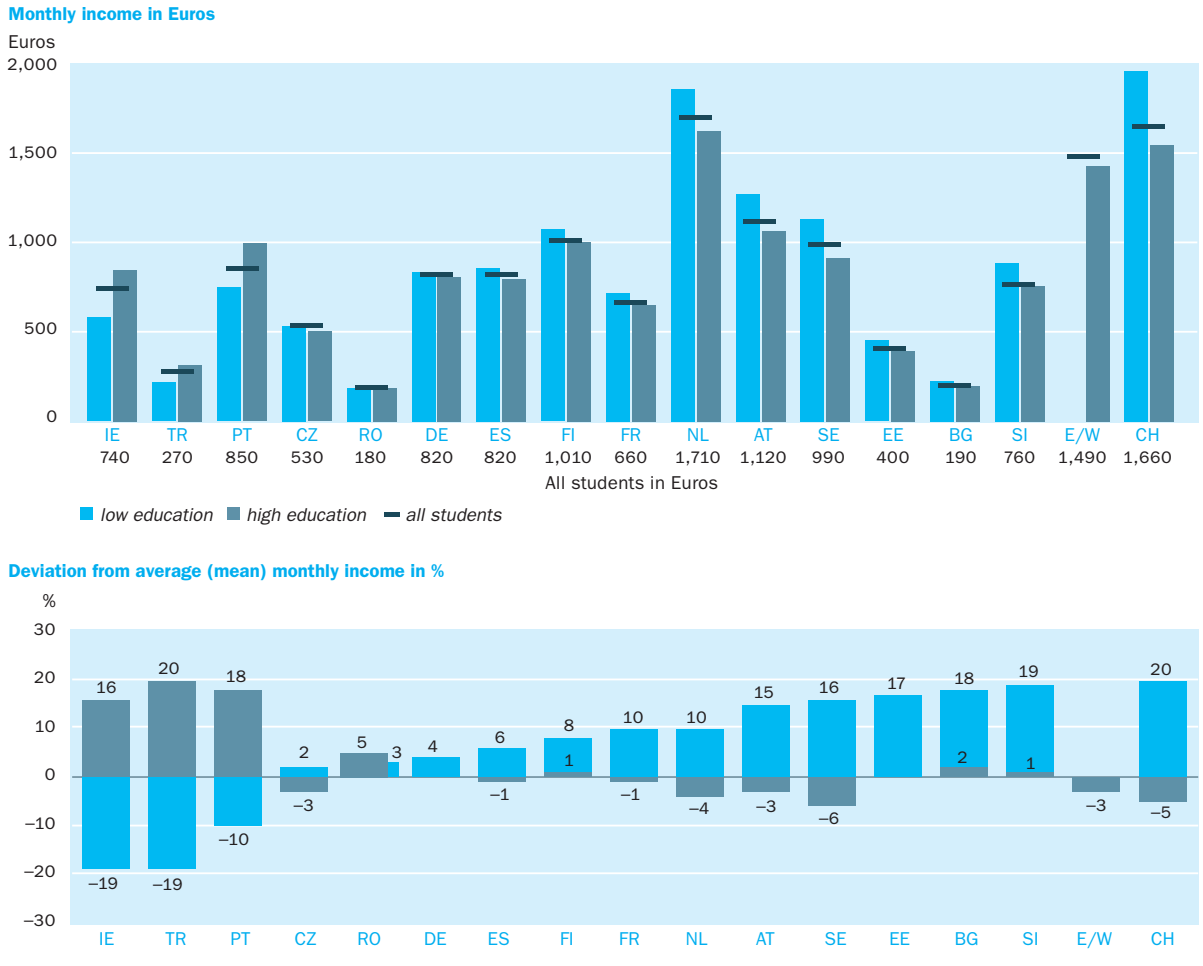
Figure 5.4 compares the difference in total income (of students maintaining their own household) for students with low and high educational backgrounds to average total income of all students.

As can be expected, in Ireland, Turkey and Portugal students with low-educated parents have a lower total income than the average student (for Portugal: 10% lower) and students whose parents have attained high educational levels have a higher income than the average student (for Portugal: 18% higher).

However, in most other countries, the large differences we saw in income levels in the previous section clearly cannot be fully ascribed to socio-economic characteristics. Indeed, with the exception of the aforementioned countries, the average student and students with a high educational background tend to have similar income levels, whilst

Fig. 5.4

Difference in total income by parental education (all students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 36. No data IT, LT, LV, NO, SCO, SK. E/W: no data on low educational background. Financial amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10 Euros.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash).", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

those from a low educational background have much higher income levels; in Switzerland they have an additional 20% above the average income level.

This result has been commented upon in the National Profiles (cf. Switzerland) and is largely related to the higher age of students from a low educational background who frequently study part-time and tend to earn more of their income through paid employment.

For many countries, this effect can be illustrated by a simple chart. Figure 5.5 shows how the difference in income levels between students of a low social background and the average monthly income for all students (on the x-axis) is related to the average age of students in each country (on the y-axis).

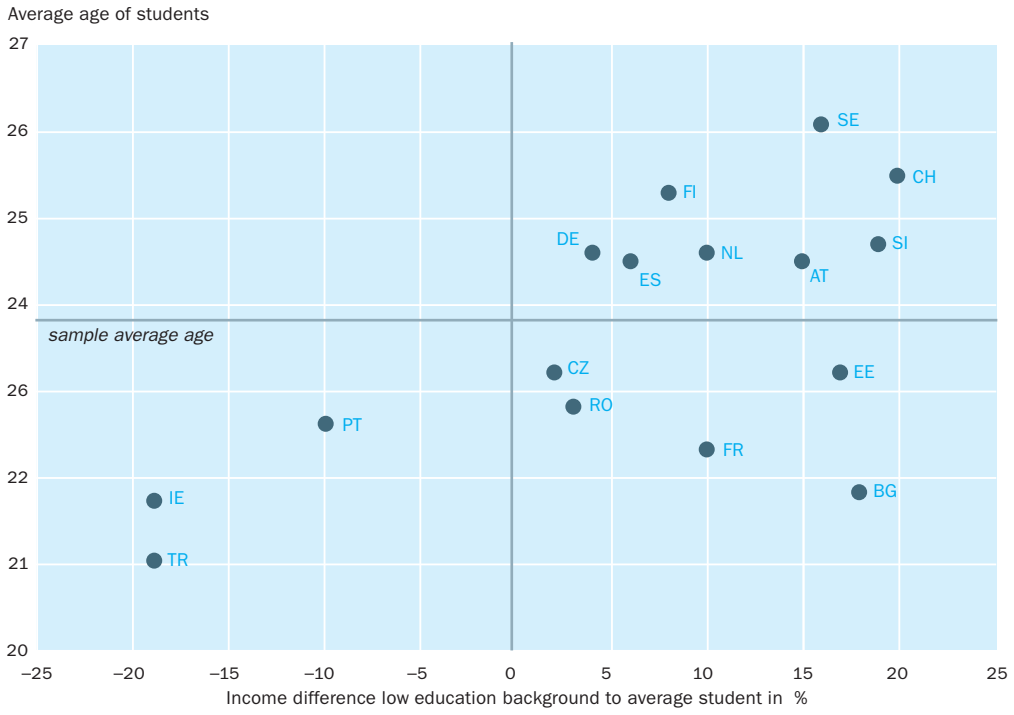
In Turkey, Ireland and Portugal the student body as a whole is young, whilst the opposite is true for Sweden and Switzerland (> *Chapter 1*). A further analysis of income sources by social background provides more insight into these issues (Fig. 5.8).

Countries can be grouped into four clusters by dominant income source

In Figure 5.6 the income mix for the total monthly income of an average student (maintaining own household) is shown. The top chart emphasises the dominant source of income, whilst the bottom chart shows the contribution of each of the three main

Fig. 5.5

Difference in total monthly income between students from a low education background and average students in percent (Reference value: all students maintaining own households) and average age of student population in years

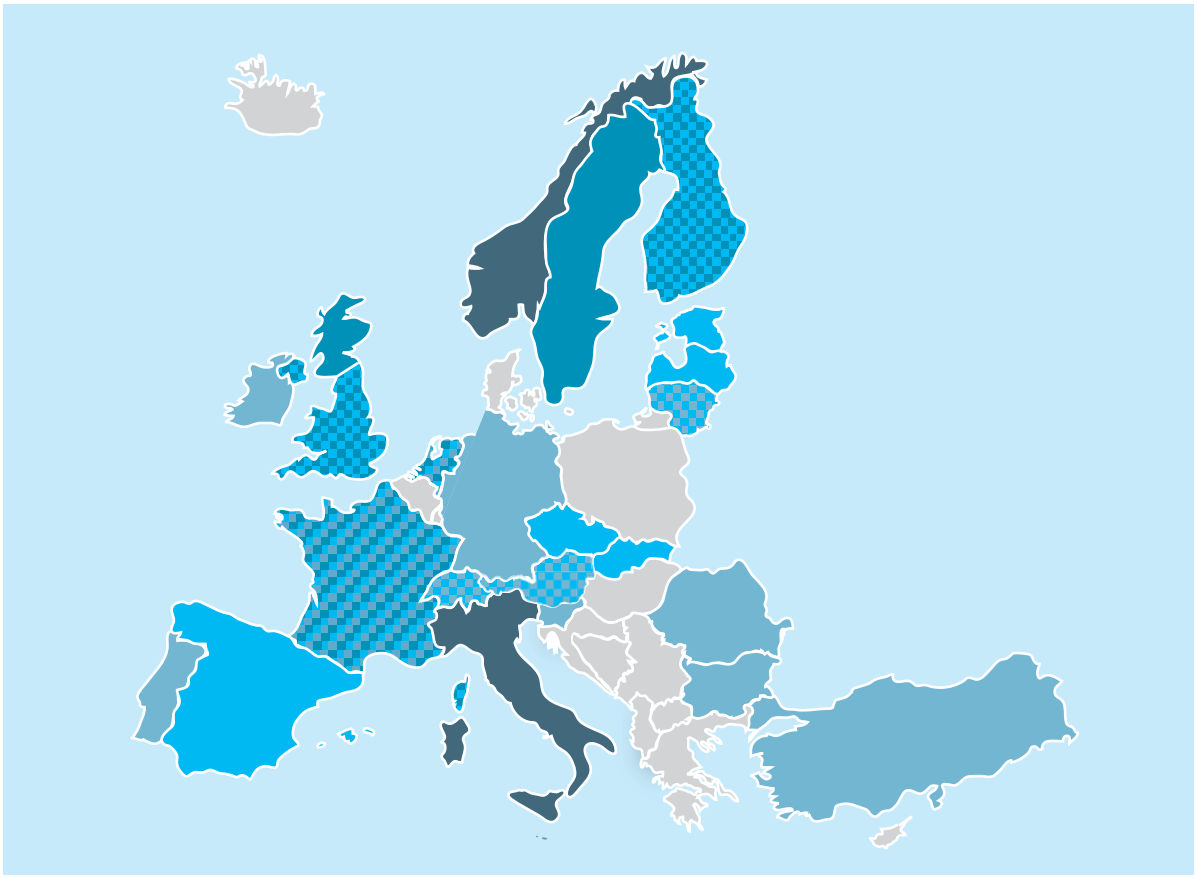


Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 27 & 1. No data E/W, IT, LT, LV, NO, SCO, SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash).", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

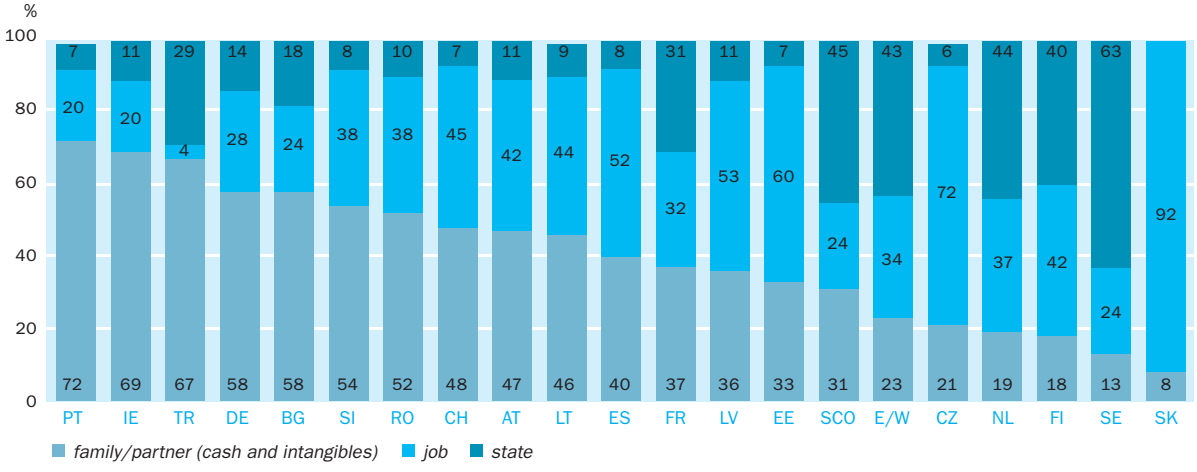
Fig. 5.6

Composition of total income by source – all students (students maintaining own households)

Dominant source of total student income



Contribution of individual income sources to total student income in %



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 27 & 29. No data IT, NO. Note: To simplify comparability, the category "other" is not shown in the chart (i.e. all values minus "other" = 100%). The values are: PT 2%, IE 4%, TR 2%, DE 8%, BG 4%, SI 2%, RO 19%, CH 4%, AT 10%, LT 3%, ES 5%, FR 0%, LV 8%, EE 14%, SCO 6%, CZ 6%, NL 16%, FI 10%, E/W 12%, SE 3%, SK 4%

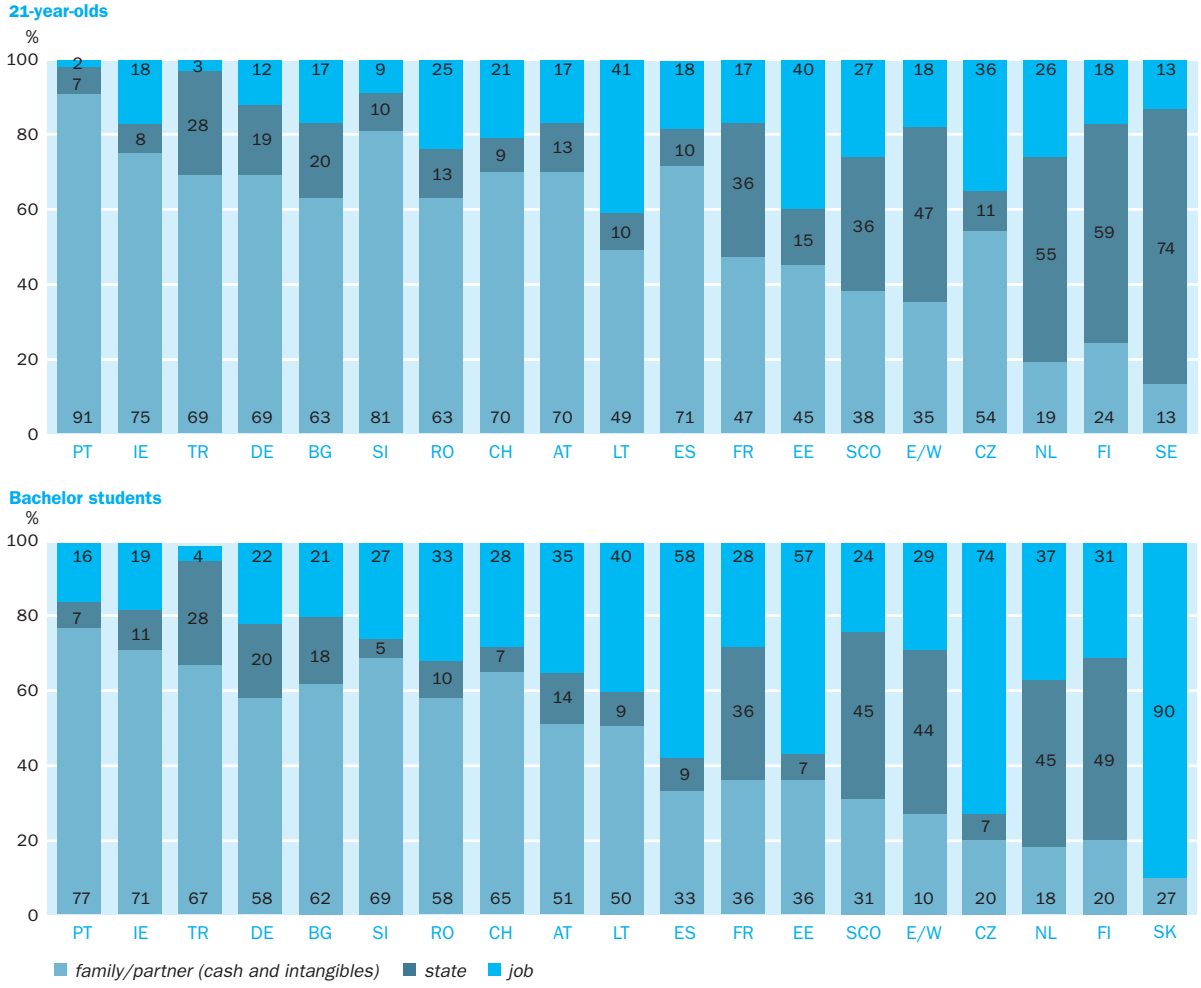
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

sources of income to a national student's monthly income. As shown in the top chart, countries may be grouped by dominant income source:

- Portugal, Ireland and Turkey: In these countries family/partner is the dominant source, which covers over two-thirds of total income. For a further four countries this source remains dominant.
- Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Spain: Job income covers over half of total income.
- Sweden and Scotland: In these countries state support is a major source of income. This source covers well over one third of total income in a further three countries.
- In the countries Austria, Switzerland and Lithuania, a combination of family support and job income together make up the dominant income sources. In Finland, England/Wales and the Netherlands it is the combination job income and state support. In France each source makes up around one third of students' total income.

Fig. 5.7

Composition of total income in percent for 21-year-olds and Bachelor students (students maintaining own households)



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 27. Top chart: no data IT, LV, NO, SK. Bottom chart: no data IT, LV, NO, SE*
Note: The category "other" is not shown in the graphic.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", question 3.1 "Which qualification are you currently studying for?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

Besides these four groups of countries by dominant income source, the figure also highlights the overall importance of job income for most countries. Its significance for total income only lies below one-fifth in one country – Turkey.

A large drop in the significance of job income and a parallel rise in the importance of family and state support can be seen, if only 21 year old students in each country are observed – see Figure 5.7. It would therefore seem that the combination of state and family support is particularly important for younger students. Focusing on students of Bachelor programmes instead of all students (bottom chart) shows only a slight difference to the general picture.

The income-mix highlights the compensation function of job income for students from low-educated families

For a closer look at the different income-mixes by social background (using parents' educational attainment as a proxy value), we will firstly focus on the contribution by family and state to a student's income. Due to the general importance of these sources of income, they can be referred to collectively as "base funding".

Figure 5.8 shows that base funding constitutes more than two-thirds of students' income from low education backgrounds in seven countries (top chart, e. g. 58 + 37 = 95% for Turkey) and in twelve countries for their counterparts with high education backgrounds (bottom chart, e. g. 74 + 22 = 96% for Turkey).[3] The difference is largely driven by family support. This source makes up over 50% of students' income for students with a high education background in nine countries (Ireland, Turkey, Portugal, Germany, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania, Austria and Switzerland), which is only true for two countries (Portugal and Turkey) for students from low-educated families. However, even in these cases, the financial value of this base funding is lower for students from low-educated families (see Fig. 5.9).

Students from low education backgrounds receive a higher share of base funding via state support. State support makes up over one third of total monthly income for students from low education backgrounds for seven countries (Sweden, Scotland, France, Finland, Turkey, Bulgaria and the Netherlands). This is the case for only four countries with regard to students from high education backgrounds (Sweden, Scotland, Finland and the Netherlands).

The least change between the two student groups is shown for Finland, Sweden and Scotland. In fact, in each of these cases, students with low education backgrounds receive a slightly higher base funding than students from high education families (see Fig. 5.9).

The third income stream for students is job earnings. As mentioned above, this stream can be characterised by four aspects:

- It enables students to acquire income to compensate for missing base funding.
- Students may, additionally, see it as a way of supplementing their income in order to cover non-necessary expenditures.

3 *For E/W there is only data on students from families with high education.*

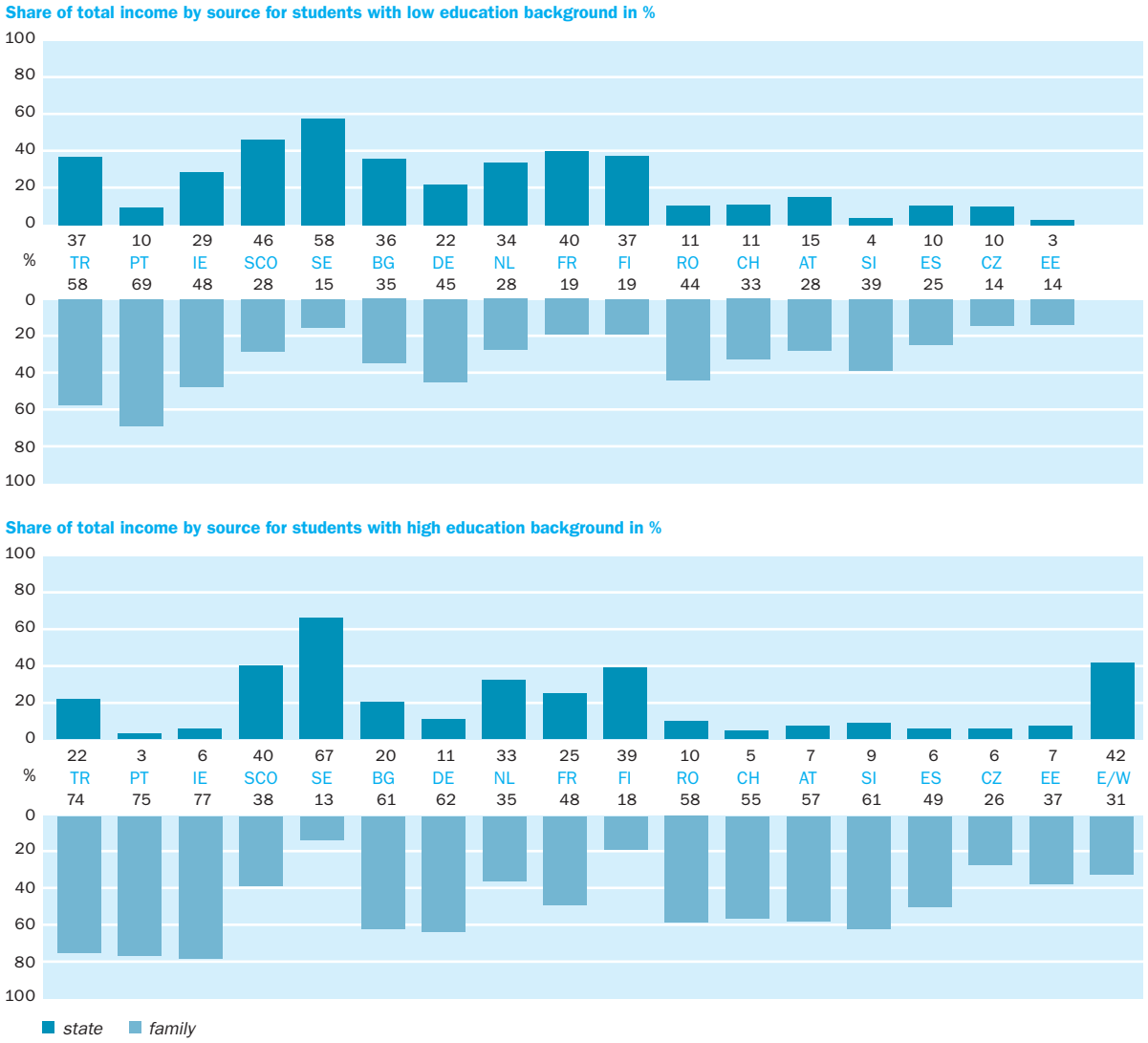
- Gainful employment can be a way of acquiring contact and soft-skills necessary for the transition to the labour market after graduation.
- Finally, irrespective of purpose, taking up employment has consequences for the amount of time available for students to follow their study programmes.

A comparison of the contribution of job earnings to a student's total income by parents' education (see Figure 5.10) confirms that students from a low education background rely on a higher share of income from this source than their social counterparts in every country but one, Portugal.

On the other hand, we have no way of judging the necessity of this supplementary income nor of judging whether this social difference regarding job earnings could be

Fig. 5.8

Comparison of importance of sources of base funding to total income (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 36. No data IT, LT, LV, NO, SK. E/W: no data on low educated parents.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash).", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Fig 5.9

Comparison of importance of base funding (Euro), selected countries

	Monthly base funding (Euro) by education background	
	low	high
Portugal	591	764
Turkey	206	310
Sweden	806	714
Finland	548	513
Scotland	795	788

Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 36

reduced through provision of base funding at a higher level. There is, however, a clear consequence for a student's time budget, which is made up of study-related and work-related time. The time-related consequences of working for students and how they assess this situation is also described in this report (> *Chapter 7*).

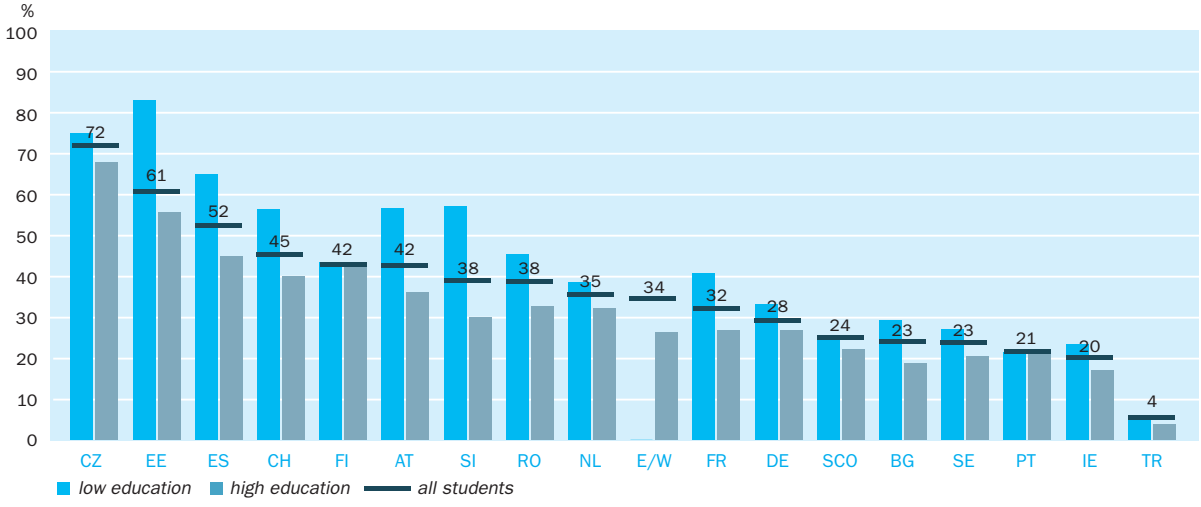
State support can be differentiated by the share of recipients and the contribution of this support to their total income

Beyond the figures on the relative importance of various sources of income for the average student, it is informative to analyse the importance for recipients of the respective income sources. The country-specific values for each of these sources are available in the National Profiles. In this section we focus on direct state support because of its central role as policy instrument.

It should be noted that the analysis of state support only captures support which is directly received by students. Indirect support such as financial benefits to students'

Fig. 5.10

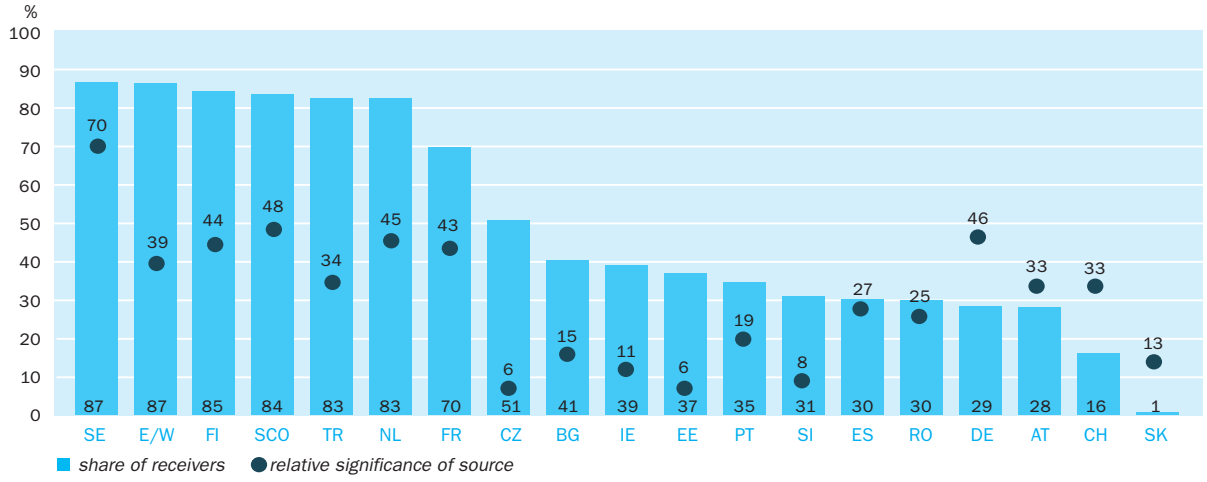
Contribution of monthly job income to total income by parents' education (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 36 without "other". No data IT, LT, LV, NO, SK. E/W: no data on low educated parents.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash).", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Fig. 5.11

Significance of state support for student recipients – Share of receivers and relative contribution to receivers' income (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopics 27 & 30. No data IT, LT, LV, NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

parents or discounted food, accommodation or medical insurance is not included (see Box 5.1, below).

One of the most discussed aspects of state support is the share of students who receive such support. Two types of system are often compared:[4]

- Universal financial support based on the principle of financial independence with respect to parents: Under this type, support is provided to a majority of students irrespective of their parents' economic or social situation. If a means test is made, it is based on the student's income alone.
- Targeted support according to parental income based on the principle of financial dependence with respect to parents: Under this type, parents are seen as the first instance for student support. Following an assessment of a students' parents' financial situation, a certain share of students may be entitled to state support.

A third type is targeted to a certain share of students and it is not based on need, but on merit – i. e. on students' performance.

Figure 5.11 shows on the left-hand y-axis a comparison of the share of recipients of state support. It can be seen that seven countries provide state support to a large majority (over 70%) of the national student population – Sweden, England/Wales, Finland, Scotland, Turkey, the Netherlands and France.

On the other hand, seven other countries provide targeted support to less than one third of their student body – Slovenia, Spain, Romania, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Slovak Republic.

4 *cf. European Commission, Key Data on Higher Education in Europe 2007, p. 17.*

On the right-hand y-axis, the relative significance of state support for student recipients in each country is shown. Limitations in the international data prevent a direct reference to the contribution of state support to total income for the actual recipient. As a work-around, the real financial amount received is related to the average income level for all students and expressed as a percentage share. This data shows that a large group of the observed countries provide recipients of state support with an important source of income.

It can be estimated that this source makes up over 40% of a recipients' monthly income in Sweden, Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, France and England/Wales. Within this group, Sweden provides the most of its students with support (87%) and Germany the least (29%).

State support is not always targeted according to students' social background

As has been shown above, many countries provide only a targeted group of students with state support. The EUROSTUDENT data can be used to assess the extent of the use of social criteria (with the proxy of parents' educational attainment) for allocating such funding.

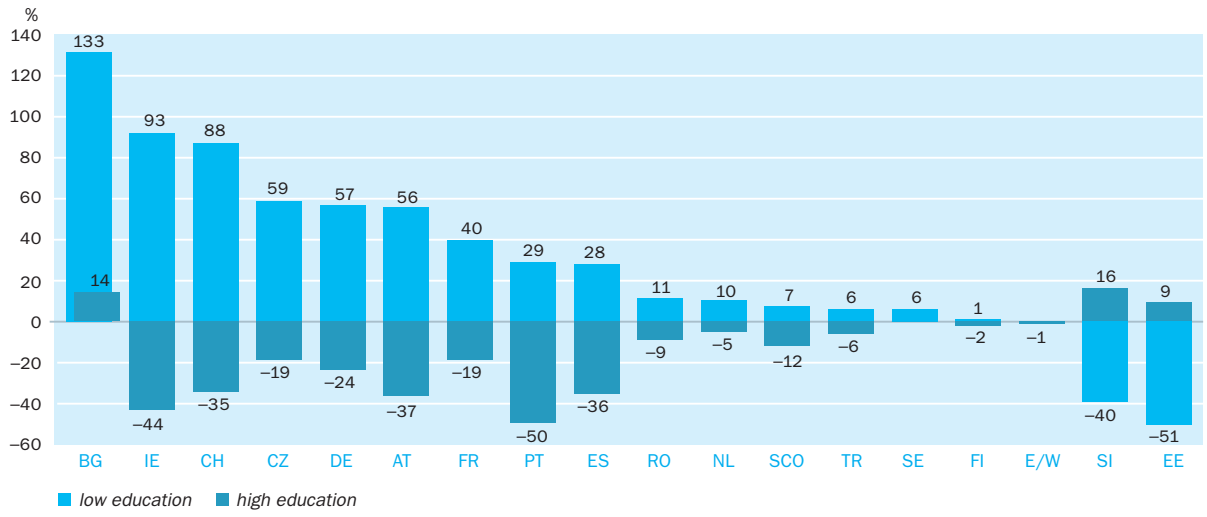
Figure 5.12 shows that targeting by social background is most extensive in Bulgaria, Ireland and Switzerland. Irish students, for instance, from low-educated families receive 93% more state support and high-educated families 44% less than the average student.

A middle group, where social background appears to make little difference, is visible containing Romania, Scotland, the Netherlands, Turkey, England/Wales, Sweden and

Fig. 5.12

Difference between income from state support by parents' education in % (all students maintaining own households)

Deviation from state support for average student in %



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 36. No data IT, LT, LV, NO, SK

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash).", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

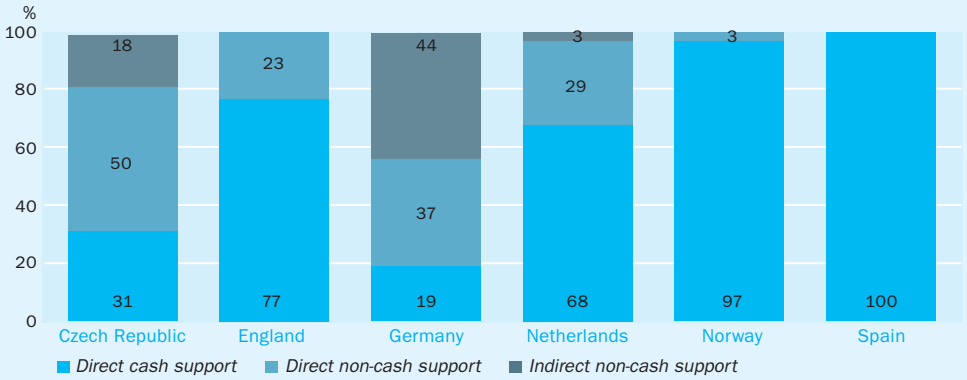
Box 5.1

Significance of indirect student support, various countries

Public subsidies for students of higher education are allocated through various paths. The EUROSTUDENT dataset only includes information on the amount which a student sees as direct support from his/her parents or the state. A recent comparative study has analysed the streams of public subsidies, which are meant for students, in six countries – Czech Republic, England, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Spain (see chart). Three main streams were found:

- Direct cash support: Cash which is allocated directly to students. This is included in EUROSTUDENT figures.
- Non-cash support: This support has the effect of decreasing students' expenditure, e. g. subsidised accommodation, transport, health insurance or meals. This type of support is reflected in the provision of student halls (> *Chapter 4*), but otherwise neglected in the EUROSTUDENT dataset.
- Indirect cash support: Cash (e. g. prolonged child benefit) or tax discounts which are allocated to students' parents in order to help them assist their student children. Under the assumption that parents do pass on this support to their student children, this would, for instance, be reflected in the German figures for EUROSTUDENT as parental support.

Composition of public support to households by type of support (in %)



The analysis carried out also included an assessment of the total financial value of these streams of public subsidy by socio-economic group. The table shows that the high levels of indirect cash support and direct non-cash support in Germany and the Czech Republic have the effect of levelling out the targeted supported provided directly to students of low socio-economic backgrounds.

Total public subsidies by socio-economic background (100 = support for low socio-economic background)

	low	lower medium	higher medium	high
Czech Republic	100	89	98	96
England	100	102	79	57
Germany	100	99	90	90
Netherlands	100	88	85	78
Norway	100	91	96	97
Spain	100	69	70	18

Source: Schwarzenberger, A. (2008, ed.): Public/private funding of higher education: a social balance. HIS, Hanover.

Finland. As shown in the previous section, with the exception of Romania, all of these countries provide the majority of their students with support.

With regard to Estonia and Slovenia, the results may be explained by the fact that social criteria are not used to allocate funds, but merit criteria. Students from high-educated families appear to be inadvertently advantaged by these criteria. The National Profile for Estonia additionally notes that the group of students from a low social background is very small in Estonia (5% of the student population).

Make-up of state support: Some countries offer generous state support, but it must be repaid after graduation

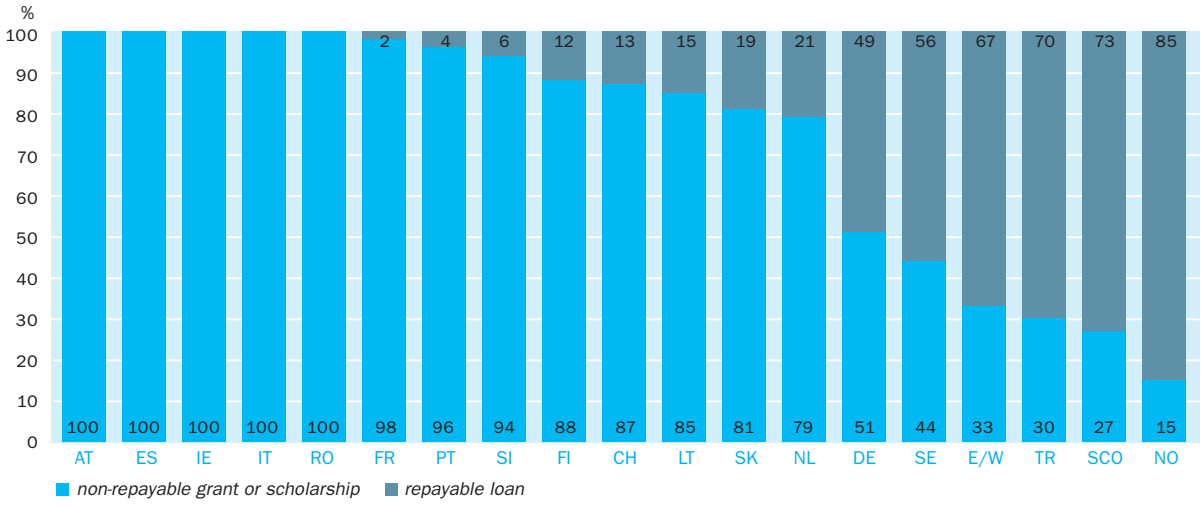
A further major design issue concerning student funding schemes is the determination of the share of support which is given to the student as a non-repayable sum. Figure 5.13 shows the share of state support which is non-repayable. Since the systems in each country are slightly different, students were asked to give income data both concerning national state grant schemes and scholarship schemes, which are often provided at local or institutional level. Here we see the advantage of student data providing information from the "receiver perspective", since the effect of both schemes can be seen together.

Three country groups can be differentiated:

- Norway, Scotland, Turkey and England/Wales: In these countries the share of non-repayable support constitutes up to one third of the total support.
- Sweden and Germany: In these countries the non-repayable share is around one half (44% and 51%, respectively).
- 13 countries: The largest share of observed countries provides state support with a non-repayable component higher than two-thirds of the total support.

Fig. 5.13

Make-up of state support – Share of non-repayable support (all students)



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, subtopic 34. No data BG, CZ, EE, LV*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

The determination of the share of support which is non-repayable may be seen as a policy measure. The question is how much of student costs is covered through providing supplementary funds and how much is provided as a loan, which provides students with temporary financial liquidity, but only postpones these costs for the students until after their graduation.

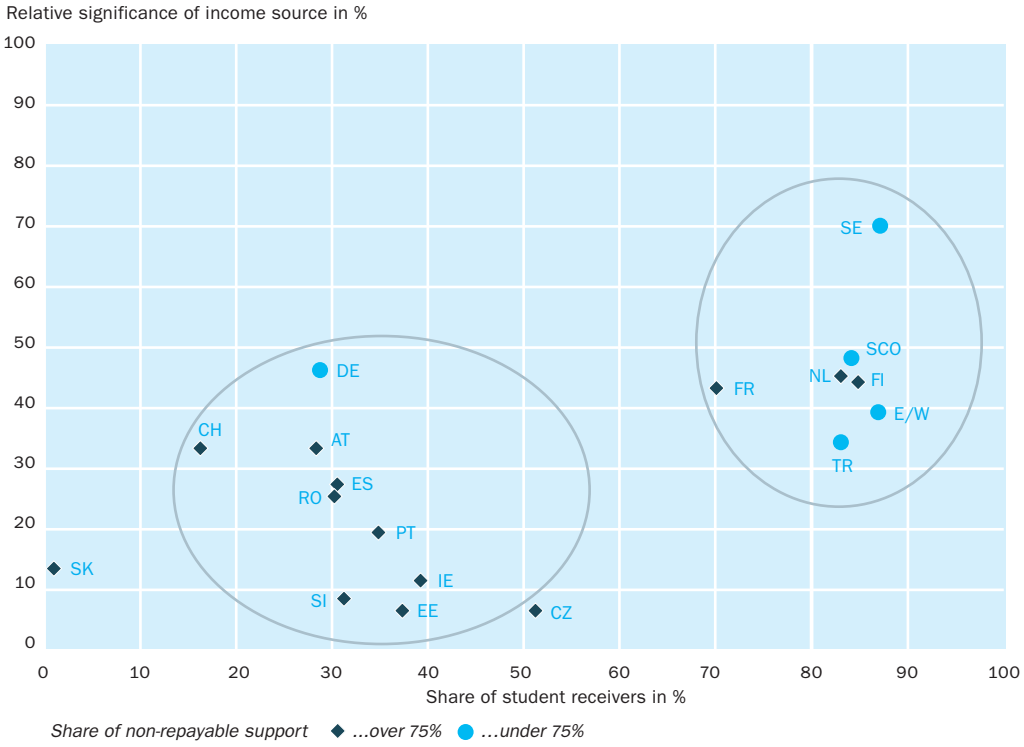
The combination of determining the share of non-repayable support, the share of student recipients (x-axis) and the significance of this support for the recipients' total budget (y-axis) can be seen in Figure 5.14. This figure combines the data from Figures 5.11 and 5.13 in order to view all aspects of a state support scheme.

It appears that Scotland and Sweden, which have schemes with relatively low non-repayable components, reach a high share of the student population (over 80%) and are significant contributors to the recipients' income (it makes up over 40% of recipients income). The Netherlands, France and Finland provide schemes with a similar coverage and significance, but with a much more generous non-repayable component of state support.

On the other hand, eleven countries provide support which has a comparatively low recipient quota (under 40%) and a low level of significance of student' incomes (also

Fig. 5.14

Share of receivers of respective source of income and relative contribution to receivers' income (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, subtopics 27 & 30. No data BG, IT, LT, LV, NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal (cash)."

Box 5.2

Conditions of repayment of student loans to meet living costs of full-time students, selected countries

Rate of interest	Method of repayment: Proportional to income post-graduation	Method of repayment: Not proportional to income post-graduation
At the market rate		RO
At a lower than market rate		NL, FI, SE, ES
At a rate equal to inflation	UK (E/W and SCO)	TR
No interest		DE, FR, SK

Source: European Commission, Key Data on Higher Education in Europe 2007, p.95

In the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Turkey and France, where a majority of students receive state support (see Fig. 5.14), the repayment conditions are not related to income levels post-graduation, although the interest rates are lower than market rate. The UK is the only region in this group to offer interest on loans at a rate equal to inflation and to organise repayment on the basis of a graduate's income level. However, in the other countries debt can be reduced or cancelled on formal grounds (such as birth of a child, death, exceptional merit in studies...). Romania is the only country for which data is available in EUROSTUDENT III in which student debts are repayable at market rate. This is likely to be a strategy followed by the Romanian government to facilitate the provision of student support at a low cost to the government (although running costs such as administration of bad debt must be carried).

under 40%), but this support is non-repayable. Germany lies on the outer borders of this group, as just under half of the support must be repaid.

This data, therefore, highlights the different strategies followed by countries with different policy agendas. From a student's standpoint, the schemes offered by Finland, France and the Netherlands are probably the most attractive. The schemes offered by Scotland and Sweden would seem to fulfil the objective of significant state support for most students, whilst minimising the direct costs for the state (at least in the long-term). For students this just postpones their study costs until after graduation.

This means that the real cost for graduates is the amount of repayable support plus the interest payable on this debt. Countries also differ concerning the conditions attached to state support schemes (see Box 5.2). The complicated conditions attached to taking out credit, which is repayable post-graduation, may make such schemes less attractive to risk-averse students, who are often from low socio-economic backgrounds. For this reason, countries offering such schemes must couple them with information policies in order to inform students of the costs and the real benefits of taking out credit.

Chapter 6:
Living expenses and student spending

Key findings

- **Housing costs are students' biggest financial burden in the majority of countries. The range runs from more than 45% (Sweden) down to 10% (Bulgaria) and clusters at around one third of student expenditure. The minimum-maximum differences can be explained by the national combination of different economic development and different standards of living or by different kinds of public support in the respective countries. Further factors are students' age and study location.**
- **On the basis of student surveys, the EUROSTUDENT dataset can provide information on the effect of fees on students' expenditure budget. The rates are highest in Turkey, Bulgaria, Portugal, Lithuania and Estonia where fees account for around one fifth of a student's monthly expenditure.**
- **Students' assessment of the sufficiency of their income is based both on income differences and general expectations. In general, satisfied students have a higher income at their disposal than the dissatisfied. However, it can be assumed that it is not just cash difference which influences students' subjective assessment, but also the different prevailing levels of subjective expectations on a national level.**

Main issues

Students are subject to a multitude of costs which are directly and indirectly related to taking part in higher education. In this section, the previous analysis of income make-up is complemented by an analysis of expenditure structures.

With regard to the problem of the calibration of minimum support for students the main point for reviewing expense and student spending is the question: What is necessary for a student to cover the basic costs of maintenance and studying? The ensuing analysis must be considered as an estimation of the significance of certain types of students' expenditures as students are particularly likely to underestimate their total costs. This is because many expenses are directly covered by students' parents (rents, medical or other insurances) or provided in kind (clothing, study books). Students' information on such goods, therefore, tends to be very rough approximations. More reliable information, however, can be expected from students on two basic expenses: rents and fees.

Following the approach introduced in the previous chapter (>*Chapter 5*), the analysis will highlight the relative significance of these costs by relating them to total expenses in an effort to provide a sensitive international comparison. The Euro values can be found on the EUROSTUDENT website and values in national currency in the individual National Profiles.

The following analysis on expenses concentrates on two aspects.

Types of expenses

All students must cover the costs of accommodation unless they continue to live with their parents/relatives during their studies. Indeed these costs make up a significant share of total living expenses. An analysis of this share of total costs shows how significant this expense is and whether initiatives such as providing discount accommodation (e. g. student halls, >*Chapter 4*) or increasing general state support (>*Chapter 5*) may be most needed. The size of a study location (e. g. small town vs. big city) may also affect these costs and this is, therefore, also looked at in this section.

Tuition fees or similar direct costs tied to participation in higher education (e. g. registration or examination fees) are currently at the forefront of higher education debates. It is, therefore, important to compare these direct costs of participation. It should, however, be noted that not all students in a higher education system pay the same level of fees; some students may have free places and others may pay a fee between a minimum and maximum level. Although average figures are shown here, the background to the fee schemes can be found for each country in the respective National Profiles.

Sufficiency of income

An analysis of students' subjective assessment of the total spending budget using indicators of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of their material well-being is another way of exploring minimum monetary limits of subsistence. Beyond trying to find objective criteria on which to base such an assessment (>*Chapter 5*), the subjective assessment of

a student's own situation is likely to be more holistic and comprehensive. The students' subjective assessment will be juxtaposed with income levels in order to examine the relationship between income amount and judgement of what is deemed as sufficient.

Data and interpretation

Expenses for accommodation make up the major part of the student spending budget. This is why public support in many countries is provided in order to reduce the direct cost of accommodation for a student. Public subsidies may come in two main forms: Either public support is given to the institutions in order to subsidise student halls or students not living with their parents can apply for an extra grant to cover part of their accommodation costs.

Another form of reducing direct expenditure for rent is to stay at home with the family. This option is only given for those students whose parents' home is situated within commuting distance to the university. By sharing the fixed costs of living among the family members, accommodation costs can be reduced to a certain degree. As it is difficult to calculate the real costs per student of living with family or relatives, the cost analysis here will consider only expenses paid by students maintaining their own household (flat, flat share, hall of residence).

Housing costs are students' biggest financial burden in the majority of countries

Figure 6.1 considers the share of total expenditure taken up by accommodation costs. The costs shown here also take account of rents which are paid directly by students' parents.

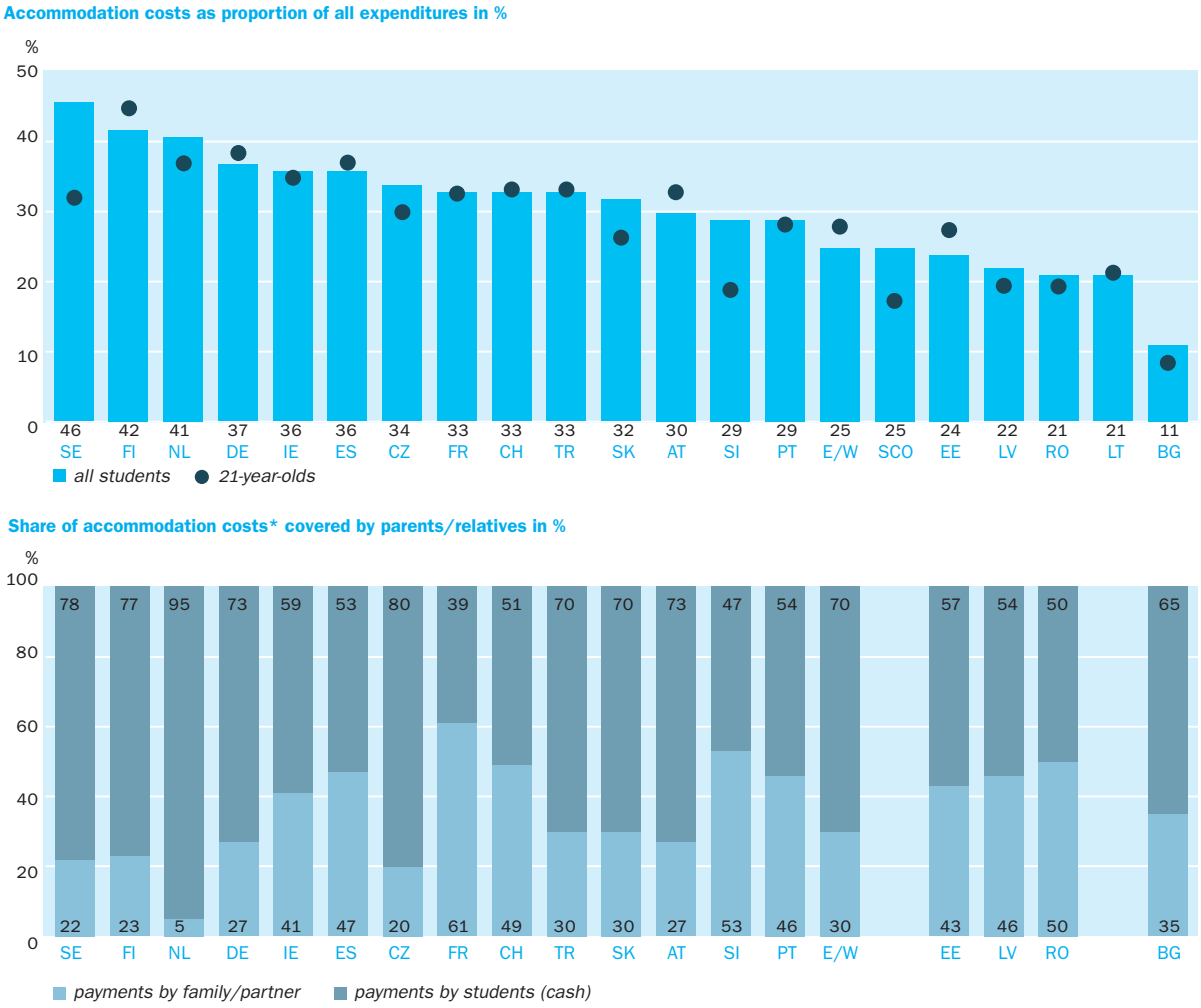
In most of the countries students spend about one third of their income on rent (top chart). A much bigger share has to be covered in the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland), a much smaller share in East European countries like Romania, Lithuania and Bulgaria.

The range runs from 46% (Sweden) down to 11% (Bulgaria). In the latter country – as in other middle-eastern European countries – state-subsidised student-halls are still the dominant modus of accommodation (> *Chapter 4*). In most countries the relative shares cluster at around one third of total expenditures. The minimum-maximum differences can be explained by the national combination of different economic development and different standards of living or by different kinds of public support in the respective countries.

A further relationship which influences the proportion of rents compared with the total budget of expenditures is age. In more than half of the observed countries 21-year-old students spend less money on housing than their counterparts. Under the assumption that these students belong to the youngest in national systems of higher education systems (> *Chapter 1*), this result can be seen to reflect that fact that aspirations for living standards often rise with age. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 6.2, where the share of total expenditure spent on accommodation (x-axis) is plotted against the aver-

Fig. 6.1

Share of total expenditure taken up by accommodation costs in % and share of costs covered by students' parents (students maintaining own households)



Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37 & 25. No data IT, NO. No data on indirect parents' support: LT, SCO.*
**Bottom chart: Only accommodation costs for private rents (i. e. excluding student halls)*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

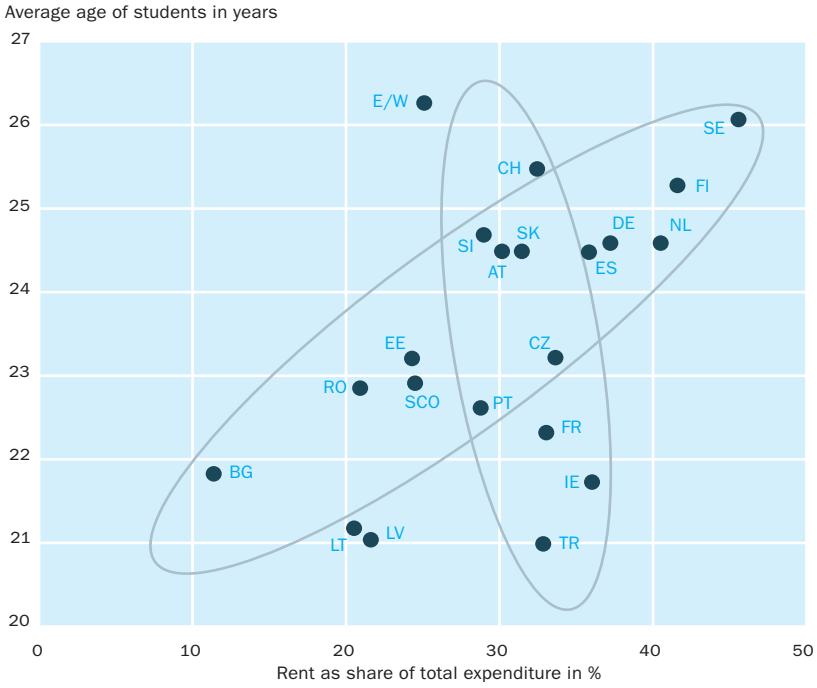
age age (y-axis). One country cluster can be detected, where a higher national average age of students is associated with a higher average share of total costs spent on accommodation.

Another cluster of countries can also be discerned where the ratios appear fixed at a constant rate of around one third of the total expenditures (from Turkey with minimum average age up to Switzerland with high average age). This is likely to be the result of the intervention of public support systems in order to set this share at one third in these countries.

It might be expected that living costs are higher in metropolitan areas than in smaller towns and, therefore, the link between size of study location and accommodation costs is investigated in Figure 6.3 for selected countries, where data is available (see also

Fig. 6.2

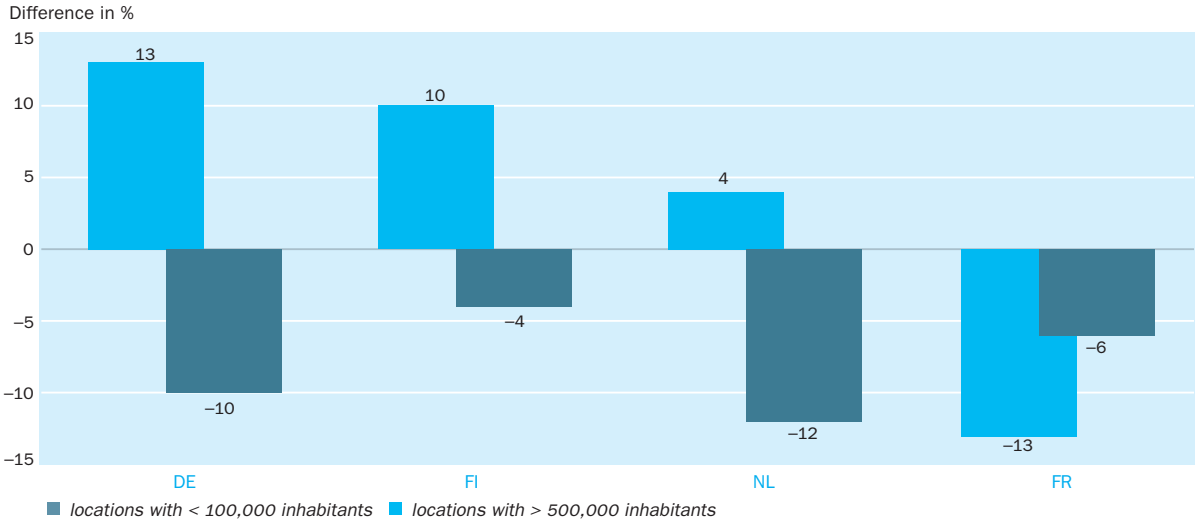
Rent for accommodation as a share of total expenditure (students maintaining own households) by average age of student body



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37 & 1. No data IT, NO. For SCO the data relate to Bachelor students only.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

Fig. 6.3

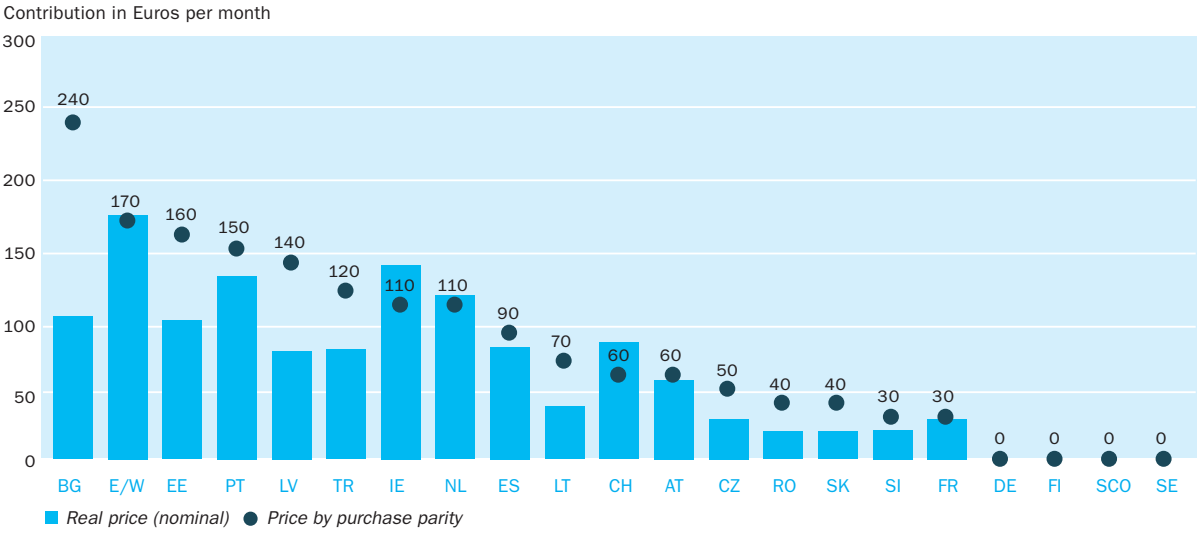
Expenditure for rent by size of study location – Difference in % compared to national average for rent in selected countries (all students)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 38.
Note: Size of study location is number of inhabitants in town or city in which the study location is situated.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense", 3.5 "Please name the location of the higher education institution you attend."

Fig. 6.4

Monthly contribution to institutions of higher education in nominal and comparative prices



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37 & Eurostat. No data IT, NO. Financial amounts rounded to the nearest 10 Euros.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

National Profiles). The assumption that accommodation costs are higher in big cities is verified for Germany, Finland and the Netherlands with high price differentials, and falsified for France where higher prices have to be paid especially in middle-sized cities (not shown in the graphic). This result for France is related to the fact that more students in both smaller cities (under 100 thousand inhabitants) and in Paris (over 500 thousand inhabitants) tend to live with their parents than the general average for France.

In those countries where most of the students tend to move away from their family and have to pay rent for an independent accommodation, students moving to big cities suffer more from elevated prices for accommodation than do students in small towns. In Germany, for example, in big cities they pay 13% above the average rents and 10% less than average in small to mid-sized towns. More or less the same phenomenon can be observed in Finland and the Netherlands. In many cases these price differentials are not considered in public support schemes.

Private contributions to higher education institutions vary at still low level in Europe

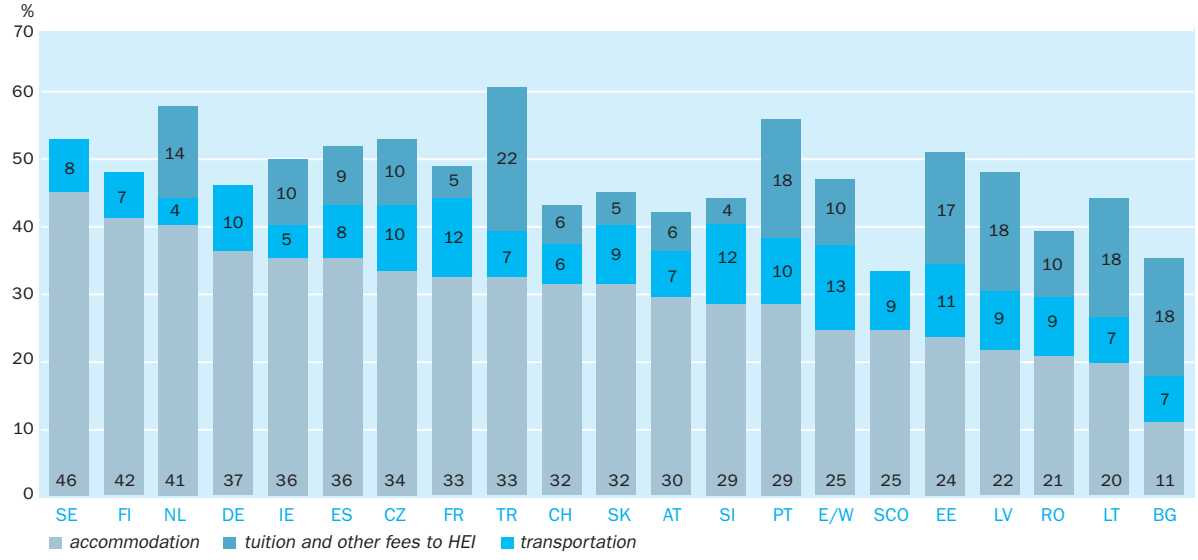
Another important type of typical student expenses is the contributions to institutions of higher education in the form of administration or tuition fees.

The contributions paid by students are considered here, irrespective of any public financial support. In some countries free access to tertiary education is still guaranteed for all students; the field mapping of Eurydice mentions eight EU-member states: Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Hungary, Scotland and Finland.[1]

1 *Eurydice/Eurostat (2007): Key data on higher education 2007. Brussels: p. 70.*

Fig. 6.5

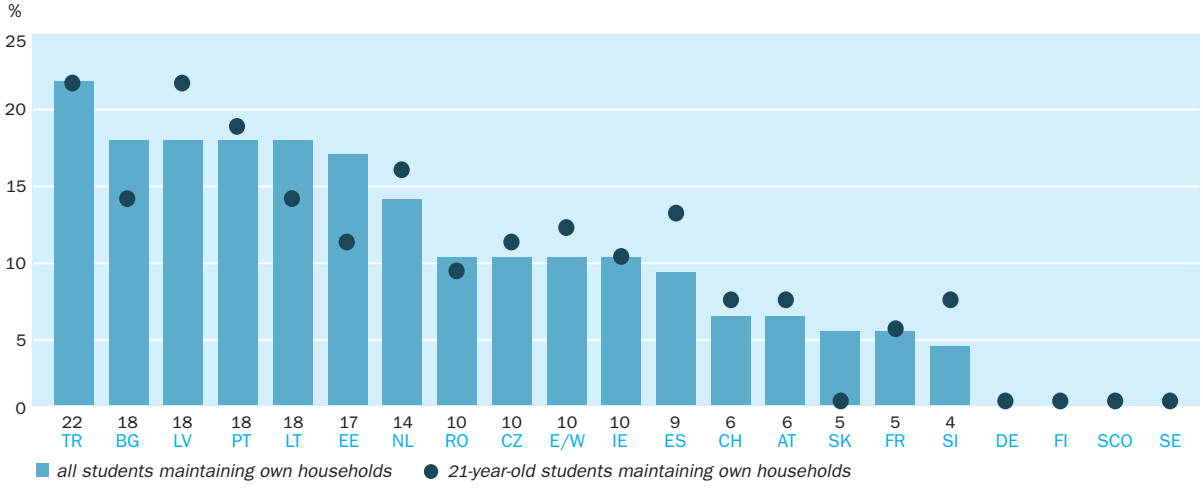
Main components of total expenditures (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37. No data IT, NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

Fig. 6.6

Contribution to institutions of higher education as a proportion of total expenditures



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37. No data IT, NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

Other countries like Estonia, Romania and Slovenia offer a contingency of study places, which are fully subsidised, while students on non-subsidised places pay fees. The majority of countries in which no fees are payable can be found in the north or in the east of Europe. But the current trend (not yet shown in this data) is towards fees and – as can be seen from the analysis below – in some countries fees are paid under another name, although at a low level.

The systems introduced in the countries differ substantially in size and criteria. Very often the fees are at the discretion of the institutions and targeted at special groups of students (e. g. part-time students, students above the state admission quota, graduate students, ex-post fees for failing students). Until now, due to the confusing variety of regulations, it was not possible to collect comparable information on the overall cash effect of the different fee policies, showing the financial burden per student. The EUROSTUDENT survey has tried for the first time to find out how the different systems affect students' expenditure budgets on an empirical basis.

Students' average contributions to higher education vary substantially in absolute terms – see Figure 6.4. However, the true impact on the budget of the students in the different countries is better reflected in relative terms.

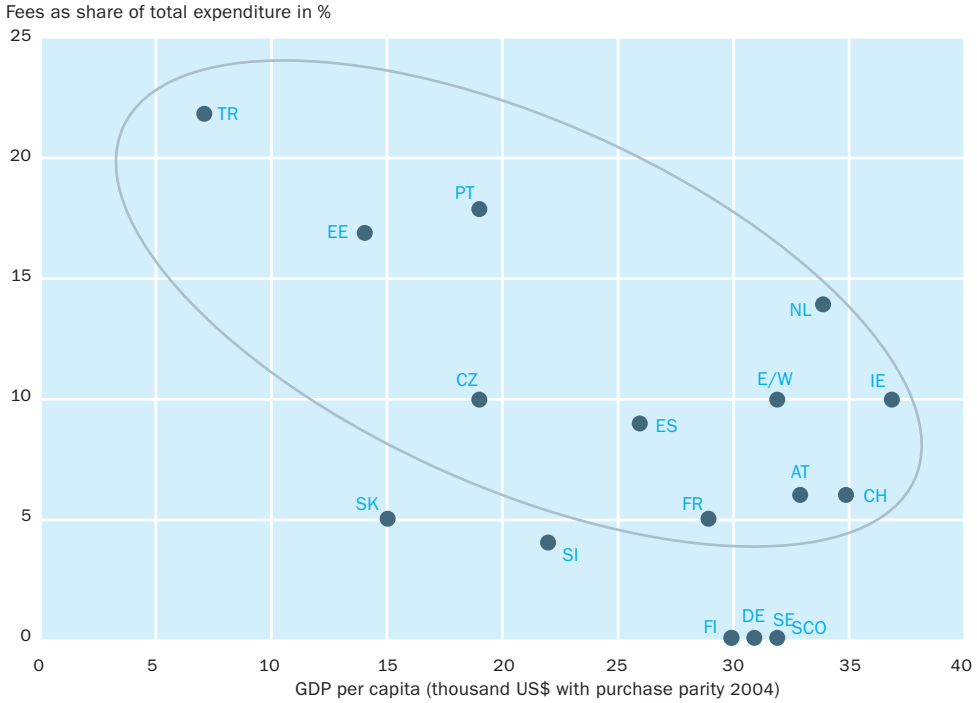
Figures 6.5 and 6.6 show that whereas in Finland, Germany, Scotland and Sweden nothing has to be contributed to the institutions, nearly one quarter of an average students' budget has to be paid in Turkey as an individual contribution to the institutional costs (22%). Furthermore, Figure 6.5 shows that transportation costs are also a significant expense for students, in many cases around 10%.

Four clusters can be observed in the European Higher Education Area according to the financial burden on students: Sweden, Scotland, Finland and (in 2006) Germany with no tuition fees; Austria, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, France and Slovenia with very moderate contribution rates (≤ 6%); the Netherlands, Romania, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Spain and England/Wales (in 2004) with moderate rates (7–15%) and Turkey, Bulgaria, Portugal, Lithuania and Estonia with very high rates (16–22%). In the latter group the contribution constitutes a real burden – as on average – around one fifth of the budget is required simply to access higher education.

Figure 6.7 shows that in general there tends to be an inverse relationship between tuition fees expressed as a proportion of a student's individual budget and the strength of the national economy (GDP/capita). It seems that the more advanced the national economy, the lower the students' contribution to higher education in the form of relative administrative and tuition fees. Even in countries with relatively high fees in absolute terms like England /Wales, the individual burden is moderate compared to other kinds of expenditure. In many of these countries extra financial support for payment of these fees is awarded to students at a socio-economic disadvantage or student fees are waived on the same grounds. In countries which lag behind economically in Europe, the opposite effect can be observed. In these countries students are asked to pay contributions to the institutions which are a heavy burden compared with their budget, which is low anyway, and are often not reflected in the state support system (for example Turkey). This indicates that high tuition fees are required in countries in which the state budget is severely constrained. This is a policy dilemma for economically less-developed countries; they require a well-educated work force to push economic development, but they also rely on a high private contribution to cover the costs of such an education system.

Fig. 6.7

Private contributions to institutions of higher education in relation to national gross domestic product



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 37 & OECD. No data BG, IT, LT, LV, NO, RO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.3 "Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense"

6

Students' assessment of the sufficiency of their income is based both on income differences and general expectations

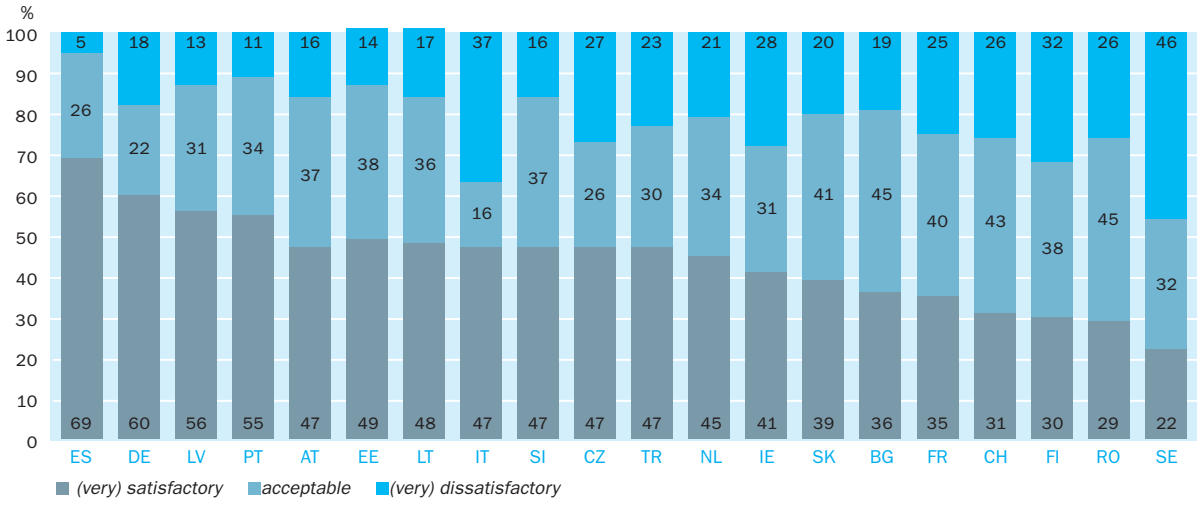
Like in many other precarious types of households students' total income on average is just sufficient to cover the total amount of expenditures incurred by living and study costs. Very often the budget can only be balanced by making debts (e. g. using loan schemes), by earning extra money on the job market (>*Chapter 6*) or by saving money in reducing living standards. As student life is a phase of transition, this precarious phase may be accepted as a temporary episode with the perspective for improvement and good returns after graduation. Although a student's expectations concerning material well-being are, therefore, modest on the whole, the differences from country to country are considerable.

Figure 6.8 shows satisfaction rates which range from 69% (Spain) down to 22% (Sweden).[2] The sharp differences in students' subjective judgements of their material well-being seem predominantly based on objective grounds in most of the countries. Figure 6.9 shows, in general, that satisfied students have a higher income at their disposal than the dissatisfied ones. However, in many countries only a small difference between the stated income by satisfaction level and the average income in a country can be found (e. g. Switzerland, Germany).

2 *AT: Students were asked how well they "coped" with their financial situation.*

Fig. 6.8

Students' assessment of their material well-being, all students

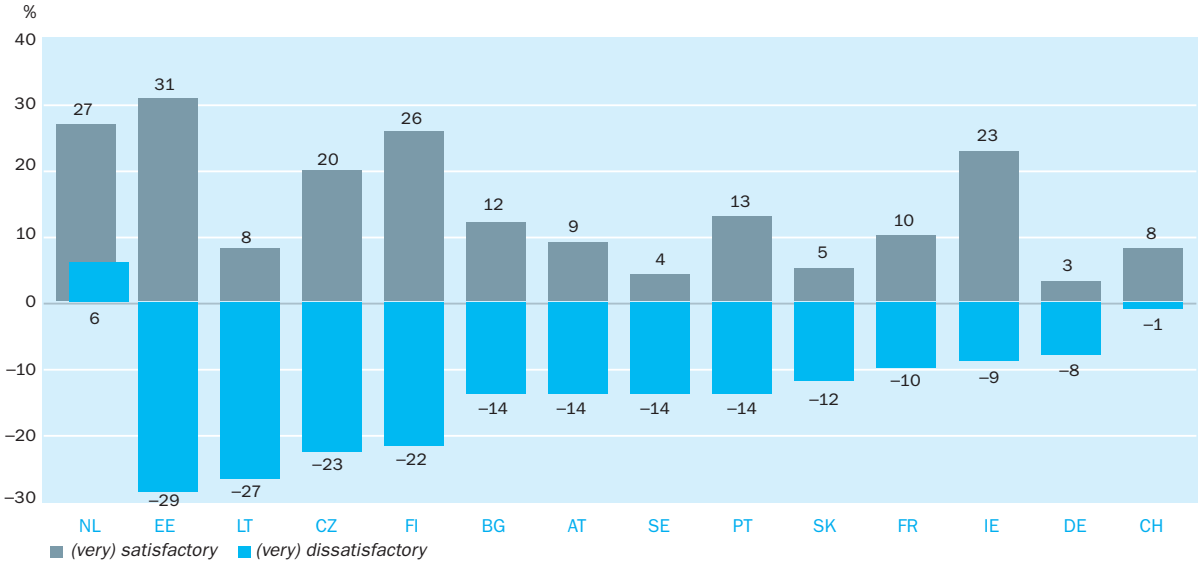


Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 39. No data E/W, NO, SCO.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

Fig. 6.9

Students' assessment of their material well-being – Income differentials of students who are satisfied vs. students who are dissatisfied (students maintaining own households)

Difference measured as deviation from average income in %

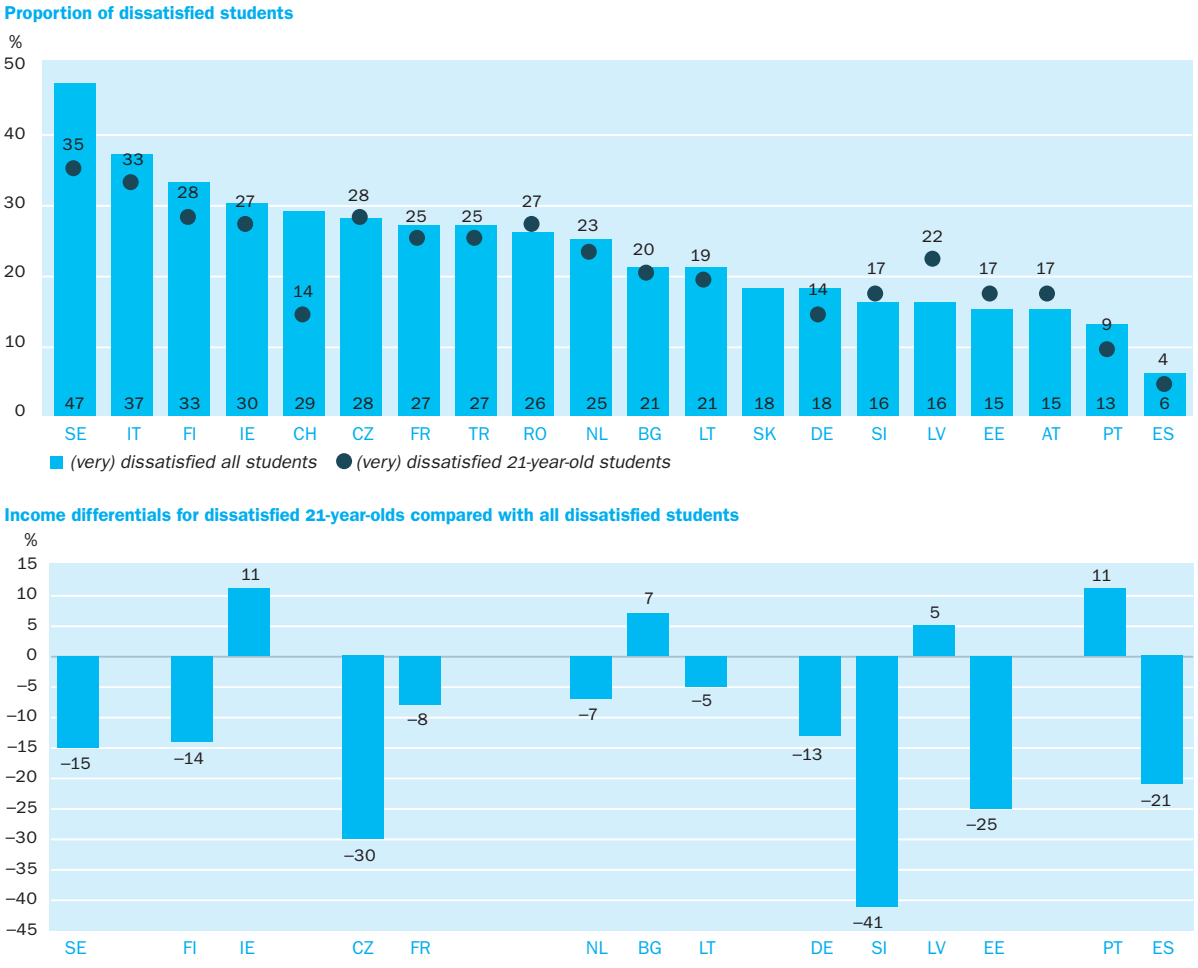


Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 40 & 27. No data ES, E/W, IT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI, TR
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal by sources of origin: Cash only (direct).", 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

It can, therefore, be assumed that it is not just the cash differences which influence subjective assessments, but also the different prevailing levels of subjective expectations in different countries. These levels of expectations are difficult to explain by objective factors and indeed the EUROSTUDENT dataset cannot provide any further in-

Fig. 6.10

Share of dissatisfied students – all students vs. 21-year-olds and average income differentials of 21-year-olds dissatisfied students compared with all dissatisfied students (students maintaining own households)



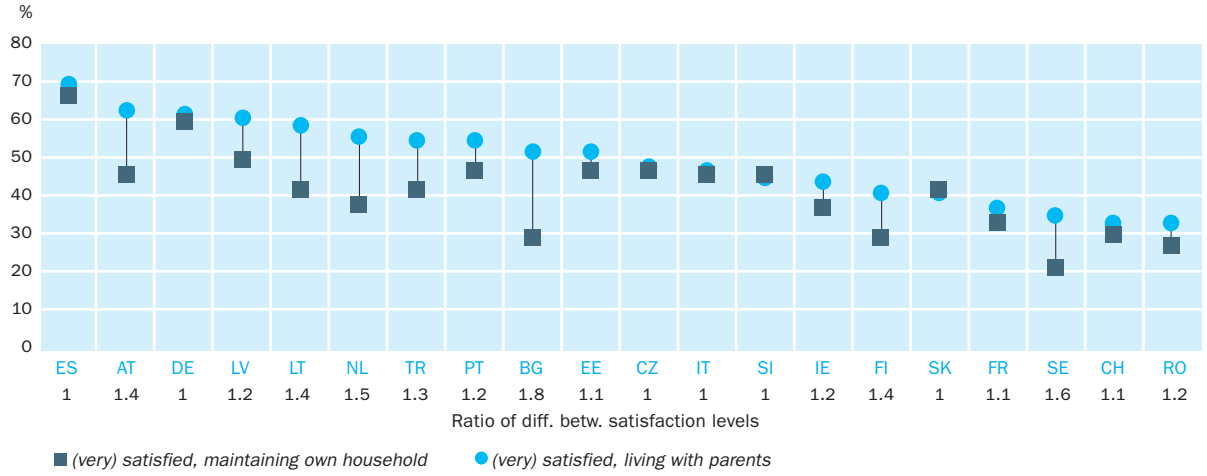
Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 40. No data: top chart E/W, NO, SCO; bottom chart AT, CH, E/W, IT, NO, RO, SCO, SK, TR
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal by sources of origin: Cash only (direct).", 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

sight into this topic area. Further studies would be necessary to better understand the connection between student satisfaction and study framework conditions.

Besides income levels, a further influential factor on expectations concerning necessary living standards is age, as an indication of personal growth. Figure 6.10 shows that, irrespective of the overall proportion of dissatisfaction among students, 21-year-old students are to a lesser degree discontent with their material well-being (top chart), although they often dispose of less money than the overall dissatisfied student population (bottom chart). This is particularly the case in the Czech Republic, Sweden, Finland and Germany, where 21 year old students tend to be at the start of their studies and younger than the general student population. In the cases of Bulgaria, Portugal and Ireland, 21-year-olds tend to belong to the older student population (> Chapter 1).

Fig. 6.11

Level of satisfaction with material well-being by accommodation form – Students who are (very) satisfied with their material well-being living with parents/relatives vs. their counterparts maintaining own households



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 40 & 41. No data E/W, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?"

Students living with parents/relatives are more satisfied with their material well-being

In a previous chapter (>*Chapter 5*), living with parents/relatives has been shown to be one coping strategy for students in an attempt to maintain a low total cost of higher education participation. The satisfaction scales allow an insight into how students implicitly assess this strategy themselves. Figure 6.11 cross-references the satisfaction levels of students living at home with the satisfaction of those maintaining their own household (i. e. private flat, flat share, student halls).

It is striking that students who live with their parents/relatives assess their material well-being more positively than students who live independently in their own households. Besides this link being clear in Portugal, where it is common and culturally accepted to stay at home, this higher level of appreciation can also be found in countries where it is much less common to live in this form of accommodation, such as in Finland (>*Chapter 4*).

Chapter 7:
Student employment and time budget

Key findings

- Student employment is frequent in all countries and the rate is affected by age and social background. The high level in all countries seems to override the effects of culture and tradition. More than half the students in eleven countries work alongside their studies and in the Netherlands and Estonia this holds for more than two-thirds of students. The difference by social background found in most countries suggests a compensatory function of this income source.
- The financial significance of students' employment differs widely between countries. In the case of the Czech Republic, Spain and Slovakia more than three-quarters of total income is derived from students' self-financing. For some students this income may be essential to make a living, others may just acquire it for improving their lifestyle.
- Under the assumption that differences in time invested in studies affect students' success, the relationship between time spent on work and time spent studying is relevant for an assessment of the implications of working alongside studies. Students who spend between 11 and 15 hours per week on their jobs spend fewer hours on their studies. The number ranges from 7 hours less (Germany, Romania) to one hour less (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania).
- There are differences in the amount of hours spent working and the amount spent studying by field of studies. In a comparison between engineering and humanities students, humanities students tend to study less and work alongside their studies more hours and more frequently.
- At least one in ten student jobs is closely related to the student's course of study. In Austria, Czech Republic and Estonia there is a comparatively high rate of employment and a relatively close relationship between students' jobs and students' courses.
- Levels of satisfaction with overall workload are related to total hours spent studying and working. In Slovenia, Bulgaria, Portugal, Switzerland and Sweden the difference between students, who are satisfied and those who are dissatisfied with their weekly time budget is over 10 hours per week.

Main issues

The chapter on funding has shown the importance of the supplementary income provided by working alongside studies (> *Chapter 5*). Irrespective of individual needs, working has become a common element of most students' study framework. The consequence of recognising this fact is the need for more data on the organisation of such jobs around a student's actual purpose – his/her course of study. As elsewhere in this report, national comparisons between student groups are made and differences between these groups are compared internationally. A final assessment of the effects of working alongside studies is not unproblematic because it is related to the demands and expectations of a student in each higher education system and different courses of study. Two main topic areas are covered in this chapter.

Employment rate and utility

In this topic area the extent of employment during term is observed for various student groups. Employment rate is defined in the EUROSTUDENT dataset as the share of students, who have worked at least one hour during their last week. It is particularly interesting to investigate differences in employment rates by social background. This analysis provides an insight into the needs and expectations of different student groups, especially those from a low social background who are particularly targeted in widening participation policies. However, this is not the only influential factor. Others are age and field of study. In the case of the former, this is related to a student's stage in the life course (e. g. young and dependent or older with dependents) and in the case of the latter, this is related to the opportunity for work presented alongside study organisation.

The utility of working alongside studies can be measured by amount earned, but also by the extent of a relation between studies and working. In an ideal case, both studies and job alongside studies complement each other. In this case, labour experience may to a certain extent be seen as an extension of a student's studies and a preparation for the transition between university and the labour market.

Total time budget and workload

The crucial question concerning working alongside studies is how much time of a finite weekly time span ("time budget") is taken up pursuing paid employment. A small amount of work is unlikely to effect study progression, whilst a greater amount will impact to some extent. The focus of this topic area is an investigation of total workload and the interplay between time spent working and time spent on study-related activities. The analysis differentiates between three elements of this time budget: time spent in paid employment, in taught studies and personal study time. A reference to student's own perception of their workload is particularly fruitful for an evaluation of the impact of such interplay.

Data and interpretation

Student employment is frequent in all countries and the rate is affected by age and social background

This section starts out looking at employment rates. Figure 7.1 shows the difference in employment rates between countries. A first conclusion from the data is that working alongside studying is normal in many countries: more than 50% of all students work in half of the observed countries. In two countries – the Netherlands and Estonia – at least two-thirds of students have a job, whilst in three countries – Spain, Portugal and Turkey – less than one third work alongside their studies.

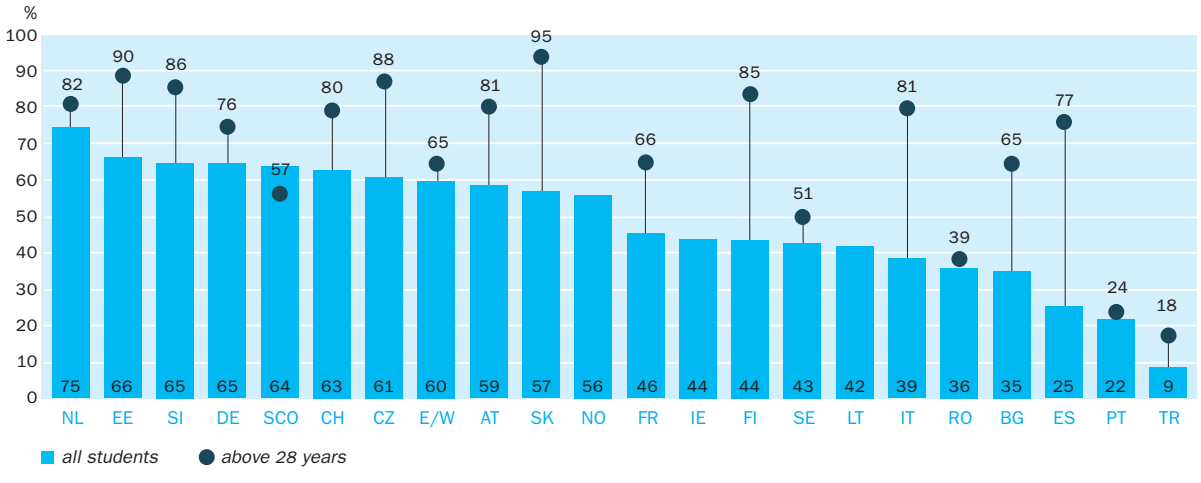
As has been shown in previous chapters, age plays a crucial role. A focus on students over 28 years old shows the prevalence of working for this age group is much higher. The number of countries in which at least two-thirds of students work increases from two to 12. This is likely to be related to a much higher rate of part-time students within this age group in some countries.

No matter what the rate of student employment is, it can be observed that student employment rates differ by social origin in most countries. The employment rate of students with a low educational background (according to their parents' education >*Chapter 3*) is higher than among their social counterparts. Futhermore, students from low-educated families are to a greater extent dependent on employment income (>*Chapter 5*) during their studies – see Figure 7.2.

This difference can be seen for data from all but three countries (Czech Republic, Turkey and Latvia) and is particularly evident in the cases of Bulgaria, Portugal, Italy, Estonia and Spain, where the employment rate of students with low educational backgrounds is at least 1.4 higher than for their social counterparts.

Fig. 7.1

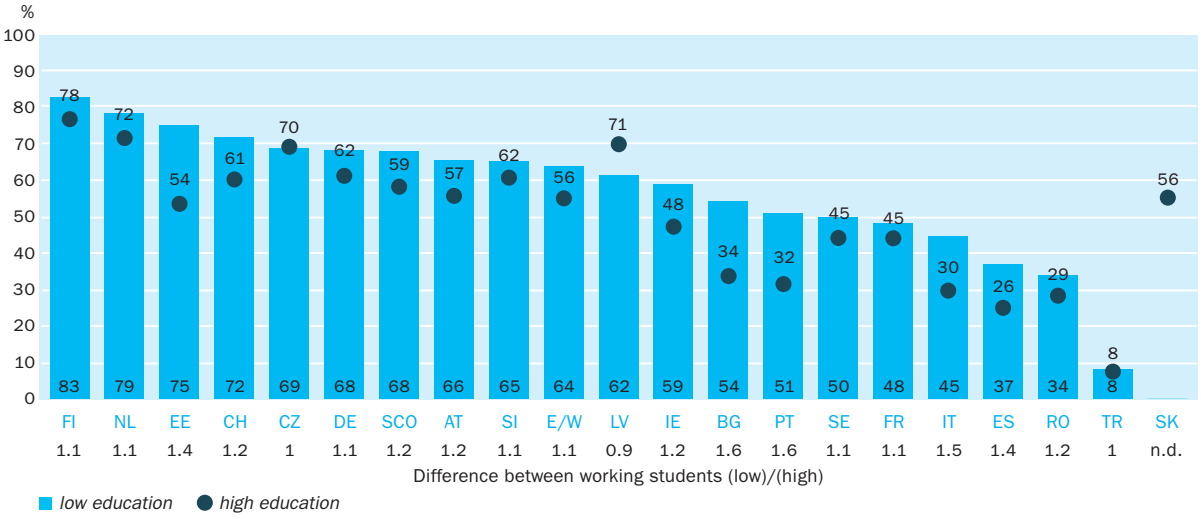
Employment rate during term for all students and by age (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 42 & 44. No data LV. No data for students over 28 years IE, LT, NO. ES asked students if they had continued gainful employment throughout the academic year.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.1 "Age", 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

Fig. 7.2

Employment rate by parents' education (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 42 & 44. No data LT, NO. SK no data on students from low education backgrounds. ES asked students if they had continued gainful employment throughout the academic year.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

A further differentiation of students who work alongside studies can reveal some effects of student employment. An analysis of the time spent on work and of the financial significance of employment shows much clearer the differences between countries and between student groups.

The financial significance of working differs widely between countries

The utility of student employment is reflected best by looking at the share of working students' total income provided by gainful employment, which is shown in Figure 7.3.

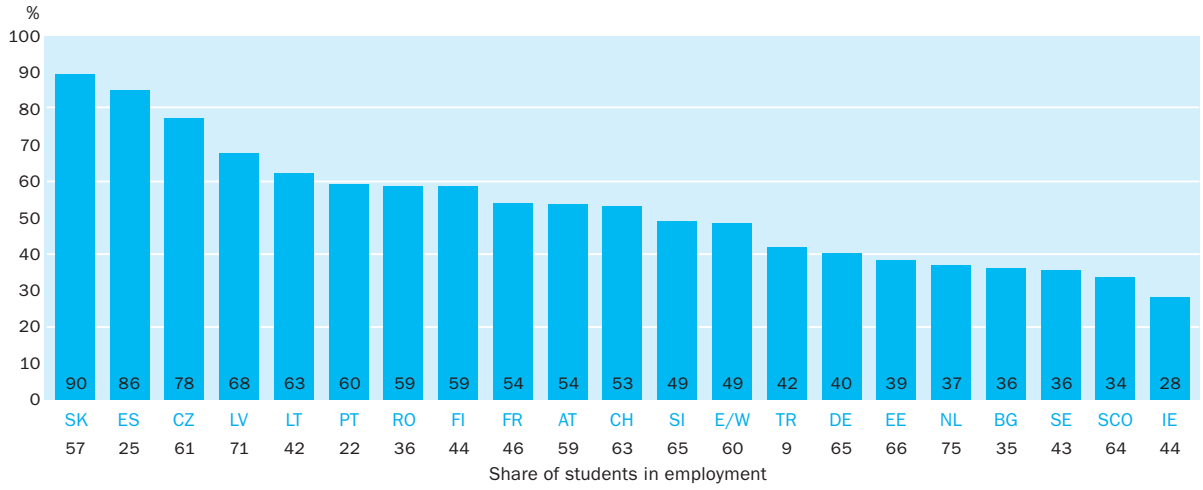
The contribution of own earnings is very high in the Czech Republic, Spain and Slovakia, where more than two-thirds of working students' total income are covered by earnings. In 14 of the observed countries the contribution of students' jobs to their maintenance reaches a substantial share of more than 40% of their total income. Thus, self-financing is a major source of student financing all over Europe as far as students who live outside of their family home are concerned.

The results suggest that cultural and economic differences between the countries are more or less overrun by students' self-financing strategies. Even in countries where the state guarantees a basic salary or support to students as in the Netherlands, Germany and Finland the share of personal earnings in a working students' total income remains high (i. e. above one third).

To a certain extent this can be ascribed to the double function of self-financing: on the one hand it is compensative of low basic financing, whilst on the other, it is motivated by the objective of improving the standard of living, especially as students get older.

Fig. 7.3

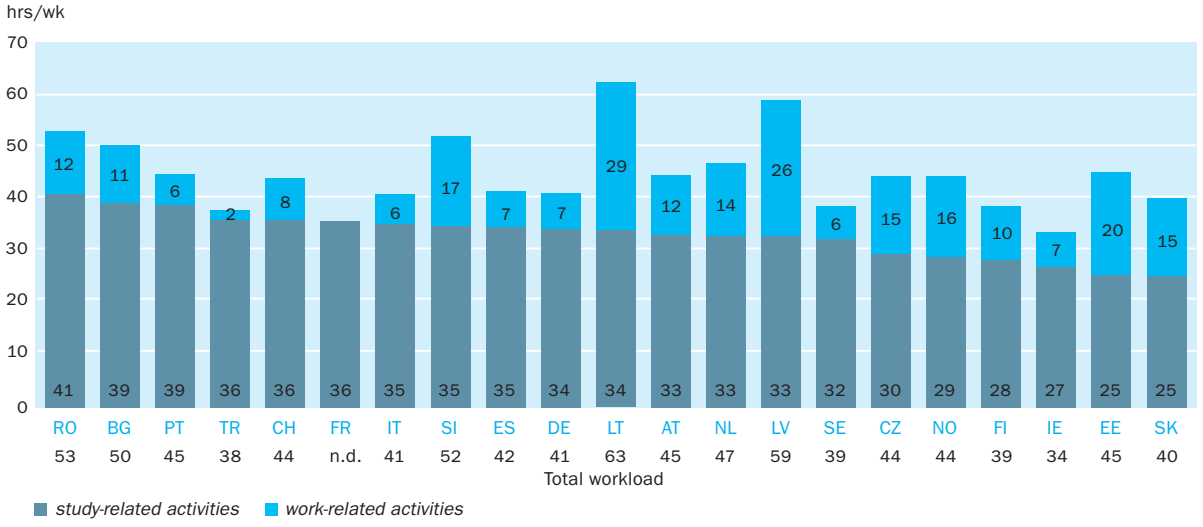
The contribution to a working student's income made by gainful employment in % (students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 43 & 42. No data IT, NO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal by sources of origin: Cash only (direct)."*

Fig. 7.4

Time budget for study-related activities and for employment workload in hours/week, all students



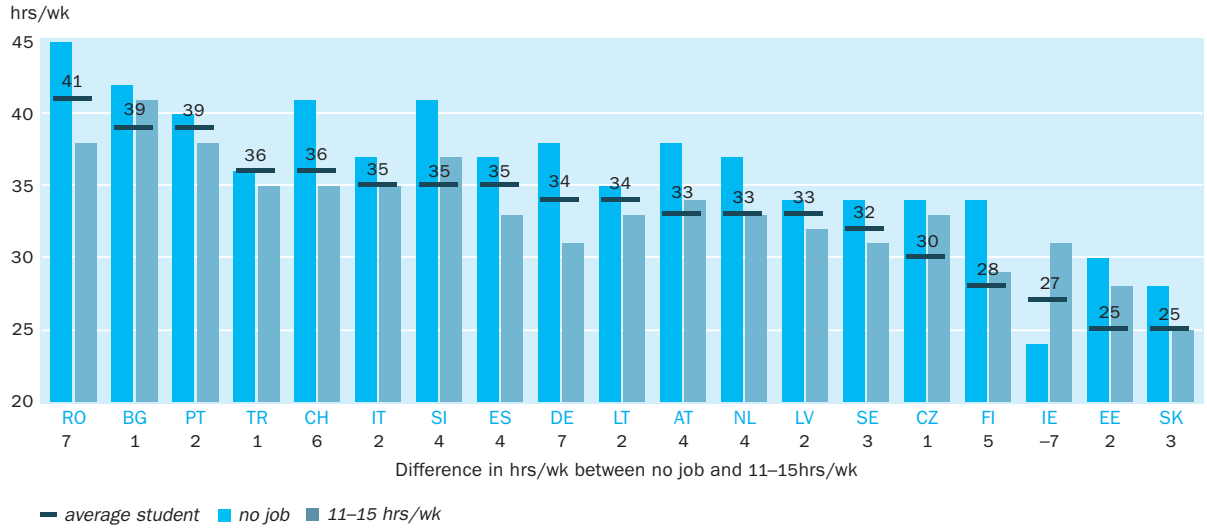
Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 45. No data E/W, SCO. No data for work-related activities: FR
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

The extent of students' work-related activities can affect their study progression

Self-financing plays a substantial role in sharing the costs of higher education between parents, state and the student himself/herself all over Europe. As employment is time-consuming it competes with the amount of study-time which a student can invest in his/here studies and may, therefore, have negative consequences for effective study progression.

Fig. 7.5

Study-related time budget according to working hours per week



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 45. No data E/W, FR, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

As a first indication for possible conflicts between study-related and work-related activities, Figure 7.4 shows the total weekly "time budget" for an average student in each country.

The national averages for study-related activities (i. e. for taught courses and personal study time) range between 25 hours per week in Slovakia and Estonia and up to around 40 hours a week in Romania and Bulgaria.

To a certain degree the variations can be explained by different demands of the national educational systems (strict workload vs. academic freedom) or regulative systems (e. g. part-time students vs. individual study plans). In most of the countries time spent on studies clusters around 30 to 35 hours per week.

Compared with the normal workload of people in employment, time-investment for academic studies appears less intensive and below what might be expected from an intensive course of study (bearing in mind that we are looking at average figures). At the same time, working alongside studies is very common and must be considered in the assessment of a students' total time budget or workload.

If we include this information it becomes obvious that a student's week consists of around or above 40 hours in all but one country (Ireland) and reaches over 50 hours in five cases – Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria. For Latvia and Lithuania the high values result from a combination of relatively high levels for study-related and work-related activities.

In order to investigate the connection between employment and study intensity, Figure 7.5 looks at student time invested in study-related activities by time spent working per

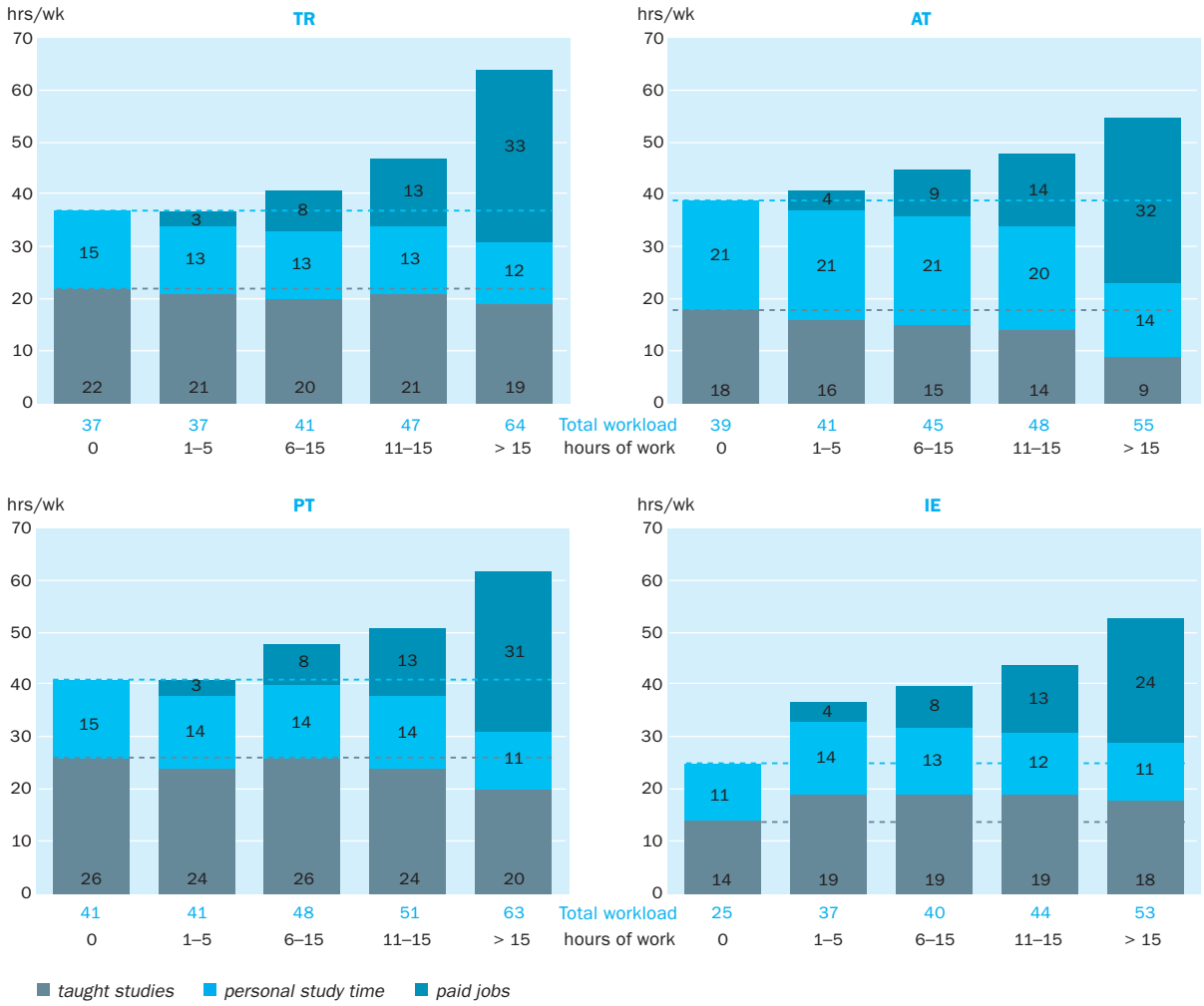
week. In all but one country (Ireland) a clear and regressive relationship is observable; i. e. students with term-time employment invest less time in study-related activities.

The number of hours *less* spent per week on study-related activities ranges from 7 hours (Romania, Germany) to one hour (Bulgaria, Turkey, Czech Republic). Figure 7.6 shows this link even more clearly for a number of country examples.

For Austria, Portugal and Turkey, which have very different levels of reliance on employment income and employment rates (see Figure 7.1 – 59%, 22% and 9%, respectively), the same relationship between employment and time invested in studying is observable; the number of hours spent in taught courses and personal study time is lower for students who work alongside their studies. In each case, students working more than 15 hours a week spent considerably less time on study-related activities than their

Figure 7.6

All students by extent of employment workload in selected countries, hrs/wk

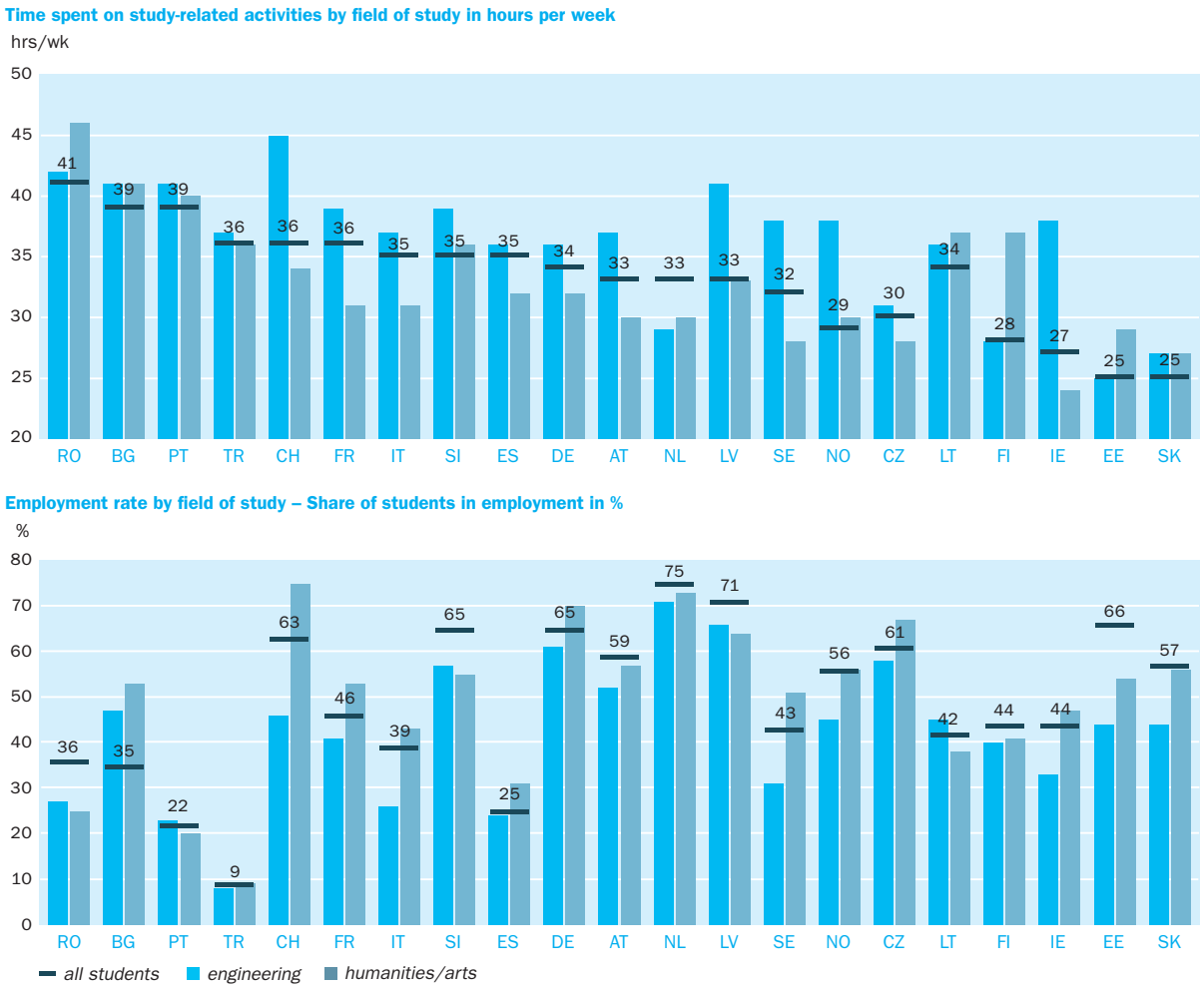


Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 46

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

Fig. 7.7

Time budget on study-related activities and employment rate by field of study



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 42, 45, 48, 50. No data E/W, SCO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.4 "The field of study or programme you follow", 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

counterparts who do not work and less time than their counterparts, who work less than 11 hours a week. However, the consequences of less hours spent studying must be evaluated within the context of national study structures and the possibilities of flexible study programmes (e. g. part-time studies >Chapter 2). Indeed, the Irish data (employment rate 44%), where the relationship between time spent studying and time spent in employment do not appear to be so closely related, suggest a strict, non-flexible studying regime, where students are not so free to determine the amount of time they spend on study-related activities.

Humanities students tend to study less and work alongside their studies more frequently

The time a student must or should spend on their studies is also related to the subject studied. The EUROSTUDENT dataset presents an insight into this link by contrasting students from two particular subject areas – engineering and humanities students. In

most countries engineering students follow a learning-intensive and highly structured curriculum which requires higher presence and investment in study time than less structured ones like the curricula for courses in humanities and arts. The higher degree of freedom and more personal studies in the "soft sciences" make it easier for those students who have to earn money to combine study and employment, even if they are formally enrolled as full-time students. In most countries where study-time invested in humanities and arts is lower than for engineering, employment rates are higher for humanities students.

Although this conclusion can be drawn with regard to most countries displayed in Figure 7.7, there are several exceptions to the rule that in "soft sciences" the study-related time is below average and much below the time spent studying by engineering students (top chart) – Romania, Lithuania, Finland, Netherlands, Estonia and Slovakia. Despite these country differences in terms of time spent on working, Romania and Lithuania are the only countries from this group in which humanities and arts students also pursue employment alongside their studies less frequently than their peers in engineering courses (bottom chart, e. g. for Lithuania 38% vs. 45%, respectively).

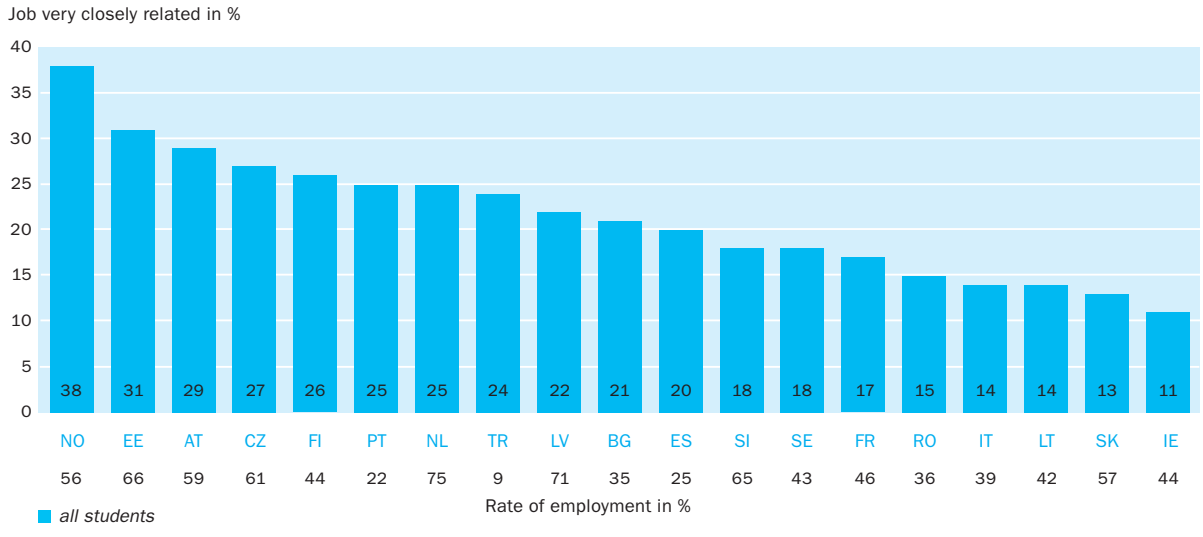
At least one in ten student jobs is closely related to students' courses of study

The utility of employment cannot only be assessed by the financial return or by the effects on time spent studying. In many cases student jobs are accompanied by learning effects which can support the whole learning process or aid the transition to the labour market after graduation.

The reality of student employment is characterized by multifarious jobs. These range from simple activities that require no previous experience or academic knowledge to

Fig. 7.8

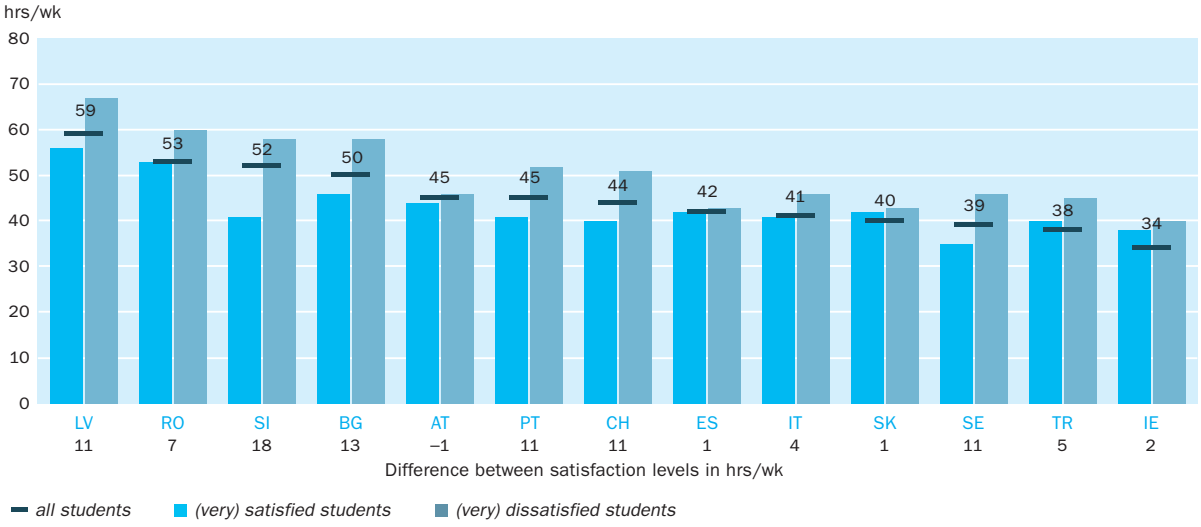
Relationship between job and studies



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 42 & 47. No data CH, DE, E/W, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.6 "If you have a job, how closely is it related to your studies?"

Fig. 7.9

Comparison between total workloads of students who are satisfied and those who are dissatisfied with their workload



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 45 & 46. No data: CZ, DE, EE, E/W, FI, FR, LT, NL, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.4 "How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?", 4.5 "How many hours did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?"

highly skilled work which requires knowledge gained during a student's studies. Some jobs are temporary and run parallel to students' studies, whilst others can be considered as accompanying and enriching the study program in which a student is enrolled.

The EUROSTUDENT dataset includes information on the extent to which students assess their jobs as relevant or related to their course of study. The responses give an overall picture for the different countries on the extent by which student jobs – no matter which type – can be assessed as a positive contribution to career development, even if they reduce the time which a student invests directly in his/her studies.

The data in Figure 7.8 cast a critical light on student employment. In many cases, nearly 80% of all jobs have no close relationship to students' studies in students' own assessment and therefore only one fifth of the jobs are productive in the sense that they are closely related to the studies The share of jobs closely related to students' studies ranges between a low 11 % (Ireland) and 38 % (Norway). The correspondence between overall employment rates and the extent to which jobs are related to studies in the different countries is also rather weak. Therefore, the extent of job-study-relation is not simply a quantitative question related to the availability of work in general.

Levels of satisfaction are related to overall workload

A more subjective but decisive answer to the crucial question concerning whether student employment is an accepted function of modern student life or more a necessity and burden is given by students' own assessment of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction – see Figure 7.9.

In general, students who are satisfied with their workload have a lower total workload than their dissatisfied peers, as might be expected. In Slovenia, Bulgaria, Portugal, Latvia, Switzerland and Sweden the difference between these two groups is over ten hours per week.

It is remarkable that a negligible difference between the workload of the two groups causes dissatisfaction in Austria, Spain, Italy, Slovakia and Ireland. This result suggests that it is not hours per se but the consequences of additional hours for both progression through a course and/or for earning sufficient income – in short the compatibility of jobs with study obligations – which affects individual levels of satisfaction.

Chapter 8:
Internationalisation and student mobility

Key findings

- Foreign study-related experiences are undertaken by more than one in ten students in half of the observed countries. The Czech Republic and Bulgaria are the only new European member states with a participation rate higher than 10%.
- There is a large share of students with definite plans for study-related experiences abroad who represent a potential for future international mobility. In most countries the percentage of students with definite plans ranges between one tenth and one fifth of students. In Austria and Bulgaria around one quarter of students have definite plans for future mobility.
- Students go abroad at various times throughout their studies. However, in most countries the biggest year-to-year increase takes place in the third or fourth year of studies. This finding has significant relevance for plans to encourage mobility whilst concurrently introducing more strict study structures within the Bologna Process.
- There is a difference in international mobility rates by the subject studied. In a contrast between two subject areas, the EUROSTUDENT data show that students of humanities and arts tend to go abroad more frequently than engineering students. The share is more than three times higher in Germany, Latvia, Slovakia and Estonia.
- The rates of both foreign study-related experiences abroad and foreign enrolment are dependent on social background. In Bulgaria, Romania, Portugal, Italy, Slovenia and Turkey the rate of foreign enrolment is at least three times lower for students of low educational backgrounds than for their social counterparts.
- English, French and German are the three most frequently spoken foreign languages. In four countries (Sweden, Austria, Netherlands, Switzerland) 70% of the students or more have fluent or very good skills in English as their first foreign language. The choice of country for foreign study-related experience is influenced by foreign language capability.
- Income disparities in the European Higher Education Area cause a significant strain on mobility movements. The monthly income required to finance a course of study in a particular country means that students from countries, where students' monthly income is comparatively high, have the greatest choice of host countries, whereas students from low-income countries have a narrower choice. In such low-income countries the state often provides a higher level of public support, but it cannot compensate for the existing disparities.
- Organisational support for mobility is provided through mobility programmes, but the share of free-movers is very high. In the Czech Republic, Turkey, Sweden, Slovak Republic and Norway well over half of all mobile students are not part of a programme and the share of free-movers is below 30% in only two countries.
- Financial insecurity and lack of support for mobility in the home country particularly concern students considering going abroad. This is especially evident in the case of Turkey, Estonia, Germany, Slovak Republic and Portugal. However, lack of individual motivation is also an influential aspect. Students from low-educated backgrounds tend to perceive all the issues to be bigger obstacles to mobility than the average student.

Main issues

In this chapter of the EUROSTUDENT Synopsis Report, the international mobility rate of students during their studies is looked at. Since the EUROSTUDENT dataset focuses on national students and permanent residents (>*Introduction*), only temporary mobility of "returners" is investigated. Student mobility contributes both to personal development and enhances competence in fields like languages and intercultural understanding and, therefore, can also contribute to employability on an increasingly international labour market. Furthermore, student mobility helps to develop European citizenship and European awareness. For these multifarious reasons, many European agencies and national ministries promote periods of study or stays abroad. To understand motivations and hindrances to such mobility it is important to look at this topic within the context of students' learning biographies and study frameworks. The data in this chapter should, therefore, also be read in conjunction with the information in previous chapters about study framework and students' profiles.

Foreign study-related experiences

The EUROSTUDENT dataset captures students who enrol in university courses, participate in work placements or simply undertake language courses abroad. All these types of temporary mobility are referred to as "foreign study-related experiences". Enrolment in university courses is then differentiated from work placement and language courses, which are referred to collectively as "non-enrolment periods abroad" (see Box 8.1).

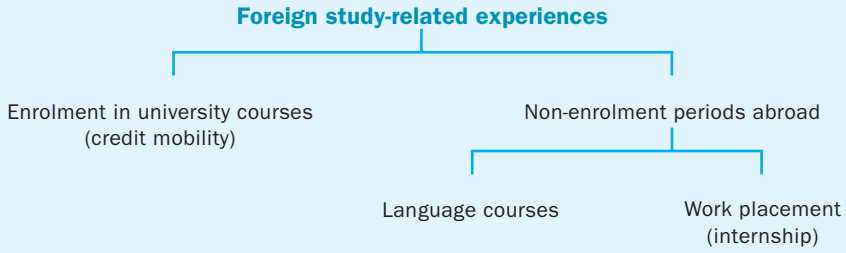
In this section mobility rates will be analysed by students' social background (>*Chapter 3*), by their language proficiency and their field of study. We also look at the stage in a study career at which mobile students go abroad. Altogether this means that the data is very comprehensive and goes far beyond other data sources on mobility in this respect. These analyses on mobility show variations, which can be investigated by those wishing to promote the share of temporarily mobile European students.

Despite these strengths, the dataset does have its limitations. Due to the benefits of mapping mobility information to information from other parts of the EUROSTUDENT dataset, all data on mobility is captured through the same surveys. This means that information relates to a cross-section of the student population and not to graduates who have their whole study period behind them. Thus EUROSTUDENT underestimates the final rates of mobility.

Data is also presented for students enrolled in Bachelor courses. In reference to this data it is important to bear in mind that the degree of implementation of the Bologna two-cycle study structure differs between the EUROSTUDENT countries. Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia and Germany, for instance, show low mobility rates for Bachelor students, but these countries also have low shares of Bachelor students among their overall student population. Thus the composition of Bachelor students with regard to attributes like field of study or social background may differ considerably between the EUROSTUDENT countries (>*Chapter 2*).

Box 8.1

Different types of student mobility



Foreign language competencies and choice of country

Both one of the preconditions and one of the expected outcomes of mobility is language competency. Although it is, therefore, difficult to disentangle causes from effects, it is important to further analyse students' perceptions of their language abilities in the most frequently spoken languages. Furthermore, the choice of country for foreign study-related experiences is related to language proficiency. Countries most frequently chosen as host country are presented in this chapter for a better understanding of the geographical aspects of international mobility.

Support for mobility

The geographic pattern of mobility and the different rates of participation in cross-border mobility are not only related to study-plans and the subject studied, but are also affected by financial issues. Financial restrictions can constitute a severe barrier for mobility, while portable student support or special scholarship schemes, which offer financial support specifically for mobility, facilitate foreign study-related periods abroad. EUROSTUDENT provides information on the average composition of a student's income abroad for students from different countries.

Another type of support is to offer special programmes, which facilitate the organisation, funding and the recognition of periods abroad (e. g. Erasmus). However, large shares of students go abroad on their own initiative (as so-called "free movers"). A comparison between the sizes of the two different student groups is presented in an effort to assess the potential for increased mobility amongst European students.
Personal barriers to international mobility

As mobility remains a sort of discovery and an adventure for many students, the decision to leave behind familiar conditions and settings of student life in the home-country and to venture out into a foreign country for a new experience also depends on the personal disposition of a student, e. g. how he/she perceives such alien challenges. Curiosity and an extrovert personality might be a push-factor to go abroad, inwardness and introversion a personal trait that holds the student at home. By looking at the total set of issues that influence the mobility-plans of students who have not been abroad, insights into the decision-making process can be offered, which suggest appropriate measures to overcome the mental and material barriers of immobile students and encourage mobility.

Data and interpretation

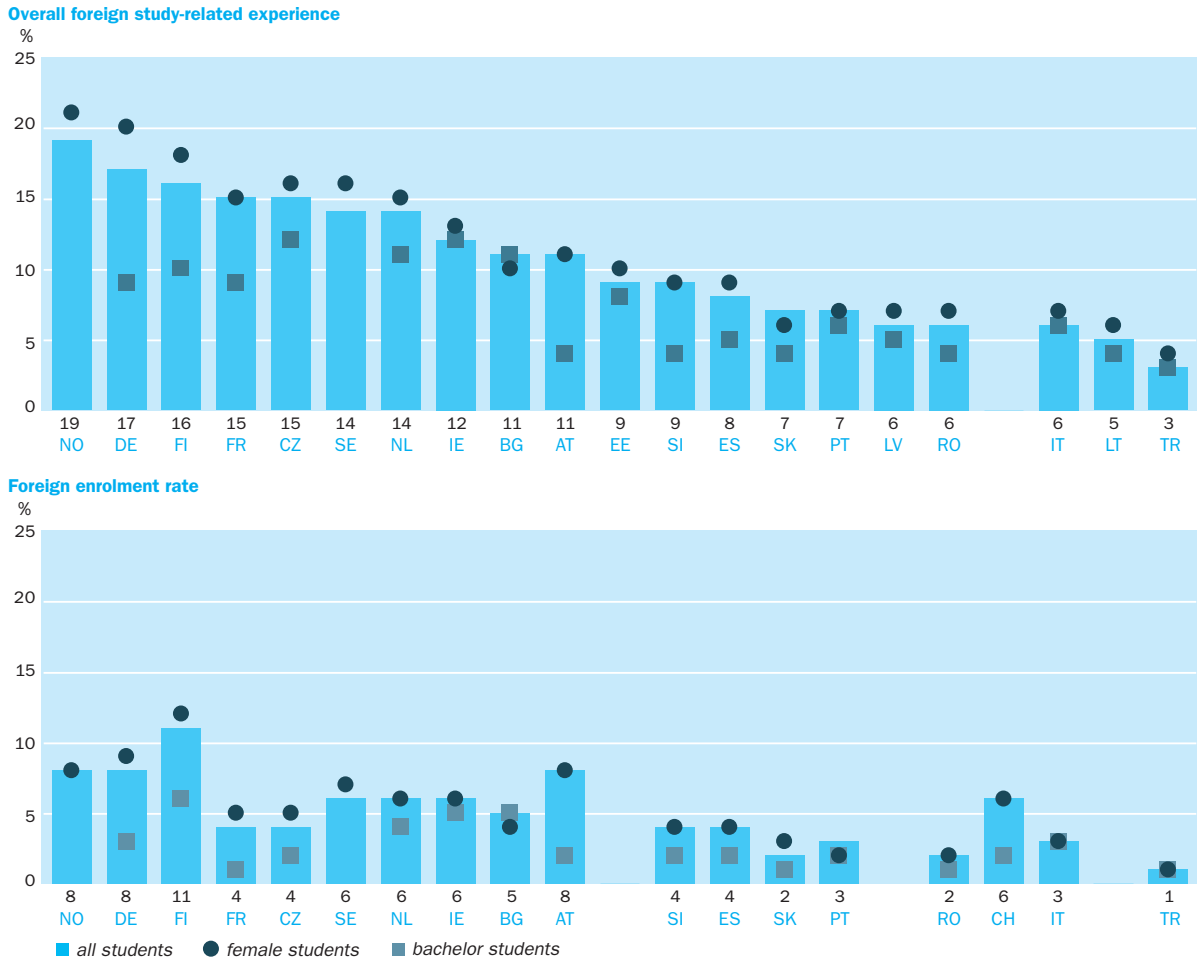
Foreign study-related experiences undertaken by more than one in ten students in half of the observed countries

Figure 8.1 differentiates between the various shares of students participating in the different forms of foreign study-related experience. Note that in question 5.4 (>*Appendix*) on the kind of study-related stay abroad multiple answers were possible. Hence the percentages of enrolment and non-enrolment do not add up to the overall percentage of foreign study-related periods abroad.

The overall percentage of students with foreign study-related experiences (top chart) ranges from 19% in Norway to 3% in Turkey. The general picture shows that more than one in ten students take part in some form of study-related experience in half the countries, for which data is available. Those countries with a participation rate under 10%

Fig. 8.1

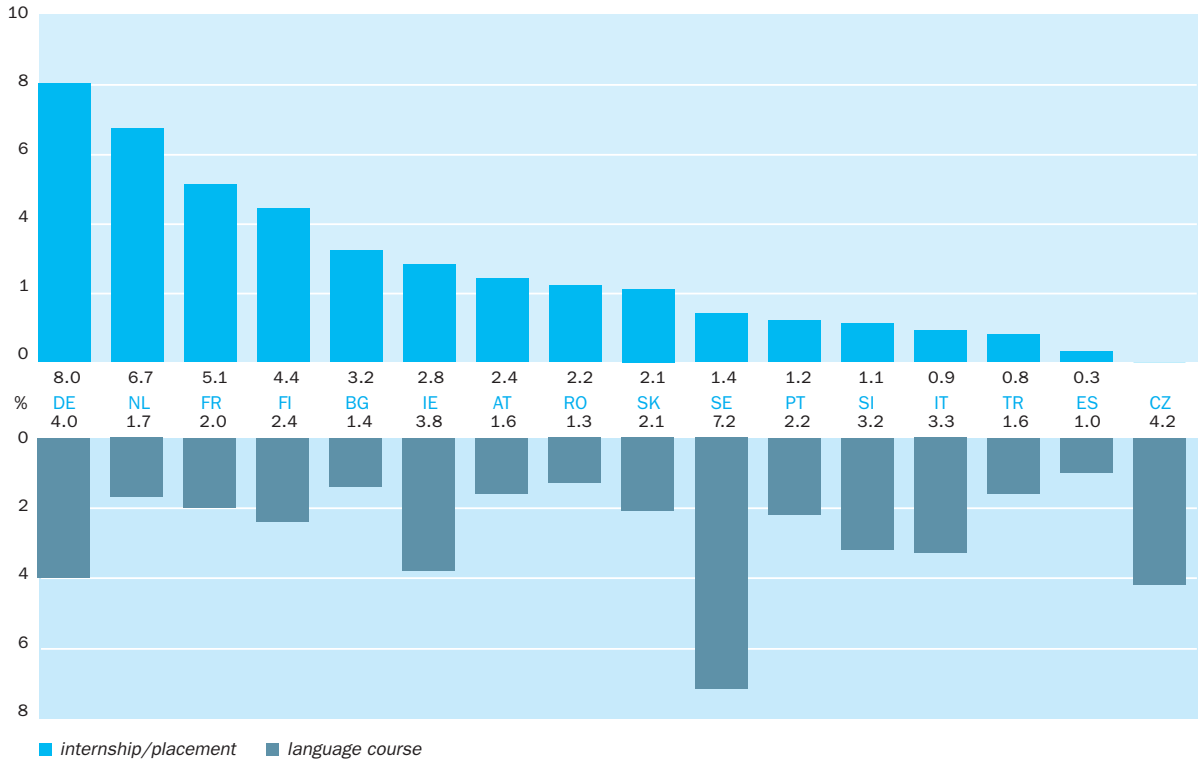
Foreign study-related experience rate by type of experience (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53. No data on foreign study-related experiences E/W, SCO. CH: only data for enrolment. IT and TR mostly Bachelor students. NO, SE no data for Bachelor students. No data foreign enrolment rate EE, LV, LT.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 1.2 "Gender", 3.1 "Which qualification are you currently studying for?", 5.4 "What kind of study-related activities did you follow and for how many months?" (multiple choice)

Fig. 8.2

Non-enrolment periods abroad – Students who have participated in an internship and students who have taken language courses



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53. No data: CH, EE, LT, LV, NO, SCO, E/W. No data for internship/placement CZ and NO.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.4 "What kind of study-related activities did you follow and for how many months?" (multiple choice)

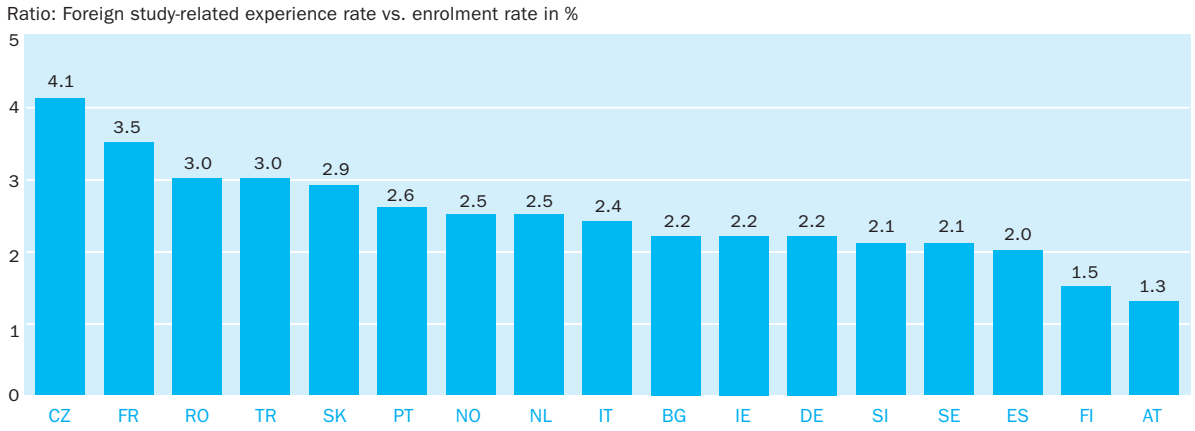
are either from the new European member states or southern Europe. The Czech Republic is the only new member state with a higher mobility rate (15%).

Differences within the mobility rate between all students and female students are rather small and in some cases negligible; however, in most countries the share of female students who gained some kind of foreign study-related experience abroad is somewhat higher than the equivalent for all students. In almost all countries the percentage of Bachelor students participating in international mobility is lower than the equivalent rate for all students. However, this latter finding says little about the effect of the Bachelor reforms in comparison to existing traditional structures. This is because most Bachelor students are still in their first few years of studying and have, therefore, had – until now – less opportunity to go abroad.

Foreign enrolment (often referred to as "credit mobility") plays a key role within European Community programmes to promote student mobility and it is hoped that the Bologna Process structural reforms will further facilitate mobility. The percentage of students who where enrolled at a foreign higher education institution at some stage of their study career (bottom chart) ranges from 11% in Finland to 1% in Turkey. Nine of the ten countries with a foreign enrolment rate under 6% are either from the new Eu-

Fig. 8.3

Foreign study-related experience and foreign enrolment – How much higher is the foreign study-related experience rate than the foreign enrolment rate by country?



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53. No data CH, E/W, SCO, LV, LT, EE
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 5.4 "What kind of study-related activities did you follow and for how many months?" (multiple choice)

ropean member states (Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania) or Southern Europe (France, Spain, Portugal, Italy).

Figure 8.2 completes the picture with a differentiation between the different types of non-enrolment periods abroad. It can be seen that the high rates of non-enrolment periods abroad for German and Swedish students are related to different forms of mobility. In the first case a high share of students take up internships abroad; also high in the Netherlands, France, Finland, Bulgaria, Austria, and Romania. In the case of Sweden a high share of students take language courses; this share is also high in Ireland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Italy, Portugal, and Spain.

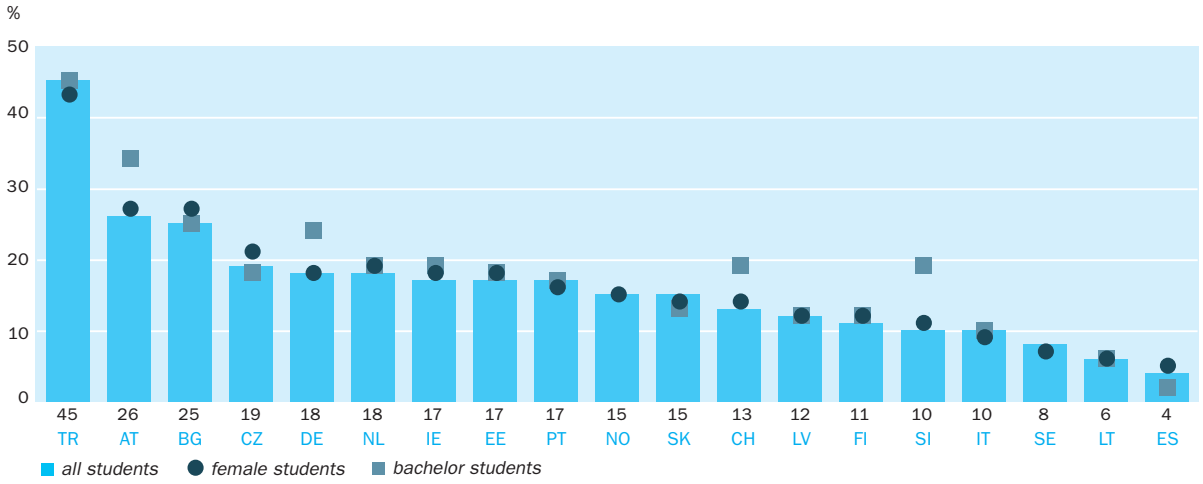
Since university enrolment is usually the focus of countries' mobility policy, it is interesting to compare shares of enrolment with shares of students on non-enrolment periods abroad. The latter might be seen as a potential for increasing the former, since these students are indeed internationally mobile. Figure 8.3 shows that the share of students, who undertake any form of foreign study-related experience, is much higher than the share, who enrol in courses, in all countries. In the countries Turkey, Romania, France and the Czech Republic the frequency of overall occurrence of mobility (i. e. foreign study-related stays, including foreign enrolment) is around or higher than three times the frequency for foreign enrolment alone.

Large share of students with definite plans for foreign study-related experiences abroad as a potential for future international mobility

Looking at the share of students with plans for foreign study-related experiences abroad provides a further insight into the potential for mobility – this is shown in Figure 8.4. The share of students with this potential ranges from 45% in Turkey to 4% in Spain. In most countries the percentage of students with definite plans ranges between one tenth and one fifth of students.

Fig. 8.4

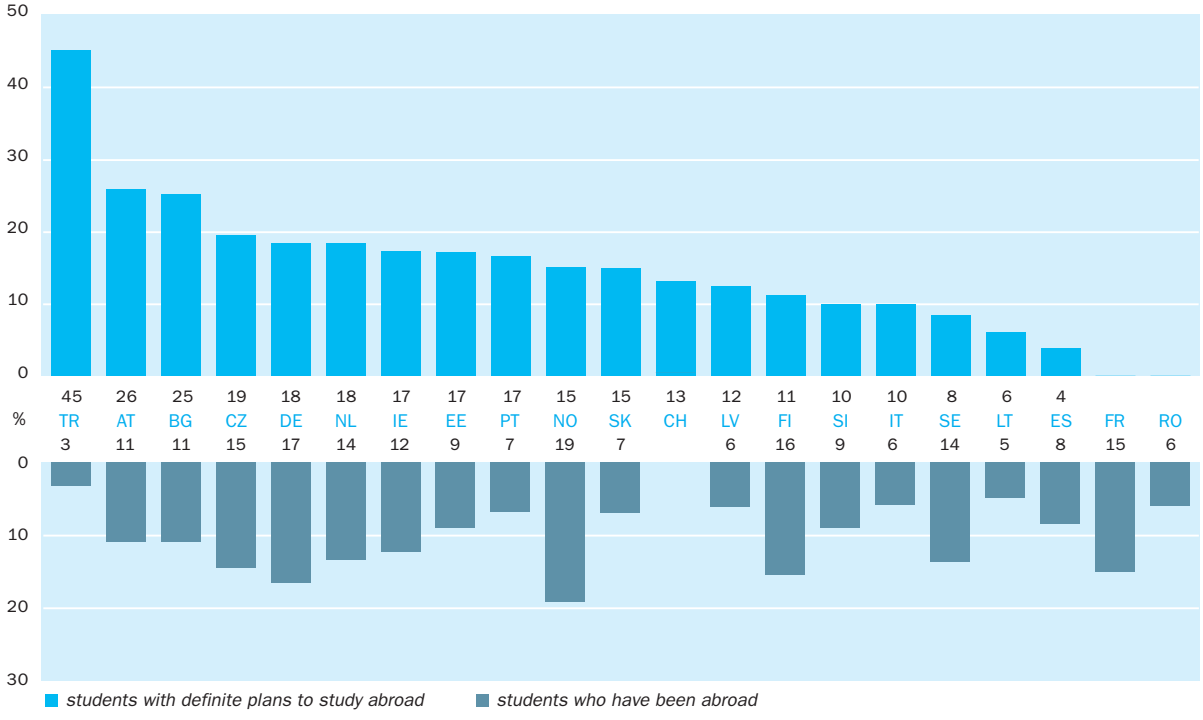
Students with definite plans for foreign study-related experiences



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53. No data FR, RO, SCO, E/W.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.2 "Do you plan any study-related activities abroad in the future?"

Fig. 8.5

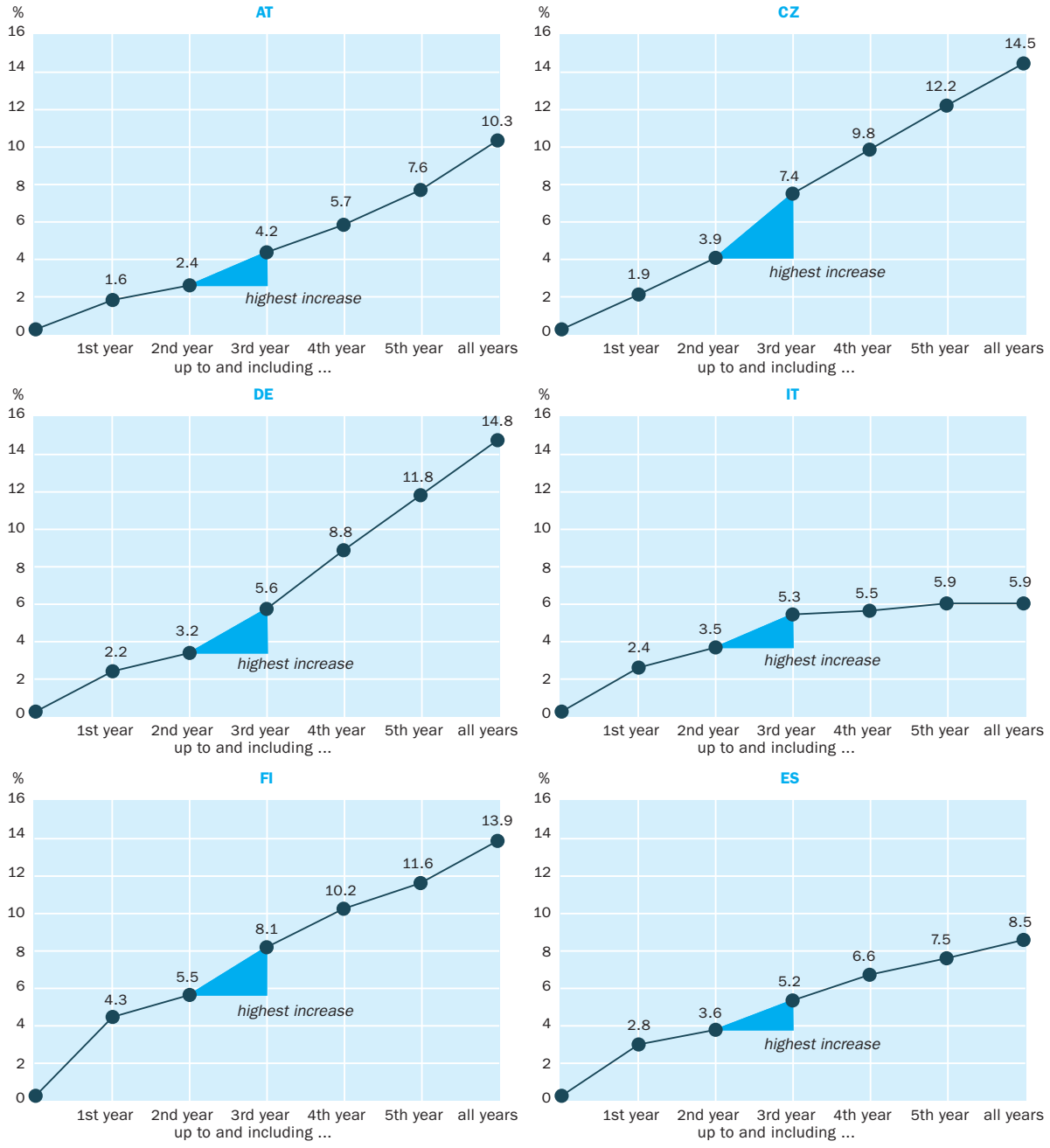
Potential for international student mobility – Foreign study-related experiences in % and students with definite plans for mobility in the future (all students)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53. No data E/W, SCO; no data on definite plans FR, RO, no data on overall foreign study-related experiences CH.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.2 "Do you plan any study-related activities abroad in the future?", question 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?"

Fig. 8.6

Foreign study-related experience by year of study, country by country

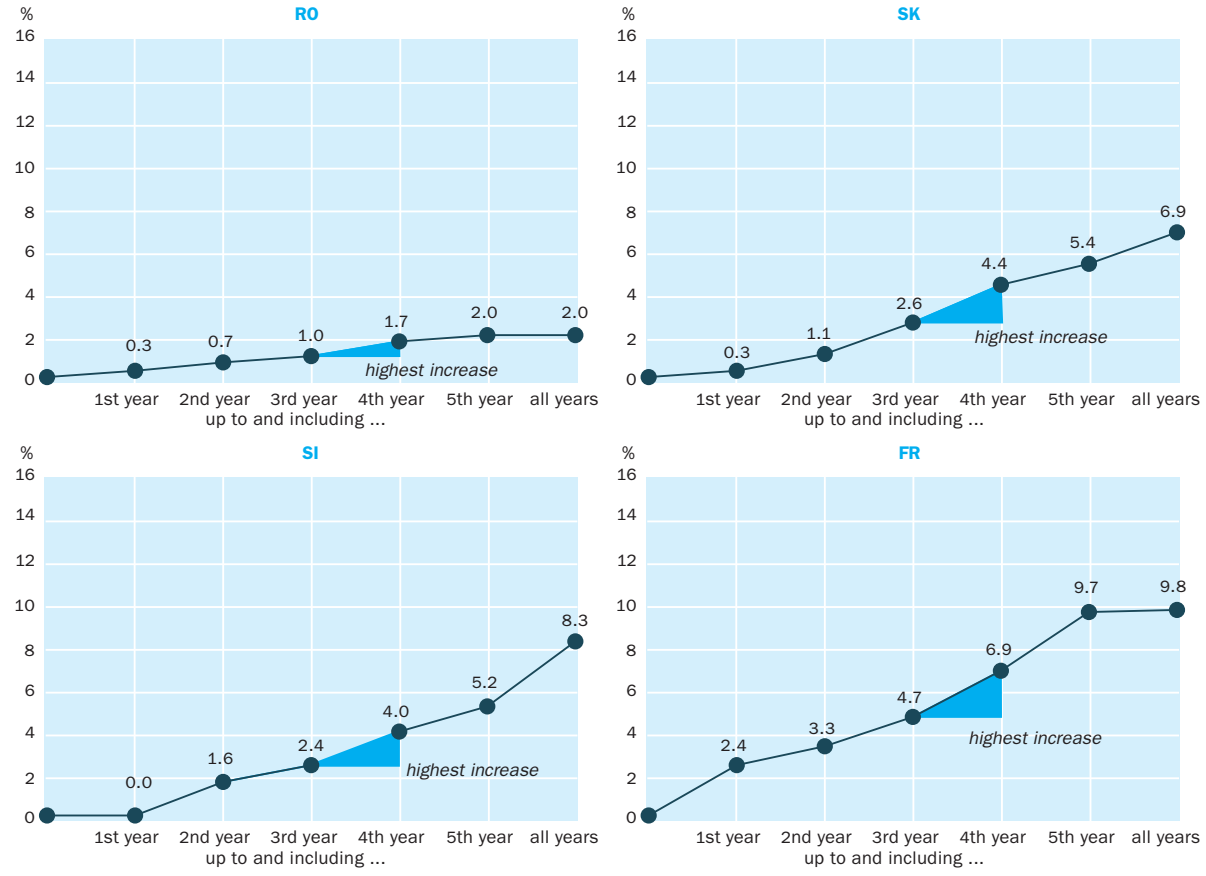


Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 56. No data BG, CH, E/W, EE, IE, LT, LV, NL, NO, PT, SCO, SE, TR.*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.2 "For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?", 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?"

Here, it is particularly interesting to see that Bachelor students in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Slovenia, which were shown in Figure 8.1 to have lower mobility rates than their counterparts in other courses, show a higher potential for mobility in the future.

Fig. 8.6 (continued)

Foreign study-related experience by year of study, country by country



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 56. No data BG, CH, E/W, EE, IE, LT, LV, NL, NO, PT, SCO, SE, TR.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.2 "For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?", question 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?"

Figure 8.5 looks at definite plans for foreign study-related experiences and the actual rates of mobility for each country together. This may offer a picture of the overall potential for mobility, provided that all students with plans to go abroad are presented with the opportunity to realise their plans. Looking at the comparative situation in this way shows in particular that students in Turkey, Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Portugal and Slovak Republic have a definite interest in participating, which is not yet matched by higher participation rates.

Students tend to go abroad during their third or fourth year of studies

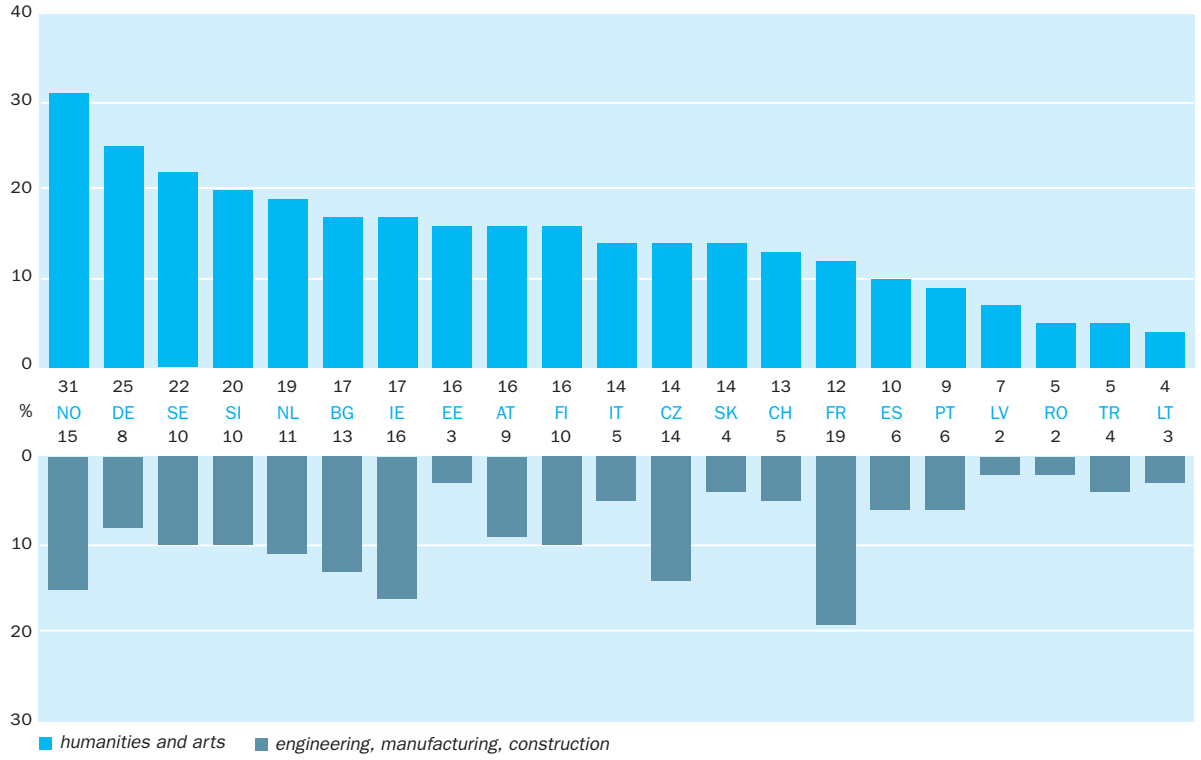
The data in Figure 8.6 shed some light on the question in which year of their studies students most frequently go abroad for foreign study-related experiences. With the help of this indicator the share of students who have been abroad can be shown in relation to the year of their studies. By cumulating this percentage within the academic period on a year-on-year basis it is possible to visualize in which year of studies what proportion of students have decided to go abroad for study-related reasons.

To help the interpretation of the charts in Figure 8.6, the case of Austria can be taken as an example. In total 10.3% of students in the Austrian survey stated that they had undertaken foreign study-related experiences (excluding the category "other"). By narrowing the student group to those who were mobile either in their first year or second year of study, the mobility rate would be 2.4%. Extending this group to include students from the third year, leads to a rise in the mobility rate from 2.4% to 4.2%. This is the biggest increase to be found in the Austrian data (+75%). From this data it can be concluded that most students undertake mobility initiatives in Austria in their third year of studying.

Overall, the third and the fourth year of study can be identified as the period in which most students appear to go abroad for a foreign study-related experience. This finding is particularly relevant with regard to the set duration for the new Bachelor courses, which should usually last three years. Within this new structure, therefore, the majority of students would be expected to go abroad only after completing their Bachelor course. In other words, special initiatives would appear necessary, if the periods of mobility are to occur during a Bachelor programme (e. g. compulsory international semesters).

Fig. 8.7

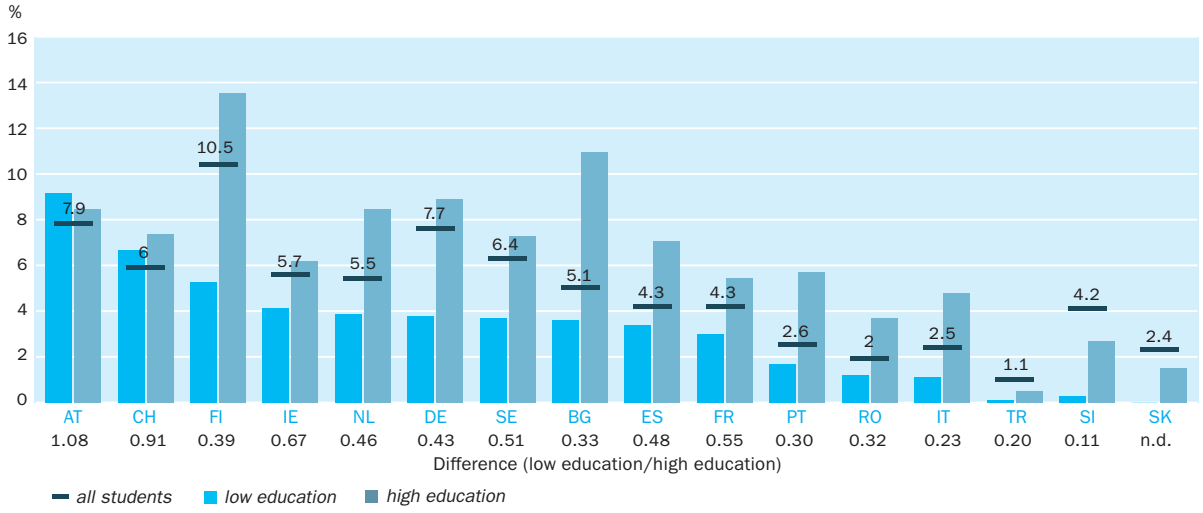
Average mobility rate by subject group (% of all students with foreign study-related experience)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 55 No data E/W, SCO.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.4 "The field of study or programme you follow", question 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?"

Fig. 8.8

Foreign enrolment by parents' education



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53&58. No data E/W, SCO, LV, LT, EE, NO, CZ; no data for low education SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Students of science and engineering tend to go abroad less frequently than students of humanities and arts

One of the framework conditions which affect the opportunity and, perhaps, motivation, for periods abroad, is the subject studied. Figure 8.7 shows the share of engineering students, who undertake foreign study-related experiences in comparison to the share of humanities students (data for other subject groups are available in the individual National Profiles).

With the exception of three cases (France, Czech Republic, Ireland), a much higher share of humanities students goes abroad than the share of engineering students. The share is more than three times higher in Germany, Latvia, Slovakia and Estonia. This is likely to be related both to the opportunity to go abroad within more flexible curricula and to students' motivation to go abroad in order to enhance their future employment prospects within the "soft" sciences.

Overall mobility rates and foreign enrolment are dependent on social background

The EUROSTUDENT data provides a comparison of foreign study-related experiences by social background (highest educational attainment of students' parents). Figure 8.8 shows foreign enrolment by parental education.[1]

The chart illustrates that students from low-educated families tend to have lower than average rates of foreign enrolment and much lower rates than students from relatively high-educated families.

1 *See Chapter 3 for a discussion on the use of this indicator for social background.*

In Bulgaria, Romania, Portugal, Italy, Slovenia and Turkey the rate of foreign enrolment is at least three times lower for students of low educational backgrounds than for their social counterparts.

The only exceptions to this tendency are Austria and Switzerland. However, in both cases the more positive results regarding students from less favourable social backgrounds seem to be only indirectly related to socio-economic issues.

As in the majority of counties, students from low-educated families in Switzerland do indeed tend to go abroad less frequently than their social counterparts. However, differences by social background are less pronounced than in other countries due to differences by field of study by social background. For instance, in the human sciences students from low-educated families are over-represented and this field of study also records the highest mobility rate (see Fig. 8.7 – 13% vs. 5%).

In viewing the comparative figures, it should be noted that access to higher education in the first place is already socially selective in some countries (e. g. in Germany, in Switzerland and Austria > *Chapter 3*).

Figure 8.9 compares mobility rates with the level of social selectivity concerning mobility for both enrolment (top chart) and for overall foreign study-related experiences (e. g. enrolment, language courses, internships – bottom chart). A value of 1 on the x-axis reflects an equilibrium concerning the social background of students with foreign enrolment and a value below 1 indicates that more students with a high educational background go abroad than those from low educational background. In Spain, for instance, the foreign enrolment rate of students from low-educated families is only about half as high as the rate among students from more privileged social backgrounds (top chart; 0.48); the ratio is somewhat better, when overall mobility is analysed (bottom chart; 0.60).

This figure shows, in part, that the degree in social selectivity of foreign enrolment is lower for countries with a higher overall level of foreign enrolment. Three country clusters can be identified in Figure 8.9, top chart:

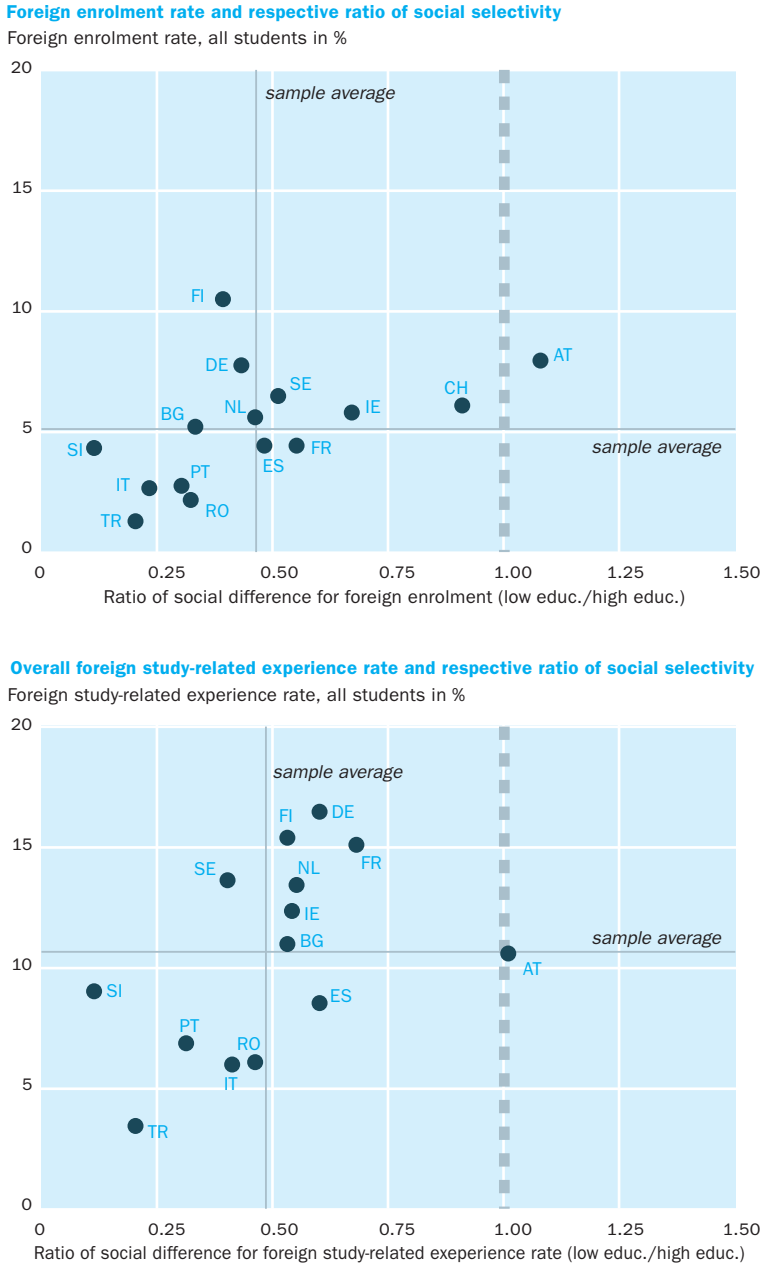
- Austria, Switzerland and (relatively speaking) Ireland are closest to social equilibrium and they have comparatively high overall foreign enrolment rates.
- Turkey, Portugal, Romania and Italy belong to a group of countries with comparatively low foreign enrolment rates and a low social equity with regards to foreign enrolment.
- Finland, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands are not close to equity but they are not as far from equity as other countries are, and the overall foreign enrolment rate is above 5%, i. e. comparatively high.

In countries with high rates of foreign enrolment the social difference is less big than in those countries where the foreign enrolment rate is lower.

Juxtaposition between enrolment (top chart) and overall foreign study-related periods abroad (bottom chart), which includes language courses and internships, shows a much lesser degree of social selectivity since more countries are near to the equilibrium

Fig. 8.9

Foreign enrolment and overall foreign study-related experience rates and respective ratios of social selectivity (parental education)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53 & 58. No data E/W, SCO, LV, LT, EE, NO, CZ; no data for low education SK; no data on non-enrolment periods for CH
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

of 1. This more limited selectivity is particularly visible for Germany, Finland, Bulgaria and Spain, and indeed on a lower level for Italy and Romania. These results point to a potential for less socially selective mobility programmes, which could be built on in the future.

English, French and German are the three most frequently spoken foreign languages

One of the prerequisites for international mobility is the ability to speak a foreign language. This competency can also be taken as an indication of a certain interest in languages, countries and cultures other than one's own.

Figure 8.10 provides an overview of different language abilities and on what level of proficiency students have in these foreign languages. The data presented here is based on students' own assessment of their language abilities.

The length of the bars in Figure 8.10 represents the overall share of students with some language proficiency (grades 1–5; where 1 is high). Each bar consists of sections, which show the share of students with foreign language proficiency, who judge themselves to be fluent or have (very) good skills (bottom section; grades 1–2), acceptable skills (middle section; grade 3) or only poor skills (top section; grades 4–5) in the respective languages.

It is no surprise that English is the first foreign language spoken by students in all EUROSTUDENT countries except Ireland, as the only anglophone country with data available. The percentage of students who judge themselves to have at least an acceptable level of proficiency in English (grades 1–3) is considerably high: above 70% in all but three countries (Bulgaria, Estonia and Slovakia). In four countries (Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Netherlands) 70% of the students or more have fluent or very good skills in English as their first foreign language.

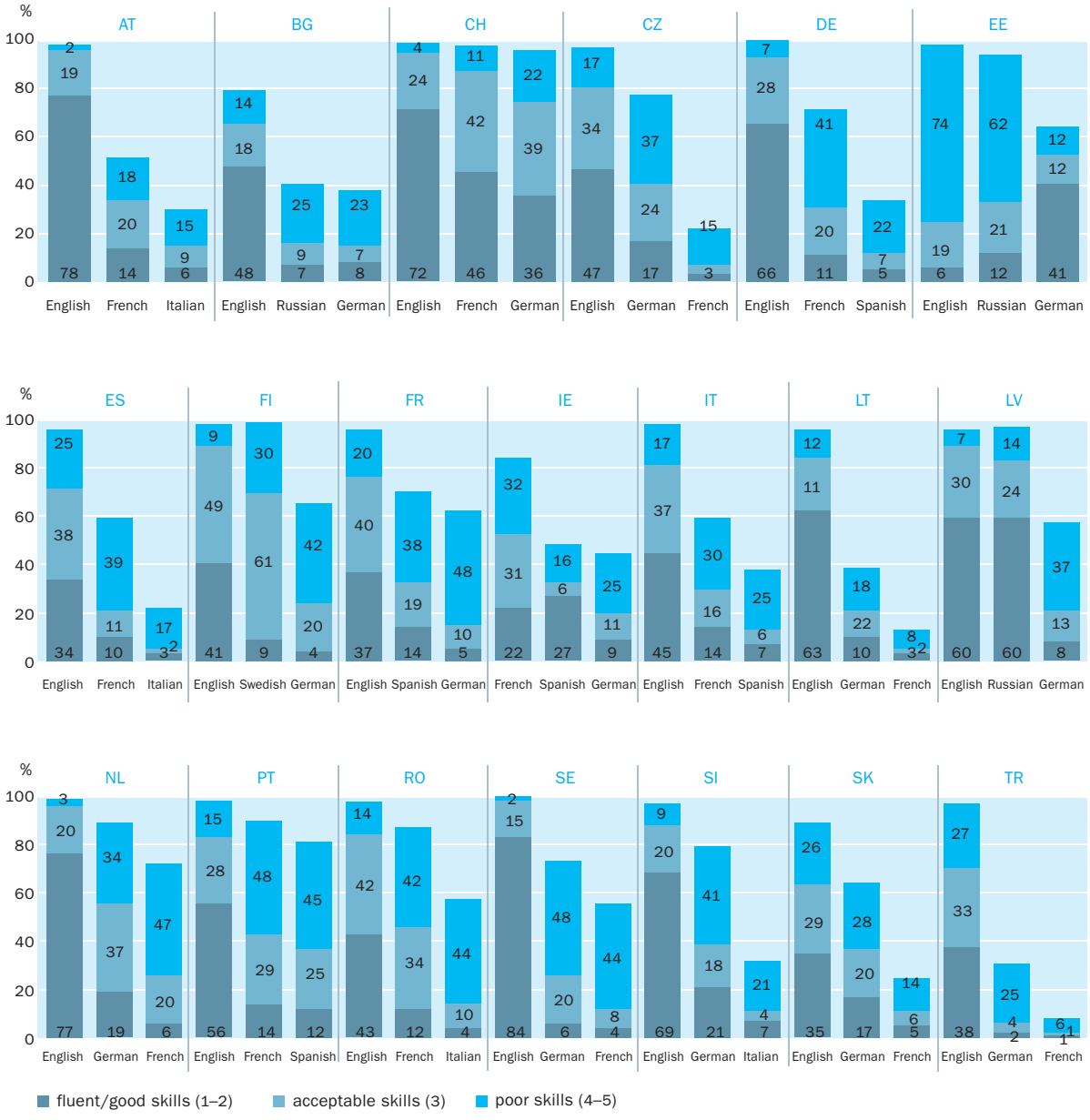
The second most frequently given foreign language is either French or German for most countries. In contrast, in two countries the second language is Spanish (France, Ireland) and equally in three countries it is Russian (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia). In Finland the second foreign language is Swedish. Albeit, in Finland, Swedish is the second official national language, with around 6% of the population being native Swedish speakers.

The percentage of students with at least some proficiency (grades 1–5) in the second most frequently spoken language is still 90% in five countries (Finland, Switzerland, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal and the Netherlands), which is amongst other things due to the fact that more than one national language exists (Switzerland – French, German, Italy, Romansh) or a secondary language is spoken (Estonia – Russian). In most countries the percentages of students who have at least some proficiency in the second language is around 50% or higher, while in Bulgaria (Russian 41%) and Turkey (German 31%) it is below 50%.

French and German are also the languages most widely spread as third languages. In six countries the third most frequently spoken foreign language, in which students have at least some proficiency, is French, in seven it is German. Students in the remaining countries speak Spanish or Italian as the third language. The percentage of students who claim to have fluent and very good skills in the third language is remarkably high in Switzerland with German (36%). And even more striking is the share of highly proficient language speakers in Estonia also with German as the third most frequently spoken foreign language (41%).

Fig. 8.10

Student language ability by most frequently used foreign languages



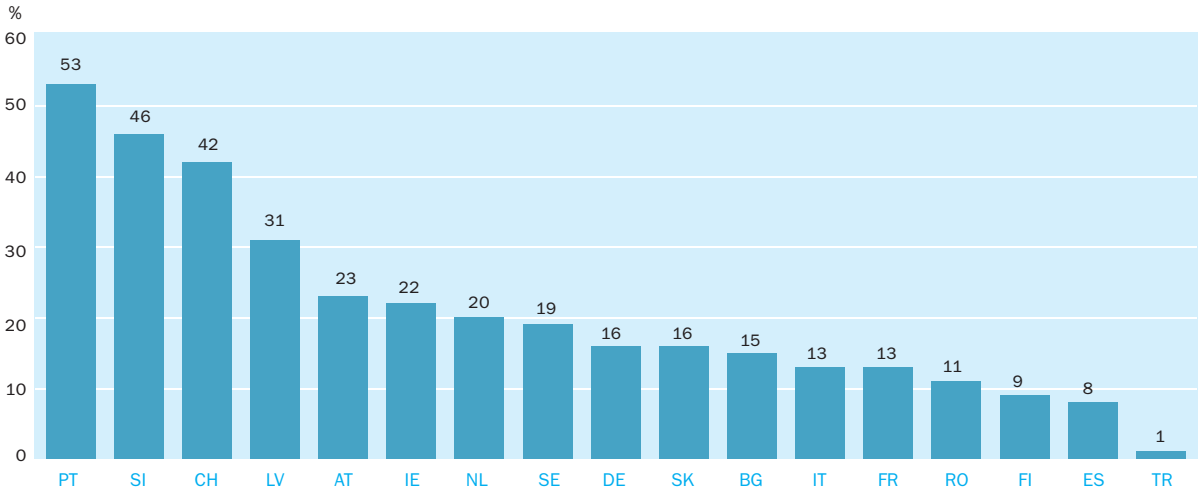
Source: *EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 51 & 52. No data E/W, NO, SCO*
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.1 "What is your present knowledge of languages besides your mother-tongue?"

Due to its status as one of the Lisbon Agenda goals for facilitating mobility, EUROSTUDENT looks at the share of students who indicate that they have a fluency in two foreign languages. In most countries at least 10% of students claim to be proficient in two foreign languages (grades 1–5). Figure 8.11 shows that in Portugal more than half of all responding students state that they have a proficiency in two languages. Between

one third and a half of all students in Slovenia, Switzerland and Latvia state that they have this high level of proficiency in two foreign languages, whilst in Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden around one fifth of students fit this category.

Fig. 8.11

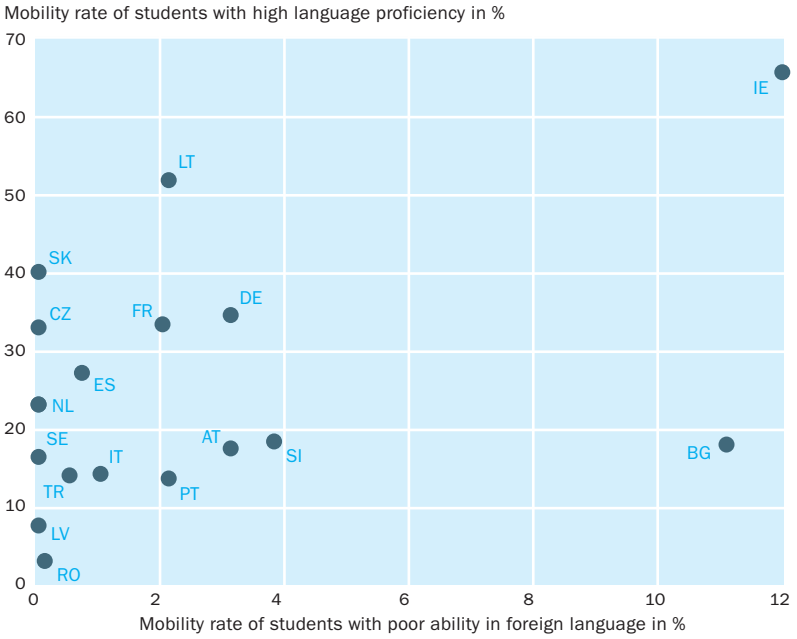
Share of students fluent in two foreign languages (in%)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 52. No data CZ, EE, E/W, LT, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.1 "What is your present knowledge of languages besides your mother-tongue?"

Fig. 8.12

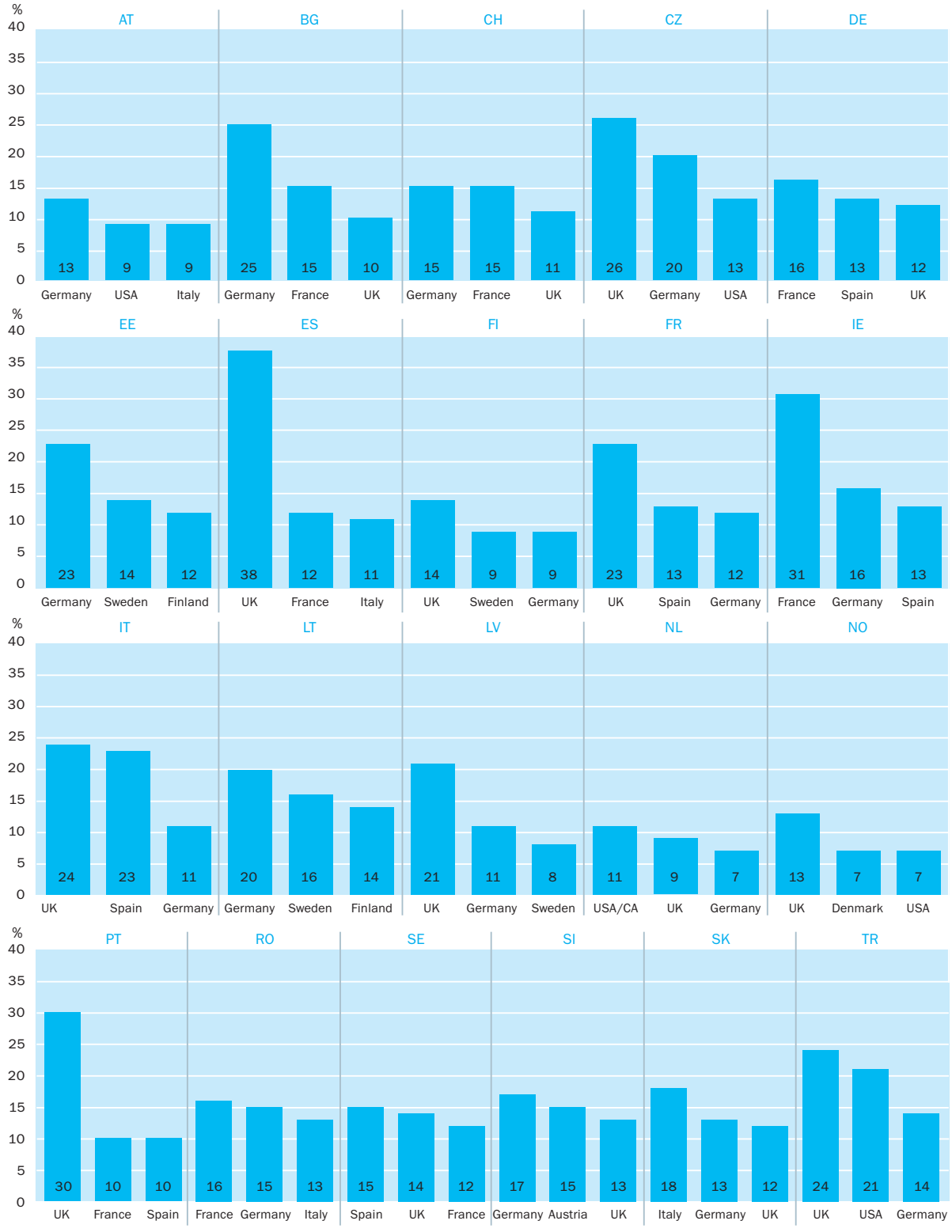
Language ability and foreign study-related experience



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 54. No data E/W, EE, LT, NO, SCO. Data for CH are not shown, since data only refer to foreign enrolment.
Note: high language proficiency = grade 1; poor ability = grade 5.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.1 "What is your present knowledge of languages besides your mother-tongue?"

Fig. 8.13

Three most frequently chosen host countries for periods abroad by share of all students with foreign study-related experiences in each country



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 59. No data E/W, SCO

EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.5 "Please specify the country in which you stayed longest for study-related activity and for how many months."

Figure 8.12 illustrates the relationship between foreign language proficiency and overall study-related mobility rates, which is also presented for each country in the respective National Profiles. In general, it is clear that students with high language competency have relatively higher mobility rates than those with low foreign language abilities. However, the data does not provide much insight into causes and effects. Some students may have acquired their language skills during their studies abroad, i. e. language ability was not necessarily the cause, but the consequence of a study period abroad. The interesting case of Ireland is likely to be related to the fact that many programmes abroad are available in English language.

Choice of country for foreign study-related experience is influenced by foreign language capability

Figure 8.13 provides an overview of the countries students chose for their foreign study-related experiences abroad. The most frequent "host" country, together with the second and the third most frequently chosen country is shown for each "home" country and the respective percentage of mobile students who have chosen each host country is given (e. g. 23% of Estonian students visit Germany on their foreign study-related periods abroad).

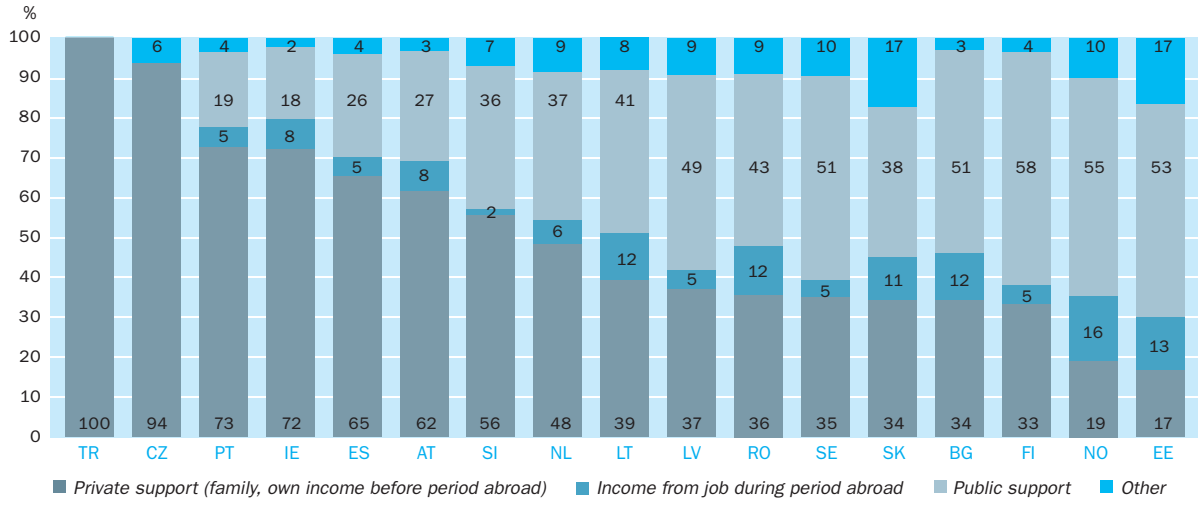
The United Kingdom is the most frequently chosen host country by the majority of students in nine countries followed by Germany in six countries and France in three countries.

Income disparities in the European Higher Education Area cause a great strain on mobility

Private sources and/or public support constitute a backbone for financing study-related experiences abroad. Figure 8.14 shows the various sources of income during these periods abroad.

Fig. 8.14

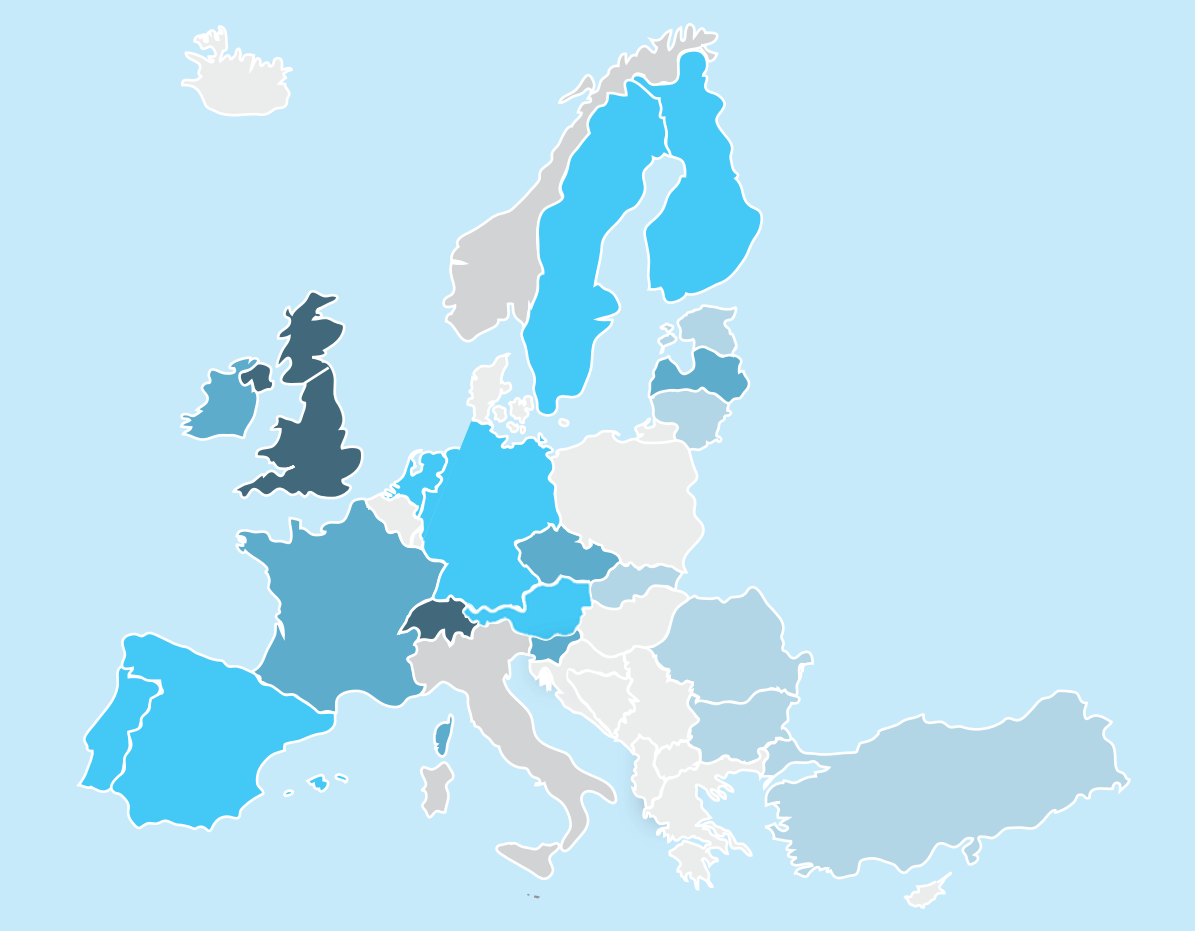
Source of financing during study-related stay abroad (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 57. No data CH, DE, E/W, FR, IT, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.6 "How did you finance your (longest) study-related activities abroad?"

Fig. 8.15

Geographical distribution of total income of students (Income classes in Euro, all students maintaining own households)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 27. No data IT, NO.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.1 "Where do you live during study terms/semester?", 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal by sources of origin: Cash only (direct)."*

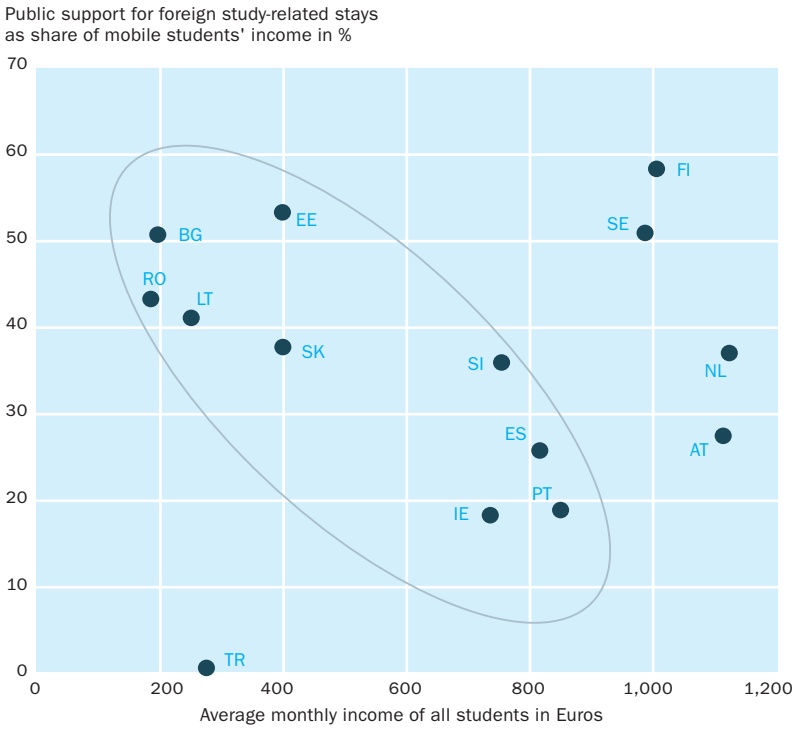
In nine cases (Turkey, Czech Republic, Portugal, Ireland, Spain, Austria, Slovenia, the Netherlands and Lithuania) more than half of the average mobile student's income is covered by private support, including income from jobs students had during their period abroad. Though the share of income from private sources is lowest among Estonian students, private support still makes up 30% of their income.

In five countries (Finland, Norway, Estonia, Sweden and Bulgaria) public support makes up over half of the average mobile student's income. With the exception of Turkey and the Czech Republic, public support remains important for students from all other countries, with the lowest contribution to income during periods abroad being Ireland at 18%.

In many cases, the share of state support for mobile students is significantly higher than for the average national student; especially in Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia and Spain (compare with corresponding figures > *Chapter 5*).

Fig. 8.16

Financial public support for mobile students in relation to the amount of disposable income for all national students



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 57 & 27. No data: CH, CZ, DE, E/W, FR, IT, LV, NO, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 4.2 "Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal by sources of origin: Cash only direct", 5.6 "How did you finance your (longest) study-related activities abroad?"

This extra state support is important as it is difficult for students to continue their self-financing strategy in a foreign country. No more than 16% of the total budget comes from employment in the reporting countries.

High-income countries and especially those countries with universal and portable state-support can make use of a special advantage, which is related to the high purchase-power of the normal student income, if spent in most of the host countries. The geographic pattern of student-income shown in Fig. 8.15 reveals the enormous downward slope of "income-power" running from West to East and North to South. Especially in the Eastern and South-Eastern parts of Europe, where the average student income is low, students, who are willing to go abroad for study reasons, face the extra disadvantage that their normal income, which may be relatively favourable in their home country, is worth much less in most of the potential host countries.

Students in Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Turkey, Estonia and Slovakia have less than € 400 per month real purchasing power, whereas they would need more than € 800 per month if they were to go, for example, to Spain, Germany or indeed Switzerland or England/Wales and live there at the same standards as home students (> *Chapter 5*, Fig. 5.1).

This wide difference in "income-power" as sketched out in the geographic pattern of total income differentials is one of the biggest obstacles to mobility in the European

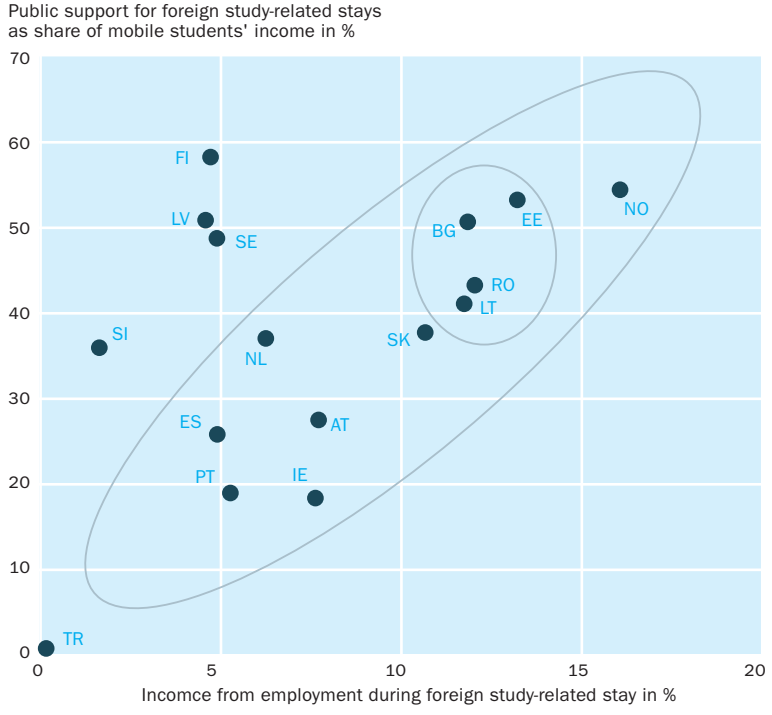
Higher Education Area. Reducing income disparities is already a major issue for achieving equal opportunities for students studying in their home countries; for students moving from a country with low student income to a comparatively wealthy host country income disparities might be even more pronounced. As most of the mobility flows in Europe are running in this direction (i. e. from low-income to high-income countries) the necessity to overcome this substantial bias in the European Higher Education Area is quite clear.

Countries with relatively low student income, therefore, have to raise the public share of student funding if they want to raise the mobility rate. And, indeed, we see this in the cases of Romania, Bulgaria and Lithuania, where the share of a mobile student's budget made up by public support (40–50%) is higher than in countries like Ireland, Spain, Portugal or Austria, where the public support makes up less than 30% of the budget – see Figure 8.16.

Figure 8.17 explores the relationship between public support and earned income during periods of foreign study-related experience. This figure shows that the countries with low student incomes and high public support rates as shown in Figure 8.16 are nevertheless to be found in the top group of countries with high rates of income from employment during the study-related periods abroad, due to the general income dispar-

Fig. 8.17

Rate of self-financing through employment by rate of financial public support during stay abroad in % (students with foreign study-related experience)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 57. No data CH, CZ, DE, E/W, FR, IT, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.6 "How did you finance your (longest) study-related activities abroad?"

ity in the European Higher Education Area. It can be assumed that the purchase power of public subsidy is still too low compared with living costs in many host countries. Employment income – it appears – is the only possibility to overcome income differentials.

The question is, whether the higher subsidiary public support in low-student-income countries can compensate for the disadvantages of low income and low purchase power or if these this issue calls for further policy actions at supra-national levels (e. g. European loan scheme, host country support vs. home country support). Without a solution with regard to the prevailing income disparities, free movement of students from less privileged areas of Europe is likely to remain low.

Organisational support for mobility is provided through mobility programmes, but the share of free-movers is frequently higher

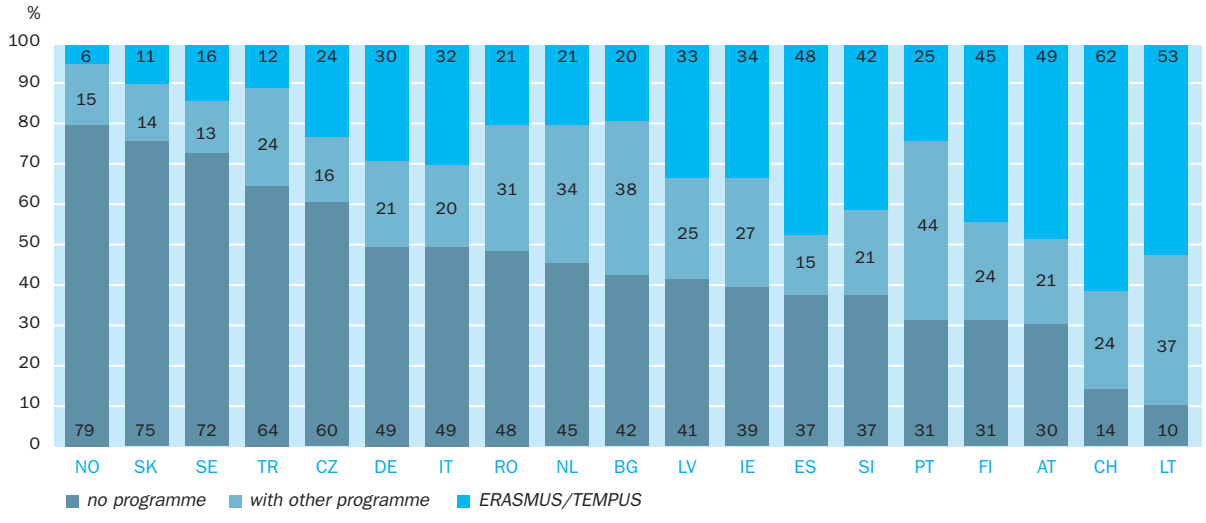
Apart from financial support specifically devised for mobility, organisational support is another accompanying measure to encourage mobility. Organisational arrangements like mobility programmes help to encourage students to go abroad; even if they are not connected with financial support or offer only minor support, as Erasmus does in many countries.

Therefore students who have been abroad were asked in the EUROSTUDENT survey, if they joined a programme or if they went abroad on their own initiative – as so-called free-movers. Figure 8.18 offers an overview and shows the prevailing strategy in the different countries.

In 14 out of 19 countries organized mobility is the dominant form of cross-border mobility (i. e. accounts for over half of all mobility). More than two-thirds of the mobile students were supported by a European mobility programme or a national one in

Fig. 8.18

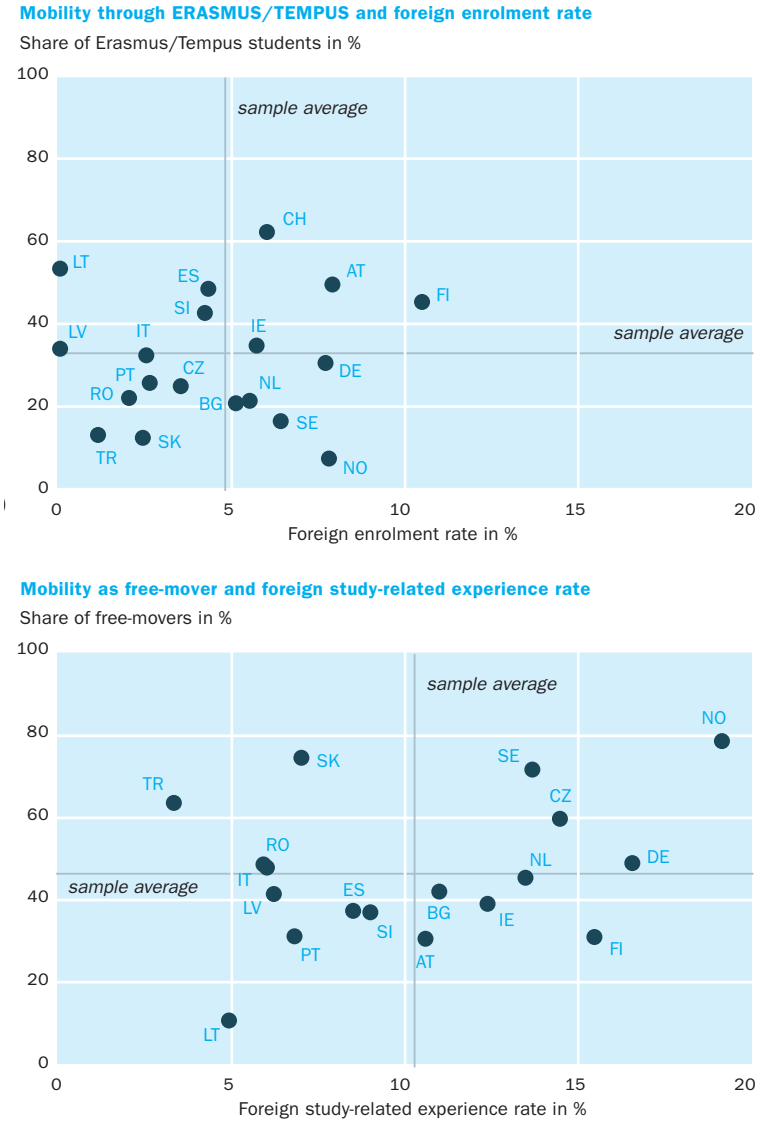
Organisation of foreign study-related experiences – All mobile students (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 60. No data E/W, EE, FR, SCO
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.7 "Was your study-related activity abroad part of a programme?"

Fig. 8.19

Rates of mobility and the organisation of periods abroad



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53 & 60. No data E/W, SCO, EE, FR (top chart), additionally no data for CH in bottom chart. EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 5.7 "Was your study-related activity abroad part of a programme?"

Lithuania, Switzerland[2], Austria, Finland and Portugal. For all but one country in this group (Portugal), the European programmes Erasmus/Tempus are the leading channels of mobility.

However, mobility based on personal initiative still remains a substantial contributor to mobility flows. In some of the countries like Norway, Slovakia and Sweden, three-quarters of the students, who have been abroad, spent time abroad as free-movers

2 *Note that in Switzerland only students that have been abroad for enrolment have been surveyed. The majority of these students participate in an organised mobility programme (most notably Erasmus). Hence the high proportion of mobile students who were supported by a mobility programme.*

and the share of free-movers is below 30% in only two countries (Switzerland and Lithuania).

The wide range of programmed mobility in Europe, as shown in Figure 8.18, raises the question of whether such programmes are also accompanied by higher rates of mobility. Figure 8.19 is an attempt to investigate this aspired effect by cross-referencing rates of mobility in individual countries with the share of students using different types of organised mobility.

The top chart cross-references rates of foreign enrolment with shares of students participating in Erasmus or Tempus programmes. This cross-check of mobility rates with programmed mobility can give no clear evidence of the expected close relationship. For instance, Romania, Bulgaria, the Netherlands and Sweden have similarly low shares of students undertaking Erasmus/Tempus schemes (around 20%), but very different enrolment rates (2.0%, 5.1%, 5.5% and 6.4%, respectively).

However, there is a group of countries with low levels of programme participation and low rates of foreign enrolment: Turkey, Romania, Slovakia, Portugal and the Czech Republic. These countries might be targeted in order to increase their participation rates.

The bottom chart shows the share of free-movers against the overall rate of foreign study-related experience. Again, high shares of free-movers do not link to particularly high mobility rates (contrast Slovakia, Sweden and Norway). At the same time, the countries mentioned above as a possible target for Erasmus programmes can be largely seen to have high shares of free-movers: Turkey, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic (Fig. 8.18 shows Portugal to have a high overall share of programme students). Especially due to the different levels of state support for foreign periods abroad (see Fig. 8.14) it would be useful to further analyse the reasons for the very different rates of overall mobility between these countries. No conclusions can be drawn on the current basis of EUROSTUDENT data.

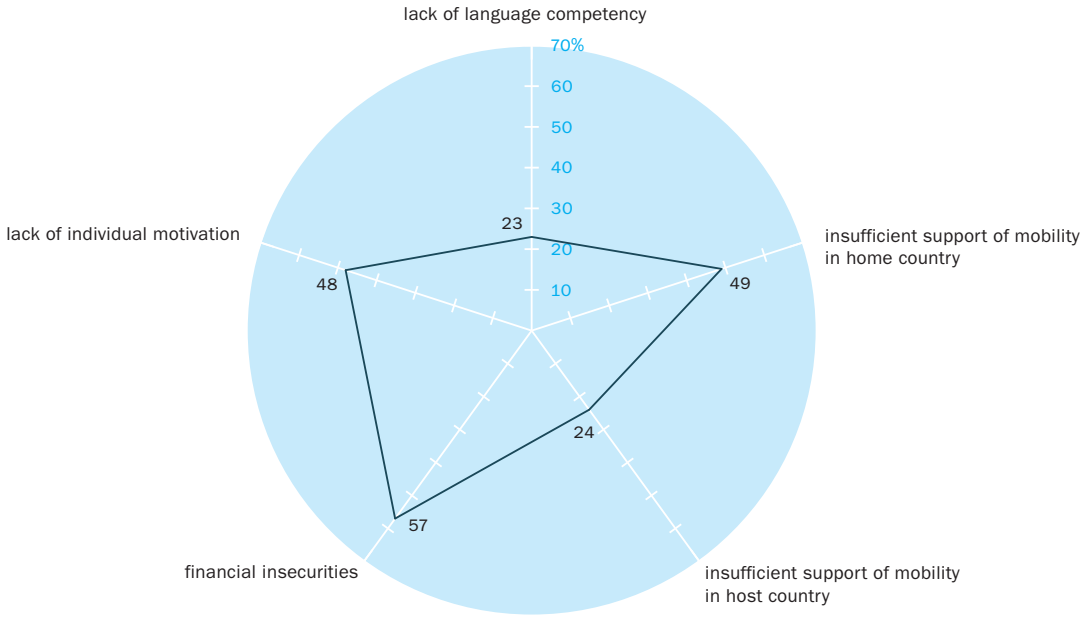
Financial insecurities and lack of support for mobility in home country influence students' plans to go abroad

The European policy target is to raise mobility rates in all countries and in all student groups. At least 20% of all graduates should have had study-related experiences in a foreign country before they enter the labour market. Achieving this long-range objective will require policy-makers to especially pay attention to those students not yet participating in cross-border study-related experiences and to their perceptions of the obstacles to mobility. The EUROSTUDENT survey consulted students on particular obstacles to participating in international mobility in order to provide a first overall insight into the issues. The patterns are more or less the same in all observed countries.

From a list of 14 items, five clusters of issues were differentiated (to see the full figures, refer to the National Profiles for each country). These were lack of language competency, insufficient support in home country, insufficient support in host country, financial insecurities and lack of individual motivation (i. e. lack of personal drive), and a focus was set on those issues that have a strong and very strong influence on the indi-

Fig. 8.20

Issues that have a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related periods abroad for students who have not been abroad (median of all countries) – Share of all immobile students (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

vidual decision of students. Figure 8.20 shows the median results across all countries' data for students, who have not been abroad.

In all countries financial insecurity plays the dominant role with a median value of 57% stating that this issue was a major obstacle to mobility. This fear goes hand in hand with the issue that support of the home country is insufficient (48%). Another aspect, which is not directly connected with the material and organisational conditions, is lack of individual motivation (48%). Lack of language competency (23%) and insufficient support of mobility in the host country (24%) play a minor role in the respective considerations, at least in the perception of those students, who remain in their home university.

The overall pattern, which can be encountered in all countries with tiny variations, allows the following interpretations:

- Decisions for or against mobility are mainly made from the perspective of the situation in the home country. The problems that might occur in the host country (lack of language competency, insufficient support in host country) tend to be neglected.
- Financial support and schemes that make plans appear feasible are the most decisive instruments by which a positive individual decision can be influenced. Arrangements must be made beforehand in the home country; students should be made aware of these opportunities.
- Students' perception of lack of individual motivation (i. e. personal drive) as a major obstacle emphasises the fact that personality factors that are embedded in the mental disposition of students exert a strong influence on international mobilisation. To

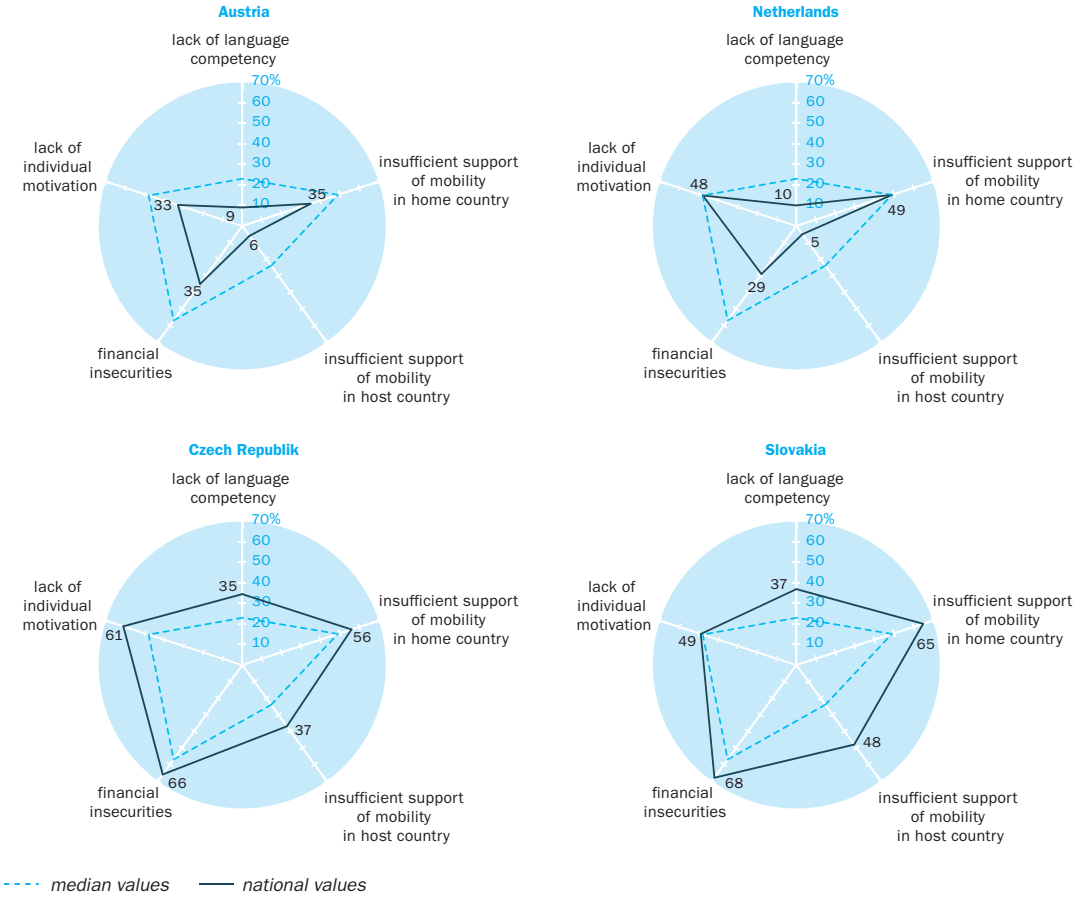
change reluctant mental dispositions is a difficult task that needs more than material incentives. Information-policy must be targeted to these groups in particular, pointing out the benefits of foreign experiences.

In Figure 8.21 selected countries are shown, which show significant deviations to the general picture.

- Slovakia and the Czech Republic could be pointed to as representatives of the south-east periphery of the European Higher Education Area, where the inhibiting factors of financial insecurity and insufficient home support are even more strongly expressed. The barriers are increased by a greater perceived lack of language competency. In the face of economic restrictions in the home country, it appears that students ascribe some of the responsibility for alleviating obstacles to the host country: insufficient support of the host countries is stressed only by these low-income countries as a special barrier for out-going mobility.
- In contrast to the general picture across all countries, a much lower share of Dutch students express concerns regarding funding and support than the median value for

Fig. 8.21

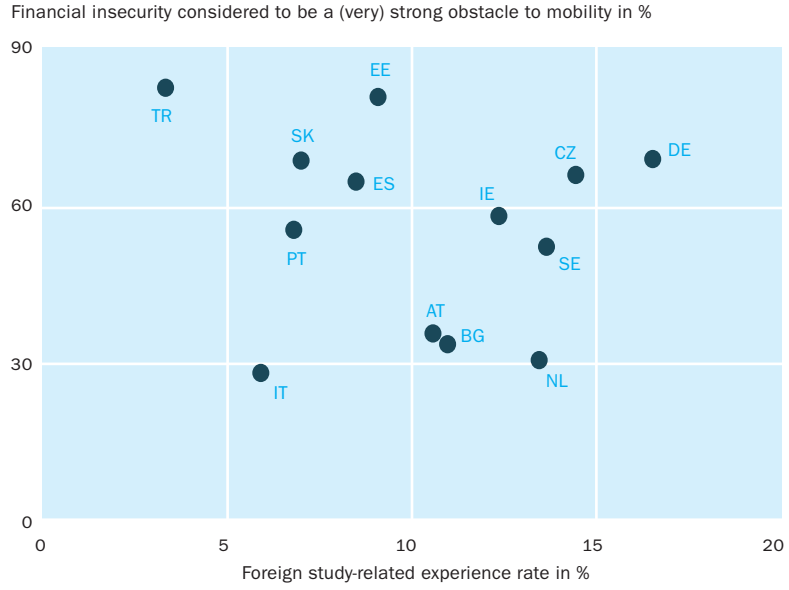
Issues that have a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related stays abroad for students who have not been abroad – Median of all countries compared to national values for selected countries (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT Subtopic 61. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

Fig. 8.22

Financial insecurities of immobile students as an influence factor on mobility rates



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 53 & 61 and OECD data. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI, CH
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

Fig. 8.23

Financial insecurities of immobile students and strength of the national economy

Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61 and OECD data. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

all countries (29% vs. 57%). However, a lack of individual motivation persists as major stated obstacle to mobility.

- Austria presents a contrast in reference to motivational issues of going abroad, where students are more positive than in other countries. This may reflect a consistent policy that encourages mobility and barriers to be perceived as challenges, which can be mastered by every student.

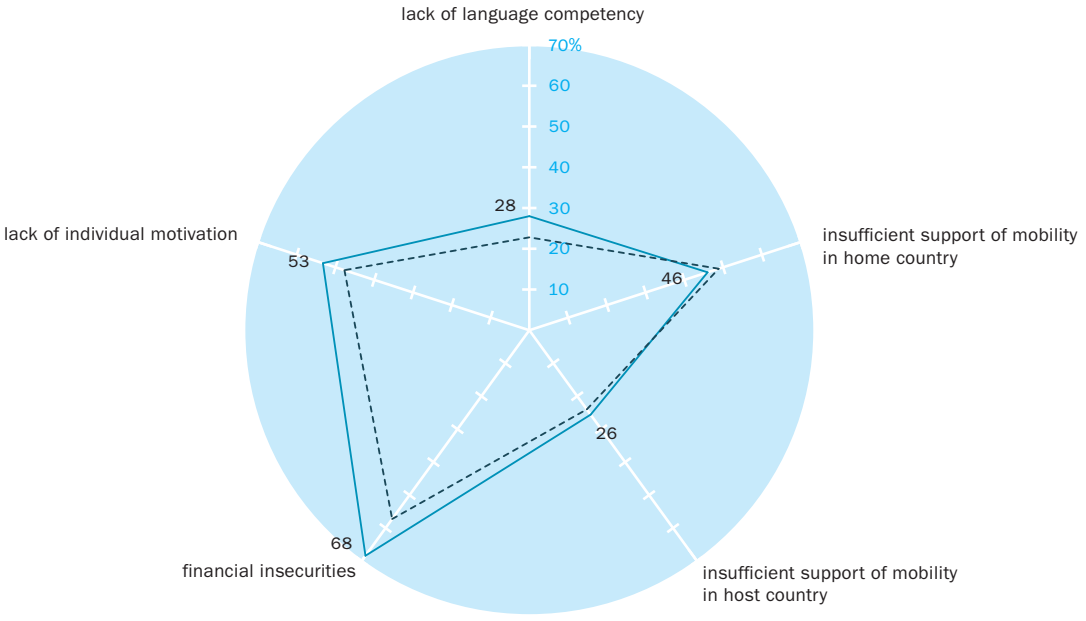
From the whole set of issues that influence the decision pro or contra international mobility the most influential factor, financial insecurity, is cross-referenced with mobility rates in Figure 8.22. This figure again suggests that perceived financial insecurity is just one of the factors influencing mobility rates.

At the same time, financial insecurity appears to be related (albeit loosely) to the strength of a country's economy (as expressed by its gross domestic product). A tendency is visible which connects individual financial insecurity with a lower GDP in the respective national economies. This may affect the mobility rates in countries like Estonia, Slovak Republic and Turkey, although it does not appear to affect Czech students (see Fig. 8.1).

Despite the – at least at first sight – rather weak link between level of financial insecurity and mobility rates, the issue remains prominent in students' minds. In nearly all

Fig. 8.24

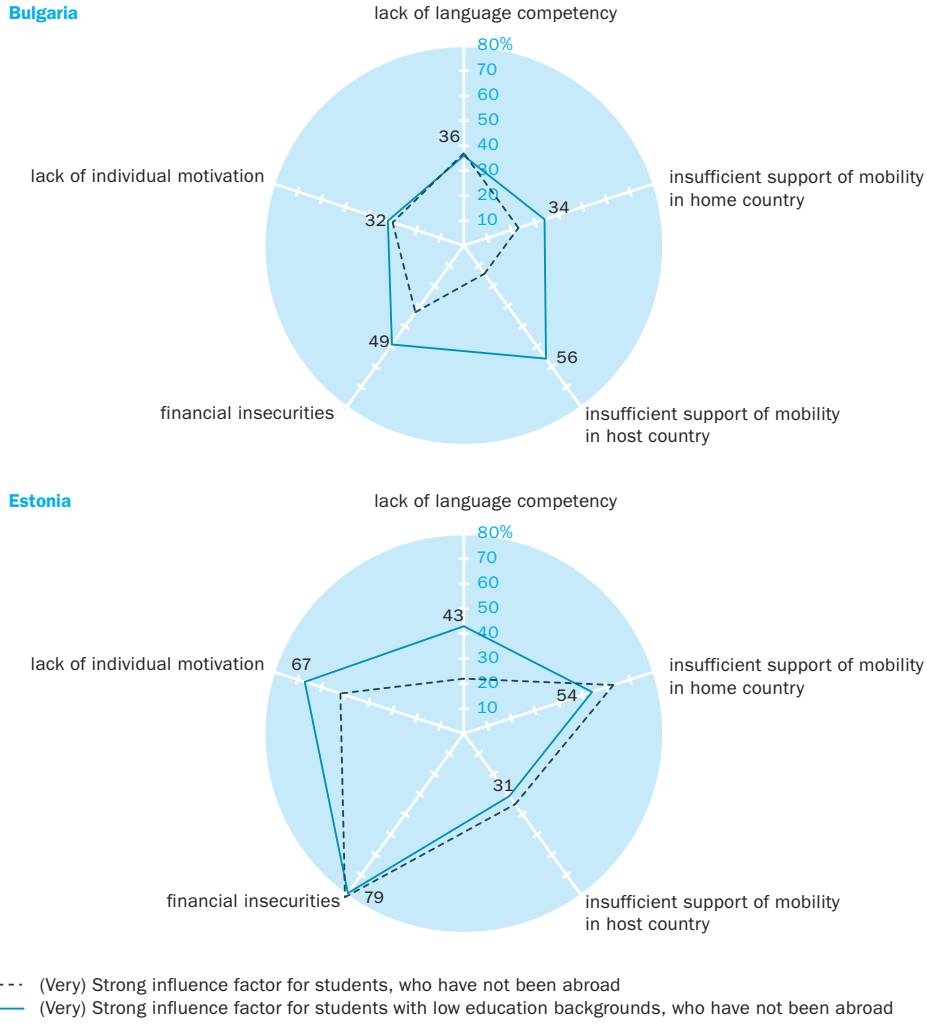
Issues that have a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related stays abroad for students who have not been abroad and by parental education background (median of all countries in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61 & 62. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI, SK
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

Fig. 8.25

Issues that have a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related stays abroad for students who have not been abroad and by parental education background, selected countries (in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61 & 62.
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.3 "Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?", 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?", 6.1 "What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?"

countries students with an unfavourable socio-economic background perceive this to be more of an obstacle than their more privileged counterparts – see Figure 8.24.[3]

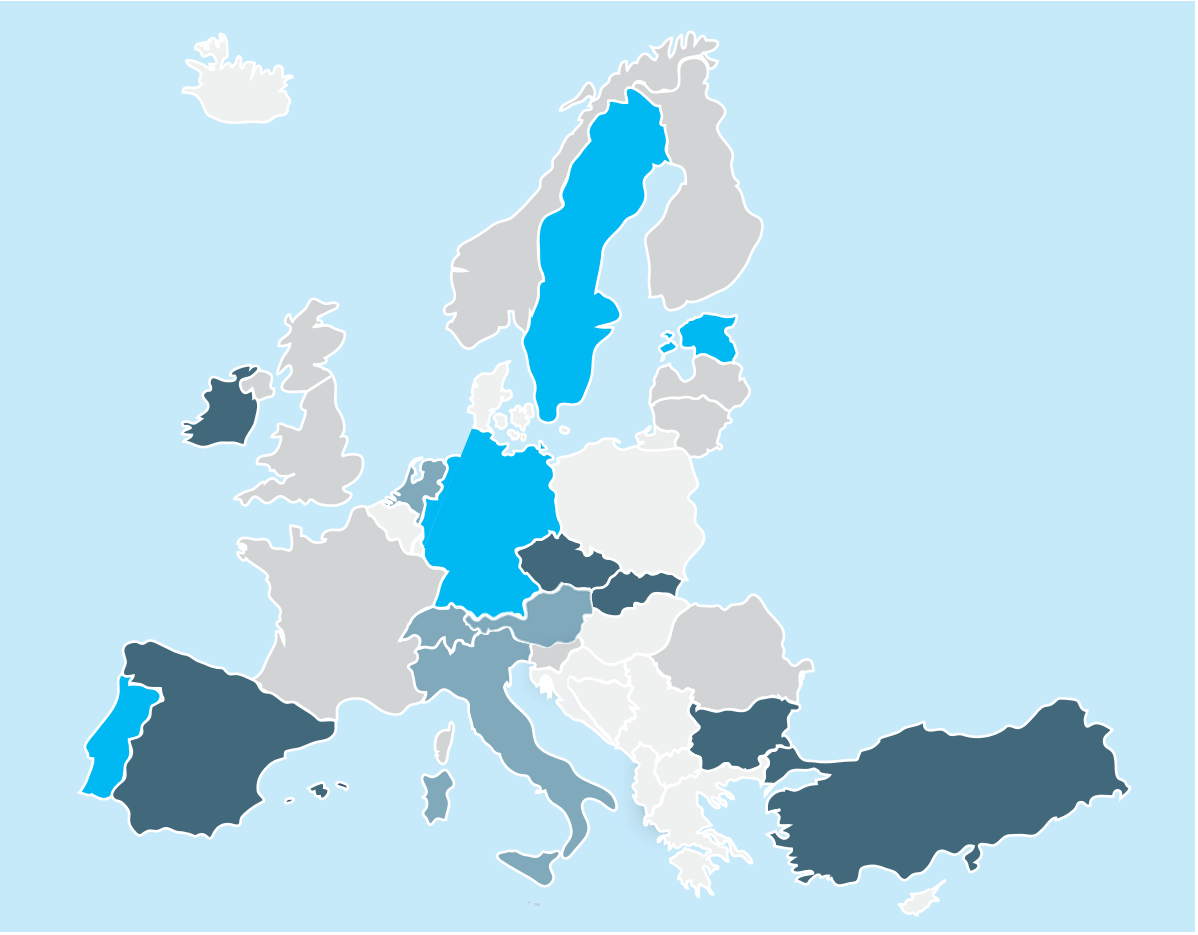
In the overall picture, when students who have not been abroad and who have low-educated parents are compared with the total student population, 68% instead of 57% students state that financial insecurities strongly influenced their decision not to go abroad.

In addition, students from low-educated families more often tend to perceive a lack of language competencies and a lack of individual motivation to be important barriers to

3 *For an explanation of the indicators used to reflect social background, see Chapter 3.*

Fig. 8.26

Lack of foreign language competency as an issue that has a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related stays abroad for students who have not been abroad – share of immobile students stating this issue as an obstacle



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 5.1 "What is your present knowledge of languages besides your mother-tongue?", 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

mobility. Hence, even though differences according to social background are more pronounced with regard to financial obstacles, targeted mobility support of students from low-educated families should not only be confined to financial measures, but should also aim at cultural competencies and at students' self-esteem. A closer look at single countries seems to confirm this conclusion.

Furthermore, additional analysis shows that the mobility obstacles pointed out above are not of the same priority in different countries. In Figure 8.25 the national patterns of issues that are perceived as mobility barriers by students are displayed for two selected countries of the Eastern periphery of Europe with similar mobility rates – Bulgaria and Estonia. Again, students of unfavourable social origin are compared with the total student population. Bulgaria stands out because socially disadvantaged students are more concerned with insufficient support of the host countries than their counter-

parts. By contrast, in Estonia, where students from low-educated families do not seem to perceive financial insecurity as more severe than students on average, individual motivation and language competency are more pressing topics.

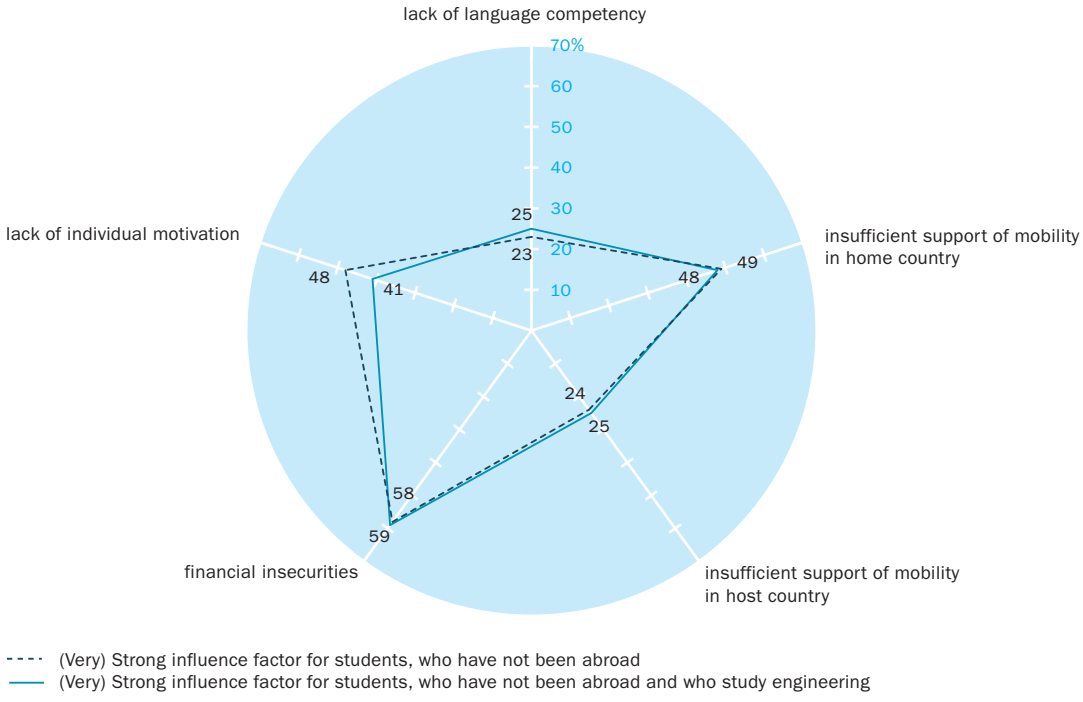
Since language competency is, at least to some degree, a prerequisite for periods abroad and is certainly a policy topic on European level, it is interesting to look at students' concerns regarding lack of language competency from a geographic perspective – see Figure 8.26.

Again, it is mainly the students in the south-east of the European Higher Education Area, who perceive to suffer most from the handicap that the acquisition of foreign languages is not yet sufficiently supported or promoted. Least concerned with this issue are students from Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands.

With regard to the Lisbon Strategy, where the mobility of technological knowledge is stressed as a priority to make Europe more competitive, the analysis of issues influencing international mobility can be concluded by the observation that potential mobility barriers are not perceived differently by students of different fields of study (Figure 8.27). If anything, a lack of individual motivation seems to be less relevant for the decision not to go abroad among students of engineering than among students on average.

Fig. 8.27

Issues that have a (very) strong influence on plans for study-related stays abroad for students who have not been abroad and for those who study engineering (median of all countries in %)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 61 & 63. No data E/W, FI, FR, LT, LV, NO, RO, SCO, SI
EUROSTUDENT Questions: 3.4 "The field of study or programme you follow", question 5.8 "To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?"

Chapter 9:
Policy considerations

Introduction

The proceeding chapters have presented a bird's eye view of the social and economic conditions of student life in Europe on the basis of data from 23 European countries. The data has shown that global societal developments, cultural, geopolitical and socio-economic factors all play a role in the constellation of a total student experience in Europe. We have seen some common trends which transverse geopolitical boundaries, some which appear to be the result of explicit policy initiatives and some which describe the different characteristics of sub-groups of the student body in particular countries.

The policy-orientated reader is confronted with the challenge of processing this vast array of data and parameters with a view to finding what is policy relevant, to assessing what should be targeted through policy initiatives and to judging what can actually be changed through policy measures. We recognise this situation and will attempt to facilitate this process by highlighting certain trends and possible policy considerations in this chapter.[1]

The basis of this chapter will indeed be provided by results from EUROSTUDENT III, but such a project has limitations. In recognition of this fact, we will also provide references to other studies, where further insightful and relevant findings can be sourced. Even a cursory look at policy documents and current studies in the field of higher education research shows that many reforms are occurring concurrently. A recent review of tertiary education carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[2] covers, for instance, the following eight areas of reform:

- Steering tertiary education and governance
- Institutional funding strategies
- Quality improvement and assurance
- Equity in education systems
- Tertiary education's role in research and innovation
- Strengthening ties with the labour market
- Internationalisation
- The academic career

In each of these areas, reform programmes are sketched and the need for further reform is analysed by the authors of the review. Students play a key role in all areas, either as objects of reform (e. g. provision of a more inclusive higher education and better study conditions), as subjects of reform (e. g. as instruments to improve higher educa-

1 *This chapter is based on discussions within the EUROSTUDENT Network and a review of policy debates and current literature elsewhere. Nevertheless, the responsibility for its contents lies with the authors, Dominic Orr and Klaus Schnitzer. It neither expresses the opinion of particular countries nor of the project funders.*

2 *OECD (2008): Final Synthesis Report from the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. Available online under: http://oecd-conference-teks.iscte.pt/documents.html*

tion provision) or indeed as products of the reform (e. g. as better graduates). This makes knowledge of the students' situation highly relevant either as a starting point for reform or for the assessment of the results of reform initiatives. EUROSTUDENT plays a special role here, since it analyses the situation via student surveys and therefore "through students' eyes". However, it should be noted that since a distinction between the situation of students before and after reform cannot be drawn as clearly as one might hope, an assessment of causes and effects is particularly difficult in such phases of wide-ranging reform.

With the additional caveats to the interpretation of the EUROSTUDENT data in mind (>*Introduction, Chapter 1*), the ensuing policy considerations should therefore not be understood as criticisms of specific situations in individual countries, but rather as suggestions for further policy-related discussions and research. In line with the analyses in the preceding chapters, this chapter will focus on four specific issues:

- Higher education access
- Study conditions
- International mobility of students
- Graduation

In each case the current state of development will be sketched and the main challenges focused upon. On the basis of this it is possible to make out a number of policy directions for consideration in the future. Although, it is in the nature of a summary over so many countries that some countries may already be pursuing these actions.

Higher education access and changes to the student body

State of development

If students play a central role in higher education, it can be assumed that changes to the student body will have significant effects on the way students play out their role. The EUROSTUDENT dataset does not (yet) present time series because of the developmental nature of the study. However, other studies and policy documents suggest that efforts to increase participation in higher education and a concurrent decrease in the "traditional" student population – which is either occurring now or is expected within the next decade – will lead to an increasingly diverse student population. EUROSTUDENT data reflects the current state of this development in various countries.

The size and make-up of the student population in any higher education system results from a combination of factors, such as:

- Possible routes into higher education (e. g. qualification requirements)
- Distribution of higher education entry qualifications in the population
- Capacity of a higher education system
- Personal motivation of individuals eligible for higher education to take up higher education
- Type of higher education provision and alternative provisions within the education sector

The "normal" route into higher education is considered to be entry through the secondary school system. In many cases secondary schooling not only prepares pupils for their transition to higher education, but also applies a selective filter so that only a certain share of the school population is directed towards higher education, e. g. through certain exit qualifications for entry into higher education.

The main criterion behind this selective function is merit, but as the OECD review states, merit is never pure.[3] There is a large body of research showing that in most European countries educational attainment is still related to social origin – even though this relationship has become weaker in the course of the 20th century.[4] Different mechanisms are considered to be the driving forces behind inequality of educational opportunity related to social background. The PISA study, for instance, which compares pupils' school performance at the age of 15 years, has demonstrated that the socioeconomic background of pupils affects both the filtering of pupils into different school types and pupils' ultimate school performance – both of which have knock-on effects for chances of higher education entry.[5] This situation is one of the main reasons that participation in higher education is biased towards students from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds (> *Chapter 3*).

Since higher education is the last and highest formal stage of an education system, many countries have begun to install measures, which give individuals a second chance to enter higher education through alternative routes. These measures may be the provision of higher education entry certificates for adults, with courses which adults can follow parallel to other daily tasks (e. g. through evening classes). Additionally, special arrangements may be made for the recognition of experiential competences (acquired, for example, through employment) as qualification criteria for higher education entry.[6] The EUROSTUDENT study has attempted to quantify the share of national students, who have taken such alternative routes into higher education (> *Chapter 2*) and suggests that the provision of such measures is a way of making a higher education system less socially exclusive; although this measure is not sufficient on its own (see below).

One reason why governments are now pursuing efforts to reduce the social exclusivity of higher education is because of general plans for further expansion of higher education provision as a foundation of the knowledge society, which requires highly skilled workers.[7] All of the countries observed in the EUROSTUDENT dataset have expanded the number of students participating in academically orientated higher education between 1998 and 2005 (latest year available > *Appendix*). Over the past decade higher education expansion has been driven by high levels of individual motivation to study and simultaneous expansion of the number of study places and has occurred irrespective of demographic downturns[8] and there is little reason to expect this trend to subside.

3 *OECD (2008): 113.*

4 *For an overview see Breen, R. & Jonsson, J. O. (2005): Inequality of Opportunity in Comparative Perspective: Recent Research on Educational Attainment and Social Mobility. Annual Review of Sociology, 31, 223–243.*

5 *OECD (2007): PISA 2006 Science Competencies for Tomorrow's World. OECD, Paris.*

6 *Cf. Davies, P. (2006): Norms and Regulations for the Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in European Universities – An overview. In: Corradi, C./Evans, N./Valk, A. (eds): Recognising Experiential Learning – Practices in European Universities. Tartu University Press, Tartu: 179–195 and Freitag, W.K. (2007): Permeability in Education, Vocational Training and Further Education – the key to lifelong learning. Working document for German Presidency Conference "Realising the European Learning Area", Munich 4–5 June 2007.*

7 *CEDEFOP (2008): Future Skills in Europe – Medium term forecast. CEDEFOP, Thessaloniki.*

8 *OECD (2006): Education at a Glance. OECD, Paris: See indicator C2.2.*

The development in the demand for a highly skilled labour force and concurrent demographic changes will lead to more heterogeneous student populations in the future. In particular, efforts to re-engage parts of the population after they missed out on higher education the first time around will lead to an increase in the share of older students. Country data suggests that we should not expect a generally older student population, but that it is more likely that old and young students will study side-by-side (> *Chapter 1*). Older students tend to live independently of their parents (> *Chapter 4*), have dependents themselves and expect both a certain type of life-style and learning style during their study period.[9]

Main challenges

It is widely accepted that the main challenge for higher education access is to improve **participative equity.**[10] Indeed it is hardly new to demand that higher education should be open to any persons willing to participate and who are capable of benefitting from it – however, it appears a difficult demand to fulfil.[11] Higher education expansion has led to an increase in the absolute number of students coming from non-traditional backgrounds, i. e. from communities and social groups in which participation in higher education has not been common. However, in many cases it has remained difficult to increase the relative share of these groups in the total student population.[12]

One of the reasons for this may be the difficulty in recognising the capability of young people to benefit from higher education, when merit is based on school performance, which itself demonstrates a social bias. If higher education policy-makers and institutions of higher education are keen to increase the share of disadvantaged groups of potential students, it is not sufficient to externalise the issues and delegate its solution wholly to the school sector. Besides school reforms, initiatives at entry to and within higher education are necessary. These include encouraging entry into higher education by **alternative paths** and an emphasis on **student retention.**

This latter issue presents a particular challenge to higher education systems which accept a certain level of attrition through student drop-outs as a further filter of adequate student ability. This is wrong-headed in many cases as the phenomenon of dropping out is not singularly caused by inappropriate ability, but also by inappropriate study conditions.[13] Furthermore, drop-outs cost the public purse money.[14]

Policy directions

- In order to motivate prospective students, especially those whose parents did not themselves graduate from higher education (so-called first generation students),

9 *Cf. Knapper, C./Cropley, A. J. (2000): Lifelong Learning in Higher Education. Routledge, London.*

10 *See: London Communiqué 2007 from the Bologna Process. Available online under: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/declarations_communiques.htm*

11 *For the UK see the discussion of the impact of higher education expansion through the 20th century in particular reference to the Robbins Report from 1963 which called for exactly these personal traits to be the determinants for higher education provision: Lowe, R. (2002): Higher Education. In: Aldrich, R. (ed.): A Century of Education. London, Routledge: 75–91.*

12 *Cf. Clancy, P./Goastellec, G. (2007): Exploring Access and Equity in Higher Education: Policy and Performance in a Comparative Perspective. In: Higher Education Quarterly, Vol. 61, No. 2: 136–154*

13 *Heublein, U./Spangenberg, H./Sommer, D. (2003): Ursachen des Studienabbruchs [Causes of dropping out (in Germany)]. Hochschulplanung Nr. 163. Hochschul-Informations-System, Hannover.*

14 *For this reason a Eurydice report refers to student drop-outs as "wastage": Eurydice (2000): Two decades of reform in higher education in Europe: 1980 onwards. Eurydice, Brussels: 107 ff. Available online under: http://www.eurydice.org/ressources/eurydice/pdf/009EN/006_chap3_009EN.pdf*

policy initiatives and institutions of higher education should take measures to actively encourage potential students at school level to continue their education career in higher education. One way of doing this is to send university delegates into schools. In the United Kingdom, for instance, so-called "school liaison officers" are already an integral part of strategies for widening higher education participation.[15] They provide information and advice to prospective students and their parents on the benefits of higher education participation.

- One method of overcoming the partial social bias in school qualifications is to take account of other factors than formal qualifications in the access procedure, which provide more holistic criteria for determining whether applicants have the appropriate competencies for a successful participation in higher education.
- Research on student retention has shown that the first year in higher education is formative regarding both academic and personal issues. Special support should be offered to all students in this first year, but especially focused on non-traditional students.[16]
- The recruitment of non-traditional students is a risk for an institution of higher education; especially if its allocation of public funding is tied to graduate numbers. States should provide premium institutional funding for institutions of higher education which recruit non-traditional students both as an incentive for such recruitment and in recognition of the higher costs of providing the appropriate study conditions for such students.

Social and economic framework conducive to effective studies

State of development

The European Commission has published a communiqué emphasising the complementarity of two terms – efficiency and equity – which were previously seen in policy circles as contradictory. The Commission argues that only treating both topics together can lead to an effective higher education system.[17] According to this, it is not sufficient just to provide access to higher education, but students need to be supported during their studies to enable successful graduation. This argument concurs with research on student retention, which shows that student engagement is a decisive factor for persistence and success in higher education. Prior schooling, personal skills, individual attributes and family background influence this engagement, but more generally it is also shaped by two critical factors:[18]

15 *Cf. The Higher Education Liaison Officers' Association (HELOA) at: http://www.heloa.co.uk/*

16 *Research has particularly shown that non-traditional students need assistance in learning "the rules of the game" at the start of their studies – see: Hatt, S./Baxter, A. (2003): From FE TO HE: Studies in Transition: A comparison of students entering higher education with academic and vocational qualifications, in: Widening participation and lifelong learning, vol. 5, no. 2: 18–29. Furthermore, that unmet expectations are one of the main causes of students dropping-out – see: May, S./Bousted, M. (2004): Investigation of Student Retention Through an Analysis of the First-Year Experience of Students at Kingston University, in: Widening participation and lifelong learning, vol. 6, no. 2: 42–48. In the USA the National Resource Center for First Year Experience and Students in Transition was set up at the University of South Carolina in the 1980s to deal with such issues and offer exchanges of best practice on a national level – see: http://www.sc.edu/fye/*

17 *Commission of the European Communities (2006): Efficiency and Equity in European Education and Training Systems. European Commission, Brussels and Schleicher, A. (2006): The Economics of Knowledge – Why education is key for Europe's success. Lisbon Council Policy Brief, available online under: http://www.lisboncouncil.net/force-download.php?file=/media/publications/lisbon_council_economics_of_knowledge.pdf*

18 *Kuh, G. D./Kinzie, J./Buckley, J. A./Bridges, B. K./Hayek, J. C. (2006): What Matters to Student Success: A review of the literature: 31–32, available online under: http://nces.ed.gov/npec/pdf/Kuh_Team_Report.pdf*

- Time and effort put into study and study-related activities
- Institutional conditions, which promote or inhibit a conducive environment for learning, including the provision of services and direct resource allocation

The task of providing an appropriate learning and living environment for different students has become an even more acute challenge due to two concurrent developments in Europe:

- Efforts to widen access to higher education, which increase the heterogeneity of the student population
- The introduction of tuition fees, which leads to an increase in the cost of participation in higher education for students

The result for both policy makers and institutions of higher education is the need to provide an appropriate study framework for students, which recognises students' divergent living conditions during their studies. One aspect of student living conditions that heavily impacts on both the amount of time and effort students can invest in higher education is student financing.

In most higher education systems in Europe students are seen as occupying a special transitory phase between economic dependence on their families and economic independence in the future. They therefore have little personal wealth and have supplementary expenses due to their participation in higher education. In the respective chapter above, two types of system were discussed and country data compared (>*Chapter 5*): the principle of a continued financial dependence on parents and the principle of students' independence and self-responsibility.

Across all of the countries, EUROSTUDENT data has shown a high dependency on parents' or families' contributions. It has also shown that the relative contribution made by this income source is lower for students with a low social backgrounds (indicator: low-educated parents), but that this decrease is not fully compensated for by state support. If this is the case, students have to work alongside their studies in order to cover their expenses.

The effects of work on study progression and study engagement can be assumed to be different between countries and to be dependent on the study structure and the possibility of following curricula with different intensity (e. g. part-time studies >*Chapter 2*). Indeed, to a certain extent, working may be beneficial to an individual's studies and his/her employment chances following graduation, if it is related to the individual's studies (>*Chapter 7*).[19] For some students, however, working in gainful employment alongside studies may simply be a coping strategy in order to make up their necessary monthly income (>*Chapter 5*).

The various situations within the context of the recruitment of a more diverse student body will lead to more diversity in students' monthly income and how they acquire it and, consequently, to more diverse study experiences in higher education.

19 *Cf. Storen, L. A./Arnesen, C. A. (forthcoming): Chapter 7: Winners and Losers. In: Allen, J./van der Velden, R. (Eds.): The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society: General Results of the REFLEX Project. Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market, Maastricht University, Netherlands: p. 229. [unpublished draft]*

Main challenges

With growing numbers of students, the concurrent issues of **affordability** and **efficiency** have, therefore, become the biggest challenge for higher education frameworks. It is necessary to assure that students have sufficient funding in order to realise their studies and to reach graduation within a reasonable time. Despite recognition of this fact, many countries have carried out parallel reforms of institutional funding. The critical question of how much institutions of higher education need to function effectively has even been answered in many cases with an approach to shift more costs from government to students.[20] Tuition fees are seen as a solution to reducing the public share and increasing the private share of higher education costs, and as a way of introducing market mechanisms into higher education. Such changes necessitate a review of existing student support schemes which may be neutralised by increasing student costs through a participation charge (e. g. tuition fees).

This counteraction between strategies for institutional funding and funding for students particularly affects affordability in Eastern and Southern European countries, where bottlenecks in public funding (inter alia due to increased participation rates) have led to the introduction of tuition fees and the abolition of subsidized accommodation and nutrition. Although low in absolute terms, the introduced tuition fees are extremely high in relative terms. In some of these countries contributions to institutions make up more than one fifth of an average student budget (> *Chapter 6*). Thus, regional imbalances in the affordability of higher education constitute another challenge for shaping the social dimension of the European Higher Education Area.

Although students require more support, the public purse is seen as constrained across most of Europe and some policy-makers have adopted the strategy of providing students with temporary liquidity through offering them financial support in the form of a loan. This may enable them to offer more students more support within a limited budget and is, in this case, laudable. However, it is important to bear in mind the psychological limitations on the effectiveness of this form of support in reaching certain student groups, since non-traditional students are more often risk-averse than their counterparts.[21] Students with high levels of risk aversion might avoid building up debt and, despite the offer, take up jobs alongside their studies.

On a more general note, it is necessary for policy-makers and institutions to make their support more transparent and to assure that it is communicated to the right "clients". In some countries, for instance, a large share of government support is transferred to students in a non-transparent manner, e. g. as indirect support via their parents.[22] Such state provisions are invisible for students and often deemed by them as their parents' own contribution. By that, public support is unable to exert direct steering effects and lacks incentives for improving academic performance.

20 *OECD (2008): Vol. 1, p. 160.*

21 *Vossensteyn, J. J. (2005): Perceptions of Student Price-Responsiveness – A behavioural economics exploration of the relationships between socio-economic status, perceptions of financial incentives and student choice. CHEPS, Center for Higher Education and Policy Studies, Enschede.*

22 *Schwarzenberger, A. (2008, ed.): Public/private funding of higher education: a social balance. Hochschul-Informations-System, Hanover. See also Chapter 5, Box 5.1 above.*

Policy directions

- The matching of private and public investment in higher education is embedded in historical, political and cultural settings which determine national priorities. The European Higher Education Area has to acknowledge the diversity of different frameworks conducive for a harmonized academic system. However, the task remains to improve the different national frameworks and align the national support systems aiming at higher and fair participation and an improvement in the knowledge process in higher education. The common criteria for assessment and improvement should be equity, affordability and efficiency and the reconciliation of these targets.
- Effective communication and transparency of support are vital to set incentives for student recruitment and progression. Social groups with high levels of risk aversion need extensive information to overcome psychological barriers. The potential benefits of loans as compared to strategies of self-financing should be explained in detail. Countries with student support systems containing indirect transfers – which are invisible to students – should consider converting transfers into direct student support related to study progression.
- Students who prefer to bear part of tuition and living costs through employment should be provided with formal structures within the higher education system (e. g. special status, reduced fees, work-study opportunities, balanced teaching and workload) which allow effective learning at different speeds.

International mobility of students as an "optional extra"?

State of development

International mobility of European students has high policy relevance on a European level, where it is seen as a component of competitive advantage in comparison with other higher education areas and a foundation of common understanding for the European project (cf. Lisbon Agenda and Bologna Process). Additionally, research on international student mobility suggests that spending time studying abroad can pay off in terms of smoothing the transition to the labour market after graduation.[23]

Under the term "internationalistion", however, various forms of mobility are meant including temporary periods abroad, cross-border enrolment for short study periods (e. g. a semester), cross-border enrolment for a complete study programme and participation in programmes in the home country provided by institutions from abroad.[24]

The EUROSTUDENT dataset focuses on temporary cross-border periods either for studies, internships or language courses. The significance of the data stems from the possibility of differentiating between organised programmes, which provide structures and support for such periods abroad, and self-initiated (non-programme) mobility.

23 Teichler, U. (forthcoming): Chapter 6: International Dimensions of Higher Education and Graduate Employment. In: Allen, J./ van der Velden, R. (Eds.): The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society: General Results of the REFLEX Project. Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market, Maastricht University, Netherlands: p. 212. [unpublished draft]

24 cf. Wächter, B. (2008a): Stocktaking Bologna – The Impact of 'Bologna' on Mobility and Inputs for Benchmarking. Presentation at workshop of the European Benchmarking Initiative. Available online at: http://www.education-benchmarking.org/storage/documents/Bernd%20Wchter.pdf

The data shows that a large share of students undertake self-initiated short periods abroad – in fact in half of the observed countries this share is above 40% (> *Chapter 8*). This means that programmes such as Erasmus and Nordplus are only reaching one share of the mobile students and, despite the significant past and planned future growth of such programmes, this situation is unlikely to change.

The analysis has also shown that participation in international mobility is socially selective. The extent of this selectivity is mitigated or amplified by – inter alia – the following factors:

- The overall mobility rate, where countries with a higher rate often have a lower level of social selectivity
- The type of mobility, where foreign enrolment is more selective than other forms
- The field of study, where humanity students are more mobile than their counterparts in engineering

These tendencies are not explanations, but describe differences which must be better understood. Therefore, insights into what students view as barriers to their own mobility can provide policy directions. The main barriers seen in the EUROSTUDENT dataset are financial insecurities and lack of self-motivation or lack of external support. In other words, students' propensity for being mobile is influenced by a combination of push factors – i. e. the student wants to take part – and pull factors – i. e. conditions being laid which encourage students to take part. These factors affect students in different student groups (e. g. traditional vs. non-traditional students) and students in different countries (e.g high-income vs. low-income countries) to a lesser or greater extent.

The reform of study structures within the Bologna Process is often highlighted as a contribution to facilitating international mobility. For some countries (especially those with a tradition of long duration courses, e. g. Germany), the introduction of Bachelor and Master "cycles" has led to a more transparent study structure, with a clearer hierarchy of progression. Additionally, the implementation of credit points as the "currency" of study content accumulation and progression is also seen as presenting students with the opportunity to change study locations during study progression and integrate, for instance, a foreign semester into their degree without prolonging the time to graduation. However, early evidence from Germany suggests that international mobility may actually drop for students within the new study structures.[25] This is partly due to the division of a study course into two parts (Bachelor then Master) and partly to do with concurrent developments in Germany, e. g. the introduction of tuition fees, which aim to increase students' study efficiency. The former case refers to a potential underestimation of the number of mobile students, because mobile students may have left one college, following graduation of their Bachelor, and pursue international mobility before being matriculated at the new college for their Masters course. The latter case relates to the fact that encouraging students to study more efficiently may lead to even more students seeing international mobility as an "optional extra", which would be nice, but is not necessary and will only be taken when all other study

25 *cf. Heublein U. / Hutzsch, C. (2007): Internationale Mobilität im Studium. Studienbezogene Aufenthalte deutscher Studierender in anderen Ländern (Untersuchungsergebnisse im Überblick). Working paper for joint DAAD / BMBF conference on international mobility. Available online under: http://www.his.de/pdf/21/auslandsmobilitaet.pdf*

conditions are sufficiently met. That is to say, that there is a direct connection between general study conditions and mobility rates. This situation is likely to be amplified for non-traditional students or for students in low-level income countries thereby further reducing their mobility rates.

Main challenges

A policy perspective on these results must start from the real and concrete objectives behind mobility programmes:

- If policy sets a priority on the acquisition of new knowledge related to a student's specific home study programme, then programmes such as Erasmus and Nordplus must be seen as the main instruments for promoting mobility. This type of mobility is often termed "credit mobility", since the aim of the student is to collect credit points for achievements in a foreign programme, which will be recognised at home. The study gains may be seen as providing a broader view of the subject area (horizontal mobility) or the opportunity to benefit from specialist knowledge not available at home (vertical mobility).[26]
- If policy sets a priority on personal development and learning more about cultures and indeed offering students the opportunity for self-reflection, then self-initiated mobility must be further promoted.[27]

Neither priorities are mutually exclusive, but a look at the current situation would suggest that a view should be taken on the relative importance of **organised programmes versus self-initiated mobility** and on an appropriate balance between the two.

The advantage of organised programmes is that they can be used to follow specific objectives for target groups. It might, for instance, be important to promote mobility flows which cover the whole of Europe and do not centre on high-income or English-speaking countries. In this example, a programme could provide encouragement and support to help students learn more about a culture and its language before they commence their study-related period abroad.

At the same time, programme development can take inspiration from self-motivated students and the purposes of their study-related periods abroad. Indeed, since motivation is one key factor affecting mobility, it would be useful to compare the motivations and purposes followed by both groups (programme and non-programme students) to better understand the potential for mobility programmes. One important issue is what students expect from their studies abroad. If students search for difference and diversity, the increasing provision of English language courses in many foreign countries and efforts to design common curricula across Europe may be counterproductive.

The challenge remains to embed both forms of mobility sensibly into the study structure of a student's course to assure both the private and societal benefits of such programmes. This may be particularly difficult in reference to part-time and adult learners, but it is equally necessary.

26 *cf. Wächter, B. (2008a).*

27 *cf. Wächter, B. (2008b). General Report on "Intercultural Dialogue on the University Campus". Council of Europe seminar, 4–5 March 2008, Strasbourg. Available online under: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/InterculturalDialogue/Final%20report_Bernd%20Wachter.pdf*

Furthermore, the data has shown that mobility is affected by study conditions and that, therefore, **affordability** and **efficiency** continue to play an important role in participation in mobility programmes.

Policy directions

- Each country and each institution of higher education should review mobility issues within the context of a concrete mobility strategy. This strategy should be the basis for initiating mobility programmes and providing special support to students.
- The profile of students, who would most benefit from mobility programmes, should be investigated and appropriate study conditions and initiatives to encourage participation in international mobility should be developed. In particular, special support for students from low socio-economic backgrounds is necessary.
- Students who desire to participate in study-related activities abroad on their own initiative should be encouraged to do so. This entails offering them advice on how to arrange their stay and on how best to benefit from a period abroad.
- Some issues cannot be solved entirely at national or institutional level, including the provision of sufficient financial support to make a study-related stay abroad feasible. In this particular case, an intergovernmental fund could be established, which would provide supplementary funding for students from low-income countries, who want to go abroad.
- On a European level more thought could be given to student flows within the context of promoting linguistic and cultural diversity.

Graduation and the value of study completion

State of development

The EUROSTUDENT dataset does not cover the topic of graduation as the data comes from surveys of current students. However, the introductory section of this report already emphasised the need to set developments concerning the social dimension within the context of graduation. This is because it is not sufficient to adopt initiatives to open up university access, if the study conditions are not organised in such a way as to assure successful study completion (> *Introduction*, Fig. 2). Indeed, it is not sufficient to provide high participative equity, if the final qualifications of higher education graduates do not secure appropriate employment opportunities.

This connection has been emphasised by the OECD Review, which warns that certain modes of diversification of higher education provision do not lead to real participative equity, but instead to a new hierarchical, compartmental system of higher education qualifications.[28] In other words, the non-traditional student is offered participation in higher education, but not parity in opportunity to obtain qualifications of the same value.

A further critical factor is the assurance of employment following graduation. This factor is not essentially tied to the topic "social dimension" as it is a relevant issue for all developments in higher education that have implications for the quality and quan-

28 OECD (2008): pp. 79 ff.

tity of graduates. However, it can be considered particularly relevant to the social dimension, since ensuring the employability of non-traditional students requires especially high efforts by students themselves as well as by institutions of higher education and public policy.

According to an often cited research brief for the United Kingdom's then Department for Education and Employment,[29] employability is made up of the following four components which comprise a mixture of individual soft skills, qualifications and the situation on the labour market.

- *Assets:* An individual's assets are a combination of knowledge (what they know), skills (what they do with what they know) and attitudes (how they do it).
- *Deployment:* This is linked to how an individual recognises and exploits their knowledge, skills and attitudes to the best strategic advantage regarding his/her own career management and job skills.
- *Presentation:* Critical to obtaining employment is the question of what an individual has to present (e. g. work experience and specific qualifications) and how he/she presents it (e. g. interview technique).
- *Context of personal circumstances and labour market:* A person's personal situation affects his/her ability to seek out and take up certain employment opportunities (e. g. his/her household status). Macro-economic developments affect, in turn, the pattern and level of job opportunities on the labour market.

It is important to bear this list in mind when looking at data on the opportunities for graduate employment from both the perspective of official administrative statistics (e. g. Eurostat data) and graduates' personal perceptions (e. g. REFLEX project).[30] For instance, the list shows that the value of a formal "paper" qualification is only one of a plethora of interdependent factors related to employment success.

Nevertheless, higher education qualifications should incorporate necessary skills for the labour market, thereby legitimising both the private (student's) and public (tax payer's) investment in higher education provision. Whilst many studies show the benefits for the average student, it is necessary to focus on the benefit for specific student groups. This need is reflected in the data from the OECD's Education at a Glance 2007, which shows that (i) the higher the educational attainment of a person, the higher his/her financial gain on the labour market in comparison to the rest of the working population, but also that (ii) this gain may be minimal for a certain share of higher education graduates. For instance, 12% of higher education graduates in Norway earn more than double the average earnings (median before tax), whilst another 12% of higher education graduates earn a maximum of half of the average income.[31]

Main challenges

The challenge is simple to formulate: Countries should embed strategies to increase equity in higher education in **comprehensive plans** which consider the school system,

29 *Hillage J/Pollard E (1998): Employability: developing a framework for policy analysis. Research Report RR85, Department for Education and Employment. Available online under: http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/summary.php?id=emplblty*

30 *This project is based on an international graduate survey and deals with the need for flexible professionals in the knowledge society. It therefore has a particular focus on the transition from higher education to the labour market. Project website: http://www.fdewb.unimaas.nl/roa/reflex/*

31 *OECD (2007): Education at a Glance. OECD, Paris. See: table A9.4a.*

higher education entry, student retention, course provision, international mobility and relevant higher education outputs for society and the labour market.

It should be mentioned that broad national strategies need to reflect the specific study conditions at higher education institutions. It is beyond the scope of this report to analyse the institutional and social mediation of learning. Available studies suggest that "what is learned at university" is influenced by conditions like teaching style, class size, learning resources etc. and by the social environment (e. g. student composition of a higher education institution, students' networks etc).[32]

Comprehensive national strategies are, therefore, difficult to implement because of the transversal nature of such a topic area, which cuts across different systems and the responsibilities of different institutions, including ministries; but they are essential.

Policy directions

- It is necessary to embed the discussion of equity within a strategy for promoting the personal efficiency and effectiveness of study progress. In other words, students should receive support in order to help them graduate successfully.
- The topic of successful graduation should be extended to include an emphasis on successful transition into the labour market. This is particularly important for non-traditional students' success at completing their aspired qualifications and achieving employment post-graduation.

After viewing international similarities and differences, it remains to be stated that the best way to understand the policy-relevance of the data presented in the report is to use it to supplement national policy debates. Even if a perfect comparability of the data is not given, viewing one's own country within the context of international data is like looking into a mirror which offers the chance for self-reflection. On the basis of this opportunity for self-reflection, both scholars and policy-makers may take a view on whether change is desirable or indeed necessary.

In this, it is useful to consider the differentiation offered by Clark Kerr for viewing change in higher education. He differentiates between response and reform:[33]

- *Response* is something that must be done in reaction to a given situation
- *Reform* starts out with a set of values and aims in order to achieve improvements through innovation

The data provided by EUROSTUDENT offer the chance to review common practices and their effectiveness in the light of European trends and with the insight that alternatives are possible and, in some cases, actually being practised by neighbouring countries. This may help national higher education systems to adapt to changing environments (response) and indeed to improve their provisions and performance (reform). EUROSTUDENT is committed to assisting this process.

32 *Brennan, J. / Edmunds, R. / Houston, M. / Jary, D. / Lebeau, Y. / Osborne, M. / Richardson, J. T. E. (forthcoming): Improving What is Learned at University: an exploration of the social and organisational diversity of university education. London: Routledge-Falmer.*

33 *Kerr, C. (1986): Foreword. In: Cerych, L. / Sabatier, P. (Eds.): Great Expectations and Mixed Performance – The implementation of higher education reforms in Europe (European Institute of Education and Social Policy). Trentham: Trentham Books: p. xvi.*

Appendix

National contributions

Austria (AT)

Project sponsor:	Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF)
Implementation:	Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS)
National report:	www.sozialerhebung.at
Contact person:	Martin Unger, Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS)
Research team:	Martin Unger, Angela Wroblewski

Bulgaria (BG)

Project sponsor:	Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science; Dutch Ministry of Education
Implementation:	Centre for Control and Assessment of Quality in Education, ResearchNED
National report:	www.ckoko.bg
Contact person:	Deyan Pilev, Centre for Control and Assessment of Quality in Education
Research team:	Deyan Pilev, Ludmila Velichkova, Teodora Popkostova and Todor Rajkov

Czech Republic (CZ)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Implementation:	Center for Higher Education Studies
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Prof. Petr Mateju, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Research team:	Centre for Higher Education Studies

England/Wales (E/W)

Project sponsor:	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
Implementation:	National Centre for Social Research and Institute for Employment Studies
National report:	www.dfes.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectid=14256&resultspage=1
Contact person:	Matthew Bollington, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
Research team:	Matthew Bollington (Ramnik Jain)

Estonia (EE)

Project sponsor:	European Social Fund
Implementation:	Federation of Estonian Student Unions
National report:	www.eyl.ee
Contact person:	Olga Tšerjomuškina, Federation of Estonian Student Unions
Research team:	Maris Mälzer, Allen Päll, (Maarja Luhiste)

Finland (FI)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education
Implementation:	Student research foundation (OTUS)
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Virpi Hiltunen, Ministry of Education
Research team:	Janne Jauhiainen, Student Research Foundation (OTUS)

France (FR)

Project sponsor:	National Ministry of National Education
Implementation:	Observatoire de la Vie Étudiante (National Observatory of Student Life/OVE)
National report:	www.ove-national.education.fr/index.php?lang=fr&page=euro_student.php
Contact person:	Ronan Vourc'h, Observatoire de la Vie Etudiante (OVE)
Research team:	Ronan Vourc'h, Sandra Zilloniz

Germany (DE)

Project sponsor:	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
Implementation:	Higher Education Information System (HIS)
National report:	www.sozialerhebung.de
Contact person:	Elke Middendorff, Higher Education Information System (HIS)
Research team:	Elke Middendorff, Wolfgang Isserstedt

Ireland (IE)

Project sponsor:	Higher Education Authority (HEA)
Implementation:	Geary Institute
National report:	www.hea.ie
Contact person:	Oliver Mooney, Higher Education Authority (HEA)
Research team:	Oliver Mooney, Fergal Noone, Liam Delaney

Italy (IT)

Project sponsor:	MiUR – Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca
Implementation:	Fondazione Rui
National report:	www.eurostudent.fondazionerui.it
Contact person:	Giovanni Finocchietti, Fondazione Rui
Research team:	Giovanni Finocchietti, Miriam Pannone, Massimo Cossignani, Valentina Testuzza, Alessandro Melchionna

Latvia (LV)

Project sponsor:	Latvian Ministry of Education and Science; Dutch Ministry of Education
Implementation:	Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (FSI), University of Latvia, ReserchNED
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Ilze Trapenciere, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (FSI),
Research team:	University of Latvia Ilze Trapenciere, Maarja Luhiste

Lithuania (LT)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education and Science
Implementation:	Spinter
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Aistė Urbonavičiūtė, Ministry of Education and Science
Research team:	n. d.

Norway (NO)

Project sponsor:	Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research
Implementation:	Statistics Norway
National report:	www.ssb.no/emner/00/90/notat_200642/notat_200642.pdf
Contact person:	Lars Arne Aasen, Ministry of Education and Research
Research team:	Einar Bjørshol, Bente Christine Gravaas, Statistics Norway

Portugal (PT)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education
Implementation:	CIES - Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology at ISCTE
National report:	www.cies.iscte.pt
Contact person:	Susana da Cruz Martins, Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES-ISCTE)
Research team:	Susana da Cruz Martins , Rosário Mauritti

Romania (RO)

Project sponsor:	Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, Dutch Ministry of Education
Implementation:	Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, ResearchNED, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Camelia Sturza, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth
Research team:	n. d.

Scotland (SCO)

Project sponsor:	Scottish Government, DG Education
Implementation:	London Southbank University and PSI
National report:	www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Lifelong-learning/SIES
Contact person:	Gerhard Mors, Scottish Government, DG Education
Research team:	Gerhard Mors

Slovak Republic (SK)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education
Implementation:	Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education, Bratislava
National report:	www.uips.sk
Contact person:	Maria Sulanova, Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education
Research team:	Margita Kovacova, Lubomira Srnankova, Maria Sulanova

Slovenia (SI)

Project sponsor:	Slovenian Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology; Dutch Ministry of Education
Implementation:	M-KORI Milan Koritnik s.p., ResearchNED
National report:	www.evrostudent.si
Contact person:	Vladimir Vajda, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
Research team	Milan Koritnik

Spain (ES)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education and Science
Implementation:	Autonomous University of Madrid
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Santos M. Ruesga, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid
Research team:	Santos M. Ruesga, Carlos Resa Nestares

Sweden (SE)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education and Research
Implementation:	Statistics Sweden
National report:	(Not available)
Contact person:	Per Bavner, Ministry of Education and Research
Research team:	Per Bavner

Switzerland (CH)

Project sponsor:	State Secretariat for Education and Research, Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology
Implementation:	Federal Statistical Office
National report:	www.studierende-stat.admin.ch (DE), www.etudiants-stat.admin.ch (FR), www.studenti-stat.admin.ch (IT)
Contact person:	Laurence Boegli, Federal Statistical Office
Research team:	Laurence Boegli, Valentina De-Luigi

The Netherlands (NL)

Project sponsor:	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Implementation:	ResearchNED
National report:	www.studentenmonitor.nl
Contact person:	Anja van den Broek, ResearchNED
Research team:	Anja van den Broek, Lette Hogeling

Turkey (TR)

Project sponsor:	Council of Higher Education
Implementation:	Middle East Technical University (METU)
National report:	www.eurostudent.metu.edu.tr
Contact person:	Nezih Guven, METU
Research team:	Ayse Gunduz Hosgor (METU), Mustafa Sen (METU)

Metadata for national surveys

Metadata is also available from the country specific National Profiles.

Country	Size of initial sample and return rate of final sample	Sampling method	Reference period	Survey method	Weighting scheme	Special notes on sample/survey
AT	7,444 Return rate 19%.	Stratified random sample	Summer 2006	Postal letter, online survey, no reminder	By HEI, field of study, gender, age group, national/foreigner	
BG	Initial sample: 4,700 Realized sample: 1,541 Return rate c. 33%	Stratified by type of HEI, field of study, academic degree	January–March 2007 academic year 2006–2007, second semester (Spring 2007)	Online	None	Distance students are included
CH	20,000. Return rate 64%.	Stratified random sample by university, fields of study	Spring 2005	Online, with postal letter and two postal reminders.	Sampling weight + correction for non response within strata + calibration on known population characteristics (gender, age classes [–25, 26–30, 31+], living place for beginning of study)	
CZ	Not applicable	Self-recruitment plus supplementary recruitment methods	Spring 2006 & Autumn 2006	Computer assisted web interviewing	Attendance mode, type of degree programme, gender	Sample not representative due to the use of self-recruitment
DE	53,993. Return rate 31%.	Quota: every 27th permanent resident student	Summer term 2006	Postal questionnaire, reminder	By type of HEI, country, gender, subject	
E/W	16,500 students were sent a postal opt-in questionnaire. 5,800 (35%) students opted to take part; 3,500 (21%) were interviewed.	Stratified by type of HEI, size, region. Student sample selected at random.	Academic year 2004–2005. (January to April 2005)	Postal opt-in questionnaires sent to a random sample of full and part time students; followed up with face-to-face interviews	Weighted to reflect student population	Additional data sources: HESA = central HE statistics
EE	2,353 out of 2,499 (94%).	Combined: expert and random sample	May 2006	online	By type of HEI, accounting to proportions of HEI's in sample, gender	
ES	4,059 Not applicable.	Stratified sampling	Spring 2006 & Spring 2007	Face-to-face interview	By HEI, age, gender, autonomous community	
FI	9,010 Return rate 48%.	Stratified random sample	Spring 2006	Online	None	
FR	75,000 18,825 questionnaires. Return rate 23%.	Quota : every 15th	2006	Postal questionnaire, reminder letter	By region, type of HEI, level and field of study, gender, age, type of baccalauréat	
IE	11,217. Return rate 18%.	Stratified by population of college, email account users	Spring 2007	Online	By institution, gender, mode of study	Survey was limited to full-time-students
IT	Initial and final sample 3,704 Return rate not applicable.	Quota: stratified by gender, level of degree, field of study, geographical area	1st and 2nd term of the academic year 2005–2006	CATI – computer assisted telephone interview	By year of enrolment, region	Only students in programmes according to Bologna reforms and only includes Masters students on one-cycle Master courses (i.e. no Bachelor phase). In this way, it represents 70% of the student population in Italy (i.e. no pre-reform courses and no separate Master courses).
LT	1,003. Return rate 62%.	Quota: stratified by type of HEI, field of study, geographical area	February–March 2007	Face-to-face 100%	By accommodation	
LV	[Please see National Profile report]					
NL	40,704. Return rate 34%.	Stratified by type of higher education, year of study and bachelor-, and master students	Spring 2006	Online	By field of study, year of study and gender	

A

Country	Size of initial sample and return rate of final sample	Sampling method	Reference period	Survey method	Weighting scheme	Special notes on sample / survey
NO	Initial sample: 4,000 Ineligible: 1,046 Gross sample: 2,954 Net sample: 2,264 Return rate: 77%.	Stratified random sample in two stages	January - June 2005	Face-to-face interview (78.6%), telephone interview (21.4 %)	None	
PT	3,000. Return rate: Not applicable.	Quota: stratified by legal status, type of HEI, region, field of study, academic degree	Winter 2006	Face-to-face interview (on paper)	None	
RO	10,000. Return rate 23%.	Stratified by HEI, field of study, year of study quota: every 50th	2nd term of the academic year 2005–2006 (Spring 2006)	Online	None	
SCO	609. Return rate not applicable.	Quota sample selected on campus	Academic year 2004–2005 (Spring 2005)	Census for student characteristics, face-to-face interview for financial data	Gender, age and year of study	Two alternative data sources: census and interviews
SE	5,000. Return rate 55%.	Random sample	November and December 2006	Postal questionnaire	Type of study (single-subject course vs. study programme) * Gender + Type of study * country of birth (in Sweden vs. in other country) + Region (Cities (200 000 people or more) vs. Towns (50 000 – 200 000 people) vs. the rest).	
SI	Initial sample: 5,000 Realized sample: 6,280 Return rate: 31%.	Stratified random sample	April – May 2007	Online	By type of HEI	
SK	Initial sample: 1,800 Realized sample: 1,333 Return rate: 74%.	Sample stratified according to type of study (full-time and part-time), study location, university and field of study	May – June 2006	Anonymous questionnaire (paper) / face-to-face interview	None	Males are over-represented
TR	Initial sample: 67,000 Realized sample: 15,382 Return rate: 23%.	Stratified random sample	March – April 2007	Online	None	Limited to students in Bachelor programmes

Core set of survey questions

The use of the core questions and response categories are a condition of participation in the EUROSTUDENT project, but additional questions and categories may be supplemented. Due to existing national surveys with specific traditions and scope, responses to every question may not be provided by every country.

1. Personal details

1.1 Age ☐☐ years

1.2 Gender

female ○
male ○

1.3 Family status

not married, with long-term partner ○
not married, without long-term partner ○
married ○

1.4 Number of children, if any ○

Age of youngest child, if any ☐☐

1.5 Do you have any physical handicaps or chronic diseases that impair your studies?

no ○
yes ○

2. Study background

2.1 What was your route to higher education entry?
Routes to higher education according to particulars of the individual country. Please list national entry routes for national survey. For data delivery to EUROSTUDENT entry routes must be categorised as "traditional" and "non-traditional" routes to HE.

(an academically orientated school-leaving certificate) ○
(e. g. via vocational experience) ○
... ○
... ○
... ○

2.2 Before entering higher education, did you have vocational training or regular paid work? Tick appropriate, more than one answer possible

A

no, no experience in the labour market or only casual ○
minor jobs (e. g. during holidays or temporary employment) ○
yes, vocational training ○
yes, regular paid work (for at least 6 months) ○

3. Current study situation

3.1 Which qualification are you currently studying for?
Qualifications according to particulars of the individual country

Bachelor ○
Master ○
national specific degree A ○
national specific degree B ○
national specific degree ... ○
... ○

3.2 For how many years have you been studying, until now (including previous higher education courses)?

Sum of total years enrolled at higher education institutions □□

3.3 Which description best fits your current status as a student?

full-time student ○
part-time student as formal status ○
guest student ○
student of distance education ○
student of continuing professional development ○
or life-long learning ○
other ... ○

3.4 What is the field of study or programme you follow?
Fields of study are given according to the ISCED "broad groups" which should be used for EUROSTUDENT data delivery. For the national survey a further differentiation of fields of study can be used. See *www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/isced/ISCED_A.pdf*

Field of study □

1 = Education
2 = Humanities and Arts
3 = Social Sciences, business and law
4 = (Natural) Science
5 = Engineering, manufacturing and construction
6 = Agriculture
7 = Health and welfare
8 = Services

3.5 Please name the location of the higher education institution you attend.

Name of the city / town / place _____

This information is necessary for national researchers in order to calculate the size of study location by 1,000 inhabitants. Data delivery for EUROSTUDENT should differentiate between the following location sizes: up to 100,000 inhabitants; 100,000 – 300,000 inhabitants; 300,000 – 500,000 inhabitants; over 500,000 inhabitants.

4. Living Conditions

4.1 Where do you live during study terms/semester?

- ○ at home (with parents/relatives)
- ○ lodging/sublet/private flat
- ○ student-hall

4.2 Please try to calculate the average monthly income-budget at your personal disposal* by sources of origin:
Cash only (direct). * At your disposal is the money which is meant for monthly consumption, no matter when it was earned.
National currency

provision from family/partner	☐☐☐☐☐
financial support from state or other public sources	
grant (non-repayable)	☐☐☐☐☐
loan (repayable)	☐☐☐☐☐
scholarship from other public sources (non-repayable)	☐☐☐☐☐
self-earned income through paid job	☐☐☐☐☐
other sources	☐☐☐☐☐
Total income	☐☐☐☐☐

4.3 Please try to calculate your average monthly expenses by type of expense (please enter figures right-justified).
National currency

A) Living costs	Own expenses	Expenses paid for by family/ partner
accommodation (including utilities)	☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐
food	☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐
clothing/toiletries (make-up, shaving foam etc.)	☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐
transportation	☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐
health costs (e. g. medical insurance)	☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐

A

B) Study-related costs (please, convert expenses per semester or other longer periods of time into monthly expenditures)

	Own expenses	Expenses paid for by family/ partner
by family/partner		
tuition fees, registration fees, examination fees		
social welfare contributions to the university/college and student association		
study books and materials		
C) Other		
Sum of expenses paid by you and your familiy/parents, respectively		
Grand total		

4.4 How would you describe the following aspects of your living conditions?

Response scale: 1 = very satisfying, 2 = satisfying, 3 = acceptable, 4 = dissatisfying, 5 = very dissatisfying

The numbering of the response scale may be adapted to your national standards. Data must be delivered to EUROSTUDENT according the response scale given here.

- ☐ accommodation
- ☐ material well-being / financial situation
- ☐ workload (including both study time and job)

4.5 How many hours per week did you spend last week in taught courses, personal study and on paid jobs?
(Try to remember day by day and fill in the sum of hours over the whole week including the weekend)

	full hours mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat	sun
taught studies (lessons, seminars, labs, tests, etc.)							
personal study time (like preparation, learning, reading, writing homework)							
paid jobs							

4.6 If you have a job, how closely is it related to your studies?

- ○ very closely
- ○ broadly related
- ○ related to some extent
- ○ not at all related

A

5. International mobility

5.1 What is your present knowledge of languages besides your mother-tongue?
Please rate your grade of proficiency in the applicable language(s).

Response scale 1–5: 1 = fluent, 5 = very poor; 0 = no knowledge

The numbering of the response scale may be adapted to your national standards. Data must be delivered to EUROSTUDENT according the response scale given here. Please add applicable local languages.

English ☐
French ☐
German ☐
Spanish ☐
5 … ☐
6 … ☐
7 … ☐

5.2 Do you plan any study-related activities abroad in the future?
(study-course, language-course, internship, others)

no, definitely not ○
I am not sure ○
perhaps ○
yes, definitely ○
yes, everything is already arranged ○

5.3 Have you been abroad for study reasons or been enrolled abroad as a student of higher education in the past?
(study-course, language-course, internship, etc.)

yes ○
no ○

5.4 What kind of study-related activities did you follow and for how many months?
Fill in the duration in months per activity!

number of months

enrolment in a regular course of study ☐☐
language course ☐☐
internship / work placement ☐☐
other (summer-school, study tour etc.) ☐☐

5.5 Please specify the country in which you stayed longest for study-related activity and for how many months.

country (fill in the name): _____

number of months ☐☐

A

5.6 How did you finance your (longest) study-related activities abroad?
Please estimate the monthly amounts that you had at your disposal.
National currency.

contribution from parents/family	☐☐☐☐☐
own income from previous job	☐☐☐☐☐
by working during my studies abroad	☐☐☐☐☐
study grants/loans from host country	☐☐☐☐☐
EU study grants	☐☐☐☐☐
support by home state loan (repayable)	☐☐☐☐☐
support by home state grant (non-repayable)	☐☐☐☐☐
special support for studies abroad	☐☐☐☐☐
other	☐☐☐☐☐
Grand total	☐☐☐☐☐

5.7 Was your study-related activity abroad part of a programme?
Please specify the name of the programme. Multiple answers are possible.

- ○ no programme
- ○ ERASMUS/TEMPUS
- ○ LINGUA
- ○ other EU-Programme
- ○ other

fill in the name: _____

5.7 To what extent are your plans concerning a study-related stay abroad influenced by the following issues?

Response scale: 1 = very strongly, 2 = strongly, 3 = moderately, 4 = weakly, 5 = not at all

The numbering of the response scale may be adapted to your national standards. Data must be delivered to EUROSTUDENT according the response scale given here.

- ☐ insufficient skills in foreign language
- ☐ difficulties in getting information
- ☐ problems with accommodation in the host country
- ☐ separation from partner, child(ren), friends
- ☐ loss of social benefits (e. g. child allowance, price discounts for students)
- ☐ loss of opportunities to earn money
- ☐ expected additional financial burden
- ☐ lack of personal drive
- ☐ expected delay in progress in my studies
- ☐ presumed low benefit for my studies at home
- ☐ problems with recognition of results achieved in foreign countries
- ☐ limited access to mobility programmes in home country
- ☐ problems with access regulations to the preferred country (visa, residence permit)

limited admittance to the preferred institution and/or study programme in foreign country ☐

6. Family background

6.1 What is the highest level of education your father and mother have obtained?

Examples according to particulars of the individual country which allow discrimination between the qualification categories should be used here. The reference to ISCED levels will help you to find appropriate examples. See *www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/42/1841854.pdf*

	father	mother
up to lower secondary (ISCED 0, 1, 2)	○	○
upper secondary (ISCED 3)	○	○
post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 4)	○	○
higher education/university (ISCED 5, 6)	○	○
do not know	○	○

6.2 Your father / mother is

	father	mother
employed	○	○
unemployed	○	○
not occupationally active (e. g. housewife/-man)	○	○
retired	○	○
deceased	○	○
do not know	○	○

6.3 What are the most recent or former occupations of your father and mother?

Please classify the job according to one of the following categories of occupation.

Categories according to ISCO-88. See *www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/ class/isco.htm* for more information and examples. Please add examples according to particulars of the individual country. You are at liberty to use your own national categories, which may be more recognisable for students. It is necessary to be able to indentify parents with blue collar occupations (according to the categories given here: number 6–9) for data delivery to EUROSTUDENT.

	father	mother
1. Legislators, senior officials and managers	○	○
2. Professionals	○	○
3. Technicians and associate professionals	○	○
4. Clerks	○	○
5. Service workers/sales workers	○	○
6. Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	○	○
7. Craft and related trades workers	○	○

	father	mother
8. Plant and machine operators and assemblers	◯	◯
9. Elementary occupations/domestic and related helpers	◯	◯
0. Armed forces/military	◯	◯
do not knowv	◯	◯

6.4 Please try to rate the overall income situation of your parents!

Income bands based on the national average (median) net family income per month should be used for the national survey (national currency).

The net family-income per month is approximately ...	◯
(up to 50% of the average income of all private households)	◯
(between 50% and 100% of ...)	◯
(between 100% and 150% of ...)	◯
(between 150% and 200% of ...)	◯
(200% or higher of ...)	◯
do not know	◯

Key background data on higher education systems

Country	Total population (million), 2006	Population density, 2006	GDP per inhabitant in 2006 in PPS	GDP year-on-year growth rate (2007)	Enrolment (all tertiary) 2006	Enrolment (ISCED 5A) 2006	Enrolment growth index in ISCED 5A (1998 = 100)
Austria	8.3	99.5	129	2.9	253,139	212,361	106
Bulgaria	7.7	69.4	37	6.2	243,464	214,693	92
Czech Republic	10.3	132.9	79	6.2	337,405	283,484	182
England/Wales*	60.6	250.0	118	2.7	2,336,111	1,730,048	135
Estonia	1.3	30.9	68	7.3	68,287	42,899	128
Finland	5.3	17.3	117	4.0	308,966	286,706	149
France	63.2	99.9	112	1.9	2,201,201	1,595,742	110
Germany	82.4	230.7	114	3.6	2,289,465	1,953,504	109
Ireland	4.3	62.3	145	7.2	186,045	126,770	147
Italy	58.9	199.7	103	2.3	2,029,023	1,976,850	108
Latvia	2.3	36.7	54	10.9	131,125	111,299	174
Lithuania	3.4	54.2	56	9.4	198,868	139,209	212
Norway	4.7	15.3	186	2.8	214,711	207,712	125
Portugal	10.6	114.9	74	2.0	367,312	342,567	127
Romania	21.6	93.9	38	5.8	834,969	785,403	231
Scotland	5.1	65.0	118	2.4	267,000	171,000	119
Slovakia	5.4	110.0	64	10.3	197,943	184,380	181
Slovenia	2.0	99.6	88	5.5	114,794	61,963	135
Spain	44.1	87.2	105	2.0	1,789,254	1,472,127	92
Sweden	9.1	22.1	124	1.8	422,614	380,846	144
Switzerland	7.5	187.1	135	2.4	204,999	152,103	141
The Netherlands	16.3	483.8	130	3.3	579,622	572,147	126
Turkey	72.5	93.0	41	6.0	2,342,898	1,625,337	223

Source: Eurostat dataset Population and social conditions.

** Data for whole of United Kingdom*