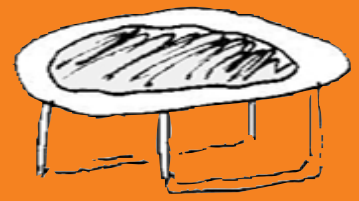
LISBON WITH STUDENT EYES



lisbon with student eyes

ESU

ESU - The European Students‘ Union

LISBON WITH STUDENT EYES

ESU - The European Students' Union

IMPRINT

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CONTENT

FOREWORD

Dear reader,
since I started working in the student movement, I have always been fascinated by the European Union's Lisbon Strategy. Whilst higher education has never been declared a European competence, the amount of conferences on the topic suggested otherwise. The Lisbon Strategy, started by the Heads of State of the European Union, was an interesting, but relatively unclear reform agenda for national higher education systems. Student unions were therefore critically watching, but waited until things would develop a more identifiable profile.
After the re-launch of the Strategy by Barroso's European Commission in 2006, it became apparent that higher education and research would play a major role in developing the knowledge base for the new European economy. By renaming the Lisbon Strategy to the EU's 'Agenda for Growth and Jobs', the Commission gave the strategy a clearer profile, matching the current economic discourse. The EU-communication 'Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities' (2006) materialised our expectations. It presented a clear agenda for reform to European higher education systems.
Students are heavily affected by these reforms, as they touch the financing of higher education and students, the governance of higher education institutions, the content of studies and access regulations. They also influence our fundamental student right to participate in the decision-making processes, categorizing those processes as 'over-regulation' of universities. All these issues naturally feature high on the agenda of student unions all around Europe, even in those countries that are not a Member State of the European Union.
ESU began to be more deeply involved in the Lisbon Strategy at the start of 2006. While we were organising the European Students Convention under the Austrian EU-Presidency, we noted that many of the national unions of students were surprised by the extent of reforms proposed in the Education and Training 2010 work programme. We had very intense debates on university governance, financing of higher education, tuition fees and the transparency of the European Commission. The Convention resulted in a statement towards the Council of Ministers. The declaration called strongly for the inclusion of student representatives in all aspects of the Education and Training 2010 work programme.
In the following months we organised training sessions and published two consecutive handbooks for student unions on the role of education within the Lisbon Strategy. Our activities have been noticed by

the Commission, who regularly invites us to participate in European discussions. This strong recognition of ESU's work shows the great financial and political support from the European Commission for our project 'Lisbon and Students'. The project is designed to give student unions the tools to actively claim involvement in reform processes that follow the EU's Lisbon Strategy.

The survey in your hands is one of the most important parts of the 'Lisbon and Students' project. As the reforms did not – and, as most European projects, probably cannot - follow a traditional path of implementation, we have always been in the dark about the real effects of the Lisbon Strategy on students. This survey therefore provides a guiding light for student unions who are still unclear about how the Lisbon Strategy is shaping our higher education systems.

Up until now, a coherent and independent assessment of the achievements of the Education and Training 2010 work programme, specifically for higher education, has not been compiled. We hope that ESU can be a reference point in this area, providing national unions of students with concrete argumentation on why they should be involved and what should be improved in the Modernisation Agenda, both on the national and European level.

I want to greatly thank the research team, which has done an excellent job in developing the survey, gathering and analysing the opinions of our members. Not only did they look at what student unions think, but they also analysed existing research material and primary sources such as the national reports. Without the work of Anita, Christine, Stinna, Stef and Maria we would continue to be in the dark. Instead, student unions have a tool to take a lead in the debate on the modernisation of higher education. They will be the ones to prove the usefulness of this report.

Koen Geven
Chairperson of ESU 2007-2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this research was to identify the different ways in which the Lisbon Startegy is implemented on a national level as well as the student opinion of its' impact on higher education. For this purpose this study combines an analysis of documents on the European level, an analysis of the National Progress Reports 2005, as well as the results of a student survey with responses from 39 national unions of students from 33 countries. It also drew on the results of a much smaller survey among ESU's member unions on the Lisbon Strategy and the work of student unions on this topic from 2005.

Concretely, this research focusses on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy and the impact on students in 8 areas:

- The implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in national higher education systems.
- Equality in and access to higher education.
- The effects on tuition fees systems and student support schemes.
- Mechanisms of alternative financing.
- Changes in the governance of higher education institutions and measures to attain excellence in higher education.
- The promotion of employability.
- Measures to foster attractiveness and mobility in European higher education systems.
- Measures to foster literacy in Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

This executive summary contains the key findings of this research.

The implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in national higher education systems

Lacking focus on access and equality. Student unions and governments both see the need for reforms on the national level in order to increase access to and equality in higher education, as well as to improve the employability of graduates. However, student unions observe that governments, despite their lip service, don't pay enough attention to increasing access to and equality in higher education. Student unions are also concerned about the lack of reforms in the financing of higher education, while governments seem not to prioritise this topic.

Too little student involvement. Since 2005, student unions have substantially increased their work and expertise on the Lisbon Strategy. But to this very day they have not managed to be fully and regularly involved in debates on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy on the national level. Efforts both by student unions as well as by governments have to be increased to include them in these processes.

Equality and access

No benchmarks for equality. In the Lisbon Strategy, the concept of equality is mainly tackled with the intention to facilitate access to education and training systems in order to raise employment and economic growth. The Bologna Process views the social dimension in terms of ensuring equal opportunities for all so that the diversity of society is equally reflected in higher education. This perspective is not properly discussed in the Lisbon Strategy. In addition, equality and non-discrimination in higher education are not monitored in a centralized way through indicators and benchmarks in the Lisbon Strategy.

Discrimination. Regarding equal representation of all social groups in higher education, the study concluded that students with disabilities, students from a disadvantaged socio-economic background and students with a migration background are discriminated against most frequently across Europe. These groups are also generally underrepresented in higher education (compared to their percentage in society). Female students are somewhat an exeption to this. They tend to be overrepresented in social science studies and on lower levels of higher education (bachelor, master), while being underrrepresented in higher levels (PhD), as well as in the academic body as a whole.

Tuition fees and student support

Tuition fees increase. Student payments exist in the majority of countries. In recent years they have tended to increase and are starting to be applied more widely, following the argumentation of the European Union. At the same time, governments are disregarding the call of the EU to intensify student support systems. Higher education institutions, forced by the insufficient funding and thus the threat of decreasing quality, are arguing even more strongly in favour of tuition fees than governments,.

Fees damage equal access. Students generally don't see any positive effects of tuition fees. This especially concerns arguments about tuition fees increasing equity and efficiency. In fact students see far more negatives in the implementation of tuition fees. Most problematic are the effects on access to higher education and the financial situation of students.

Not enough student support. The most common student support systems are grants and loans, which are dependant on the student or parental income. Generally, students don't believe that the level of support adequately covers students' living expenses. The majority of students in Europe therefore work alongside their studies in order to cover their living expenses. Any increase in living expenses, e.g. tuition fees, other payments connected to studies, as well as rising living costs, increase the financial pressure on students. This contradicts the argument that tuition fees would »reinforce student motivation« (Euro-

pean Commission 2006c: 8), since they in fact provide another push factor into employment and pull factor from pursuing ones' studies.

Alternative financing

Most common schemes. Student unions in Europe generally don't feel that the Lisbon Strategy has motivated their higher education institutions to diversify their funding sources. The most common and financially most relevant alternative funding schemes developed by higher education institutions are research provided for a fee, tuition fees from specialised business-oriented training courses and sponsorships.

Harmful mechanisms. Student unions think that faculty tie-ups, sponsorships/ advertisements and research provided for a fee are most harmful to maintain the role and public responsibility for higher education. Students see these as a threat towards the autonomy of teaching and research. Although general tuition fees were not an explicit category in this section of the survey, a large number of student unions also expressed concerns about various forms of charging students in order to generate income.

Excellence and governance

Externals in decision-making. There is a clear trend in Europe to reform higher education institutions governments, with more inclusion of externals from the business sector. The motivation for governments for doing this is clearly in line with the aims of the Lisbon Strategy. Externals are included in decision-making and advisory bodies, with an influence mainly on financial management matters and the strategic development of the institution, sometimes also on the design of study programs.

Pros and cons. The national unions of students see both positive and negative aspects of this development. Positive: universities open up to the surrounding society, thereby creating knowledge relevant to society and economy. Negative: short-sighted business strategies are not appropriate for higher education systems, threatening their autonomy and the involvement of students in the decision making processes.

Focus on excellence. In most countries, governments use grant systems to specifically support excellent students. The responsibility for those systems is fairly equally divided between the governments and higher education institutions. Governments furthermore use other financial incentives to foster excellence in higher education.

Employability

Not enough money for students. The majority of students in Europe work during their studies, and the proportion of working students increases with higher levels of education. This might be due to a rise in financial independence from parents, higher costs of studies or legal regulations regarding their status. The majority of working students choose to take up employment for financial, not professional reasons.

This contradicts the aim of the Lisbon Strategy to strengthen the links between study and working life. Working alongside studies is resulting in an increased overall workload of students, which is perceived as a burden.

Focus on entrepreneurial skills. On average, there is no substantial attention paid to transferable, social and civic skills, as well as to leadership and entrepreneurial skills in higher education study programs. Placing learning in an ethical context and obtaining skills for active citizenship are the areas which receive least attention.

Mathematics and technology. In more than half of the countries, governments promote certain fields of study. In approximately a third of ESU member countries, these study fields are supported by additional financial means as well as by promotional support. The most frequently promoted fields in Europe are engineering, hard sciences, technology and mathematics. Those promotional activities are but slightly effective in terms of increasing enrolment rates, resulting in the relationship between the input of the government and the actual output in achieving goals being relatively weak.

Attractiveness and mobility

Promoting mobility. Countries are mostly active in promoting mobility to other countries or in attracting students to their country. Very few countries actually report a loss of skilled individuals and have measures in place to prevent the mobility of skilled individuals out of their country.

Unbalanced mobility. To prevent developments of unbalanced mobility, countries need to develop good and effective measures to retain skilled individuals and share this good practice. In order to improve balanced mobility among countries while maintaining the positive effects of internationalisation and increasing access to mobility throughout Europe, net-gaining countries with low outward student mobility should increase programmes to foster mobility of local students abroad.

Brain gain initiatives. Initiatives to retain skilled individuals seem most productive in two areas: fostering economic development and improving the quality of the higher education systems. Initiatives to attract foreigners seem most successful when promoting the visibility of the higher education system and the culture.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and e-learning

Available for students. Computer systems, wireless internet connection and specialized ICT for specific subject areas are available for students in the majority of higher education institutions. The survey shows similar findings for private access of students to ICT. However, access to ICT is generally more limited to students at home than at their higher education institution. Private access to the internet strongly

depends on the financial situation of students. Keeping in mind that e-learning should be a means for more flexible access to education, the availability of fast internet connections in the homeplace needs to be considered and supported.

More ICT integration. Higher education institutions are not very active in integrating ICT into higher education. There is very limited support to enable students and academics learn and teach online and there is limited integration of ICT in the learning process. These findings contradict the countries' lip service of prioritsing actions on ICT in the National Reports of 2005. Improving ICT infrastructure and skills development on how to use ICT only in primary and secondary education are not enough to ensure access to ICT in higher education and an increased application of ICT in the learning process.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2003 the European Students' Union (ESU) has been engaged in activities of the European Commission in the field of higher education under the header of the Lisbon Strategy: ESU participated in the public consultation process on the »Role of the Universities in the Europe of Knowledge« (2003), in several working groups followed up by the »Wim Kok midterm review« (2004), in the consultation sessions on the European Institute of Technology (2005/06) and more recently in EU presidency events discussing the main communications to the Parliament and Council. The intensity of ESU's work on the Lisbon Strategy is currently strengthened through its project »Lisbon and Students«, which is carried out in the years of 2007 and 2008 with the support of the European Commission.

With the aim to assess the impact of the Lisbon Strategy in higher education on students, ESU carried out a survey amongst its member unions called »Lisbon with Students Eyes« as one element of this project. This survey builds on a prior, however much more limited survey amongst its members in November 2005. The aim of which was to assess students involvement in the implementation of higher education reforms in the Lisbon Strategy.

With the 2007 "Lisbon with Student Eyes" research, the scope has widened considerably. It analyses not only the reform suggestions of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of higher education on the European level, but also looks at the impact on the national level. The latter included an analysis of national reports from 2005, as well as findings from a survey amongst ESU's member unions. The survey aimed to reflect the status quo of the national implementation of higher education reforms as part of the Lisbon Strategy. Most importantly, this research intends to compare (European and national) governments' perception of reform focuses and necessities with those of students. It is not a stocktaking exercise, but aimed at providing an overview over the general trends in the Lisbon reforms on higher education, as perceived by students.

The questionnaire was conducted in July and August 2007. Altogether 39 student unions from 33 countries[1] answered the survey. Based on previous research on the Lisbon Strategy in its handbook »The EU Lisbon Agenda«, ESU felt that the impact of the Lisbon Strategy on Non-EU countries should also **be** explored in this survey. For this

1 The student unions responding to this survey are national representative organisations from the following countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

reason the survey does not only address ESU member unions from EU Member States, but also Non-EU members.
We hope that this analysis can serve as a guiding light – both for student unions in developing their work on this issue, as well as for policy makers in preparing for louder and stronger student involvement.

ESU Committee on Commodification of Education

I THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LISBON STRATEGY IN NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

While student unions have substantially increased their work on the Lisbon Strategy in the past years, they are still not fully recognized and involved by their governments in the reform processes.

1.1 Introduction

Since 2001 ESU has been a full part of the follow-up structure of the Bologna Process. This process has demonstrated fast progress, whilst maintaining a constructive dialogue with the higher education community, including students and their representatives. The input of students not only improves the quality of the reform programme, but the reforms also have more legitimacy when implemented.

ESU CALLED FOR THE INCLUSION OF STUDENT UNIONS AT ALL STAGES AS EQUAL PARTNERS.

ESU also called for the inclusion of student unions at all stages as equal partners when coordination groups for the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme were set up at the national level. Our commitment as equal partners in higher education is mirrored in our continuous involvement in the public debate on the European level regarding the further development of the Lisbon Strategy, in our efforts to join all stakeholders in higher education in Europe in regular meetings to discuss issues of joint concern in the Lisbon Strategy, as well as in our efforts to provide all necessary assistance to our member unions in order that they adequately address the reform processes on the national level.

methodical approach

Reform agendas differ between countries, due to the different levels of performance regarding the Lisbon Objectives in the EU Member States. But also the differences in the political and social situation as well as the historical backgrounds influence the characteristics of government reforms in higher education. The main aim of our research on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy was to find out which of the Lisbon Objectives in higher education have actually been taken forward by national governments.

Inorder to do so, we first analysed the reform agreements in higher education within the Lisbon Strategy on the European level, and secondly, based on the national reports, analysed which of these suggested reform objectives are taken forward as a policy priority by the national governments. We compared these findings with the answers from our national unions of students regarding their own work on the Lisbon Strategy and their perception of the actual reform objectives of their respective governments. Furthermore, we contrasted government priorities with the reform priorities that student unions perceive as urgent in their country. Another part of the research was to ask student unions about their inclusion in the debates on these reforms. Since we already conducted a survey with the same questions among our member unions in 2005, the findings of this survey in 2007 can be compared to the results from 2005 and provide a picture of the development of student unions' work on the Lisbon Strategy.

1.2 Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

When the Heads of State of the European Union met in Lisbon in 2000, they agreed to launch a joint European strategy with

> *a new strategic goal for the next decade: to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge—based economy in the world, capable of sustainabale economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. (European Council 2000: 3)*

Since it was evident to the European Council that, in a knowledge-based economy, education serves as one of the engines to foster innovation and growth, the Education ministers of all EU Member States agreed on »The concrete future Objectives of Education and Training Systems« in Stockholm in 2001. These objectives were then translated into a »Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe« at their meeting of in February 2002 in Barcelona. This work programme is very extensive and encompasses 13 objectives under 3 overarching goals:

1. Improving the quality and effectiveness of Education and Training Systems in the EU

- *Improving education and training for teachers and trainers*
- *Developing skills for the knowledge society*
- *Ensuring access to ICT for everyone*
- *Increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies*
- *Making the best use of resources*

2. Facilitating the access of all to Education and Training Systems

•Open learning environment
•Making learning more attractive
•Supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion
3. Opening up Education and Training Systems to the Wider World

•Strengthening the links with working life and research and society at large
•Developing the spirit of enterprise
•Improving foreign language learning
•Increasing mobility and exchange

•Strengthening the European co-operation (European Council 2002: 2)

1.3 Actions taken on the national level

In their National Reports in 2005, all countries acknowledge the relevance of the suggested Lisbon reforms in the area of higher education. However it is not only the Lisbon Strategy, but also the Bologna Process that currently influence higher education reforms in Europe. In both processes the implementation of reforms lies within the responsibility of the national governments, which causes an inconsistent implementation of reform objectives throughout Europe and makes it hard to identify the origins of these reforms.

THE REFORM OBJECTIVES ARE NOT A PICK AND CHOOSE SUPERMARKET

While the reform instruments of Lisbon and Bologna are in part complementary, the objectives of the two processes are partially contradictory (ESIB 2006: 54-55). As the reform objectives in the separate processes are coherent and mutually enhancing, they are not a pick and choose supermarket, implementing individual objectives from each of the processes. Such an approach could result in hindering the overall success of the reforms. Evidence of such negative effects can be found in the biannual "Bologna with Student Eyes" surveys of ESU (ESIB 2003b; ESIB 2005a; ESIB 2007), as well as in the Bologna Black Book from 2005 (ESIB 2005b). Lastly, the mixed debates and implementation of reforms from both the Bologna Process as well as the Lisbon Strategy result in a lack of clarity (as is evidenced in the National Reports) as to which are the priorities for each country regarding the Lisbon Strategy.

However it appears that reforms in higher education have been undertaken mainly in four areas: increasing the quality of higher education to attain excellence, improving the access to and the equality in higher education, improving the employability of higher education graduates and reforming the governance of higher education institutions (see Fig. 01 and table 01 in the annex).

The reasons put forward by national governments for prioritising certain objectives are varied. Some countries point out that social, economical and political circumstances made reforms necessary prior to the launch of the Lisbon Strategy. The reforms now proposed under the Lisbon Strategy thus overlap with previous reforms. This is creating a fundamental problem of reform capacity of the higher education systems. (Slovenia 2005: 5; Lithuania 2005: 4; Czech Republic 2005: 7)

Other countries prioritized certain objectives because they felt that their performance in other areas were already fairly satifsfactory according to previously undertaken reforms, which didn't need to be re-invented again. Instead, they aimed either at improving their performance in areas in which they were underperforming, or they aimed at scoring even higher performance levels than set out in the Lisbon Objectives (Netherlands 2005: 2,3; United Kingdom 2005: 2; Ireland 2005: 4; Turkey 2005: 8).

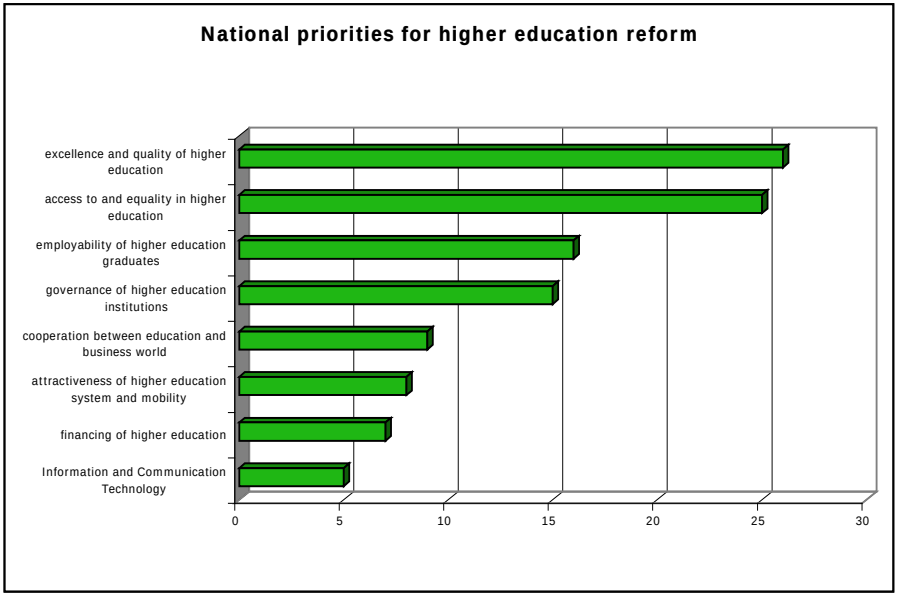


Fig. 01: National priorities for higher education reform according to National Reports 2005

Financing of higher education

Interestingly, whilst the vast majority of countries prioritize both improving the quality of (26) and the access to (25) higher education, this figure is not matched

with an equal prioritisation of the financing (7) of higher education. The latter is explicitly stated only by Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Slovakia and the United Kingdom (see table 01 in the annex). The majority of these countries are new EU Member States.

However this does not necessarily reflect an increase in public spending on higher education. The majority of these countries focus their efforts on increasing the efficient use of the available resources. Only Slovakia and the United Kingdom prioritise an increase of the funding for higher education by diversifying the funding sources (Slovak Republic 2005: 7; United Kingdom 2005: 5).

Information and Communication Technology

Another interesting factor is the prioritization of Information and Communication Technology. While the Detailed Work Programme from 2002 and the eLearning Action Plan from 2001 mention the objective of ensuring access to ICT for everyone in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of education (European Commission 2001: 2), there is a strong discrepancy between the prioritization of improving the quality of higher education (26) and the literacy and use of Information and Communication Technology (5). Only Greece, Iceland, Malta, Poland and Turkey have explicitly mentioned this as a priority reform objective for higher education.

Other countries mainly focus on ICT inititiatives in the areas of primary and secondary education by providing the infrastructure, improving the skills of teaching personnel and making instructions on use of ICT compulsory at these levels of education. However the five above-mentioned countries again differ in their reform objectives. While Greece and Poland mainly focus on increasing the infrastructure at the level of higher education and focus on the use of ICT for career guidance and counselling, Iceland, Malta and Turkey prioritize ICT both in order to foster access (Iceland 2005: 4; Malta 2005: 9; Turkey 2005: 12) as well as »to serve the educational needs of teachers, pupils and communities to improve quality of education and to use ICT in education as part of educational policy.« (Turkey 2005: 13; see also Iceland 2005: 4; Malta 2005: 9)

THE PRIORITIES ARE NOT MATCHED WITH EQUAL PRIORITISATION OF THE FINANCING OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Responsibility for the implementation

Another varying factor between the countries is the responsibility for the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme. In the majority of the countries, a strong cooperation between different ministries and actors in higher education is believed to be paramount for a successful implementation of the reforms. According to the National Reports, almost half of

the countries coordinate the implementation of the reforms in an interministerial structure (see Fig. 02 and table 02 in the annex). More than another quarter of the countries reported that, whilst the implementation of reforms is the responsibility of the ministry of education, they had frequent contacts with other ministries or stakeholders in education.

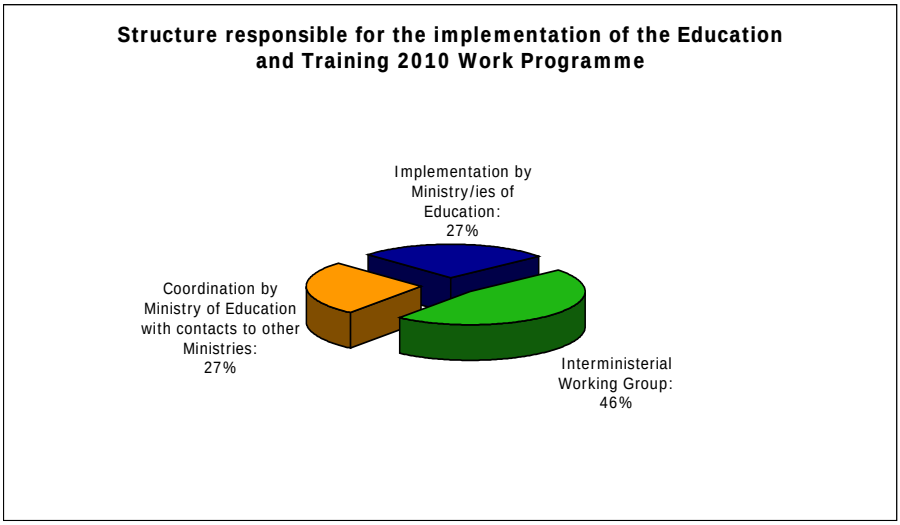


Fig. 02: Structure responsible for the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme

Of those countries which don't coordinate the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, there are the two participating EEA countries, 4 new EU Member States, as well as Germany and Italy.

STRONG COOPERATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT MINISTRIES IS PARAMOUNT FOR A SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION.

One can conclude that Non-EU members do not seem to be creating interministerial strategies or working groups to help attain the Lisbon Objectives, whilst old and new EU Member States, as well as candidates to the EU mainly follow an overall strategy to generate economic growth and competitiveness, and implement this strategy by a coordinated effort between different political resorts. Reasons for countries not to implement such a structure might be rooted in their political system regarding the regulation of education, ongoing administrative and political reforms or their size, rendering special coordination structures unnecessary.

1.4 Student opinion

The work of student unions in Europe on the Lisbon Strategy has improved significantly between 2005 (when the first survey of ESU amongst its member unions was carried out) and 2007. This is true for EU as well as Non-EU countries alike. While in 2005 less than 40% of the respondents had worked on the Lisbon Strategy, this figure is now well over 60% (see Fig. 03).

It is also worth noting that student unions in Non-EU countries are well informed about reform processes in the Lisbon Strategy: the number of unions not working on the subject has almost halved since 2005. This is relevant insofar as students in Europe realized that a number of reform objectives from the Lisbon Strategy also impact countries outside the EU (ESIB 2006: 28-36).

The number of student unions with an explicit policy on the matter has also increased substantially. While in 2005 only 40% of the respondents had developed their policy on the Lisbon Strategy, this number has increased to well over 50%. And again the increase in activity from Non-EU countries is significant. The percentage of student unions from Non-EU countries without any policy on the subject fell from 30% of all respondents to this question in 2005 to 20% in 2007.

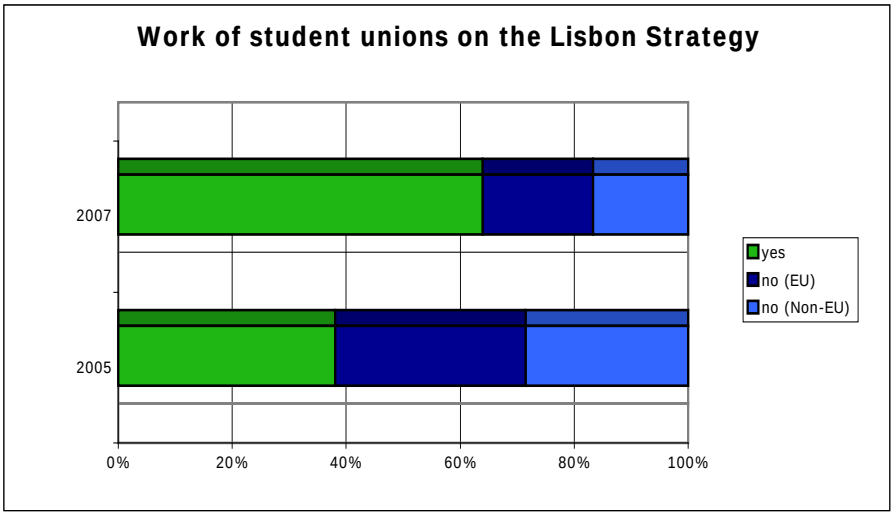


Fig. 03: Work of student unions on the Lisbon Strategy

Students' perception of government priorities and reform necessities

It is very interesting to see the student unions' perception of the Lisbon priorities that their governments are actively taking forward. Figure 04 provides an overview of both the perception of student unions regaring the priorities of their governments, as well as the reform areas which the student unions deem important in their country. The majority of the unions perceive their countries to follow mainly 3 priorities: financing of higher education, governance and autonomy of higher education institutions and the promotion of excellence and quality of higher education. In comparison to these perceptions, governments themselves stated in their National Reports from 2005 that they prioritised mainly the promotion of excellence and quality of higher education, opening access to and equality in higher education as well as increasing the employability of higher education graduates (see Fig. 01).

THE WORK OF STUDENT UNIONS ON LISBON HAS IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY BETWEEN 2005 AND 2007

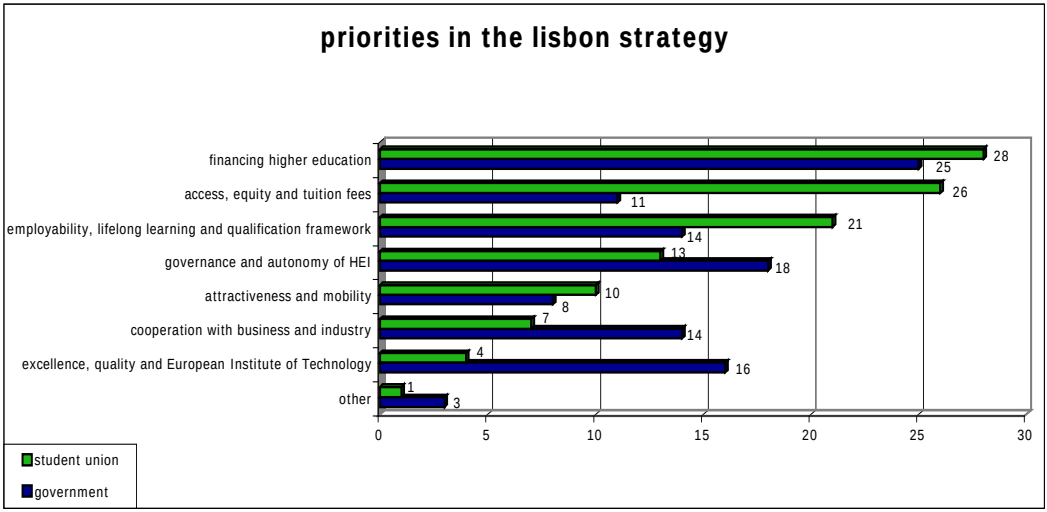


Fig. 04: Priorities in the Lisbon Strategy of governments and student unions based on the perception of student unions

The difference between the priority outlines of governments and their estimation of student unions are striking and interesting. While a fair number of student unions (14) mentioned employability among those priorities which they believe

to be important to their governments, this is not the case for reform objectives regarding access to or equality in higher education (11). This leads to the conclusion that either the reform initiatives to promote access and equality are not very transparent in the public and the effects are limited, or that these objectives are not pursued to the extent that they are claimed in the National Reports of 2005.

It is also interesting to compare the reform areas, which student unions believe to be important in their country (see Fig. 04), with the reform areas that governments prioritise in their National Reports in 2005 (see Fig. 01). Student unions believe that reforms are most important in the areas of financing of higher education, access to and equality in higher education as well as the improvement of employability of higher education graduates. Keeping in mind that governments stated that their reform priorities are excellence and quality of higher education, access and equality as well as employability, there is quite some overlap between student unions and governments in the analysis regarding which areas need special attention in their country: both state access and equality as well as employability to be of utmost importance.

EITHER REFORM INITIATIVES FOR ACCESS AND EQUALITY ARE NOT VERY TRANSPARENT, OR THEY ARE SIMPLY NOT PURSUED TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY ARE CLAIMED

However there is a strong difference in the importance given to reforms in systems of financing higher education. This area is mentioned only 7 times explicitly as a reform priority by governments, while it is of the highest importance to student unions (28). Keeping in mind the developments regarding the introduction or increase of tuition fees (e.g. in the United Kingdom, Germany and Hungary), student unions obviously are actively seeking alternative ways of financing of higher education apart from charging students. Further findings on this issue are described in the chapters on tuition fees and alternative financing.

Stronger focus on financing

Student unions stress the importance of reforming the financing of higher education, which only very few governments mention as an explicit priority. Furthermore, reforms in the area of access and equality, despite the priority that governments claim to be giving this policy area, are not perceived to receive enough attention. This seems to be connected to the low priority that governments are giving the financing of higher education: Access to and equality in higher education depend on a strong – financial – commitment of governments, and they are influenced by the different tuition fee systems.

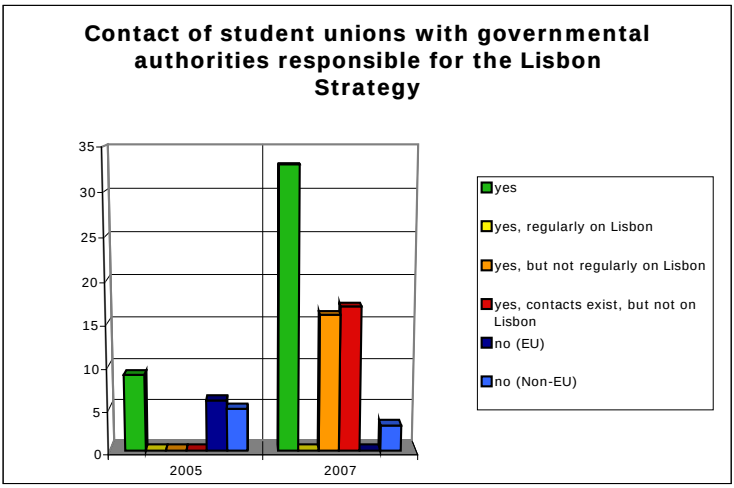


Fig.05: Contact of student unions with the governmental authorities responsible for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy

Stronger inclusion of students

The survey also asked student unions about their contacts with the governmental authorities responsible for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in order to see whether the concerns of student unions are being heard (see Fig. 05). The activities of student unions substantially increased between 2005 and 2007. In fact no student union from the EU countries responded that they had no such contacts. The number of responding Non-EU countries with no contacts also halved. Student unions not only intensified their work on the Lisbon Strategy and developed a policy on the topic, they also actively sought contact with the responsible governmental authorities.

However, in contrast to 2005, we also asked about the nature of these contacts in order to see whether student unions are actually involved in the debates on the Lisbon Strategy. It seems that this is less successful. Aside from the fact that no student union has regular contacts with the governmental authorities on the Lisbon Strategy, the majority of those unions with contacts to these authorities maintain them on other issues than the Lisbon Strategy.

GOVERNMENTS ARE HESITANT TO INVOLVE STUDENTS IN THE DEBATES ON IMPLEMENTING LISBON

This leads to two conclusions: While student unions have substantially increased their work on the Lisbon Strategy in the past two years, they have still not achieved full recognition and involvement in this issue. Governments, while

involving student unions on other issues, still seem hesitant to involve them in the debates on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in higher education.

1.5 Conclusions

- Student unions and governments both see the need for reforms to increase access to and equality in Higher Education, as well as to improve the employability of graduates.
- Despite their prioritisation, student unions feel that governments don't pay enough attention to increasing access to and equality in higher education.
- Student unions are eagerly seeking reforms in, or are concerned about the funding of higher education, while governments seem not to prioritise this topic.
- Student unions have substantially increased their work and expertise on the Lisbon Strategy.
- Nevertheless, student unions did not manage to be fully and regularly involved in debates on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy on the National level. Efforts both by student unions as well as by governments have to be increased to include them in these processes.

II EQUALITY AND ACCESS

Equality, non-discrimination and access with the aim of ensuring equal opportunities for all is not properly discussed in the Lisbon Strategy. Furthermore, the progress is not monitored in a centralised way through indicators and benchmarks.

2.1 Introduction

At the heart of the idea of equality lie basic principles concerning human rights, equal opportunities and social justice. The extent of the rights, privileges and citizens' responsibilities to all members of society is a topic of increasing national and international importance. For ESU, equality and equal opportunities for all in higher education is the cross-cutting principle which is reflected in all policy and working areas.

The importance of equality issues is also evident in the policy of the European Union. The European Commission has designated 2007 as the »European Year of Equal Opportunities for All« (European Commission 2005d: 1) as part of a concerted effort to promote equality and non-discrimination in the EU. Within this context, the Commissioner for European Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimír Spidla, said: »Fundamental rights, non-discrimination and equal opportunities will remain key priorities for the European Commission.« (ibid: 1)

methodical approach

There are several interesting issues concerning the student view on equality in the Lisbon Strategy: How strongly is this issue considered in the higher education policy of the EU? What are the conceptual differences between the EU's idea of "equity" in higher education and the "social dimension" of the Bologna Process? How is the target of equality implemented, and which problems are identified by students as barriers to reaching equality in higher education?

The explicit goal to achieve equality in higher education does not exist in the Lisbon Strategy. Therefore, before analysing equality in the Lisbon Strategy, it is important to define a frame of reference and to name our definition of equality.

ESU defines equality as a »parity of esteem, and access to opportunity, regardless of individual differences.« (ESIB 2003a: 2) Similarly, the Bologna Process wants the »student body entering, participating in and completing higher education [to] reflect the diversity of our populations.« (Department for Education and Skills 2007:9) Therefore the research:

- Examined the EU's policy towards »facilitating the access of all to education and training systems« (European Council 2002: 3), in order to assess the importance of equality principles in higher education in the Lisbon Strategy, and to compare them with the understanding of the Social Dimension in the Bologna Process.
- Asked European student unions which groups of their society face difficulties and discrimination in higher education, and to what extent does their participation in higher education reflect the diversity of society.

2.2 Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

Although the EU has a very comprehensive policy on equality and non-discrimination, the Lisbon Strategy's education agenda grossly defines equality as increasing access to European education and training systems.

The report of the European Commission »Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training, indicators and benchmarks 2007« explains the importance of equity in the Lisbon Strategy from the very beginning:

> *When launching the Lisbon strategy in 2000, the Heads of State agreed that the target that by 2010 the European Union should become 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs« has to be accompanied by »greater social cohesion«. In the field of education and training, the Lisbon agenda was put into action in the »Education and Training 2010« programme containing three broad strategic objectives, of which the second directly concerned equity in education and training, stressing the need to facilitate access. (European Commission 2007b: 23)*

This overarching goal of facilitating access to education and training systems was set by the Stockholm European Council in 2001, and later elaborated in the Detailed Work Programme (European Council 2002). It encompasses objectives of creating an open learning environment, making learning more attractive and supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion.

THE EXPLICIT GOAL TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION DOES NOT EXIST IN THE LISBON STRATEGY

As stated in the report from the Lisbon mid-term evaluation, »lifelong learning is not a luxury, it is a necessity.« (High Level Group 2004: 33) A commission staff working paper of 2005 explains it even more:

> *current demographic trends imply that Europe will not be able to rely solely on well-educated younger generations to replace older workers – rather, it is imperative to boost the labour-market participation of older people, women, migrants and minority groups, to raise overall employment levels.(European Commission 2005b: 67)*

The EU acknowledges that education and training systems can have a significant positive impact on the social and economic structure of a society, including sustainable development and social cohesion: Inequities in education cause huge hidden costs, which include tax losses, increased demand for health-care and public assistance, as well as higher rates of crime and delinquency (European Commission 2006c: 3). However, as the quotes from the EU Commission show, social cohesion in the Lisbon Strategy is largely perceived as a means of increasing employment, economic growth and competitiveness. This was even more evident after the Lisbon-relaunch in 2005. The goal of social cohesion was dropped from the main slogan in order to »re-focus priorities on growth and employment.« (European Council 2005: 4)

equity and efficiency

After being confronted with critical voices, who fear that the strive for efficiency in education systems would overrule the idea of equality, the EU published a Communication on "Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems" (2006). It attempts to demonstrate how the integration of the principles of equity and efficiency at all levels of the education and training systems will guarantee access for everyone, particularly the most disadvantaged.

»Equity« is interpreted as the »extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training, in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes« (European Commission 2006c: 2). Equitable systems should

> *ensure that the outcomes of education and training systems are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage and that treatment reflects individual's specific learning needs. (ibid: 2)*

The need to improve accessibility of higher education systems for all individuals regardless of their background is perceived as important in order to maximize the positive impact on economic and social outcomes of education. Combining the concepts of equity and efficiency is presented as the answer to economic and social challenges, such as an ageing population and migration flows in Europe, the development of ICT, as well as emerging industrialized and highly competitive economies.

2.3 Actions taken on the national level

It is recognized in the Third Progress Report towards the Lisbon Objectives in education and training (2006) that significant inequalities still exist with regards the participation in tertiary education. Various social, geographical and financial barriers continue to hinder the access of various disadvantaged European citizens to tertiary education (European Commission 2006b: 35).

SOCIAL COHESION IS SEEN MAINLY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INCREASING EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS

However, when it comes to actually following-up and coordinating the policy implementation in the fight against existing inequalities in the Member States, there are no appropriate benchmarks or indicators in the framework of the existing 29 indicators in the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, which would specifically address higher education. Accordingly the progress reports (ibid; European Commission 2007b) fail to succesfully tackle these issues. The Council only established two indicators towards the strategic objective to facilitate access to education and training systems (European Commission 2006b: 27). They refer to the participation rate of adults in lifelong learning and the rate of early school leavers.

In their Communication »A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training« (2007), the EU Commission lines out that specific issues need to be monitored, such as the promotion of gender equality, the integration of ethnic minorities, the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and chronic illnesses, the reduction of regional disparities etc. However, it says that progress in the future will be monitored only through such core indicators as participation in pre-school education, special needs education, early school leavers and stratification of education and training systems (European Commission 2007a: 2).

2.4 Student opinion

We asked the national unions of students to indicate two groups which, in their opinion, are the most discriminated groups of students in their countries. The two most frequently mentioned groups are students with disabilities and students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (see Fig. 06). Furthermore, the respondents frequently mentioned immigrants, students with a migration background and ethnic minority students.

Other groups identified by student unions are female students, international students, Roma students, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) students, mature students, part-time students, students with children, students

with a non-academic background and students from rural backgrounds. There was no regionally specific pattern of discrimination that could be witnessed on the basis of the survey responses (see table 03 in the annex).

National unions of students stated that those groups facing discrimination in higher education tend to be underrepresented in higher education compared to their percentage in society. Female students are an exeption. Despite representing the majority amo,gst students on the lowest levels of higher education, the national unions of students in France and Slovenia analysed that women are underrepresented on higher academic levels and among the academic staff. It was also mentioned that students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds are overrepresented on the bachelor level, but underrepresented on higher levels of higher education.

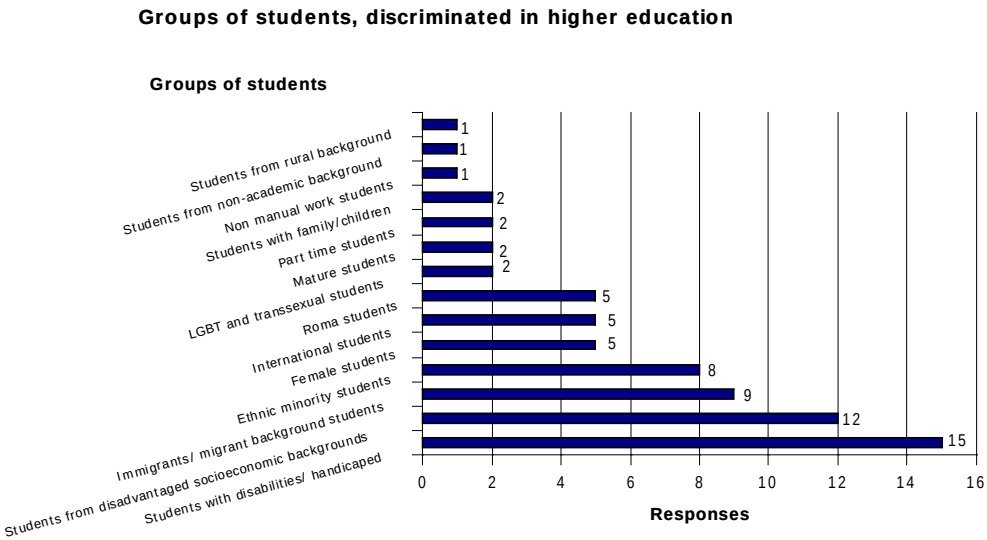


Fig. 06: Groups of students, discriminated in higher education

2.5 Conclusions

- In the Lisbon Strategy, the concept of equality is mainly tackled with the aim to facilitate access to European education and training systems in order to raise employment and economic growth. The perspective of ensuring equal opportunities for all in order to reflect the diversity of society in higher education is not properly discussed and monitored in the Lisbon Strategy.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS FROM DISADVANTAGED SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS ARE THE MOST DISCRIMINATED GROUPS

- Equality and non-discrimination in higher education are not monitored in a centralized way through indicators and benchmarks.
- Students with disabilities, students from a disadvantaged-socio economic background and students, with migration background or ethnic minorities are discriminated against most frequently across Europe.
- Those groups of students that are facing discrimination in higher education are generally also underrepresented in higher education compared to their percentage in society. The exception is female students, who tend to be overrepresented in social science studies and on lower levels of higher education.

III TUITION FEES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

All national unions of students have witnessed or believe in the neagtive impact of tuition fees on students. They negatively affect the access to higher education and the social situation of students, and they limit the choice of study.

Although there are various forms of financial support to meet students' living costs, students are generally not satisfied with the level of this support, stating that it fails to adequately cover living expenses.

3.1 Introduction

Lately the European Union has shown a clear policy towards tuition fees, which is interconnected with the European Commission's concept of equity in higher education (European Commission 2006c). This concept is elaborated in chapter 2 on Equality and Access.

methodical approach

This research aims to see whether European students see the same connection between the implementation of tuition fees and the creation of equitable higher education systems as the EU Commission suggests. Since equitable education systems must be accompanied by support systems, the research also analysed existing support systems in Europe based on the Eurydice »Key Data on Higher Education« (2007 edition). Furthermore, we wanted to find out whether these support systems are sufficient for all students to be able to enter, follow and finish as well as be devoted fully to their studies.

In order to create a better overview, we have divided the presentation of our findings into tuition fees on the one hand, and sudent support systems on the other hand.

3.2 Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

To ensure equity, i.e. eliminate factors that lead to educational disadvantage, and

to encourage access to education for socio-economically disadvantaged students, the European Commission suggests the implementation of support schemes on the national level based on bank loans, income-contingent loans, scholarships and means-tested grants (European Commission 2006c: 8).

The EU Commissions suggests to accompany these support schemes with the implementation of tuition fees, arguing that »free access to higher education does not necessarily guarantee equity« (ibid: 8). Keeping this in mind, the European Commission asks Member States to focus their attention on raising the overall financing of higher education by creating »appropriate conditions and incentives to generate higher investment from public and private sources, including, where appropriate, through tuition fees« (ibid: 8).

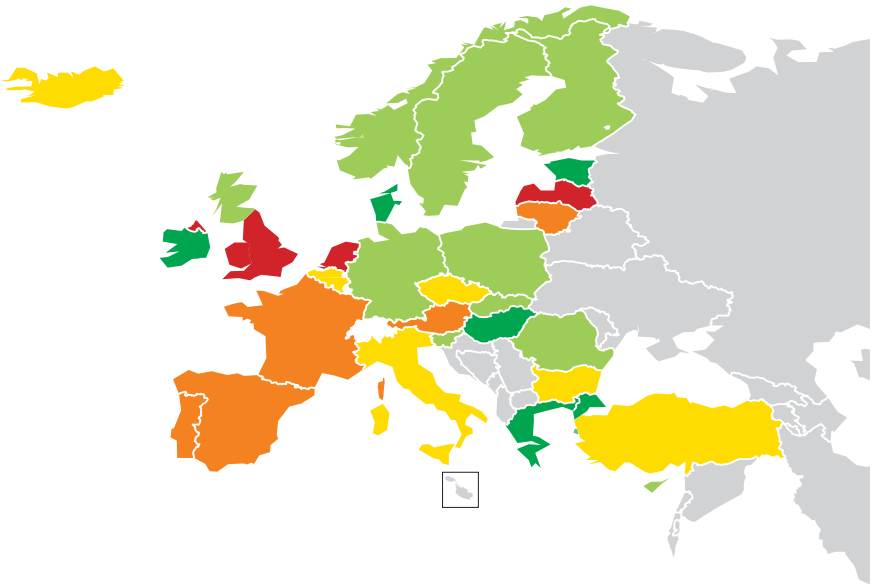
THE EU'S ARGUMENTATION FOCUSES ON FEES AS AN "EDUCATING" TOOL IN ORDER TO REINFORCE STUDENT MOTIVATION

The argumentation of the European Commission doesn't only focus on tuition fees as a funding source for higher education institutions, but also as an "educating" tool:

> *market effects of tuition fees may improve the quality of teaching and management in universities, and reinforce student motivation. (ibid: 8)*

3.3 Tuition fees: Student opinion

As stated in the Communication from the Commission on efficiency and equity, »many countries are turning to the main direct beneficiaries of higher education, the students, to invest in their own futures by paying tuition fees.« (ibid: 7-8) Data from 2005/06 (see Map 1) confirms that already two years ago a clear majority of European countries had some kind of student payments in place: administrative and/or tuition fees. The map also indicates that charging students is not a necessity, but a matter of attitude and political approach.



Map 1 amount of fees and other contributions in EUR paid by full—time daytime students enrolled for a first qualification in the public or government—independent private sectors, 2005/06 (European Commission 2007c)

- Ô no contributions from students
- Ô only administrative fees or student contributions to student organizations 0 – 100 EUR
- Ô total contributions 100 – 500 EUR
- Ô total contributions 500 – 1.000 EUR
- Ô total contribution > 1.000 EUR
- Ô no data available

Argumentation to implement or increase tuition fees

In the survey, student unions were asked to indicate their government's argumentation for implementing or increasing tuition fees. This data was then compared with the argumentation of the EU as outlined above (see Fig. 07). The main arguments of governments to implement or increase tuition fees were: to increase funding for (92%) and the quality of higher education (65%), as well as to increase student motivation (54%). This shows that the main arguments for

the implementation or increase of fees used on the national level fully reflect the argumentation of the EU Commission, which indicates a direct influence in policy development.

Figure 07 shows that almost the same argumentation lines are used in current debates on the national level to introduce or increase fees: increasing funding for (88%) and improving the quality of higher education (76%) are the most common arguments, together with the aim to increase the efficiency of the system (65%).

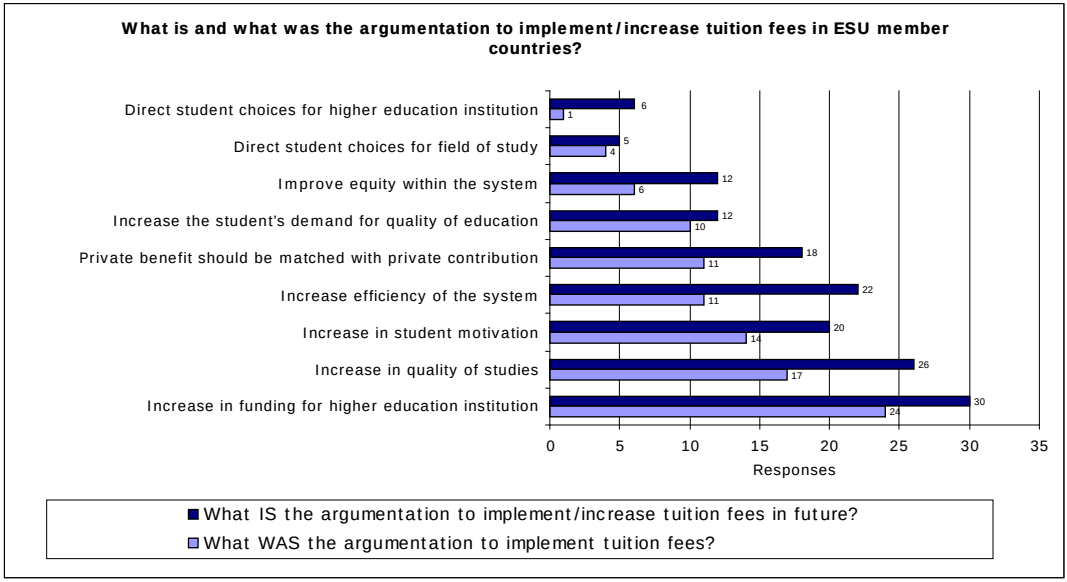


Fig. 07: Argumentation to implement/increase tuition fees in ESU member countries

Increasing equity in higher education does not play a strong role, neither in the past, nor in the present. Only 6 national unions of students (DE, EE, FR, HU, IT, PT), i.e. 23% of the respondents to this question, acknowledged that in their countries increasing equity in higher education was used as an argument to implement tuition fees. In the present debate, this argument has spread to 12 countries, i.e. 35% of all unions responding to this question. Again, this indicates a direct influence in the argumentation from the European Commission to the national level.

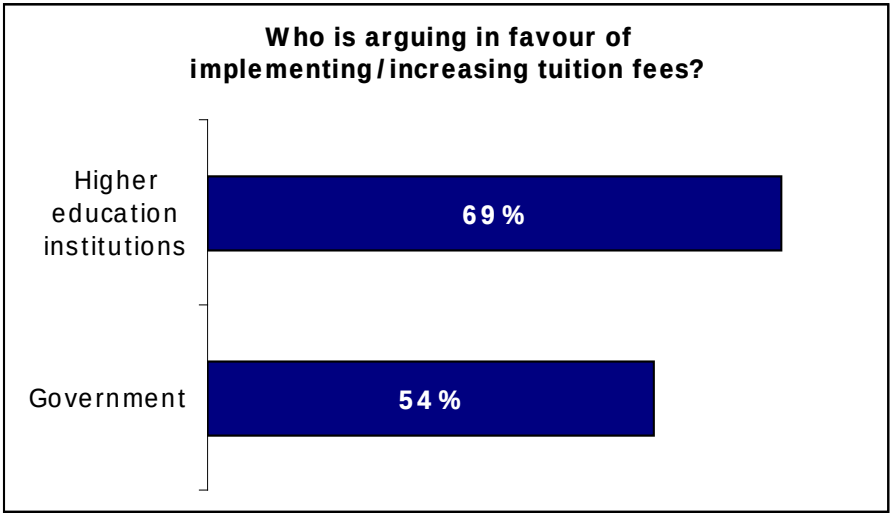


Fig. 08: actors arguing in favour of implementing or increasing tuition fees according to student unions

According to the student unions, higher education institutions argue more strongly for the implementation of tuition fees than governments (see Fig. 08). If one keeps in mind that the main motivation to implement or increase tuition fees is to increase the available financial resources for higher education, it becomes more understandable that higher education institutions, confronted with a lack of public financing, argue in favour of fees, in order maintain or increase the quality of higher education.

Effects of tuition fees on higher education

The majority of student unions (58%) do not agree with any of the above mentioned arguments as brought forward by the EU Commission or their governments. However, some student unions see similar effects of fees on higher education and students (see Fig. 09): every third student union (29%) believed that tuition fees increase student motivation, every fourth (24%) that they increase funding for higher education, and every fifth (21%) agreed that they increase students' demand for high quality education. This indicates that, while the majority of students disagree with the arguments in favour of tuition fees, the arguments most plausible to them are similar to the ones most common in the

debate on implementing or increasing fees.

As figure 06 indicates, student unions believe that the socio-economic background of students are a key factor for discrimination in higher education. Keeping this in mind, a lack of student motivation is caused by financial constraints and the pressure to complete their education in the shortest possible period of time. Thus, payments for higher education will probably neither raise student motivation, nor the attractiveness of higher education. This interpretation is also supported by the fact that only 13% of student unions agreed that tuition fees increase the efficiency in the higher education systems. This indicates that students generally don't believe that tuition fees actually improve the overall performance of both the students as well as the system itself, but that they would just function as a factor of increased financial pressure and rush through the study.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, CONFRONTED WITH A LACK OF PUBLIC FINANCING, ARGUE IN FAVOUR OF FEES

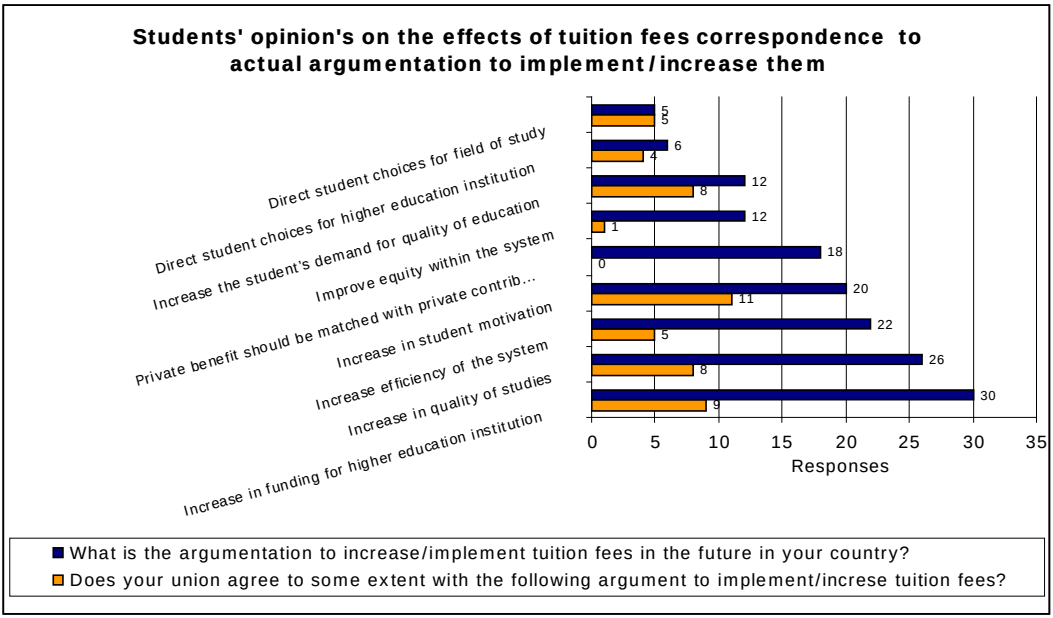


Fig. 09: Student opinion's on the effects of tuition fees correspondence to actual argumentation to implement/increase them

Effects of tuition fees on students

While some unions consider some arguments on the effects of tuition fees valid, literally all respondents witnessed or foresee negative impacts of tuition fees (see Fig. 10). This concerns mainly impacts on access to higher education (92%), the social situation of students (87%) and student choice regarding their field of study (74%). Student unions believe or have witnessed that tuition fees are not only yet another barrier for those facing discrimination in the education system or being socio-economically disadvantaged. Also the few of those actually entering higher education are faced with social and economic hardships and may not choose their field of study based on interest or competence, but on their monthly income and savings.

Again, this strongly suggests that increasing student motivation through tuition fees in fact doesn't work. Fees do not cause enhanced performance or efficiency of higher education systems, but an increased pressure to complete the studies in the shortest possible period of time.

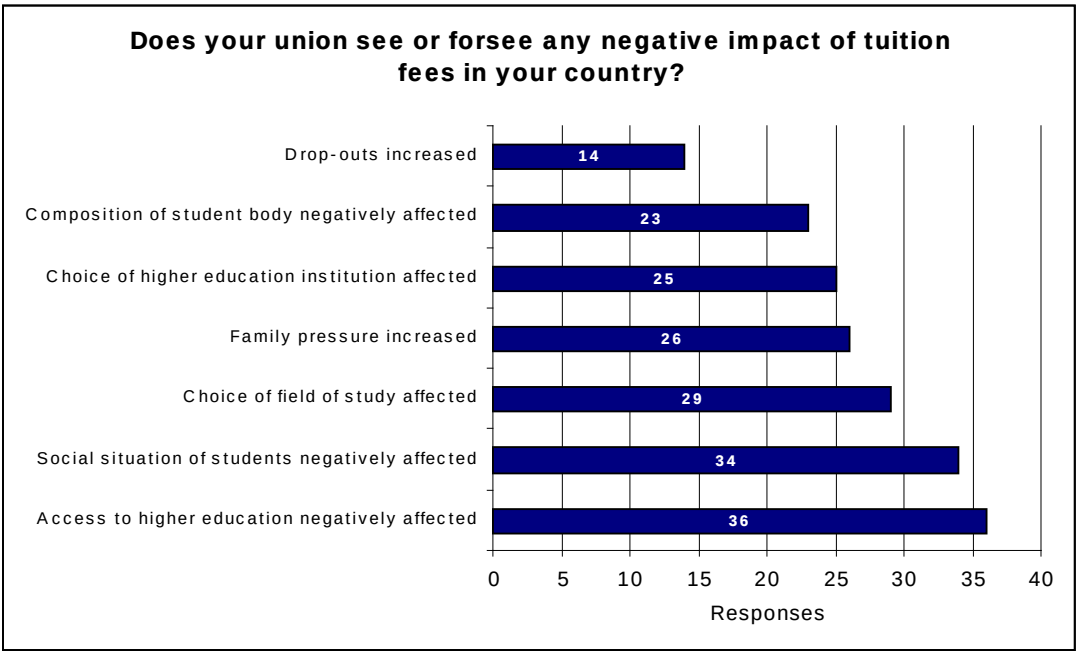


Fig. 10: Does your union see or foresee any negative impact of tuition fees in your country?

3.3.1 Conclusions

- The majority of ESU member countries have some sort of students' payment in the form of administrative and/ or tuition fees. In recent years the number of countries that have implemented or are planning to implement tuition fees is increasing.
- The most popular arguments used to implement or increase tuition fees are to increase the funding for and the quality of higher education; there is no intention to use additional financial means to increase equity, as suggested by the EU.
- In recent years, arguments in favour of tuition fees increasingly focused on directing student choices, increasing the efficiency of higher education and improving equity within the system, as well as matching private benefit with private contributions. Since these arguments mirror the policy of the EU, the EU's activities obviously had an influence on

national discourse and decisions.

- According to the national unions of students, higher education institutions are arguing in favor of tuition fees even more than governments, in order to prevent any decrease in quality of higher education resulting from a lack of public financing.
- The majority of national unions of students disagree with arguments put forward in favour of implementing or increasing tuition fees. Some unions believe that fees will motivate students to finish their studies in a shorter period of time, simply because of financial constraints. Considerably less unions believe that fees would increase the efficiency of higher education systems at all.

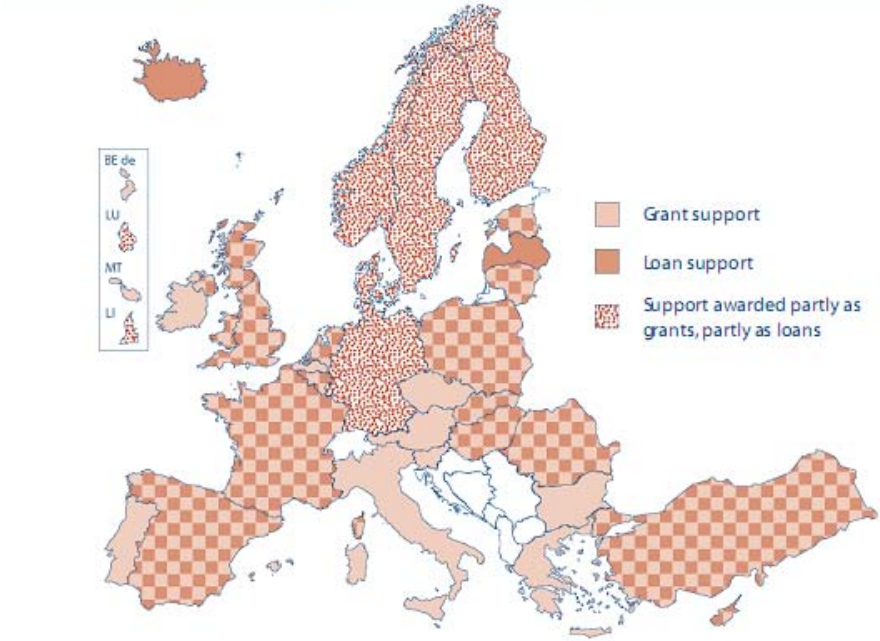
ALL RESPONDENTS WITNESSED OR FORSEE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TUITION FEES ON ACCESS, SOCIAL SITUATION OF STUDENTS, AND THE CHOICE OF THE STUDY FIELD

- Literally all national unions of students have witnessed or believe that tuition fees have negative effects on students. Negative effects are expected mainly regarding the access to higher education, the social situation of students and a limitation in the choice of the study field.

3.4 Student support systems: Student opinion

As stated above, the European Commission suggests the implementation of support schemes in order to eliminate factors that lead to educational disadvantage, and in order to encourage access to education for socio-economically disadvantaged students. According to the EU, those support schemes should be based on bank loans, income-contingent loans, scholarships and means-tested grants. Figure 11 indicicates that the majority of countries already have such support systems in place, which are based on a loan (2) or partially given out as a student loan (19). The Eurydice publication »Key Data on Higher Education in Europe« offers a range of data on different support schemes for students in European countries.

Figure D3: Forms of financial support to meet the cost of living awarded to full-time students in tertiary education for a first qualification (ISCED 5), public and/or government-dependent private sectors, 2005/06



Source: Eurydice.

Fig. 11: Financial support to meet the living costs (European Commission 2007c: 104)

Figure D2: Financial support specifically for students who are parents, in tertiary education at ISCED 5 and 6, in the public and/or government-dependent private sectors, 2005/06

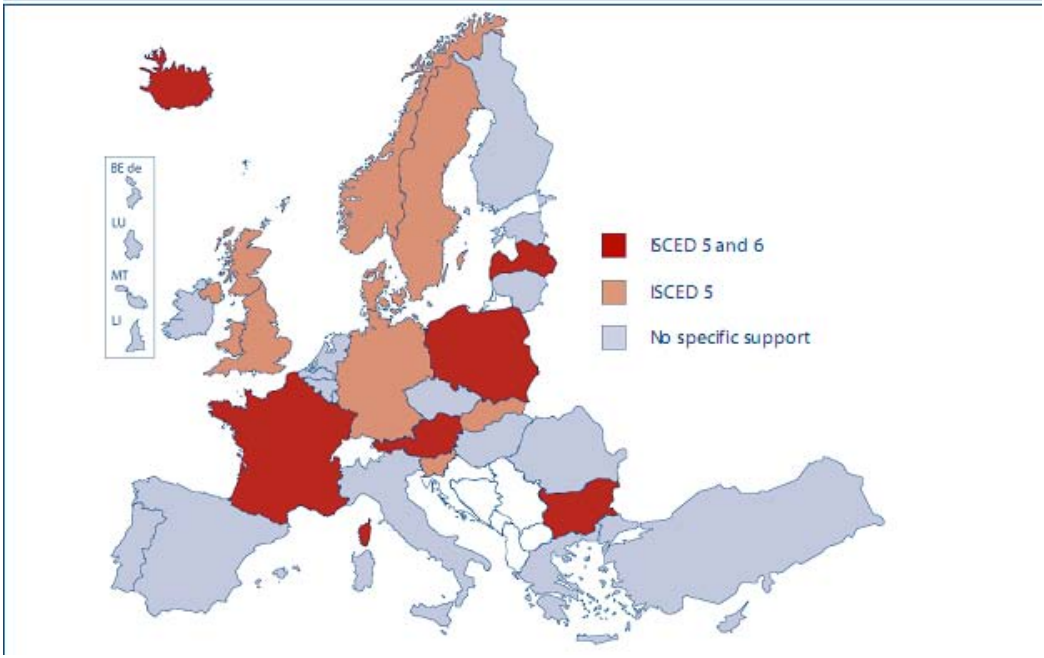


Fig. 12: Financial support schemes for students with parental responsibilities (European Commission 2007c: 102)

Figure 14 illustrates the characteristics of the different student support system in ESU member countries.

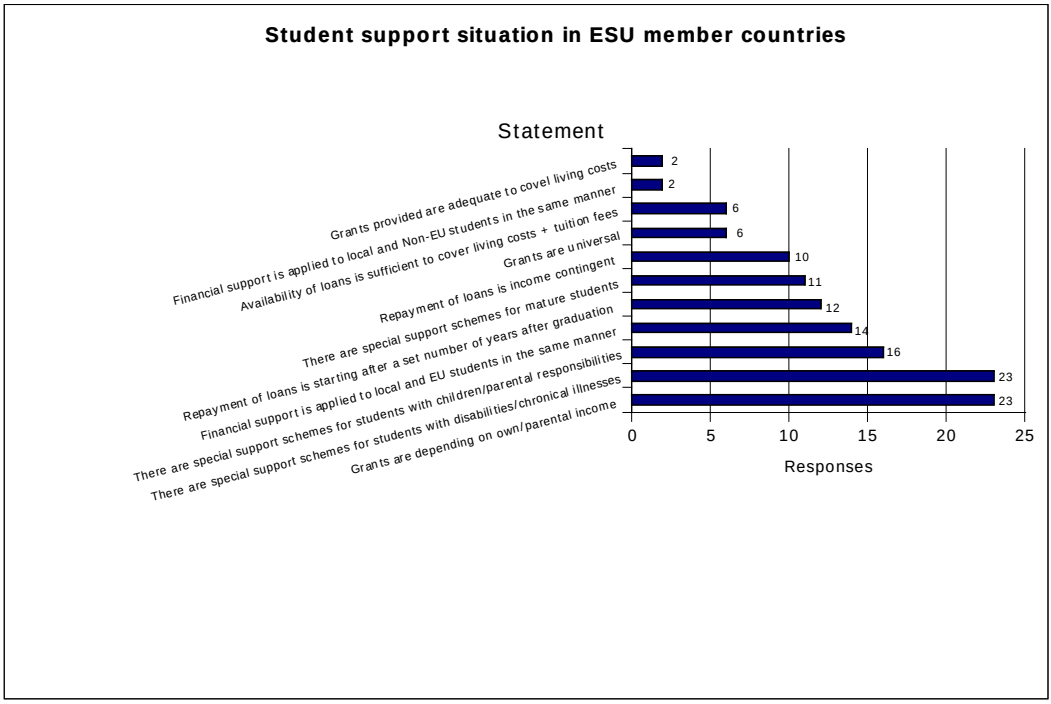


Fig. 14: Student support system in ESU member countries

Grants systems

Only 15% of the national unions of students (CY, DK, FI, MT, NL, SE) answered that grants are universal in their countries. Much more, 59% of all national unions of students (AT, BE, BG, CH, DE, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK-ENG, UK-SCT), confirmed that the most frequent »support measure« for students in their countries are grants, which depend on students' and/ or parental income.

Although there are various forms of financial support specially to meet living costs (see Fig. 13) and even different types of support for accommodation (see Fig. 14), only one national union of students (Cyprus) confirmed that the grants for

students are adequate to cover their living costs, and only 15% (CY, MT, NK, NO, SI, SK, PT) confirmed that there is a sufficient loans system to cover living costs and tuition fees.

Loans systems

31% of national unions of students confirmed that the repayment of loans in their countries (CY, DE, DK, EE, FI, IS, LT, NL, NO, PL, PT, SI) starts after a set number of years after graduation. 26% of national unions of students stated that the repayment of loans in their countries (BE nl, DE, ES, HU, IS, LT, NL, NO, UK-ENG, UK-SCT) is income contingent.

The survey results show that in the majority of countries (BG, CH, FI, FR, HU, IT, MT, NL, PL, RO, RS, SI, SK) very few students (less than 25%) take up loans to finance their studies. Only a few student unions estimate the percentage of students choosing this option between 25% and 55% (DK, EE, FI, IE, IS, LV). Only 4 unions from 2 countries (NO, UK) responded that a vast majority of students (80% - 90%) take up loans for financing their studies.

Support for special groups of students

Even if all EU students should – according to EU regulations – be able to study in every EU country with the same rights as local students, only 34% of national unions of students confirmed that the financial support is applied to local and EU students in the same manner in their countries (AL, BE, CZ, EE, HU, IE, IT, LV, NO, PT, SI, SK, UK-ENG, UK-SCT). Regarding Non-EU students, only the national unions of students from Finland and Italy answered that the financial support is applied for them in the same manner as for local students.

28% of all national unions of students confirmed that there are special support schemes for mature students in their countries (AT, BE, CY, FR, GE, HU, IE, MT, SE, SI, UK-ENG).

59% of national unions of students confirmed that there are special support schemes for students with disabilities/chronical illnesses in their countries (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GE, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, SI, SK, UK-ENG, UK-SCT), either due to their student status, or as citizens in general.

3.4.1 Conclusions

- Only 15% of national unions of students answered that grants are universal in their countries. Much more, 59% of all national unions of students, confirmed that the most frequent form of support for students in their countries are grants, which depend on students' and/ or parental income.

ONLY 5% CONFIRMED THAT THE GRANTS FOR STUDENTS ARE ADEQUATE TO COVER THEIR LIVING COSTS

- 31% of the national student unions stated that the repayment of loans starts after a set number of years after graduation. 26% of the national unions of students confirmed that the repayment of loans in their countries is income contingent.
- The most common form of support are grants and loans, which mainly depend on students' and/ or parental income. Only 6 national student unions stated that grants are universal in their countries.
- Financial support for international students (both EU and Non-EU) is practically available much less than for local students.
- There are support schemes for students with disabilities/ chronical illnesses in almost 2/3 of the countries. For mature students, they exist only in less than in 1/3 of the countries.
- Although there are various forms of financial support specially to cover their living costs, students in only one country (Cyprus) are satisfied with the level of this support to adequately cover living costs.

IV ALTERNATIVE FINANCING

Higher education institutions opt for financial returns mostly from their core academic activities of teaching and research.

Student unions are convinced that faculty tie-ups, sponsorships and research provided for a fee are most harmful to maintain the role of and the public responsibility for higher education.

4.1 Introduction

Financing of higher education is conceived to be of central importance for the creation and dissemination of knowledge and research. At the same time, the quality, accessibility and form of higher education is highly dependent on the way it is financed. ESU strongly believes that the type of society one strives for should be reflected in the financing mechanisms of higher education.

Although financing systems in Europe are very diverse, they still contain particular common characteristics that separate them clearly from other systems in the world. The European approach is characterised by its treatment of higher education as one of the fundamental public responsibilities. For these reasons, ESU has continuously pleaded for a strong commitment of governments to the funding of higher education and promoted financing mechanisms that ensure open and inclusive higher education systems. ESU also stressed the need for a stronger diversification of funding for higher education and looked into appropriate mechanisms.

methodical approach

While there exists a basic understanding in the Lisbon Strategy that more money has to be invested in higher education and research in order for it to have the capacities to promote innovation and competitiveness, it is less obvious where the money should come from. Many Member States see three essential options: doing nothing, increasing public funding or private contributions. The survey therefore looked into the national strategies to fostering a diversification of funding streams, and evaluated the student opinion on these strategies.

This was done on the basis of European policy suggestions on financing higher education in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy. Based on the National Reports from 2005, as well as on a study conducted by the European Commission on »The Financing of Higher Education in Europe« (European Commission 2004), we analysed national actions towards a stronger diversification of higher education funding.

We compared the findings from this analysis with the findings from the survey of ESU's member unions in order to see which alternative methods of funding are perceived as relevant sources of income for higher education. Furthermore, we were interested, which sources of funding are considered most harmful by student unions to maintaining the role of and public responsibility for higher education.

4.2 Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

The European Commission has repeatedly suggested the introduction of mechanisms to increase the private funding for higher education and research:

> *For the future, it seems likely that the bulk of resources needed to close the funding gap will have to come from non-public sources. (European Commission 2006a: 4)*

This rests upon the firm belief that it would be a »given that it is highly unlikely that additional public funding can alone make up the growing shortfall.« (European Commission 2003: 12) For this reason, the European Commission called upon countries to investigate ways of diversifying the income of higher education institutions, which would enable them to meet the Barcelona target of 3% GDP expenditure in research.

ESU HAS CONTINUOUSLY PLEADED FOR A STRONG COMMITMENT OF GOVERNMENTS TO THE FUNDING OF HIGHER EDUCATION

While the European Commission counts four main sources of university income, namely public funding, private donations, selling of services and contributions from students (European Commission 2003: 13), neither the European Commission, nor the EU Member States have expanded these sources with concrete mechanisms of alternative funding.

Instead, the focus of the European Commission mainly rests on the last mentioned source of university income: contributions from students (see chapter 3 on tuition fees and student support).

4.3 Actions taken on the national level

A study on »The Financing of Higher Education in Europe« commissioned by the European Commission, that looks into policy initiatives by EU Member States, concludes that:

> *In general, for the old EU Member States as a whole, there is no overall discernable trend towards diversification of sources of funding except for a few countries such as the UK. Results of the study indicate that less than 15 percent*

of innovative mechanisms introduced by the EU Member States are aimed at diversification of funding sources. Also, the study shows that there are hardly any innovative mechanisms, which are not already in existence somewhere else. This appears to show that there is a tendency to be cautious in introducing new mechanisms, preferring to opt for those ones which have been tried and tested elsewhere. ***(European Commission 2004: 6f)***

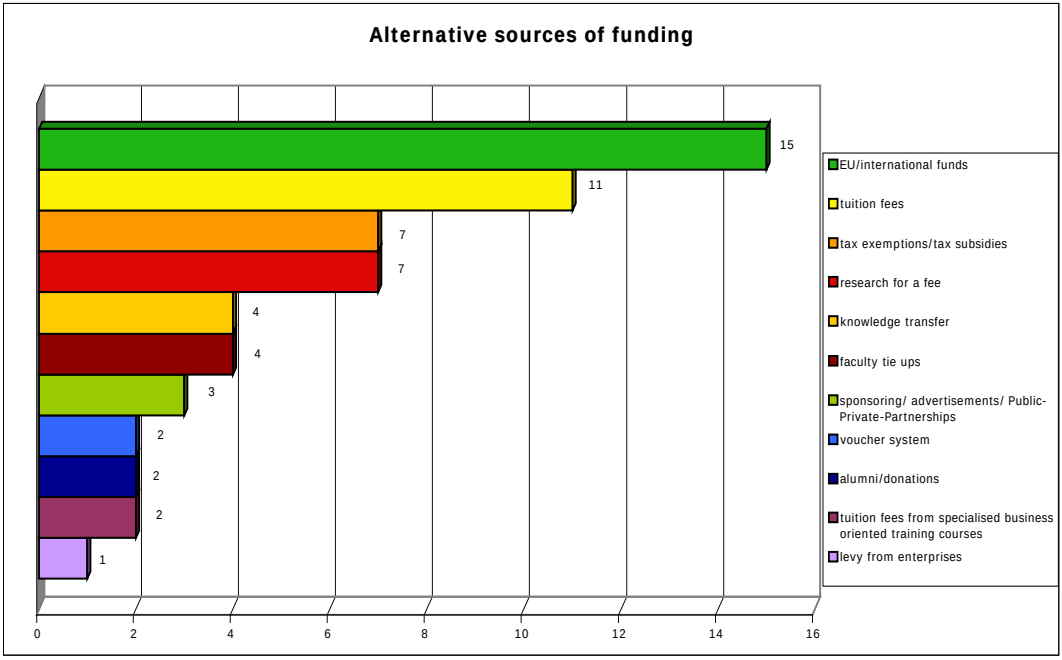


Fig. 17: Alternative funding methods by source according to National Reports 2005

The alternative funding souces that were developed and promoted in the different countries (as outlined in their National Reports 2005), contain mainly EU and international funds, as well as tuition fees, both from the general student population as well as specifically for Non-EU students, mature students or specific levels of higher education (see Fig. 17 and table 07 in the annex). Concepts of diversifying the income by way of »selling services« (European Commission 2003) or involving enterprises and the society at large in the funding of higher education are marginal. They include research commissions and incentives to foster the knowledge transfer between higher education and research institutions

to the economic environment, to tax incentives and levies from enterprises (see Fig. 17 and table 07 in the annex).

Considering the reforms in higher education in the past 2 years, one can safely say that tution fees have even grown in importance as a source of alternative financing. Apart from the social implications of this development, this means that alternative means of funding have not been fully explored. This could be rooted in the lack of good practise, as pointed out above by the study on »The Financing of Higher Education in Europe« (see European Commission 2004: 7). One might also conclude that establishing incentives to convince enterprises and the society at large to invest in higher education and research is much more challenging, politically less opportune and less reliable as an income source compared to charging students.

4.4 Student opinion

By and large student unions in Europe don't feel that the Lisbon Strategy has motivated their higher education institutions to diversify their funding sources (see Fig. 18). More than a quarter of the respondents were unsure whether this was the case and a third said their higher education institutions have not been motivated to do so. This is in line with both the findings from the study commissioned by the European Commission in 2004 as well as the initiatives developed and promoted by the different countries.

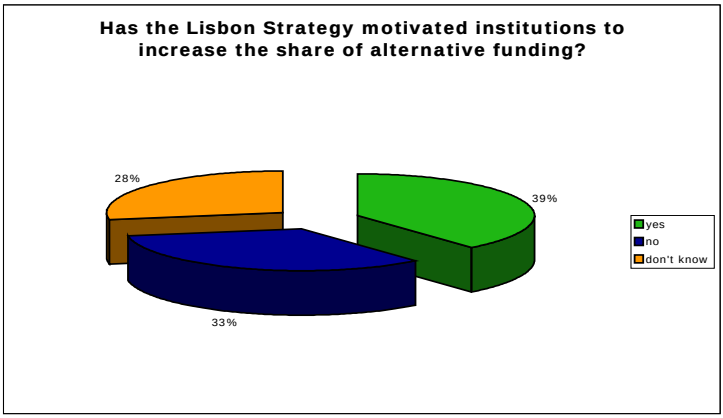


Fig. 18: Initiatives of higher education institutions to increase alternative funding

Student unions reported that the most common and financially most relevant alternative funding schemes developed by higher education institutions are: research provided for a fee, tuition fees from specialised business-oriented training courses and sponsorships (see Fig. 19). Apparently higher education institutions opt for financial returns mostly from their core academic activities of teaching and research rather than generating income from for example facilities management, benefiting from returns of financial investments, marketing their research findings and developing them into profitable products or reaching out to their environement with activities such as consultancy.

good and bad practices

Some of these funding mechanisms however were mentioned as good practise by student unions to generate income for higher education institutions. The national union of students in Ireland and a number of other national unions of students for example stated, that they »have seen good practice where an institution rents out unused space on campus out of term time.« At the same time also bad practise was reported in this respect. The national union of students in Serbia SUS mentioned, that »during the summer period students are obliged to leave their dorms and campuses, so that the higher education institution authorities could rent these rooms at commercial rate.« Also the national union of students in Romania criticised that higher education institutions were renting out facilities, while the facilities available for teaching and research were already insufficient.

Another source of good practise mentioned by student unions was knowledge transfer. The national union of students in Hungary HÖOK and one of the national unions of students in Poland PSRP stated that several higher education institutions have developed competence centers or centers for technology transfer, which enable them to receive external research funding, develop research results into commercially relevant outcomes and also »provide possibilities for students to get practical knowledge and experience with the newest technologies.«

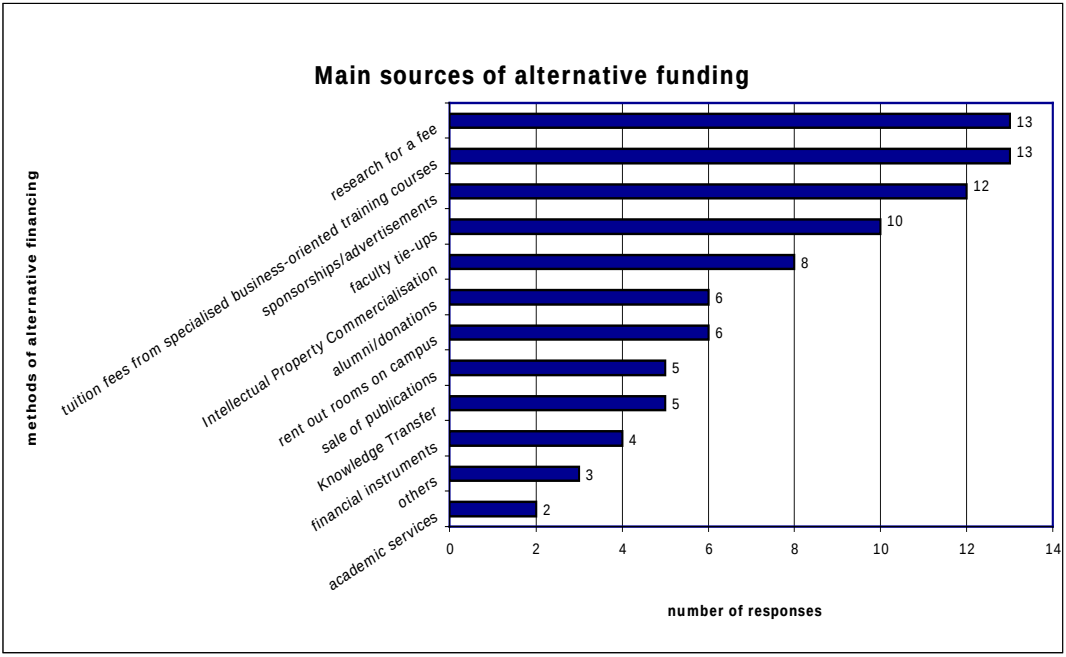


Fig. 19: Main sources of alternative funding of higher education institutions according to student unions

European and international funds, although they seem to be an important source of funding of higher education on the national level, are not sought directly by the higher education institutions, but are distributed through the national budgets. While good examples of funding higher education have been mentioned also by some of ESU's member unions, e.g. by the national union of students in Malta KSU for funding ICT infrastructure of higher education institutions, they don't materialise evenly in all countries and at all higher education institutions. Consequently the responses from our student survey are very much in line with the findings from the National Reports 2005, which also marked tuition fees and research for a fee among the major sources of alternative income for higher education institutions.

harmful financing mechanisms

In addition to looking into the most common sources of alternative funding of higher education institutions in Europe, the survey also focused on the student view regarding the most harmful alternative funding mechanisms (see Fig. 20). Student unions felt that faculty tie-ups, sponsorships/ advertisements and

research provided for a fee were most harmful to maintain the role of and the public responsibility for higher education. These concerns were based mostly around the overall aim to maintain the integrity and autonomy of teaching and research, which are perceived as a core responsibility of higher education. The Slovenian national union of students SSU expressed concerns that alternative funding would exert »too much influence on independence of research« and result in »less autonomy of teaching.« Also one of the national unions of students in Bulgaria UBS expressed their concern about the commercialization of research, and the national union of students in Ireland USI stated, that in some cases »research [...] is only published if it agrees with the opinions of the corporate sponsorship.«

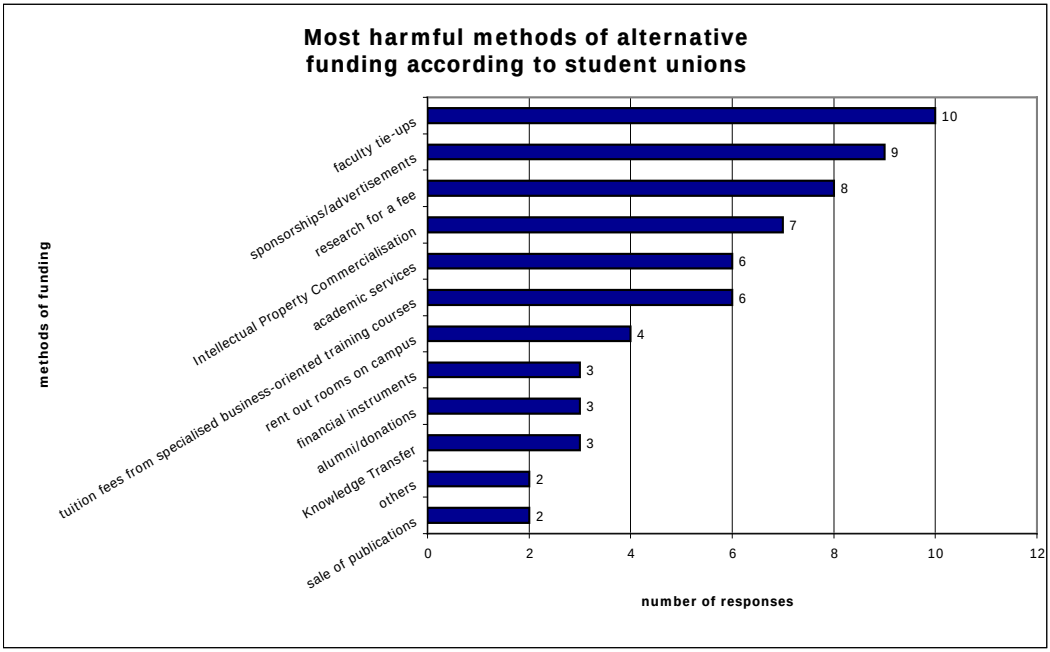


Fig. 20: Most harmful methods of alternative funding of higher education according to student unions

Apart from concerns about the autonomy of teaching and research, one of the national union of students in the Netherlands LSVb expressed concern about sponsorships, advertisement and commercial presence of enterprises at higher education institutions. They reported bad practise of higher education institutions signing contracts with companies, which granted them exclusive rights to sell certain goods, for example books, on campus.

Tuition fees

Although general tuition fees for students were not an expressed category in the questionnaire apart from fees for business-oriented courses, a large number of respondents also expressed concerns about various forms of charging students in this section of the questionnaire.

FACULTY TIE-UPS, SPONSORSHIPS AND RESEARCH PROVIDED FOR A FEE ARE PERCEIVED AS MOST HARMFUL TO MAINTAIN THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

The national union of students in Belgium (Flemish community) mentioned in this regard »programs set up in English that have to attract foreign students, who pay lots of tuition.« Apart from using foreign students as an income source, they mentioned that »the programs are in many cases not very high in quality.«

Both the national union of students in Germany fzs as well as one of the national unions of students in Poland PSRP reported tuition fees for specific business-oriented Master courses, which are overestimated compared to the running costs of the programme, and led to an increased implementation of exactly these programmes on the expense of general non-fee Master courses.

But student unions also reported a number of additional charges collected from students by higher education institutions. The national union of students in Estonia reported registration and credit point transfer fees, while the national union of students in Slovakia reported leaving exam fees and stated that corruption remains a problem in higher education, that creates financial obstacles for students.

4.5 Conclusions

- Student unions in Europe don't think that the Lisbon Strategy has motivated their higher education institutions to diversify their funding sources.
- The most common and financially most relevant alternative funding schemes developed by higher education institutions are research provided for a fee, tuition fees from specialised business-oriented training courses and sponsorships. These findings are in line with those from the National Reports 2005, which also marked tuition fees and research for a fee among the major sources of alternative income for higher education institutions.
- Higher education institutions opt for financial returns mostly from their core academic activities of teaching and research rather than generating income from for example facilities management, benefiting

from returns of financial investments, marketing their research findings and developing them into profitable products or reaching out to their environement with activities such as consultancy.

- Student unions are convinced that faculty tie-ups, sponsorships/ advertisements and research provided for a fee are most harmful to maintain the role of and the public responsibility for higher education. These concerns were based on the aim to maintain the integrity and autonomy of teaching and research.

STUDENT UNIONS REPORTED A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL CHARGES COLLECTED FROM STUDENTS

- Although general tuition fees for students were not an expressed category in the questionnaire apart from fees for business-oriented courses, a large number of student unions also expressed concerns about various forms of charging students in order to generate income.

V GOVERNANCE AND EXCELLENCE

Business influence in higher education might result in narrow and specific programs, rather than considering the long-term needs of societies. Student unions also feared that external influence might limit the democratic rights of the academic community and pose a threat to the autonomy of teaching and research.

5.1 Introduction

In most countries, the governance and organization of higher education institutions has changed over the last 10 years, with new legislation being set up by governments in order to give all the institutions the conditions to fully achieve 'excellence' in education and research 'on the market in a knowledge-based economy'.

methodical approach

This chapter aims at assessing the current status of excellence and governance in higher education institutions in the different ESU member countries by first looking at the agenda set by the European Commission, and secondly analysing the opinion of student unions of the current changes

Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

In 2003, the European Commission identified improving the excellence of higher education institutions as a key importance in order to achieve economic competitiveness of the European Union (European Commission 2003: 2), since their »existing approaches to financing, governance and quality are proving inadequate to meet the challenge of what has become a global market for academics, students and knowledge itself.« (European Commission 2005a: 24) To support higher education institutions in their attempts to attain excellence, the Commission identified effective and efficient management structures and practises, as well as an improved responsiveness to the various needs of society and industry as central. (European Commission 2003: 17; European Commission 2005a: 24) Thus the ability to attain excellence is very closely connected to the governance of higher education institutions. More specifically, the European Commission advocates for a decrease in public »overregulation«, which they perceive as the most limiting factor for higher education institutions to be responsive to external needs. (European Commission 2005c: 4) Instead there should be a

> *fundamentally new type of arrangement (or »contract«) with society, whereby they are responsible and accountable for their programmes, staff and resources, while public authorities focus on the strategic orientation of the system as a whole. (ibid: 7)*

Concretely the European Commission calls for higher education institutions to be granted the autonomy to set their own specific priorities, identify areas of research, teaching and services, define the curricular of courses and professionally manage their facilities, financial resources and external communication (ibid: 7-8). To better reflect and respond to the needs of society, higher education institutions should include external representatives in their governance structures, and Member States should

> *build up and reward management and leadership capacity within universities. This could be done by setting up national bodies dedicated to university management and leadership training, which could learn from those already existing. (ibid: 6)*

But it is not only autonomy in governance, which enables higher education institutions to attain excellence. Also an

> *increased competition, combined with more mobility and further concentration of resources, should enable universities and their partners in industry to offer a more open and challenging working environment to the most talented students and researchers, thereby making them more attractive to Europeans and non-Europeans alike. (ibid: 9).*

According to the European Commission, the financing of higher education institutions is a central element in increasing the competition between them.

> *Each country should therefore strike the right balance between core, competitive and outcome-based funding (underpinned by robust quality assurance) for higher education and university-based research. Competitive funding should be based on institutional evaluation systems and on diversified performance indicators with clearly defined targets and indicators supported by international benchmarking for both inputs and economic and societal outputs. (ibid: 8)*

> *Consequently the European Commission suggests the concentration of political efforts on few institutions as pillars of excellence and »flagships«, such as the European Institute of Technology, which will be »showing the value of modernised approach and mode of governance and partnership with business.« (ibid: 11)*

2.2 Governance of higher education: student opinion

Including business representatives in governing bodies

One of the trends in governmental is an increase in the inclusion of externals from the non-academic society in higher education institutions. The majority of national unions of students reported this for all (51%) or some (19%) higher education institutions. This development seems to be more pronounced in public (65% of the respondents stated such developments) than in private (43% of the respondents stated such developments) higher education institutions. However the reason for the more intense action in the area of public higher education might also be connected to already existing involvement of externals in private higher education. Respondents also indicated that externals are more frequently involved in governance of universities (49%) than in polytechnics (43%). This means that in half of the responding countries, external stakeholders are included in higher education institutions.

The motivation for their inclusion is very much in line with EU policy suggestions regarding governance of higher education institutions. ESU member unions stated that governance of higher education institutions was opened to external representation in order to increase the responsiveness to the societal and labour market needs (BE nl, BG, CH, DK, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, GE, IT, LT, MT, PL), to increase the autonomy of higher education institutions (IS) while ensuring effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of higher education institutions management (BG, DE, EE, FI, IE, PL, UK-SCT), to increase external funding (HU, SI) and improve the quality of higher education (NO).

FINANCING IS A TOOL FOR INCREASING COMPETITION BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The competences of the externals can be categorised in advisory and decision-making competences. In the majority of countries, external representatives are granted decision-making powers on issues such as finances (BG, CH, DK, IS, LT, NE, PL, UK) or strategic planning (CH, DE, DK, FI, LT, NE, PL). In considerably fewer countries, the powers of external representatives are limited to advisory competencies in these fields (BE nl, EE, GE, HU, SI).

Positive effects and concerns

Student unions see positive and negative effects to such inclusion of externals in higher education governance. They are welcoming the opening of higher education institutions to society and its involvement in the development of higher education, which they consider as crucial for increasing employability and the relevance of research findings. Closely connected to this is the belief that external

input might contribute to the improvement of the quality of higher education. And finally, student unions believe that the involvement of external representatives would improve the transparency and efficiency of higher education governance and expenditure.

However, the inclusion of externals also raises a number of concerns in students. A number of respondents fear that focusing on the students' employability might lead to a very narrow or short-sighted labour market focus on higher education and result in too specialized degrees (CH, DE, EE, NO, PL, SI). They also voiced that such a labour market focus will displace the social values of higher education and thus give rise to a commodification of education (DK, MT, RS).

Student unions also fear that, while a stronger involvement of society in higher education institutions might prevent them from becoming »ivory towers«, external influence might limit the rights of the academic community inside higher education institutions and pose a threat to the autonomy of teaching and research (CH, DE, DK, EE, FR, GE, IE, RS). Closely connected to this is the worry of student unions, that not enough qualified external representatives with expertise on higher education might be found and that their political appointment might render them as partial instead of independent representatives.

Furthermore, we asked the national unions of students, if they see a connection between the involvement of externals in higher education institutions and an increase in alternative financing sources. While about 2/3 of the respondents (62%) to this question did not perceive any relation between governance and alternative financing, a little less than a third (28%) of the respondents stated that the intention to raise external financing is an obvious reason why higher education institutions include external representatives in governing bodies (AT, BG, CH, DE, GE, HU, IT, MT, RO, SI, UK).

However the financial contribution might differ between countries. One of the national unions of students in Bulgaria for example mentioned that some of the externals created special funds and provided financial support to the study grants.

Involvement of externals and students in the design of study programs

Traditionally the development of study programs has been in the hands of the academic staff and students of higher education institutions. With the tendency of involving externals and/or employers in the governance of higher education institutions and with stressing an increase in the relevance of study programs to the needs of society, the survey inquired the involvement of employers, externals and students in the design of study programs.

It appears that in the vast majority of universities students are involved in the development of study programs with 73% of the respondents stating that they were either involved in all universities (54%) or at least some (19%). The rate of

involvement in polytechnic institutions is unfortunately lower. Here only 62% indicated that they were involved in all (43%) or some (19%) institutions. The figures regarding the involvement of employers are showing an opposite trend. While employers seem to be involved in about half of the responding countries either in all (22%) or some (27%) polytechnics, they are involved to a considerably lesser extent in universities. Only 41% of the responding unions stated that employers were involved in the development of study programs in all (14%) or some (27%) universities.

These findings indicate that, while universities are involving external actors more strongly in core academic activities, such as the development of academic programs, they also tend to emphasize the responsibility of the academic community for these activities much stronger than polytechnics. Polytechnics seem to embrace this tradition to a much lesser extent, but rather focus on outreaching activities to their environment, including employers' involvement in academic activities.

BUSINESS INFLUENCE AND THE FOCUS ON EMPLOYABILITY COULD LEAD TO A NARROW OR SHORT-SIGHTED APPROACH TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Link between governance and financing mechanisms

Since one of the policy suggestions by the European Commission in order to increase financial accountability of higher education institutions are performance agreements and an output-based funding system, the survey also inquired in the level of implementation of such instruments in national higher education systems.

The majority of national unions of students (54%) indicated that the governance of higher education institutions is increasingly linked to performance based financing models. The most common models of doing so are output-based funding mostly on the basis of graduates (DK, EE, FI, IT, NE, SI, RO), performance agreements or performance-based financing (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, FI, HU, NE, RO, UK-SCT). Criteria for performance-based financing include among others the number of graduates or doctorates, number of publications, amount of external funding and the number of female students/ professors, while performance agreements seem to be more specified objectives for an individual higher education institution with performance indicators such as degree targets, the resources needed to achieve them, monitoring and evaluation of target achievement, and the development targets.

These objectives and targets are reviewed and confirmed in annual performance negotiations. While in performance—based funding, the higher education institutions are influenced only indirectly regarding their measures to attain certain levels of performance, performance agreements are binding higher education institutions explicitly to a certain performance level and the way to achieve that.

Quality assurance processes and governance of higher education

European Commission policy also suggests a close connection between competitive and outcome-based funding, quality assurance and the governance of higher education institutions. In the survey we asked student unions what impact the relationship of these 3 areas has on national level.

The majority of the respondents stated that results of quality assurance affect mostly strategic planning (54% of the respondents mentioned such impact) and the funding of higher education institutions (46% of the respondents mentioned such impact). Notably most impact was reported regarding the consequences of results of accreditation procedures (BE, CH, FR, GE, NE, RS). Negative course accreditation in these countries leads to the closure of a program or the loss of government funding. However about a third of the respondents also felt that results of quality assurance had no impact on governance of higher education institutions at all (32% stated so). Thus the perception of student unions regarding the impact of quality assurance results on the funding and governance of higher education institutions seems to indicate, that the policy proposals by the European Commission are implemented in the majority of ESU member countries.

5.4 Excellence: student opinion

Access regulations

GOVERNANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IS INCREASINGLY LINKED TO PERFORMANCE BASED FINANCING MODELS

In a number of countries, access to higher education depends on students' performance in the previous level of education. According to the findings of the survey, selection mechanisms are a widespread mechanism to ensure a high level of qualification of students already at the entry level with 38% of the respondents stating they were implemented at every higher education institution, 16% stating they were implemented very widely and almost every 5th student union responding they were implemented widely.

Most student unions, which indicated that such access criteria are in place in their country, stated that higher education institutions are responsible for this selection process (76%), while governments also carry responsibility in about a third of the responding countries. This indicates that there are a number of countries with mixed responsibilities on this issue. Some countries also delegate this responsibility to non-governmental institutions, like for example in Ireland, where a central office is determining the requirements depending on the demand. Responsibilities are also split according to the level of higher education. In

Hungary, for example, the responsibility is split between the government (access to the bachelor level) and higher education institutions (access to the master).

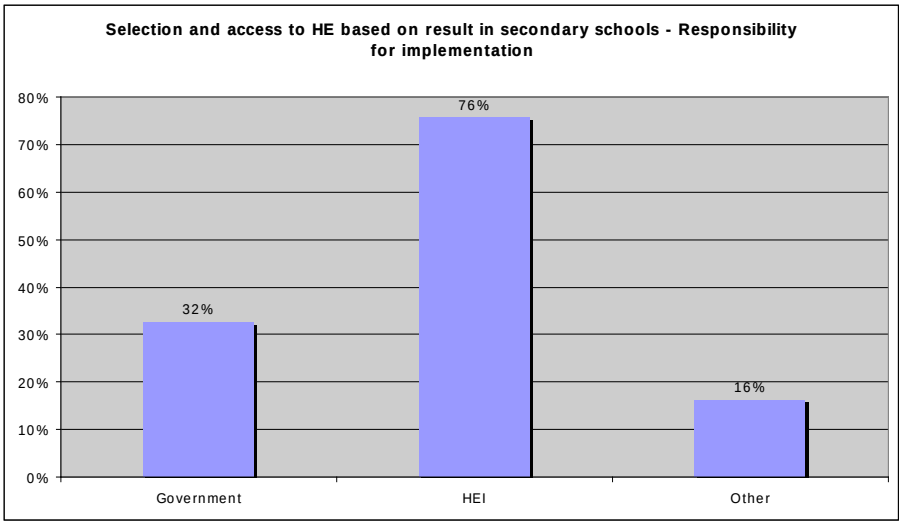


Fig. 21: Responsibility for the implementation of selection mechanisms for access to higher education based on the results of secondary education according to student unions

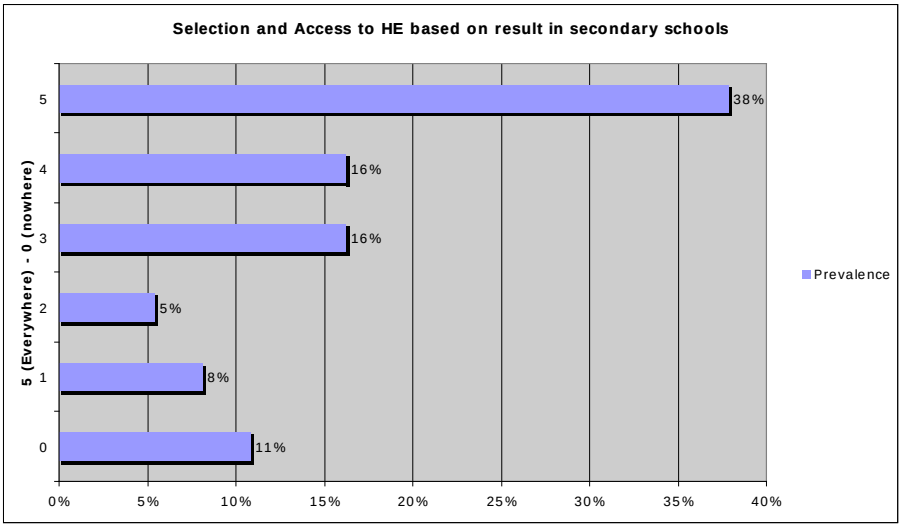


Fig. 22: Prevalence of selection mechanisms for access to higher education based on the results of secondary education according to student unions

Special grants for excellent students

Suggestions of the European Commission to foster excellence on an individual basis do not only focus on the selection of the »best brains« to higher education, but also on providing incentives for them to enrol in higher education as well as support socio-economically disadvantaged »excellent« students. For this reason, the survey also assessed the level of implementation of positive measures of outreach to »excellent« students.

The survey results indicate that selection is a much more common tool to ensure the access of excellent students to higher education, than providing incentives. Only every 5th respondent stated that incentive measures are implemented at every higher education institution, which is about half of the number of respondents stating that selection mechanisms are implemented everywhere. Less than every 10th student union stated that such incentives are implemented very widely and about every 5th respondent that special grants are widely available for »excellent« students.

Interestingly, the countries, which do have such measures in place everywhere, are (except for Norway and France) either new EU Member States, or Eastern European countries. These countries seem to combine both selection and incentive measures to ensure that the limited public funding for higher education

institutions is allocated strictly on a merit basis, disregarding the resulting perpetuation of inequalities in lower levels of education throughout higher levels of education. However keeping in mind the limited public support for students throughout Europe as indicated in the chapters on equality and access (chapter 2), as well as tuition fees and student support (chapter 3), it is not surprising that the majority of the respondents see these incentive measures as beneficial or rather beneficial (49%), while only 14% of the national unions of students considered them to be harmful. The national union of students in Spain, CREUP, comments that those grants are only to be regarded as beneficial, if general student support guarantees equal access.

SELECTING STUDENTS IS MORE COMMON THAN PROVIDING INCENTIVES

While selection mechanisms are mainly implemented by higher education institutions, financial incentives for »excellent« students are mainly implemented by governments (59%). However the answers of student unions again indicate that providing special grants for »excellent« students is a shared responsibility between the government, higher education institutions and other actors, since about half of the respondents also indicated that higher education institutions do take on responsibilities for providing such measures.

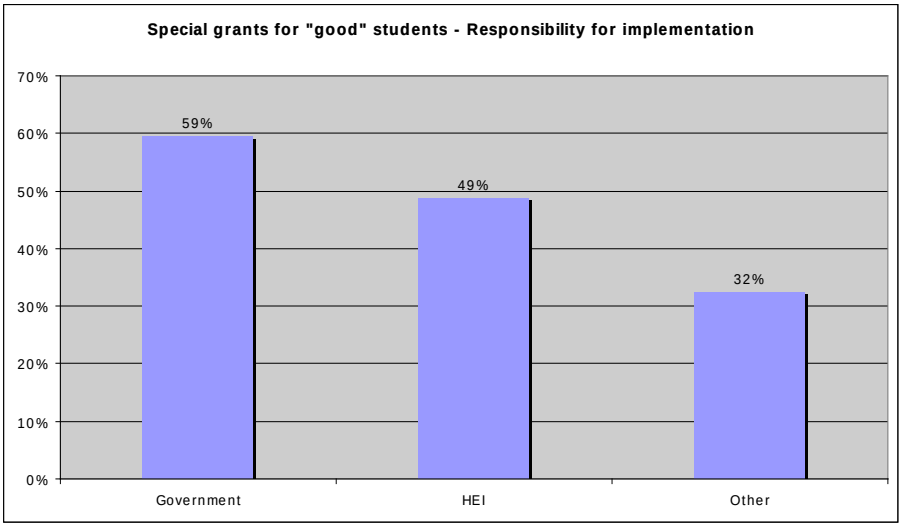


Fig. 24: Responsibility for the implementation of special grants for excellent students according to student unions

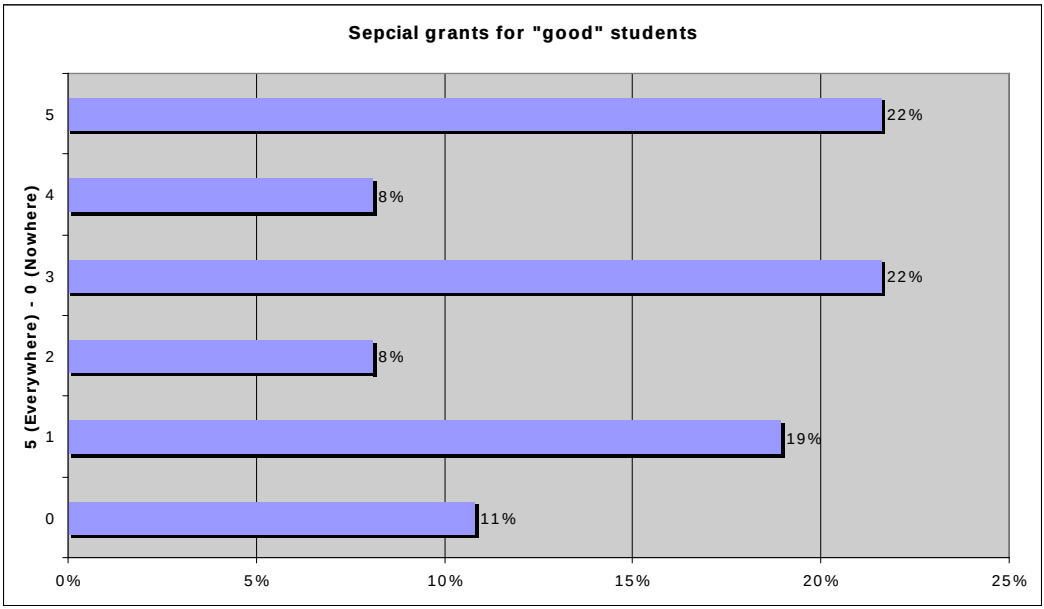


Fig. 25: Prevalence of special grants for excellent students according to student unions

5.5 Conclusions

- There is a clear trend in Europe to increasingly include external representatives in higher education institutions' governance structures. Either the externals are included in decision-making bodies, or they are included in advisory bodies. Their competences here are either in financial and management matters, and/or in matters of strategic development of higher education institutions.
- The national unions of students consider this both positive and negative. Positive: Higher education institutions are opening to the surrounding society and thereby create knowledge and skilled people, which benefits the whole society. Negative: Business influence might result in narrow and specific programs, rather than considering the long-term needs of societies. Student unions also feared that external influence might limit the democratic rights of the academic community inside higher education institutions and pose a threat to the autonomy of teaching and research.

- While about 2/3 of the national unions of students do not see any relation between governance and alternative financing, about a third of the respondents stated that raising external funding has been a clear intention to include external representatives in governing bodies of higher education institutions.
- The majority of national unions of students indicated that the governance of higher education institutions is increasingly linked to performance-based financing models. The most common models are output-based financing (mostly on the basis of graduates), performance agreements or performance-based financing. **The majority of the** respondents stated that results of quality assurance affect strategic planning and the financing of higher education institutions. **Most impact** was reported regarding the consequences of accreditation procedures (including the closure of a program or the loss of government funding).
- Most countries are not only implementing measures to select the »best brains« to higher education, but are also providing incentives for them to enrol in higher education, as well as support for socio-economically disadvantaged »excellent« students. However selection is a much more common tool to ensure access of excellent students to higher education, than providing incentives. While selection mechanisms are mainly implemented by higher education institutions, financial incentives for »excellent« students are mainly implemented by governments.

VI EMPLOYABILITY

The majority of students work during studies mainly to cover their living expenses. Increasing costs of living and studies will increase these financial pressures. Working students are dissatisfied with their increased workload and negatively affected in their academic performance.

Flexible learning paths are no reality in higher education systems. Most obstacles exist in choosing interdisciplinary study paths and changing the field of study between different cycles of studies. In addition the political aim to promote employability is not mirrored by an equal attention to transferable skills in curricula.

To meet labour market demand for graduates in math, science and technology more than a third of the countries give additional promotional and financial support to these fields. Students perceive the relationship between input and output of these activities to be rather low.

6.1 Introduction

Increasing employment rates is among the most important success criteria within the Lisbon strategy and was also strengthened in the re-launch of the strategy (European Commission 2007a: 7).

methodical approach

There are three different aspects through which employability is examined in this research. In the first aspect employability is viewed as a process of employment taken up by students alongside their studies. In the second aspect employability is viewed as one of the aims of Education and Training 2010 Work Programme, which should be achieved through quality education. And finally the third aspect of employability is connected to the needs of the labour market. For this reason it is analysing, whether the education sector is responding to these demands, for example through shaping curricula, designing study programs and promoting certain fields of study.

6.2 Policy on the European level in Lisbon

Employability is kept high on the agenda of the Lisbon strategy. Also the agenda for modernizing higher education includes ideas for increasing employability of education degrees:

> *Education and training are part of the problems, which are connected to socio-economic and demographic challenges in Europe. There is a growing need to improve the level of competencies and qualifications on the labour market. (European Commission 2005e: 3)*

European level initiatives in higher education, which aim at fostering employability are for example the Lifelong learning programme including the mobility programmes, setting key competencies for Lifelong Learning and the European Qualification framework of the European Union. However also a number of measures in the Bologna Process, such as the implementation of a 3-cycle system and a student-centered and learning outcome based approach, contribute to increasing employability. In the Lisbon strategy the key indicators to monitor the progress in employability are the level of educational attainment of the population and the level of adult skills.

Key indicators to monitor progress in employability in the Lisbon Strategy are the level of educational attainment of the population and of adult skills.

The European Commission has tackled the issue of key competencies through the development of a European reference framework for key competencies in lifelong learning (LLL). This framework sets forth 8 key competences, which member states should integrate into lifelong learning schemes as well as into compulsory education:

- Communication in the mother tongue.
- Communication in foreign languages.
- Mathematical competence and basic competencies in science and technology.
- Digital competence.
- Learning to learn.
- Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence.
- Entrepreneurship.
- Cultural expression. **(European Union 2006a)**

Each competence is defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude. Key competences, which include entrepreneurship, are the main determinants of an

individual's employability throughout life:

> *In order to overcome persistent mismatches between graduate qualifications and the needs of the labour market, university programmes should be structured to enhance directly the employability of the graduates and to offer broad support to the workforce more generally. [...] Credit-bearing internships in industry should be integrated into curricula. This applies to all levels of education, i.e., short cycle, Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes. [...] This should extent beyond the needs of the labour market to the stimulation of an entrepreneurial mindset amongst students and researchers. (European Commission 2006a: 7)*

Apart from rather professional skills, people also have to be equipped with skills to deal with increasing social and cultural diversity and it is essential to learn social and civic values such as citizenship, equality, tolerance and respect. (European Union 2006a: 1)

ENROLMENT IN AND EMPLOYABILITY OF MATHS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE GIVEN PRIORITY

When it comes to study orientation, the main focus is on the promotion of math, science and technology studies and students. The concrete target (benchmark) is to increase the number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology by at least 15%, with a simultaneous decrease in gender imbalance.

6.3 Employment during study period: Student opinion

Working during studies is already for a long time a common practice in European countries. Different reforms in higher education shall create an »open learning environment« (European Council 2002: 2) allowing for more flexibility and the possibility of different choices in study paths. Also side activities including employment shall be taken into consideration and shall be made possible to combine with studies. The motivation to work during studies can be associated with gaining valuable professional experience »through strengthening the link with working life.« (ibid: 2) Another important reason is also the socio-economic situation of students and the need for additional financial resources.

However if students' motivation to work is based purely on financial constraints, it is evident that it will negatively affected the learning process. ESU believes that a meaningful learning process can only be achieved, if students can take full advantage of education activities.

Thus, the aim of this research is to see:

- what is the motivation of students to work during studies;
- how many students are engaged in employment on each level of studies; and

- how students manage to combine studies and employment.

Motivation to work during studies

The EUROSTUDENT Report 2005 confirms that about half of the students in the majority of countries are employed during studies. (see Fig. 27) Most national unions of students answered that students are working in order to cover part of their living expenses and to gain some practical experience that is valuable for their job prospects (see Fig. 28). Financial reasons however are mentioned slightly more frequently as motivation than professional reasons. And in fact no student union mentioned that financial reasons were no factor at all in taking up employment, while 11% stated so in regard to the motivation to work for gaining professional experience (AT, FR, GE, LT, NL).

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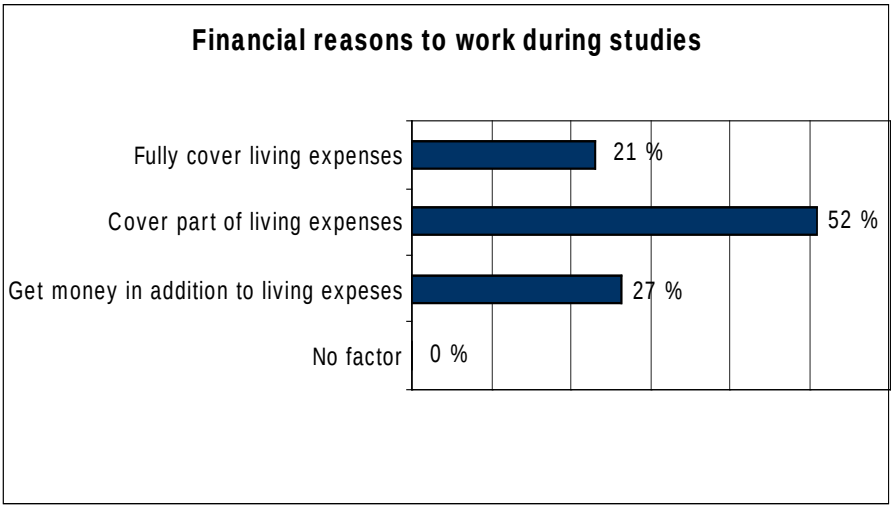


Fig. 27: Financial reasons to work during studies

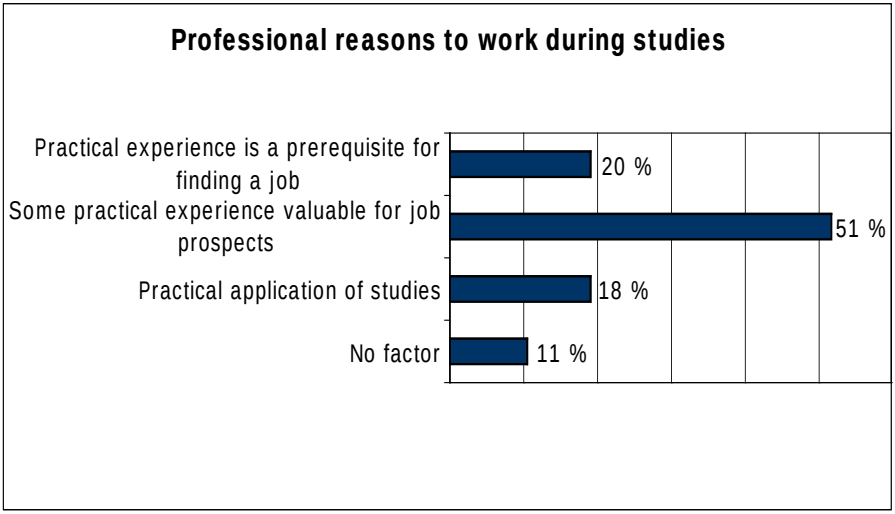


Fig. 28: Professional reasons to work during studies

Students' engagement in employment during studies to finance their studies

While countries with virtually all students taking up employment during their studies are relatively few, in the vast majority of countries employment is a regular part of students' life (see Fig. 29). 24 out of 30 national unions of students, i.e. 80% of all respondents, affirmed that students on all levels work to finance their studies (see Fig. 29). The necessity to work in order to finance ones' studies seems to be rooted in the lack in other forms of financial support and increasing expenses of studies. According to the student union responses the vast majority of students (73%) have to work to cover their living expenses either fully or in part. Less than a third of the countries stated that students work in order to gain financial means in addition to their living expenses. This however means that any increase in living expenses, e.g. tuition fees or other costs of living or studies, will also increase the financial pressures on students. This contradicts the argument tuition fees would »reinforce student motivation.« (European Commission 2006c: 8) In fact they will provide another push factor into employment and pull factor from pursuing ones' studies. Not only does this threaten the individual educational success, but at large also decreases the

ABOUT HALF OF THE STUDENTS IN THE MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES ARE EMPLOYED DURING STUDIES. FINANCIAL REASONS ARE THE MAIN FACTOR

efficiency of education systems.

If one looks at different levels of higher education, the number of students working to finance their studies increases with every level (see Fig. 30). This might be due to an increasing financial independence from parents, due to higher costs of higher levels of studies or depending on the legal regulation of the status in the different levels of higher education.

INCREASING LIVING AND STUDY RELATED COSTS, LIKE RAISING TUITION FEES, WILL INCREASE FINANCIAL PRESSURES ON STUDENTS

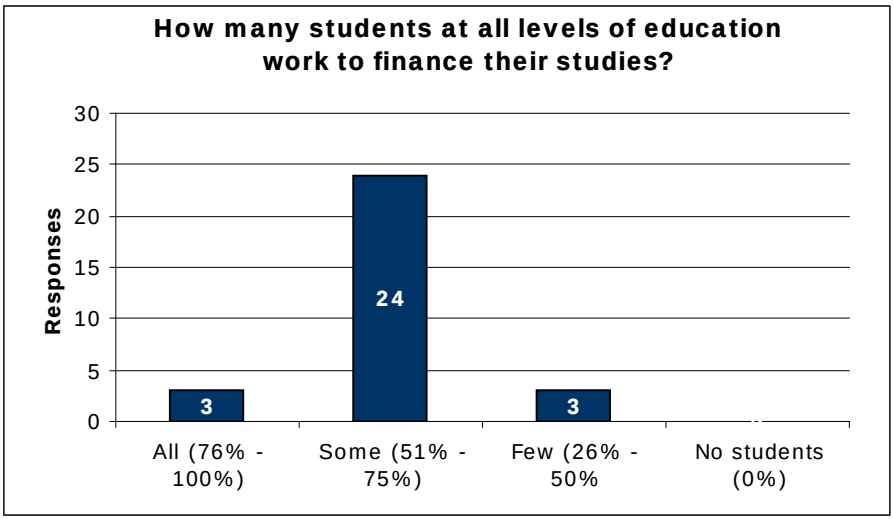


Fig. 29: How many students at all levels of education work to finance their studies?

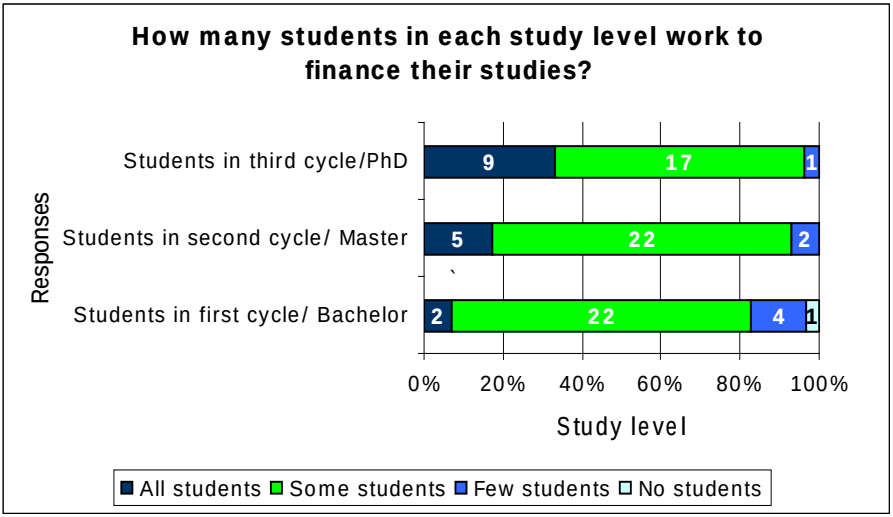


Fig. 30: How many students in each study level work to finance their studies?

Working during studies effect on learning process

Since working during studies definitely requires some time and workload, the impact on studies has to be kept in mind and thus has been examined in this study. Data from the EUROSTUDENT Report 2005 shows that in the majority of countries the relationship between students' job and their studies is weak (see Fig. 31). That means that the experience gained from employment mainly cannot be used in the process of studies allowing for some practical application of acquired knowledge. At the same time the overall workload to fulfill professional and academic duties is increased for students in employment. Figure 32 shows the students' assessment of their workload. Although the assessment of the degree of satisfaction vis-à-vis a certain amount of workload is very subjective or system-bound, it is evident that the level of dissatisfaction with workload exceeds the level of satisfaction.

STUDENTS IN EMPLOYMENT FACE AN INCREASED OVERALL WORKLOAD. THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS IS DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR WORKLOAD

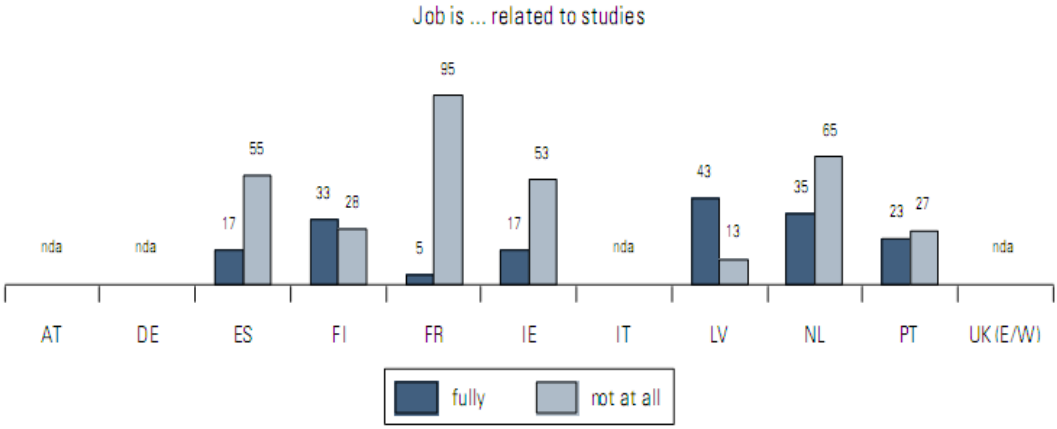


Fig. 31: Relation of job to studies (EUROSTUDENT Report 2005: 136)

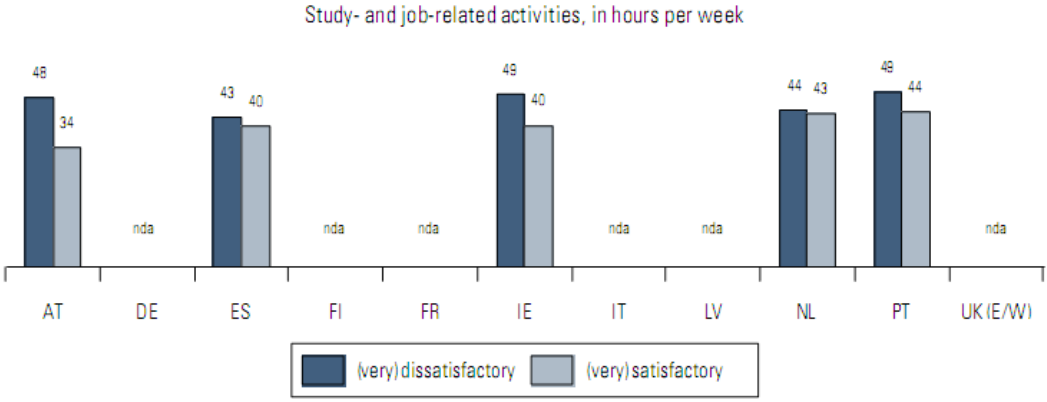


Fig. 32: Students' assessment of their workload by extent of study- and job-related activity (EUROSTUDENT Report 2005: 134)

6.3.1 Conclusions

- The majority of students in Europe work during their studies and the proportion of working students increases with the level of higher education. This might be due to a rise in financial independence from parents, higher costs of studies or legal regulations regarding their status.
- The majority of working students choose to take up employment for financial, not professional reasons. In fact data from EUROSTUDENT 2005 indicates that the link between students' employment and their studies is rather weak, which is contradicting the aim of Lisbon to strengthen the links with working life, gaining useful professional experience and reinforce learning outcomes.
- Working alongside studies is resulting in an increased overall workload of students, which is perceived as a burden. This kind of "employability" does not only threaten the individual educational success, at large it also decreases the efficiency of education systems.

6.4 Employability as the outcome of education: Student opinion

In the Policy on employability of 2006 ESU explains main trends in enhancing employabilty of higher education in the European policy and students' attitude towards them:

> *The trend towards the articulation of learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, most notable in the context of the development of qualifications frameworks and outcomes-based, student-centred models of education and higher education, is a welcome one and acts as a transformation of narrower, utilitarian notions of employability. [...]*
>
> *Certain reforms that have the enhancement of employability as an objective are supported by students. In particular, the restatement and modification of curricula (including transferable skills) in terms of clear learning objectives, based on the achievement of knowledge, skills and competence, is a priority. However, students should be assisted in recognising their own skills and competences (such as transferable skills – that is, skills developed in one context that are capable of application in another), as this is the key to sustainable employability. In connection with this, it is also necessary to couple counselling and guidance with the expansion of 'choice' and flexible paths. (ESU Policy on employability: 2006)*

Bearing this in mind, through this research we aim to see, to what extend practices are applied in European countries for flexible learning paths. In

addition the survey analysed, what learning outcomes are implemented in higher education system in order to raise the employability of education degrees. The perception of students of these developments has been given special focus.

Promoting flexible learning paths in higher education

A vast majority of national unions of students responded that there are obstacles to flexible learning paths, i.e. the possibility to change field of study between study cycles (95% of all responses), to choose interdisciplinary study paths (90% of all responses) and to change the orientation of studies to be applied or research focused between study cycles (87% of all responses). Only national unions of students from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Spain, United Kingdom and Scotland stated that there were no obstacles for students in their country at least once out of the abovementioned 3. As is visible in the Figure 33, most obstacles exist in choosing interdisciplinary study paths and changing the field of study between different cycles of studies.

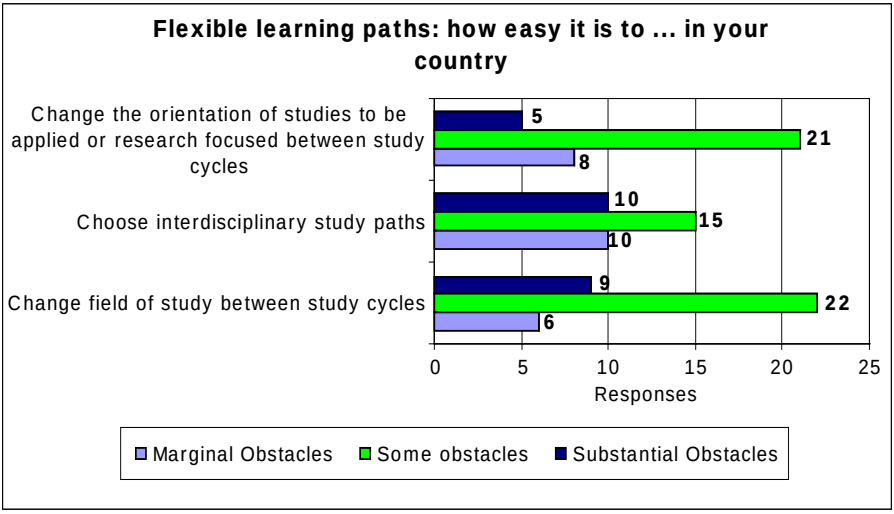


Fig. 33: Possibilities for flexible learning paths according to student unions

Obtaining skills important for employability

Transferable skills can be applied equally from one area/job to another and thus are essential elements for the labour market as well as other life situations. Therefore we asked national unions of students, how well skills that are obtained in a study programme can be applied in another area and whether in their higher education systems attention was paid to this objective. In general student unions felt that transferable skills were given some sort of attention in their countries, with 2 unions stating it was substantial, 17 responding it received some and 16 stating marginal attention was paid (see Fig. 34). However, especially keeping in mind the latter, these figures show that the level of attention is rather unsatisfactory. And in fact 4 national unions of students even felt that no attention is paid at all to this objective in their national higher education system.

MOST OBSTACLES EXIST IN CHOOSING INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY PATHS AND CHANGING THE FIELD OF STUDY BETWEEN DIFFERENT CYCLES OF STUDIES

The lack of attention to transferable skills development becomes even more apparent if one looks more closely at particular transferable skills. Problem solving skills and research/analytical skills are the basis for creative thinking and can be applied equally in all areas. On average, every tenth national union of students answered that substantial attention is paid in study programmes in their national higher education system to obtain these skills, and these were the best results among all proposed options of skills.

Even less attention is paid to obtaining the ability to work in teams, putting learning within an ethical context as well as to skills for active citizenship. Although these skills are important for social and civic competencies, student unions stated more often than on any of the other items that higher education systems were not giving these skills any attention – respectively 5 and 10 out of 38 answers and 11 out of 39 answers.

Attention to skills, which are connected to the ability of an individual to turn ideas into action – obtaining leadership and entrepreneurial skills, is surprisingly also very limited according to national unions of students. None of the national unions of students confirmed that substantial attention is paid to entrepreneurial skills in their countries – one of the prerequisite to develop innovations and knowledge transfer between research and industry. Also only 2 national unions of students confirmed that substantial attention is paid to career guidance of students.

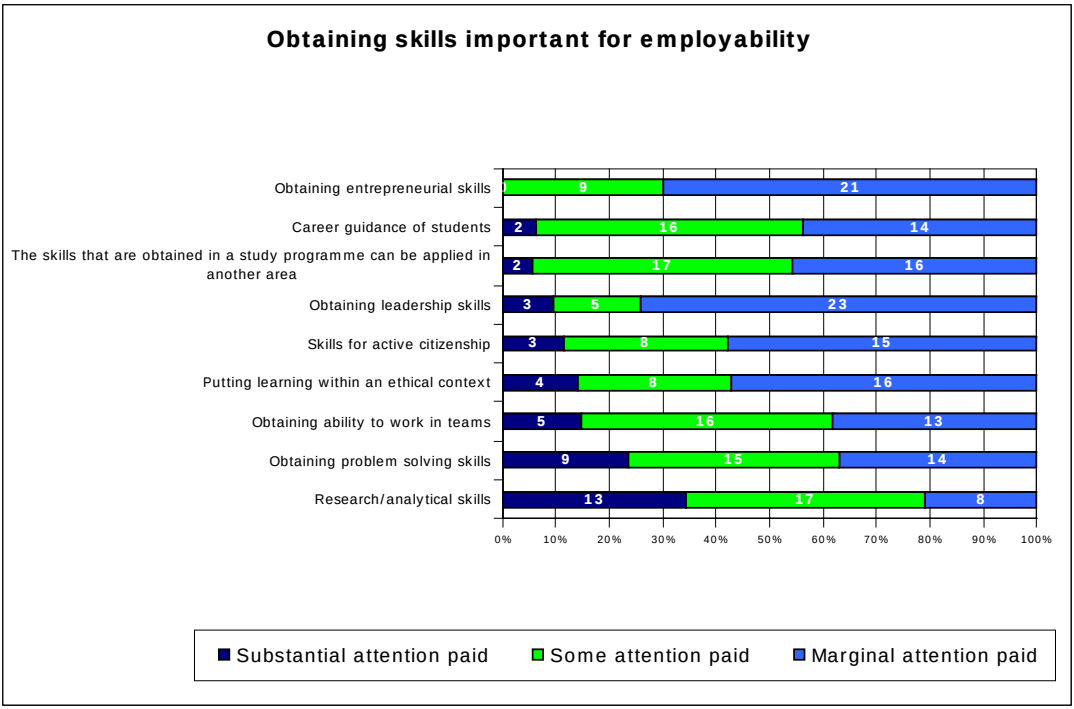


Fig. 34: Attention given in higher education to obtaining skills important for employability according to student unions

6.4.1 Conclusions

- There are significant obstacles to flexible learning paths in most ESU member countries.
- On average, there is no substantial attention paid to transferable, social and civic as well as to leadership and entrepreneurial skills in higher education study programmes of ESU member countries.
- In practice, career guidance for higher education students is not well developed in ESU member countries.
- Putting learning into an ethical context and obtaining skills for active citizenship are the areas, which receive least attention in ESU member countries.

THE LEVEL OF ATTENTION PAID TO TRANSFERABLE SKILLS IS UNSATISFACTORY

6.5 Employability as a factor for study changes: Student opinion

Since the Lisbon strategy in its essence is based on economic goals, to achieve them in the most effective way the need for professionals or particular areas is acknowledged in its education agenda. This need can be satisfied either through attracting particular individuals from other countries or through educating the necessary professionals. Students can be attracted to these fields of study, for example by improving the learning environment or through financial incentives. ESU welcomes any improvements in the quality and accessibility of studies, but rejects marketing of study programs. ESU also criticizes support of certain fields of studies on the expense of others, which don't contribute to achieving economic goals. Some of these studies, especially humanities, are frequently associated with cultural, artistic, intercultural, ethical and other values that are so important in democratic and diverse societies.

SUPPORT OF CERTAIN FIELDS OF STUDIES MUST NOT RESULT IN NEGLECT OF OTHERS

Therefore we are looking at the trend in our member countries, whether certain fields of study are promoted, how they are promoted and whether this is effective in terms of achieving the aims of these promotional initiatives. The study also analysed the effect of these promotional activitires on other fields of studies.

promotion of study fields

Almost half of the respondents stated that their national governments do not promote certain fields of studies. However 33% of all national unions of students answered that certain study fields are supported through allocated additional financial means and 36% through promotional support. (see Fig. 35)

As a promotional method the national union of students from Iceland mentioned allocating additional funding for private higher education institutions (teaching mainly business, law, computer science, economics and engineering) and additional loans for students of these institutions to pay tuition fees. The public universities react to this by moving money from fields where there is no competition (humanities, languages, social sciences etc.) and investing more into the fields that have competition.

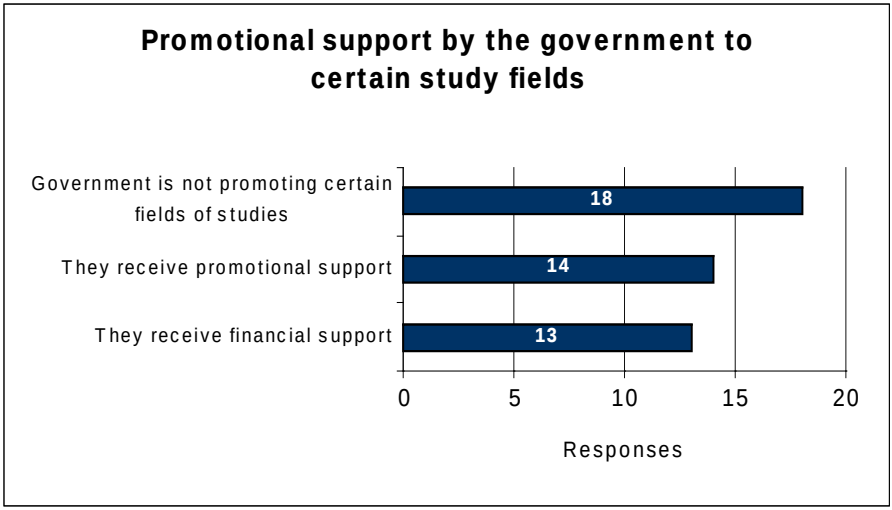


Fig. 35: Promotional support by the government to certain study fields

The majority of those national unions of students, which answered positively about promotion of certain fields of studies in their countries, confirmed that studies of engineering, hard sciences, technology and mathematics are promoted the most. Less frequently mentioned were informatics, medicine and biotechnology, law, economics, teaching and nursing studies. The opinion on the effectiveness of these promotion activities varies a lot. While student unions in France and Latvia consider them very effective, student unions in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Cyprus believe they are not effective. However the majority of the national unions of students believe they are not effective, since less than half of them confirmed that these promotional initiatives are very effective or effective (see Fig. 36). Concretely 48% of the respondents confirmed that they are effective or very effective in terms of influencing student enrolments. 39% stated they are effective in terms of meeting labour market needs for graduates in the supported subject areas. These figures on the perceived effects of these promotional activities by student unions show, that the relationship between input of the government and actual output in achieving the mentioned goals is relatively weak.

IN MORE THAN A THIRD OF THE COUNTRIES CERTAIN FIELDS OF STUDIES RECEIVE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL OR PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT

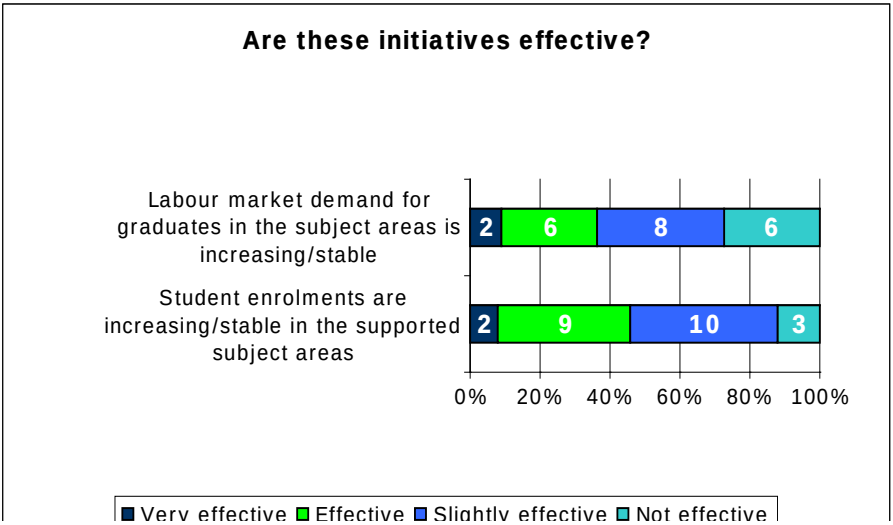


Fig. 36: Are these promotional initiatives effective?

6.5.1 Conclusions

- In more than half of ESU member countries governments promote certain study fields. In approximately a third of ESU member countries these fields of studies are supported by additional financial means as well as by promotional support.

STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INPUT AND OUTPUT OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO BE WEAK

- The most frequently promoted fields in Europe are engineering, hard sciences, technology and mathematics and to a lesser extend– Information and Communication Technology and computer studies, medicine and biotechnology, law and justice, economics and business, teaching and nursing studies.
- On average promotional activities in terms of increasing enrollment rates and influencing labour market demand for the promoted subject areas are slightly effective to effective«, which means that the relationship between the input of the government and the actual output in achieving goals is relatively weak.

VII ATTRACTIVENESS

To prevent developments of unbalanced mobility, countries need to develop good and effective measures to retain skilled individuals and share this good practise, while at the same time keeping up the positive effects of mobility.

7.1 Introduction

Mobility benefits the individual and its employability as well as societies and the labour market – economically spoken, this accounts at least for the countries where mobile individuals decide to stay and work. For this reason all countries will always aim to attract educated individuals, while trying to prevent the loss of them.

UNBALANCED MOBILITY CAN CAUSE POLITICAL TENSION

The phenomenon of unbalanced mobility first started out as a consequence of the physical movement of people for a number of personal, historical, geographical, political and social reasons. Opportunities for the mobility of individuals have consistently increased, in such a way that we now evidence a more elaborate concept of mobility of skilled individuals. Nowadays unbalanced mobility also occurs due to deliberate efforts by relevant authorities, in their attempt to create and shape areas of knowledge. Unbalanced mobility results in either brain gain or brain drain, and in this respect inevitably has an impact on higher education. ESU has continuously promoted the positive implications of student mobility, however also pointed out negative implications, namely unbalanced mobility and brain drain from the less “developed” regions in the world.

The circumstance that some countries are more capable to attract students than others is the basis for unbalanced mobility. This capability may result in disparities of regional development both within the European Union as well as between EU- and Non-EU countries. This carries the potential for political tension if adequate compensation or means for balancing mobility are not properly considered and implemented.

methodic approach

The research and survey therefore looked into motivations at the European level for increasing inward and outward mobility of students, analysed the mobility streams in Europe and reasons for imbalances in mobility streams between

countries. The survey then looked into national strategies to counterbalance such imbalances and asked student unions to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies from the student perspective. It also asked student unions about push and pull factors for students to leave or come to their country.

7.2 Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

Communications from the European Commission outline four problems for imbalanced mobility from EU Member States to other countries. Firstly, they name the lack in quality and business-orientation of higher education. »If universities are to become more attractive locally and globally, profound curricular revision is required—not just to ensure the highest level of academic content, but also to respond to the changing needs of labour markets.« (European Commission 2005c: 5) This problem is closely connected to the second challenge faced by European higher education according to the European Commission, which is the global competition for skilled individuals:

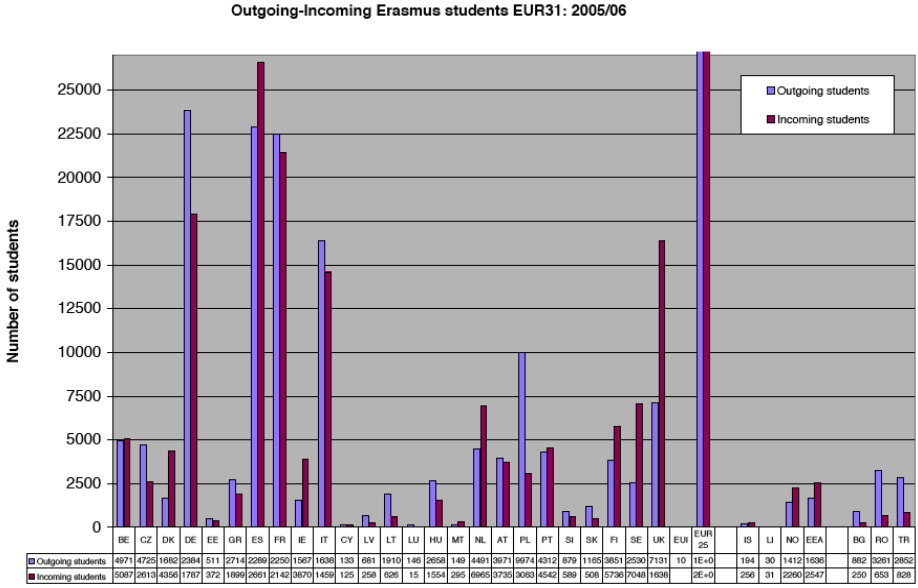
> *European universities are functioning in an increasingly ‚globalised' environment and find themselves competing with universities of the other continents, particularly American universities, when it comes to attracting and keeping the best talent from all over the world. […] The Union will also step up support to enhance the attractiveness of European universities through action to support mobility under the Sixth Framework Programme, which will enable over 400 researchers and doctoral students from third countries to come to European universities between 2003 and 2006, and under the ‚Erasmus World' initiative. (European Commission 2003: 21)*

The third challenge named by the Commission is that higher education institutions are ill equipped to take action to attract and retain skilled individuals, since they lack autonomy in their governance. This dependence on governmental policy hinders them, according to the European Commission, to compete »over talent, prestige and resources.« (European Commission 2005c: 4) Lastly it is not only the lack of autonomy granted to higher education institutions by governments that provides for problems to attract and retain skilled individuals. Also the visa and work permission regimes and the administrative procedures connected to them cause countries to close their borders to them (see European Commission 2006a: 10).

THE EU WANTS UNIVERSITIES TO COMPETE OVER TALENT, PRESTIGE AND RESOURCES

7.3 Actions taken on the national level

Since this study focuses only on the mobility of students, any imbalances in the mobility of skilled labour force in general have not been analysed. However comprehensive data on the mobility of students throughout Europe is lacking, since there is not data available on so-called free movers, which are self-organising their mobility period abroad outside any mobility programme. Also there is very limited data on the mobility of Non-EU students both to EU Member States and Non-EU countries. Nonetheless trends regarding mobility streams in Europe are also visible based on the Erasmus statistics on incoming and outgoing students (see Fig. 37).



	BE	CZ	DK	DE	EE	GR	ES	FR	IE	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	EUI	EUR 25	IS	LI	NO	EEA	BG	RO	TR
Outgoing students	4971	4725	1682	2384	511	2714	2289	2250	1567	1638	133	681	1910	146	2658	149	4491	3971	9974	4312	879	1165	3851	2530	7131	10	1E+0	194	90	1412	1636	882	3261	2852
Incoming students	5087	2613	4356	1787	372	1899	2661	2142	3670	1459	125	258	626	15	1554	295	6965	3735	3063	4542	589	506	5736	7048	1636		2E+0	256	31	2260	2547	250	653	828

Fig. 37: Number of incoming and outgoing Erasmus Students by country in the academic year 2005/2006

origins and destinations

As Figure 37 shows the net-gainers of Erasmus mobility in the academic year 2005/06 were the United Kingdom with more than 9.200 more students incoming than outgoing, Sweden with about 4.500 and Spain with about 3.700 more students coming to study in the country. In contrast to that, the countries which are losing more students than gaining, are Poland with a net-loss of about 7.000 students, Germany with a net-loss of about 6.000 students and Romania, which had about 2.600 more students leaving than coming to study in the

country.

Based on Figure 38 the concrete mobility streams and favoured destinations of students are also visible with the number of incoming and outgoing Erasmus students listed based on the country of their home- and host institution. The countries with the largest number of incoming Erasmus students are Spain with 26.611 students, France with 21.420 students and Germany with 17.879 students. However if one looks at the popularity of the different countries, i.e. the 3 most frequently chosen host countries, France is the most popular destination of students, followed by Germany and Spain. Figure 38 also allows to analyse the most popular destinations of students from the EU 15 and EFTA countries in Eastern Europe. Western and Northern European students favour Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary as host countries in Eastern Europe. And students from Eastern European countries choose the Czech Republic over Poland and Lithuania as their most popular host country for an Erasmus period in Eastern Europe.

ERASMUS STUDENT MOBILITY 2005/2006 - Total number of students by home and host country

Host Country

Country of home institution	BE	CZ	DK	DE	EE	GR	ES	FR	IE	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	IS	LI	NO	BG	RO	TR	TOTAL	% OF THE TOTAL	
BE fr		21	57	154	0	26	660	185	76	242	0	2	3	0	21	4	158	41	34	56	3	0	78	71	165	2	0	31	4	17	13	2.126	1,36	BE fr
Be fr		51	40	163	6	51	699	577	52	201	7	4	8	0	34	8	141	59	55	129	8	7	140	118	160	3	0	51	13	11	25	2.845	1,84	Be fr
BE		72	109	337	6	77	1.359	762	130	448	7	6	11	0	55	12	299	100	89	185	11	7	218	189	325	5	0	82	17	28	38	4.971	3,22	BE
CZ	165		136	1.092	6	110	378	619	60	193	2	5	25	1	11	3	239	280	135	216	63	66	239	170	375	5	1	63	11	4	58	4.735	3,06	CZ
DK	45	24		330	2	13	280	221	26	69	3	3	6	0	6	11	95	69	16	15	5	0	10	26	345	17	0	27	0	0	19	1.665	1,08	DK
DE	334	374	568		67	199	5.063	4.486	856	1.857	23	54	96	6	335	34	816	472	652	377	50	50	1.081	1.874	3.105	76	11	647	24	52	210	23.848	15,44	DE
EE	7	4	35	67		13	98	57	9	53	0	0	5	0	9	1	34	22	8	10	2	2	75	25	28	1	0	10	8	0	3	511	0,33	EE
GR	148	111	66	376	2		411	491	22	265	6	0	5	1	32	1	119	83	43	103	8	4	124	92	140	1	0	28	9	17	8	2.714	1,76	GR
ES	1.191	317	663	2.630	13	221		3.615	596	5.291	14	20	67	0	127	13	1.221	368	346	1.245	51	38	842	677	2.901	36	1	246	34	99	17	22.891	14,82	ES
FR	390	311	606	2.888	54	225	5.481		1.202	1.640	5	22	67	2	204	55	893	991	459	274	94	46	834	1.338	4.469	22	1	327	21	160	88	22.501	14,57	FR
IE	55	13	29	271	2	10	274	479		87	0	0	2	0	8	10	82	43	12	14	6	0	39	70	43	0	3	11	4	0	0	1.567	1,01	IE
IT	595	115	336	1.763	41	146	6.080	2.542	260		6	7	56	0	137	77	577	275	232	762	29	21	315	396	1.283	24	0	168	11	144	29	16.386	10,61	IT
CY	1	3	0	3	0	54	13	14	0	7		0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	5	0	0	10	1	18	0	0	0	0	0	3	138	0,09	CY
LV	56	8	35	159	5	3	27	49	5	29	3		40	0	3	1	31	27	25	18	4	3	64	41	21	2	0	19	0	2	4	681	0,44	LV
LT	119	42	194	802	10	30	97	131	25	105	5	91		0	11	0	49	64	84	85	10	18	217	137	72	2	0	37	7	5	21	1.910	1,24	LT
LU	1	1	1	33	0	0	24	29	0	9	0	0	0		1	0	3	10	1	6	0	0	2	12	15	0	0	1	0	0	0	146	0,09	LU
HU	107	14	80	676	6	59	150	321	16	273	0	1	1	0		0	171	156	94	42	7	5	226	71	131	1	1	8	47	2	5	19	2.696	1,72	HU
MT	6	1	5	2	0	0	5	15	9	57	0	0	0	0	0		7	0	0	3	0	0	6	3	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	149	0,10	MT
NL	164	55	184	378	13	58	808	574	104	270	0	4	7	0	83	10		109	71	85	5	0	280	435	538	7	0	137	4	10	100	4.491	2,91	NL
AT	97	81	104	298	16	47	712	526	158	439	1	13	22	0	43	16	218		53	83	26	11	252	314	364	22	0	113	8	9	27	3.871	2,51	AT
PL	475	247	541	2.329	20	182	968	1.116	136	824	7	36	84	0	70	4	440	293		371	76	109	425	375	567	7	0	100	49	22	103	9.974	6,46	PL
PT	228	205	76	196	7	52	1.076	915	21	771	4	11	51	0	76	5	269	45	269		62	37	98	118	172	0	2	36	14	91	19	4.312	2,79	PT
SI	34	35	29	135	2	6	114	87	0	76	0	0	12	0	6	0	47	88	21	57		5	27	35	32	0	2	8	4	1	14	879	0,57	SI
SK	67	98	40	201	1	25	107	125	6	79	2	5	9	4	19	0	36	66	59	40	8		79	20	43	0	0	10	1	0	14	1.165	0,75	SK
FI	131	144	28	617	58	66	488	409	114	178	22	10	19	0	122	12	320	270	62	72	29	18		105	473	13	1	18	18	9	11	3.851	2,49	FI
SE	67	51	28	368	8	28	307	475	71	183	1	6	6	0	25	0	221	136	35	36	9	1	15		467	3	0	15	2	2	18	2.556	1,64	SE
UK	139	99	163	971	13	43	1.578	2.192	17	659	5	2	6	0	26	26	325	116	55	76	25	25	241	222		12	1	96	4	3	9	7.191	4,62	UK
EUI	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0,01	EUI
EUR25	4.641	2.429	4.051	16.292	352	1.664	25.838	19.687	3.819	13.781	119	295	564	14	1.406	291	6.499	3.484	2.760	4.189	551	466	5.550	6.847	15.999	258	31	2.360	250	659	929	145.790	94,41	EUR25
IS	3	3	53	21	2	4	17	24	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	6	0	0	1	0	3	18	25							164	0,10	IS
LI	0	0	3	5	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3							30	0,02	LI
NO	29	93	100	213	5	13	284	200	14	80	0	8	5	0	17	3	83	40	10	43	3	1	21	62	198							1.412	0,91	NO
EFTA-EEA	32	96	155	284	7	18	284	225	17	84	1	20	5	0	18	3	85	46	10	44	4	1	30	91	226							1.636	1,06	EFTA-EEA
BG	65	24	18	221	8	55	65	126	7	51	0	0	7	1	4	0	23	35	34	44	4	7	38	18	38							862	0,57	BG
RO	161	12	49	441	2	91	345	1.140	21	468	1	1	4	0	51	0	65	45	35	145	4	4	41	28	79							3.261	2,11	RO
TR	168	118	85	691	5	71	109	239	6	209	0	2	46	0	65	1	293	125	224	122	26	30	87	76	54							2.852	1,85	TR
Cand.C.	414	154	166	1.383	19	217	519	1.506	34	736	0	3	57	1	130	1	391	305	269	309	34	41	196	126	171	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.969	4,50	Cand.C.
TOTAL	5.067	2.813	4.356	17.879	372	1.899	26.611	21.420	3.870	14.591	125	329	626	15	1.554	295	6.965	3.735	3.063	4.542	589	508	5.736	7.049	16.386	288	31	2.360	250	659	929	154.421	100,00	TOTAL
%	3,28	1,69	2,82	11,58	0,24	1,23	17,23	13,87	2,51	9,45	0,08	0,17	0,41	0,01	1,01	0,19	4,51	2,42	1,98	2,94	0,38	0,33	3,71	4,56	10,61	0,17	0,02	1,46	0,16	0,43	0,54	100,00		

Fig. 38: Number of incoming and outgoing Erasmus students in the academic year 2005/2006 by country of home and host institution

These figures show that there is not necessarily a connection between the popularity of a country based on the choices of students and the net-gain or loss in students to or from this country. While for example the strong popularity in the case of Spain might be a factor in attracting skilled labour force, popularity seems not to be a factor in the cases of the United Kingdom or Sweden. Also the examples of Germany and Poland show that popular countries with strong inward mobility might at the same time also have a strong mobility of their skilled individuals abroad, leading to an overall net-loss. Thus both the attitudes

of students towards mobility and a country's popularity are key factors for a balanced or unbalanced mobility to and from this country.

That means that countries with a high popularity like Germany and a strong outward mobility tend towards a more balanced mobility, while countries like the United Kingdom with a strong inward mobility and lower inclination of local students to go abroad are benefiting from a net-gain in skilled individuals. The case of Romania shows that countries with little popularity and strong outward mobility are losing skilled individuals, while Poland with a strong outward mobility, but at the same time also strong attractiveness for foreign students will tend towards a balanced mobility in the long-run.

In order to improve balanced mobility among countries, while maintaining the positive effects of internationalisation and increasing access to mobility throughout Europe, net-gaining countries with low outward student mobility should increase programmes to foster mobility of local students abroad, while countries with net-loss and strong outward mobility should increase the visibility and attractiveness of their higher education system.

7.4 Student opinion

imbalance of incomings and outgoings

BOTH THE ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS TOWARDS MOBILITY AND A COUNTRY'S POPULARITY ARE KEY FACTORS FOR BALANCED OR UNBALANCED MOBILITY

In the survey student unions were asked to evaluate whether their country was losing or gaining skilled individuals, or whether the inward and outward mobility of skilled individuals was balanced. While more student unions analysed that their country was rather losing than gaining skilled individuals, overall only roughly 40% believed that their country was suffering from a loss (see Fig. 39).

While this question was not limited to the mobility of students or even Erasmus students, similar tendencies can be witnessed also based on the number of incoming and outgoing Erasmus Students per country in the academic year 2005/06 (see Fig. 37). It seems however, that while the overall loss in skilled individuals remains a problem in a number of countries in Europe, it is less pronounced than in the mobility streams in the Erasmus programme, which might be due to an increasing number of incoming students from other continents.

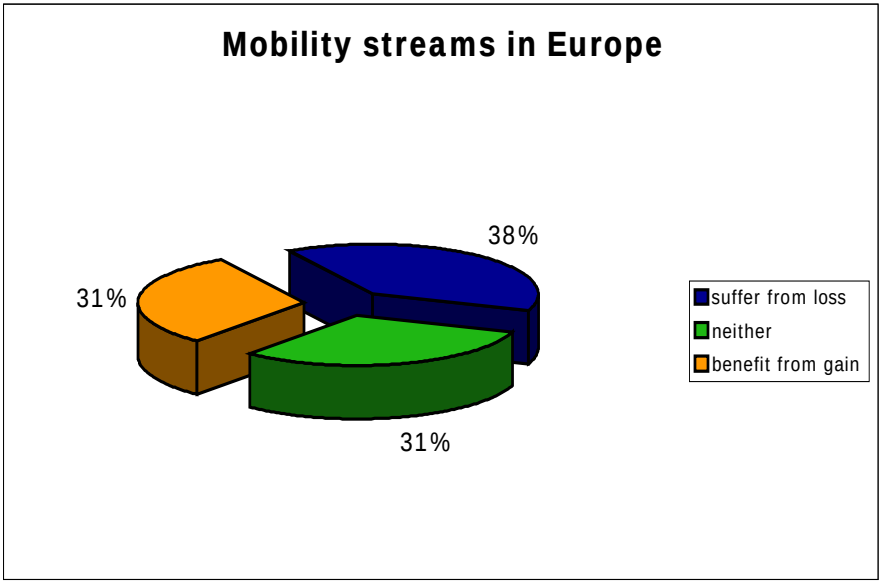


Fig. 39: Countries benefiting from a gain or suffering from a loss of skilled individuals

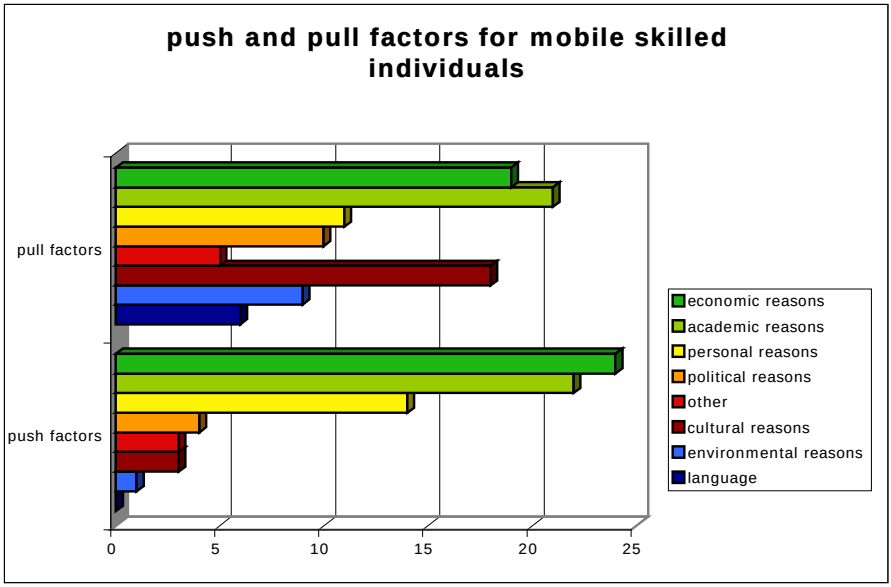


Fig. 40: Motivations for skilled individuals to leave the country (push factors) or foreigners to move to the host country (pull factors)

push- and pull-factors

The survey also inquired the factors driving skilled individuals out of a country, so-called push factors, or making a country attractive to them, so-called pull factors (see Fig. 40). Economic and academic reasons are equally important both in driving skilled individuals away as well as attracting them. But also the culture of the host country is a very important factor in the choice. So the main factors deciding about the popularity of a country seem to be economic, academic and cultural.

It appears that, apart from economic and academic reasons, the factors driving people out of their country and going elsewhere are either cloudy or varied to such an extent, that they can't be clearly defined. Personal reasons appear as the third most important push factor, while all other factors have been mentioned considerably less often.

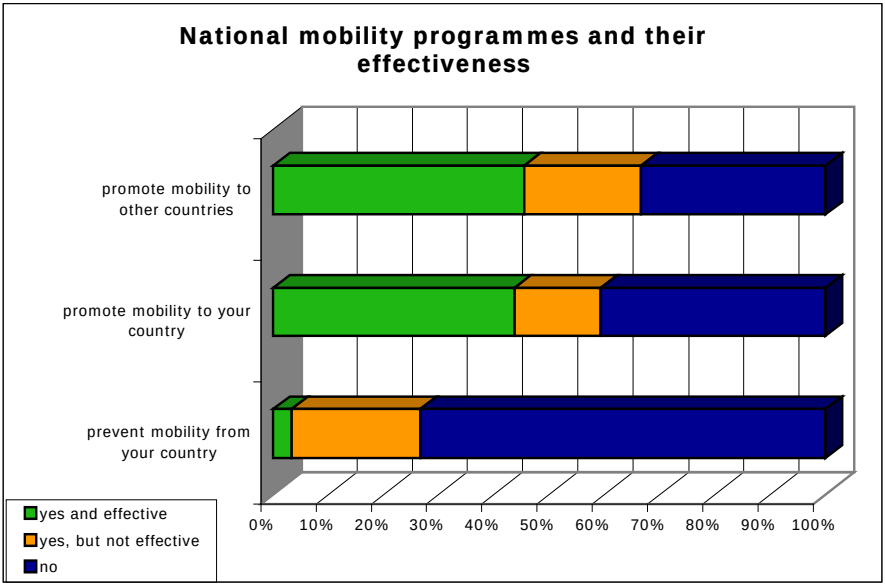


Fig. 41: National initiatives to retain skilled individuals, foster mobility abroad and attract foreign students

In conclusion it appears that, based on the abovementioned push and pull factors, any initiatives geared at retainining skilled individuals are most productive in two areas: foster economic development and improve the quality of the higher education system. In addition to that iniatives to attract foreigners seem most successful, if they are increasing the visibility of the higher education system as well as the culture of a country..

promotion of mobility

Based on the responses from our survey on the existence of any national initiatives to retain skilled individuals, foster their mobility abroad or attract foreign skilled individuals (see Fig. 41), it appears that countries are most active in promoting mobility to other countries or in attracting students to their country. Few countries and most importantly considerably less than those, which actually report a loss of skilled individuals, have measures in place to prevent mobility of skilled individuals from their country.

The initiatives undertaken to promote mobility to other countries or

attract foreign students are usually linked, which explains the similar responses in both areas. Besides participation in the EU mobility programmes, those initiatives include additional scholarships, bilaterial agreements, international study programmes and programmes tought in English, as well as legal provisions to treat foreign and local students in the same manner regarding working and residence regulations. Some countries have also issued explicit initiatives that seek to attract foreign skilled individuals, like Germany or a Prime Ministers Initiative for international education in the United Kingdom. In addition some countries have established institutions, which are responsible for the implementation of mobility initiatives, such as the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) in Finland. The majority of student unions, where any such initiatives are in place, believe that these are successful: About 2/3 of the respondents with existing programmes stated that they are effective.

In order to prevent mobility of skilled individuals abroad, countries mainly establish financial incentives to either retain students or increase the rate of skilled individuals returning to their home country. The national union of students in Latvia LSA also reported awareness raising initiatives about the issue in public through the press as an instrument to prevent skilled individuals to leave the country. However student unions don't consider these iniatives to be effective. Only 12,5% of those unions stating that their country was undertaking any such measures believed that they are effective. The national union of students in Slovenia SSU for example believes that no measure can ever be fully sufficient, since »the ones that want to go, leave anyway«, and the national union of students in Italy UdU believes that the initiatives of the Italian government are inefficient and unattractive, since »the person, who comes back, obtains only a short time contract and has to continue its research in a situation of lack of finances and infrastructures.«

INITIATIVES TO RETAIN SKILLED INDIVIDUALS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY AIM AT FOSTERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

It appears that measures to promote mobility abroad or attract skilled individuals to the own country are generally successful, because they are building on and expanding existing good practise in academic exchange, like the EU mobility programmes, and they are mainly focussing on political measures to increase the academic attractiveness of the national higher education system, which has been mentioned both as a push and a pull factor. The motives for leaving a country however are not only and maybe even not mainly rooted in academic reasons, and thus measures to retain skilled individuals have to go beyond initiatives in the field of higher education. Also, due the fact that there are no existing initiatives to retain skilled individuals, good and effective practise is lacking. That means there

is a lack of demonstration effect, leading to not only few, but also weak initiatives by countries.

The success of measures to promote mobility abroad and attract skilled individuals based on good practise on the one hand, and the ineffectiveness and limited initiatives to retain skilled individuals due to lack of good practise on the other hand, are proof to the importance of good practise for the effectiveness of national mobility programmes. This means that good practise to promote mobility abroad or attract skilled individuals will reinforce the effectiveness of measures in this field and will even be passively supported by the continued hesitation of countries to take initiative to retain skilled individuals. To prevent such developments of unbalanced mobility, countries need to develop good and effective measures to retain skilled individuals and share this good practise.

7.5 Conclusions

- While the overall loss in skilled individuals remains a problem in a number of countries in Europe, it is less pronounced than in the mobility streams in the Erasmus programme, which might be due to an increasing number of incoming students from other continents.

STUDENT UNIONS DON'T CONSIDER INITIATIVES THAT TRY TO RETAIN STUDENTS EFFECTIVE

- Countries are most active in promoting mobility to other countries or in attracting students to their country. Few countries and most importantly considerably less than those, which actually report a loss of skilled individuals, have measures in place to prevent mobility of skilled individuals from their country.
- Good practise is of key importance for the effectiveness of national mobility initiatives. Existing good practise to promote mobility abroad or attract skilled individuals to the own country will reinforce the effectiveness of measures in this field and will even be passively supported by the continued hesitation of countries to take initiative to retain skilled individuals. To prevent such developments of unbalanced mobility, countries need to develop good and effective measures to retain skilled individuals and share this good practise.
- In order to improve balanced mobility among countries, while maintaining the positive effects of internationalisation and increasing access to mobility throughout Europe, net-gaining countries with low outward student mobility should increase programmes to foster mobility of local students abroad.
- Initiatives geared at retainining skilled individuals seem most productive in two areas: fostering economic development and improving the quality of the

higher education system, whereas iniatives to attract foreigners seem most successful in increasing the visibility of the higher education system as well as the culture.

VIII INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) & E-LEARNING

Internet access is available to students free of charge in their higher education institutions, while private internet access strongly depends on the financial capacity of students.

Universities are not very active in integrating ICT in higher education, especially when it comes to support for learning and teaching online.

8.1 Introduction

The information and communication technology (ICT) based provision of education, e-learning, has been growing in scope and importance. This growth can be attributed to many factors, like the innovation in technology and pedagogy, the need for broader accessibility and even the various market driven forces that are influencing higher education on a global level. Yet e-learning is not a new concept. In the late 90s, e-learning was hailed as the pedagogy of the future that would bring enhanced quality of learning, increased and widened access, reduced costs for higher education institutions and improved life-long learning. These aims are very far from being achieved, but e-learning, if developed and used in the right manner, may truly take the provision of education to new heights. ESU has been dealing with this topic already for more than 5 years and continuously stressed the importance of using both ICT enhanced- and online provision of learning for the diversification of the learning experience, for improving access to learning opportunities and as a tool to improve internationalisation of higher education.

methodic approach

Promoting the use of ICT is also an important part of the modernization agenda for education (see chapter 1 on the implementation of Lisbon). However, we cannot talk about introducing new solutions and technologies, if even such basic things as internet or ICT infrastructure are not available to all students or those who wish to study. The research and survey therefore looked into the

implementation of ICT infrastructure on all levels of education, with a special focus in higher education. Since e-learning involves both ICT enhanced learning within the environment of the higher education institution, as well as the online provision of learning, the survey looked at the availability of this infrastructure in education institutions as well as in the private sphere.

The introduction of new technologies should be followed by providing education to learners, teachers and trainers on how to use these on all levels of education. For this reason the research and survey also looked into whether the use of ICT and the transmission of ICT skills are actually integral elements of study programs.

The analysis is based firstly on the suggested action how to improve access to ICT for everyone on the European level in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy. This analysis is the basis for looking into the manner in which national governments take these suggestions forward on the national level. The results from our survey will complement this picture on the institutional and individual level, and provide the basis for an evaluation of these actions.

8.2 Policy on the European level in the the Lisbon Strategy

Opening access to ICT and e-learning for all, together with increasing the literacy in both of these areas have been key objectives of the Lisbon Agenda from the very beginning, since »Europe's long-term demand for skilled ICT people remains strong and short-term events do not undermine the basic growth trend.« (European Commission: 28). For this reason an eLearning initiative was developed by the European Commission already in 2001 with the aim

> *to step up the training drive at all levels, especially by promoting universal digital literacy and the general availability of appropriate training for teachers and trainers, including technology training as well as courses on the educational use of technology and management of change. [...]*
>
> *The eLearning initiative places emphasis on creating appropriate conditions for the development of content, services and learning environments which are sufficiently advanced and relevant to education, in terms of both the market and the public sphere. (European Commission 2001: 3)*

In order to reach these aims, the initiative identified »four main lines of action [...] covering infrastructure, training, high-quality multimedia services and content, and dialogue and cooperation at all levels.« (ibid: 8)

In 2002 this specific initiative in the area of ICT and e-learning was placed in the context of the Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives on Education and Training Systems in Europe. In this document, the concrete

objectives regarding ICT and e-learning until 2010 were spelled out in order to ensure access to ICT for everyone (European Council 2002: 18).

However according to the European Commission, the countries' initiatives have not improved access to and literacy in ICT significantly enough in most of the EU countries. In his communication to the Spring European Council in 2005, President Barroso therefore laments that:

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY PROVIDING EDUCATION TO LEARNERS AND TEACHERS ON HOW TO USE THEM

> *More generally, our innovation performance is crucially dependent on strengthening investment and the use of new technologies, particularly ICTs, by both the private and public sectors. Information and Communication technologies provide the backbone for the knowledge economy. They account for around half of the productivity growth in modern economies. However, investments in ICTs in Europe have been lower and later than in the United States [...]. (European Commission 2005a: 24-25)*

This statement from President Barroso was backed—up by recommendations to increase the funding for ICT infrastructure in the Communication from the Commission on Mobilising the Brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy in April 2005 (European Commission 2005c: 9).

In the Communication from the Commission on the efficiency and equity in European education and training systems, another challenge regarding ICT and e-learning is outlined:

> *The EU is facing four interrelated socio-economic challenges: globalisation, and the emergence of newly industrialised and highly competitive countries; demography, in the form of Europe's ageing population and migration flows; rapid change in the nature of the labour market; and the technology-driven ICT revolution. Each of these has an impact on the challenge of providing good education for all. (European Commission 2006c: 2)*

Consequently, while ICT might promote access to higher education for a wider and more diverse group of learners accomodating their specific needs, limited access to ICT and internet have posed new challenges for access to education and the threat of a new digital divide. Keeping this in mind together with the overall aim in the eLearning Initiative of 2001 and the Detailed Work Programme of 2002 to ensure access to ICT for all, the main messages on ICT in the Commission Staff Working Document on the Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training from 2006 appears to address mainly overcoming obstacles to access to ICT in primary and secondary education (European

Commission 2006b: 23).

8.3 Actions taken on the national level

This limited focus on initiatives to broaden access to ICT and incorporate it in the educational process mainly in primary and secondary education is also visible in national initiatives. Out of 30 countries reporting to the EU in 2005, 23 reported about extensive initiatives to provide the necessary infrastructure in schools, include training on the use of ICT in the curriculum and improve teacher training on the use of ICT and how to incorporate it in the pedagogy (Bulgaria 2005: 3; Croatia 2005: 9-10; Cyprus 2005: 7-9; Denmark 2005: 6, 8-9, 14; Finland 2005: 6; France 2005: 4; Greece 2005: 17; Hungary 2005: 7-8, 11, 24; Iceland 2005: 12; Ireland 2005: 18; Italy 2005: 7, 10; Lithuania 2005: 28; Malta 2005: 4; Netherlands 2005: 12; Norway 2005: 16; Poland 2005: 7, 31; Portugal 2005: 20; Romania 2005: 4-6; Slovakia 2005: 13-14, 25; Slovenia 2005: 13, 34, 37; Sweden 2005: 6; Turkey 2005: 12-13; United Kingdom 2005: 4, 10).

Activities are less pronounced in higher education. Out of 30 countries, three countries had no action specified or planned for higher education (see table 09 in the annex). It appears that most countries follow the strategy of developing ICT skills at an early stage with the assumption that it will lead to a natural inclusion of ICT in higher education. While this might be true for the ICT literacy of future students and academics, a less pronounced emphasis on integrating ICT and e-learning into higher education could lead to the development of e-learning of limited educational quality and benefit. However if the countries agree that ICT and e-learning are benefitial elements in the educational process and might improve the access to education from a lifelong learning perspective, the opportunities and limits of integrating new technologies in the educational processes should be explored at all levels of education and made use of to the utmost extent.

LIMITED ACCESS TO ICT AND INTERNET HAVE POSED NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION

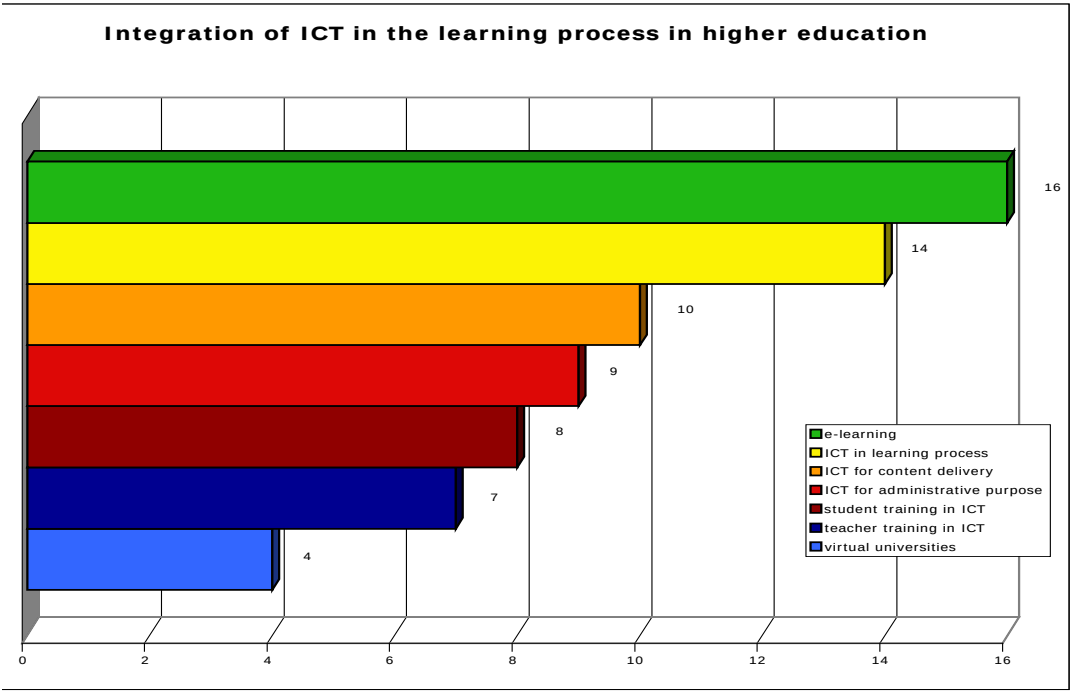


Fig. 42: Integration of ICT in the learning process in higher education

e-learning courses

Based on the national reports, the most common form of integrating ICT in the learning process in higher education is the development of e-learning courses (see Fig. 42 and table 09 in the annex). Out of 27 countries implementing or planning any actions in this field, 16 reported that they were either already promoting such developments, or planned to do so in the future.

OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEGRATING NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS SHOULD BE EXPLORED AT ALL LEVELS

However, this development seems not to go hand in hand with the development of virtual higher education institutions, since only 4 countries reported any such development. It seems that ICT and e-learning are seen as components which might enhance the educational experience of traditional higher education, with 52% (ICT) and 37% (e-learning) of the countries reporting to take measures to integrate it in the learning process or use it for the transmission of content and

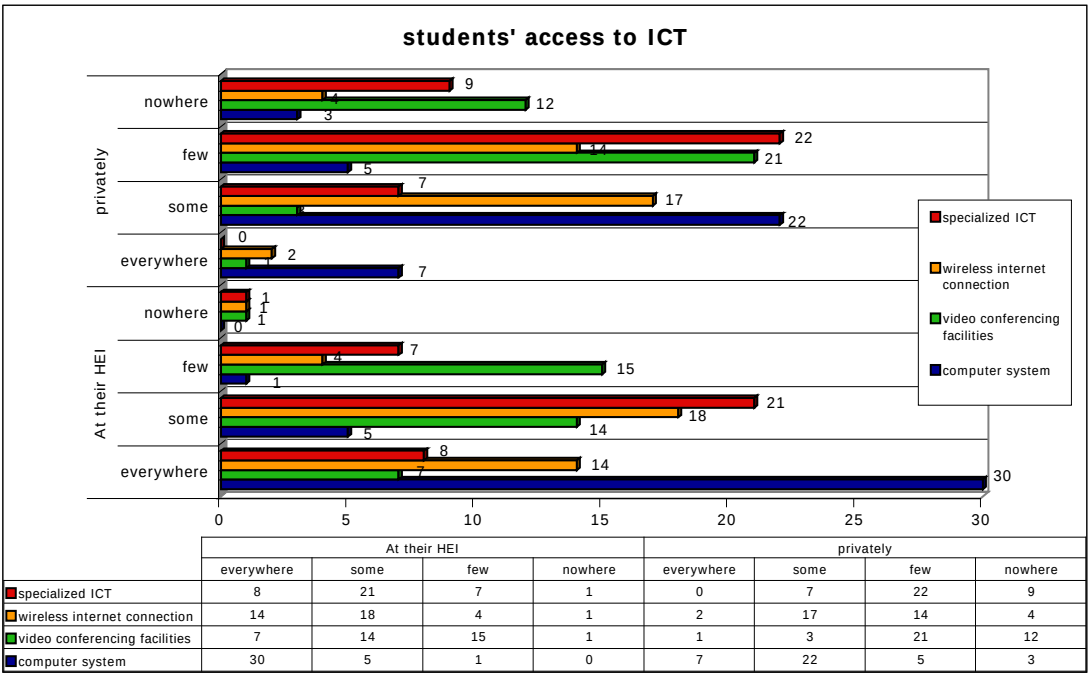
course material. The rather limited activities for the development of ICT skills of students and academics may be explained with the focus on primary and secondary education, as mentioned above. However one has to keep in mind that competences in ICT use might still be limited with current student cohorts and academics.

8.4 Student opinion

access and availability of ICT

The survey explored the availibility of ICT to students both at their higher education institutions and privately, in order to see whether students are at all in a position to participate in ICT enhanced learning (see Fig. 43). Computer systems are available to students more or less at every higher education institution according to more than 80% of the respondents. This is not true to the same extent for video conferencing facilities, wireless internet connection or specialized ICT. Less than 40% of the student unions stated that a wireless internet connection is available at all higher education institutions. And about 20% of the student unions said the same for video conferencing facilities and specialized ICT. However 57% of the respondents said that specialized ICT was available at least in some higher education institutions and 49% confirmed this for wireless internet. The availability of video conferencing facilities to students at their higher education institutions however seem to be a problem with only 38% of the respondents stating that they are available at some and 41% saying they are available only at few institutions. That means not only that in the majority of countries they are generally not available to students at their higher education institutions, but also that certain ICT enhanced and online provided programmes are not be accessible to students.

A similar picture can be drawn for private access to ICT. Students do have access to computer systems (19% stated this for all students, and an additional 59% said so for some) and wireless internet connection (46% said so for some students). At the same time, specialised ICT or video conferencing facilities are only accessible to few students or not available to them at all. It also shows that students rather have access to specialised ICT than to video conferencing facilities. However Fig. 43 also shows that access to ICT is generally more limited to students at home than at their higher education institution. This is not very surprising, since ICT tends to be costly and thus the availibility of ICT is very much dependent on the financial situation of students.



	At their HEI				privately			
	everywhere	some	few	nowhere	everywhere	some	few	nowhere
specialized ICT	8	21	7	1	0	7	22	9
wireless internet connection	14	18	4	1	2	17	14	4
video conferencing facilities	7	14	15	1	1	3	21	12
computer system	30	5	1	0	7	22	5	3

Fig. 43: access of students to ICT both at their higher education institution and privately

internet access

This is not only true for ICT, but also for access to the internet. In order to better understand the accessibility of internet to students throughout Europe, we asked our member unions to evaluate the average cost and speed of the internet connection available to students in their country both at their higher education institution and in private. While internet access is available free of charge to students at their higher education institutions according to 93% of the responding unions, it is available free of charge or cheaply to about every fourth student in private (see Fig. 44). About half of the responding student unions stated that the cost of private internet access is moderate, while it is costly for every third student.

SPECIALISED ICT OR VIDEO CONFERENCING FACILITIES ARE ONLY ACCESSIBLE TO FEW STUDENTS OR NOT AVAILABLE TO THEM AT ALL

Again, one may conclude that internet access is available to students free

of charge in their higher education institutions, but in private, the access to internet very much depends on the financial capacity of students. While no union responded, that students in their country have no private internet access at all, the expenses for internet access at home are either a substantial or a regular share of their monthly income.

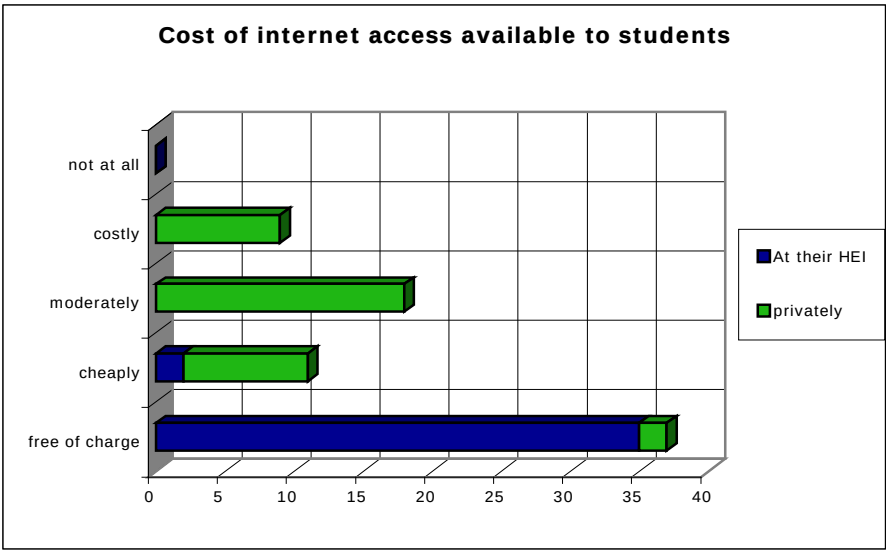


Fig. 44: cost of internet access available to students both at their higher education institution and privately

Access to ICT enhanced and online provided learning does not depend per se on the availability of internet to students, but is also closely linked to the type and connection speed of internet. For this reason we also inquired the type of internet access available to students (see Fig. 45). The vaste majority of students in Europe have access to an internet connection equivalent to DSL, broadband or faster. This is true for both access to internet at their higher education institution, for which 86% of the unions stated that this connection speed was available to students, and to a lesser extent in private with 65% of the respondents stating this.

PRIVATE INTERNET ACCESS STRONGLY DEPENDS ON THE FINANCIAL CAPACITY OF STUDENTS

That shows that in a number of countries the connection speed of students' private internet access remains slower and thus not in all cases sufficient for ICT enhanced education or programmes taught online. This is especially true

for those 14% of the respondents, stating that students in their country generaly only have a modem internet connection at home. Considering that e-learning has been supported in the Lisbon Strategy also as a means for more flexible access to education, for example for individuals with disabilities and chronical illnesses or from remote areas, the availability of fast internet connections needs to be considered and supported.

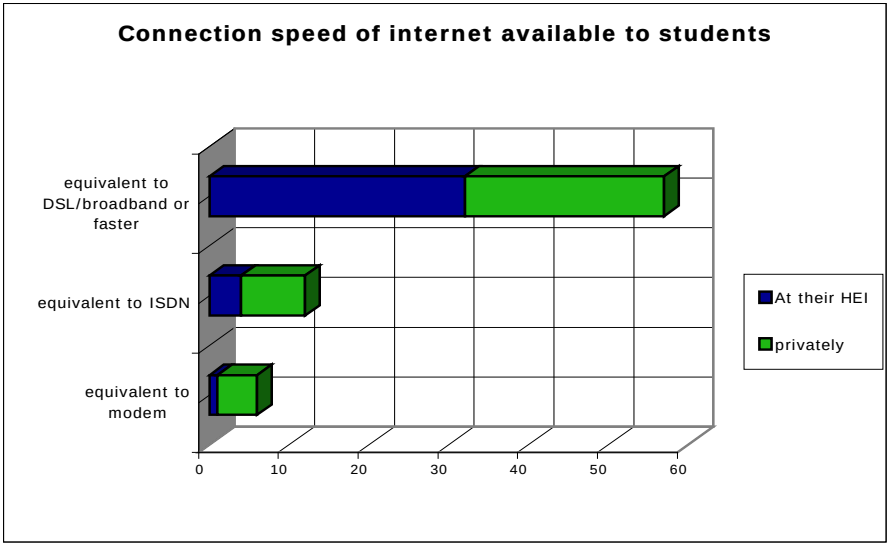


Fig. 45: connection speed of internet access available to students both at their higher education institution and privately

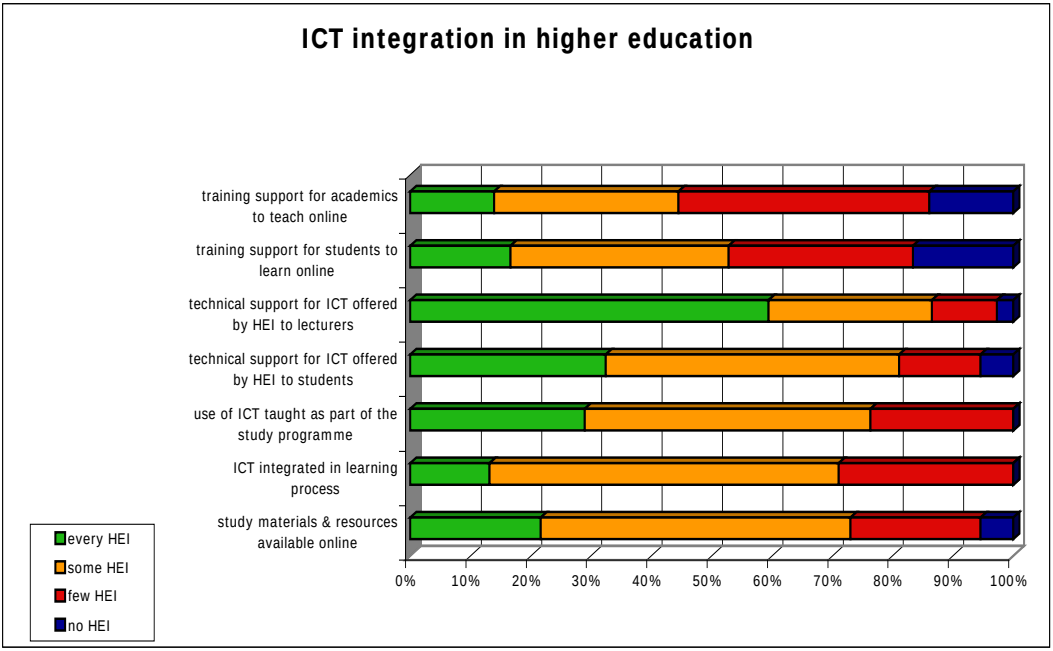


Fig. 46: integration of ICT in the learning process in higher education

integration of ICT in the learning process

In addition to the availability of ICT and internet access, the survey also looked into the integration of ICT in the learning process. Not only should the introduction of new technologies be followed by providing education to learners, teachers and trainers on how to use these on all levels of education. ICT enhanced learning and online provided education should also enhance the learning experience of students by providing meaningful programmes to them.

As Fig. 46 shows, most student unions report that ICT is in some way or another part of their study programme, and that both students and lecturers receive support in how to use ICT. However Figure 46 also shows that higher education institutions are not very active in integrating ICT in higher education. The majority of student unions reported on any of the measures that only some or few higher education institutions in their country are taking any action. Most activity was visible in the technical support provided to students and lecturers on the use of ICT. More than half of the student unions reported that every higher education institution in their country provides technical support to lecturers on the use

of ICT, while the support made available to students is considerably lower with roughly a third of the unions reporting the same for support offered to students. Least activity was visible regarding ICT enhanced learning and training support offered to students and academics in how to learn or teach online.

political focus on ICT developments

These findings on the one hand contradict the priorities mentioned in the National Reports of 2005 (see Fig. 42), but are also a visible proof of the prioritization of improving access to ICT mainly for primary and secondary education. While the countries mention for example the development of e-learning courses and the integration of ICT in the learning process as priorities for action to promote ICT enhanced learning, there seems to be no effect to this end on the ground as these are the areas with the least amount of activity reported by student unions. So either these activities are very isolated initiatives reaching only very few students, or the enthusiasm and competences both of students and academics to develop and take up such courses and programmes seems limited. One of the reasons might be the limited availability of training support to be able to teach or learn in a fully online provided course.

Also the fact that a third of the student unions reported that ICT is integrated in the study programme of only few institutions and another quarter reported that only few institutions in their country also focus on providing the necessary skills to students on how to use ICT are proof of a limited focus on ICT enhanced learning in higher education. These findings show that improving ICT infrastructure and skills development on how to use ICT only in primary and secondary education is not enough to ensure access to ICT in higher education and an increased application of ICT in the learning process.

1.5 Conclusions

- Computer systems, wireless internet connection and specialized ICT for specific subject areas are available to students in the majority of higher education institutions.
- Since video conferencing facilities are available to students only in few higher education institutions, certain ICT enhanced and online provided programmes for this reason will not be accessible to them.
- The survey shows similar findings for private access of students to ICT. However access to ICT is generally more limited to students at home than at their higher education institution.
- Internet access is available to students free of charge in their higher education institutions, while private internet access strongly depends on

the financial capacity of students. For the majority of students in Europe, the costs for internet access at home make up for either a substantial or regular share of their monthly income.

UNIVERSITIES ARE NOT VERY ACTIVE IN INTEGRATING ICT IN HIGHER EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ONLINE

- The majority of students in Europe have access to an internet connection equivalent to DSL, broadband or faster both at their higher education institution and at home. However 14% of the student unions stated that students only have access to a modem internet connection in their country. Considering that e-learning should also be a means for more flexible access to education, the availability of fast internet connections also in private needs to be considered and supported.

- Higher education institutions are not very active in integrating ICT in higher education. The survey shows that they mainly focus on technical support regarding the use of ICT. In contrast to that, there is very limited support to students and academics to be able to learn and teach online, and there is limited integration of ICT in the learning process. These findings contradict the prioritisation of actions on ICT in the National Reports of 2005. Improving ICT infrastructure and skills development on how to use ICT only in primary and secondary education are not enough to ensure access to ICT in higher education as well as an increased application of ICT in the learning process.

ANNEXES

Analysis of the National Reports 2005 and data from the student survey

table 01: National priorities for higher education reform by country

Countries	Priorities
Austria	qualitative development of universities of applied sciences governance of higher education institutions teacher training (Austria 2005: 9)
Belgium (Flanders)	access to education quality of education increase attractiveness of vocational education and training (Belgium Flanders 2005: 3)
Bulgaria	access to education quality of education improve employability (Bulgaria 2005: 2)
Croatia	access to education increase employability enhance cooperation between education, business and industry on the regional level (Croatia 2005: 3)
Cyprus	access to education governance of higher education attractiveness of Cyprus' higher education system (Cyprus 2005: 5-6)
Czech Republic	access to education quality of education governance of education institutions employability and responsiveness to labour market (Czech Republic 2005: 4-5)

Countries	Priorities
Denmark	access to education increase excellence and quality of education raise employability of graduates increase mobility and the attractiveness of Danish higher education (Denmark 2005: 5-7)
Estonia	increase excellence and quality of education increase employability of graduates increase mobility and attractiveness of Estonian higher education (Estonia 2005: 5-6)
Finland	increase access to education attain excellence and improve quality of higher education change governance of higher education institutions improve the internationalisation of Finnish higher education (Finland 2005: 4)
France	improve access to education improve excellence and quality of higher education improve recognition of qualifications. (France 2005: 2)
Germany	increase access to education improve excellence and quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions increase mobility (Germany 2005: 5-6)
Greece	increase access to education improve quality of education increase employability and entrepreneurship increase cooperation between education and the business world improve literacy in Information and Communication Technology (Greece 2005: 2)

Countries	Priorities
Hungary	increase access to education improve the quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions improve the relationship between education and the economy increase efficiency in funding higher education (Hungary 2005: 10)
Iceland	increase access to education improve quality of education promote use and literacy in Information and Communication Technology (Iceland 2005: 4)
Ireland	improve access to education improve quality of education to attain excellence reforme governance of higher education improve employability of its graduates (Ireland 2005: 7)
Italy	improving quality of higher education governance of higher education increase cooperation between education and the business world increase flexible learning paths reform (Italy 2005: 3)
Latvia	increase access to education increase quality of education increase employability of graduates improve efficient use of financial resources. (Latvia 2005: 7-8)
Lithuania	increase access to education improve quality of education improve governance of higher education institutions insure employability improve efficient use of financial resources (Lithuania 2005: 3-4)

Countries	Priorities
Malta	Improve access to education (Malta 2005: 4; 5-6) improve quality of education (Malta 2005: 14) improve employability of its graduates (Malta 2005: 3; 8) improve financing and the efficient use of available financial resources (Malta 2005: 14) improve literacy in Information and Communication Technology (Malta 2005: 9)
The Netherlands	increase access to education reform governance of higher education improve employability of higher education graduates increase number of qualified teaching personnel. (Netherlands 2005: 5-6)
Norway	increase access to education improve quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions improve efficient use of financial resources (Norway 2005: 10)
Poland	improve access to education improve quality of education improve employability of graduates promote use of and literacy in Information- and Communication Technology (Poland 2005: 4-5)
Portugal	increase access to education improve quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions (Portugal 2005: 4;9)

Countries	Priorities
Romania	improve quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions improve employability of graduates increase cooperation between education and economic and social environment (Romania 2005: 7)
Slovakia	increase quality of education to be able to attain excellence reform governance of higher education institutions promote cooperation between education and the business world promote diversification of financing (Slovak Republic 2005: 7;9)
Slovenia	increase access to education improve quality of education reform governance of higher education institutions improve mobility and international attractiveness of Slovenian higher education (Slovenia 2005: 5;7)
Spain	increase access to education (Spain 2005: 3;5) improve quality of education (Spain 2005: 3) promote mobility (Spain 2005: 7)
Sweden	increase access to education (Sweden 2005: 11-13) improve employability promote cooperation between education and the business sector (Sweden 2005: 13;15) increase mobility and attractiveness of Swedish higher education (Sweden 2005: 15)

Countries	Priorities
Turkey	increase equality in education (Turkey 2005: 6) improve quality of education (Turkey 2005: 4;6) improve employability of graduates improve cooperation between education and economic and social environement (Turkey 2005: 4;6) increasing use of and literacy in Information- and Communication Technology (Turkey 2005: 12)
United Kingdom	increase access to education (United Kingdom 2005: 5;7) increase quality of education to attain excellence increase employability of graduates increase cooperation between higher education institutions and business world diversify funding sources for higher education. (United Kingdom 2005: 5)

table 02: Structure responsible for the implementation of the Education and Training 2010

Work Programme by country

Interministerial Working Group	Coordination by Ministry of Education with contacts to other Ministries/ stakeholders	Implementation by Ministry/ies of Education
Austria (Austria 2005: 7) Belgium (Belgium Flanders 2005: 8-9) Cyprus (Cyprus 2005: 4-5) Denmark (Denmark 2005: 5) Estonia (Estonia 2005: 4) France (France 2005: 3) Greece (Greece 2005: 5,7) Ireland (Ireland 2005: 16) The Netherlands (Netherlands 2005: 9) Poland (Poland 2005: 3) Portugal (Portugal2005: 4) Slovakia (Slovak Republic 2005: 5) Slovenia (Slovenia 2005: 4) Spain (Spain 2005: 4)	Bulgaria (Bulgaria 2005: 3,7,9) Croatia (Croatia 2005: 3) Czech Republic (Czech Republic 2005: 6) Finland (Finland 2005: 8-9) Lithuania (Lithuania 2005: 4) Sweden (Sweden 2005: 4) Turkey (Turkey 2005: 5) United Kingdom (United Kingdom 2005: 3)	Germany (Germany 2005: 6-7) Hungary (Hungary 2005: 6) Iceland (Iceland 2005: 3-4) Italy (Italy 2005: 8) Latvia (Latvia 2005: 9) Malta (Malta 2005: 4) Norway (Norway 2005: 14) Romania (Romania 2005: 10-11)

table 03: Discriminated groups in higher education according to point of view of national unions of students, in their countries

Discriminated group	Countries of national unions of students
Students with disabilities/ handicapped students	AL, BE, BG, DK, EE, FI, GE, IS, LT, LV, MT, NO, RS, SI
Students from disadvantaged socio- economic backgrounds	AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, GE, MT PL, PT, RS, SI
Immigrants/ migrant background students	BE, DK, FI, IS, IT, NO, CZ
Ethnic minority students	EE, FI, IT, LV, NO, RO, SE, PL
Female students	AT, BE, FR, HR, SI
Roma students	BA, BG, CZ, HR
International students	CY, FR, NO, SK, NL
LGBT and transgender students	IT, LT
Mature students	CY, PT
Part time students	IE, SK
Students with family/children	SI, UK-SCT
Non manual work students	IE
Students from non-academic background	SE
Students from rural background	RO

table 04: Discriminated groups in higher education, obstacles and examples of good and bad practices, according to national unions of students

Discriminated group	Usual obstacles for this group in higher education	Country of national union of students	Example of bad practice on treatment of the group in higher education in the country, given by national union of students	Example of good practice of empowering this group in higher education in the country, given by national union of students
Students with disabilities/ handicapped students	Inappropriate physical conditions and infrastructure in higher education institutions, physical accessibility problems; study material accessibility problems; psychological boundaries, preconceived attitude; lack of information counseling and special services; financial problems; accommodation problems.	BE	Conservative thinking like: »can they even study?«; »we can not lower standards for them«; »All students should be treated the same way«; »But will you get a job later on in life«; »If something happens, we'll be responsible«; »If we make an effort, we'll be the institution of the disabled«	Existence of a national centre of expertise on the subject of disability of higher education, giving guidelines to higher education institutions, having coordinators and organizing platform for discussion and exchange of experience on the topic. national union of students organize stimulation and empowerment activities for local student organizations on the topic.

Students with disabilities/ handicapped students	Inappropriate physical conditions and infrastructure in higher education institutions, physical accessibility problems; study material accessibility problems; psychological boundaries, preconceived attitude; lack of information counseling and special services; financial problems; accommodation problems.	BG	There are not special textbooks for students with eye problems	Special support schemes for students with disabilities
		MT	Impossibility to participate in higher education because of lack of facilities	national union of students have had awareness raising activities encouraging government to impose standards on facilities to provide access to buildings and resources to students with physical disabilities
		DK		Extensive student counseling network
		EE	Despite a law that every public building should have access for people with disabilities and that higher education should be accessible to all, there are very few HEIs that have disability access. There are very few positive role models from society. People with disabilities are pushed away from everyday life. Social support for people with disabilities varies between 40€ - 80€ which is hardly enough.	More e-learning courses have been developed Schools are (slowly) improving their infrastructure. Courses for teachers to improve their teaching methods, have been developed

Students with disabilities/ handicapped students	Inappropriate physical conditions and infrastructure in higher education institutions, physical accessibility problems; study material accessibility problems; psychological boundaries, preconceived attitude; lack of information counseling and special services; financial problems; accommodation problems.	FI		A case when using MSN messenger was allowed during classes in order to make it possible for deaf students to communicate
		IS	There is no program for helping and encouraging disabled people. They have to search and ask for help only themselves.	
Students from disadvanta-ged socio economic back-grounds	Financial problems (covering tuition fees, transport, rent) high level of investment necessary to undertake HE. Tuition fees are only a part of them; academic barriers – usually students from low socio-economic background are worse educated in secondary education and thus faces problems to enroll in free places in HEIs ...	AT	Tuition fees facilitates difficulties in compatibility of studies and work	Grant Systems

Students from disadvanta-ged socio economic back-grounds	Financial problems (covering tuition fees, transport, rent) high level of invest-ment necessary to undertake HE. Tui-tion fees are only a part of them; academic barriers – usually students from low socio-eco-nomic background are worse edu-cated in secondary education and thus faces problems to enroll in free places in HEIs. In the system, in which students have to compete for free education among each other, usually students who get state-paid education are the ones coming from better educated and more affluent families; typical orientation on spe-cific studies; unjust mark system; less cultural capital within the family and interconnected problems of fam-ily/peer support to study.	BE	They are at the risk of drop out or not con-tinuing higher level studies for different rea-sons, e.g., first failures or even attitude from professors	
		CH	Very inefficient-ly and fairly functioning grant and tui-tion fee system	
		MT	Marginaliza-tion. General lack of motiva-tion both from the part of the student as well as the motiva-tor.	Increasing the levels of state schools (free schooling). Government is motivating and increasing participation and access to vocational courses at high-er education institutions. Increasing public access to studying 'luxuries' such as internet, etc.
		GE		Some scholar-ships form university to support these students.
		SI	Existence of tuition fees.	Access to grants
		PL	Low number of books avail-able in libraries which forces students to buy costly new ones (or copy)	

Immigrants/ migrant background students	Obstacles appears already in earlier stages of education, where this group in not well represented, and this leads to risk of drop out possibilities and inequalities in higher education; financial obstacles; socio-cultural obstacles; social isolation due to cultural differences; lack of social support (in family, society, secondary school); preconceived attitude; insufficient language skills (e.g., to prepare for entrance exams); recognition of secondary education;	BE	Thinking that it is an individual problem and therefore not providing study facilities or counseling for students from migrant backgrounds. Preconceived thinking like: »We can not lower the standards, so confusion special action to compensate certain boundaries with positive discrimination«; »If we make an effort, we'll be the institution of the immigrants«;	In a lot of higher education institutions student organizations have mobilized themselves trying to help to solve problems of migrant students. Some institutions offer a course in 'academic Dutch'. Some institutions have special actions and projects aimed at attracting more migrant students.
		NO	Language barrier – sufficient language courses are not offered at all higher education institutions, and many courses are not taught in English.	Increased funding from the state to International students union (ISU). Some student welfare organizations guarantee student housing for international students.
		DK	Social isolation due to cultural differences.	Language learning help activities, multicultural social events.

Immigrants/ migrant background students	Obstacles appears already in earlier stages of education, where this group in not well represented, and this leads to risk of drop out possibilities and inequalities in higher education; financial obstacles; socio-cultural obstacles; social isolation due to cultural differences; lack of social support (in family, society, secondary school); preconceived attitude; insufficient language skills (e.g., to prepare for entrance exams); recognition of secondary education;	FI	Tutoring and guidance does not fulfill the needs of immigrants. Language barriers to access practical information and understand existing legal rights.	Offering preparatory studies to immigrants before entering higher education studies. Public discussion on the possibilities of immigrants in higher education
		IS	There is no support in any way to immigrants in higher education.	
		IT	In the region of Veneto students coming from abroad (either EU or non-EU) are not entitled to the same rights as the Italians (in terms of grants, student accommodation, ect.). According to national union of students, this is illegal and the national union of students has started a trial against the region to eliminate this discrimination.	

Ethnic minority students	Financial obstacles; poverty; socio-cultural obstacles; social isolation due to cultural differences; lack of social support (in fhamily, society, secondary school); psychological barrier (mainly low educated); lack of confidence; negative self-evaluation; language barrier, limited number of/not existing courses in minority languages; lack of information and counselling; no contact with the »academic world«; lack of understanding about the benefits that HE can give; discriminating entrance exams; lack of positive role models; study choice of this group is very much affected	IT	In the region of Veneto students coming from abroad (either EU or non-EU) are not entitled to the same rights as the Italians (in terms of grants, student accommodation, ect.). According to national union of students, this is illegal and the national union of students has started a trial against the region to eliminate this discrimination.	
		RO	Lack of preparatory/ transitional courses for students with non-Romanian backgrounds	Specialized places are reserved for Roma youth in higher education.
		NO		The University of Oslo started 4 years ago a project (MiFA) focussing on empowering this group. The results were good. NSU is working on taking this project up at the national level, at all the universities and universities colleges.

Ethnic Minority Students	Financial obstacles; poverty; socio-cultural obstacles; social isolation due to cultural differences; lack of social support (in fhamily, society, secondary school); psychological barrier (mainly low educated); lack of confidence; negative self-evaluation; language barrier, limited number of/not existing courses in minority languages; lack of information and counselling; no contact with the »academic world«; lack of understanding about the benefits that HE can give; discriminating entrance exams; lack of positive role models; study choice of this group is very much affected	EE	There are approximately 30% of Russian in the population of Estonia, but Russians acquiring higher education is only a small minority. There are many reasons for this: 1) Higher education is taught mainly in Estonian language. There are very few curriculums taught in other languages. As integration in Estonia isn't very successful and majority of ethnic Russians form a separate community, it is very hard for them to learn Estonian which isn't the easiest language to learn. This could be considered the main obstacle. 2) To start studying in higher education institution, people need to pass high national school graduation exams,	There are universities where students who don't speak Estonian can have special course before they start their studies to learn Estonian and it must be free of charge for students. More courses are available in other languages

		EE	incl. compulsory Estonian language exam. For most HEIs these exams are considered entrance exams. 53% of students in Estonia pay tuition fees varying between 640€ - 6400€ per year. Social support for students is very low, approx. 50€ per month. This is distributed on the basis of grades and is only accessible to 14% of all students. Students depend on their parents' allowance or their own means. As it is more likely that parents of people belonging to this group don't have very big incomes, HE can be just too expensive for them. 3) There is a lack of counseling and too few positive role models which can lead to people not even considering HE	

Ethnic Minority Students	Financial obstacles; poverty; socio-cultural obstacles; social isolation due to cultural differences; lack of social support (in fhamily, society, secondary school); psychological barrier (mainly low educated); lack of confidence; negative self-evaluation; language barrier, limited number of/not existing courses in minority languages; lack of information and counselling; no contact with the »academic world«; lack of understanding about the benefits that HE can give; discriminating entrance exams; lack of positive role models; study choice of this group is very much affected	FI	Ethnic minorities are underrepresented in higher education.	There is public discussion going on about discrimination of certain minorities.
		PL		There are scholarships for students from rural areas provided by the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture (parents not holding higher education degree much more often live in rural areas).
Female students	gender stereotypic induced reasons; lack of confidence in one's success, other invisible obstacles.	AT	male oriented studies; care for children is solely a responsibility of women	Gender quotas for employed university staff.

Female Students	gender stereotypic induced reasons; lack of confidence in one's success, other invisible obstacles.	BE		Weakening the orientation and the importance of choosing particular study fields. Female professors and students are encouraged to choose and study further at more different study fields.
		FR	Continuing prevention from choosing certain study fields.	Campaigning to promote participation of women in higher education and science.
		HR	Cases of sexual harassment (there even are official judgment against some professors).	There are some NGOs informing society about similar problems.
		SI	Girls have better grades in secondary education and thus easier access to higher education, but in higher education they face discrimination.	
Roma/ Gypsy students	Obstacles in earlier stages of education, even primary & secondary school; lack of financial resources and motivation to pursue HE; significant social exclusion	BG		Existence of some special courses.

Roma/Gypsy Students	Obstacles in earlier stages of education, even primary & secondary school; lack of financial resources and motivation to pursue HE; significant social exclusion	CZ	Very low number of representatives in higher education	
International students	Language barriers; limited number of/no courses offered in foreign languages; Entrance barriers – additional exams to international students; administrative barriers (e.g., visa, work permits).	NO	Sufficient language courses are not offered at all higher education institutions, and many courses are not taught in English.	Increased funding from the state to International students union (ISU). Some student welfare organizations guarantee student housing for international students.
		CY	The teaching language in the university is Greek so international students are unable to study there, but only in the colleges.	
		FR	Foreign students coming without convention and outside the EU are not welcome.	Student association organizes Welcome days to help these students.
		SK		Foreign students offered same advantages as national students

LGBT Students	Negative attitude and other forms of discrimination from both teachers and other students	IT	There are quite a lot of ways in which these students are discriminated and most of them are related to teachers or students making fun of them during exams or lectures.	The University »La Sapienza« in Rome has decided to register all transsexual students (even if they have not already changed sex) with the name and the sex they feel to be part of.
		LT	Discriminating attitude and keeping distance.	LGBT students participate in the activities organized by student organizations.
Mature Students	Entrance barriers – either the same entrance criteria's as for ordinary students or even additional exams at the entrance to higher education; Studying obstacles – not addressing specific needs of mature students in the higher education (e.g., not adjusted schedule)	CY	A mature students (age of 23+ for females and 25+ for males) don't receive 1000 pounds grant from the government.	If mature students don't pass the national exams to ensure their entry in the University, they have a second chance with an extra 5% of extra places if their score is 90% of the last student's score that enter in the University.
		PT	HEIs are not prepared for teaching mature students: there are no support structures, adjustable schedules and curricula, there are no preparatory courses before entering HE	Successfully functioning recognition of prior learning and integration of work elements in curricula of some polytechnics.

Part-time students	Tuition fees; no aid to pay them; less study programs available for part time students in comparison to full time students.	IE	No grant aid or tuition fee aid	
		SK	HEIs are not willing to adjust schedules of lectures and exams to the needs of part time students, who have to be at work at the time of studies.	Part-time students get valuable experience from working life.
Students with family/ children	Nursery provision in institutions; funding available for students; accomdation problems	UK-SCT		Nursery provision is getting better
		SI	Problems with lodging in student's hall of resistance for partner.	
Non-manual work students	[national union of students of Ireland currently conducts a research about this group]			
Students from non-academic background	Lack of support and information			
Students from Rural Background	Lack of quality in rural secondary education; pressure to start working earlier (especially in such fields as agriculture)	RO	Rural students have almost no access to counseling and information services unlike urban youth, even though they need it more.	There are scholarships for rural youth.

table 05: National actors arguing in favour of tuition fees according to national unions of students

Country	Actors
CH	Economy and industry organizations, parties (liberal, nationalistic and conservative)
FR	President of the French Republic
GE	Sometimes even students themselves are not against tuition fees, because they see a lot of problems in higher education, which they would like to be solved.
IS	Political parties, parliamentarians, congressmen, some departments within Universities (e.g. department of business, economics), also some students.
LT	The Ruling Parties
PL	Labour Marlet
RO	Universities depend on tuition fees as one of their largest sources of income, and they often increase the number of students they enlist, in order to bring in more money from tuition fees.
SI	Private Stakeholders
UK-SCT	Right-wing think-tanks, one political party (out of 4)
PT	Groups of academics apart from higher education institution, private higher education institutions
CZ	A part of academic community (some of former rectors and deans); representatives of industry; neo-liberally oriented think-tanks; some »independent« institutions, e.g., Institute for Social and Economic Analyses – some of its members are preparing »White Book of Tertiary Education« for the Ministry of Education, in which implementation of tuition fees is proposed.

table 06: Negative effects from tuition fees according to national unions of students

Country	Effects of Tuition Fees
FI	HEIs turn from places of academic thinking into factories of mechanic learning; Commodiffication of education
HU	This year the number of applications to higher education institutions dropped by 18%.
IS	Social discrimination: some people are prevented from access to higher education. Education becomes a product that students (consumers) buy – which will also effect the relationship between students and teachers and grade inflation.
IT	Most of the students are obliged to work to pay for the tuition fees or for their living and this affects negatively their academic results.
NUS-UK	The variable nature of fees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the different funding systems across the different parts of the UK means that - particularly if tuition fees are increased and a full market emerges - students may start choosing institutions and courses based on costs, rather than the quality or content of the course on offer. Institutions are already aggressively »marketing« themselves based on bursaries, scholarships and other financial support on offer.
PT	The different level of tuition fees between universities and polytechnics (due to competition reasons) reinforces a continuous differentiation of social groups having access to these two different higher education subsystems.
CZ	Decrease in public financing for public HEIs, commercialization of education; gradually formed abyss between a small group of elite and very expensive schools, and a numerous group of average and more or less affordable schools for the majority of students (i.e. »Americanization of higher education«); negative impact on the middle class (which is bad for social, economic and political stability)
SE	Less international students; the risk of implementation of tuition fees for all students in Sweden

table 07: alternative funding methods by country based on the National Reports 2005

Funding Method	Countries
sponsoring/advertisements/Public-Private-Partnerships	FR (France 2005: 7), HU (Hungary 2005: 6), LT (Lithuania 2005: 36)
tuition fees from specialised business oriented training courses	BE nl (Belgium Flanders: 5), IS (Iceland 2005: 7)
faculty tie ups (i.e. faculties teaching in collaboration with corporations)	BE nl (Belgium Flanders 2005: 5), CY (Cyprus 2005: 10), FI (in-service training) (Finland 2005: 10,13), UK (United Kingdom 2005: 13)
Research-for-a-fee	BE nl (Belgium Flanders 2005: 5), FI (Finland 2005: 13), SK (Slovakia 2005: 9), SI (Slovenia 2005: 9), ES (Spain 2005: 5), SE (Sweden 2005: 16), UK (United Kingdom 2005: 6)
Knowledge Transfer	AU (Austria 2005: 25), SI (Slovenia 2005: 9, 25), SE (Sweden 2005: 15), UK (United Kingdom 2005: 5,17)
Alumni/Donations	NO (Norway 2005: 11), PT (Portugal 2005: 11)
tuition fees	AT (Austria 2005: 13), HR (for private higher education) (Croatia 2005: 8), DK (for adult education) (Denmark 2005: 10) and Non-EU students (Denmark 2005: 21), FI (for adult education) (Finland 2005: 10), IE (private funding of adult training) (Ireland 2005: 35), LT (Lithuania 2005: 18), MT (Malta 2005: 14), PL (Poland 2005: 9), PT (Portugal 2005: 11), UK (United Kingdom 2005: 6)
voucher systems	BE nl (Belgium Flanders 2005: 5), UK (United Kingdom 2005: 7)
levy from enterprises	CY (Cyprus 2005: 10)
tax subsidies/ tax exemptions	CY (Cyprus 2005: 10), CZ (Czech Republic 2005: 10), FI (Finland 2005: 13), LT (Lithuania 2005: 17,36), PT (Portugal 2005: 11), SI (Slovenia 2005: 9), SE (Sweden 2005: 5)
EU (structural) funds/international funds	BG (Bulgaria 2005: 5), HR (Croatia 2005: 7), EE (Estonia 2005: 9,16,17), FI (Finland 2005: 11,13), FR (France 2005: 5), DE (Germany 2005: 28), EL (Greece 2005: 4), HU (Hungary 2005: 8,10, 18), LV (Latvia 2005: 19), LT (Lithuania 2005: 13), NL (Netherlands 2005: 7), RO (Romania 2005: 7), SK (Slovakia 2005: 18), SI (Slovenia 2005: 22), ES (Spain 2005: 5)

table 08: governance structures of higher education institutions externals are included in according to student unions

Austria	Universitätsrat (one of the three major bodies in universities)
Belgium nl	At some institutions in advisory bodies
Bulgaria	board of trustees
Switzerland	council of higher education
Germany	Higher Education Councils
Denmark	Boards
Estonia	Council, committees, advisory body
Spain	In the Social University Council
Finland	In the boards of higher education institutions
Finland	The senate (The supreme executive body). Also it is possible that university has externals also in other bodies.
France	Boards
Georgia	Quality Insurance, Policy making, Funding.
Hungary	In every higher education institution there is a so called financial council, which are consultative bodies for the rectors
Ireland	On governing authorities, the highest decision making bodies in higher education institution's
Iceland	Boards
Iceland	Boards, decision making bodies
Italy	1) For public higher education institutions: Each university has its own governance system. Some times the representatives of the city council is involved in the Council of Administration of the University; 2) For private: It changes quite a lot. In some of them there are even church representatives, or company representatives
Lithuania	Councils, in some Senates
Malta	University Council (i.e. the administrative board of university)
Netherlands	Supervisory Board
Norway	At the local level- universities: there should be externals sitting in almost each board. This is written in the law of university and college.
Norway	At least 4 of the 11 members of the university/college board must be externals.

Poland	Externals are included in governance in Higher Vocational Schools (in translation – they are comparable to Polytechnics in Europe) both public and private: There are two basic structures in such schools: The senate – main decision making body. There is respective representation of academic teachers from universities (or academic higher schools) – the level depends on the statutes of higher education institution Convent – mainly with power of giving opinions to financial decisions, candidate for rector but also adopts introducing new specialization, limits of enrolment, agreements with companies. Convent involves representative of local self-governments, scientific and vocational institution, labour market. The level of representation is specified in the statutes of higher education institution. In private higher education institutions there is usually representative of the founder of higher education institution.
Sweden	In the higher education institution boards.
Slovenia	Board of trusties at one public university
Slovakia	All universities must have externals included in their governance.
United Kingdom (England)	Mostly governing bodies, audit and finance committees as well as fundraising bodies
United Kingdom (Scotland)	Governing body and its major committees are normally chaired by externals

table 09: Integration of ICT in the learning process in higher education by country

Country	Is ICT integrated in the learning process in higher education?
Austria	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (18) Use of ICT in delivering content (25) development of e-learning programmes promoted (19)
Belgium (Flanders)	development of e-learning programmes promoted (13)
Bulgaria	integration of ICT in learning process insufficient (4) Aim of using ICT in delivery of content (10) Aim of training teachers to obtain ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (10)
Croatia	no action specified/planned
Cyprus	ICT used in learning process focus on ICT literacy of students (14)
Czech Republic	ICT used in learning process (20) focus on ICT literacy of students (27)
Denmark	no action specified/planned
Estonia	ICT used in learning process (15, 26) focus on ICT literacy of students (16, 26) training teachers to obtain ICT skills (26)
Finland	Aim of using ICT in transmission of content ICT used in learning process focus on ICT literacy of students Aim of training teachers to obtain ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (6)
France	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (16) focus on ICT literacy of students (4) development of e-learning programmes in regional or theme based digital universities promoted (5)
Germany	integration of ICT for administrative purposes development of e-learning programmes (18)
Greece	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (2)
Hungary	Aim of using ICT in transmission of content focus on ICT literacy of students Aim of training teachers to obtain ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (14)
Iceland	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (12-13) development of e-learning programmes (12, 21)

Ireland	Aim of using ICT in transmission of content (19-20) ICT used in learning process focus on ICT literacy of students development of e-learning programmes (23)
Italy	development of e-learning programmes at 4 virtual universities (7)
Latvia	development of e-learning programmes (15)
Lithuania	No action specified/planned
Malta	development of e-learning programmes (9, 12)
Netherlands	development of e-learning programmes (15)
Norway	focus on ICT literacy of students (16) ICT used in learning process (17) development of e-learning programmes (22)
Poland	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (Lewandowska 2005: 4-5)
Portugal	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (20) focus on ICT literacy of students (20) Aim of using ICT in transmission of content (21) development of e-learning programmes at a virtual university (20)
Romania	integration of ICT for administrative purposes (21) development of e-learning programmes (21) training teachers in ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (31)
Slovakia	aim to use ICT for administrative purposes (16) use of ICT in transmission of content (13) aim to use ICT in learning process (16) aim to develop e-learning programmes (13, 16)
Slovenia	use of ICT in transmission of content (24) use of ICT in learning process (24)
Spain	use of ICT in learning process (9)
Sweden	use of ICT in learning process (12) develop e-learning programmes (12) develop Virtual University (12)
Turkey	use ICT for administrative purposes (12-13) use of ICT in transmission of content (12-13) use of ICT in learning process (7) develop e-learning programmes (12-13) training teachers to obtain ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (12-13)
United Kingdom	use ICT for administrative purposes (14) use of ICT in transmission of content (14) use of ICT in learning process (14) training teachers to obtain ICT skills and include ICT in learning process (14)

ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Albania
AT	Austria
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BE	Belgium
BE fr	Belgium French Community
BE nl	Belgium Flemish Community
BG	Bulgaria
CH	Switzerland
CHEPS	Center for Higher Education Policy Studies, University Twente
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DE	Germany
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free-Trade Area
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
ESIB	The National Unions of Students in Europe (former name of ESU)

ESU	European Students' Union (formerly known as ESIB)
EU	European Union
FI	Finland
FR	France
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Georgia
HE	higher education
HEI	higher education institution
HR	Croatia
HU	Hungary
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IE	Ireland
IS	Iceland
IT	Italy
LT	Lithuania
LV	Latvia
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
NO	Norway
PL	Poland

PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
RS	Serbia
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovak Republic
TR	Turkey
UK	United Kingdom
UK-ENG	United Kingdom, England
UK-SCT	United Kingdom, Scotland

TABLE OF FIGURES

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