

# 1. CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

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## Chapter outline

Ministers of the 47 countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) agreed on the common future priorities of the EHEA but they are facing very different contexts when implementing their higher education policies. This first chapter of the report sets the EHEA scene in which the higher education systems evolve. It provides insights on the student population in the EHEA area (section 1), on the structure of higher education systems in terms of institutions (section 2) and on higher education expenditure throughout the EHEA (section 3).

## 1.1. Student population

There are around 37.8 million tertiary students in the EHEA (academic year 2011/12). Most of them (nearly 80 %) are enrolled in theoretically-based programmes (ISCED level 5A<sup>1</sup>) in the first two cycles, while only 20 % are in programmes that are more occupationally specific (ISCED level 5B). Students in the third cycle (ISCED level 6 i.e. programmes that lead directly to the award of an advanced research qualification) account for 2.7 % of the total tertiary student population.

The size of the student population is very diverse in the 47 countries of the EHEA and reflects the demographic characteristics of each country. Demographic conditions (i.e. the size of young age cohorts) impact student enrolments in tertiary education but other inter-related factors also affect the size of the population of students: the size of the eligible population (i.e. persons with qualification required to enter tertiary education); the effective entry in tertiary education conditioned by the particular aspirations of the eligible population, the selection criteria for admission, existing alternative opportunities in the labour market, the cost of participation and the potential gain of completing tertiary education; the theoretical length of studies (which in turn depends on the structure of the programmes supplied by tertiary education system) and the effective duration of studies (impacted by the drop-out rate and part-time attendance among other things) (OECD 2008)<sup>2</sup>.

The total number of tertiary students (i.e. ISCED levels 5A, 5B and 6) vary between 960 in Liechtenstein to 8 732 579 in Russia which takes up slightly more than 23 % of the student population in the whole EHEA area while students in the five countries with the highest number of tertiary education students (Russia, Turkey, Germany, the United Kingdom and Ukraine) represent slightly more than 55 %. Apart from these countries, France, Poland, Spain and Italy have more than 1 900 000 students, while there are less than 200 000 in 18 countries of the EHEA (out of those where data is available).

The picture is rather different when considering the population of students in the second stage of tertiary education (ISCED level 6) only. The four countries with the highest number of students in the second stage of tertiary education (Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and France) represent nearly 53 %. With 208 500 students, nearly 21 % of the EHEA students at this level of education are

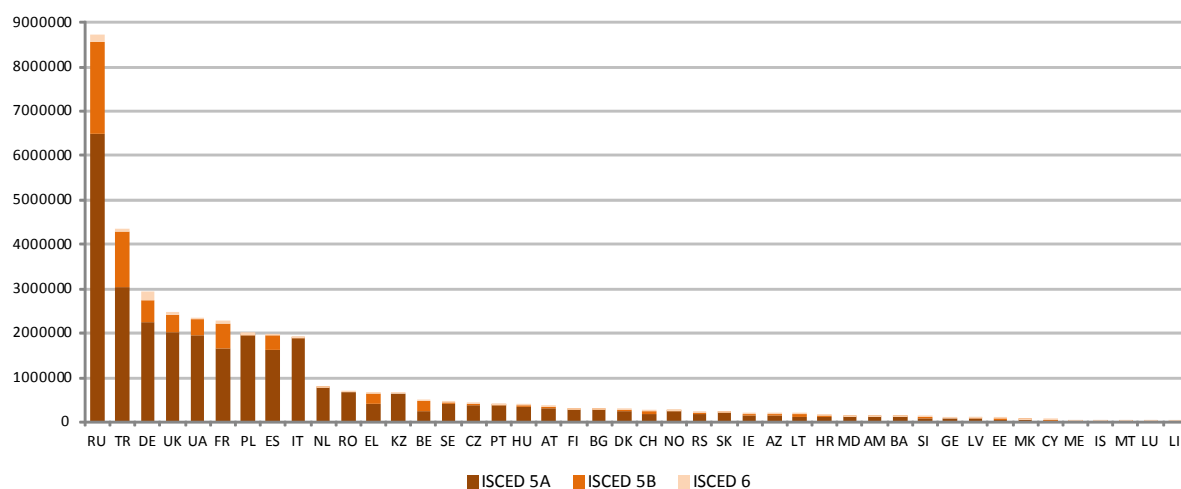
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<sup>1</sup> When the source of the data is Eurostat, ISCED refers to the ISCED97 classification.

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2008), "What is the Impact of Demography on Higher Education Systems? A Forward-looking Approach for OECD Countries" Higher Education to 2030, Volume 1: Demography, Chapter 2

enrolled in Germany while 15.9 % of them are enrolled in Russia. At the other end of the spectrum, there are less the 2 000 students at this level in 20 countries of the EHEA for which data is available.

**Figure 1.1: Number of students enrolled in tertiary education by ISCED level, 2011/12**



Number	RU	TR	DE	UK	UA	FR	PL	ES	IT	NL	RO	EL	KZ
TOTAL	8732579	4353542	2939463	2495780	2347380	2296306	2007212	1965829	1925930	793678	705333	663698	629507
ISCED 5A	6490002	3031232	2240603	2010039	1954789	1649057	1953696	1621895	1887038	765252	681515	415773	627919
ISCED 5B	2081736	1270351	490360	390792	356768	576668	13253	321392	4263	15884	:	224478	:
ISCED 6	160841	51959	208500	94949	35823	70581	40263	22542	34629	12542	23818	23447	1588
Number	BE	SE	CZ	PT	HU	AT	FI	BG	DK	CH	NO	RS	SK
TOTAL	477712	453328	440230	390273	380757	376498	308924	284995	275009	269573	238224	231661	221227
ISCED 5A	228327	404482	381255	370972	331455	310011	288645	264082	232820	191844	229135	178789	206231
ISCED 5B	235217	27494	32870	74	42048	40436	84	16210	33230	55717	871	47322	2851
ISCED 6	14168	21352	26105	19227	7254	26052	20195	4703	8959	22012	8218	5550	12145
Number	IE	AZ	LT	HR	MD	AM	BA	SI	GE	LV	EE	MK	CY
TOTAL	192647	184834	175066	157289	124784	120733	115907	104003	99376	97041	67607	63318	31772
ISCED 5A	143937	147774	122414	104656	105588	106855	115036	82781	95110	77697	43765	60940	22604
ISCED 5B	39780	35978	49777	49398	17321	12779	659	17124	:	16821	20791	1921	8458
ISCED 6	8930	1082	2875	3235	1875	1099	212	4098	4266	2523	3051	457	710
Number	ME	IS	MT	LU	LI								
TOTAL	25313	19099	12203	6085	960								
ISCED 5A	20690	18388	10498	4320	854								
ISCED 5B	4532	259	1628	1375	:								
ISCED 6	91	452	77	390	106								

Notes: [To be included]. Countries are sorted by total number of students in tertiary education.

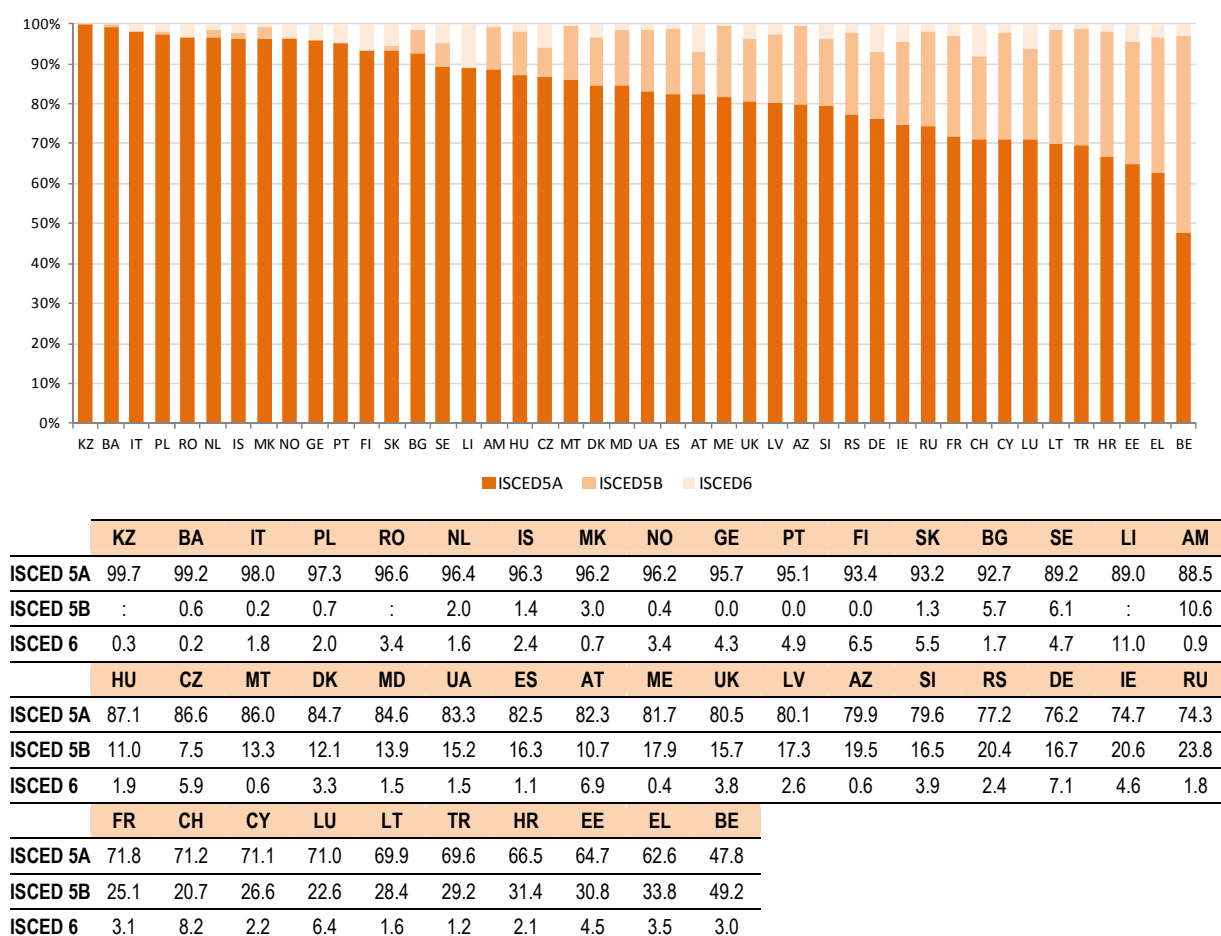
Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Countries of the EHEA also largely differ in the composition of their tertiary student population in terms of level of education. This reveals differences in terms of supply of educational programmes (i.e. between programmes with an academic orientation which are largely theoretically based – ISCED level 5A – and those with an occupational orientation which are typically shorter and designed to enter to the labour market – ISCED level 5B<sup>3</sup>) but also in terms of the aspiration of students regarding the type of programmes in which they wish to enrol.

<sup>3</sup> Despite it is specified in the ISCED97 classification, the distinction between academic and vocational orientation of programmes in tertiary education might be considered as artificial: one may consider that most graduates from ISCED 5A programmes enter “non academic” labour markets after completion.

In all EHEA countries except Belgium, a majority of tertiary students are enrolled in programmes with an academic orientation that are theoretically based (ISCED level 5A). Such programmes account for 63 % of the total student population in Greece and nearly all students in Italy, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kazakhstan. In seven EHEA countries (Greece, Croatia, Estonia, Turkey, Lithuania, Cyprus and France), at least a quarter of the student population is enrolled in programmes with an occupational orientation (ISCED level 5B) while in Belgium they are 49 %. Students in doctoral programmes usually account for less than 5 % of the student population in the EHEA with the exception of eight countries where they represent a higher proportion despite standing below 9 % of the total student population (except in Liechtenstein where the 106 students in doctoral programmes represent 11 % of the total population of students).

**Figure 1.2: Distribution of students enrolled in tertiary level of education by ISCED level, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]. Countries are sorted by number of students enrolled at ISCED level 5A.

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The EHEA countries show a mixed picture when looking at the changes in the total student population between some of the most recent key milestones of the Bologna process (i.e. between 2005/06 and 2008/09 and between 2008/09 and 2011/12) and when considering the entire time period. Changes in the student population through time result from the influence of multiple factors. It should also be borne in mind that demographic changes (i.e. an increase or a decrease of a cohort) will only gradually affect the higher education system because of the “continued impact of past cohorts” (OECD 2008)<sup>4</sup>

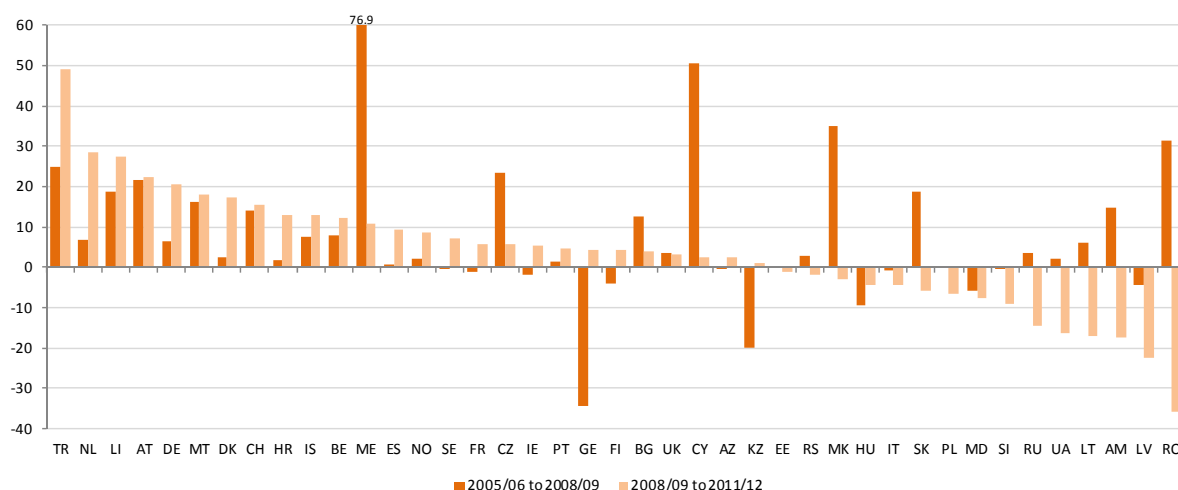
<sup>4</sup> OECD (2008), "What is the Impact of Demography on Higher Education Systems? A Forward-looking Approach for OECD Countries" Higher Education to 2030, Volume 1: Demography, Chapter 2

The total number of students enrolled in tertiary education is lower in 2012 than in 2006 in nearly one third of the EHEA countries for which data is available. This decrease is the most pronounced in Georgia (-31.5 %), Latvia (-26 %), Kazakhstan (-18.8 %) and Romania (-15.5 %) when comparing the two academic years despite the four countries showing different patterns within this time period. Georgia and Kazakhstan recorded a strong decrease in the number of students between 2006 and 2009 while showing a limited rise between 2009 and 2012. Latvia registered two consecutive decreases in the total number of students. In Romania the strong growth in the number of student in 2009 compared to 2006 was superseded by the decline in 2012 compared to 2009.

The number of tertiary students declined during the two time periods in Hungary, Italy, Moldova and Slovenia. In Italy and Slovenia, the decrease in the number of tertiary student was moderate between 2005/06 and 2008/09 but more pronounced during the second period of time. Overall, the decline of the student population range between 5 % in Italy and 13 % in Moldova and Hungary.

On the other hand, the total number of tertiary students strongly increased in Luxembourg – where it more than doubled (from 2692 students in 2006 to 6085 in 2012) –, Montenegro (+96 %) and Turkey (+86 %). Both Montenegro and Turkey register high increases over both periods. Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Austria, the Netherlands and Malta show an increase of more than one third of their student population in 2012 compared to 2006. All these countries are among the half of EHEA countries where the total number of students increased during the two periods.

**Figure 1.3: Change in the total number of students enrolled in tertiary education between 2005/06 and 2008/09 and/or between 2008/09 and 2011/12**



	TR	NL	LI	AT	DE	MT	DK	CH	HR	IS	BE	ME	ES	NO	SE	FR	CZ
2005/06 to 2008/09	24.8	6.7	18.6	21.7	6.5	16.0	2.5	13.9	1.8	7.6	7.8	76.9	0.6	2.1	0.0	-1.3	23.5
2008/09 to 2011/12	48.9	28.3	27.3	22.2	20.5	17.9	17.2	15.5	13.1	12.9	12.3	10.9	9.2	8.6	7.3	5.7	5.6
2005/06 to 2011/12	85.8	36.9	50.9	48.7	28.4	36.8	20.1	31.5	15.1	21.5	21.1	96.2	9.9	11.0	7.3	4.3	30.5
	IE	PT	GE	FI	BG	UK	CY	AZ	KZ	EE	RS	MK	HU	IT	SK	PL	MD
2005/06 to 2008/09	-1.8	1.5	-34.4	-4.0	12.6	3.4	50.5	-0.6	-19.8	0.2	2.9	34.8	-9.4	-0.9	18.7	0.2	-6.0
2008/09 to 2011/12	5.5	4.6	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.3	2.5	2.5	1.1	-1.2	-1.8	-2.9	-4.3	-4.3	-5.9	-6.6	-7.7
2005/06 to 2011/12	3.5	6.3	-31.5	0.0	17.1	6.8	54.3	2.0	-18.9	-1.0	1.0	30.9	-13.2	-5.1	11.8	-6.5	-13.2
	SI	RU	UA	LT	AM	LV	RO	EL	LU								
2005/06 to 2008/09	-0.4	3.4	2.1	6.0	14.6	-4.4	31.5	:	:								
2008/09 to 2011/12	-9.1	-14.4	-16.1	-16.9	-17.2	-22.6	-35.8	:	:								



2011/12										
2005/06 to 2011/12	-9.4	-11.5	-14.3	-12.0	-5.1	-26.0	-15.5	1.6	126.0	

Notes: [To be included]. Countries are sorted by the percentage change between 2008/09 and 2011/12.

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

As mentioned above, the total population of students is impacted by the cohort effect (e.g. a decline or an increase in the population of younger cohorts would impact, other things being equal, the population of students with a time lag). Information on the trend of the total population of students should thus be balanced by information on the enrolment rate, which compares the total population of students with the population of a specific age group. The share of the population aged 18-34 that is enrolled in tertiary education provides insight on the capacity of the education system to enrol students of this age group. However, the age group under consideration is broader than the theoretical age group, which is difficult to determine as education systems still largely differ across countries. The theoretical age at which secondary general education ends varies between 17 and a half years old (e.g. Genel Liseler or Anadolu Liseleri in Turkey) and 21-years old for some programmes in Sweden (Eurydice 2013<sup>5</sup>). Furthermore, the enrolment rate is impacted by the duration of programmes and study. Countries with, on average, shorter average study duration would have a lower enrolment rate than countries with higher study duration even if the share of an age cohort enrolled in tertiary education is the same between the two countries.

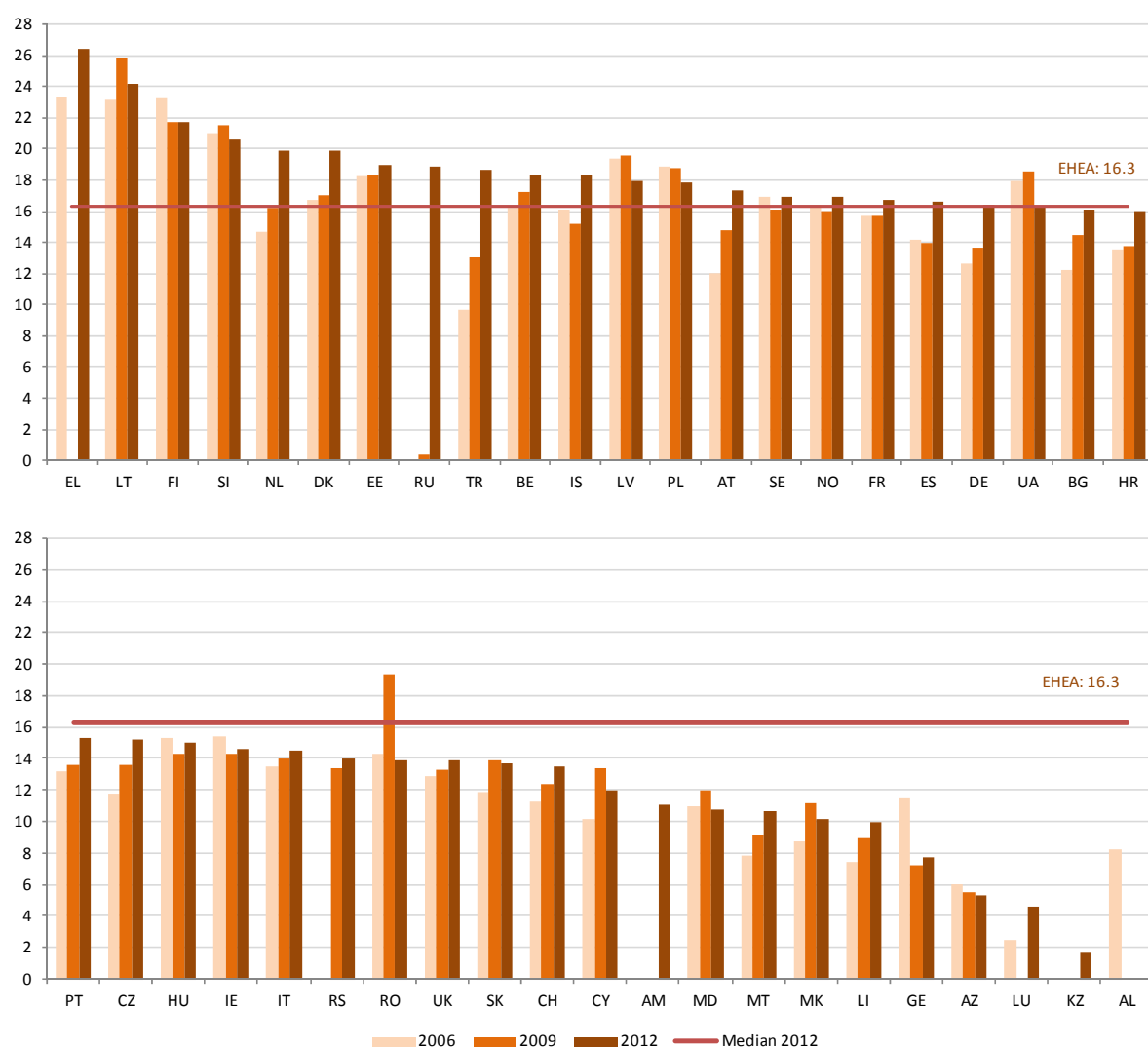
EHEA countries show different levels of enrolment rate of the 18-34 years old in tertiary education. In Greece, slightly more than one fourth of the 18-34 years olds are enrolled in tertiary education. Lithuania, Finland, Slovenia, the Netherlands and Denmark also experience high participation rates, approaching 20 % or beyond. At the end of the spectrum, the participation rate in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Luxembourg and Kazakhstan is below 10 %.

Enrolment of 18-34 years old as a percentage of the population of the same age group, increased in 2012 compared to 2006 and 2009 in half of the countries for which data is available. This confirms the trend towards the development of tertiary education in some countries complemented, for some of them, by increasing inflows of degree mobile students (see Chapter 7). Furthermore, in 2012, half of the EHEA countries for which data is available show an enrolment rate higher than 16.3 % (against 14.3 % in 2009 and 13.5 % in 2006). In Latvia, Romania and Georgia, the percentage of the 18-34 in tertiary education decreased by 1.5 percentage point (pp), 0.4 pp and 3.8 pp respectively. This suggests that the decrease of the population of students is not exclusively explained by demographic factors in these countries. Similarly, the percentage of the population aged 18-34 enrolled in tertiary education is lower in 2012 than in 2006 in Hungary, Slovenia and Moldova. Italy shows a different pattern: while the number of students decreased over the period, the enrolment rate (of the 18-34 population) stands at 14.5 % in 2012 which is 1 pp higher than in 2006.

Five other EHEA countries (Azerbaijan, Poland, Ireland, Finland and Ukraine) experience a lower enrolment rate of the 18-34 years old population in 2012 than in 2006 in conjunction with a decrease of the population of tertiary students (Poland and Ukraine), little change (Finland) and an increase (Ireland) in 2012 compared to 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Eurydice (2013) The structure of the European education systems 2013/14: schematic diagrams available at: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/facts\\_and\\_figures\\_en.php#diagrams](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/facts_and_figures_en.php#diagrams)

**Figure 1.4: Enrolment rates in tertiary education for the 18-34 years old (% of the total population aged 18-34), 2005/06, 2008/09, 2011/12**



	EL	LT	FI	SI	NL	DK	EE	RU	TR	BE	IS	LV	PL	AT	SE	NO	FR
2006	23.4	23.2	23.2	21.0	14.7	16.8	18.2	0.1	9.7	16.2	16.1	19.4	18.8	12.0	16.9	16.4	15.7
2009	:	25.8	21.7	21.5	16.3	17.0	18.4	0.3	13.0	17.2	15.2	19.6	18.8	14.8	16.1	16.0	15.7
2012	26.5	24.1	21.7	20.6	19.9	19.9	19.0	18.8	18.7	18.4	18.3	18.0	17.9	17.3	16.9	16.9	16.7
	ES	DE	UA	BG	HR	PT	CZ	HU	IE	IT	RS	RO	UK	SK	CH	CY	AM
2006	14.2	12.7	18.0	12.2	13.5	13.2	11.8	15.3	15.5	13.4	:	14.3	12.8	11.9	11.3	10.2	:
2009	14.0	13.6	18.6	14.5	13.8	13.6	13.6	14.3	14.3	14.0	13.4	19.4	13.3	13.9	12.4	13.4	:
2012	16.6	16.4	16.3	16.1	16.0	15.3	15.2	15.0	14.6	14.5	14.0	13.9	13.9	13.7	13.5	12.0	11.1
	MD	MT	MK	LI	GE	AZ	LU	KZ	AL								
2006	11.0	7.9	8.8	7.4	11.5	6.0	2.4	:	8.2								
2009	12.0	9.1	11.1	9.0	7.2	5.5	:	:	:								
2012	10.8	10.7	10.2	10.0	7.7	5.3	4.6	1.6	:								

Notes: [To be included]. Countries are sorted by enrolment rate in academic year 2011/12.

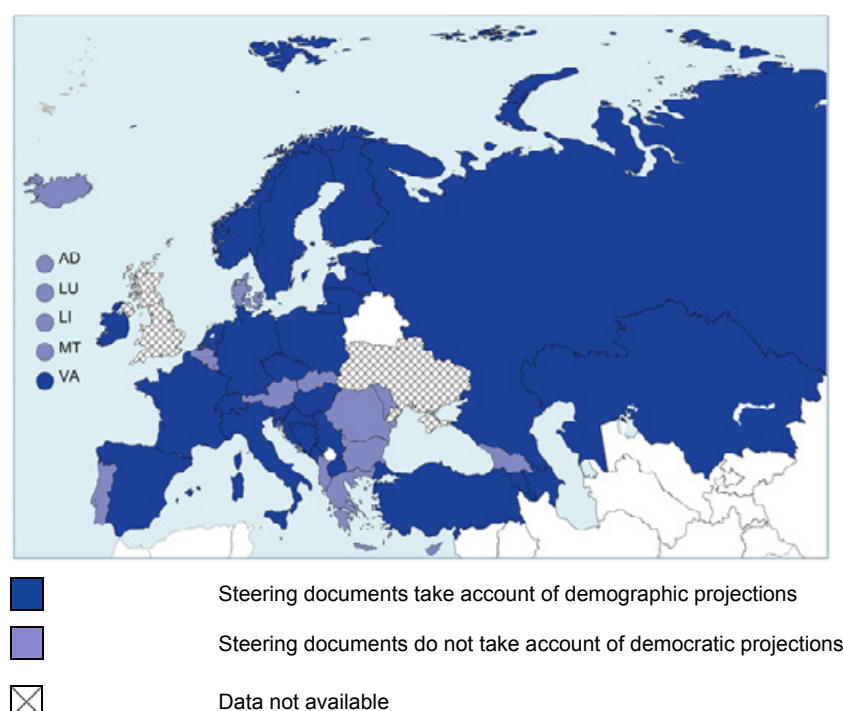
Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Demographic changes affecting the number of students have to be taken into consideration when designing higher education policies and goals. Figure 1.5 shows that in around 60 % of countries,

steering documents for higher education explicitly take account of demographic projections. On the one hand, many countries are concerned about the decreasing number of young people and how such changes will affect higher education participation and funding. On the other hand, several countries prepare for the increasing skills needs of an ageing population and the entry of non-traditional learners into higher education.

In comparison to 2012, seven Countries introduced demographic projections in their steering documents (Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Holy See, Italy, Latvia, Russia and Spain). Conversely, four countries registered the opposite: in Denmark, Georgia, Moldova and Romania demographic projections are not included anymore in steering documents.

**Figure 1.5: Demographic projections in steering documents for higher education policy, 2014/15**



## 1.2. Higher education institutions

The type and number of higher education institutions also vary among the EHEA countries. Higher education institutions can be academically or professionally oriented; can be publicly or privately founded and funded; or there might be other distinctions applied in a given country context.

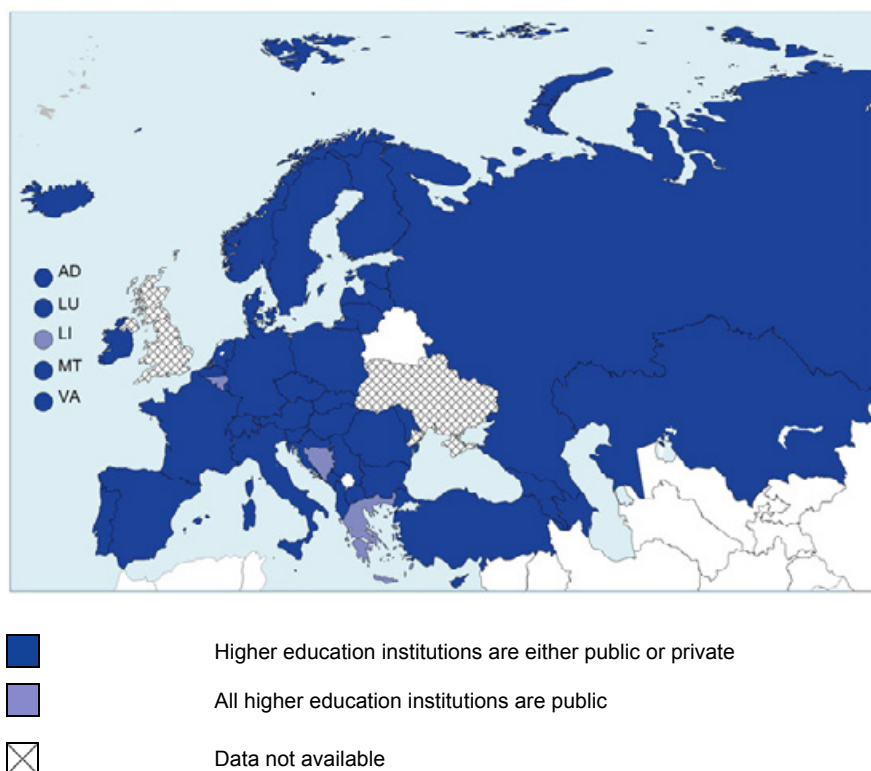
While higher education institutions can be academically or professionally oriented, this distinction is increasingly not clear-cut. In many countries, old differences between academically and professionally oriented institutions still exist formally, but – partly due to the Bologna Process – actual differences are diminishing or have ceased to exist altogether. For example, in many cases, both academically and professionally oriented institutions can offer academic and professional programmes. This also means that while there might be a (formal) distinction between the institutions, there are no differences between the degrees awarded. In other cases, there might be no distinction between institutions, but

there could still be a difference between the orientations of the study programmes offered. Therefore, it is impossible to create a clear typology of countries along this dimension.

A second possible distinction to be made is between public and private higher education institutions. This distinction refers mainly to the source of funding: whether higher education institutions are financed primarily from public or private sources (for a detailed definition, see the Glossary and methodological notes). This also means that privately founded higher education institutions funded mainly by the state or from public sources are considered as public institutions here.

Figure 1.6 shows in which countries the distinction between public and private institutions applies. As the figure shows, there are both public and private higher education institutions in the vast majority of the EHEA countries. However, the weight of private institutions within a country might differ. Whereas some countries have more private institutions than public ones, in many the number of private institutions is fairly small in comparison to public higher education institutions. All institutions are considered public in four education systems (Belgium (French Community), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liechtenstein and Greece).

**Figure 1.6: Types of higher education institutions: public or private (source of funding), 2014/15**



### 1.3. Public expenditure on higher education

European higher education institutions are funded predominantly by public sources. It is thus relevant to compare public expenditure on higher education in the EHEA. This section is devoted to such a comparison based on Eurostat indicators. Alone, none of the indicators presented below can provide a sufficient basis for comparing EHEA countries; but taken together they provide a broad overview of similarities and differences between them. The economic crisis had a strong impact on the level of

public funding of education and higher education systems were not spared (see EACEA/Eurydice, 2011b).

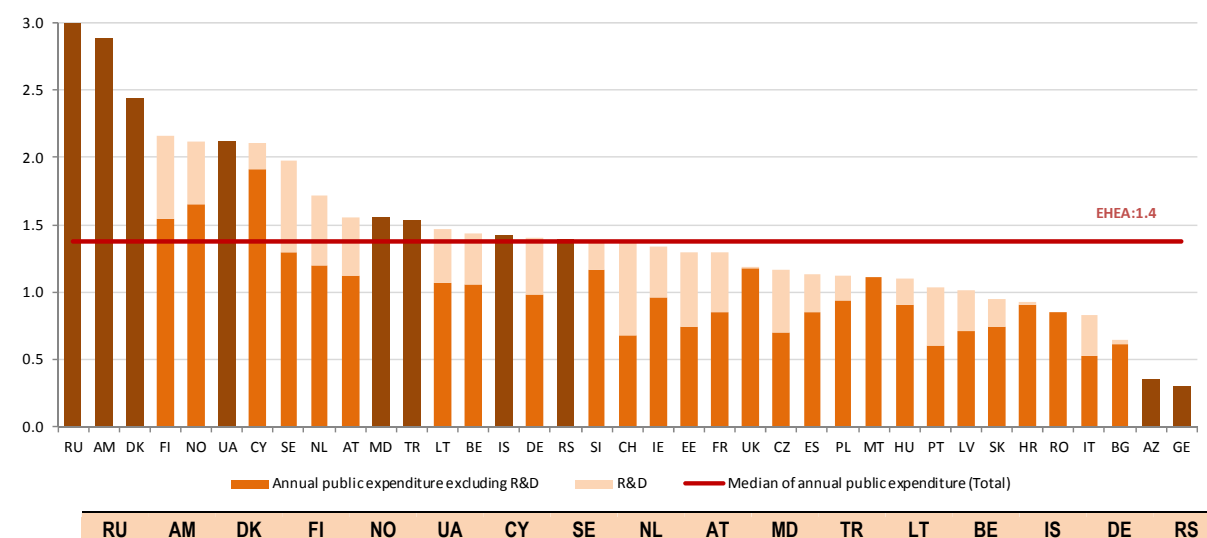
Annual public expenditure on tertiary education (which includes expenditure from all levels of government) not only covers the funding of universities and higher education institutions but also all other tertiary educational institutions which provide education-related services including entities administering education (e.g. ministries or department of education), entities providing ancillary services and entities performing educational research, curriculum development and educational policy analysis. Annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a percentage of GDP monitors the country's public financial effort in supporting its higher education system in relation to the strength of the country's economy.

Apart from expenditure on educational core goods and services (i.e. expenditure that is directly related to instruction and education e.g. expenditure on teachers, university and institutions' buildings, teaching materials, etc.), annual public expenditure also includes all expenditure on research performed at universities and other tertiary institutions and public expenditure on ancillary services (i.e. services provided by educational institutions that are peripheral to the main educational mission).

Half of the EHEA countries invest more than 1.3 % of their GDP in tertiary education and more than 0.4 % of their GDP for R&D activities at this level of education while the other half of EHEA countries invest less than these shares. Annual public expenditure on tertiary education is the highest in Nordic countries (from 2 % of GDP in Sweden to 2.4 % of GDP in Denmark), Cyprus (2.1 %), Ukraine (2.1 %), Armenia (3 %) and Russia (8.7 %). Within the EHEA area, annual public expenditure on tertiary education is the lowest and below 1 % of GDP in Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, Italy, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

In some EHEA countries, expenditure on R&D takes up a high part of annual public expenditure on tertiary education. Such direct R&D expenditure might be funded through different modes: institutional funding and/or project-based funding and depend on the overall institutional settings of EHEA countries' research systems. In Switzerland, R&D expenditure accounts for half of the annual expenditure on tertiary education and for 0.7 % of the GDP. Other EHEA countries such as Sweden (0.69 % of GDP), Finland (0.62 %), Estonia (0.55 %) and the Netherlands (0.52 %) also show high research intensity in the tertiary education sector. In these countries, public expenditure for educational core services and ancillary services at tertiary level are thus less than half of the annual public expenditure on tertiary education.

**Figure 1.7: Annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a % of GDP, 2011**



<b>TOTAL</b>	8.71	2.89	2.44	2.17	2.12	2.12	2.11	1.98	1.72	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.47	1.44	1.43	1.40	1.39
<b>R&amp;D</b>	:	:	:	0.62	0.46	:	0.20	0.69	0.52	0.44	:	:	0.40	0.38	:	0.42	:
	<b>SI</b>	<b>CH</b>	<b>IE</b>	<b>EE</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>CZ</b>	<b>ES</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>MT</b>	<b>HU</b>	<b>PT</b>	<b>LV</b>	<b>SK</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>RO</b>	<b>IT</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	1.37	1.37	1.34	1.29	1.29	1.19	1.16	1.13	1.13	1.11	1.10	1.04	1.01	0.95	0.93	0.85	0.83
<b>R&amp;D</b>	0.21	0.70	0.38	0.55	0.44	0.01	0.46	0.27	0.19	0.00	0.20	0.44	0.30	0.20	0.02	:	0.31
	<b>BG</b>	<b>AZ</b>	<b>GE</b>														
<b>TOTAL</b>	0.65	0.36	0.30														
<b>R&amp;D</b>	0.03	:	:														

Notes: [Source: UOE educ\_esms\_an20 – FA01\_4]

**Belgium:** Expenditure exclude independent private institutions and the German speaking Community.

**Denmark:** Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. R&D expenditure is not available. Expenditure excludes independent private institutions.

**Ireland:** Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Croatia:** Public transfers to private entities other than households are not available. Expenditure excludes independent private institutions. Data exclude local transfers and payments to private entities.

**Cyprus:** Including financial aid to students studying abroad.

**Portugal:** Expenditure at local level of government is not available. Expenditure for ancillary services is not available. Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. Student loans from public sources are not available. Public transfers to private entities other than households are not available.

**Slovakia:** Expenditure of ISC 5B is not included.

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The public financial effort directed to tertiary education can also be assessed against the total public expenditure. Indeed, in periods of public budget rationalisation and constraint, the analysis of annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a share of the total public expenditure indicates the relative priority attached to tertiary education compared to other levels of education and to other functions of public funding.

In 2011, half of the EHEA countries devoted more than 2.7 % of their total public expenditure to tertiary education. The EHEA countries that allocate the highest share of their public expenditure to tertiary education expenditure are Armenia (11.07 %), Norway (4.83 %), Ukraine (4.64 %), Cyprus (4.56 %), Denmark (4.23 %) and Switzerland (4.08 %). Few countries devote less than 2 % of their public funding to tertiary education: Croatia (1.94 %), Bulgaria (1.82 %), Italy (1.67 %) and Azerbaijan (1.06 %).

The trend of such indicator alone does not allow definite conclusions to be drawn with respect to the actual levels of tertiary education funding: changes in the proportion of expenditure on tertiary education result from the combination of two trends and their respective pace: the one of public expenditure on tertiary education and the one of the total public expenditure. A constant ratio through time only indicates that both public expenditure on tertiary education and total public expenditure grew or diminished at the same rate. It suggests that tertiary education is given the same public financial priority through time.

The ratio increases when public expenditure on tertiary education grows more rapidly (or decline less rapidly) than total public expenditure. Such situation highlights that tertiary education is given a higher priority compared to other public expenditure or that they have been less severely hit by budgetary cuts than other public expenditure in the framework of the consolidation of public finances.

Three groups of countries might be identified when analyzing the evolution of the share of public expenditure directed to tertiary education across the key milestones of the Bologna process (2005, 2008 and 2011).

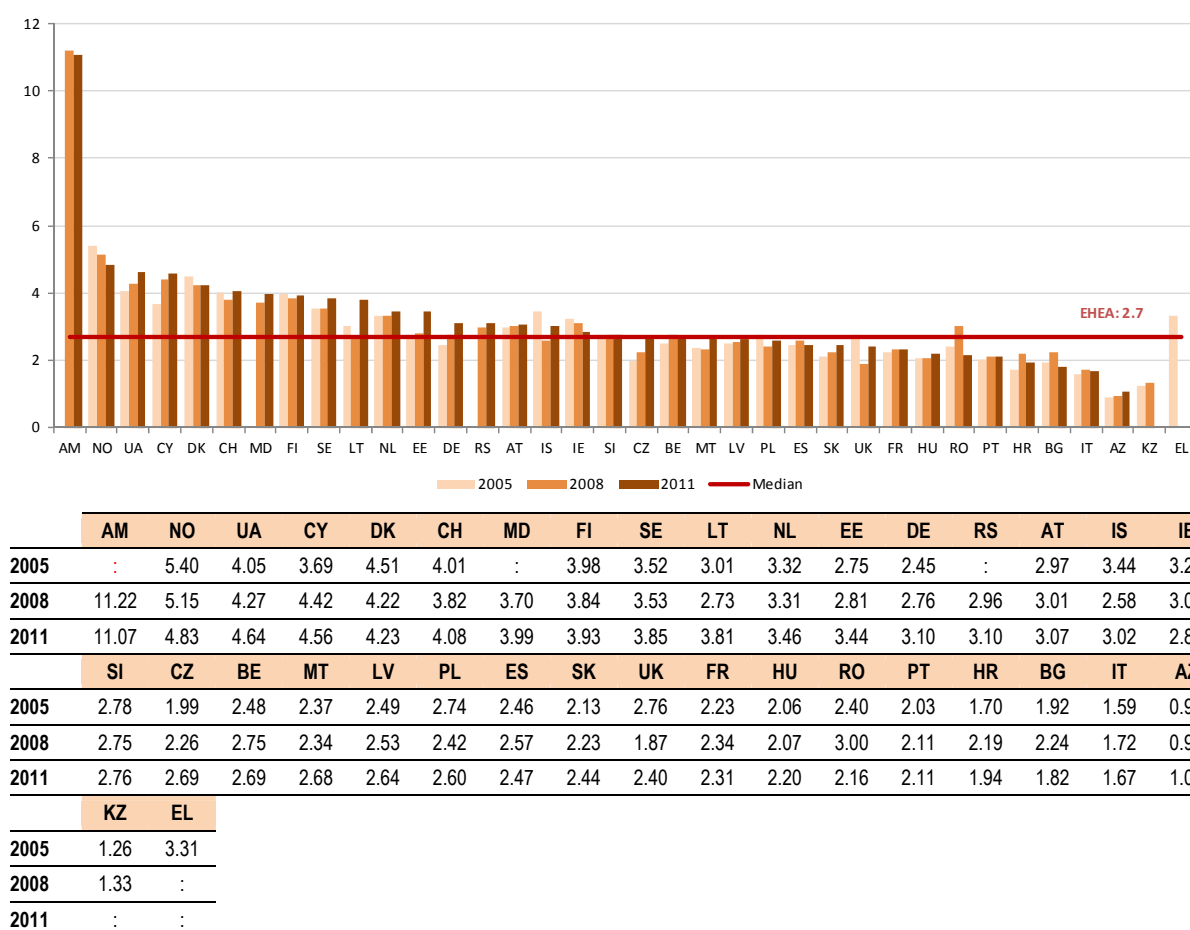
In the first group of EHEA countries (i.e. nearly half of the countries for which data is available) the percentage of the total public expenditure devoted to tertiary education is higher in 2011 than in 2005. In these countries, annual public expenditure on tertiary education increased faster than the total

public expenditure (or decrease at a slower pace than the total public expenditure). Some countries that belong to this group experienced a decrease of the above-mentioned share in one of the two period of time under scrutiny (either in 2008 compared to 2005 or in 2011 compared to 2008), which was more than compensated during the second period of time. This is for instance the case of Lithuania, Malta and the Netherlands, which experience a slight decline of the share in 2008 compared to 2005. In Croatia and in Belgium, the stronger public effort recorded in 2008 (compared to 2005) was only partially offset by a weaker effort in 2011 (compared to 2008).

In a second group of countries, public expenditure on higher education grew basically at the same pace as the total public expenditure: its share remained roughly unchanged in 2011 compared to 2005. In these countries, the share of the total public expenditure allocated to tertiary education changed by a maximum 0.1 percentage point in 2011 compared to 2005. This is what occurred for instance in Switzerland, Spain, Slovenia and Finland.

In the third group of countries (nearly one fourth of EHEA countries for which data is available), public expenditure on tertiary education increases at a slower pace than public expenditure (or decreased more rapidly than public expenditure). This is especially what occurs in Norway, Iceland and Ireland where the share of public expenditure aimed at tertiary education is respectively 0.57 pp, 0.42 pp and 0.4 pp lower in 2011 than in 2005. In the other countries of this group, the decrease amounts from 0.14 pp in Poland to 0.36 pp in the United Kingdom when comparing the same reference years.

**Figure 1.8: Annual public expenditure on tertiary education as a % of total public expenditure, 2005, 2008 and 2011**



Notes: [Source: UOE educ\_esms\_an20 – FA01\_4]

**Belgium:** Expenditure exclude independent private institutions and the German speaking Community. 2008: Excludes transfers to local governments.



**Denmark:** Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. R&D expenditure is not available. 2009 and 2011: Expenditure excludes independent private institutions.

**Ireland:** Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Greece:** 2005: Expenditure at local level of government is not available.

**Spain:** 2005 and 2008: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Croatia:** 2005: Public transfers to other private entities are not available. 2005 and 2008 Scholarships and other grants are not available. 2008 and 2011: Public transfers to private entities other than households are not available; Expenditure excludes independent private institutions. 2011: Excludes local transfers and payments to private entities.

**Cyprus:** Including financial aid to students studying abroad.

**Lithuania:** Public transfers to other private entities are not available.

**Malta:** 2008: Public transfers to private entities are not available.

**Portugal:** Expenditure for ancillary services is not available. 2005: Expenditure at regional and local levels of government is not available. 2005 and 2008: Imputed retirement expenditure is not available. 2008: Excludes direct expenditure to private institutions at regional level of government. 2008 and 2011: Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. 2011: Expenditure at local level of government is not available; Student loans from public sources are not available and public transfers to private entities other than households are not available.

**Romania:** 2005: Expenditure at local level of government is not available.

**Slovakia:** Expenditure of ISC 5B is excluded.

**Sweden:** 2008: Excludes intergovernmental transfers for education.

**United Kingdom:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Iceland:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available. 2008: R&D expenditure is not available.

*Source:* Eurostat, (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Most of EHEA countries have been severely hit by the economic and financial crisis putting stronger pressure on public budget and thus public expenditure on education. It has to be noted, however, that since the latest available data in the UOE (UNESCO-UIS/OECD/Eurostat) data collection is from 2011, indicators presented so far on public funding do not reflect the latest effects of the economic crisis, although it has already had a significant impact on the levels of public funding before 2012. For this reason, additional data compiled in accordance with the classification on COFOG (Classification of the Functions of Government) is used to complement the analysis despite existing differences between UOE and COFOG data (see the Glossary and methodological notes).

Analysing the public expenditure on tertiary education at constant price allows avoiding price distortion through time. In some countries and for some years, nominal public expenditure on tertiary expenditure increases while the “price index of individual consumption expenditure of general government” increases in greater proportion. This leads to a decrease in real public expenditure on education, which might be difficult to interpret in terms of policy making. Indeed, the preparation of the draft budget usually makes use of assumptions about expected economic developments and important economic variables including the inflation rate. The decrease in real public expenditure on tertiary education might be caused by incorrect assumptions about inflation rate when the public budget is prepared (e.g. forecasts of inflation were lower than effective inflation) and not by budgetary cuts.

Among the EHEA, only four countries (Luxembourg, France, Denmark and Germany) did not record a decrease in real public expenditure for tertiary education in any years over the 2008-2012 period. In Luxembourg, the lowest yearly change in real public expenditure at this level of education was 11 % over this period. This is explained by the set up of the higher education sector during this period. In France, real public expenditure at this level recorded two digits yearly growth between 2008 and 2010 but growth was much more moderate in the following years. In Denmark and Germany, yearly growth never exceeded 5 % over the period.

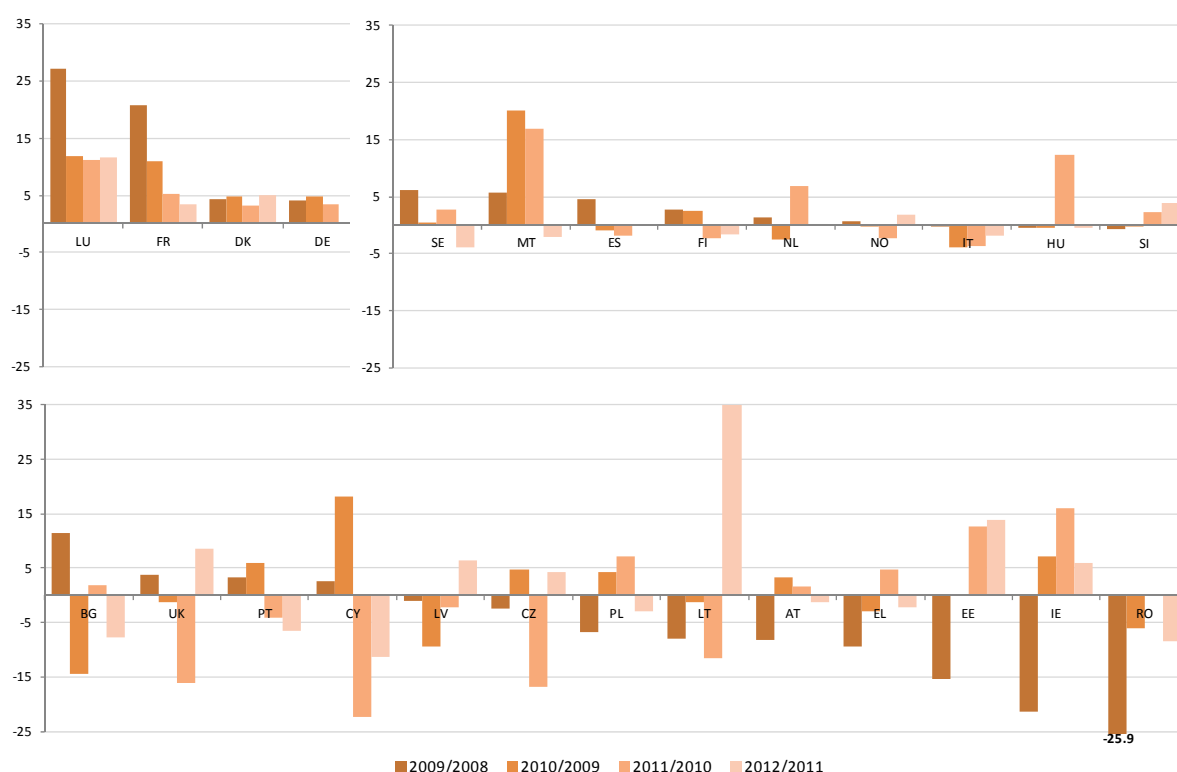
In a second group, yearly decrease(s) in real public expenditure directed to tertiary education never exceeded 5 % when occurring. These decreases in real expenditure were usually preceded by relative greater increases (e.g. Sweden, Spain, Finland) or offset by subsequent growth (e.g. the Netherlands,



Slovenia). Among this group of countries, Italy is the only one that recorded four consecutive decreases in real public expenditure on tertiary education. According to the COFOG data, the level of real public expenditure in tertiary education in 2012 was 9.4 % below the one in 2008. On the opposite, in Malta, the level of such expenditure increased by 45 % when comparing the two years.

In the third group, countries experienced much more significant decrease (yearly decrease higher than 5 %) either during a single year (the United Kingdom, Portugal, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Austria, Estonia, Ireland and Poland), two years (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania) or even three years (Romania). In all these countries except Lithuania, the level of real public expenditure devoted to tertiary education was lower in 2011 compared to 2008. The highest decline is observed in Romania (-36.2 %). In Lithuania, the nominal increase of public expenditure in tertiary education registered in 2012 is amplified by the decrease in the price index leading to an increase of real public expenditure of 52.6 % in 2012.

**Figure 1.9: Yearly changes in real public expenditure on tertiary education between 2008 and 2012, (price index 2005=100)**



	LU	FR	DK	DE	SE	MT	ES	FI	NL	NO	IT	HU	SI	BG	UK	PT	CY
2008-2009	27.3	20.8	4.4	4.1	6.1	5.7	4.5	2.7	1.3	0.6	-0.3	-0.4	-0.7	11.5	3.8	3.4	2.6
2009-2010	11.8	10.9	4.8	4.7	0.3	20.1	-0.9	2.5	-2.6	-0.1	-3.8	-0.5	0.0	-14.4	-1.2	5.9	18.2
2010-2011	11.1	5.1	3.1	3.4	2.7	16.9	-1.9	-2.4	6.9	-2.2	-3.8	12.3	2.2	1.8	-16.1	-4.1	-22.3
2011-2012	11.6	3.5	5.1	0.3	-3.8	-2.0	:	-1.7	0.2	1.8	-1.8	-0.5	4.0	-7.7	8.5	-6.6	-11.2
	LV	CZ	PL	LT	AT	EL	EE	IE	RO								
2008-2009	-1.1	-2.4	-6.7	-7.9	-8.2	-9.5	-15.3	-21.3	-25.9								
2009-2010	-9.3	4.7	4.4	-1.2	3.4	-2.9	0.1	7.1	-6.0								
2010-2011	-2.3	-16.9	7.2	-11.5	1.6	4.8	12.6	16.0	0.2								
2011-2012	6.5	4.3	-2.9	52.6	-1.2	-2.3	13.8	5.8	-8.5								

Notes: Within each group, data are sorted by the degree of change between 2008 and 2009.

Source: Eurostat (national accounts, government finance statistics, COFOG).

The distribution of students by type of institution provides insights on the organisation of tertiary education systems across the EHEA. It could also help understanding the level and makeup of public expenditure on tertiary education: a strong involvement of the private sector in the provision of organized tertiary educational programme could either complement or being a partial substitute to public investment in tertiary education. Unfortunately, it should be borne in mind that data by type of institution suffer from methodological weaknesses: when private institutions are substantially subsidized or aided by the government, the distinction between private and public educational tertiary institutions is not clear-cut. This is also the case when some students are directly financed through government scholarships (either at national or lower levels).

In addition, the UOE data collection does not allow connecting the population of students by type of institution to the source of funding. Indeed, according to the UOE methodology, the classification between public and private institutions *“is made according to whether a public agency or a private entity has the ultimate control over the institution”*. Furthermore *“the extent to which an institution receives its funding from public or private sources does not determine the classification status of the institution between public and private”*.

In nearly all EHEA countries, most tertiary students are enrolled in public tertiary institutions. In Malta and Greece, all students are enrolled in public institutions as well as 98 % of them in Denmark and Ireland. In the remaining EHEA countries, between 70 % and 95 % of tertiary students are enrolled in public institutions. There are few exceptions where the majority of students are enrolled in private government independent institutions (Cyprus) or government-dependent private institutions (Belgium, Estonia, Latvia and Luxembourg).

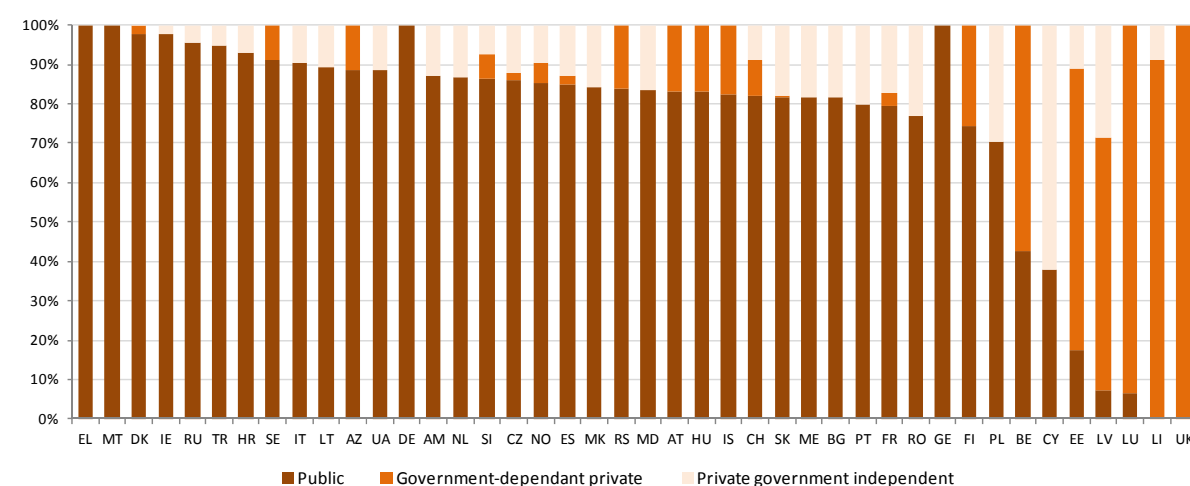
The private government independent sector is an alternative to other types of settings in all EHEA countries except Serbia, Hungary and Finland where students can only be enrolled in private-government dependent institutions when they are not enrolled in public institutions. In Finland, these students account for one fourth of the total population of student. They are 16 % and 17 % in Serbia and Hungary respectively.

On the opposite, in more than one fourth of EHEA countries for which data is available, private government independent institutions are the sole alternative for those not enrolled in public institutions. In this group of countries, the size of the private independent sector varies from less than 10 % of total enrolments (Turkey, Croatia and Italy) to nearly 30 % in Poland.

In the remaining countries, students have the possibility to choose between the three types of institutions. When they are not enrolled in public institutions, enrolment in the two private sectors is relatively balanced in Slovenia, Norway and Switzerland while in Czech Republic, Spain, Slovakia, Montenegro and France, private government independent institutions is predominant in the private sector.

Finally, the United Kingdom and Liechtenstein are the only countries where no public tertiary institutions exist and thus where all students are enrolled in private institutions.

**Figure 1.10: Distribution of students enrolled in tertiary level of education by type of institutions, 2011/12**



	EL	MT	DK	IE	RU	TR	HR	SE	IT	LT	AZ	UA	DE	AM	NL	SI	CZ
Public	100.0	100.0	97.8	97.8	95.4	94.6	92.9	91.2	90.6	89.2	88.6	88.5	87.2	87.1	86.6	86.4	85.9
Government-dependant private	(-)	:	2.1	(-)	0.0	(-)	(-)	8.8	(-)	(-)	11.4	(-)	:	0.0	(-)	6.1	2.0
Private government independent	(-)	:	0.1	2.2	4.6	5.4	7.1	:	9.4	10.8	0.0	11.5	:	12.9	13.4	7.5	12.2
	NO	ES	MK	RS	MD	AT	HU	IS	CH	SK	ME	BG	PT	FR	RO	GE	FI
Public	85.2	84.8	84.3	84.0	83.5	83.2	83.0	82.2	81.9	81.8	81.6	81.5	79.8	79.5	77.1	75.7	74.2
Government-dependant private	5.1	2.3	(-)	16.0	(-)	16.8	17.0	17.8	9.2	0.3	0.0	(-)	(-)	3.2	(-)	:	25.8
Private government independent	9.7	13.0	15.7	(-)	16.5	:	(-)	:	8.9	17.9	18.4	18.5	20.2	17.3	22.9	:	(-)
	PL	BE	CY	EE	LV	LU	LI	UK									
Public	70.4	42.7	37.7	17.4	7.3	6.6	(-)	(-)									
Government-dependant private	(-)	57.3	(-)	71.6	64.0	93.4	91.0	100.0									
Private government independent	29.6	:	62.3	11.0	28.7	:	9.0	:									

Notes: [To be included]

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Beside public expenditure on tertiary education, private expenditure should also be considered when analysing the investment in tertiary education at national level. Private sources of funding include households (i.e. students and their families) and other private entities such as private businesses and non-profit organisation. Household's expenditure includes what they pay to tertiary educational institutions (e.g. tuition fees, administrative fees, laboratory fees, lodging and any other welfare services, etc.) and for educational goods and services outside tertiary educational institutions. Private entities (e.g. private companies, private foundations) other than households may also contribute to tertiary education through contracts for research or training, grants or charitable donations as well as financial aids to students (scholarship, grants or loans). In this latter case, expenditure from other private entities is directed to students and households but not tertiary educational institutions.

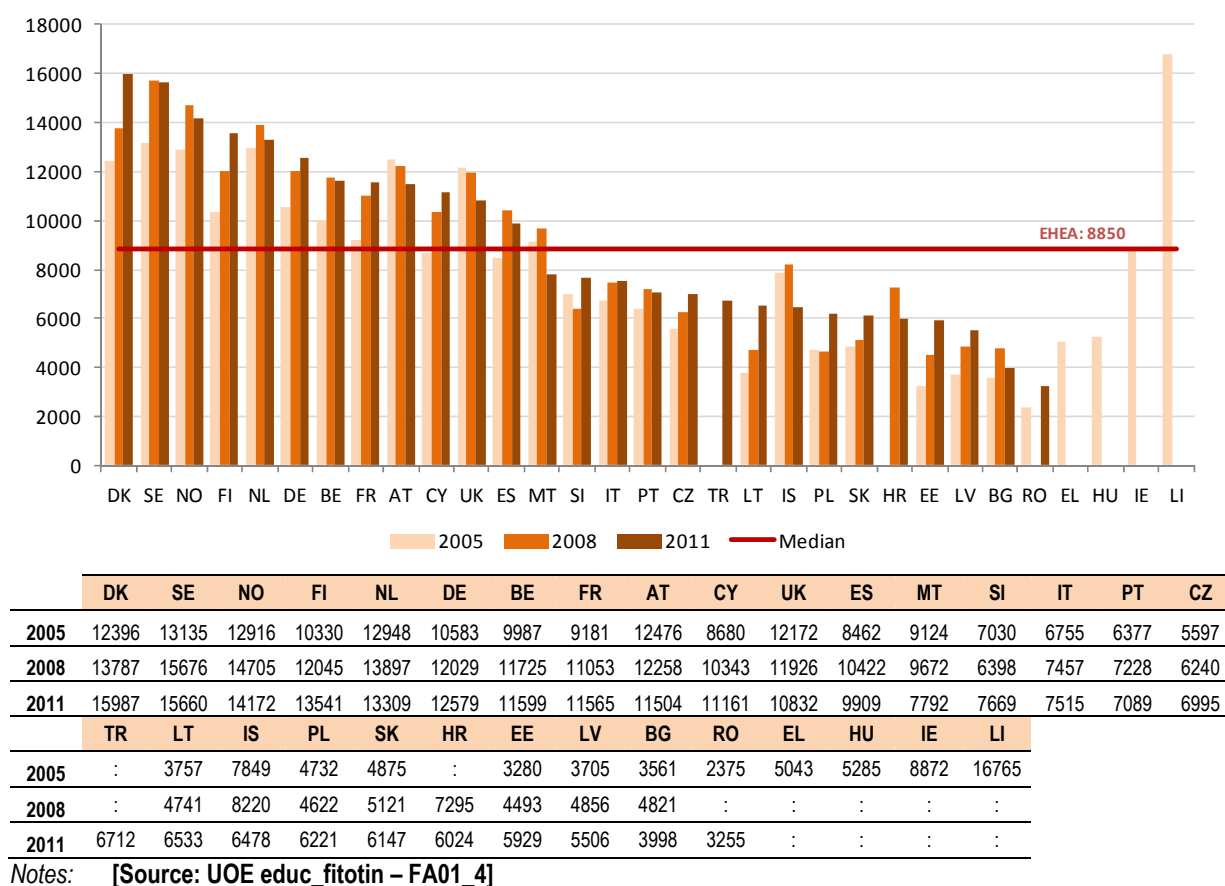
Looking at the total annual expenditure (both public and private) per student, it allows comparing the total financial investment of a country in relation to the size of the student population. In 2011, half of

the EHEA countries spent more than PPS<sup>6</sup> 8850 with a maximum of PPS 15 987 in Denmark while the other half of EHEA countries spent less with a minimum at PPS 3 255 (Romania). Thus, the EHEA shows wide disparities since the highest level of expenditure per full-time equivalent students is five times higher than the lowest one. Expenditure per full-time equivalent student is the highest of the EHEA (more than PPS 13 500) in four of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland) and stands at more than PPS 10 000 in a number of countries. However, the majority of countries for which data is available spend less than PPS 10 000.

The differences observed in terms of annual expenditure per full-time equivalent student should also be considered against the situation some years ago. The Baltic countries show the highest increase in annual expenditure per full-time student: in 2011, investment per full-time students increases by 80.8 %, 73.9 % and 48.6 % compared to 2005 in Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia respectively. Such increase may be the results of an increasing investment in tertiary education but might be amplified by a decrease or a slower growth of the population of student.

Romania increases its investment per full-time equivalent student by 37.1 % (in 2011 compared to 2005), which is among the highest growth in the EHEA area. In fact, Romania combined a strong decrease in the number of tertiary students (see Figure 1.3) with a decline of real public expenditure on tertiary education (see Figure 1.10). At the other end of the spectrum, expenditure per full-time equivalent student is lower in 2011 compared to 2005 in Austria (-7.8 %), the United Kingdom (-11 %), Malta (-14.6 %) and Iceland (-17.5 %). Despite such decrease, expenditure per full-time student in Austria and the United Kingdom remains higher than PPS 10 000.

**Figure 1.11: Annual expenditure on tertiary education per full-time equivalent student in PPS, 2005, 2008 and 2011**



<sup>6</sup> The purchasing power standard, abbreviated as PPS, is an artificial currency unit. Theoretically, one PPS can buy the same amount of goods and services in each country. For more details please see: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing\\_power\\_standard\\_%28PPS%29](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing_power_standard_%28PPS%29)

**Belgium:** Expenditure exclude independent private institutions and the German speaking Community.

**Denmark:** Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. R&D expenditure is not available. 2005 and 2011: Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. 2008 and 2011: Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available.

**Ireland:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Spain:** 2005 and 2008: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Croatia:** 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available. 2008: Expenditure for compensation of personnel in private educational institutions is not available. 2008 and 2011: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to independent private educational institutions are not available. 2008: Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available.

**Austria:** 2005: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

2008: Payments from private entities other than households to public educational institutions are not available.

**Poland:** Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. 2005 and 2008: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

**Portugal:** Expenditure at local level of government is not available. 2008 and 2011: Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in upper secondary and tertiary level of education. 2005 and 2008: Imputed retirement expenditure is not available; Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available. 2005: Expenditure at regional and local levels of government is not available; Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available.

**Slovenia:** 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available.

**Slovakia:** Expenditure of ISC 5B is not included. 2008: Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available. Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to private educational institutions are not available.

**United Kingdom:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available. Adjustment of educational expenditure of financial year, that is running from 1<sup>st</sup> of April to 31<sup>st</sup> of March, to the calendar year.

**Iceland:** 2005 and 2008: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available; Payments from other private entities and payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available. 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available. 2008 and 2011: R&D expenditure is not available.

**Norway:** 2005 and 2008: Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

*Source:* Eurostat (UOE data collection).

The analysis of expenditure on tertiary education should consider the total population of students enrolled in tertiary education but might also take into account the wealth of each country: a positive relationship between expenditure per student and the GDP per inhabitant is expected. The level of the GDP per capita could be considered as the country's ability to pay for tertiary education of its population. Cross-country comparison of this indicator is easier for primary and secondary education as enrolment rates across countries show similar levels. Indeed, in countries where primary and secondary education is nearly universal, this indicator informs about the amount that is spent by pupils. For higher education, cross-country comparison is more complex as enrolment rates vary in greater proportions: countries where the enrolment rate is low could show higher expenditure per full time equivalent students than countries where tertiary education is more universal. This suggests that countries adopted a different approach regarding the participation in tertiary education rather than indications on the resources devoted per student.

The positive relationship between the wealth of a country (expressed by the GDP per capita) and the investment per student is clearly identified in Europe. However, this relationship does not imply a direct causal relationship between the two variables in the short term. Indeed, public expenditure (i.e. the major part of total expenditure on tertiary education) involves long-terms commitments (capital expenditure or staff salaries) and cannot be adjusted rapidly to the economic recession; the number of students is the result of multi-cohorts behaviors and their attitudes towards tertiary education.

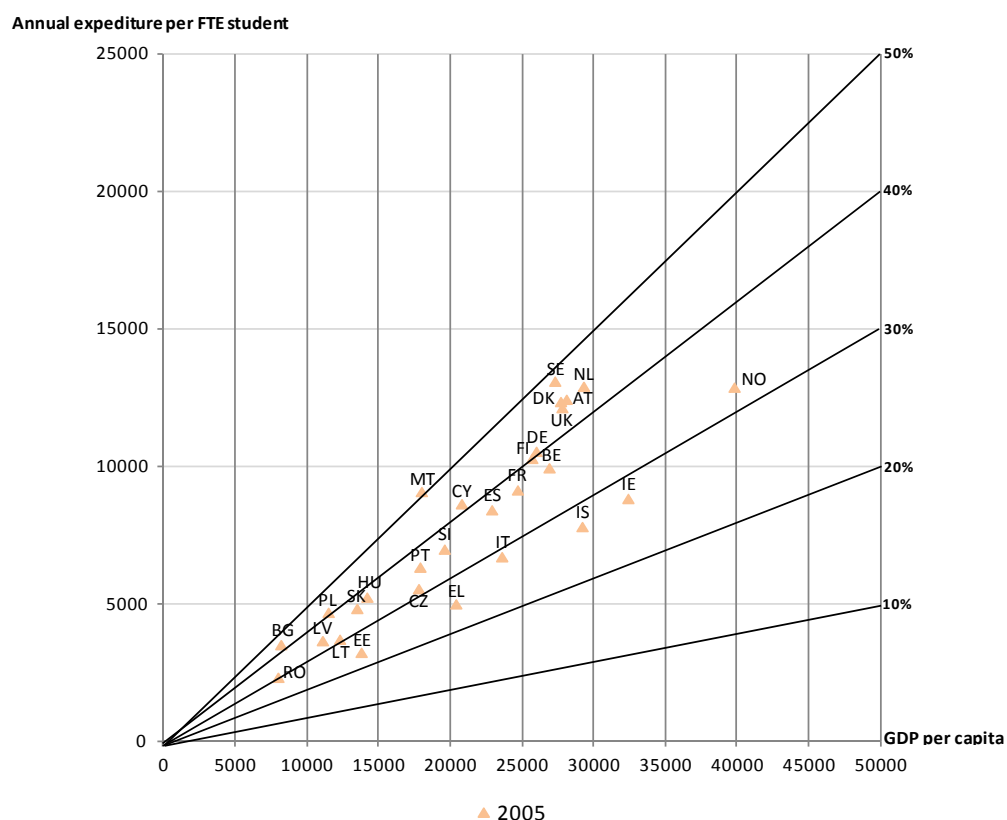
This indicator reveals that countries that have different levels of GDP per capita and annual expenditure per student, make a similar relative financial effort towards tertiary education. For instance, Turkey spends slightly more than 50 % of its GDP per capita on each tertiary student which is nearly as much as Denmark and slightly more than Sweden while its GDP per capita and annual expenditure per student are less than half of the one in these two countries in 2011.

The economic and financial crisis provoked a decrease in the GDP per capita in numerous European countries when comparing 2011 with 2008. In these countries, investment per tertiary student decreased at a slower pace than GDP per capita (Spain); at a faster pace than GDP per capita (the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Croatia, Iceland and Norway); or still increased (Italy, Cyprus, Slovenia and Finland).

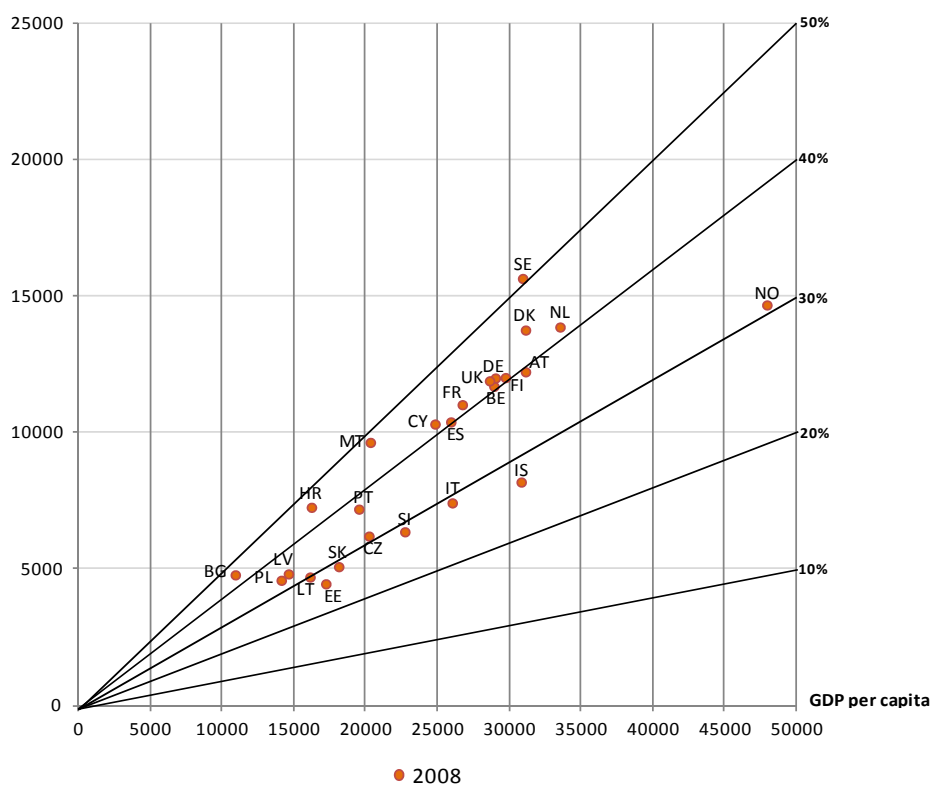
The above-mentioned countries show different profiles when considering the pre-crisis period. More than half of them increased their GDP per capita faster than expenditure per students (Cyprus, the Netherlands, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway). In Slovenia and the United Kingdom, expenditure per full time equivalent student was even on a downward trend. In the others group of countries, the annual public expenditure on tertiary education per full-time equivalent student in PPS relative to the GDP per inhabitant increased during the pre-crisis period.

Investment per tertiary student also decreased in countries where the GDP per capita grew in 2011 compared to 2008. This situation occurs in Belgium, Bulgaria, Malta, Austria and Sweden. Among all these countries, expenditure per tertiary student was already on a negative trend in Austria (i.e. in 2008 compared to 2005).

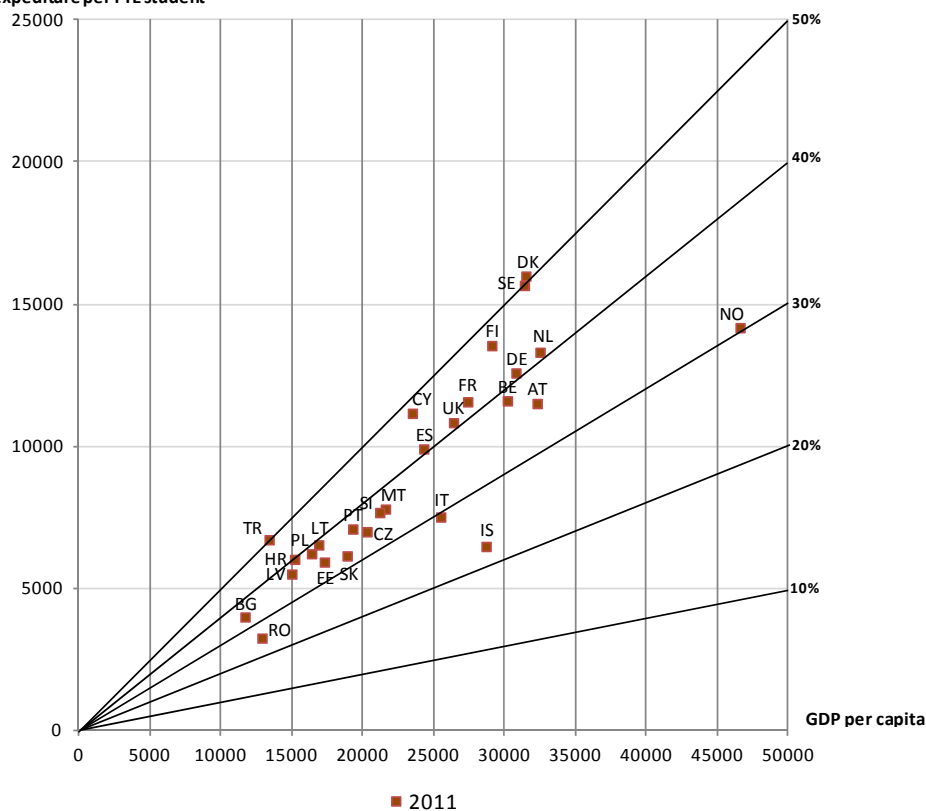
**Figure 1.12: Annual public expenditure on tertiary education per full-time equivalent student in PPS relative to the GDP per inhabitant in PPS, 2005, 2008 and 2011**



Annual expenditure per FTE student



Annual expenditure per FTE student



	DK	TR	SE	CY	FI	FR	DE	ES	NL	UK	HR	LT	BE	PL	PT	LV	SI
2005	44.7	:	48.1	41.6	40.3	37.2	40.7	36.9	44	44.1	:	30.6	37.1	41.1	35.7	33.3	35.8
2008	44.3	:	50.7	41.6	40.5	41.4	41.5	40.2	41.4	39.9	44.9	29.4	40.6	32.9	37.1	33.3	28.2
2011	50.8	50.2	49.9	47.3	46.6	42.2	40.8	40.8	40.7	40.4	39.7	39.2	38.5	38	36.7	36.6	36.5
	MT	AT	CZ	BG	EE	SK	NO	IT	RO	IS	EL	HU	IE	LI			

2005	50.5	44.4	31.4	43.3	23.7	36.1	32.4	28.5	30.2	26.8	24.8	37.3	27.3	26.8
2008	47.7	39.4	30.8	44.4	26.1	28.3	30.7	28.6	:	26.7	:	:	:	:
2011	36	35.6	34.7	34.2	34.1	32.5	30.4	29.5	27.5	22.5	:	:	:	:

**Notes:** **Belgium:** Expenditure exclude independent private institutions and the German speaking Community. 2005 and 2008: Payments from private entities other than households to educational institutions are not available for primary and secondary education in the Flemish Community.

**Denmark:** Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. R&D expenditure is not available. 2005 and 2011: Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. 2008 and 2011: Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available.

**Ireland:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Spain:** 2005 and 2008: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Croatia:** 2005 and 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available. 2008: Expenditure for compensation of personnel in private educational institutions is not available; Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available. 2008 and 2011: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to independent private educational institutions are not available.

**Austria:** 2005: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

2008: Payments from private entities other than households to public educational institutions are not available.

**Poland:** Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. 2005 and 2008: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

**Portugal:** Expenditure at local level of government is not available. 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

2008 and 2011: Expenditure of post secondary non-tertiary level of education is partially included in tertiary level of education. 2008: Imputed retirement expenditure is not available. 2005: Expenditure at regional and local levels of government is not available; Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. 2005 and 2008: Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

**Slovenia:** 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available.

**Slovakia:** Expenditure of ISC 5B is not included. 2008: Expenditure for independent private educational institutions is not available. Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to private educational institutions are not available.

**United Kingdom:** 2005: Expenditure for ancillary services is not available.

**Iceland:** 2005 and 2008: Expenditure for ancillary services, payments from other private entities to educational institutions and payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available. 2008: Capital expenditure from private educational institutions is not available. 2008 and 2011: R&D expenditure is not available.

**Norway:** 2005 and 2008: Payments from other private entities to educational institutions are not available. Payments from international agencies and other foreign sources to educational institutions are not available.

Source: Eurostat.

In a first group of countries (more than half of the countries for which data is available) the growth of the annual expenditure per student in 2011 compared to 2005 is higher than the one of the GDP per capita. Within this group, several patterns could be observed. In Belgium, Portugal and Sweden, annual expenditure per student increased at a higher pace than the GDP per capita in 2008 compared to 2005 while the opposite occurred during the second period of time (GDP per capita increased at a faster pace than expenditure per students in 2011 compared to 2008). In the second group of countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, Cyprus and Slovenia), the stronger increase in annual expenditure per student than that of GDP per capita (in 2011 compared 2008) explains the growth in the share of GDP per capita devoted to higher education. Annual expenditure per student increased at a faster pace than the wealth of the country during both periods of time in Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland. In Spain, annual expenditure per student decreased less than the GDP per capita which explains the growth in the proportion of GDP per capita devoted to expenditure per student.

In the second group of countries (Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Norway), expenditure per tertiary students increased at a slower rhythm than the GDP per inhabitant leading to a decreasing share of the GDP per capita invested in tertiary education in 2011 compared to 2005.

Finally, four countries lowered their investment per student in 2011 compared to 2005 while their GDP per capita increased (Malta and Austria) or decreased (the United Kingdom and Iceland).



## The Bucharest Communiqué

Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees with the aim of promoting the employability of European citizens and the international competitiveness of European higher education is a core action line of the Bologna Declaration itself. In Bucharest in 2012 ministers acknowledged the significant progress that has been made, stating that, *"higher education structures in Europe are now more compatible and comparable"*. However, they also recognised that *"we must make further efforts to consolidate and build on progress. We will strive for more coherence between our policies, especially in completing the transition to the three cycle system, the use of ECTS credits, the issuing of Diploma Supplements, the enhancement of quality assurance and the implementation of qualifications frameworks, including the definition and evaluation of learning outcomes."*

Ministers also committed themselves to examining national legislation and practices relating to joint programmes and degrees as a way to dismantle obstacles to cooperation and mobility embedded in national contexts, encouraging higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes and degrees as part of a wider EHEA approach.

The Bucharest Communiqué also acknowledges that realising the full benefits of qualifications frameworks can in practice be more challenging than developing the structures and that the development of qualifications frameworks must continue so that they become an everyday reality for students, staff and employers. Ministers also invited countries that could not finalise the implementation of national qualifications frameworks compatible with QF-EHEA by the end of 2012 to redouble their efforts.

With regard to recognition, Ministers welcomed the European Area of Recognition (EAR) Manual and recommended its use as a set of guidelines for recognition of foreign qualifications and a compendium of good practices, as well as encouraged higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies to assess institutional recognition procedures in internal and external quality assurance. They also declared their determination to remove outstanding obstacles hindering effective and proper recognition and their willingness to work together towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees, building on the tools of the Bologna framework, as a long-term goal of the EHEA. Ministers therefore committed to reviewing national legislation to comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and pledged to support the work of a pathfinder group of countries exploring ways to achieve the automatic academic recognition of comparable degrees.

All of these commitments are entirely coherent consequences of the findings of the 2012 Bologna Implementation Report.

## BFUG Working Group on Structural Reforms

The 2012-2015 Working Group on Structural Reforms was mandated in to develop proposals for policy and practice aiming to improve instruments for structural reform: qualifications frameworks, quality assurance, recognition of qualifications and transparency instruments as well as the coherence between the main elements of structural reform within the European Higher Education Area as well as to oversee and advise the BFUG on the implementation of structural reforms.

Close cooperation between the Reporting Working Group and the Working Group on Structural Reforms Working group facilitated the work on the section of this report on Degrees and Qualifications.

## Chapter outline

This chapter deals with the basic structures and tools of the Bologna Process and with recognition. The first section is devoted to the implementation of the three-cycle degree structure. The second section covers the Bologna tools – National Qualifications Frameworks, ECTS, and the Diploma Supplement. Section 3 covers the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention <sup>(1)</sup>.

## 2.1. Bologna structures

### 2.1. Structure and implementation of the Bologna three cycle system (BA, MA, PhD)

The commitment to adopt easily readable and comparable degrees and to establish a two-cycle system are mentioned as the two first action lines in the 1999 Bologna Declaration originally signed by 29 countries and now being implemented in the 47 countries constituting the European Higher Education Area. The stage of implementation of the two cycles has been an important goal of the Bologna process and therefore it has been addressed in all the reports prepared for the Bologna Ministerial summits in 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2012. Since 2012 the data for this indicator is collected by EUROSTAT thus adding precise statistical data complementing the comparisons based on the BFUG qualitative survey. The overarching qualifications framework for the EHEA adopted in 2005 sets credit ranges: 180-240 ECTS credits for the first cycle and 90-120 credits with at least 60 credits at second-cycle level.

This section considers how successful the implementation of the two cycles has been, and also provides a more detailed look at the typical models of the two-cycle system that have emerged. In addition to analyses of the changes in access between Bologna cycles, the report provides information on which countries regulate the minimum total student workload of the two cycles together. The report also follows the implementation of the third cycle (doctorates) which was introduced to the Bologna Process structural objectives in 2003 (Berlin Communiqué) as well as issues regarding the links between short-cycle studies and the first cycle.

#### 2.1.1. Structure and implementation of the three cycles

One way to monitor the stage of implementation of the Bologna model is to analyse the percentage of students enrolled in programmes following the Bologna three-cycle structure and how it changed between 2009 and 2012. A high value of this percentage suggests that the Bologna structure is nearly fully implemented in the country concerned while a low value of the percentage highlights the opposite. However, the indicator should only be considered as a proxy of the implementation of the Bologna structure.

Increases in the percentage of students enrolled in programmes following the Bologna model through time initially suggest that countries have stepped up implementation. Such an assumption may or may not be justified. Two tertiary education systems that register an increase in the percentage of students

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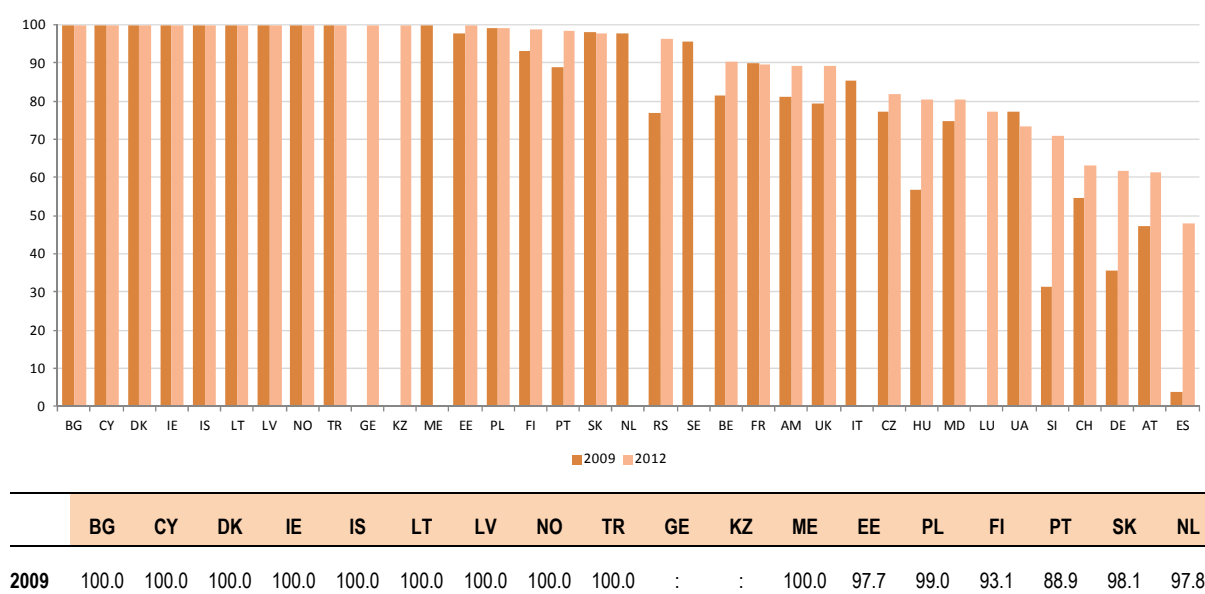
<sup>(1)</sup> Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon, 11 April 1997.

enrolled in programmes following the Bologna model may face two different situations regarding the move toward the full implementation of the Bologna structure. The first country has developed the implementation of the Bologna model (i.e. an increasing number of programmes follows the three-cycle structure and thus the percentage of students enrolled concerned also increases). In the second country, however, the relative number of programmes following the three-cycle structure has remained the same (*stricto sensu* the Bologna model did not develop) but the number of students enrolled in programmes following the three-cycle structure increased relatively more than enrolments in programmes outside the Bologna model. Conversely, a decrease in the percentage of students enrolled in programmes structured according to the Bologna model does not necessarily indicate a move backward in the implementation of the Bologna structure.

Overall, with the exception of Spain, a majority of students in countries where data are available are enrolled in programmes following the Bologna three-cycle structure. In more than one third of the EHEA countries for which data is available, the Bologna model is fully implemented (i.e. all students are enrolled according to the Bologna framework). In another third of the EHEA countries, more than 89 % of students are enrolled in the Bologna three-cycle structure. Despite being less developed, the Bologna model is a reality for more than 70 % of enrolled students in the remaining countries except Switzerland, Germany and Austria where 63.2 %, 61.9 % and 61.5 % respectively of enrolled students study in the framework of the Bologna structure. Spain is the only EHEA country for which data is available, where more than half of tertiary students are still outside the Bologna three-cycle structure.

The data demonstrates that some countries which chose an unhurried step-by-step implementation in the first stages of the Bologna process, have sped up implementation in recent years. In Spain, the percentage of students enrolled in the Bologna structure increases by 44 percentage points (pp) from 3.5 % of all students to almost 48 % of them. In Slovenia, this percentage reaches nearly 71 % (an increase of 40 pp compared to 2009). Despite the large differences in their level of implementation, Germany and Hungary also register a significant development of the Bologna model with increases of 26 pp and 24 pp respectively. In other countries, the development is more moderate. In Serbia, the percentage of students enrolled in the Bologna structure reached 96 % in 2012 (a 19 pp increase compared to 2009).

**Figure 2.1: Percentage of students enrolled in programmes following the Bologna three-cycles structure, 2008/09 and 2011/12**



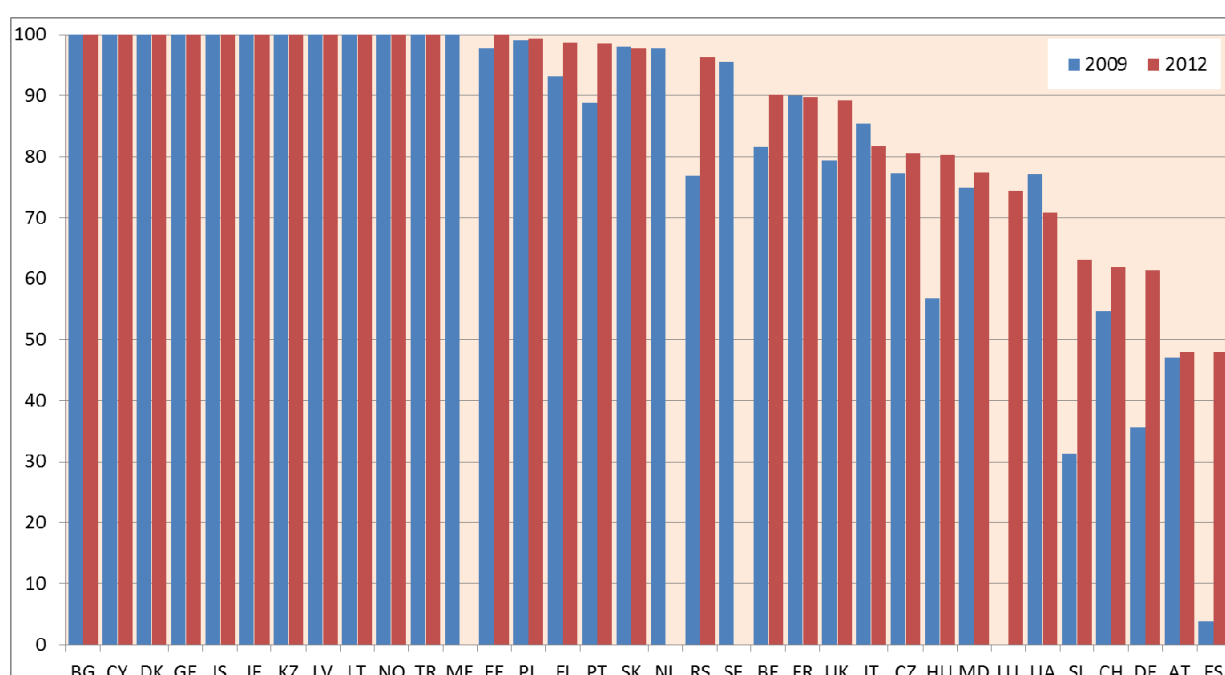
2012	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	:	100.0	99.3	98.8	98.6	97.8	:
	RS	SE	BE	FR	AM	UK	IT	CZ	HU	MD	LU	UA	SI	CH	DE	AT	ES	
2009	76.9	95.5	81.6	90.0	81.3	79.3	85.5	77.3	56.7	75.0	:	77.2	31.3	54.6	35.6	47.1	3.8	
2012	96.3	:	90.2	89.7	89.4	89.2	:	81.8	80.6	80.3	77.4	73.3	70.9	63.2	61.9	61.5	47.9	

Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The 2014 EUROSTAT data shows the comparison of the share of students studying in the Bologna three cycle structure in 2012 against 2009 (Figure 2.2). This comparison demonstrates that, apart from the 11 countries which already had 100% Bologna structure in 2009, 19 other countries have progressed in the implementation of the Bologna model.

**Figure 2.2: Share of students studying in the Bologna three cycle structure, 2009 - 2012**

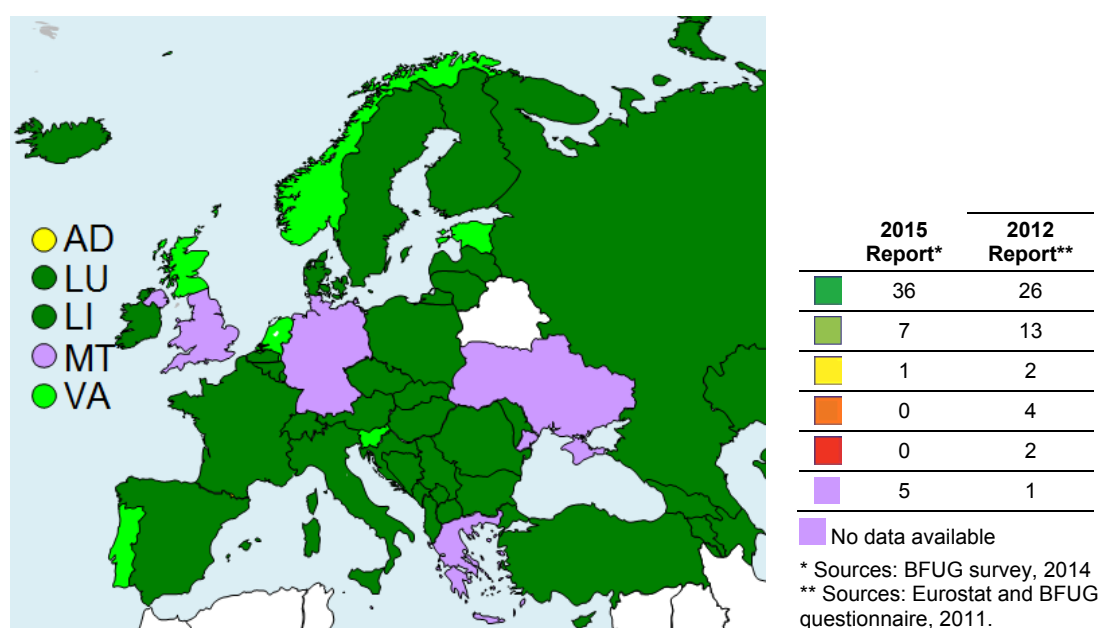


*Eurostat, 2014 (data on 2009 and 2012)*

The greatest progress between 2009 and 2012 has happened in some of the countries which chose an unhurried and seemingly slower step-by-step implementation model in the first stages of the Bologna process, but have sped up implementation in recent years. Thus, in Spain the share of students studying in Bologna model programmes has grown by 44% between 2009 and 2012, in Slovenia by 32%, in Germany by 26%, in Hungary by 24% and in Serbia by 19%. However, little or no progress was made in Austria during this period (an increase of 0.1 %).

It should, however, be recognised that the latest EUROSTAT data goes up to 2012 only. For data on the progress between 2012-2014 interval, information is provided in Figure 2.3, and is based on BFUG survey data. Data have been collected for both the share of students in Bologna structures and the share of programmes.

**Figure 2.3: Scorecard indicator n°1: Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle, Data from BFUG survey, 2013/14<sup>2</sup>**



**Notes:**

1. The indicator is defined as the share of students studying in the programmes belonging to the Bologna model (in %).

BFUG survey data is reflecting the situation in 2013/14.

2. Germany, Greece, and Malta could not provide the share of students studying in the programmes belonging to the Bologna model. However, these three countries all have more than 90% of the study programmes belonging to the Bologna model.

## Scorecard categories

- At least 90 % of all <sup>(3)</sup> students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
- 70-89 % of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
- 50-69 % of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
- 25-49 % of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
- less than 25 % students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles  
**OR**  
 Legislation for a degree system in accordance with the Bologna principles has been adopted and is awaiting implementation

Scorecard indicator No1 shows that the first and second cycles are close to being fully implemented (see also notes above). Country explanations confirm that the seven countries which score “light green” (Estonia, Holy See, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland and United Kingdom-Scotland) have a high number of students study in programmes leading to qualifications in regulated professions which are not rearranged into a bachelor-master pattern. Norway explained that while the

<sup>2</sup> Question to FYROM: according to Eurostat data, the Bologna system has not been implemented prior to 2012. Has there been a major reform that should be reported in this section?

(<sup>3</sup>) "All" = All students who could be involved in the 2-cycle system i.e. NOT those in doctoral programmes and NOT those in short higher education programmes. Students of ALL study fields are taken into account.

programmes in question are not rearranged to bachelor-master pattern, the other aspects of the Bologna process, e.g. ECTS and learning outcomes, have been implemented in these programmes.

Eurostat data (Figure 2.4) shows that in two thirds of the EHEA countries for which data is available; more than half of the tertiary students are enrolled in first cycle (bachelor) programmes. In this group of countries, first cycle student account enrolments range from 50.4 % of the total student population (Luxembourg) to 95.4 % (Kazakhstan). Conversely, bachelor's students represent less than 40 % of the total student population in Spain (38.3 %) and France (32.3 %) while they show different situations regarding the implementation of the Bologna structure (Figure 2.2a).

Short or short-cycle (less than three years) programmes feature differently in the higher education landscape according to the country concerned. While in more than half of the EHEA countries for which data is available, such programmes do not exist, less than 5 % of tertiary students are enrolled in them in Iceland (1.4 %), Georgia (2.5 %), Luxembourg (2.6 %) and still less than 10 % of students in Cyprus (8.4 %). Short programmes are much more common in Turkey (29.2 %), Norway (23.1 %), France (21.6 %) and Ireland (20.6 %).

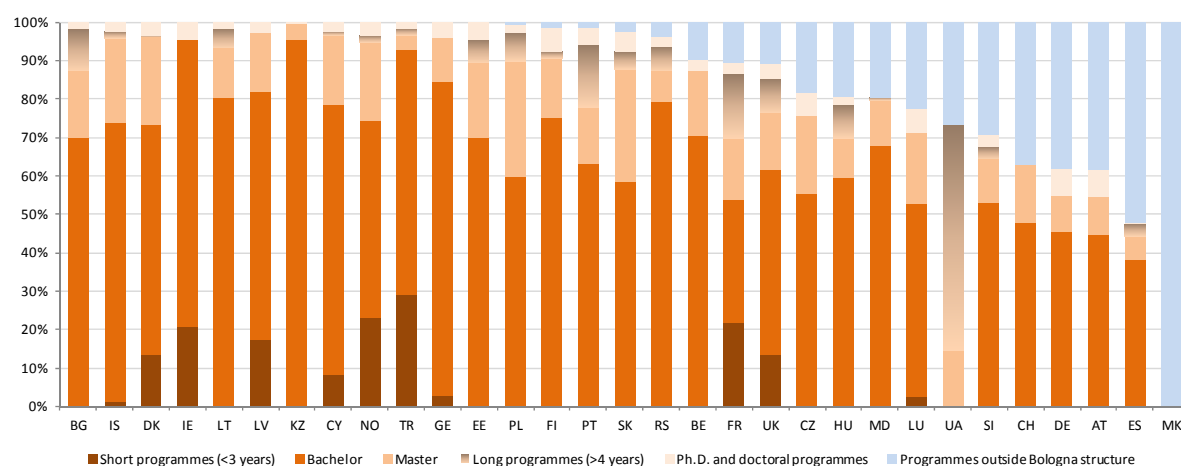
Long (four years or more) programmes are offered in nearly two-thirds of the EHEA countries for which data is available. However, the percentage of tertiary students concerned is very low (less than 2 %) in numerous countries (e.g. Finland, Iceland, Cyprus, Moldova, Turkey and Denmark) and nowhere does it exceed 10 % of the student population except in Bulgaria (11 %), Portugal (16.1 %) and France (17 %).

In the EHEA, the third cycle of the Bologna structure (i.e. Ph.D. and doctoral programmes) usually accounts for less than 5 % of enrolled students except in Finland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Germany and Austria.

Countries that still need to further develop the implementation of the Bologna structure show different patterns. In Austria and Germany, a majority of the students (60.2 % and 50.2 % respectively) who are not covered by the Bologna structure are enrolled in programmes leading to a first degree lasting 5 years or more (ISCED level 5A). Spain shows a more balanced pattern: while 44.4 % of the “non-Bologna students” are enrolled in a long first degree (ISCED level 5A), one fifth are studying for a first degree lasting from 3 to less than 5 years (at ISCED level 5A) and 31.4 % are studying for a first qualification provided by more occupationally tertiary programmes (ISCED level 5B).

Switzerland displays a more specific pattern for tertiary students ‘outside the Bologna structure’: the majority of these students (56.1 %) are enrolled for a first qualification at ISCED level 5B while 22.2 % are studying at the second stage of tertiary education leading to an advanced research qualification (ISCED level 6). To a lesser extent, the situation in Slovenia is similar: the majority of students for which the Bologna structure is not yet implemented (56.6 %) are enrolled for a first qualification at ISCED level 5B level, while the others are enrolled for a first degree lasting from 3 to less than 5 years (ISCED level 5A).

**Figure 2.4: Distribution of students enrolled in programmes following the Bologna three-cycles structure, by cycle, 2011/12**



	BG	IS	DK	IE	LT	LV	KZ	CY	NO	TR	GE	EE	PL	FI	PT	SK
Short prog. (<3 years)	0.0	1.4	13.6	20.6	0.0	17.3	0.0	8.4	23.1	29.2	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bachelor	70.3	72.7	59.9	74.7	80.2	64.8	95.4	70.1	51.3	63.6	81.9	70.1	59.8	75.1	63.1	58.4
Master	17.1	21.9	22.9	0.0	13.1	15.3	4.3	18.0	20.4	3.9	11.3	19.5	30.1	15.5	14.9	29.3
Long prog. (>4 years)	11.0	1.7	0.4	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.7	1.7	0.0	6.0	7.4	1.6	16.1	4.6
Ph.D. and doctoral prog.	1.7	2.4	3.3	4.6	1.7	2.6	0.3	2.2	3.5	1.7	4.3	4.5	2.0	6.5	4.6	5.5
Prog. outside Bologna structure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.2	1.4	2.2
	RS	BE	FR	UK	CZ	HU	MD	LU	UA	SI	CH	DE	AT	ES	MK	
Short prog. (<3 years)	0.0	0.0	21.6	13.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	:	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	:	
Bachelor	79.3	70.3	32.3	47.9	55.3	59.6	68.1	50.4	:	53.1	47.7	45.5	44.8	38.3	:	
Master	8.2	16.9	15.8	14.7	20.5	10.3	11.3	18.0	14.6	11.4	15.5	9.3	9.7	5.9	:	
Long prog. (>4 years)	6.2	0.0	17.0	9.0	0.0	8.9	0.8	0.0	58.7	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	:	
Ph.D. and doctoral prog.	2.6	3.0	3.1	3.8	5.9	1.9	0.0	6.4	:	3.3	0.0	7.1	7.0	0.6	:	
Prog. outside Bologna structure	3.7	9.8	10.3	10.8	18.2	19.4	19.7	22.6	26.7	29.1	36.8	38.1	38.5	52.1	100.0	

Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Figure 2.4 therefore illustrates that 12 out of the 34 higher education systems for which data is available, had all students enrolled in programmes following the three-cycle structure, and in a further eight systems less than 5% students follow programmes outside the Bologna framework. At the other extreme, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not use the Bologna framework in 2012.

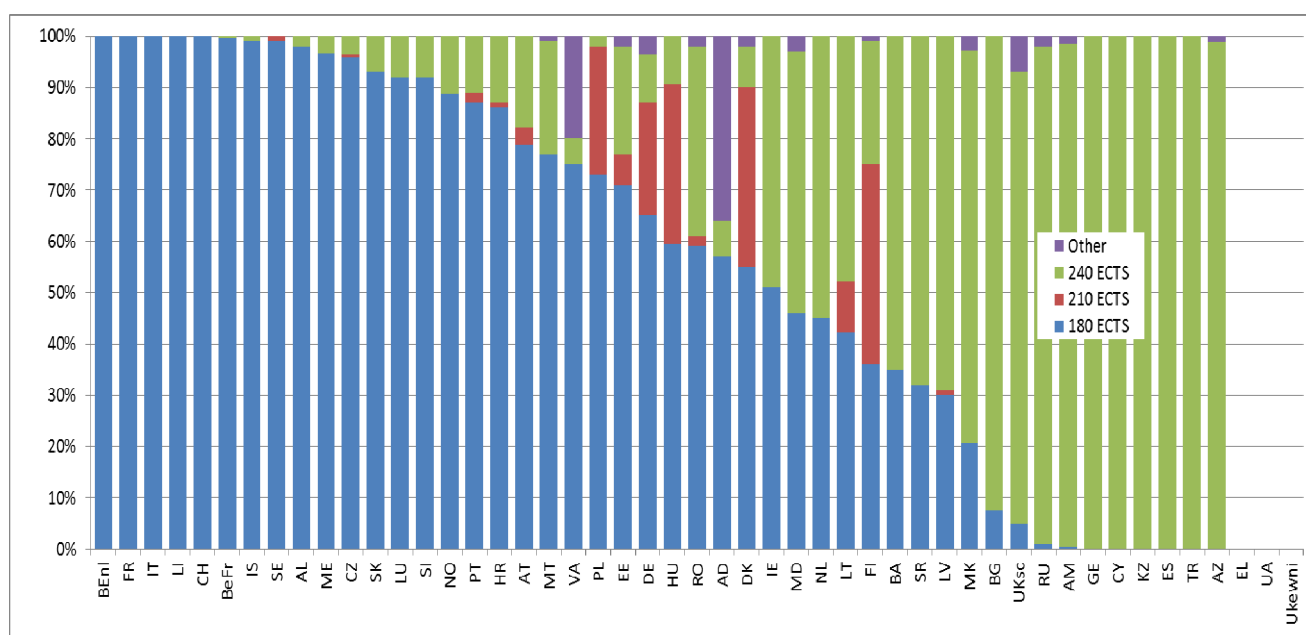
## Most common models and typical credit ranges of ECTS in the first cycle

Figure 2.5 shows the share of programmes having the typical workload of 180 ECTS and 240 ECTS, credits, but also those programmes with 210 ECTS and/or another number of credits. The average share of the whole EHEA are: programmes with a workload of 180 ECTS - 58%; 240 ECTS – 37%; 210 ECTS – 4%; and a different workload, just 2%.

Thus, 180 and 240 ECTS models dominate the structure of first cycle programmes, with the 180 ECTS workload model being almost 20 % more widespread than the 240 ECTS model. The 210 ECTS workload is not widespread in the EHEA at large, but it is important in five countries: Denmark (35% programmes), Finland (39%), Germany (20%), Hungary (31%) and Poland (25%). In most of these countries the 210 ECTS workload structure is used in professional/applied bachelor programmes where up to 30 ECTS credits are allocated for professional training or placements.

While there has clearly been a strong process of convergence in the structure of first cycle programmes, there is no single model of first-cycle programmes in the EHEA. Most countries have a combination of 180 ECTS and 240 ECTS often accompanied with programmes of other durations in the first cycle. However, like in 2012, in Flemish Community of Belgium, France, Italy, Liechtenstein and Switzerland have 180 ECTS Bachelor programmes only. A strong predominance of the 180 ECTS model can therefore be seen in Albania, the French Community of Belgium, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Norway, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden.

**Figure 2.5: Share of first cycle-programmes having workload 180 ECTS credits, 210 Credits and 240 ECTS credits or other number of credits\*, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

UK (1) = UK-ENG/WLS/NIR

\*Greece and United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) could not provide statistical data on the breakdown of second cycle programmes by workload and Ukraine failed to submit data

The 240 ECTS model only is found in Cyprus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Spain, Turkey while in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Russian Federation, Spain and in the United Kingdom (Scotland) more than 75 % of programmes follow the 240 ECTS model. 240 ECTS model is also predominating in the Netherlands where, while the share of programmes of 240 ECTS programmes is 45 %, but the share of students in this model is 70 %.



There is no single model of first-cycle programmes in the EHEA. Most countries have a combination of 180 ECTS and 240 ECTS, often accompanied with programmes of other durations in the first cycle. The 210 ECTS model is not widespread in the EHEA, however, it is important in some countries and mainly in professional bachelor programmes.

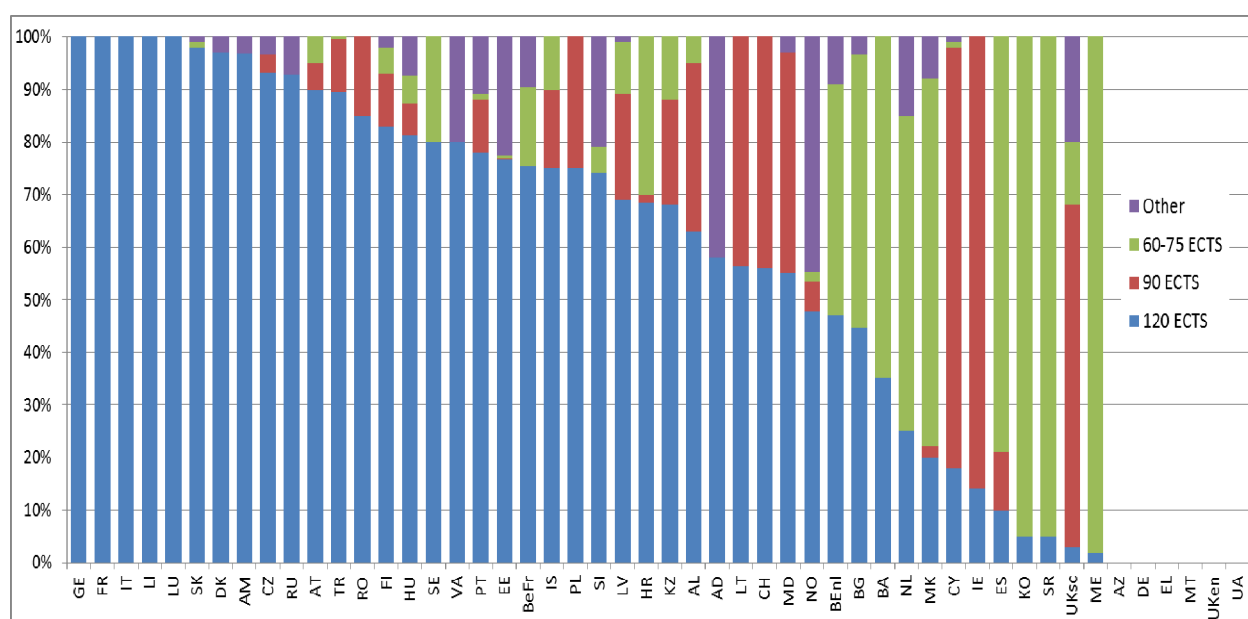
The comparison with the Report of 2012 shows a slight trend towards further diversification and moving away from the workload of 180 ECTS.

Nearly half the countries (23) confirmed that in their higher education systems academic and professional programmes are structured differently, for example having a different duration. In the first cycle, professional programmes tend to be longer. This is the case in Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Latvia and the Netherlands, where professional programmes have a workload of 210 or 240 ECTS credits while academic programmes include 180 ECTS credits. The opposite reality can be found in Bulgaria, where academic programmes require 240 ECTS credits but professional programmes require 180 ECTS credits.

A few countries admit differences in the proportion between general, specialised and applied knowledge and skills, especially in the case of programmes leading to qualifications for regulated professions, i.e. if the education is governed by the EU directives 2005/36/EC and 2014/55/EU or by specific national requirements for regulated professions.

### Most common models and typical credit ranges of ECTS in the second cycle

**Figure 2.6: Share of second-cycle (master) programmes with a workload of 60-75, 90, 120 or another number of ECTS credits, 2013/14\***



Source: BFUG questionnaire.

\*Azerbaijan, Germany, Greece, Malta and United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) could not provide statistical data on the breakdown of first cycle programmes by workload and Ukraine failed to submit data

In the second cycle (Figure 2.6), the 120 ECTS model is by far the most widespread, being present in 43 higher education systems. 120 ECTS credits is the sole model in Azerbaijan, France, Georgia, Italy, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg and is used in more than 75 % programmes in a further 21 systems. Since 2012, Albania, Armenia and Turkey have diversified their programme offer, after previously using only the 120 ECTS model in the second cycle. On average, in the EHEA 65% second

cycle programmes follow the 120 ECTS model, while 60-75 ECTS model is present in 16% programmes, 13% second cycle programmes in the EHEA follow the 90 ECTS model but 6% of programmes have another duration. In the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) this data is not centrally available, however the most typical workload is 90 ECTS – for Taught Master degrees and 180 ECTS for Taught MPhil.

The 60-75 ECTS model is present in 26 countries and dominates in four systems (a reduction from eight in 2012). The 90 ECTS model is less widespread: while it is present in 22 systems, it dominates in only three countries (six in 2012)– Cyprus, Ireland, and the United Kingdom (Scotland). In 19 higher education systems, there are also programmes with a workload other than 60-75, 90 or 120 ECTS credits. The above tendencies were also confirmed by the data on the shares of students enrolled in second-cycle programmes. Whereas in the first cycle, professional programmes are typically longer than academic ones, in the second cycle, the tendency is the opposite: professional programmes are often shorter.

The share of second cycle programmes with a duration outside 60-120 ECTS interval in most cases is between 1% and 5%, however they reach 10% in Russia and 13,5% in Norway.

There is no single model of both first and second-cycle programmes in the EHEA. In the first cycle, most countries combine programmes of 180 ECTS and 240 ECTS. In some countries the number of (usually professional) programmes using the 210 ECTS model is significant as well.

In the second cycle, the most common model is 120 ECTS – two thirds of programmes follow this workload. The other models are less widespread in the EHEA as a whole but they are dominating in particular countries, e.g. 90 ECTS in Cyprus, Ireland and UK-Scotland and 60-75 ECTS in Montenegro, Serbia and Spain.

### Common duration of Bachelor's and Master's programmes

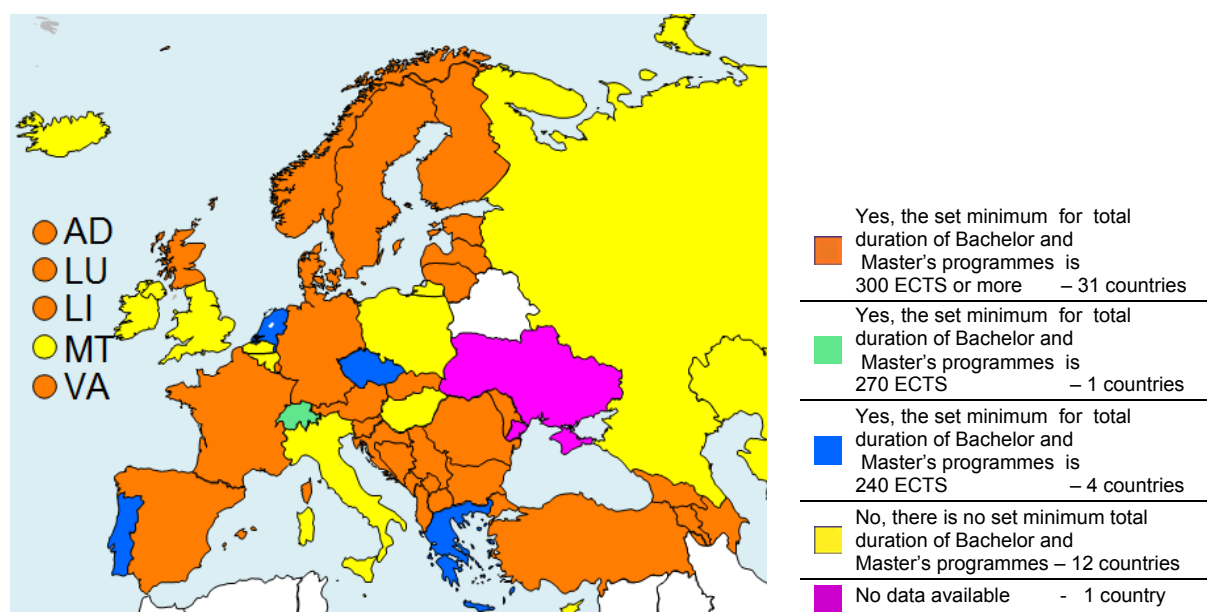
If looking at first and second cycle studies together in the EHEA, the student's total workload may vary considerably. While the most widespread combination is the 180 ECTS (first cycle) plus 120 ECTS (second cycle), at least twelve combinations are commonly found between 240 ECTS ("3+1") to 360 ECTS ("4+2"), These combinations are outlined in table 1.

**Table 1. Possible combinations of student workload of the first and second cycle**

Number of ECTS credits in the first cycle	Number of ECTS credits in the second cycle	Total number of ECTS	Number of ECTS credits in the first cycle	Number of ECTS credits in the second cycle	Total number of ECTS
180	60	240	210	90	300
180	75	255	210	120	330
180	90	270	240	60	300
180	120	300	240	75	315
210	60	270	240	90	330
210	75	285	240	120	360

The difference between the extremes is 120 ECTS or two nominal years of study, and this reality has caused recognition problems. For this reason, the 2014 BFUG questionnaire asked countries if they have set a minimum total workload of first and second cycle studies.

**Figure 2.7: Nationally set minimum total duration of the Bachelor & Master programmes, 2013/14\***



\* Source: BFUG questionnaire, 2014

**Note:** It is also possible that country do not set minimum workload for the combination of workload of first and second cycles, but do set minimum workload of each cycle, e.g. Belgium (Flemish Community).

As shown in Figure 2.7, 36 out of 47 higher education systems regulate the minimum total workload of the two cycles. Out of the 36 countries that have set the minimum, 31 countries mention 300 ECTS. Some countries underline that a total of 300 ECTS allows several of the bachelor and master combinations (mainly “3+2”; “4+1”). Georgia and Azerbaijan have set even higher minimum total workload (360 ECTS and 330 ECTS correspondingly). Switzerland has set the minimum of 270 ECTS. Finally, four countries – Czech Republic, Greece, the Netherlands and Portugal require at least 240 ECTS credits (“3+1”). Lithuania and Moldova in turn, also regulate the maximum workload of the first and second combined – 360 ECTS credits and 330 ECTS credits respectively.

The main characteristic of a qualification is learning outcomes and workload considerations are therefore secondary. However, the recognition of foreign qualifications whose study workload is substantially smaller than that of in the country where recognition is sought can lead credential evaluators to question whether the learning outcomes of such a qualification can be similar to the one of the host country (Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications of the qualification in another country)<sup>4</sup>. For the above reason, the large differences (60-120 ECTS credits) in the total workload of first and second cycles, may cause problems in recognition of second cycle qualifications.

<sup>4</sup>Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee at its fifth meeting, Sèvres, 23 June 2010), paragraph 40 and paragraph 40 of the Explanatory Memorandum,  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/recognition/criteria%20and%20procedures\\_EN.asp#P309\\_37160](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/recognition/criteria%20and%20procedures_EN.asp#P309_37160)

The differences in the total workload of first and second cycles in EHEA can vary by up to 120 ECTS credits. Such a large difference in the total workload of first and second qualifications may cause problems in recognition of second cycle qualifications in particular.

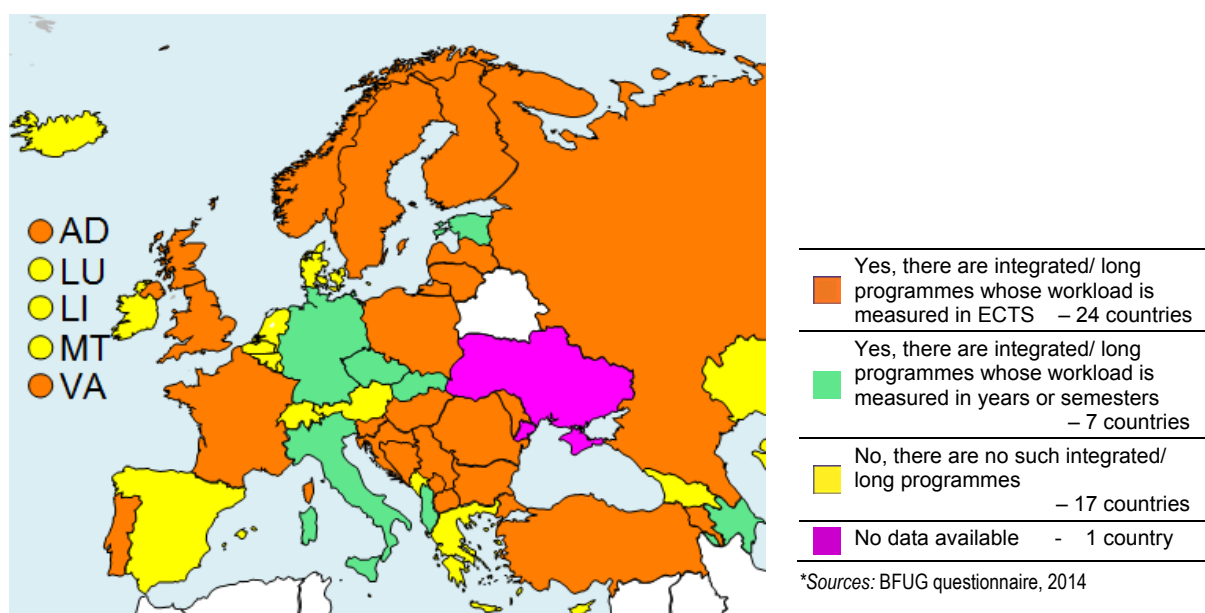
### Programmes outside the typical Bologna models

31 higher education systems confirm the existence of degree programmes outside the two-cycle (Bachelor-Master) model.

**Integrated first and second cycle programmes.** The most typical 'deviation' from the Bologna two cycle model are the integrated programmes including both the first and second cycle of studies and leading to a second cycle qualification. This kind of programme in most cases leads to qualifications in regulated professions, i.e. in the fields of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, nursing and midwifery, architecture, but in some countries also in engineering, law, theology, teacher training and some others. The total number countries which maintain integrated/long programmes is 31 and this figure has not changed since 2012.

In the earlier years a substantial number of countries continued to measure the workload in those programmes in years or semesters. However, Figure 2.8. shows that in 2014 only eight countries Albania, Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Italy and Slovakia still measure workload in years/semesters.

**Figure 2.8: Presence of the integrated/long programmes leading to a second-cycle degree 2013/14**



The duration of the integrated programmes leading to regulated professions is usually chosen according to the requirements of national legislation and in the EU/EEA countries according to the EU directive 2015/36/EC amended by 2014/55/EU in the EU/EEA countries. In general, this duration is 300-360 ECTS (five-six years) depending on the regulated profession in question. Additional data show that the share of the above programmes in the total number of programmes varies widely: from 2.3% in Finland to 28% in Sweden and Switzerland. In the United Kingdom, integrated programmes are shorter than in other countries – 240 ECTS/4years of which 60 ECTS credits are obtained at the second cycle level, mainly in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects and professions allied to medicine. This leaves a remaining 10% to arts, humanities and social science.

## **Second cycle programmes with a duration outside the Bologna 60-75, 90 and 120 ECTS pattern.**

Deviations to the typical Bologna duration in the second cycle (outside 60-120 ECTS credits) are observed in 27 Higher education systems, mainly in those cases where programmes leading to regulated professions have been rearranged into two Bologna cycles, but the regulations of the profession in question require a total duration of studies longer than 300 ECTS/5 years. For this reason in the second cycle programmes can comprise up to 180 ECTS Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Holy See, Montenegro, Norway, Switzerland and even more in United Kingdom (Scotland) - 187,5 ECTS credits), and up to 150 ECTS credits in Czech Republic, Finland and Hungary - mainly in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, architecture, law or theology.

In the United Kingdom, there are more second cycle qualifications outside the Bologna model, such as Taught MPhil (<180 ECTS), Postgraduate diplomas (60 ECTS), Postgraduate certificates (30 ECTS). Some other countries have introduced a greater duration of the second cycle (180 ECTS) with a view to accommodate students having a bachelor degree in a different field (Slovakia) or to facilitate programmes with specific language requirements (Holy See).

**‘Pre-Bologna’ programmes.** Another group of programmes including both first and second cycles are the ‘pre-Bologna’ programmes in those countries whose legislation allowed for long transition periods, for instance in Andorra, Slovenia and Spain. Those programmes will cease to exist when the first cohort of the students studying in the Bologna model graduate.

### **Access to the next cycle**

Access between the Bologna cycles has been among the most important issues already since the beginning of the Bologna process. It has been stated in the Bologna Process that first-cycle degrees should give access to studies in the second cycle, while the second-cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies" <sup>(5)</sup>. Access is defined in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention as having the right to be considered for admission.

However, even if access is provided in the understanding of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, there are several reasons why not all first-cycle programmes give direct access to the second-cycle, and this is often related to a binary differentiation between "academic" and "professional" programmes. This leads to a requirement that holders of professional first-cycle degrees must follow bridging programmes in order to be able to access academic second cycle programmes. Indeed in several countries, there may be no second-cycle programmes that provide direct continuation from some or all professional first-cycle programmes.

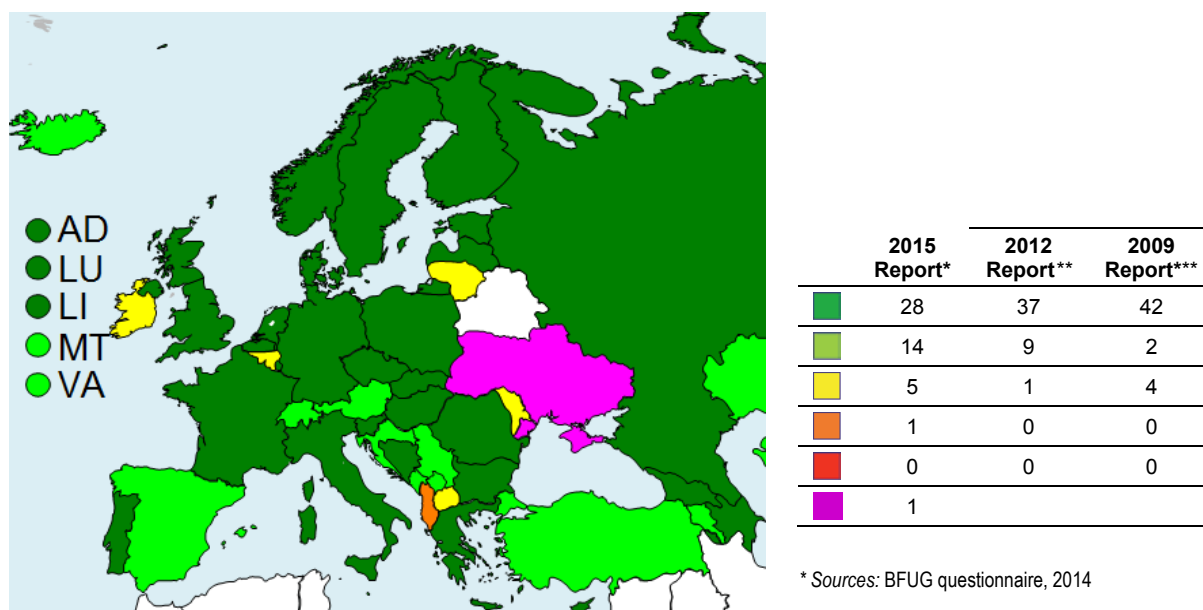
Similar reasons may hinder access of holders of the “professional” second cycle qualifications to enter doctoral studies. Consequently, ministers in several of Bologna ministerial communiqués encouraged efforts to remove barriers to access and progression between cycles <sup>(6)(7)</sup>.

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Are of such programmes <sup>(5)</sup> Realising the European Higher Education Area. Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education, Berlin, 19 September 2003.

<sup>(6)</sup> The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005.

Figure 2.9: Scorecard indicator n°2: Access<sup>8</sup> to the next cycle, 2013/14\*



United Kingdom: data from Northern Ireland only, for England and Wales data are not centrally available

### Scorecard categories

- All first-cycle qualifications give access to second-cycle programmes and all second-cycle qualifications give access to at least one third-cycle programme without major transitional problems <sup>(9)</sup>
- There are some (less than 25%) first-cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle, **and/or** some second cycle-qualifications that do not give access the third cycle
- There are some (less than 25 %) first-cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle **and/or** some second-cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle
- A significant number (25-50 %) of first and/or second-cycle qualifications do not give access to the next cycle
- Most (more than 50 %) first and/or second-cycle qualifications do not give access to the next cycle **OR** there are no arrangements for access to the next cycle

In 28 countries, all first-cycle programmes now give access to the second cycle. In the next group 14 countries can be found in the category “light green”. In Bosnia-Herzegovina some first-cycle qualifications do not give access to the second cycle, while some of second-cycle qualifications do not give access to the third cycle in Armenia, Austria, Croatia, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Malta, Montenegro,

(7) London Communiqué: Towards the European Higher Education Area: responding to challenges in a globalised world, 18 May 2007.

(8) Access to the next cycle is defined as the right of qualified candidates to apply and to be considered for admission (definition used in the Lisbon Recognition Convention). The indicator measures the percentage of first-cycle programmes that give access to at least one second-cycle programme. Scoring criteria are given in the table above.

(9) Compensatory measures required for students coming from another study field will not be counted as "major transitional problems".



Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey. In 3 countries - Denmark, Holy See and Spain some programmes in both the first and second cycles do not give access to the next level.

In 5 countries – Albania, Belgium (French speaking community), FYROM, Ireland, Lithuania and Moldova **more** than 25% have some second-cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle, but in Albania less than 50% second cycle qualifications do not give access to the third cycle.

At first sight, it seems that the performance of countries in improving access to the next cycle has decreased over time. However, the country explanations and additional data demonstrate that actually the changes in scores are rather caused because of better data collection and more detailed self-analysis of the countries concerned. According to country explanations, instead of broad estimates claiming 100% access (actually, just meaning that the country takes no additional measures to hinder access), in the current data collection countries paid attention not only to the most common case where graduates choose a next cycle programme in the same field. In the 2014 data collection, countries also considered cases where students choose studies in a different field, where students choose to switch between academic and professional programmes (which exists in 23 EHEA countries), or where students choose a different higher education institution).

Several countries do not grant direct access to second cycle studies to holders of professional first cycle qualifications. For instance, in Belgium (Dutch speaking community), Lithuania and the Netherlands graduates from professional programmes must complete bridging programmes. Malta applies a 30 ECTS bridging course if the field of study is different, but in Switzerland additional courses have to be taken if the applicant comes from a different Higher Education institution. In Ireland access is granted for holders of honours degrees rather than the ordinary bachelor (see also next section *Regulation of progression between first and second cycle* below, particularly Figure 2.9).

Thus, access to the next cycle (according to the Lisbon Recognition Convention definition) generally works. The cases where access is not granted occur most often if the applicant has graduated from a professional programme, or holds a qualification which does not follow the Bologna pattern.

### **Regulation of progression between first and second cycle**

Despite the general tendency towards easier access to the next cycle, when it comes to practical measures, access to the next cycle may require sitting additional examinations, taking additional courses or having a mandatory work experience, see Figure 2.10.

Access to second cycle applicants may have additional requirements, of which the main are the following: applicants have to sit additional examinations, to take additional courses or a prior job experience is requested. However, there are several main cases of application of the additional requirements, namely: additional measures as a rule applied to all students; requirements at the cases where the applicants holding a professional first cycle qualification but seek admission to an academic second cycle programme; applicants holding a first cycle qualification in a different study field; applicants holding a first cycle qualification in the same study field

**General additional requirement applied to all students.** Just some countries use the above additional requirements for all students. In eight countries - AZ, BH, CZ, GE, KZ, MD, RU, TR, all students have to sit entrance exams, and some students will have to sit examinations in another 22 countries. However, several countries admitted that they chose the answer “Some students” due to additional requirements in the cases of highly specific fields e.g. creative arts, sports or other and therefore the requirements affect a small share of all students. The same is true in the cases of applying additional courses. Regarding the prior work experience as a rule, it is mentioned by 19

countries. In Finland, if a professional first cycle degree holder applies to further professional studies, work experience between the two cycles is compulsory.

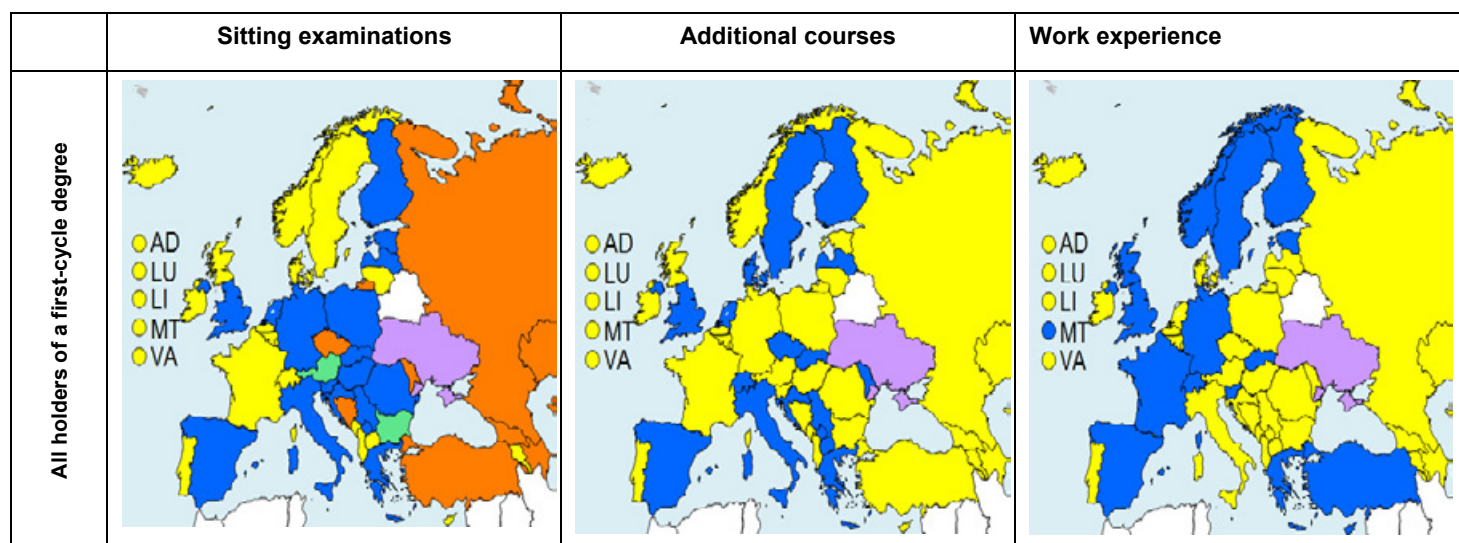
**Applicants holding a professional first cycle qualification.** All applicants holding professional first cycle qualifications have to sit examination in the countries mentioned above and in 25 countries the examinations are applied in some cases. As regards additional courses, five higher education systems – BEfr, BEnl, ME, RS and CH countries will apply additional courses but 20 countries will apply this requirement in some cases. Some of these latter countries mention that the additional courses are applied individually.

**Applicants holding first cycle qualification in a different field.** Additional examinations are only applied in the above group of eight countries where the examinations are a general requirement, but 21 countries apply additional examinations in some cases.

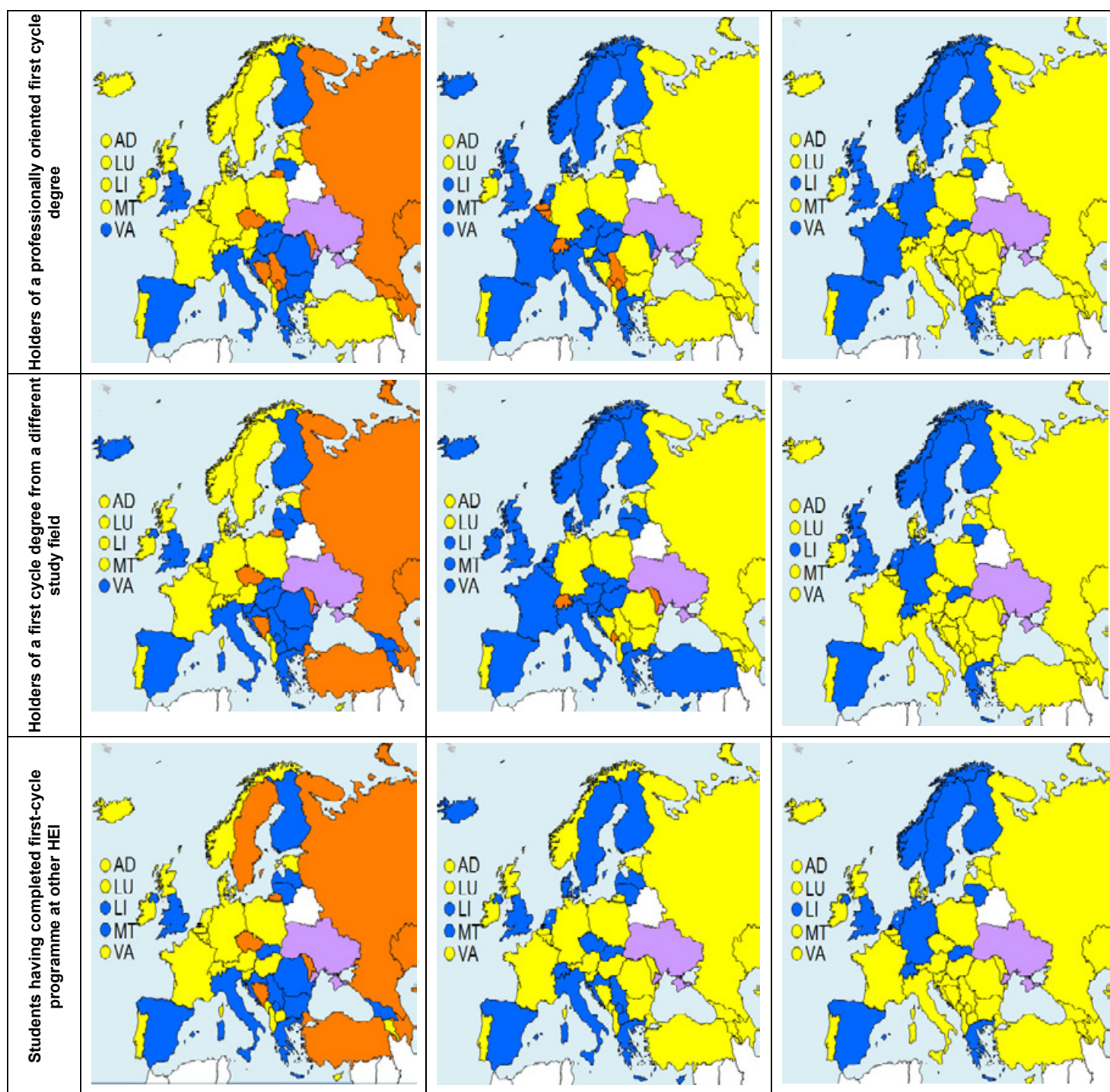
However, in Moldova, Montenegro and Switzerland all applicants coming from a different study field have to take additional courses, but in 17 countries the additional courses are applied in some cases. In Bulgaria there is no formal requirement for those coming from a different field to take additional courses, although the second cycle programme is prolonged.

**Figure 2.10: Requirement to sit exams or take additional courses for holders of a first-cycle degree to be admitted to a second-cycle programme, 2013**

■ No data     
 ■ All students     
 ■ Some students     
 ■ No students







■ No data   
 ■ All students   
 ■ Some students   
 ■ No students

### Applicants with qualification in the same field but coming from a different institution.

In the same above group of countries and Sweden applicants with a qualification in the same field but coming from a different HEI will have to sit examinations but in 25 other countries exams will be applied in some cases. No country applies additional courses to all such applicants, but in 28 countries additional courses can be applied to some students.

For access to second cycle programmes, the vast majority of countries do not apply overall requirements to sit additional examinations, take additional courses or have work experience as a general rule, but about half of the countries may apply such measures in some cases. According to country comments, the “some cases” mean a small share of applicants are affected by those measures, mainly in the cases of programmes of creative arts, sports where specific skills are needed. However, there is a group of 8 countries where sitting additional examinations is a rule.

There are two groups of applicants who have to fulfil additional requirements: those holding a professional first cycle degree applying for admission to an academic second cycle programmes, those who come from a different study field, but also those who have a degree in the same field but come from a different HEI.

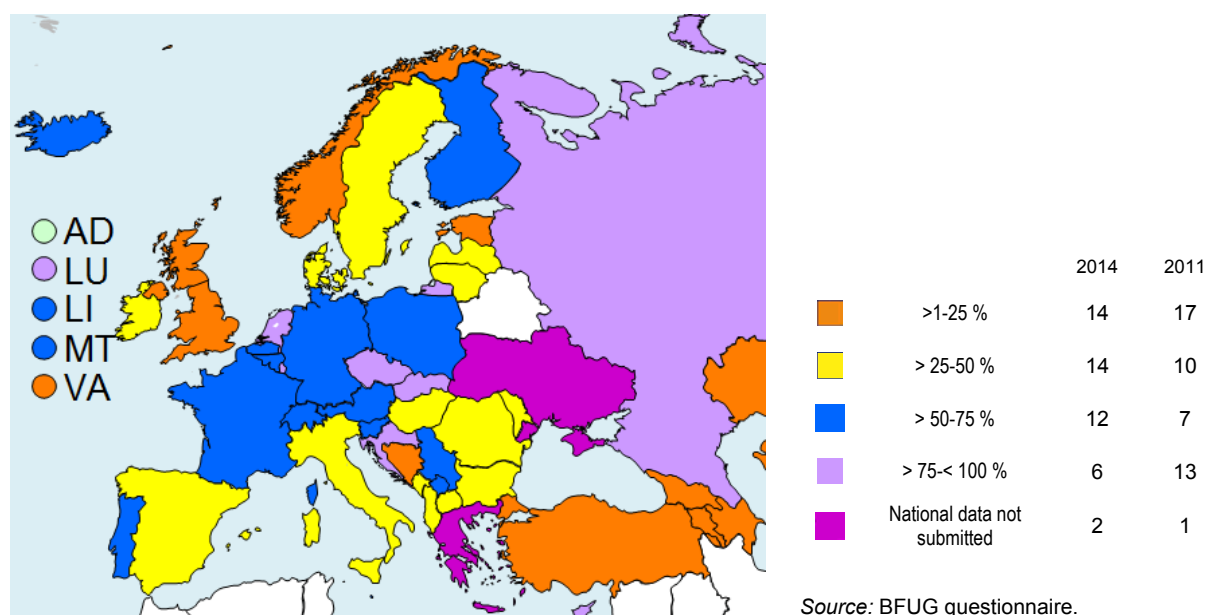
### **Share of first-cycle graduates who actually continue their studies in the second cycle**

In principle, nearly all first cycle graduates are eligible at least to have access to a second cycle programme in the same field. However, it does not mean that nearly all first cycle graduates should undertake further studies in a second cycle programme – nor that they should remain in the same field. Figure 2.11 below shows the share of first-cycle graduates who actually continue studies in a second-cycle programme.

In 2014, the number of countries where 76-100% students follow to the second cycle has shrunk even stronger: from 13 in 2011 to 6 in 2014. In addition, in some of those six countries the share of students continuing to the second cycle remained in the 76-100% interval but decreased within this interval.

On the other end of the spectrum, only in 14 countries does the share of graduates who continue to a second cycle stay at 1-25% compared to 17 countries in 2011. According to Figure 2.3 most of the above 14 countries have bachelor programmes with 240 ECTS workload. According to explanations of the above countries, the 240 ECTS programmes include work placements and/or professional training more often than in the programmes of smaller workload. Thus, one explanation of the small share of students continuing to the second cycle is that those graduates are more employable and therefore move to the labour market rather than continue studies. On the other hand, there are other possible explanations - for instance, high selectivity at admission to the second cycle.

**Figure 2.11: Share of first-cycle students continuing studies in a second-cycle programme after graduation from the first cycle (within two years), 2013/14**



Generally, very high shares of students who continue to second cycle could be an indication that bachelor graduates cannot find jobs and therefore massively enter the second cycle, as it was admitted in several countries in the 2012 report. In some countries the high share of students that choose to continue in the second cycle is a sign of the culture, traditions and opinion in society not accepting a bachelor degree as a qualification for the labour market. Finland and the Netherlands admit that the share of bachelor graduates may differ between university graduates and the ones of the professional HEIs – while the former opt for further studies, the latter rather start their working life.

Changes since 2012 show that the number of countries where nearly all first cycle graduates follow studies in the second cycle has decreased by half. This is a positive move since a very high share of students following to further studies is usually an indication that bachelor graduates have difficulties getting jobs and thus they are forced to study in the next cycle.

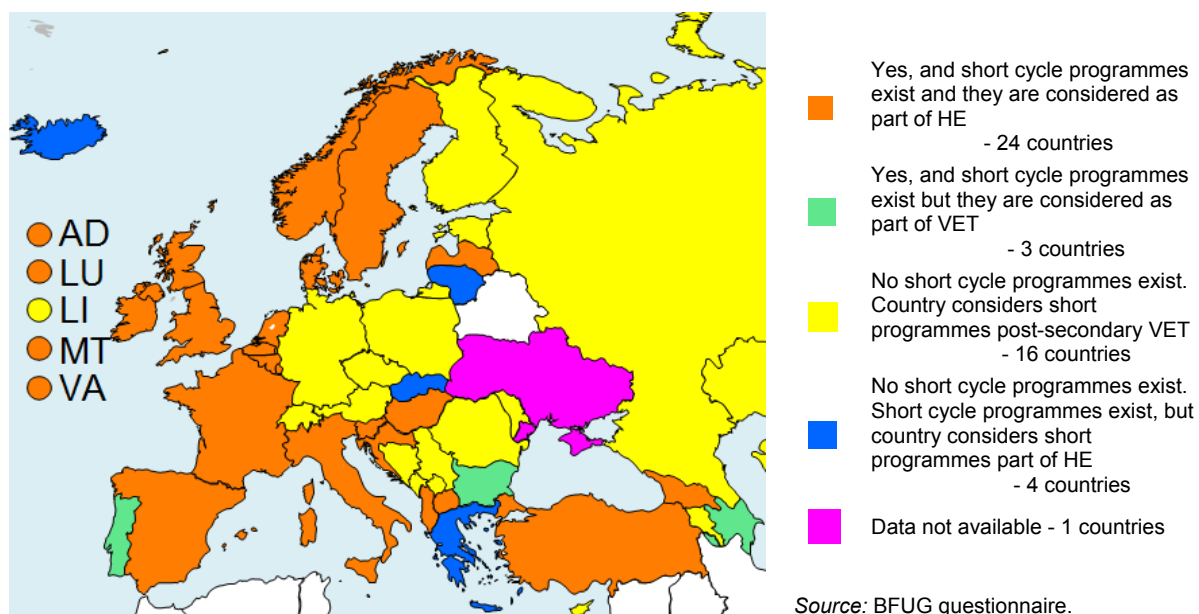
### 2.1.2. Short-cycle higher education programmes

Short cycle programmes have been the subject of discussion since the beginning of the Bologna Process. While a group of countries did not have short cycle programmes and they did not plan to introduce them, other countries had short cycle programmes and they were looking how to accommodate those programmes in the Bologna three cycle system. The compromise accepted in the Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in 2005 in Bergen formulated “short cycle within the first cycle” but this has not solved all the issues. Hence several ministerial communiques have since addressed short cycle studies with a view to improve transparency and comparability of this sector of higher education.

The 2014 BFUG survey attempted to clarify several issues related to short cycle studies. Not all countries have short cycle programmes, however the number of educational systems having short cycle programmes has grown from 14 in 2005 to 27 in 2014, namely Albania, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Hungary, Denmark, France, FYROM, Georgia, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom. As illustrated in Figure 2.12, short cycle programmes are most commonly considered to

belong to higher education but in some countries they are attributed to post-secondary VET programmes.

**Figure 2.12. Do short cycle programmes belong to higher education? 2014**



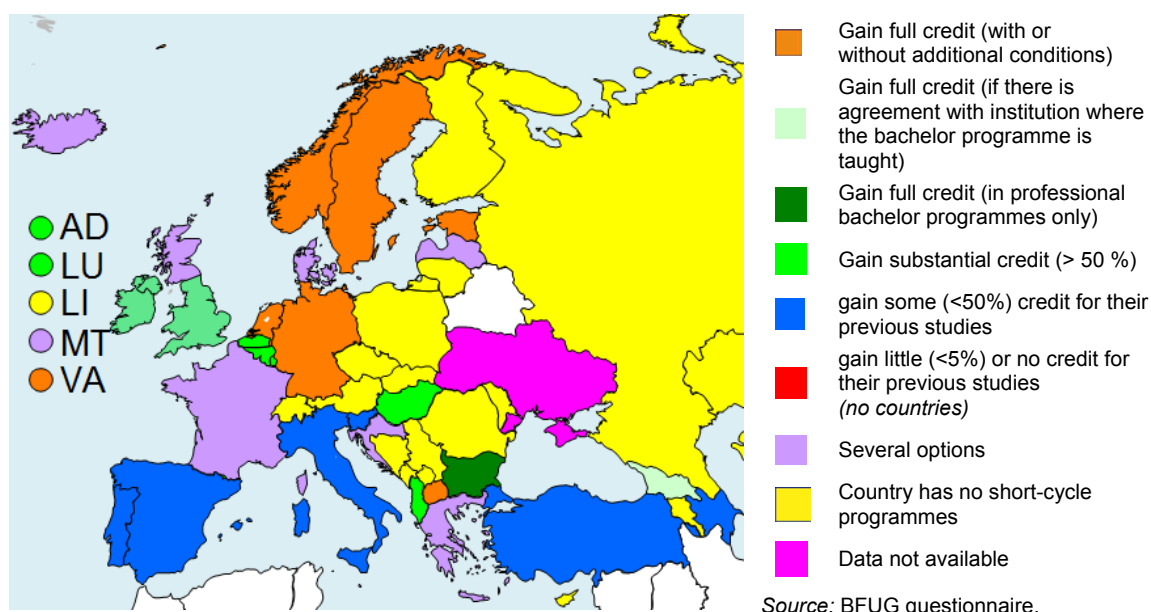
Altogether there are four groups of countries: countries that have short cycle programmes and they are considered part of HE, those that have short cycle programmes but they consider these programmes as part of post-secondary VET. The countries that do not have short cycle programmes also divide into those considering short cycle programmes as belonging to VET and those who consider them part of HE (see Figure 2.12).

The diversity of the short cycle can also be seen from the names of short-cycle qualifications: *Higher Education Certificate, Undergraduate certificate, Higher Technician, Professional diploma, Advanced Professional Diploma, Interim Qualification, Technological Diploma, Higher Education Diploma, Diploma of Higher Education, Undergraduate diploma, University diploma, Associate degree, Degree, Foundation Degree, First Level Professional Higher Education Diploma, Sub-Bachelor<sup>10</sup>, Professional Bachelor*. In addition, some countries such as France, Luxembourg, Malta, Spain and the United Kingdom have several short-cycle qualifications and part of them are at different levels. Also, while the majority of those qualifications belong to professional higher qualifications, some of them are academic.

<sup>10</sup> In UK *Diploma of Higher Education* is of higher level than *Higher Education Diploma*



**Figure 2.13: Gaining credits towards bachelor programme in the same field for previous short-cycle studies, 2014**



When continuing studies in a first-cycle programme, short-cycle graduates can often gain full credit for their further studies in Armenia, Estonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Serbia and Sweden (see Figure 2.12). In Cyprus, Ireland and United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) short-cycle graduates can gain full credit for studies, but on the condition that there is an agreement between the institution where the short-cycle programme was taught and the institution where the bachelor programme is taught. In Bulgaria, full credit is granted but only when continuing in professional first-cycle programmes. Some countries also mention shorter programmes which either prepare for certain professions or are intermediate qualifications in programmes leading to a first-cycle degree. The length of such programmes can vary between 60 ECTS (one year) to 180 ECTS (three years). The most common length of short-cycle programmes seems to be 120 ECTS credits (two years), as mentioned by Andorra, the French Community of Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

In seven countries there are several options and in three of the countries the number of credits gained may vary between full credits to zero credit. For instance, in Georgia, there have been no any cases of recognition of short cycle qualification for the purposes to continue studies on bachelor's programmes.

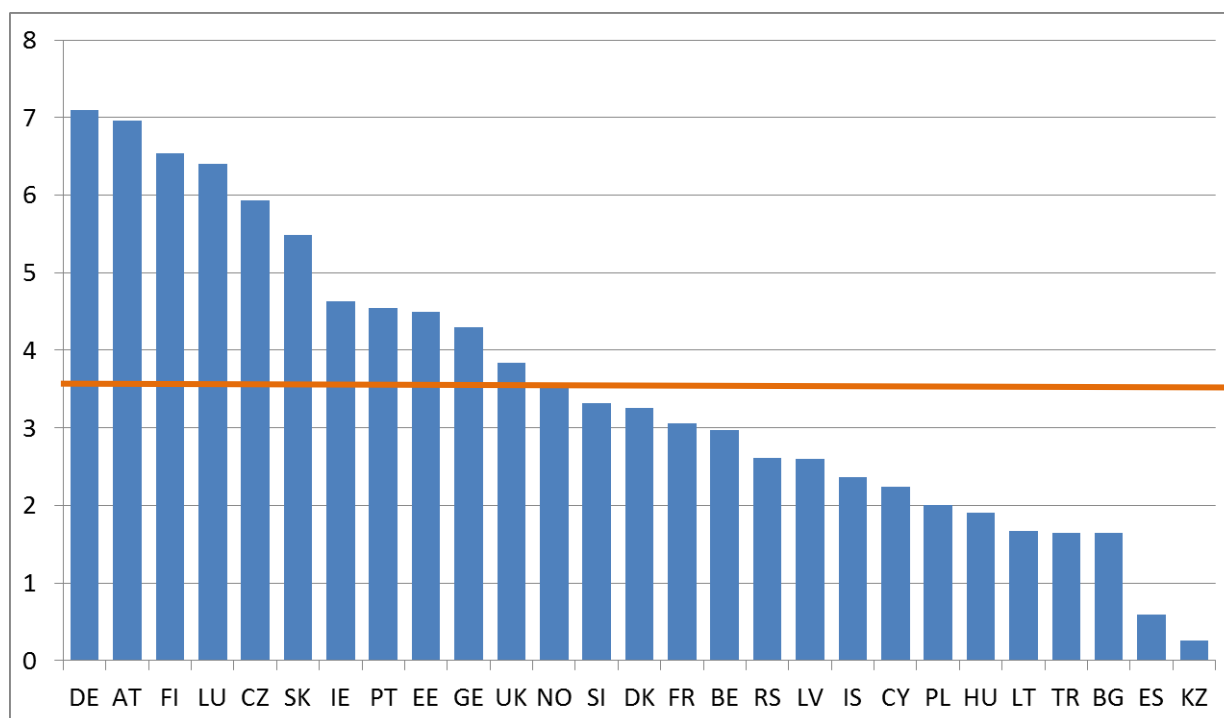
Short-cycle qualifications vary across the EHEA. They can be part of higher education or part of post-secondary vocational education. When continuing in first-cycle programmes, short-cycle graduates gain different numbers of credits –from full credit down to zero credits.

The short cycle programmes and qualifications should be addressed in the next period with a view to improve their readability and international comparability.

### 2.1.3. Third-cycle programmes

The share of third cycle students in the total student community varies strongly across the EHEA. The newest Eurostat data of 2012 covers 27 countries within and outside the European Union.

Figure 2.14: Share of doctoral students in the total number of students in Bologna patter. Eurostat 2012

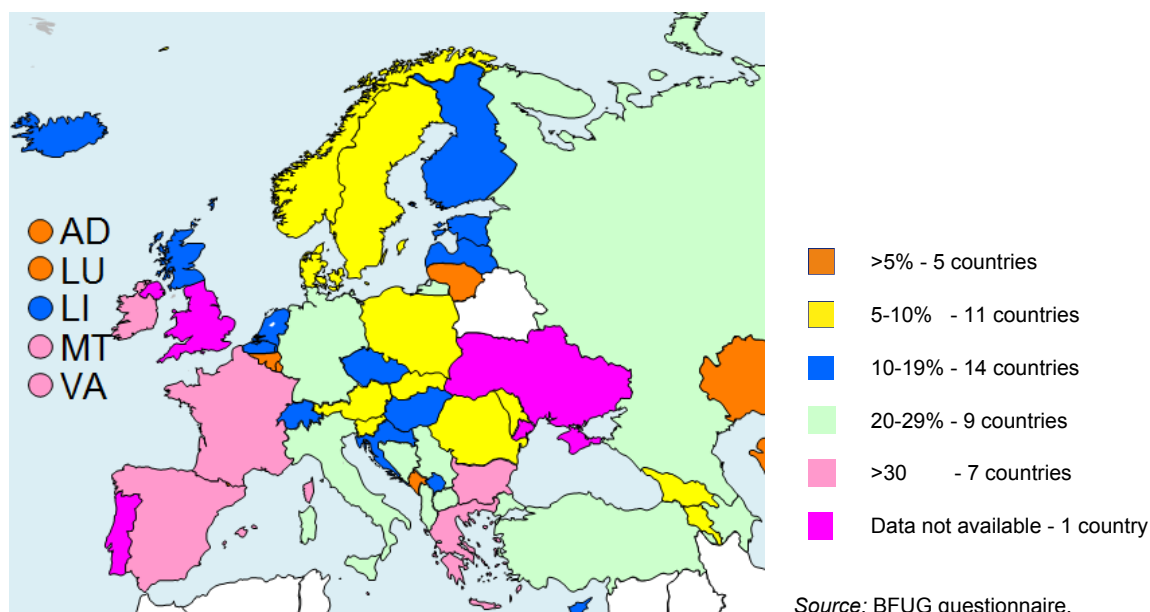


*Note: The data does not include doctoral students outside the Bologna pattern*

The highest percentages of third cycle students are in Germany and Austria – 7% followed by Finland and Luxembourg with just over 6 %, but the smallest share of doctoral students in the entire student population is in Kazakhstan - 0,25%, and in Spain - 0,60%. It should however take into account that in the case of Spain the reason for a small percentage of doctoral students may be that doctoral students are not studying in Bologna type doctoral programmes.

While EUROSTAT data shows the share of doctoral students among all students, the BFUG survey asked countries to estimate the percentage of second cycle graduates eventually entering into a third cycle programme, see results in Figure 2.14.

Figure 2.15: percentage of second cycle graduates eventually enter into a third cycle programme, 2013/14



The greatest movement of second cycle graduates to third cycle studies is to be found in Bulgaria, Greece, Holy See, France, Ireland, Malta, and possibly UK (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) although no estimate has been provided. Particularly in England nearly half of doctoral students had their previous education outside the UK.

In 19 countries access to studies in the third cycle without a second cycle qualification is also possible. In the vast majority of those countries such access to third cycle without second cycle qualification is exceptional and only the high performing students are accepted. In the Flemish community of Belgium this opportunity is mainly given to foreign students. In Holy See, Montenegro, Romania, Spain in turn this path is available to students who have studied in the 300 ECTS programmes and therefore are only formally belong to first cycle graduates.

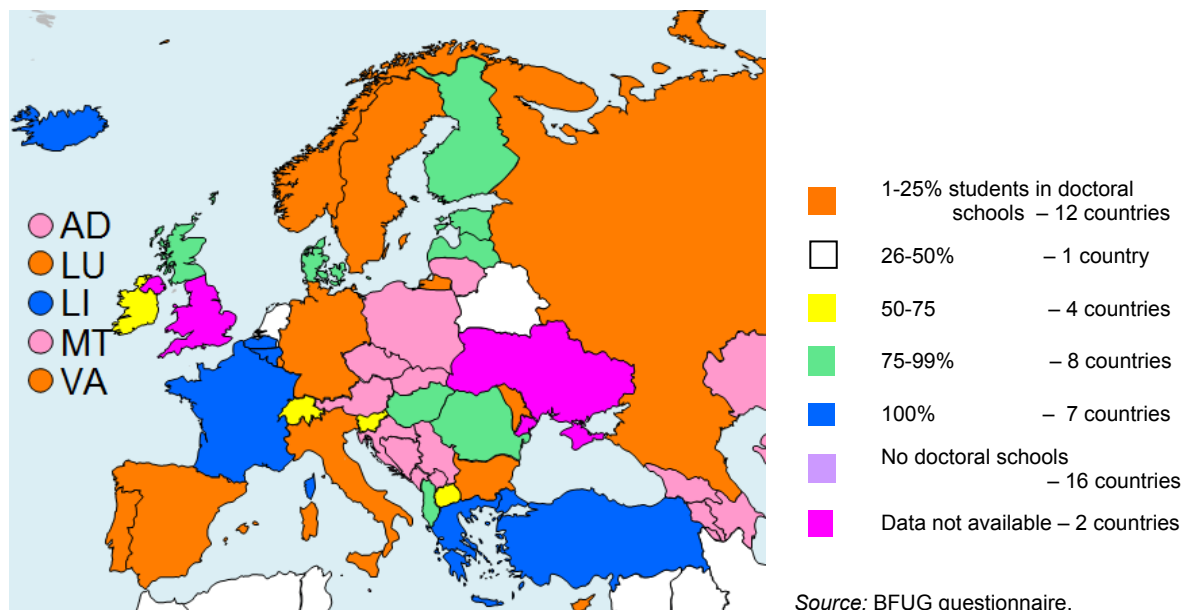
In most of cases the share of third cycle students entering to doctoral studies without a second cycle qualification is 1-5% in Belgium, Germany, Montenegro, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and UK (Scotland). In Cyprus, Denmark and Holy See the share is 6-15%, but in Ireland and Portugal this number reaches 16-25%. Austria, Finland, Greece, Malta, Romania and United Kingdom (England, Wales, Northern Ireland) can not specify the share of students.

Introduction about Doctoral schools to be written on the basis of the report of the Ad-hoc group on Third Cycle

In 2014, the 27 countries have doctoral schools compared with 30 in 2012. There still are 16 countries which do not have doctoral schools (see figure 2.15). Of those 32 countries where are doctoral schools, the most widespread share of students in doctoral schools in 12 countries is between 1-25% of doctoral students, but at the same time there are 8 countries where the most of the students are study in doctoral schools: 75-99% students in doctoral schools in 8 countries and all students in other 7 countries.

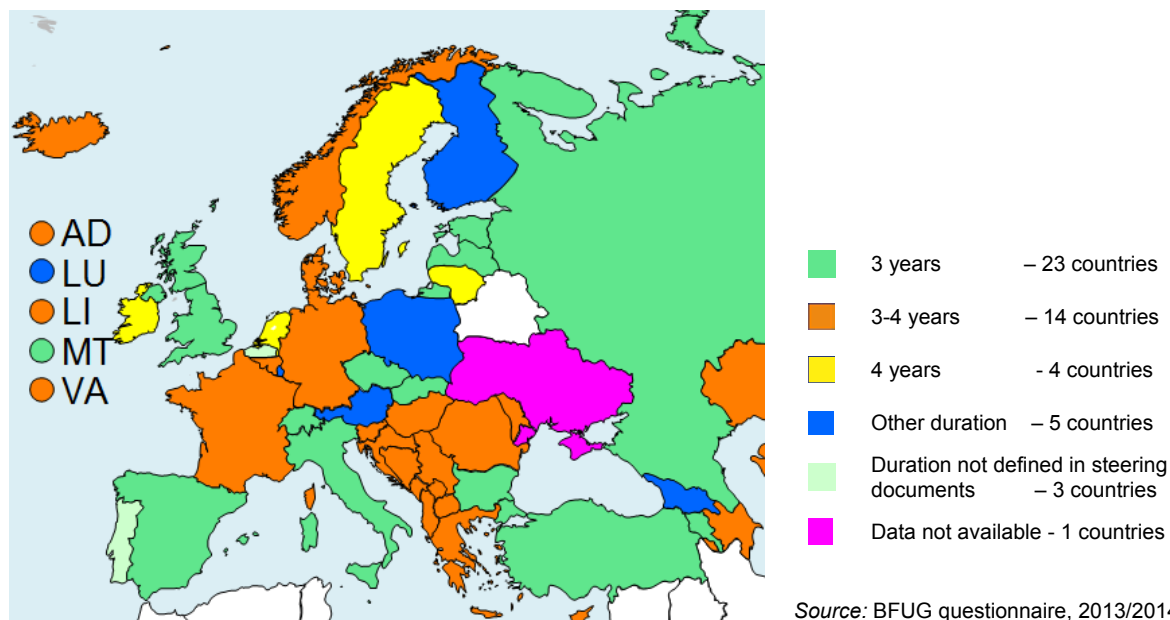


Figure 2.16: Percentage of doctoral students in doctoral schools, 2014 **NEW!**



There are several routes through which to pursue a doctorate in England. These are primarily through traditional supervision based doctorates and specialist training in doctoral training centres. Doctoral Training Centres differ from traditional supervision in that they provide training for students within focused research areas, often defined strategically by the Research Council funder(s) from the outset. Centres can be focused on academic or industrially relevant research topics, or a mix of both. In addition there are other less commonly adopted routes such as professional doctorates.

Figure 2.17: The length of full-time third-cycle programmes defined in the national steering documents, 2013/14

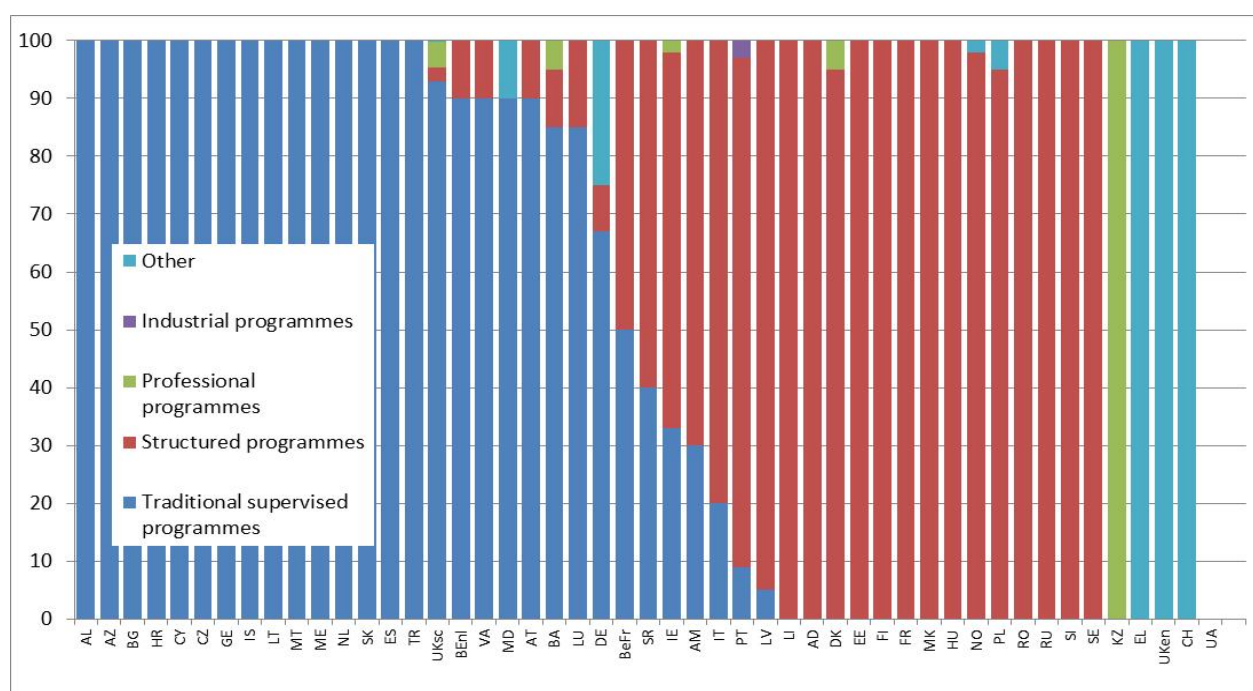


The highest number of countries have a 3 year duration of doctoral studies – 23 countries in 2014 ( 24 countries in 2012). The second popular duration of doctoral studies is 3-4 years – in 14 countries in 2014. In 4 countries – Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands and Sweden the duration of the doctoral studies is 4 years. In five countries duration of doctoral studies reaches outside 3-4 year interval: in Finland –

4-5 years, Georgia and Luxembourg – 3-5 years and 2-4 years in Poland. Cyprus, Greece and Portugal do not mention doctoral training in their steering documents.

As shown in Figure 2.17, the most typical prescribed duration of full-time doctoral programmes is three years while in eight countries it is three-four years. Four countries make no attempt to define or regulate the length of doctoral studies. Actual duration is estimated to be between three and four years in most countries.

**Figure 2.18: Proportion between traditional and structured doctoral studies and other types of doctoral programmes 2014**

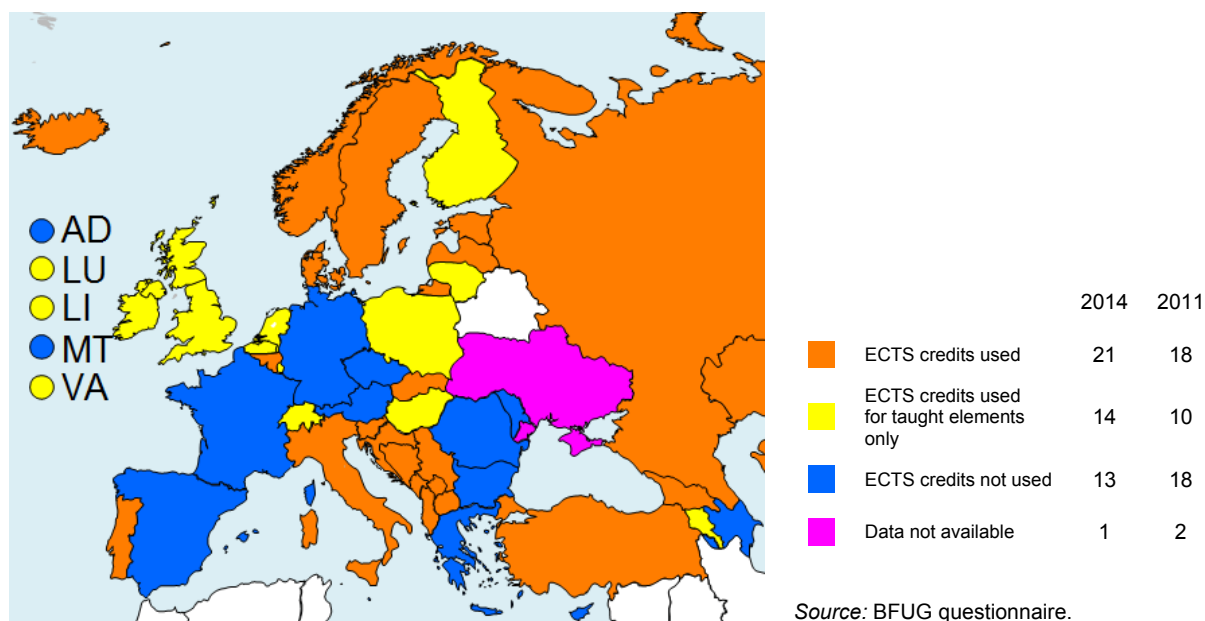


Although the structured doctoral programmes are growing, the traditional supervised doctoral studies are still the most widespread: in 16 countries all doctoral training follow traditional model and in another 9 countries over 70% of programmes follow the traditional approach (Figure 2.18). As regards the structured doctoral studies are more widespread than before and in 2014: in 14 countries all doctoral programmes follow the structured model and in another 6 countries more than 70% of programmes are structured.

Professional doctoral programmes are not yet widespread. Only BE, DK, IE, KZ and UK have 2-5% professional doctoral programmes, but KZ – that all of doctoral programmes are professional. 3% of industrial doctoral programmes are run only by Portugal (3%).

All those countries which have developed a qualifications framework, include doctoral qualifications into their qualifications frameworks. The use of ECTS in doctoral studies is growing over time. In 2014, 21 systems use ECTS for the whole doctoral studies and 14 countries for the taught elements (see Figure 2.18) and 13 countries do not use ECTS in third cycle programmes. In comparison, in 2011 to 18 systems used ECTS fully, 10 for taught part only and 18 systems did not use in doctoral programmes at all. 18 other countries do not require ECTS to be used in doctoral education.

Figure 2.19: Use of ECTS credits in doctoral programmes, 2013/14



Like in 2011, all the countries which have qualifications frameworks also have included third cycle qualifications. In 8 countries – Albania, Armenia, France, Italy, Moldova, Norway, Slovenia and UK-Scotland besides doctoral degrees have other qualifications in the qualifications frameworks.

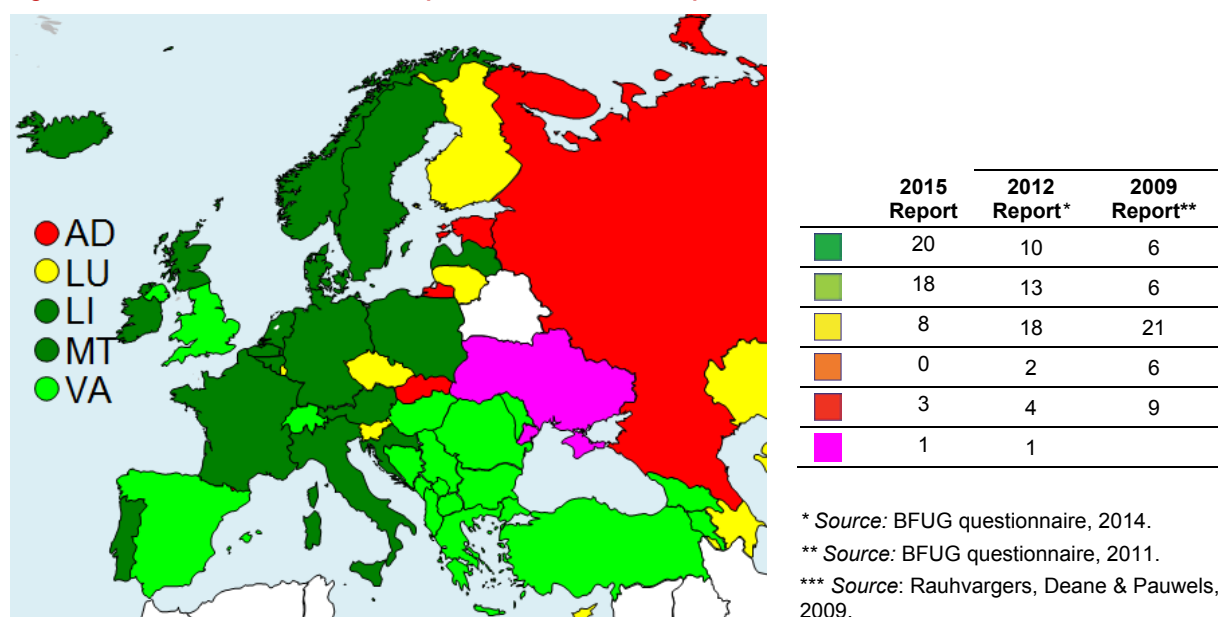
## 2.2. Bologna tools

### 2.2.1. National qualifications frameworks

Information on developments in qualifications frameworks to be written (info from Structural reforms group) to be added

Nineteen countries have completed have fulfilled all the 10 steps in implementation of qualifications frameworks comparing to ten countries in 2012 and eighteen more countries are following (Figure 2.21), but what is even more important, the number of countries still in the first three steps of implementation – there are three such countries compared to nine countries in 2012.

Figure 2.21: Scorecard indicator n°3: Implementation of national qualifications frameworks, 2013/14\*



To be verified with Structural Reforms group

## Scorecard categories

- Step 10: The Framework has self-certified its compatibility with the Qualifications Framework for the European for Higher Education Area
- Steps 7-9:
  - 9. Qualifications have been included in the NQF
  - 8. Study programmes have been re-designed on the basis of the learning outcomes included in the NQF
  - 7. Implementation of the NQF has started with agreement on the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions, quality assurance agency(ies) and other bodies
- Steps 5-6:
  - 6. The NQF has been adopted in legislation or in other high level policy fora
  - 5. Consultation / national discussion has taken place and the design of the NQF has been agreed by stakeholders
- Step 4: The level structure, level descriptors (learning outcomes), and credit ranges have been agreed
- Step 3-1:
  - 3. The process of developing the NQF has been set up, with stakeholders identified and committee(s) established
  - 2. The purpose(s) of the NQF have been agreed and outlined
  - 1. Decision to start developing the NQF has been taken by the national body responsible for higher education and/or the minister

*Note:* Indicator is defined as the current state in implementation of the national qualifications framework. The state of implementation was measured against the ten steps of implementation of NQF defined by the EHEA qualifications frameworks working group. To keep the same scoring criteria as in 2009 the 10 steps of NQF implementation are transformed into stocktaking scores as shown.

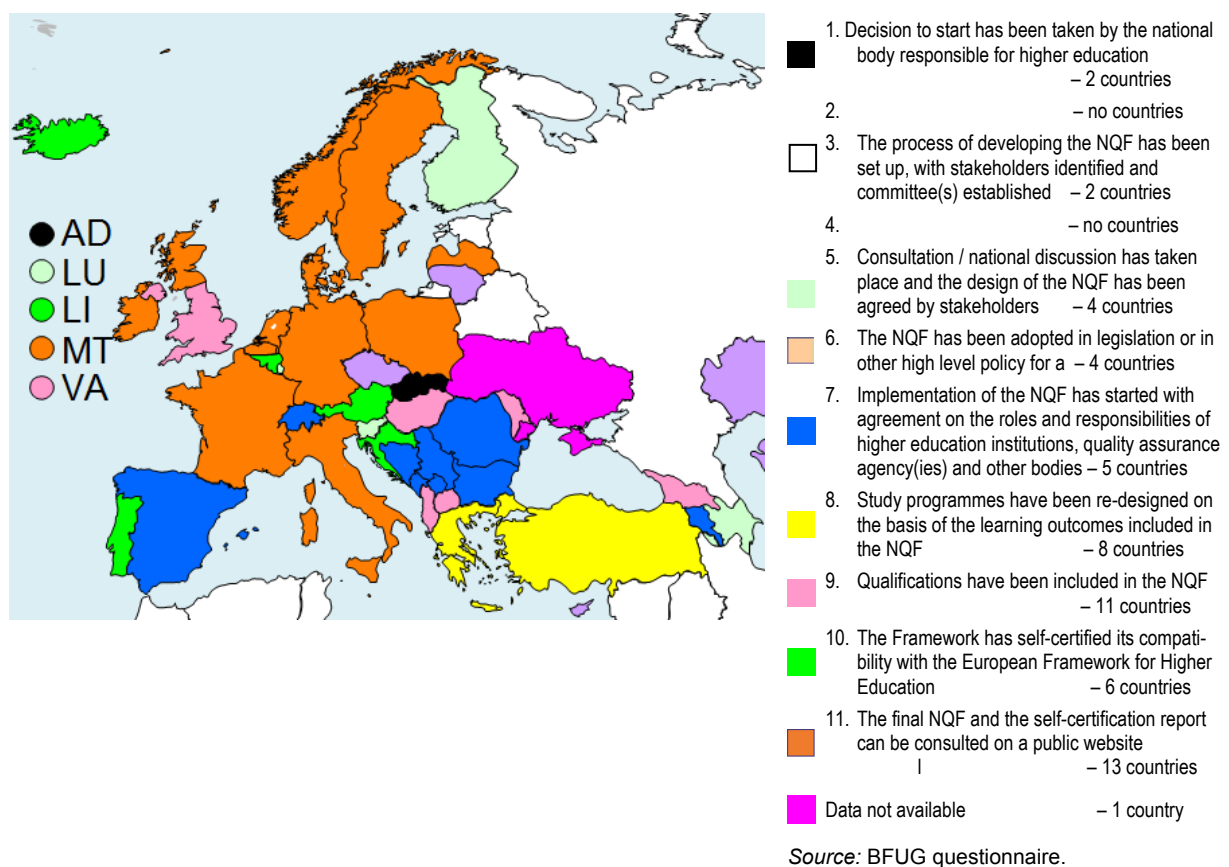
Figure 2.22 shows the breakdown of countries by each step of implementation. Thirteen countries, namely BE<sub>nl</sub>, DK, FR, DE, IE, IT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, SE and UK<sub>sc</sub> have fulfilled all the steps in implementation of qualifications frameworks and have the self-certification report can be consulted on a public website compared to while AT, BE<sub>fr</sub>, HR, IS, LT and PT miss only information on qualifications frameworks on a public website.

Next group of ten countries, namely AL, FYROM, GE, VA, HU, MD, SR, ES, CH and UK<sub>ewni</sub> countries that have Qualifications have been included in the NQF but who have not yet self-certified its compati-

bility with the European Framework for Higher Education the national framework. Georgia and Turkey are the phase when qualifications have been included in the NQF. In Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Romania the implementation of the NQF has started but the study programmes have not yet been completely re-designed on the basis of the learning outcomes included in the NQF. Legislation has been adopted but the practical implementation has not yet started in Cyprus, Czech republic, Kazakhstan and Lithuania. In Azerbaijan, Finland, Luxembourg and Slovenia the national agreement on the design of NQF has been reached. In Estonia and Russia the process of developing the NQF has been set up, with stakeholders. Finally, in Andorra and Slovakia only the decision to start work at NQF is made.

Altogether, eight countries still do not have legislation for NQF, and another four countries have legislation but have not started practical implementation at all.

**Figure 2.22: Progress in development of national qualifications frameworks according to the 11 steps, 2014\***



\* No countries at Step 2 and step 4 are not

Conclusion: At least fifteen countries have made substantial progress in implementation of national qualifications frameworks, but at the same time twelve countries still have not started the implementation at programme and institution level, some of them do not show progress since 2012.

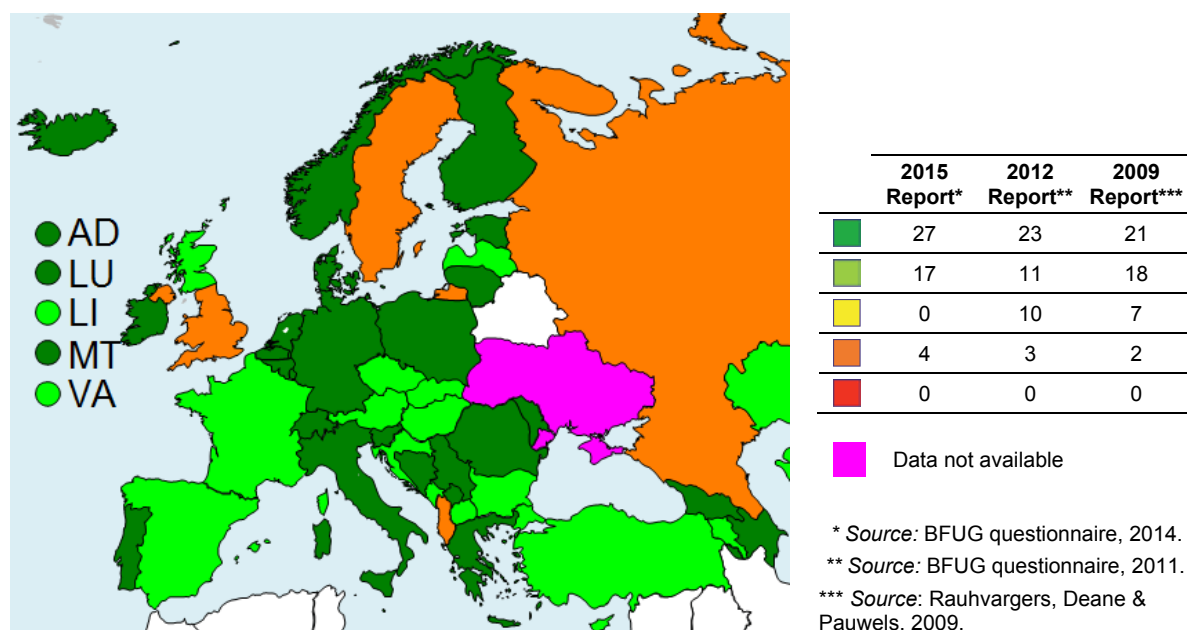
### 2.2.2. ECTS, learning outcomes and student centred learning

#### New developments in ECTS to be written

44 countries are in the dark or light green categories compared to 34 in 2012 and the four remaining countries are in orange zone: in Albania, Russia, United Kingdom(EWNI) in which ECTS credits are allocated in less than 75% programmes, and Sweden where the national credit system that is not

compatible with ECTS. Other countries with national credit systems Bulgaria that are compatible with ECTS, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, and United Kingdom (EWNI).

**Figure 2.23: Scorecard indicator n°8: Stage of implementation of ECTS system, 2013/14\***



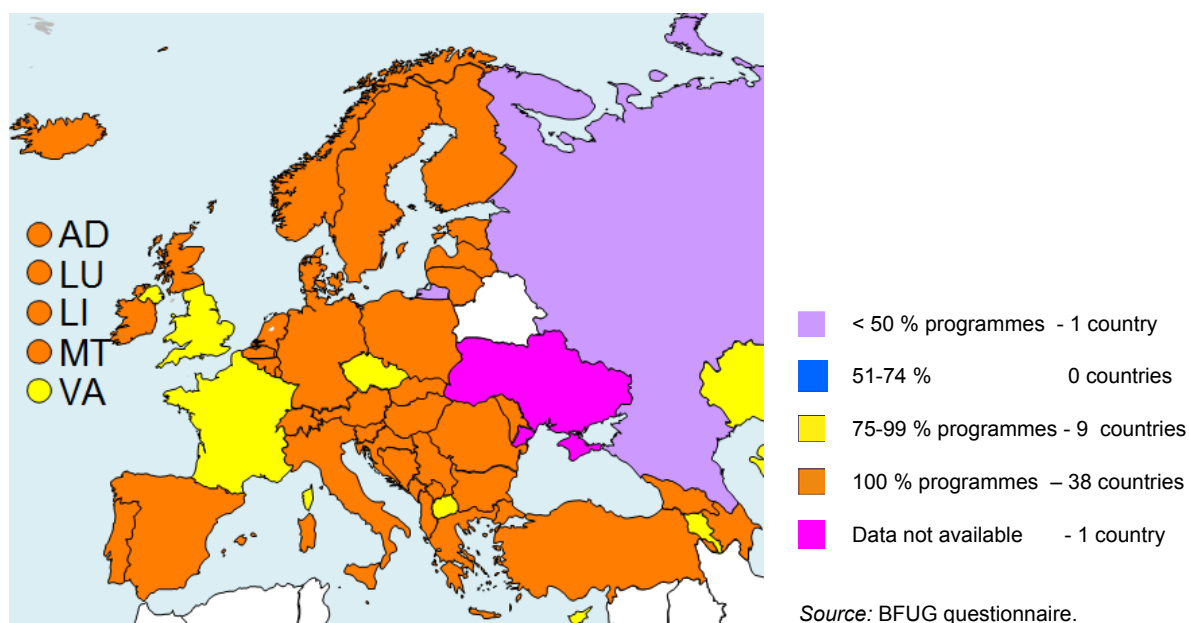
### Scorecard categories

- ECTS credits are allocated to all components of all HE programmes, enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes
- ECTS credits are allocated to all components of more than 75 % of HE programmes, enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes  
**OR**  
 Credits are allocated to all components of all HE programmes using a fully ECTS compatible credit system enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes
- ECTS credits are allocated in 50-75 % of all HE programmes AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes **OR**  
 ECTS credits are allocated to all components of more than 75 % of HE programmes enabling credit transfer and accumulation, but ECTS credits are not yet linked with learning outcomes
- ECTS credits are allocated in at least 49 % of HE programmes **OR**  
 a national credit system is used which is not fully compatible with ECTS
- ECTS credits are allocated in less than 49 % of HE programmes **OR**  
 ECTS is used in all programmes but only for credit transfer

A comparison of Figures 2.16 and 2.17 shows that linking credits with learning outcomes has been implemented to a far lesser extent than the use of ECTS for credit transfer and accumulation. Indeed it is the linking of credits with learning outcomes that hinders the full implementation of ECTS.

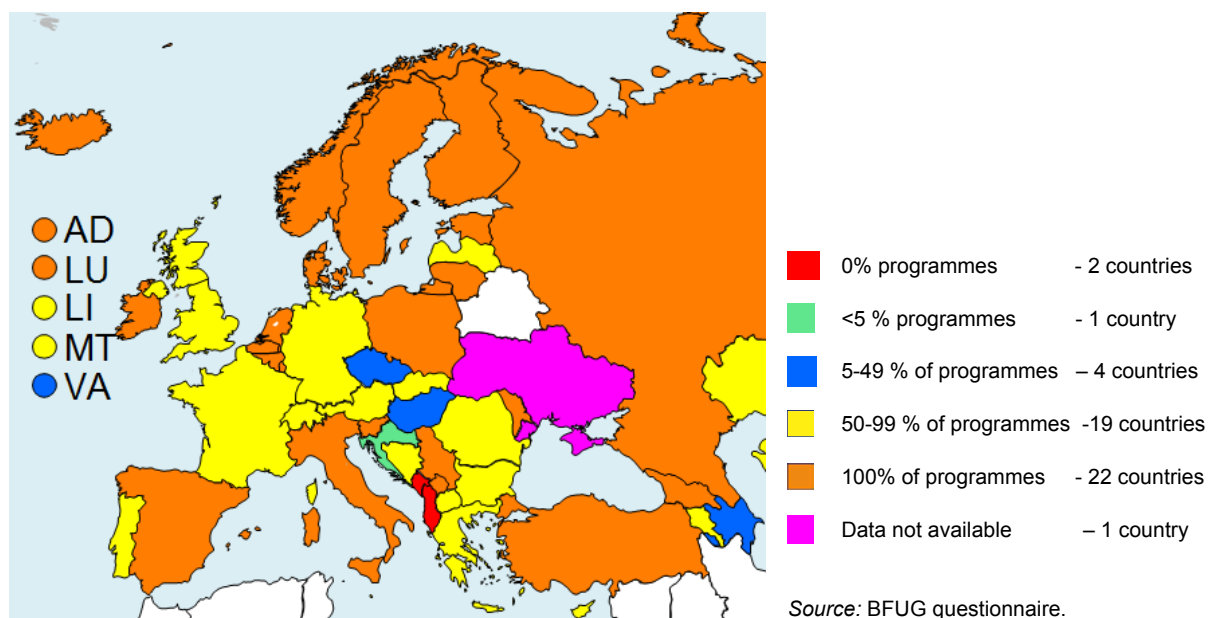


**Figure 2.24: Share of programmes using ECTS credits for accumulation and transfer for all elements of study programmes, 2013/2014**



There is progress in implementation of ECTS. In 38 countries (Figure 2.24) ECTS is used for both accumulation and transfer while all programmes but in other 19 countries – in 75-99% of programmes compared to 30 and 7 countries respectively in 2011. In those two aspects of ECTS implementation is close to completion.

**Figure 2.25: Extent to which ECTS credits are linked with learning outcomes in higher education programmes, 2013/2014**



**In 22 higher** educational systems (Figure 2.25) HEIs have linked all the parts of programmes to learning outcomes and next 19 countries have done so for 50-99% programmes.

There has been visible progress in linking ECTS credits for with the learning outcomes. However, implementation of linking credits with learning outcomes is lagging behind compared to the achievements of applying ECTS for accumulation and transfer.



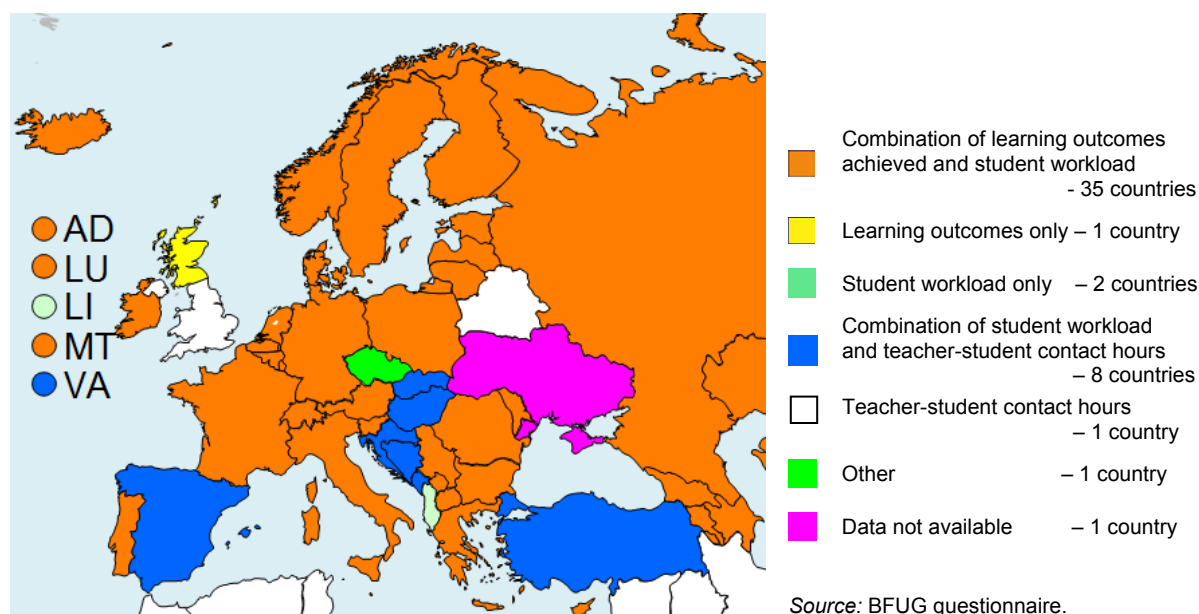
Although the dimensions are different, comparison between the Figures 2.24 and 2.25 shows that while using ECTS of accumulation and transfer is nearly fully implemented but – it is the case in 38 countries ECTS is used for both accumulation and transfer while in only 22 countries all programmes are linked with learning outcomes.

The quality of implementation of LO – to be written

There is progress in ECTS implementation. Using ECTS for both accumulation and transfer is implemented to some extent practically everywhere. Linking credits with learning outcomes has progressed as well, but more efforts are needed.

**Credit allocation.** It has been agreed that credits are allocated on the basis of learning outcomes achieved and student workload: student has fulfilled the prescribed workload and has achieved the expected learning outcomes and 35 countries follow this pattern, see Figure 2.26. The second largest group of 8 countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Holy See, Hungary, Montenegro, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey) allocate the credits on the bases of combination of student workload and teacher-student contact hours. It should be noted that this combination is not compatible with ECTS. In Albania and Liechtenstein credits are allocated on the basis of student workload only, achieving the student learning outcomes only in United Kingdom (Sct), United Kingdom (EWNI) allocate credits according to teacher-student contact hours and, finally Czech Republic may use learning outcomes with either student workload or teacher-student contact hours.

Figure 2.26: Basis to award ECTS credit in the majority of HEIs, 2013/14



## Understanding and usage of learning outcomes

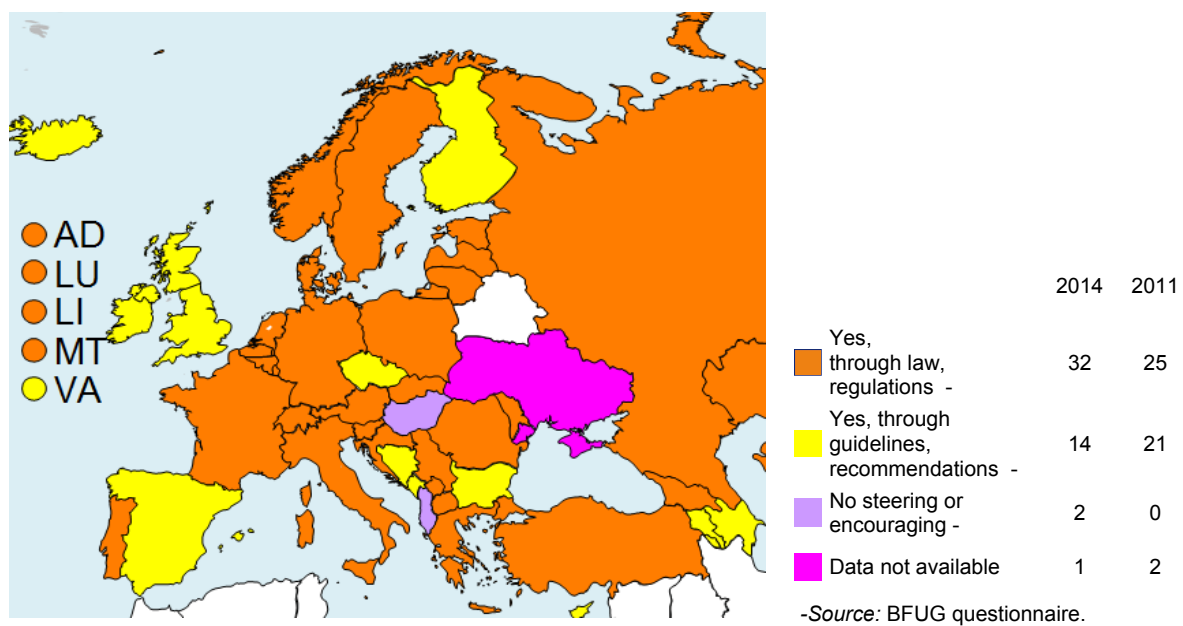
**National steering towards use of learning outcomes for curriculum development.** Steering or encouraging the use of learning outcomes through national policies is stipulated in legislation in 32 higher education systems, while 14 encourage learning outcomes through guidelines or recommendations. In just two countries (Albania and Hungary), there is no central encouragement of

learning outcomes at all. (see Figure 2.27). Compared to previous year, seven more countries encourage usage learning outcomes through laws or steering documents. This shows that, importance of learning outcomes in programme development has grown.

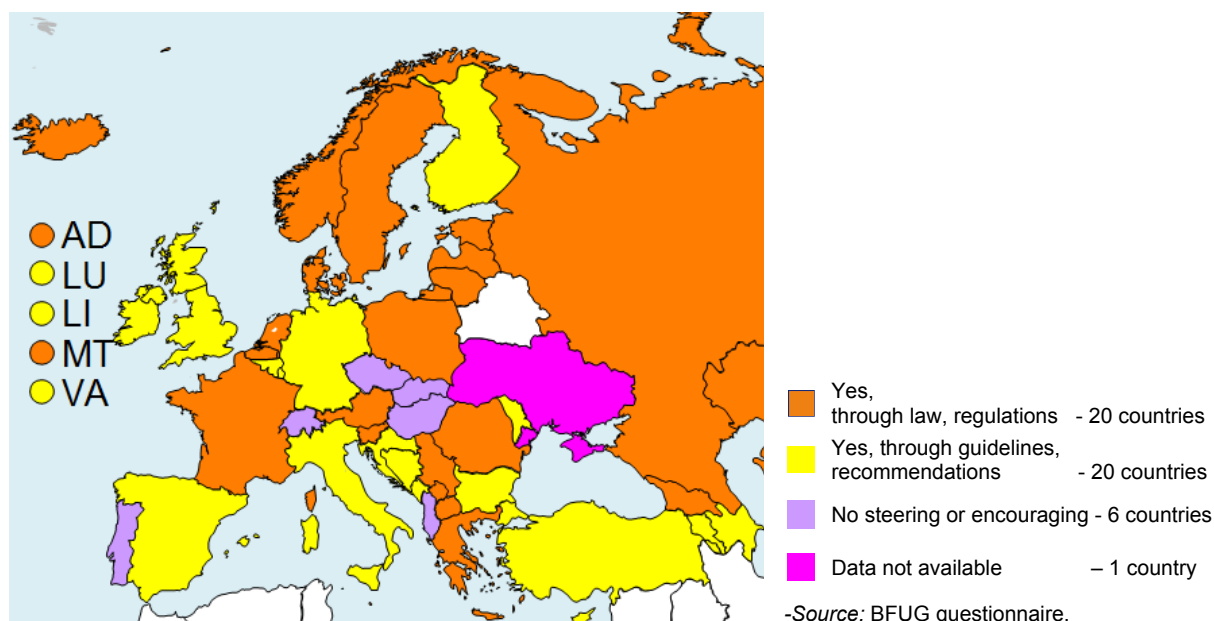
In 2015 Report, the steering or encouraging for using learning outcomes in student assessment was measured separately (Fig. 2. 28). The results show that the importance of use of learning outcomes for student assessment has not yet been fully understood.

Conclusion: Steering and encouraging the use of learning outcomes in curriculum development has substantially grown. However; the use of learning outcomes in student assessment is much less widespread.

**Figure 2.27: Steering and/or encouraging use of learning outcomes in national policy for programme development, 2013/14**



**Figure 2.28: Steering and/or encouraging student assessment procedures to focus on learning outcomes, 2013/14**



Implementation of ECTS, student-centred learning, qualifications frameworks, internal quality assurance within higher education institutions and other important action lines all depend on successful implementation of learning outcomes. However, it should be kept in mind that the above action lines take more time to implement properly than introduce the structural changes. The precondition for proper introduction of learning outcomes and even more introduction of student assessment which clearly demonstrates whether the learning outcomes actually have been achieved, is a change paradigm moving from teacher-centred to student-centred.

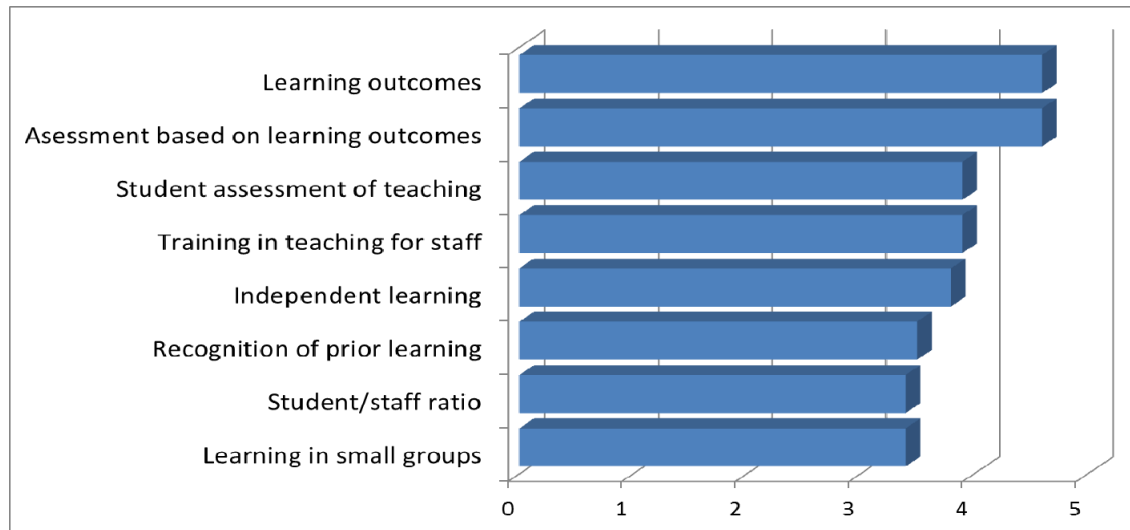
The findings suggest that those countries that choose not to make a learning outcomes approach compulsory through laws and regulations should step up their activities to encourage implementation of a learning outcomes approach.

**Monitoring of the use of learning outcomes and assessment of student achievements** by quality assurance procedures is in place in most higher education systems, the exceptions being Azerbaijan, CY, ME, Slovakia, Switzerland and. Most countries which monitor the use of learning outcomes first refer to external quality assurance and particularly procedures for programme accreditation/approval. It seems that the most widely used model is direct assessment of implementation of learning outcomes by external evaluators. Belgium, the Czech Republic and Finland mention the involvement of internal quality assurance procedures, with external monitoring in the form of an audit procedure while Armenia uses stakeholders' feedback.

**Country perception of the importance of elements of student-centred learning.** Countries were asked to score several elements of student-centred learning on a scale from one (not important) to five (see Figure 2.29). It appears that the perception of the elements student centred learning sharply differ between the group of forty countries in which steering documents mention the concept of student-centred learning (further mentioned as Group A) and the group of eight countries - Albania, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovakia (further mentioned as Group B) in which steering documents doesn't mention the concept of student-centred learning (Figure 2.29 A and B).

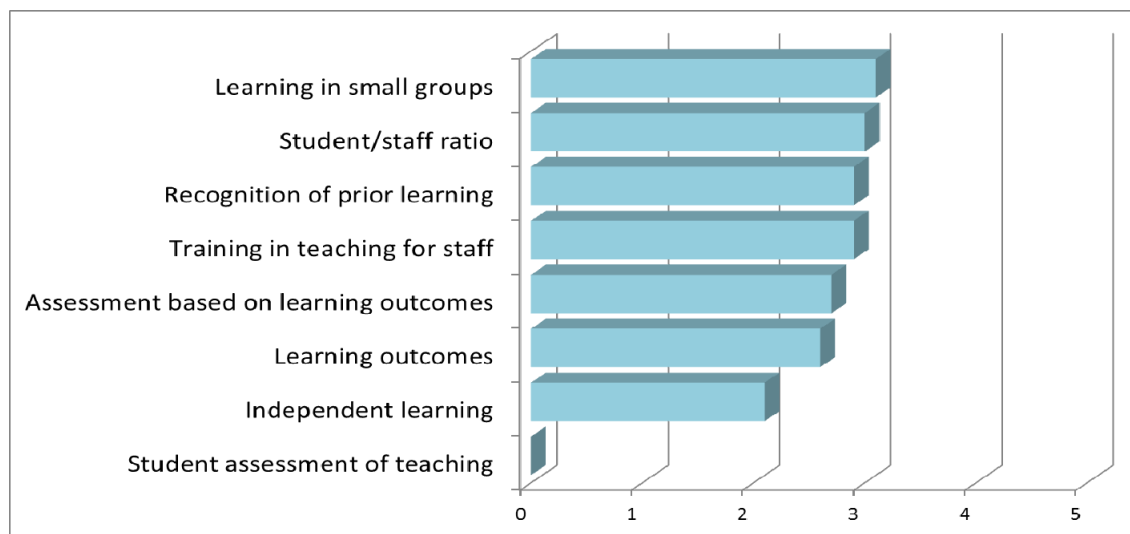
**Figure 2.29: Importance of elements of student-centred learning in the eyes of EHEA countries (of total score 5), 2013/14**

**A – Results for countries where steering documents mention the concept of student-centred learning**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

**B – Results for countries where steering documents don't mention the concept of student-centred learning**



Source: BFUG questionnaire.

In the countries of the first group countries generally highly score all of the , like in the report of 2012, the two most valued elements clearly are the learning outcomes and assessment based on learning outcomes which score 4.6. out of total score 5. Student evaluation of teaching, t training in teaching for staff and independent learning come next. Even the three least valued aspects in Group A - Recognition of prior learning, student/staff ration and in small groups are scored at 3,4 out l score 5..

As regards the Group B, both the sequence of aspects of student-centred learning and their scores strongly differ with the bulk of the countries. Average score of all the aspects is 2.4 out of total score 5 while in the Group A it was 4.0. The above demonstrates that the countries which don't mention the concept of student-centred learning in their laws or steering documents do not do so because they do

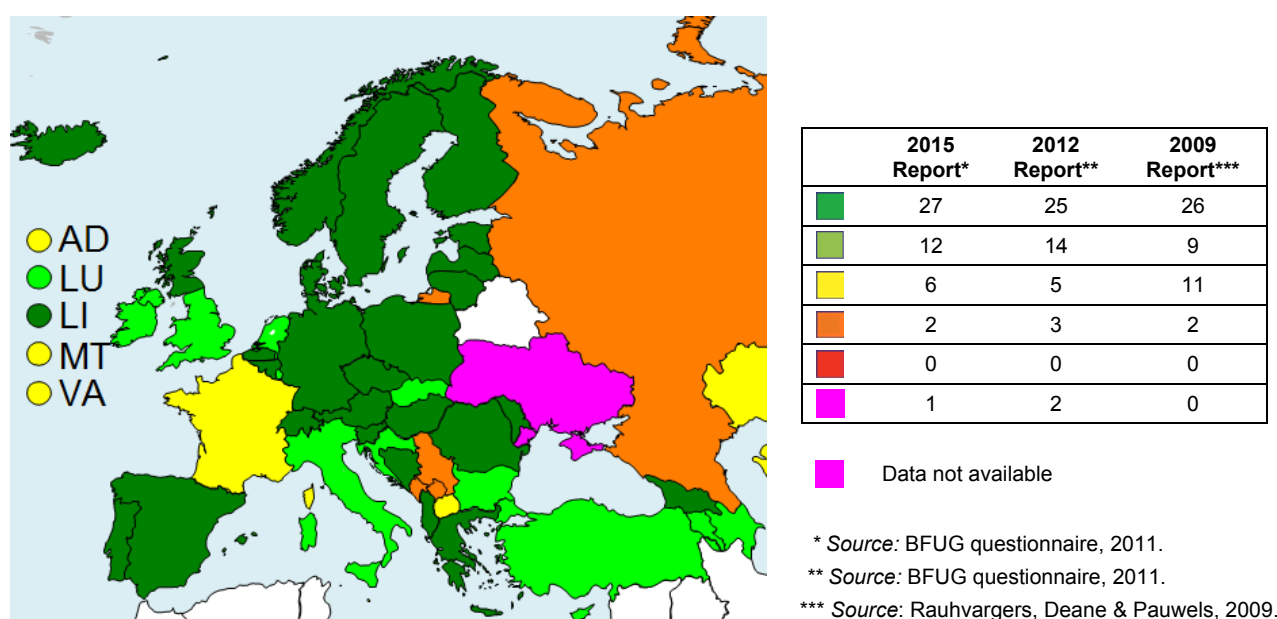
not value the student-centred learning altogether. Furthermore, while in Group A the highest scored aspects were using learning outcomes and assessment based on learning outcomes, in Group B the highest ranks are given to learning in small groups and student-staff ratio which were least valued by countries of Group A. The least valued in Group B in turn are the student evaluation of teaching which received score zero, followed by independent learning and use of learning outcomes.

Conclusion: In the great majority of countries (39) student-centred learning is mentioned in laws or steering documents and all individual aspects of student-centred learning are highly valued. However, in another group of 8 countries not only is student-centred learning not mentioned in laws or steering documents but the individual aspects of the student-centred learning are not considered useful. The most critical problems for these countries is their lack of esteem for student evaluation of teaching, independent learning and the use of learning outcomes.

### 2.2.3. Diploma Supplement

The Diploma Supplement was developed in 1998 by a working group sponsored by the Council of Europe, the European Commission and UNESCO-CEPES, and it was taken up as a transparency tool already in the Bologna Declaration in 1999.

**Figure 2.30: Scorecard indicator n°7: Stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement, 2013/2014\***



### Scorecard categories

- Every graduate receives a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language
  - automatically
  - free of charge
- Every graduate who requests it receives a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language
  - free of charge
- OR
- At least 75% graduate who requests it receives a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language free of charge
  - automatically
  - free of charge

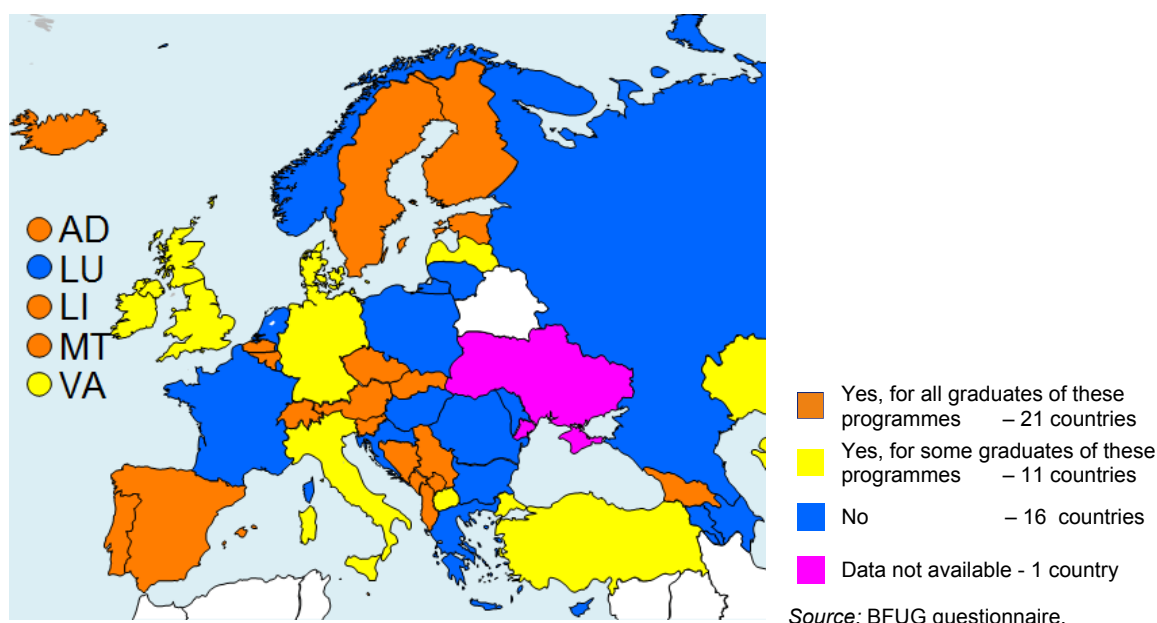
- A Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language is issued to some graduates OR in some programmes free of charge
- A Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language is issued to some graduates OR in some programmes for a fee
- Systematic issuing of Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format and in a widely spoken European language has not yet started

*Note:* Indicator measures the implementation of the Diploma Supplement against four criteria:

- 1) Diploma Supplement should be issued to every graduate
- 2) Diploma Supplement should be issued automatically,
- 3) Diploma Supplement should be issued in a widely spoken European language;
- 4) Diploma Supplement should be issued free of charge.

**Quantitative data on issuing the Diploma Supplement.** In addition to country scores in the Diploma Supplement indicators (Figure 2.30), the data submitted by countries show that all the countries have at least started the implementation of Diploma Supplement. The main issue in implementation is issuing Diploma Supplement automatically: only 31 higher education systems (26 in 2012) while only four countries issue Diploma Supplement for a fee – Montenegro, Serbia and for some groups of students in Russia) and just five countries fail to issue of Diploma Supplements to some students or in some programmes (Albania, France, Greece, Croatia and Kazakhstan).

**Figure 2.31: Issuing Diploma Supplement to graduates in the third cycle, 2013/14**



All countries issue Diploma Supplements in widely spoken European language but in some cases only on request (Andorra, Azerbaijan, Russia, Serbia and Slovakia). Most countries choose English language as the main non-national language for DS. Several countries, for instance, Romania, Spain and Turkey also offer DS in other widespread languages – French, German, Italian or Spanish. In Bosnia-Herzegovina and Switzerland HEIs issue diploma supplements in various official languages plus English. Similarly, in FYROM and Hungary DS is issued in official language, minority languages where appropriate and in English. As regarding countries whose language is widely spoken in Europe, France issues Diploma Supplements in French only, but Ireland and UK in English, while Germany, Italy and Spain automatically issue Diploma Supplements also in English (in Spain there are more options upon request), but Russia offers other widespread languages on request.

In Andorra, Azerbaijan, France, Greece and the Holy See, Diploma Supplements are not issued to all graduates. While in 2012 five countries issued Diploma Supplements for fee – Montenegro, which introduced such fees since year 2013/14, Serbia and Russia. The size of the fee is known only for Serbia and it varies between 50 and 100 Euro.

### **National monitoring of the effectiveness of the Diploma Supplement.**

Fourteen higher education systems (against seven in 2012) – Austria, the French Community of Belgium, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, and United Kingdom report that they have launched studies to monitor how the monitoring of how higher education institutions use the Diploma Supplement.

Checking how employers use the Diploma Supplement is rare: just four countries survey employers. In France the information gathered by the ENIC-NARIC centre demonstrates that employers rarely use the diploma supplement. In Germany, in contrast, the survey shows that more than 70% of the German employers consider the issuing of the Diploma Supplement as important, but nearly 50% of the employers consider the submission of a Diploma Supplement as an important criterion for the employment of a candidate. In Moldova and Montenegro monitoring detected that Diploma Supplement is of increasing interest from employers, but the latter would like to see DS more informative from the point of knowledge skills and competences of diploma holder and are ready to cooperate with HEIs on this regard.

The bodies carrying out monitoring the implementation of Diploma Supplement vary widely. Such body can be, for instance, the ministry (French Community of Belgium, Kazakhstan, Lithuania and Moldova), National Board of Education (Finland), inspectorate (the Netherlands, Serbia), quality assurance agency (Norway), Rectors' Conference (Germany), but in the United Kingdom it is the UK Higher Education International Unit.

### **Conclusions on the Diploma Supplement.**

There is improvement compared to 2012. However, two thirds of countries have failed to fulfil all the requirements – that the Diploma Supplement should be issued to every graduate, automatically, in a widely spoken European language and issued free of charge.

The least achieved requirement is the automatic issuing of Diploma Supplements.

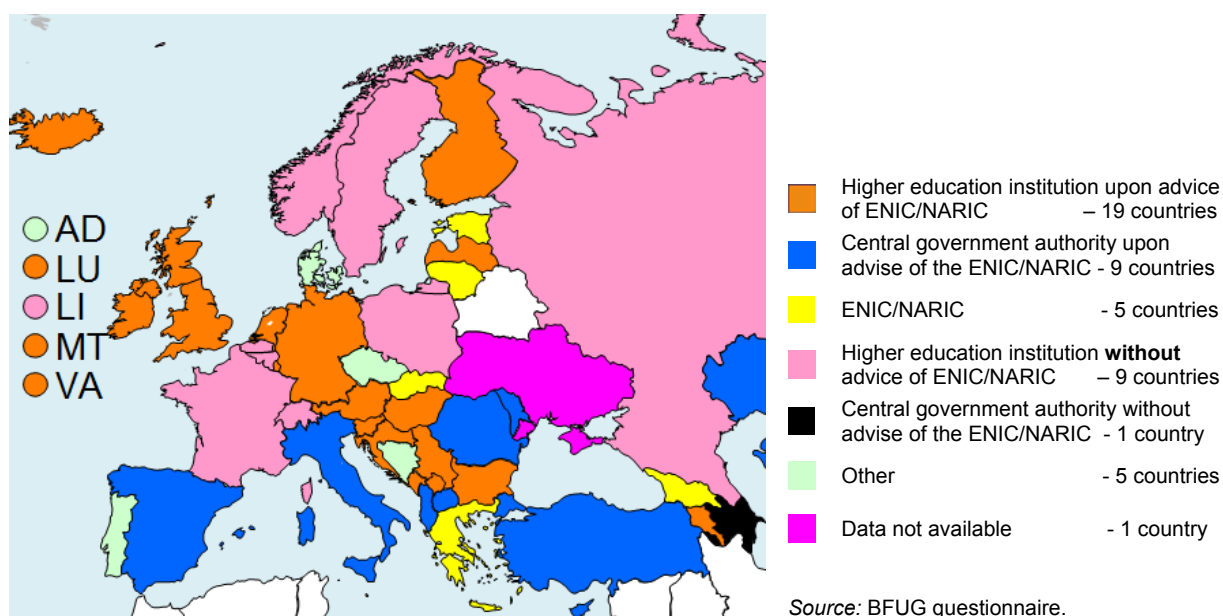


## 2.3. Recognition of qualifications

### General introduction to progress on recognition – to be written

In 2014, the survey asked more detailed data than in 2011 regarding on which organisation is making final decisions on the recognition of foreign qualifications for academic purposes. The data show that in the largest group of countries – 19, recognition decisions are taken by higher education institution whose decision is made based on ENIC/NARIC centre advice, thus HEIs make autonomous decisions, but at the same time use the experience and knowledge of the national ENIC/NARIC centre. Second largest group of 9 countries (BE, FR, LI, NO, PL, RU, SE, CH), higher education institution without advice of ENIC/NARIC. In this case, HEIs make autonomous decisions, but then they also have hire specialists in recognition who are familiar with foreign higher education systems and the principles of recognition. If a HEI does not employ such specialists, it risks making low-quality decisions.

**Figure 2.32: Institution which makes final decisions on recognising foreign qualifications for academic purposes, 2013/ 2014**



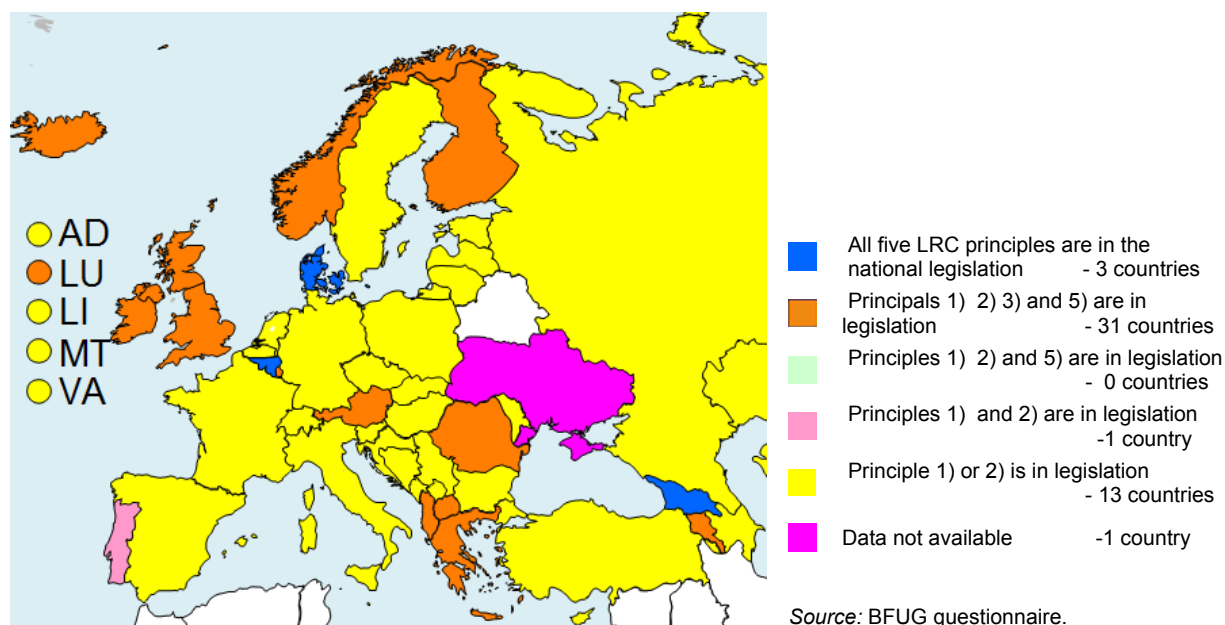
In another group of 9 countries (AL, CY, FYROM, IT, KZ, MD, RO, TR), final decisions of recognition are made by central government authority (ministry) upon advice of the ENIC/NARIC. This option involves the knowledge and experience of the ENIC/NARIC centre, but the HEIs are not involved in decision making when decision is made regarding their future students.

ENIC/NARIC make decision in other 5 countries (EE, GE, EL, LT and SK). This case actually is similar within the previous one with the difference that ENIC/NARIC not only evaluate credentials, but also make decisions. Using this approach, the professional approach to the recognition is used but the HEIs are not involved in decision making when decision is made regarding their future students.

In 5 countries have specific other situations. In Andorra, a government institution acts as ENIC and makes decisions. Similarly, Danish ENIC/NARIC office is the central authority situated within the Ministry of Higher Education and its decisions are legally bounded to HEIs. In BH there are no single system of recognition due to different legislation in different federal parts of the country. In CZ, the

recognition case is decided by a Czech public HEI which have a programmes similar to the one that the applicant has graduated from. In Portugal there are two systems – a system of equivalence, where which is “based on the scientific re-evaluation of the work carried out by the applicant” and the more modern approach which “is based on the principle of mutual trust “.

**Figure 2.33; Principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in national legislation, 2014**



**This indicator is suggested as a Scorecard indicator 5. Decision is pending**

The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the later Supplementary Documents<sup>11</sup>, so that the five main principles are fulfilled and:

- 1) Applicants have a right to fair assessment;
  - 2) There is recognition if no substantial differences can be proven;
  - 3) Legislation/guidelines encourage comparing learning outcomes rather than programme content;
  - 4) In cases of negative decisions, competent authority demonstrates the existence of substantial difference
  - 5) There is a right of appeal
- The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with abovementioned principles 1) 2) 3) and 5)
  - The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with abovementioned principles 1) 2) and 5)
  - The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with abovementioned principles 1) and 2)
  - The Convention has been ratified but either principle 1) or 2) or both is not fulfilled
  - No data

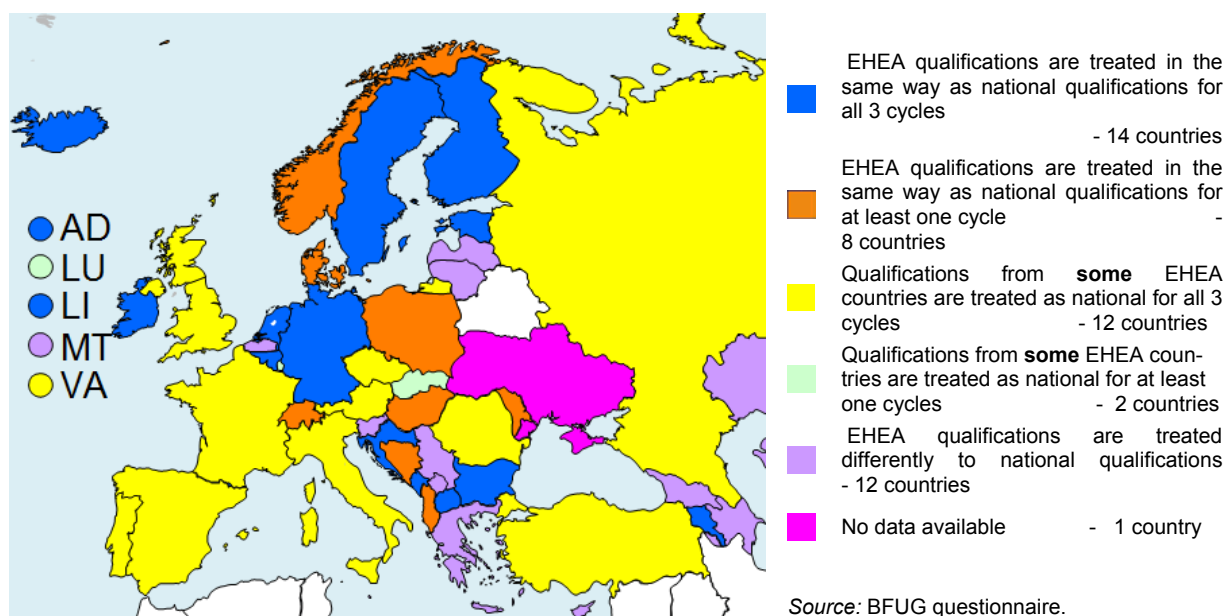
The feasibility of the indicator to be discussed at the WG meeting

<sup>11</sup> Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001), Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004), Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001) [http://www.enic-naric.net/instruments.asp?display=legal\\_framework](http://www.enic-naric.net/instruments.asp?display=legal_framework)

Text to be written based on answers to the question I.68.2. What measures exist to ensure that these legal statements are implemented in practice

Outcomes of the question I.68.2 should be described

Figure 2.34: **System-Level recognition of three cycle degrees** (automatic recognition), 2014/14



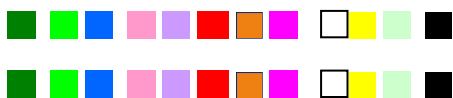
#### Indicator proposal 6: System-Level recognition of three cycle degrees. Decision pending

- Qualifications from all EHEA countries giving access to the next cycle are treated in the same way as national qualifications for all 3 cycles
- Qualifications from all EHEA countries giving access to the next cycle are treated in the same way as national qualifications for at least one cycle
- Qualifications from some EHEA countries giving access to the next cycle are treated in the same way as national qualifications for all cycles
- Qualifications from some EHEA countries giving access to the next cycle are treated in the same way as national qualifications for at least one cycle
- Qualifications from all EHEA countries giving access to the next cycle are treated differently to national qualifications
- Data not available

Main outcomes of the pathfinder group to be integrated into text

## Conclusions

Overall conclusions of the chapter to be written



### **3. Quality Assurance**

#### **The Bucharest Communiqué**

The aspiration to improve the quality of higher education provision throughout the European Higher Education Area lies at the core of the Bologna Process, and has underpinned major developments in quality assurance during the last 15 years. The Bucharest Communiqué stresses the importance of quality assurance in building trust and reinforcing the attractiveness of higher education in the EHEA. The Communiqué acknowledges the role of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) in binding countries to common objectives with regard to quality assurance, and also calls on the ESG to be revised to improve clarity, applicability and usefulness. The Communiqué can also be considered as a key moment in the development of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), with the commitment made to "allow EQAR-registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements. In particular we will aim to recognise quality assurance decisions of EQAR registered agencies on joint and double degree programmes."

It is also worth pointing out that the Bucharest Communiqué places the issues of the social dimension firmly under the heading of "Providing quality higher education for all", thus linking overall quality goals in higher education to the development of quality assurance systems.

#### **The 2012 Bologna Implementation Report**

The 2012 report highlighted the momentum of developments in quality assurance across Europe, stressing the important role for European Standards and Guidelines, and also showing that systems are often becoming complex as societal demands increase. Given this reality the report stressed that issues regarding stakeholder involvement in quality assurance systems remain relevant, and that there is a need to be vigilant that the further development of quality assurance systems continues to support higher education institutions in their role of assuming primary responsibility for quality assurance. The report also stressed the fact that, although the European Quality Assurance Register has been established and is developing well, many countries remain reluctant to devolve responsibility for external quality assurance beyond national boundaries.

#### **Chapter outline**

This chapter deals with the progress made to develop quality assurance systems across the European Higher Education Area and covers both internal and external quality assurance. The main focus is on how quality assurance systems are responding to the evolving policy agenda, in relation to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). After examining how national systems relate to the development of internal quality assurance, It looks at the main distinctions in European quality assurance systems, as well as the development of trends towards greater internationalisation and cross border quality assurance. The chapter also tracks the involvement of different key stakeholders, and looks at the range of issues and challenges being addressed by quality assurance.

### **3.1. Internal quality assurance**

Quality assurance in higher education can be understood as policies, procedures and practices that are designed to achieve, maintain or enhance quality as it is understood in a specific context. Already in 2003, Ministers recognised that 'the quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area.' They also stressed that 'the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself and this provides the basis for real accountability...'

The Bologna process has overseen the development of quality assurance systems which, through the European Standards and Guidelines, follow these principles. This report therefore also looks firstly at the role of higher education institutions in developing robust internal quality assurance systems. However, as this report has no direct input from higher education institutions themselves, information on internal quality assurance systems is necessarily limited to an overview of what different national systems require of internal quality assurance within higher education institutions.

#### **3.1.1. Formal requirements for higher education institutions to establish internal quality assurance systems**

Nearly all countries require higher education institutions to establish internal quality assurance systems. Indeed the only EHEA countries where this is not a formal requirement are Estonia, Hungary and Switzerland. Such requirements are usually specified in legislation, and there has been little change since the 2012 report.<sup>1</sup>

#### **3.1.2. Responsibility for the focus of internal quality assurance systems**

The findings with regard to responsibility for the focus of internal quality assurance systems also echo the 2012 report. In an overwhelming number of systems (37) it is the higher education institutions themselves who hold this responsibility. Where this is not the case, most countries report that it is a combination of Ministry, quality assurance agency and the institution that determine the focus of the system.

However, several countries point out that the external quality assurance framework is tightly defined, and that, even if higher education institutions formally have the responsibility for deciding on the focus of their internal quality assurance system, in reality the external quality assurance framework itself limits substantially their margin for manoeuvre.

#### **3.1.3. Institutional strategies for continuous quality improvement**

Many countries report positive findings regarding the number of institutions that have published a strategy for continuous quality improvement in the past 5 years. Indeed, 24 national systems consider this number to be in excess of 75 % of their higher education institutions, with 7 systems claiming that

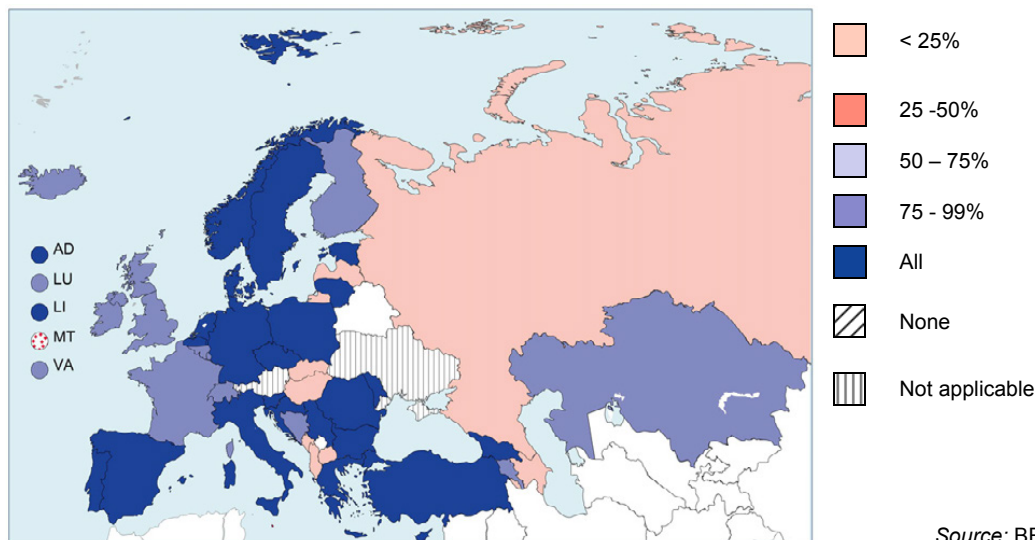
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<sup>1</sup> Question to Hungary, Slovakia and UK. Your answers on this topic differed to the 2012 reporting. Has there been any change in legislation that should be mentioned in the report?

all higher education institutions have published such a strategy. However, this represents a slight decrease from the estimations in the 2012 report, where 12 systems considered that all institutions published such a strategy.

At the other end of the scale only four systems estimate that less than 25 % of institutions have published such a strategy, compared to 11 in 2012. Four systems estimate 25 - 50 %, and six estimate between 50 and 75 %.

**Figure 3.1: Publication of institutional strategies for continuous quality enhancement in the past 5 years, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

### 3.1.4. Publication of critical and negative evaluation reports

The picture regarding the number of institutions that publish critical and negative outcomes of quality assurance shows some development from the 2012 report. At that time, only 6 systems indicated that all institutions publish these reports while, as shown in Figure 3.7, this number has now risen to 15<sup>2</sup>.

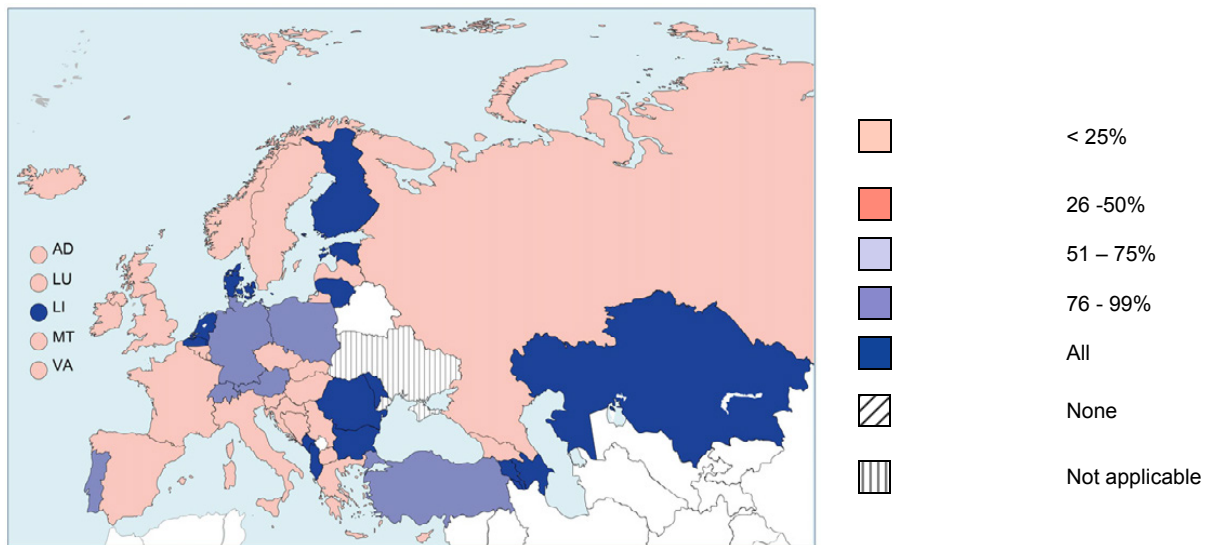
At the other end of the scale the number of systems which stated that none of their institutions publish such reports was 22 in 2012, while now it is 15. In 2012, a further 11 systems indicated that less than 25% of institutions publish such reports, while this time 15 systems estimated that their institutions are in 15.

These changes suggest that there are likely to have been system changes obliging higher education institutions to publish outcomes of quality assurance reviews – whether they are critical or not.

<sup>2</sup> Question to Greece, Iceland, Italy, Sweden, UK: please check your answers (major changes reported compared to the 2012 responses)



**Figure 3.2: Publication of critical and negative outcomes by higher education institutions, 2013/14**

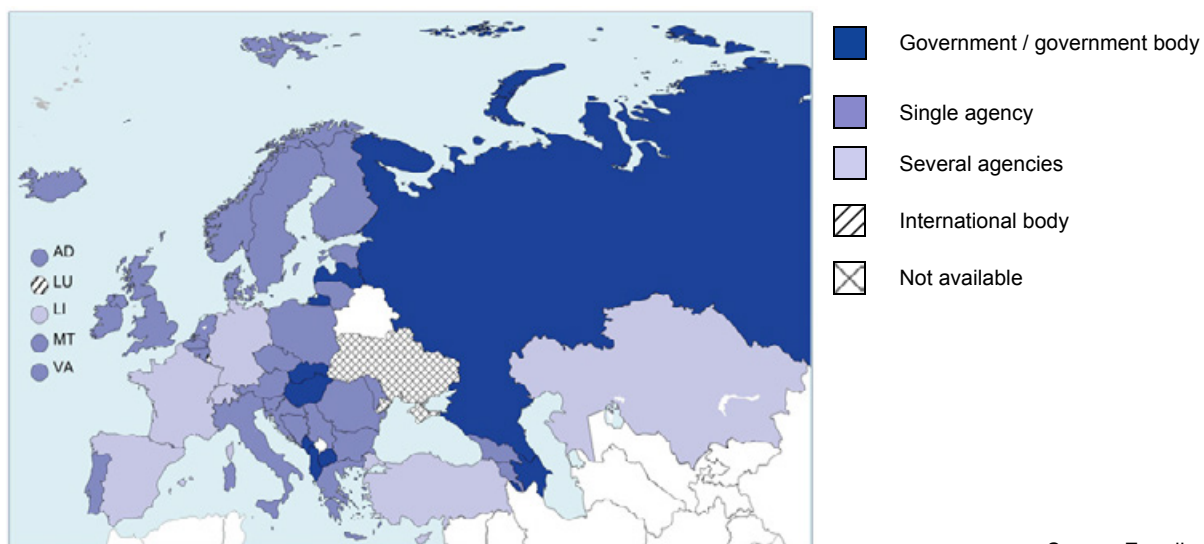


## 3.2 External quality assurance

### 3.2.1. Character and orientation of national quality assurance systems

Throughout a period of rapid change in higher education systems, the role of quality assurance has been constantly and quickly evolving. When the Bologna Declaration was signed in 1999, only a handful of countries had a recognisable quality assurance system, and external quality assurance agencies were few and far between. The picture 15 years on is vastly different. Improving the quality and relevance of higher education, and establishing trustworthy quality assurance systems has been a high priority for many if not all countries, and developments have been fast moving.

**Figure 3.3. Responsibility for external quality assurance, 2013/14**



Source: Eurydice

Figure 3.3 illustrates that the rise of quality assurance agencies has been a major trend. Few countries retain a system where a Ministry or Ministry body has direct responsibility for quality assurance. This is the case only in Albania, Azerbaijan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Russia and Slovakia. During a transition period, it is also the reality of Latvia, while the government aims at the development of an improved quality assurance system.

The development of the European Higher Education Area has certainly been a catalyst to this process with quality assurance clearly linked to establishing stakeholder confidence. When the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for quality assurance were adopted in 2005, this gave a boost to European cooperation in the domain. The European Association for National Quality Assurance (ENQA) provides a thriving forum for cooperation and engagement among quality assurance agencies, requiring its members to adhere to the European Standards and Guidelines, and promoting the exchange of good practice between agencies.

The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) was established in 2008, following an agreement of the Ministers responsible for higher education in the London Communiqué, to provide reliable information on credible quality assurance agencies operating in Europe, and thus supporting trust and acting as a gatekeeper for quality assurance agencies wishing to work across

national borders in the EHEA. The essential condition to be listed on the Register is for the agency to have been evaluated and proved to operate in compliance with the ESG. In September 2014, 32 agencies in 15 countries were listed on the Register. The countries where at least one agency is listed in EQAR are Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom. This shows an increase (from 13 – 15 countries) since January 2012.

However, while agencies from Estonia, Lithuania, and the United Kingdom have been added to the Register, those from Bulgaria and Ireland are no longer listed.

Several countries have experienced recent evaluations of their agencies for ENQA membership with the outcomes indicating that there are issues to address to ensure compliance with the European Standards and Guidance (ESG) for quality assurance. This is the case for agencies in Bulgaria, Hungary and Sweden. In Iceland and Italy, the agencies have also not yet demonstrated their full compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines, and do not yet have full member status in ENQA. Agencies in a number of other countries have not applied for ENQA membership and have not undergone external evaluation to find out whether or not they comply with the ESG. This is the case for agencies in Andorra, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Greece, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, Moldova, Slovenia & Turkey.

One other country that does not work with one or several national quality assurance agencies is Luxembourg. Here the government has put in place a system drawing strongly on international expertise based on committees of 7 experts acting independently.

Everywhere else in the European higher education area is now functioning with professional quality assurance agencies.

Although practically all EHEA countries have established some form of external quality assurance system, there are significant differences in the approach behind systems. One important distinction that can be drawn is whether the primary aim and orientation of external quality assurance is to regulate institutions and programmes – deciding which of them have a sufficient threshold of quality to operate, or alternatively whether the main thrust of quality assurance is to support improvement in the quality of provision. Another important distinction is whether external quality assurance focuses on the quality of programmes or looks at institutions.

In this respect it is noteworthy that the vast majority of QA systems now focus on a combination of institutions and programmes (26) while only three systems - Belgium French Community, Czech Republic and Sweden - now focus more exclusively on programmes (although in the French Community of Belgium there are also elements of institutional evaluation) and three countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland and the United Kingdom – focus on institutions. Overall, this picture suggests that quality assurance systems are becoming more complex as they evolve.

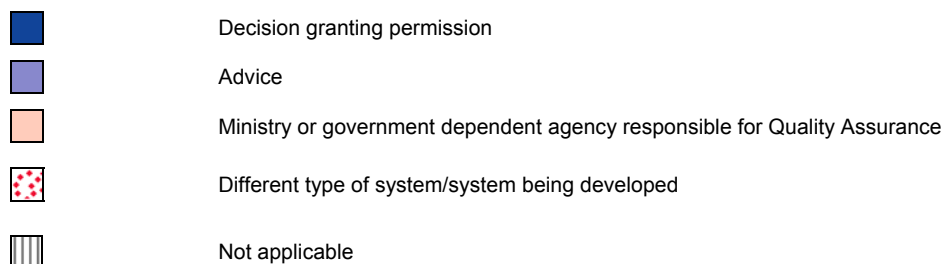
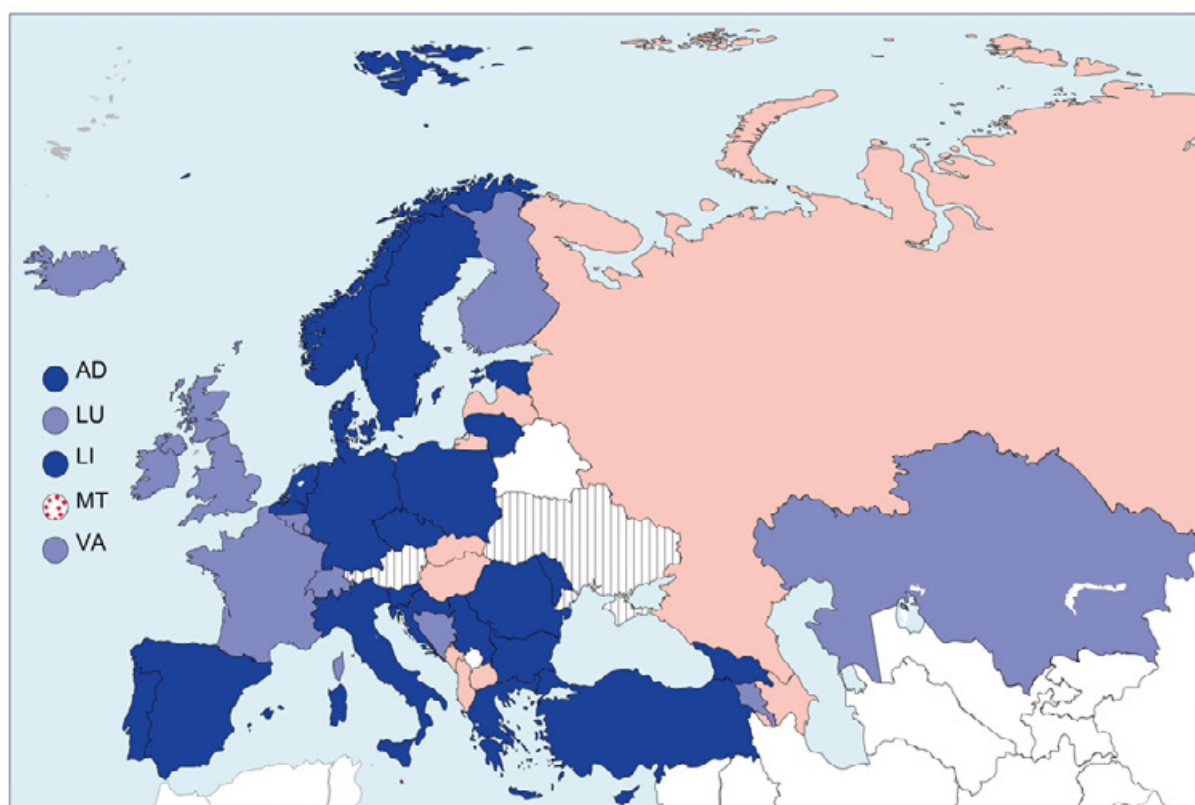
In systems where responsible quality assurance bodies/agencies have the power to permit or refuse programmes and/or institutions to operate, or where they advise governments on such decisions, quality assurance can, in broad terms, be perceived as supervisory in character. In these cases, it generally aims to ensure that minimum quality thresholds are met. Agencies may of course play other roles – including giving advice on the enhancement of quality. This is indeed specifically mentioned in a number of countries, but all these additional roles are likely to be subordinate to the decision of permitting programmes and/or institutions to operate.

The majority of systems across the EHEA are, using this categorisation, more supervisory in character. Indeed 28 systems (an increase from 21 in 2012) have established agencies with decision-

making powers – including countries where the agency makes a proposal for decision and the government is responsible for actual decision. Fifteen<sup>3</sup> (compared to eleven systems in 2012) have agencies that are advisory and more enhancement-oriented in character.

The impact of external quality assurance on funding varies considerably according to the characteristics of the system. Most commonly systems where QUALITY ASSURANCE is enhancement oriented see little or no impact on funding. One exception to this rule is France, where although the system is enhancement oriented, the outcomes of evaluation are used in negotiations between the Ministry and higher education institutions that lead to decisions on funding. However, it is perhaps interesting to find out that, in 8 of the systems where evaluation may lead to a decision on whether a programme or institution may operate, there is otherwise no impact on funding. In the other cases where quality assurance systems are more supervisory in character, there is an impact, at least in some cases, on programme and/or institutional funding, from the decisions related to evaluation.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.4: Main outcome of external evaluation by QA agency, 2013/14



<sup>3</sup> **Question for KZ.** Is the system one of accreditation (agency evaluation deciding on whether a programme/inst may operate) or quality enhancement? You mention accreditation but say that the main outcome of evaluation is enhancement not a decision...

Unsurprisingly, the picture has changed little since the 2012 report. The main developments were reported in Latvia and Malta, where both countries are currently in the process of re-thinking the quality assurance system. Latvia, after a long period of having a single independent national agency; is undertaking improvement-oriented reforms of the quality assurance system. During the transition period the ministry is responsible for quality assurance, delegating the task to a commission consisting of stakeholders. The re-establishment of an improved quality assurance system has been defined as one of the priority tasks for the government.

Malta is also in the process of establishing a new system. A national quality assurance agency has been established, which is Government funded and appointed but it is hoped will have sufficient legal and operational independence. The agency is in the process of developing its external quality audit mechanism which should be implemented in the second half of 2015.

Russia, by far the largest system in the EHEA, also stands out as a country showing variants from the main European developments in quality assurance. In particular, the system is one of state accreditation, although there are also quality assurance agencies offering services to institutions and working in compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines.

### **3.2.2. Focus of External Quality Assurance**

From the questionnaire responses, there appears to be a high degree of consensus on the issues under consideration during external quality assurance evaluations in different EHEA countries. Unsurprisingly, all countries state that teaching forms part of the evaluation process, while the vast majority also include research. Where research is not included, it tends to be evaluated under a separate quality assurance process.

Other topics, such as student services, admissions systems and the internal management of higher education institutions are also frequently cited as being subject to external attention. While most countries also typically claim that quality assurance examines entry, dropout and completion rates, the fact that data on these topics is so infrequently monitored at national level (see Chapter 4) suggests that this finding may be exaggerated. Lifelong learning provision is less often considered as a topic typically evaluated in external quality assurance, but is still mentioned by around half of the countries.

Some national systems give examples which extend beyond these topics. A number of countries mention learning outcomes or the outcomes of programmes in a more general sense as the key focus of their evaluations. In Finland, in addition to the more standard topics listed above, institutions have the possibility to be evaluated in relation to matters such as student well-being, study guidance systems, entrepreneurship or sustainable development.

### **3.2.3. Ability of higher education institutions to be evaluated by non-national agencies**

The European debate on quality assurance has stressed the importance of trust between systems. One significant measure of the extent to which trust is developing, is whether governments enable higher education institutions to be evaluated by a quality assurance agency from another country when aware that the agency works in full compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines. Cross border quality assurance clearly has the potential to contribute positively and importantly to the development of the European Higher Education Area, and working across borders is vital in the effort of learning from others in different systems.

However, there is clearly a need for sufficient safeguards to ensure that the public responsibility for quality assurance is maintained. National responsibility for quality assurance could be perceived to be challenged by cross-border quality assurance, and it is therefore by no means self-evident that evaluation from non-national agencies will become commonly recognised in the EHEA, particularly in systems where the main outcome of quality assurance is a decision granting permission to institutions or programmes to operate. The issue may also perhaps be perceived differently by bigger and smaller higher education systems.

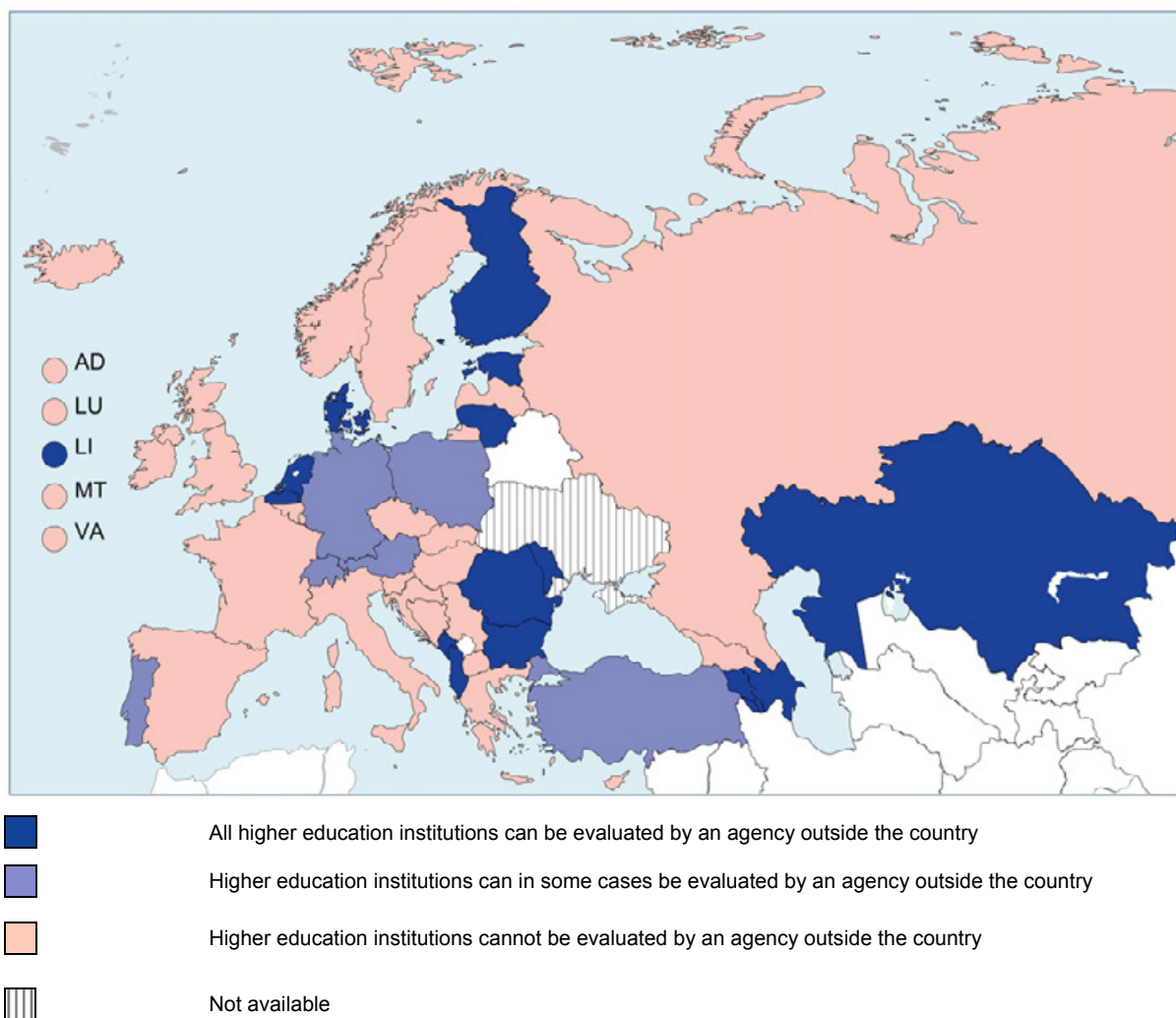
To address these aspirations and anticipate some of the legitimate concerns in working across borders, Ministers have adopted the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) and established the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

The question of whether higher education institutions are able to undertake an evaluation by an agency outside the country implies that the status and use of the evaluation would be equivalent to an evaluation by a national agency. In some countries the possibility to undertake required external quality assurance with a foreign agency can also be realised under certain conditions. For example it may be possible for programme accreditation but not for institutional accreditation (eg Belgium, Flemish Community and the Netherlands), or it may be possible for certain types of higher education institution only (eg public universities in Austria, universities of applied sciences in Switzerland).

The picture illustrated in Figure 3.2 shows that progress is, however, slow. Sixteen national systems claim that all their higher education institutions are free to be evaluated by foreign national agencies. Within this group, in the Netherlands and the Flemish community of Belgium, while evaluations of other agencies are treated in the same way as a national agency, formal decisions on accreditation remain the preserve of the Dutch/Flemish quality assurance agency.

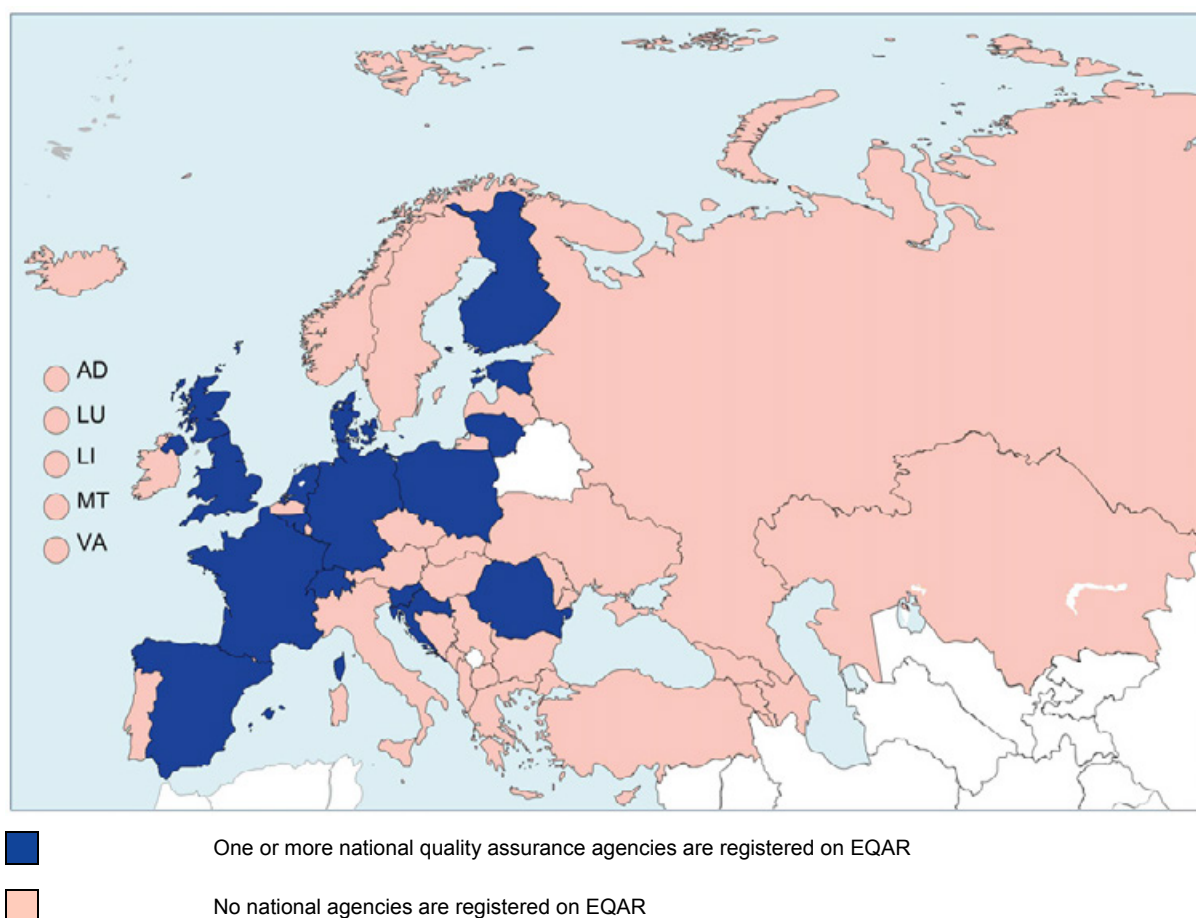
A further five countries point out that under certain conditions, some institutions are able to pursue this route. For Austria, public higher education institutions may use non-national agencies, but private institutions cannot. In Germany, higher education institutions can choose agencies that are accredited by the German Accreditation Council for the periodic accreditation of their study programmes or internal quality assurance systems. For joint programmes (of a German and at least one foreign institution), recognised agencies can ratify individual accreditation decisions by other agencies if they are registered in EQAR or are a full member of ENQA.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.5: Ability for higher education institutions to be evaluated by an agency outside the country, 2013/14





◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.6: Quality Assurance Agencies registered on EQAR, 2013/14



The Czech Republic, Croatia, Moldova and Spain point out that institutions are able to go through evaluation processes with other agencies, and may do so to gain prestige. However, this is only possible if they are first accredited by the national system. As this is more a duplication of efforts rather than evidence of opening up to cooperation in quality assurance across borders, these countries are shown in the map alongside those that are unable to be evaluated abroad.

Some higher education systems also point out that, even if their higher education institutions are unable to choose to be evaluated from an agency outside the country, they are free to seek accreditation for particular study fields by international accrediting organisations. There are also examples of cooperation between national quality assurance agencies in evaluating higher education institutions and/or particular programmes.

The RIQAA project (Recognising International Quality Assurance Activity) has provided evidence that cross-border activity of national quality assurance agencies is growing significantly. Although the number of cross-border evaluations may be increasing within the EHEA, major developments in opening up national systems have not taken place since 2012. The countries that were willing to enable their higher education institutions to undertake evaluations with a foreign agency mostly decided to do so prior to 2012. In the case of Poland, legislation came into force in October 2011 providing a basis for higher education institutions to be evaluated by international agencies, and for the outcomes to be taken into consideration by the national quality assurance system. Armenia and Austria are the only examples of countries that have opened up this possibility to their higher education institutions since the Bucharest Communiqué in 2012. Around 75% of systems have not yet

followed through on the commitment of the Communiqué to allow their institutions to be evaluated by EQAR registered agencies.

It is also important to recognise that, in the countries that allow higher education institutions to be evaluated by a foreign agency, many systems are not following strictly the requirement that foreign agencies should be listed by EQAR. A number of countries consider that other criteria, such as ENQA membership, are sufficient for the choice of a foreign agency. EQAR has been developed to ensure that the EHEA has a trustworthy mechanism showing which agencies are legitimate to operate in conformity with the ESG. The fact that there are a considerable number of countries which do not use EQAR registration to guide higher education institutions in their choice of agency is therefore a matter of concern.

### **3.2.4. Evaluating national systems against ESG**

The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) were adopted in 2005 by the ministers in Bergen (Norway). The standards and guidelines are designed to be applicable to all higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies in Europe, irrespective of their structure, function and size, and the national system in which they are located. The ESG do not include detailed "procedures" since institutional and agency procedures are an important part of their autonomy. Rather the ESG "recognise the primacy of national systems of higher education, the importance of institutional and agency autonomy within those national systems, and the particular requirements of different academic subjects" (ENQA 2005, p. 13).

A revised version of the ESG has been developed for adoption at the Yerevan Ministerial conference, but for the period of this report, the first version of the ESG should be implemented. The following principles outlined in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) stress that quality assurance should focus on:

- the interests of students as well as employers and the society more generally in good quality higher education;
- the central importance of institutional autonomy, tempered by a recognition that this brings with it heavy responsibilities;
- the need for external quality assurance to be fit for its purpose and to place only an appropriate and necessary burden on institutions for the achievement of its objectives.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.7: Legislation encouraging EQAR registration and ENQA membership for national agencies, 2013/14

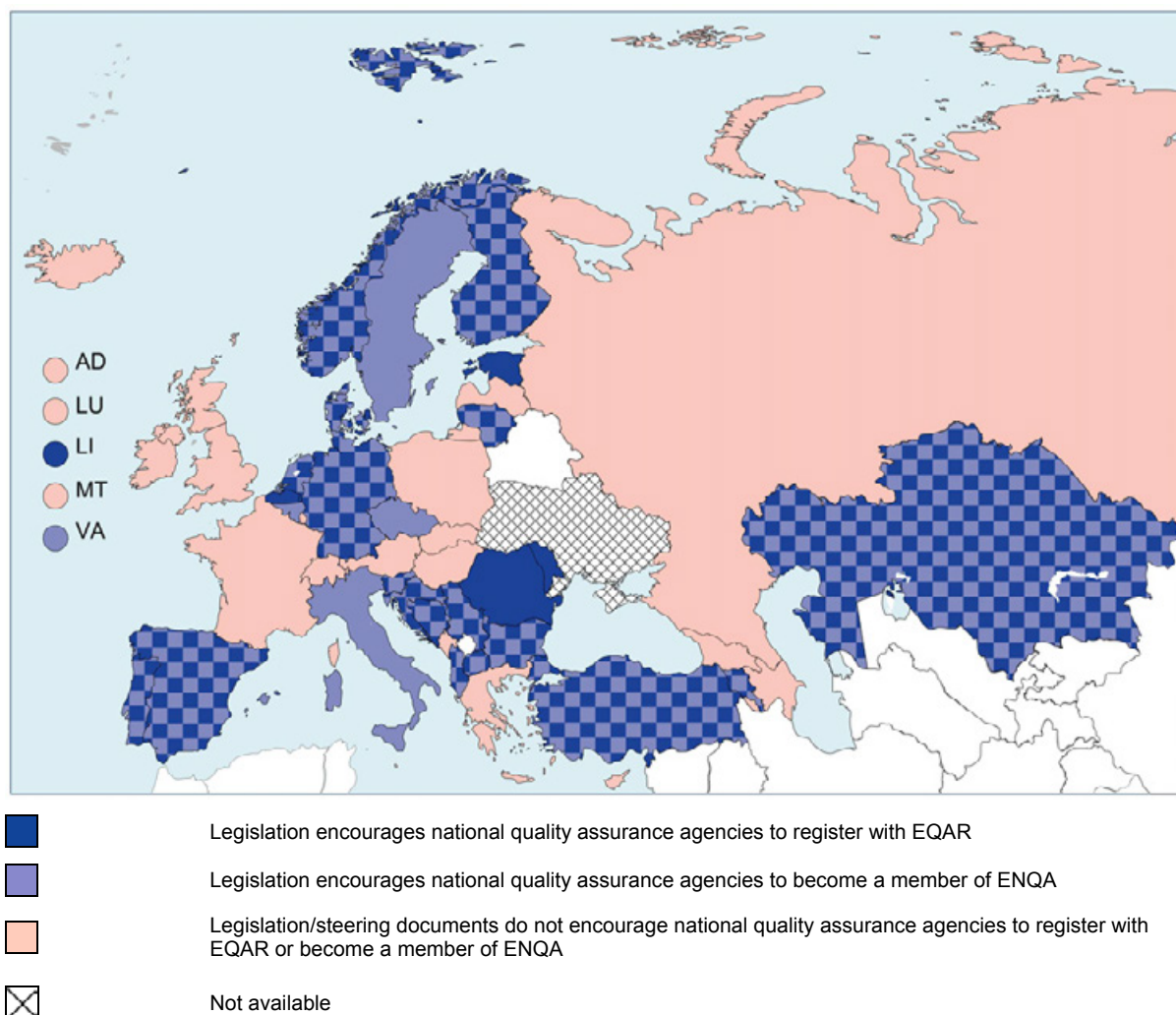
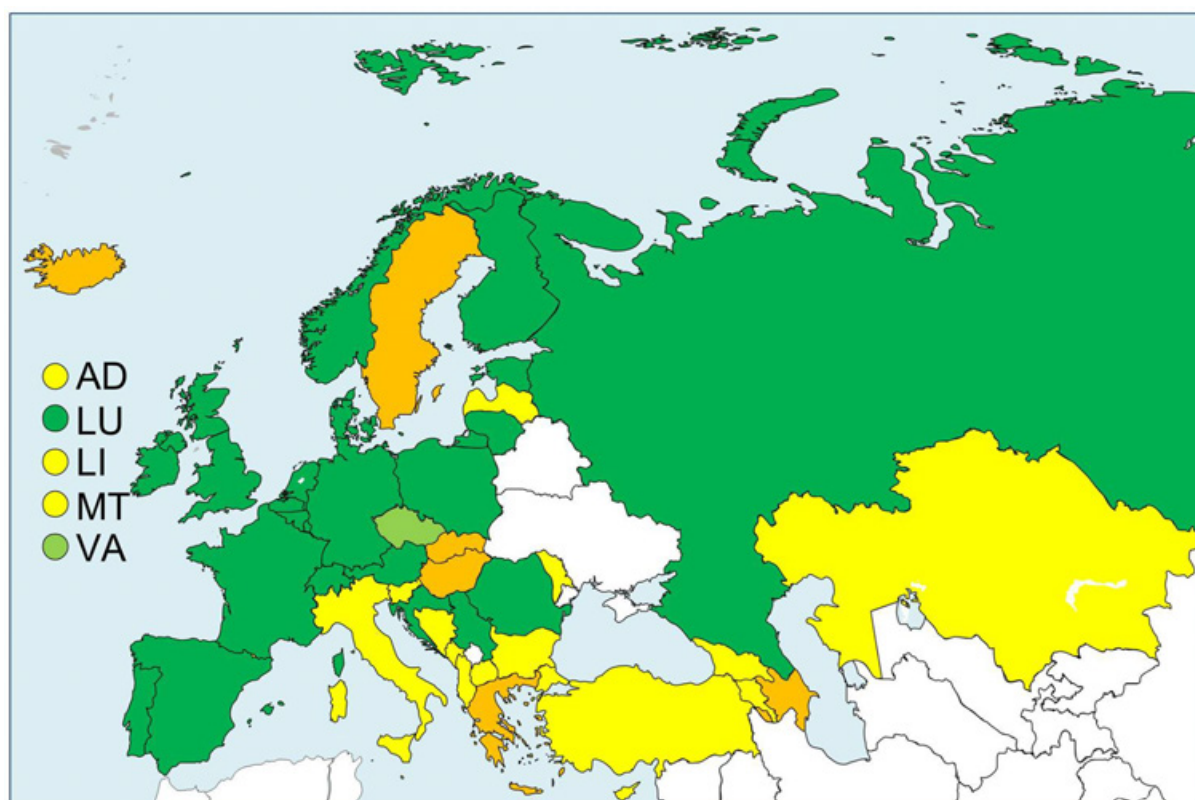


Figure 3.7 gives evidence of where public authorities encourage their own national quality assurance agencies to become members of ENQA and to register with EQAR. EQAR and ENQA both provide support to national agencies in strengthening their adherence to the ESG. ENQA promotes European co-operation and disseminates information and expertise among its members, while EQAR is based on adherence to the ESG. It is curious to note that the same number of systems (23) encourage EQAR registration and ENQA membership.

Three indicators on quality assurance are included in the EHEA Scorecard. They focus on the stage of development of external quality assurance systems, the level of student participation in external quality assurance and the level of international participation in external quality assurance.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.8: Scorecard Indicator (4): Stage of development of external quality assurance system 2013/14



### Scorecard categories

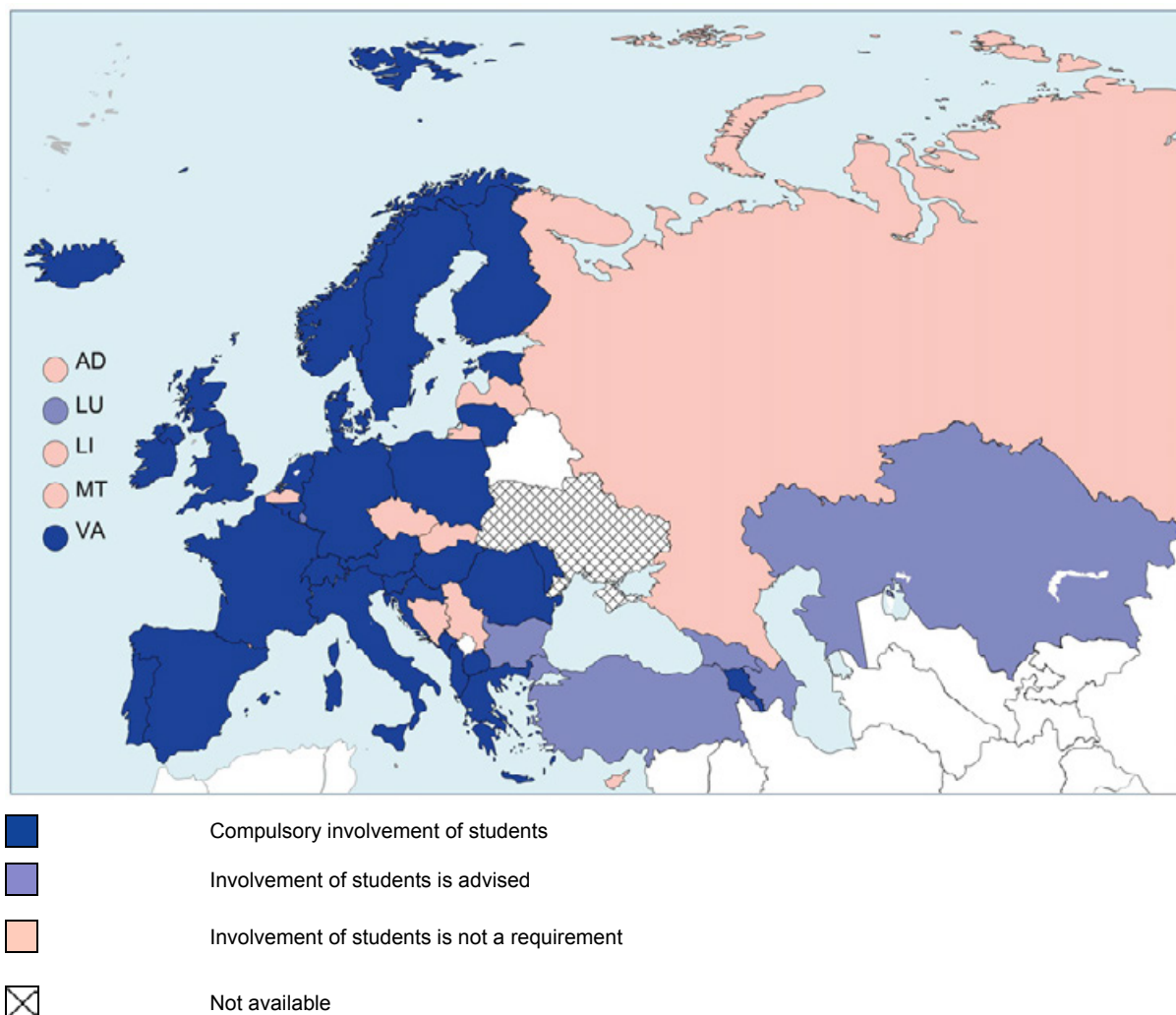
- A fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA agency/ies has/have been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers the following main issues:

  - teaching
  - student support services
  - internal quality assurance/management system
- A fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA agency/ies has/have been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers teaching, student support services and internal quality assurance/management.

OR

A quality assurance system is in operation at the national level. The QA system has been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to some institutions and/or programmes and covers subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to some institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.9: Involvement of students in Quality Assurance governance bodies, 2013/14



One of the noticeable features of the development of quality assurance systems in Europe has been the increasing recognition of the importance of stakeholder participation, and in particular the importance of the role to be played by students as the key stakeholder group in higher education. The Bologna texts recognise that students should be fully engaged in the improvement and enhancement of higher education and of their own learning experiences. The form of this engagement should be wide-ranging, involving students in all aspects of quality assurance systems.

Figure 3.9 focuses on student participation in governance structures, distinguishing between required involvement, optional (advised) involvement, and no requirement for students to be involved. It is interesting to note that student involvement is a formal requirement in 31 systems, while there is no requirement in only 11 systems.



◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.10: Involvement of students in external review teams, 2013/14

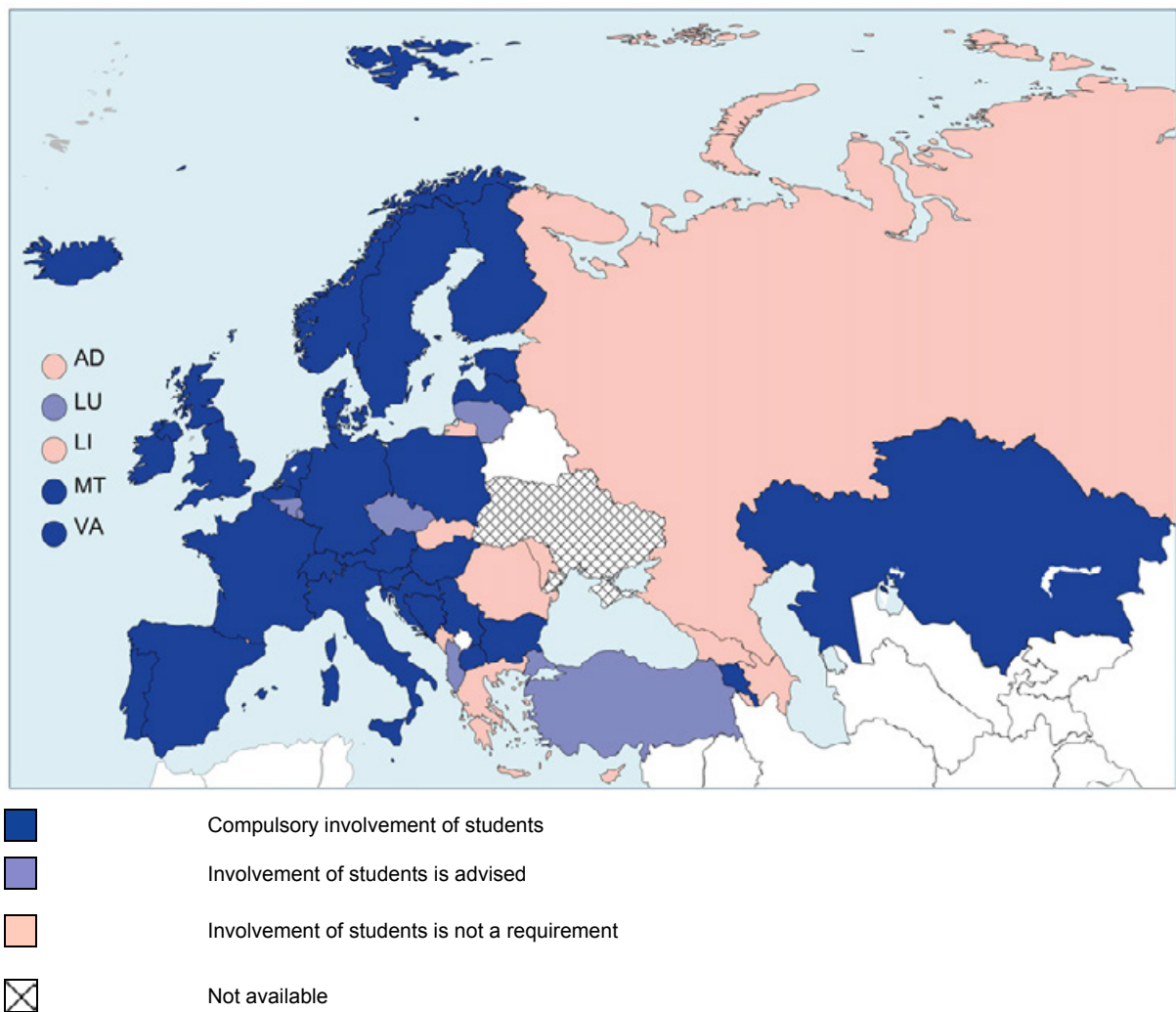
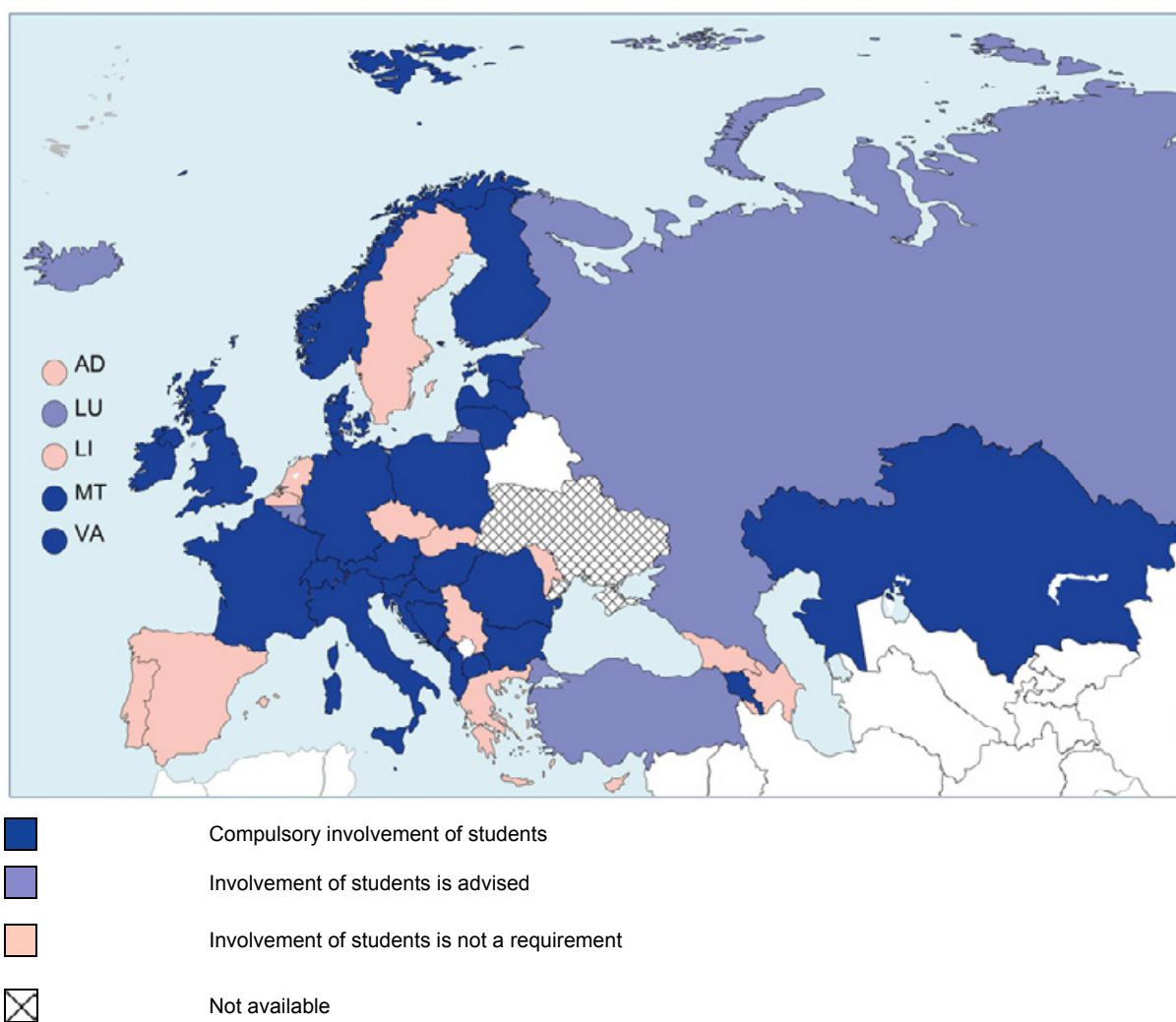


Figure 3.10 focuses on student participation in external review teams, again distinguishing between required involvement, optional (advised) involvement, and no requirement for students to be involved. It is interesting, if not surprising, to note the strong overlap with the information in Figure 3.9, demonstrating the likelihood that where student involvement has established itself as the norm, this will be reflected in all key processes and issues regarding quality assurance.

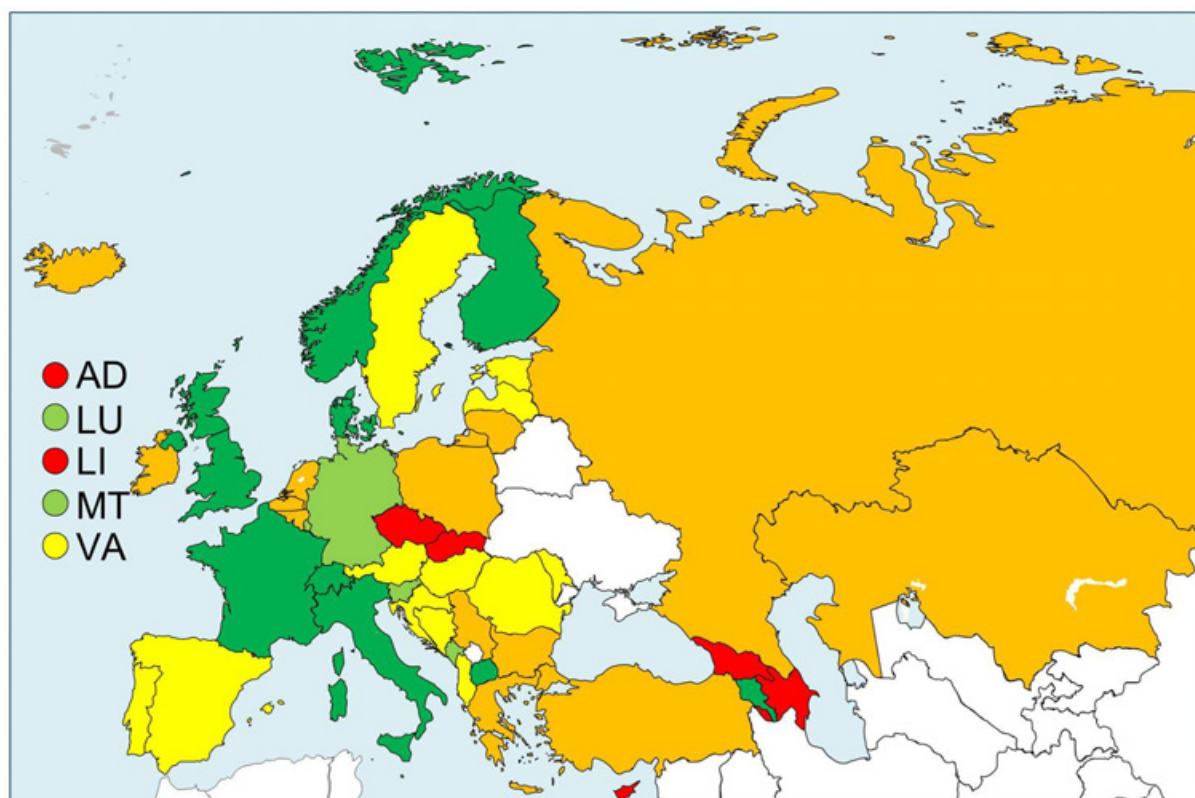
This assumption, however, needs to be questioned after looking at figure 3.11 on the involvement of students in decision-making processes. This map still shows a considerable number of systems (28) where student involvement is compulsory. However, the picture is more nuanced, and in general there is a tendency for countries to be more reluctant in involving students in decision-making. One interesting exception to the rule is Russia, where student involvement in decision-making is advised despite the fact that there is no required student involvement in other aspects of external quality assurance.

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.11: Involvement of students in decision-making processes for external reviews, 2013/14





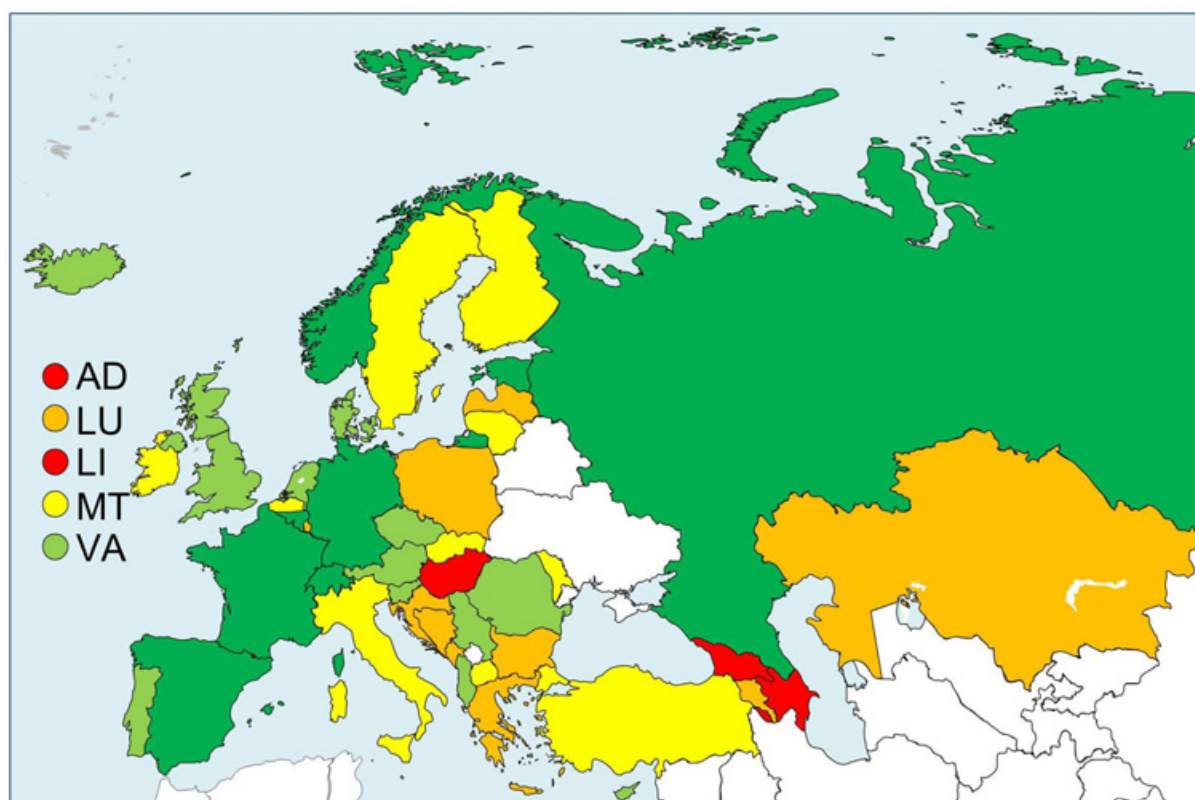
◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.12: Scorecard Indicator (5): Level of student participation in external quality assurance system 2013/14



### Scorecard categories

- In all quality assurance reviews, students participate at five levels:
  - in governance structures of national quality assurance agencies
  - as full members or observers in external review teams
  - in the preparation of self evaluation reports
  - in the decision making process for external reviews
  - in follow-up procedures
- Students participate at four of the five levels mentioned above
- Students participate at three of the five levels mentioned above
- Students participate at two of the five levels mentioned above
- Students cannot participate or participate at only one level mentioned above

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.13: Scorecard Indicator (6): Level of student participation in external quality assurance 2013/14



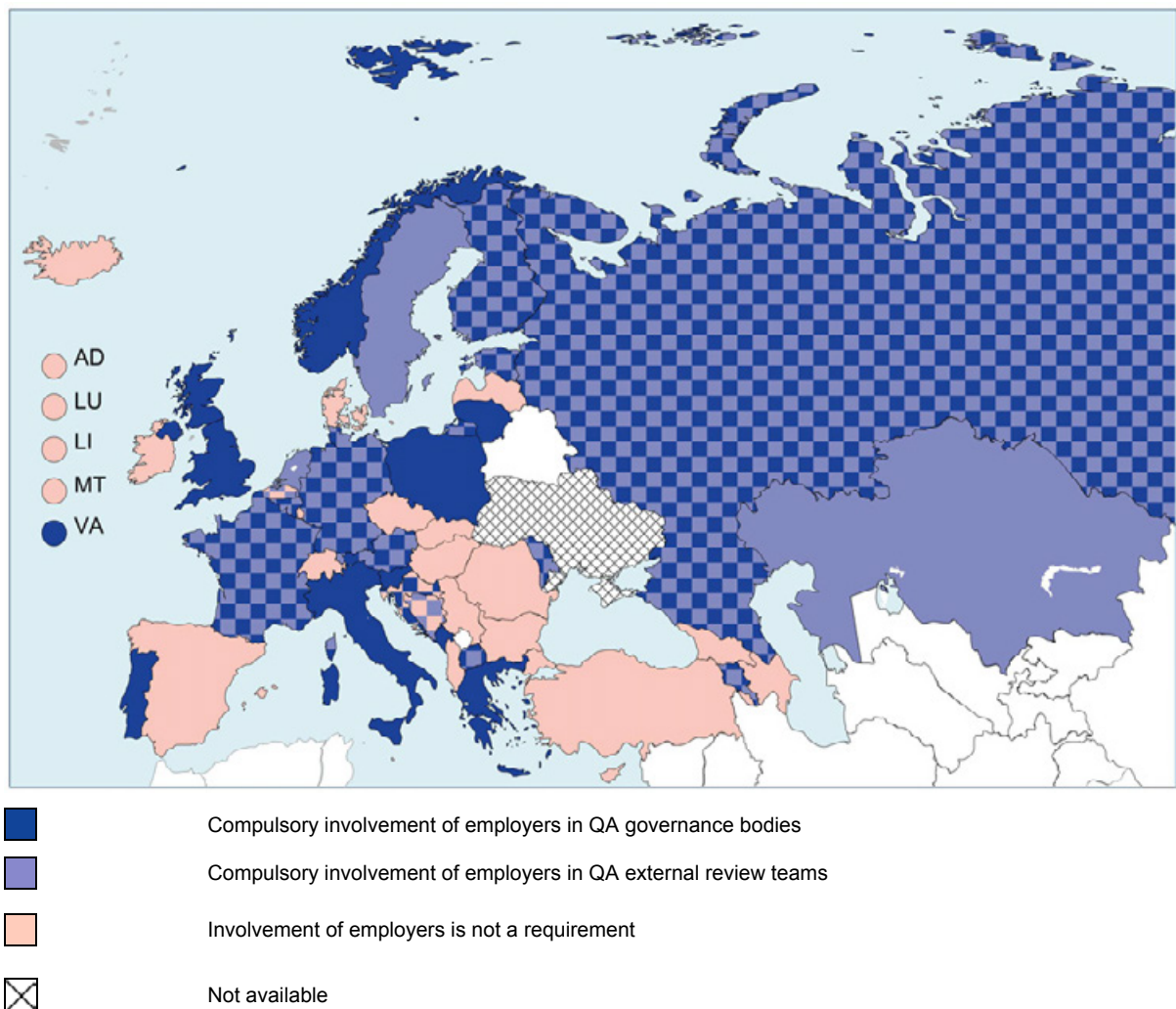
#### Scorecard categories

- In all cases the following four aspects are met:
  - agencies are full members of ENQA and/or listed on EQAR
  - international peers/experts participate in governance of national QA bodies
  - international peers/experts participate as members/observers in evaluation teams
  - international peers/experts participate in follow-up procedures
- Three of the four aspects are met
- Two of the four aspects are met
- One of the four aspects is met
- No international participation

### 3.2.5. Involvement of employers in Quality Assurance

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) specify that quality assurance of programmes and awards are expected to include "regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organisations".

◆ ◆ ◆ Figure 3.14: Required involvement of employers in QA governance bodies and external review teams, 2013/14



The findings shown in figure 3.14 indicate that employer involvement has become a feature of quality assurance in many systems. However there have been few developments since 2012. Indeed 27 countries state that there is a formal requirement for involvement of employers – whether in governance bodies, external review teams or both. Among the countries where the position has changed since 2012 is the United Kingdom which at that time pointed out that it depended upon the orientation provided by the higher education institution being evaluated. Now, however, the importance of employability issues overrides the principle of institutional autonomy.

## Conclusions

To be drafted

## 4. SOCIAL DIMENSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### The Bucharest Communiqué

With the Bucharest Communiqué (2012), ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the social dimension in higher education and thus to working towards the goal that '[t]he student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations' <sup>(1)</sup>. This goal had been formulated for the first time at the London summit of 2007, where ministers had also stressed 'the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background' <sup>(2)</sup>, after the social dimension had entered the Bologna Process with the Prague Communiqué in 2001 and gained importance in subsequent years.

To further this goal, ministers at their meeting in Bucharest in 2012 agreed 'to adopt national measures for widening overall access to quality higher education' and to 'work to raise completion rates and ensure timely progression in higher education in all EHEA countries' <sup>(3)</sup>. More specifically, they agreed to 'step up [their] efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services, counselling and guidance, flexible learning paths and alternative access routes, including recognition of prior learning' <sup>(4)</sup>. They also encouraged peer learning on the social dimension <sup>(5)</sup> and endeavoured 'to monitor progress in this area' <sup>(6)</sup>. The present report is an important contribution to this monitoring.

### The 2012 Bologna Implementation Report

As the previous Bologna Process Implementation Report showed, the goal of providing equal opportunities to quality higher education had not yet been reached <sup>(7)</sup>. [A short summary of the results to follow...]

By way of conclusion, the report raised the question whether countries gave sufficient priority to addressing under-representation of particular societal groups in higher education (ibid., p. 101) and stressed the need to strengthen the link between data gathering (monitoring) and policy development in most EHEA countries (ibid., p. 82). One issue highlighted in particular for further analysis was the impact of the implementation of national qualifications frameworks on alternative entry routes (ibid., p. 88). Alternative access to higher education in turn was to be regarded as 'a key component of debates relating to the social dimension in higher education' (ibid, p. 87).

### Chapter outline

The purpose of this chapter is to present the situation three years on, reviewing which developments related to the social dimension have continued and which changes and new developments have

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(1) Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 1.

(2) London Communiqué: Towards the European Higher Education Area: responding to challenges in a globalised world, 18 May 2007, p. 5.

(3) Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 1.

(4) Ibid., pp.1-2.

(5) This was taken up by the PL4SD (peer learning for the social dimension) project, which seeks to support policy-makers and practitioners in developing effective measures for improving the social dimension of the EHEA (see <http://www.pl4sd.eu/>).

(6) Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 2..

(7) The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report, chapter 4.

occurred in the meantime. The first section presents statistical information on the impact of a number of factors (gender, country of birth, parental education) on higher education participation and attainment. Against this background, the second section examines if and how the social dimension goal is reflected in national higher education policies across the EHEA. The chapter then looks at the extent to which alternative access routes to higher education are made available, focusing in particular on the question of recognition of prior learning (also for the purposes of progression in higher education). The closely-related questions of higher education completion and drop-out as well as the provision of student services connected to employability will be discussed in chapter 6. The final section of the social dimension chapter focuses on financial obstacles to participation in higher education and measures in place to address those obstacles.

## **4.1. Statistical information on the impact of students' background on their participation in and attainment of higher education**

Central to the social dimension of the Bologna Process is the aim that the student body should reflect the diversity of the populations and that the background of students should not have an impact on their participation in and attainment of higher education. Given the diversity across the EHEA, it is left to each country to decide which characteristics to take into account when comparing the composition of the student body to the total population. Which groups of society are then identified as underrepresented in higher education also differs between countries.

The BFUG questionnaire specifically mentioned students with disabilities; mature students; students from lower socio-economic background; male/female students; ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic minorities; students living in specific geographical areas; migrants and migrants' children. Which of those groups are identified (and monitored) as underrepresented by different countries and targeted by national policies will be examined in section 4.2.

This section is based on statistical data provided by Eurostat, which allows to analyse the impact of gender, country of birth (as proxy of immigration), and the educational background of students' parents on their participation in and/or attainment of higher education.

### **4.1.1. Gender balance in higher education**

Equal opportunities for men and women to attain higher education are a main concern of the social dimension within the Bologna Process. This section on gender balance looks at the development of women's enrolment overall, by level of study and by field of study.

Figure 4.1 shows the share of women among new entrants in tertiary education in 2001/02 and ten years later. In all countries, except for Turkey and Switzerland, the percentage of women entering tertiary education was above 50 % in 2001/02; Georgia had almost gender parity among new entrants, while in Estonia, Iceland and Armenia more than 60 % of the newly enrolled students were female. In the following ten years, Turkey, Switzerland, Georgia and Slovakia saw a steep increase in the share of women starting a study programme on tertiary education level. The share of women among new entrants in the Czech Republic and Cyprus also increased by more than 5 % <sup>(8)</sup>. On the other hand,

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<sup>(8)</sup> NB: This indicator does not refer to freshmen/women only but to all 'students who, during the course of the current reporting period, enter any programme leading to a recognised qualification at this level of education *for the first time*, irrespective of whether the students enter the programme at the beginning or at an advanced stage of the programme.' (UOE Manual 2013:22) This means, the indicator collates students, who commenced any study programme on the ISCED level in question in the respective country for the first time, e.g. a Bachelor student on 5A level counts just like a student from abroad, who enrolls for a Master programme for the first



the share of female students starting education at tertiary level dropped by almost 13 % in Estonia but in 2011/12 was still far from being balanced with 55.4 % females among new entrants. The same applies to Iceland, which used to have a share of more than 61 % women in 2001/2002 and ten years later still had the highest share of females with 57.5 % of the new entrants being female. In Ireland, the share of women among new entrants dropped by almost 8 % from a small overrepresentation of women in 2002 to a slight underrepresentation in 2012. This might be linked to the Irish National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2008-2013) promoting lifelong learning, which attracted more men than women.

Overall, a trend towards convergence can be observed: In 2001/02, the gap in the shares of females entering tertiary education spanned from 42 % in Turkey to 64 % in Estonia; in 2011/12, this variation amounted to only ten percentage points, with Turkey having almost 48 % females among new entrants and Iceland 57.5 %. [➤more about balance/imbalance over time and between countries to follow, once the updated graph is available]

**Figure 4.1: Percentage of women in new entrants in tertiary education in 2001/02 and 2011/12 and the variation in percent [graph still to come]**

	TR	CH	IE	MK	AZ	DE	BG	NL	LU	FI	RS	FR	ES	AT	MT	SI	LT	DK
2001/02	42.4	44.4	53.2	51.8	:	53.7	53.3	52.4	:	56.1	:	55.0	53.7	54.2	57.9	53.6	58.0	57.8
2011/12	47.6	48.8	49.0	51.1	51.3	51.7	52.0	52.4	53.4	53.6	53.7	53.7	53.7	53.8	54.1	54.2	54.3	54.6
Variation	12.5	9.9	-7.8	-1.5	:	-3.7	-2.5	0.0	:	-4.5	:	-2.4	0.0	-0.7	-6.5	1.0	-6.3	-5.4
	PT	RO	HU	CY	BE	EE	PL	EL	AM	IT	UK	GE	SE	SK	CZ	LV	IS	NO
2001/02	:	54.7	54.5	52.2	54.5	63.6	:	:	61.0	55.3	54.1	50.2	59.1	52.1	53.2	:	61.2	:
2011/12	54.8	54.9	54.9	55.0	55.3	55.4	55.4	55.5	56.1	56.1	56.3	56.4	56.4	56.6	56.6	57.1	57.5	57.7
Variation	:	0.3	0.8	5.4	1.5	-12.9	:	:	-8.0	1.5	4.0	12.4	-4.6	8.7	6.4	:	-6.0	:

Notes: PL: modified since the two reference years do not cover the same levels of education

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Next to this variation between countries, the share of women among new entrants in tertiary education also varies between levels of education. In the vast majority of countries (23 out of 30 for which data is available), the share of women entering higher education decreases when comparing ISCED 5A to ISCED 6. Still, given the overrepresentation at the level of ISCED 5A, in half of the countries (15), the share of women at the level of doctoral education is 50 % or more. In four countries (Norway, Hungary, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan), the shares of men and women entering at the level of doctoral education are more or less equal; in 12 countries men are underrepresented, in 14 countries women.

At the level of ISCED 5A, men are underrepresented in almost all countries covered (32 out of 36). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, entry at ISCED-5A-level is more or less balanced between men and women. In two countries women are underrepresented, namely in Germany (47.2 %) and in Azerbaijan (also 47.2 %).

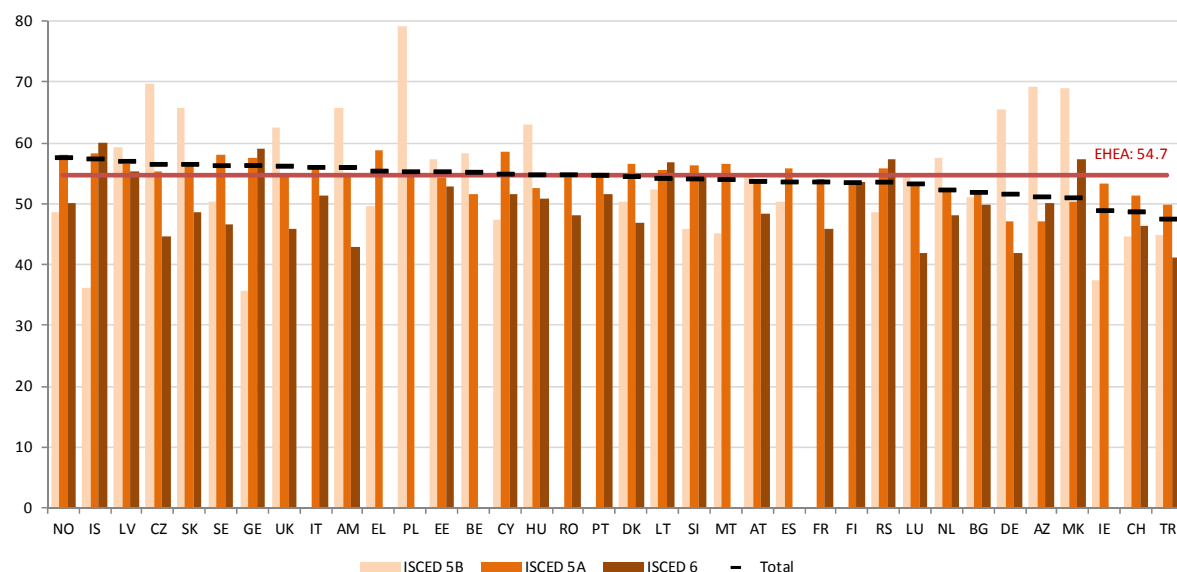
Taking into account a certain time lag, it may well bet that many countries (after an increase at ISCED-5A-level) will see an increase in the participation of women in doctoral education in the coming years. Nevertheless, in the majority of countries, women are less likely to enter a third-cycle programme than their male counterparts. This imbalance to the disadvantage of women is the strongest in Turkey (41.1 %), Germany (41.8 %), Luxembourg (41.9 %) and Armenia (42.9 %). At the other end of the

time in the particular country. Further, no country in regard reported numbers of PhD entrants for 2001/02; hence comparability over time is indeed limited.



spectrum (with a significant overrepresentation of women in doctoral education) are Iceland (60 %), Georgia (59.1 %), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (57.3 %) and Serbia (57.2 %).

**Figure 4.2: Share of women of new entrants in tertiary education on different levels, 2012**



	NO	IS	LV	CZ	SK	SE	GE	UK	IT	AM	EL	PL	EE	BE	CY	HU	RO	PT
<b>ISCED 5B</b>	48.6	36.2	59.3	69.7	65.7	50.3	35.6	62.5	:	65.8	49.7	79.2	57.3	58.4	47.4	63.1	:	:
<b>ISCED 5A</b>	58.0	58.2	56.5	55.4	56.9	58.0	57.5	54.9	56.4	55.0	58.8	55.2	54.3	51.5	58.5	52.6	55.0	55.0
<b>ISCED 6</b>	50.0	60.0	55.4	44.7	48.7	46.5	59.1	45.8	51.4	42.9	:	:	52.8	:	51.7	50.9	48.1	51.6
<b>Total</b>	57.7	57.5	57.1	56.6	56.6	56.4	56.4	56.3	56.1	56.1	55.5	55.4	55.4	55.3	55.0	54.9	54.9	54.8
	DK	LT	SI	MT	AT	ES	FR	FI	RS	LU	NL	BG	DE	AZ	MK	IE	CH	TR
<b>ISCED 5B</b>	50.4	52.4	45.9	45.1	54.9	50.4	:	:	48.6	55.1	57.5	51.1	65.4	69.3	68.9	37.5	44.6	45.0
<b>ISCED 5A</b>	56.6	55.6	56.2	56.6	53.9	55.8	54.2	53.6	55.8	53.1	52.4	52.1	47.2	47.2	50.4	53.4	51.4	49.8
<b>ISCED 6</b>	46.9	56.7	54.9	:	48.4	:	46.0	53.7	57.2	41.9	48.0	49.8	41.8	50.1	57.3	:	46.3	41.1
<b>Total</b>	54.6	54.3	54.2	54.1	53.8	53.7	53.7	53.6	53.7	53.4	52.4	52.0	51.7	51.3	51.1	49.0	48.8	47.6

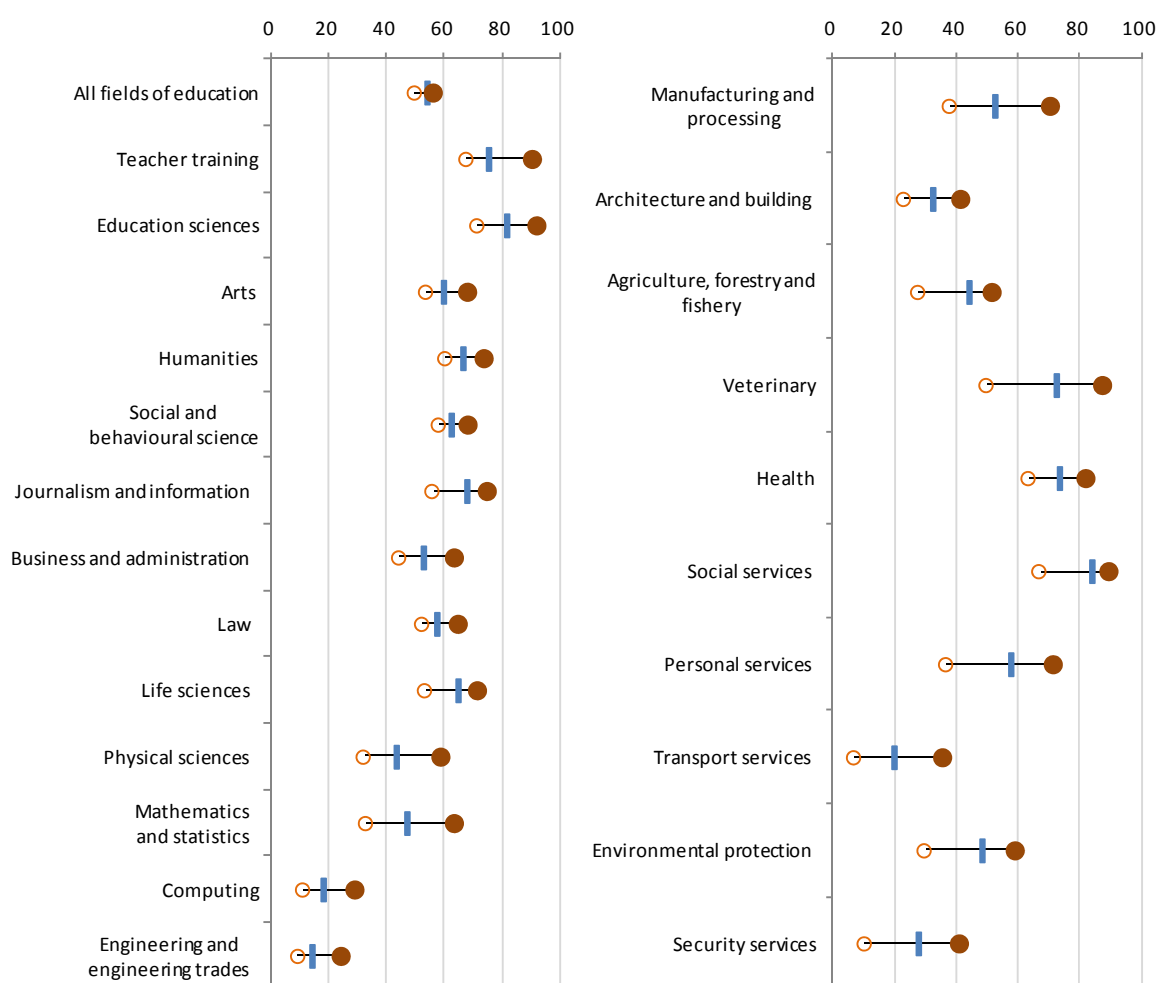
**Notes:**

**Source:** Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The differences between levels are partly related to differences between study fields – at which level they are commonly studied and whether they tend to attract more men or more women. Figure 4.3. shows very clearly that the share of women entering tertiary education varies quite strongly between different fields of study.

Analysis of figure 4.3. to follow...

**Figure 4.3 Percentage of women in new entrants in tertiary education by field (median and 10/90 percentile), 2011/12**



**Notes:**

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

**Figure 4.4 Percentage of women in enrolled students in Bologna structures by field of education and level of Bologna structure (BA and MA), 2011/12**

Updated graph & analysis to follow...

## 4.1.2. Participation and attainment of students with immigration background

Next to gender balance, another central concern of the social dimension is whether immigrants and children of immigrants have the same chances to participate in and attain higher education as native students. That type of information is, however, much more difficult to gather. Eurostat data presented in this section uses the country of birth as criterion, which has its limitations, as the group of foreign-born students also includes students who moved to the country just for the purposes of study (mobile students), while children of immigrants born in the country (often referred to as 'second generation immigrants') on the other hand are treated like native-born students. Keeping these limitations in mind,

data on foreign-born students can still be used as a rough measure to assess whether in this respect the composition of the student body corresponds to the composition of the total population.

Participation in higher education to a large extent depends on participation in earlier stages of education. As will be shown in section 4.3, to get access to higher education, completion of upper secondary education is required in most cases. Figure 4.5 shows the share of early leavers from education and training (ESL) among young adults (18 to 24 years old) and depicts disparities between the foreign-born and the native-born population. The indicator relates the number of young women and men (18 to 24 years old) who were born abroad and who left the education system before completing upper secondary education to the total foreign-born population of the same age group (18 to 24). The indicator for the native-born population is calculated accordingly.

As this indicator uses the total population aged 18-24 (foreign-born / native-born) as denominator, a country with a large proportion of international students scores lower (i.e. better) on the indicator for ESL among the foreign-born population, since international students add to the total population but enter the education system at tertiary level and thus have no possibility to drop-out at a lower level. The results of figure 4.5 therefore have to be interpreted with care and to be complemented with contextual information on the proportion of foreign students in the respective country, which varies greatly across the EHEA [see chapter 7, in particular figures 7.1 and 7.5]. As far as second-generation immigrants are concerned, the indicator does not reveal any information on their share among early leavers from education and training, as they are included in the group of native-born young adults.

Concerning the total share of young adults leaving education and training before completing upper secondary education, figure 4.5 shows that two-thirds of the countries for which data is available have rates around or lower than 10 %, while large differences exist across the EHEA with rates ranging from 3.9 % in Slovenia to 22.6 % in Spain.

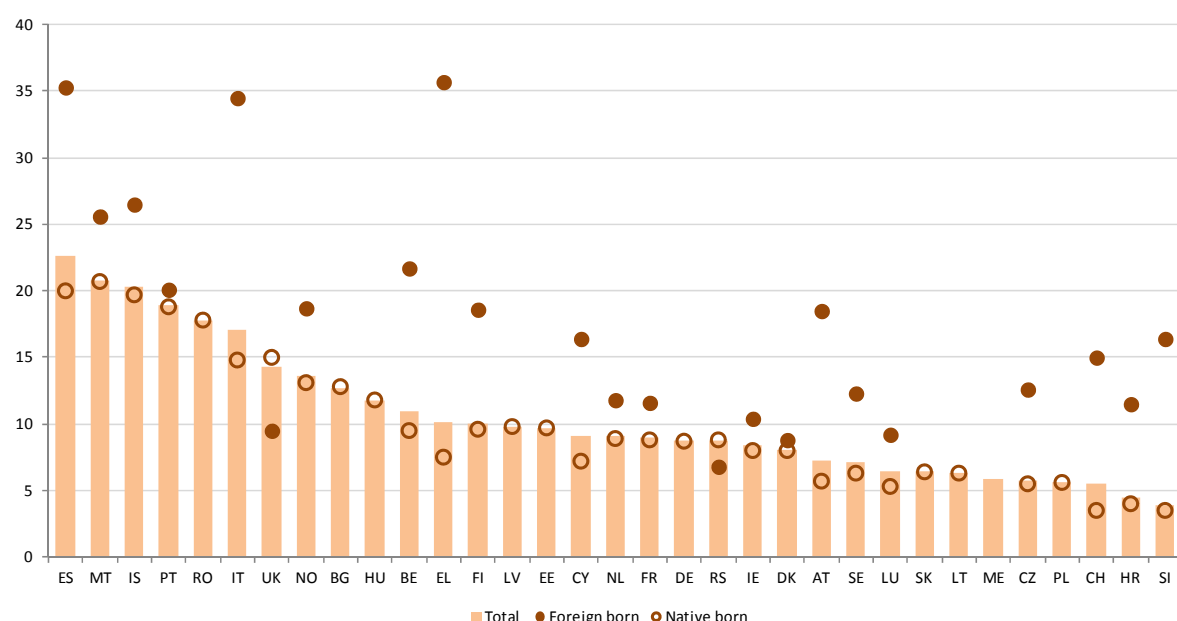
The highest shares of ESL among native-born young adults are observed in Spain, Malta and Iceland. In those three countries, one out of five young women and men (18-24 years old) left the education system without a qualification at upper secondary level. In Portugal, Romania, the United Kingdom, Italy, Norway, Bulgaria and Hungary this share is between 10 and 20 % of the respective age group. The majority of countries (19 out of 33) have rates between 5 and 10 %, while only Croatia, Switzerland and Slovenia have rates below 5 %.

Foreign-born young adults are more likely to quit education and training at an early stage than native-born in nearly all EHEA countries for which data is available. The exceptions are Serbia<sup>9</sup> and the UK, which might at least partly be related to the comparatively high number of international students in that country [see figures 7.1 and 7.5]. In Greece, with a share of 35.7 %, foreign-born men and women aged 18-24 are almost five times as often ESL than native-born men and women of that same age group, in Switzerland the ratio is four to one, in Austria three to one. In Italy, Belgium, Cyprus, Sweden and Luxembourg foreign-born young adults are twice as likely to leave education and training without completing upper secondary education as their native-born counterparts. In the remaining countries, the differences between the native-born and the foreign-born population are not as big, while the rates for the foreign-born population can still be quite high (e.g. 26.5 % in Iceland and 35.3 % in Spain).

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(<sup>9</sup>) The Serbian data are of limited comparability, as the country of birth refers to nowadays borders and the category of 'foreign born students' thus also includes ethnic Serbs who were born in other parts of former Yugoslavia, which at the time of their birth still existed as one country. Similar limitations of comparability apply to the ex-Soviet countries in Eastern Europe.

**Figure 4.5: Early leavers from education and training as percentage of the population born abroad, native-born and the total population, 2013**



	ES	MT	IS	PT	RO	IT	UK	NO	BG	HU	BE	EL	FI	LV	EE	CY	NL
Total	22.6	20.8	20.3	18.9	17.8	17.1	14.3	13.6	12.7	11.8	11	10.1	10	9.8	9.7	9.1	9.1
Foreign-born	35.3	25.6	26.5	20.1		34.5	9.5	18.7		:u	21.7	35.7	18.6	:u	:u	16.4	11.8
Native-born	20.0	20.7	19.7	18.8	17.8	14.8	15	13.1	12.8	11.8	9.5	7.5	9.6	9.8	9.7	7.2	8.9
	FR	DE	RS	IE	DK	AT	SE	LU	SK	LT	ME	CZ	PL	CH	HR	SI	
Total	9	8.7	8.7	8.4	8	7.3	7.1	6.4	6.4	6.3	5.81	5.7	5.6	5.5	4.5	3.9	
Foreign-born	11.6		6.8	10.4	8.8	18.5	12.3	9.2	:u			12.6	:u	15	11.5	16.4	
Native-born	8.8	8.7	8.8	8	8	5.7	6.3	5.3	6.4	6.3		5.5	5.6	3.5	4	3.5	

Notes: :u: not reliable and not publishable and *italics*: not reliable. Data are sorted by Early leavers from education and training as percentage of the total population.

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

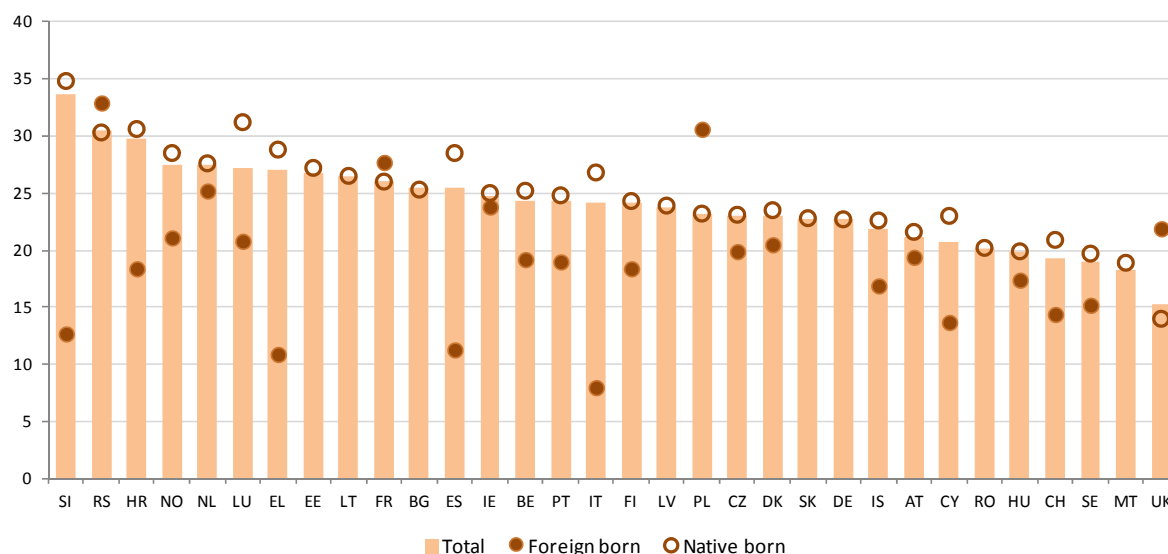
Figure 4.6 shows to what extent the discrepancies at lower education levels between those born abroad and those born within a country persist also at tertiary level. This indicator compares the participation rates in higher education of the foreign-born population aged 18 to 29 with the participation rate of the native-born population in the same age group. Children of immigrants born in the destination country ('second generation immigrants') are again counted as part of the native-born population. Similar to figure 4.5, the indicator also loses significance on the integration of the foreign-born population of a given country the higher the share of international students is.

In almost all EHEA countries for which data is available, young adults born abroad have a lower participation rate in tertiary education than native-born young adults. There are however significant differences across the EHEA. The participation rates of young adults born abroad range from 8 % in Italy to 27.7 % in France and 32.9 % in Serbia (with most of those born abroad coming from other parts of former Yugoslavia). However, also with regard to the total population, participation rates vary significantly across the EHEA – the share of all young adults (aged 18-29) participating in tertiary education ranges from 15.3 % in the United Kingdom to 33.6 % in Slovenia.

So when interested in potential disadvantages of young adults with immigration background it is more informative to compare the gaps in participation ratios of foreign-born and native-born young adults (keeping in mind the limitations linked to the definition of both groups for the purposes of data collection). The largest gaps can be observed in Italy, Greece and Spain, where the participation rates in tertiary education between young adults born abroad and their native-born counterparts differ by

more than 15 percentage points. In Luxembourg and Cyprus the gap is around 10 percentage points, in Norway, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland, Portugal, Iceland and Sweden, the gap is between eight and four percentage points. In the remaining countries (the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria Ireland, France and Serbia), the gap amounts to less than three percentage points (in France and Serbia to the advantage of foreign-born young adults). The United Kingdom with its large share of international students is again a special case: with 21.9 % the share of young adults born abroad participating in tertiary education is significantly higher than the share of UK-born young adults (14 %).

**Figure 4.6: Participation rates in tertiary education among the population born abroad, native and total population, 2013**



	SI	RS	HR	NO	NL	LU	EL	EE	LT	FR	BG	ES	IE	BE	PT	IT
<b>Total</b>	33.6	30.5	29.8	27.5	27.4	27.2	27	26.8	26.5	26.1	25.4	25.4	24.7	24.3	24.3	24.1
<b>Foreign-born</b>	12.7	32.9	18.4	21.1	25.2	20.8	10.9	15.3	:u	27.7	:u	11.3	23.8	19.2	19	8
<b>Native-born</b>	34.8	30.3	30.6	28.5	27.6	31.2	28.8	27.2	26.5	26.0	25.3	28.5	25	25.2	24.8	26.8
	FI	LV	PL	CZ	DK	SK	DE	IS	AT	CY	RO	HU	CH	SE	MT	UK
<b>Total</b>	24.1	23.7	23.2	23	23	22.8	22.7	21.9	21.2	20.7	20.2	19.8	19.3	19	18.3	15.3
<b>Foreign-born</b>	18.4	:u	30.6	19.9	20.5	:u	:	16.9	19.4	13.7	:u	17.4	14.4	15.2	:u	21.9
<b>Native-born</b>	24.3	23.9	23.2	23.1	23.5	22.8	22.7	22.6	21.6	23	20.2	19.9	20.9	19.7	18.9	14

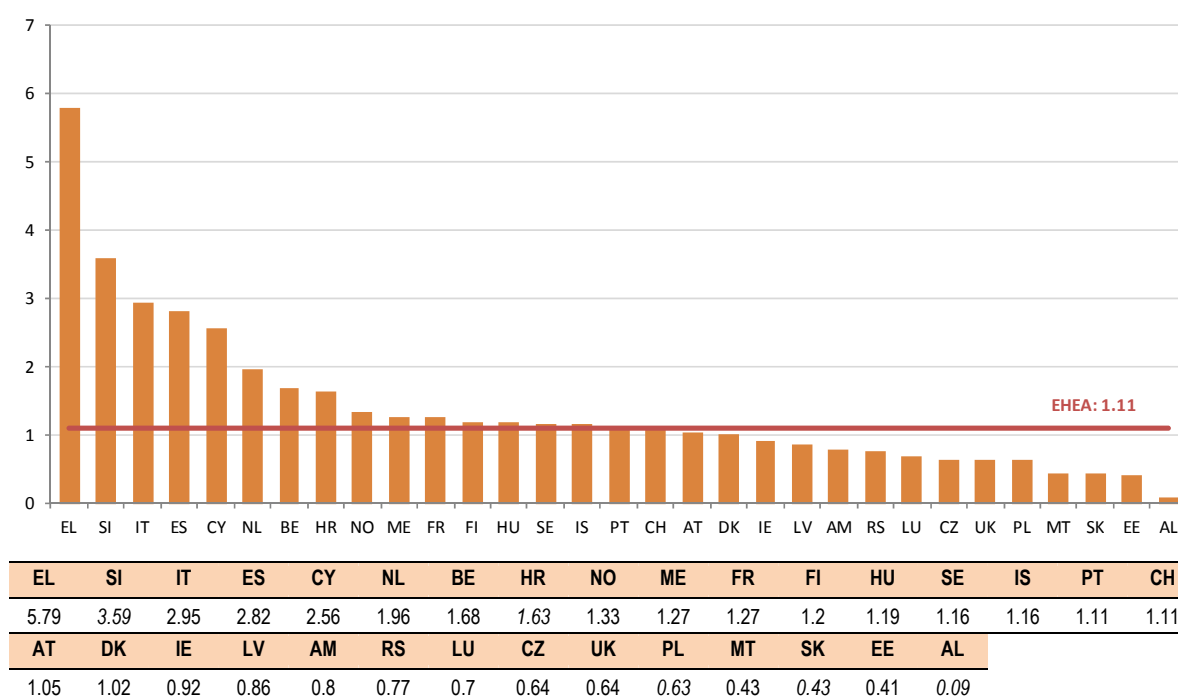
Notes: :u: not reliable and not publishable and *italics*: not reliable.

Data are sorted by participation rate in tertiary education of the total population.

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The last figure of this section (figure 4.7 below) shows the overall chances of those born within a country over those born abroad to attain higher education, depicted as odds ratios. This means that the numbers in figure 4.7 can be read as chances of native-born over foreign-born young adults [?] to attain higher education. In Greece, this ratio is significantly to the disadvantage of foreign-born young adults who are almost six times less likely to complete higher education than their native-born counterparts. In Italy, Spain and Cyprus this ratio is almost one to three, in the Netherlands and Belgium almost one to two. On the other hand, there are also countries (roughly one third of the countries for which reliable data is available) in which adults born abroad have higher chances to attain higher education than those born within the country (in Estonia, Malta, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom those chances are roughly twice as high). Again, it needs to be kept in mind that the foreign-born population also includes international students, which especially in the United Kingdom are of a significant number.

**Figure 4.7 Higher education attainment by country of birth: odds ratio of native-born population over population born abroad to complete higher education, 2013**



Notes: 'u': not reliable and not publishable and *italics*: not reliable. Armenia: 2012.

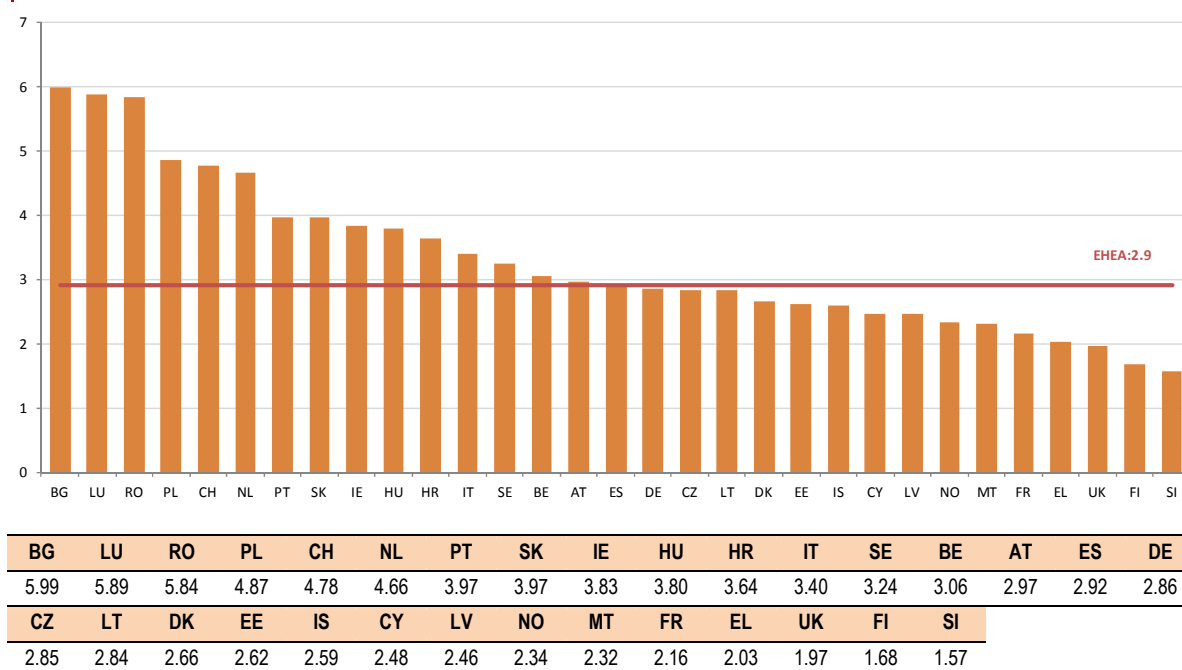
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

### 4.1.3. Influence of parental education on higher education attainment

A core concern of the social dimension when it was introduced to the Bologna Process was to enable young adults to enter, participate and complete higher education without obstacles related to their social or economic background, as ministerial communiqués repeatedly stressed. One way to assess to what extent the social and economic background functions as obstacle to higher education is to examine the influence of the educational attainment of parents. Figure 4.8 therefore shows the odds ratios of young adults [25-34?] with highly educated parents over those with medium educated parents to attain higher education. The indicator takes into account the highest degree of both parents, so to be considered as 'highly educated parents', at least one of them must have completed tertiary education; 'medium educated parents' refers to parents with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as highest degree.

In all EHEA countries for which data is available, children of medium educated parents have much lower chances to attain tertiary education than children of highly educated parents. In most of the countries, the relative chances to attain tertiary education of young adults whose parents have only upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education are two to five times lower than those of young adults with at least one parent having completed tertiary education. In Finland and Slovenia the effect is slightly weaker; in Bulgaria, Luxembourg and Romania, on the other hand, it is particularly strong: in those countries children of tertiary educated parents have nearly six times more chances to attain tertiary education themselves than children of medium educated parents.

**Figure 4.8: Attainment by educational background: odds ratio of young adults with highly educated parents (i.e. tertiary educational attainment) over young adults with medium educated parents (i.e. upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education) to successfully complete higher education, 2011**



Notes:

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC.

## 4.2. Policy approaches to widening access and participation in higher education

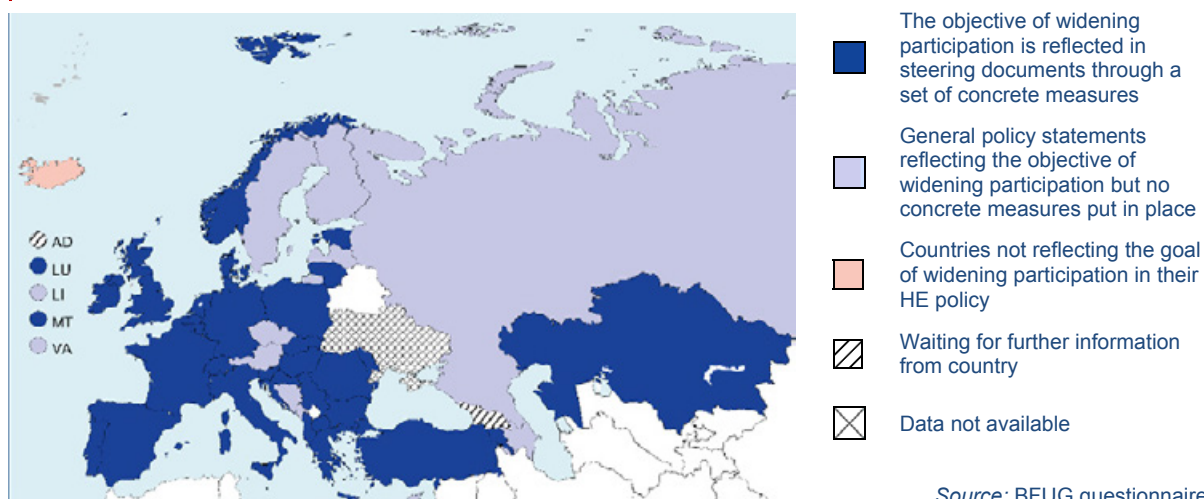
Drawing upon the responses to the BFUG questionnaire and the results of the Eurostudent survey, this section outlines the different policy approaches to widening participation in higher education across the EHEA. It shows to what extent the objective of widening participation is reflected in national higher education policies, which concrete measures (if any) are in place, and if the resulting composition of the student body is subject to systematic monitoring.

### 4.2.1. Overview of the main approaches

As already shown by the previous reporting exercise, the objective of widening participation is reflected in the higher education policy of almost all EHEA countries. Iceland is the only country to report this objective not to be reflected in its higher education policy (in 2012 there had been three more: Andorra, Latvia and Slovakia). In 12 systems (now also including Latvia) the objective of widening participation is reflected in steering documents through general policy statements without concrete measures being put in place. In more than 70 % of the systems (35, including Andorra and Slovakia) it is reflected through a set of concrete measures (see figure 4.9). [to be confirmed for Andorra and Georgia]



**Figure 4.9: National policy approaches to widening participation in higher education, 2013/14**



### Concrete measures to widen participation

Looking at the concrete measures taken across the EHEA to widen participation in higher education, two types of measures can be discerned: measures to increase participation as a whole, expecting this to increase the participation of underrepresented groups as well (also referred to as mainstreaming approach); and measures targeting specific underrepresented groups directly in order to achieve a more balanced composition of the student body. Most countries combine both approaches in one way or another. [More conceptual discussion on mainstreaming vs. targeted approach to follow...]

Increasing overall participation and trying to organize higher education in a way that makes it accessible to the widest possible range of learners is the predominant approach in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway). This includes, for instance, offering higher education free of charge (which also applies to Turkey), combined with generous grants and loans for all students (Denmark and Norway), expanding the number of university places (also Germany, Malta, UK-ENG-NIR-WLS), or providing funding for counselling (France, Germany, Greece, Italy) and various student facilities (housing, meals, social, psychological and medical support, childcare etc.), as mentioned by the Flemish Community of Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Italy, Moldova, Norway and Serbia.

While those measures are usually open to all students, several countries also implement measures targeting specific underrepresented groups, mainly students with disabilities, students from ethnic minorities or from socially and/or economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The measure mentioned most frequently (by roughly half of the systems with concrete measures, 40 % of all systems) are scholarships for underrepresented groups of students (with disabilities, orphans, from poor socio-economic background, from rural areas, released from military service, Roma etc.) or a needs-based study allowance and/or loan system.

Also quite common (reported by 15 systems) are special examination/study conditions or other support measures for students with disabilities. Seven systems work with admission / enrolment quotas and/or reduced or no tuition fees for certain groups of students (e.g. students with disabilities or Roma). A few countries also offer special support to non-native speaking students (Denmark and Estonia) or to higher education institutions in rural areas (Estonia and Poland). Other measures mentioned are the provision of flexible learning opportunities, part-time or distance education and short-cycle programmes.

## Quantitative objectives

With the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué of 2009, ministers agreed that each participating country would set 'measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, to be reached by the end of the next decade' <sup>(10)</sup>.

Five years later, 70 % of the systems (34) have indeed defined such measurable targets. The vast majority (25 systems), however, have only targets for widening overall participation; three countries have targets with a reference to underrepresented groups only; six countries have both. In total, less than 20 % of the systems have measurable targets for increasing participation of underrepresented groups, as called for by the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué. It could be argued that without the European Union's Europe 2020 strategy (see below), the number of systems having measurable targets for widening overall participation would be considerably lower as well. 14 systems (12 non-EU countries plus the UK) have not (yet) defined any specific quantitative objectives to be reached.

A year after the EHEA countries had adopted the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, the European Union countries among them adopted the Europe 2020 strategy and the target that by 2020 at least 40 % of young people (aged 30-34) should have completed tertiary or equivalent education by 2020. In the following, all EU countries except the UK defined national targets for tertiary education in their Europe 2020 National Reform Programmes <sup>(11)</sup>. As the BFUG reporting showed, also two non-EU/candidate countries (Montenegro and Serbia) have adopted such targets. As a result, 30 of the 48 systems covered by the present report have at least one quantitative objective regarding the population entering, participating in and/or completing higher education, namely a specific share of higher education graduates among the 30-34 year-olds to be reached by 2020, ranging from 26-27 % in Italy and Romania to 60 % in Ireland and 66 % in Luxembourg. Norway reported a quantitative objective concerning the population entering higher education, namely an increase by 24.800 in the number of study places by 2019 (compared to 2006).

Some of the countries have set more than one quantitative objective without reference to underrepresented groups. Those additional objectives mainly concern the share of the population aged 19 or 19-24 entering or participating in higher education (Germany, Malta, Slovenia) and the share of students or graduates in the fields of engineering and natural sciences (Estonia, Lithuania, Poland). After a steep increase in the first decade of the 21st century, the Czech Republic for 2015 defined upper ceilings for first-time enrolments in tertiary education (roughly up to two-thirds of the relevant age cohort) and bachelor graduates continuing to study at master level (not more than 50 %).

In addition to the objectives mentioned above, some countries (Finland, Greece?, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Serbia) have defined also quantitative objectives with a reference to underrepresented groups. Three more countries (Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia) have quantitative objectives with a reference to underrepresented groups only. So in total, only 9 out of 48 systems for which data is available have defined quantitative objectives with a reference to underrepresented groups of the student population. Some of them reserve a given number or a percentage of study places for underrepresented groups of the student population [examples...]. Some have defined enrolment targets to be reached (as share of the total student population) [examples...]. Finland focuses on imbalances and seeks to halve gender and regional differences and the effect of the social and ethnic background on participation in higher education by 2020. The gender differences in graduation in young age groups are to be reduced by 2020 and halved by 2025. The long-term aim is to remove

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<sup>(10)</sup> Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009.

<sup>(11)</sup> Overview of Europe 2020 targets. The national targets as set out in the National Reform Programmes (NRP) in April 2014. Available at [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets_en.pdf) [Accessed: 23 October 2014].

those differences altogether. The underrepresented groups covered by the various targets are students with disabilities (Finland, Greece, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Serbia), orphans (Greece, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia), mature students (Ireland, Malta, Poland, Slovenia), students from lower socio-economic background (Finland, Ireland, Moldova), from ethnic minorities (Finland, Moldova, Serbia), or from specific rural areas (Moldova) as well as gender groups (Finland, see above).

In Norway, for privacy reasons, national education authorities are not allowed to collect data on disabilities, religion, ethnic origin etc. and therefore cannot implement quantitative objectives defined along those lines.

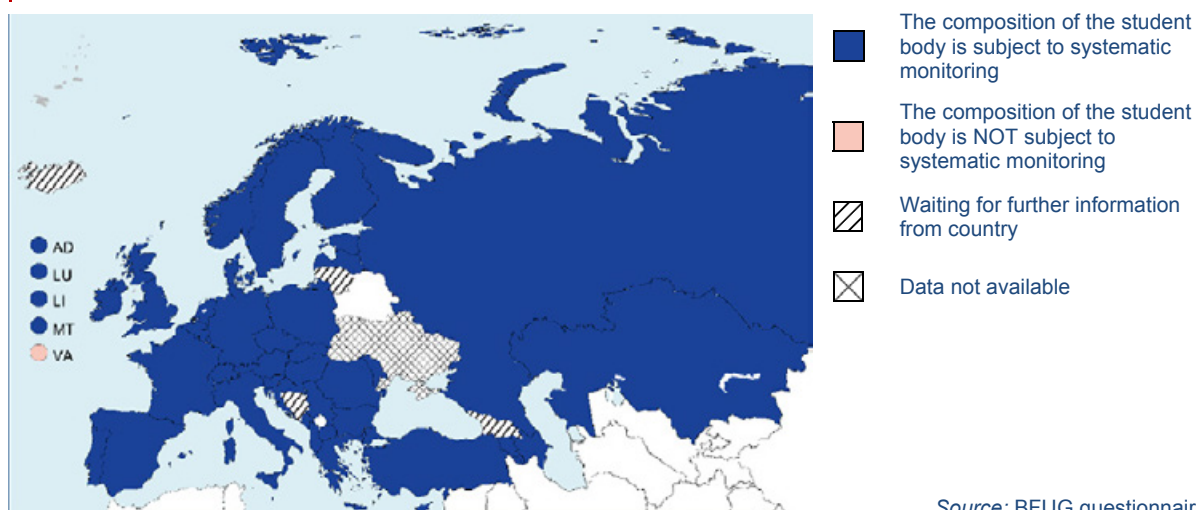
## 4.2.2. Monitoring of the composition of the student body

To be able to assess whether measures to widen access and participation in higher education have the desired effect, the composition of the student body needs to be systematically monitored over time.

In 90 % of the systems (in 43 out of 48) the composition of the student body is subject to systematic monitoring at some point, usually at entry to higher education, during higher education studies, and at graduation. Systematic monitoring after graduation takes place in roughly half of the systems. In Bosnia and Herzegovina?, Georgia?, the Holy See, Iceland? and Lithuania?, the composition of the student body is not systematically monitored at all (see figure 4.10). In Iceland this might be connected to the fact that this country does not reflect the goal of widening participation in its higher education policy, as shown above.

Taking a closer look at the characteristics monitored, it turns out that higher education systems that systematically monitor the composition of the student body most often take into account age (41) as well as type and level of qualification achieved prior to entry to higher education (40) and gender (40). More than half of the systems also take into account disability and socio-economic background; roughly a quarter look at ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic minority status, migrant status, and/or labour market status prior to entry to higher education. [other characteristics mentioned by a few...] Religion is a characteristic not taken into account at all, except by Switzerland during higher education studies.

**Figure 4.10: Monitoring the composition of the student body, 2013/14 [to be updated]**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

The monitoring is usually carried out by a ministry or governmental body and/or by higher education institutions with obligation to submit data to another body (ministry, statistical office or quality assurance agency). In a number of countries, data is also collected by independent bodies and/or higher education institutions without obligation to report to another body, especially when it comes to monitoring after graduation.

In 38 of the 43 systems where a systematic monitoring of the composition of the student body takes place, mechanisms exist that encourage or oblige higher education institutions to participate in such a monitoring (the exceptions are Albania, Andorra, Croatia, Cyprus and Kazakhstan). Quite often the monitoring is part of regular data collection by national statistical offices; in some cases it is connected to quality assurance. In several countries, higher education institutions are obliged to keep a student register. A growing number of countries work with a central database (in some cases managed by the ministry in charge of higher education). Monitoring can also be connected to funding, for example with scholarships for certain categories of students or support for higher education institutions offering education to students with disabilities.

In most systems (with the exception of Albania, Andorra, Bulgaria and Cyprus?), results of monitoring activities are publicly available. In 24 cases, some or all results are shown for each individual higher education institution; in 15 cases, information is aggregated, which is often due to protection of personal data.

Almost 80 % of the systems (38) report legal restrictions on publishing data on certain student characteristics; in 29 of them legal restrictions apply also to collecting data (the latter also applies to Hungary where restrictions apply only to the collection, not the publication of data). Restrictions concern personal / private data for reasons of data protection (most frequently mentioned are ethnic origin & disabilities; also: religion, medical data, judicial data etc.). In some cases restrictions apply to data on individuals, while publication of aggregated data is possible. In some cases data collection (and publication) is possible on a voluntary basis (i.e. if students agree to it). In nine systems there are no legal restrictions on collecting and publishing data on student characteristics.

Asked about the main changes in the composition of the student body during the last decade, a quarter of the systems for which data is available [9 of 36] report a greater share of international students. Less than 20 % report an increase in the number of migrants or students from ethnic minorities; female students and graduates; mature students; students disclosing a disability and/or students from under-represented socio-economic groups respectively. [More on individual responses?] Six countries did not identify any major changes.

While in most systems the student body is subject to systematic monitoring, it often covers only a limited number of the characteristics usually referred to in the context of the social dimension, related to underrepresented groups. Moreover, it remains unclear to what extent the monitoring is actually linked to policy-making. It seems that only a small number of countries [give examples] use the information on the composition of the student body to assess the impact of measures aimed at widening participation.

## 4.3. Opening access routes to higher education, recognition of prior learning and student services

[Brief introduction / outline to follow...]

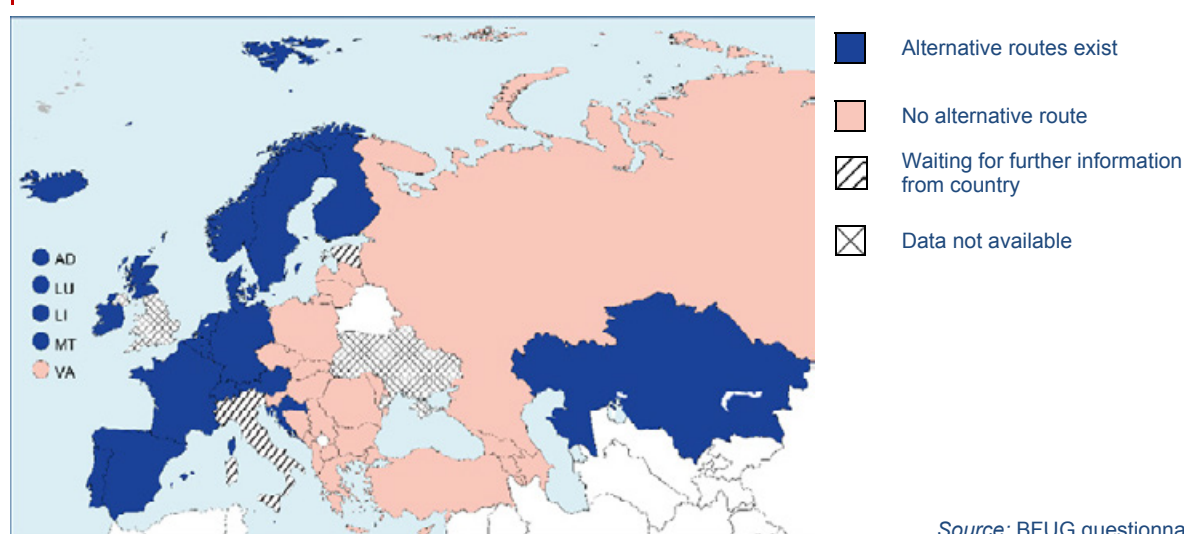
### 4.3.1. Access routes to higher education

The traditional direct access route to higher education is the possession of an upper secondary qualification, general (ISCED 34) or vocational (ISCED 35). In the vast majority of the systems covered by this report, meeting those standard entry requirements does not guarantee access to higher education, though. In 70 % of the systems, individuals that meet standard entry requirements do not have a guaranteed right to higher education. Typically, students compete for a limited number of places and are selected on the basis of their level of achievement in the upper secondary qualification and/or an additional entrance examination. In some countries, there are central entrance exams that all students need to pass; in other countries, it depends on individual higher education institutions and/or the field of study whether an entrance exam needs to be taken.

In the remaining 30 % of the systems <sup>(12)</sup>, individuals that meet the standard entry requirements have a guaranteed right to higher education in some (or most) fields of study and/or at HEIs other than universities (which can also be related to the fields of study) and they are commonly accepted to the institution of their own (first) choice. Special admission requirements, such as numerus clausus, entry exam or aptitude test, usually apply to medicine, architecture, arts, music and/or sports.

As far as alternative access to higher education is concerned, the overall picture across the EHEA looks very similar to the situation described in the previous implementation report. In 22 higher education systems (most of them in Western Europe) at least one such alternative route to higher education exists, while in the remaining 25 systems for which data is available the access to higher education still depends on the possession of an upper secondary school leaving certificate (general or vocational) (see figure 4.11).

**Figure 4.11: Alternative routes to higher education for non-traditional candidates, 2013/2014**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

<sup>(12)</sup> Armenia?, Austria, Flemish Community of Belgium, French Community of Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta?, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland.



There is only one country (Croatia) [possibly also EE and IT?] that in the meantime has introduced an alternative route to higher education where none existed before: at some higher education institutions, mature students (25+) may enter without State Matura exam. The ministry recently identified access of non-traditional students to higher education as one of its strategic priorities and under the funding agreements for the period 2012-2015 provides additional funding to higher education institutions that facilitate the access of students older than 25 years.

Incentives for higher education institutions to admit non-traditional students exist in roughly a third of the higher education systems. [give more examples]

Several countries also mentioned the possibility to get an upper secondary qualification, which in turn gives access to higher education, via 'second chance' education (Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Sweden, United Kingdom).

About half of the higher education systems offer one or several types of bridging programmes: programmes targeted at those who have completed an upper secondary programme, which does not allow direct access to higher education (Croatia, the Czech Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and/or targeted at those who left school prior to completion of any type of secondary education (United Kingdom, France, Greece?, Slovenia, Moldova?). Those programmes are usually leading to an upper secondary qualification or equivalent, but can also give direct access to a specific higher education institution (Iceland) or higher education programme / field of study without leading to a particular qualification (UK-ENG-NIR-WLS?, UK-Scotland). A few countries (Denmark, Finland, Malta) offer special bridging programmes for refugees and immigrants. Finally, there are bridging programmes to equip candidates with specific qualifications required for a specific study programme (e.g. engineering) (Denmark, Norway, Sweden).

In a number of countries it is also possible to enter higher education without formal entry qualification. In some cases, candidates not possessing the required entry qualification may be admitted on the basis of an entry exam instead. Another access route is the recognition of prior learning and/or vocational experience, which will be dealt with in more detail in the next section. Often, such exceptions are available only to mature students, although the required minimum age differs from country to country, or even from institution to institution.

### 4.3.2. Recognition of the knowledge and skills acquired outside formal learning contexts

The importance of the recognition of knowledge and skills gained through non-formal and informal learning has been stressed by communiqués of ministerial conferences for years and with the Bucharest Communiqué ministers explicitly agreed to 'step up [their] efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide [...] alternative access routes, including recognition of prior learning' <sup>(13)</sup>.

Nevertheless, in more than half of the systems (28), it is still not possible for candidates to be admitted to higher education on the basis of the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning. In those countries, all higher education candidates must hold a higher education entry qualification (or pass an entry exam). Some of those countries (the Czech Republic, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland and Turkey) are, however, in the process of developing a regulatory framework.

In nine systems, at least some (types of) higher education institutions (e.g. university of applied sciences) or programmes are already open to admission based on the recognition of prior non-formal

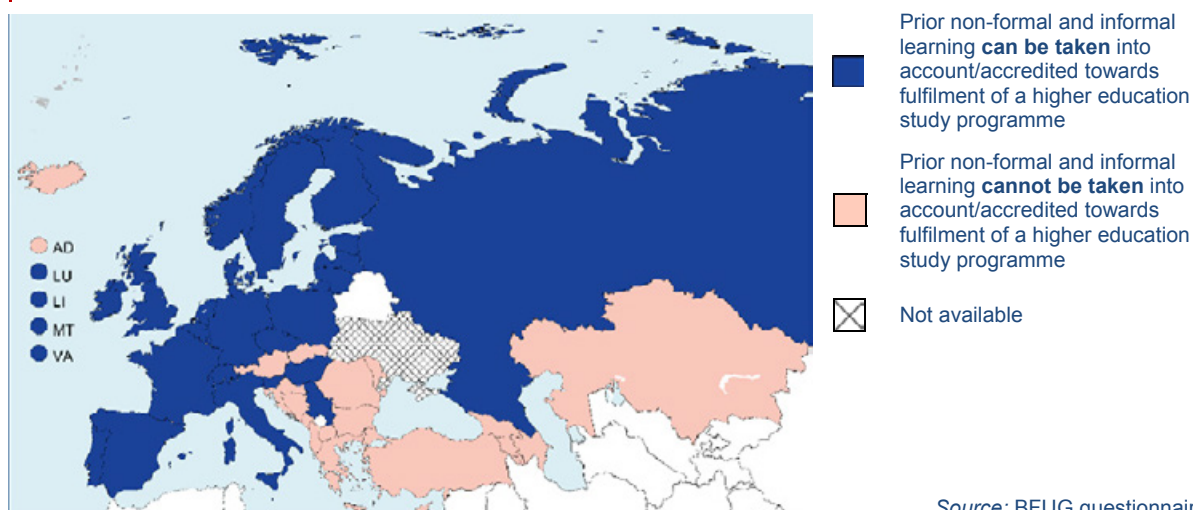
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<sup>(13)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, pp.1-2.

and informal learning. In 11 systems, admitting candidates without standard qualifications based on the recognition of prior learning is possible in all higher education institutions/ programmes. In eight of those systems (French Community of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden), access to recognition procedures is a legal right for candidates and all higher education institutions are obliged to provide relevant procedures. The final decision about recognising learning (to gain credit and/or exemption from qualifications) rests with higher education institutions. In 10 systems (with and without recognition procedures as legal right), steering documents however refer to one or more specific requirements, such as age (Ireland, Norway, Portugal) or duration of prior professional experience (French Community of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg).

More widely implemented than admission based on the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning is the possibility to take prior learning into account towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme. As Figure 4.12 shows, this possibility exists in 29 systems (18 of which also offer admission based on RPL). In about half of the 29 systems, it is a legal right for candidates to have their prior non-formal and informal learning recognised towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme and higher education institutions must provide relevant procedures. In the other half, higher education institutions can autonomously decide whether they will provide relevant procedures.

**Figure 4.12: Recognition of prior learning for progression in higher education studies, 2013/14**



In a number of systems, higher education candidates or students who would like to fulfil their higher education modules/programme through the recognition of non-formal and informal learning need to meet special requirements, mainly related to the duration of prior professional experience (in Denmark 2 years, in France, Luxembourg and Malta 3 years, and in the French Community of Belgium 5 years). In Portugal and Scotland it is up to higher education institutions to define the requirements that need to be met.

In the majority of cases (20), recognition of non-formal and informal learning can only lead to a limited number of credits. How this limit is defined, differs a lot. The lowest number / shares of credits that may be given on the basis of recognition of prior learning exist in Italy (up to 12 ECTS), Spain (up to 15 %) and Portugal (up to one third). In Germany and Switzerland up to 50 % of a study programme may be accredited on the basis of recognition of prior learning; in Hungary up to two-thirds and in Lithuania up to 75 %. In the French Community of Belgium and in Norway at least 60 credits need to be gained at the degree-awarding higher education institution. In Scotland and Sweden it is up to higher education institutions to decide how many credits they grant on the basis of recognition of prior learning (in Scotland it is generally up to 50 %).

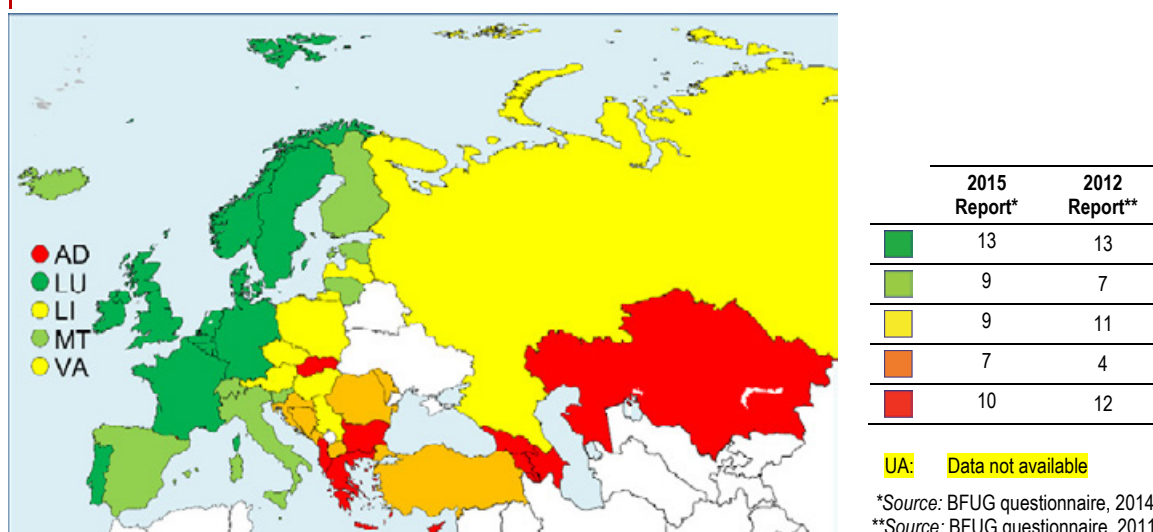


In nine systems (Flemish Community of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, UK-England/Northern Ireland/Wales), recognition of non-formal and informal learning can lead to a complete award of a higher education qualification. In most of those cases it is however more a theoretical possibility or still in the progress of being developed rather than a common practice. In Denmark it only applies to special education programmes for adults, not to regular study programmes. The only country with a well-established and commonly used practice to award full degrees based on the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning seems to be France. In 2012, 60 % of the cases of RPL concerned the award of full degrees (compared to 17 % in 2001), mainly master degrees and professionally-oriented “Licences” (first-cycle degrees). So with 4.016 RPL cases in total, this would be around 2.400 degrees.

In 19 systems, mainly in the South-East, prior non-formal and informal learning cannot be taken into account/accredited towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme. In two of those countries (Austria and Iceland), some higher education institutions or programmes are open to *admission* on the basis of recognition of prior learning. In the remaining 17 systems, recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning is not used at all, neither for admission to nor for progression in higher education. However, in a number of systems work has started to establish a policy, guidelines and/or procedures on the recognition of prior learning, as is also reflected in figure 4.13.

The scorecard indicator combines the results on the recognition of prior learning for both, admission to and progression in higher education. It examines if nationally established procedures, guidelines or policies exist on one or both forms of recognition of prior learning, and to what extent they are used in practice. [More detailed analysis to follow]

**Figure 4.13: Scorecard indicator n°?: Recognition of prior learning, 2013/14\***



### Scorecard categories

- There are nationally established procedures, guidelines or policy for assessment and recognition of prior learning as a basis for 1) access to higher education programmes, and 2) allocation of credits towards a qualification and/or exemption from some programme requirements, AND these procedures are demonstrably applied in practice.
- There are nationally established procedures, guidelines or policy for assessment and recognition of prior learning as a basis for 1) access to higher education programmes, and 2) allocation of credits towards a qualification and/or exemption from some programme requirements, BUT these procedures are not demonstrably applied in practice.  
 OR  
 There are nationally established procedures, guidelines or policy EITHER for 1) OR for 2) (see above), AND these procedures are demonstrably applied in practice.
- There are nationally established procedures, guidelines or policy EITHER for 1) OR for 2) (see above), BUT these procedures are not demonstrably applied in practice.  
 OR  
 There are no specific procedures/national guidelines or policy for assessment of prior learning, but procedures for recognition of prior learning are in

operation at some higher education institutions or study programmes.

- Implementation of recognition of prior learning is in a pilot phase at some higher education institutions  
**OR**  
Work at drawing up procedures/national guidelines or policy for recognition of prior learning has started.
- No procedures for recognition of prior learning are in place EITHER at the national OR at the institutional/programme level.

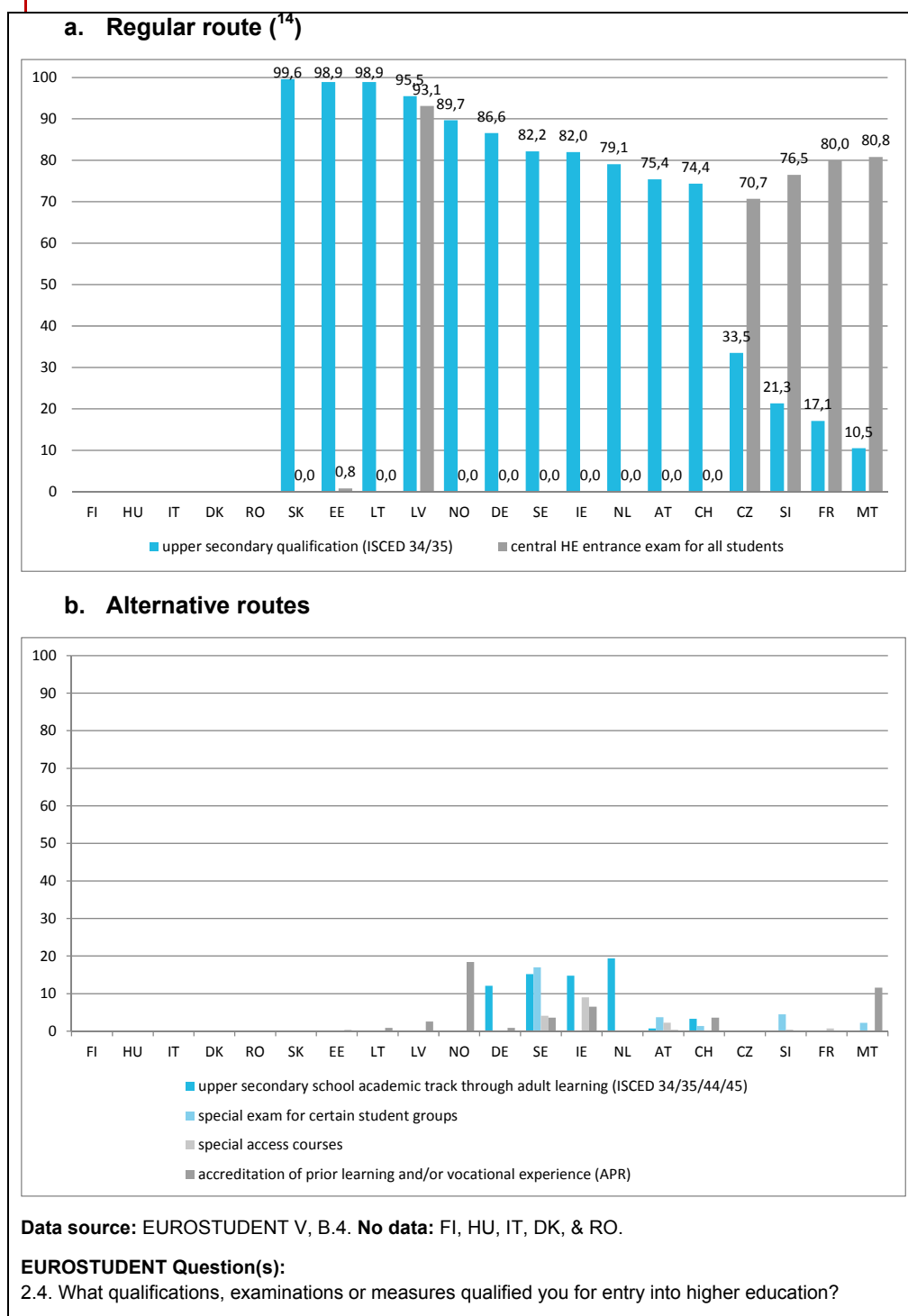
Other than might be expected, the responses to the BFUG questionnaire on this topic included hardly any references to national qualifications frameworks. Only five systems (France, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malta and UK-Scotland) explicitly referred to the respective national qualifications framework (NQF) as one of the steering documents on which recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning for the purposes of admission to and/or progression in higher education is based. Three more countries mentioned their NQF as part of their plans for the future: Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are planning to introduce a possibility to have prior non-formal and informal learning taken into account/accredited towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme in the context of their work on the national qualifications framework. In Croatia there are no explicit obstacles in the legislation for higher education institutions to take into account prior non-formal and informal learning in the admission process, but it is not an existing practice. Therefore, the need has been recognised to develop an appropriate legislative framework for the validation of non-formal and informal learning that is quality-assured and in line with the development of the national qualifications framework. No other countries referred to their national qualifications frameworks in the context of recognition of prior learning or widening access more generally, which is quite remarkable, given that one of the purposes of national qualifications frameworks is precisely to facilitate access to higher education by creating a variety of access routes.

### 4.3.3. Statistics and monitoring on alternative access routes and recognition of prior learning

As shown above, in 22 higher education systems there is at least one alternative route to higher education. In most cases, there is however no official data on how many candidates actually make use of those alternative routes to enter higher education. Where there is data, or where countries were able to provide at least estimates, it appears that usually only a (very) small proportion of students enter higher education through an alternative route – in the Flemish Community of Belgium, Finland, Austria and Switzerland 1 % or less; in Norway, the Netherlands, Germany, Andorra and France 1-3 %. Notable exceptions are Ireland and Malta, where more than 10 % of students use an alternative route to gain access to higher education.

As far as the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning is concerned, only half of the systems with the possibility of admission to higher education on the basis of recognition of prior learning could provide official data or estimates. In most cases, the proportion of students entering through this route tends to be less than 5 % (in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Finland less than 1 %, in the French Community of Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway 1-5 %). Only Denmark (6-10 %) and Malta (11-20 %) report higher shares. For Malta and Germany this is also confirmed by recent Eurostudent research (see figure 4.14).

**Figure 4.14: Share of students entering higher education through regular route / alternative routes, in %**  
**[incomplete, more data to follow]**



**Questions to be clarified concerning the Eurostudent figure (4.14.):**

- Does 4.14.b) include only responses of students who did not select any of the options shown in 4.14.a)? To what extent did students combine several of the answer options of 4.14b)?
- For Norway, students' responses to the Eurostudent questionnaire resulted in a much higher figure (18.4 %) than official data (1-5 %).
- According to Eurostudent data, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia have alternative routes, according to the BFUG reporting they don't (Latvia reported 100 % for route 1=secondary school leaving certificate)

<sup>(14)</sup> As in some countries it is necessary to have an upper secondary qualification and pass a central exam to get access to higher education, respondents could select more than one answer. Figure 4.14.a shows only two of the answer options; another regular route selected by a substantial number of students (at least in some countries) was 'foreign qualifications'.

- For Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania Eurostudent reports APR as alternative access route; according to the BFUG reporting, RPL can only be used for progression in, not for access to HE studies.
- For Sweden, Eurostudent mentions 17.4 % entering through a special exam for certain student groups. This probably refers to the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (route 4 of BFUG reporting, unfortunately no % given). This test is taken by adults (min. 25 years) who have not completed upper secondary education but have at least 4 years of work experience; but also by people who have completed upper secondary education and hope to get better grades.

As far as the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning as a means of progression in higher education studies (i.e. towards fulfilment of studies) is concerned, data availability is also limited.

Of the 30 systems, in which prior non-formal and informal learning can be taken into account/accredited towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme, only three could provide official data on the proportion of higher education institutions, which commonly make use of it - in Estonia and France more than 96 % of the institutions do so, in Lithuania 51-75 %. Another seven systems provided estimates, according to which in Finland more than 96 % of higher education institutions commonly use recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning for the purposes of progression in higher education studies; 26-50 % of institutions in the Flemish and the French Communities of Belgium as well as in Ireland, and 5-25 % of the institutions in Hungary, Serbia and Switzerland.

Official data on the number of students who participated in the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and were exempted from some or all higher education programme requirements also exist in only three systems. In the Flemish Community of Belgium, 137 students made use of this opportunity (academic year 2013/14); in Estonia 6.178 [during which period?] and in France 4.016 (2012). The French Community of Belgium estimated the number of students who were exempted from higher education programme requirements based on the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning to have risen from 185 in 2008 to 662 in 2012; Lithuania estimated the number to be between 300 and 500 per year; Serbia estimated a rate of around 1 %.

The vast majority of the systems, however, were not able to provide estimates, let alone official data, of the extent to which the opportunity to have prior non-formal and informal learning accredited towards fulfilment of a higher education programme is used in practice. This could be one of the issues to be flagged for future follow-up.

#### 4.3.4. Student services

When the Bergen Communiqué of 2005 first listed concrete measures related to the social dimension, one of the measures included with a view to widening access was to provide students, especially from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, with adequate counselling and guidance services <sup>(15)</sup>. Subsequent communiqués confirmed the importance of such services, most recently the Bucharest Communiqué with which ministers agreed to ‘step up [their] efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services, counselling and guidance’ <sup>(16)</sup>.

While higher education institutions may offer various types of student support services, the BFUG questionnaire focused on academic guidance services, career guidance services and psychological guidance services. In all higher education systems for which data is available (48), academic and/or career guidance services are commonly provided by higher education institutions; in 44 systems

<sup>(15)</sup> The European Higher Education Area - Achieving the Goals. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005.

<sup>(16)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, pp. 1-2.

higher education institutions offer both types of services, in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Slovakia only academic guidance; in Albania and Romania only career guidance. In two-thirds of the systems, higher education institutions provide psychological guidance services as well. Roughly half of the systems also report on additional services offered by higher education institutions, such as healthcare, catering and accommodation, services related to sports and culture, or internationalisation services. Several countries also refer to special services for students with disabilities. In some cases different types of services can be combined, for instance with career guidance for students with disabilities. Career guidance services targeting underrepresented groups of students are offered in 15 systems, as will be shown in more detail in chapter 6.

In all systems for which information is available, support services are not only offered to enrolled students but also to prospective students. In all 48 systems, prospective higher education students can receive professional advice about their further studies and careers. In Ireland and Poland advice is available to *some* prospective students, in all other countries it is available to *all* prospective students. In the vast majority of cases (41) those services are provided free of charge by both higher education institutions and upper secondary schools. In Norway and Portugal only by the latter; in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, the Holy See and Lithuania only by higher education institutions. In 30 systems this is complemented by external service providers that offer information, advice and guidance to prospective students, in 18 cases also free of charge, in 12 cases for a fee. In addition, a small number of systems also offer services targeting specific groups of prospective students that are expected to face particular obstacles (with disabilities, from lower socio-economic background, mature students or women in sciences). Even if services offered to prospective students are not necessarily targeting specific groups of prospective students, they can be highly relevant to underrepresented groups and contribute to widening access to higher education. The same applies to support for the transition of newly admitted students, which is particularly important for 'non-traditional students', as they are more likely to drop out of higher education than their peers.

Support provided to newly admitted students as well as career guidance services are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

## **4.4. Fees and financial support**

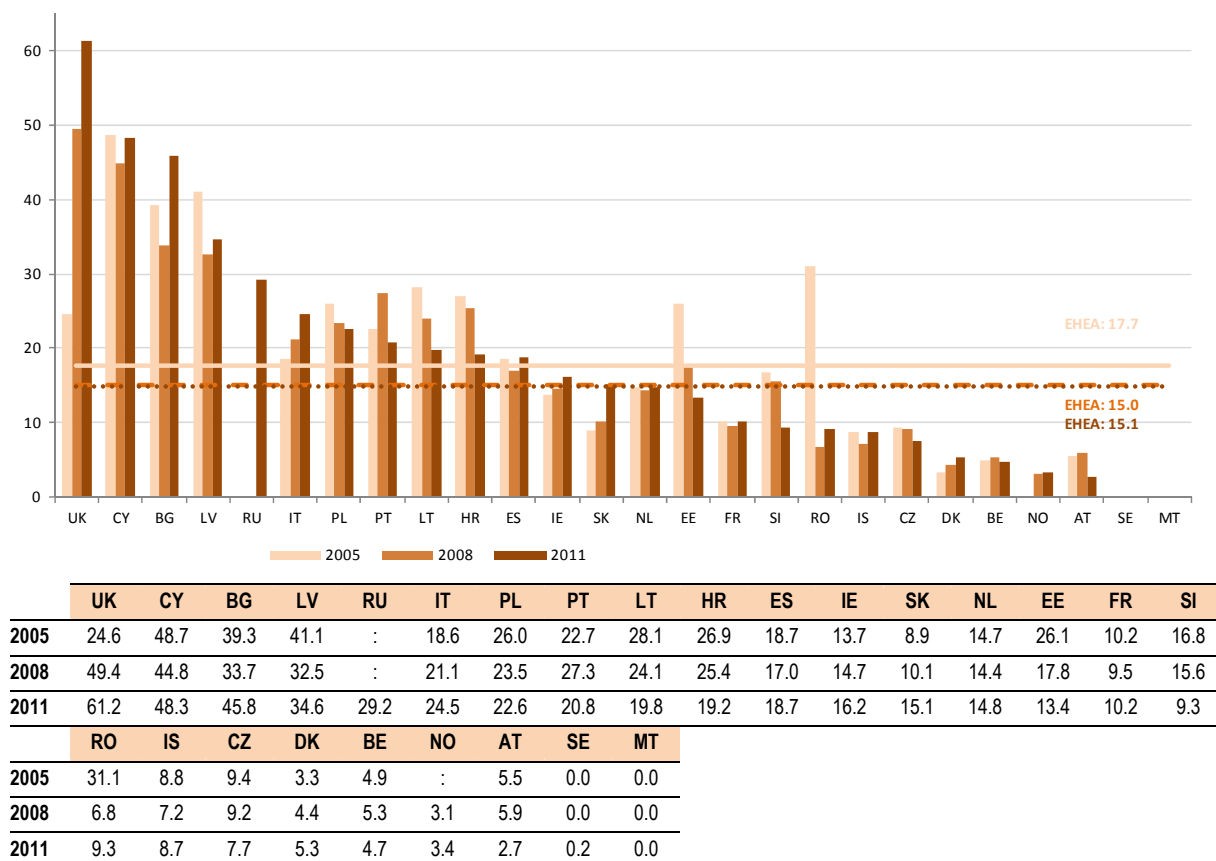
Comparing fee and support systems in higher education in the EHEA region is far from an easy task. From the student perspective, it is the interplay between fees and support that is important, as a student will perceive fees very differently according to the level of financial support that (s)he receives. There are many factors influencing the size of the student financial burden and the support for students. For fees, such factors include the criteria determining which students have to pay fees, the amount and range of fees (also relative to income levels in a given country), or the timing of fee payments (upon enrolment, throughout the studies or after graduation). For student support, similar factors play a role, including the criteria determining which students receive support, what forms of support are available for students and their families, and what kind of costs student support actually covers. All this needs to be taken into account in order to provide a full picture of students' financial reality in the EHEA. This section aims to highlight some aspects of this reality.

### **4.4.1. Student costs**

The (perceived) costs of higher education are likely to influence the decision of prospective students and their families whether to start studying at higher education level or not. The existence of fees is one criterion to consider; however, this information needs to be complemented by the amount of fees, the proportion of students paying fees and based on what criteria, and whether there is student support covering (at least parts) of such costs.

Figure 4.15 gives a broad overview picture of the costs of higher education: the financial contribution to higher education from household funding in 2005, 2008 and 2011. Changes registered in EHEA countries in this time period are related to three main factors. First, fluctuations in the household funding for higher education reflect changes in fee policies over the period covered. Second, the share of household funding changes also if funding for higher education from other sources (mainly from the public budget) increases or decreases. Finally, the share of household funding is also related to overall participation rates in higher education: the higher the number of students, the larger the share of household funding for higher education. Therefore, this indicator needs to be interpreted with caution.

**Figure 4.15: Share of total expenditure for higher education institutions from household funding, 2005, 2008, 2011**



**Notes:** Data are sorted by share of total expenditure for higher education institutions from household funding in 2011.

**Source:** Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

At the level of the EHEA, the situation in 2008 and 2011 was roughly similar, as increases of household funding in some countries are offset by decreases in others. The largest increase in the share of household funding was registered in the United Kingdom, where the share of total expenditure for higher education institutions from household funding doubled between 2005 and 2008, and increased by a further 24 % until 2011. However, tuition fees were relatively constant in this period, so these changes are indicative of a relative decrease in public funding for higher education.

The relative contribution of private households increased in other countries as well, although at a much lower level. Between 2008 and 2011, Slovakia saw an increase by 50 %, Romania by 37 % and Bulgaria by 36 %. However, in Romania, this increase was followed by a large decrease (by 80 %) of the share of household expenditure between 2005 and 2008, which is linked to a large decrease in

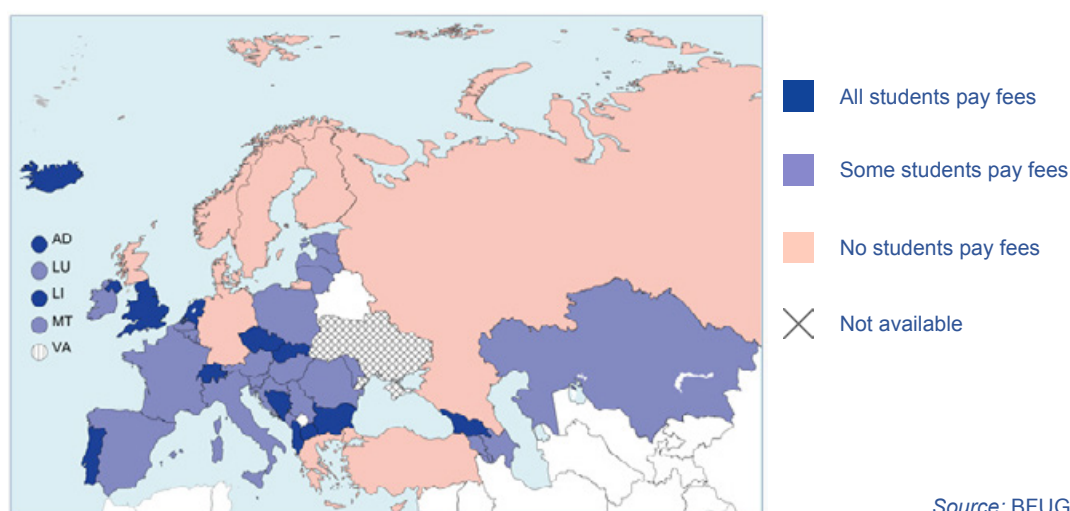


student numbers. In Slovakia, the increase in private funding took place in parallel to a decrease in student numbers (see Chapter 1).

Countries with the largest decrease in the share of household expenditure between 2008 and 2011 were Austria, which saw a decrease by more than 50 %, Slovenia (by 40 %), Estonia (by 25 %) and Croatia (by 24 %). [To investigate].

The largest contribution of household expenditure to higher education is in the form of fees. Figure 4.16 illustrates the prevalence of fees in EHEA countries in the first cycle. Fees are understood here as comprising all forms of administrative and other fees in addition to tuition fees. As the figure shows, in the majority of countries, at least some students are required to pay fees in public higher education institutions. In 14 education systems, all students have to pay fees, while no fees are charged to students in ten systems.

**Figure 4.16: Prevalence of fees in the first cycle, 2013/14**



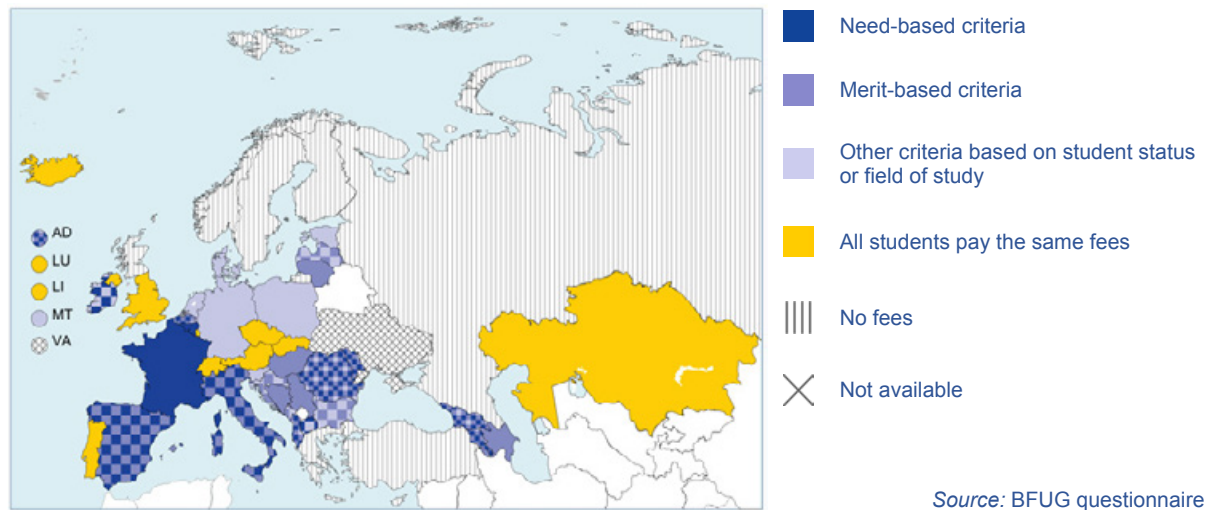
Source: BFUG questionnaire

Looking at the second cycle, the picture looks very similar. However, in Cyprus and Greece, while no students have to pay fees in the first cycle, some students have to do so in the second cycle. In the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), while all students have to pay fees in the first cycle, only some students are charged fees in the second cycle <sup>(17)</sup>.

Figure 4.17 depicts the criteria based on which countries determine which students have to pay fees or what amount. The two most common criteria are academic merit and student status (full-time students, part-time students or distant learners), followed by need-based criteria or criteria based on the field of study.

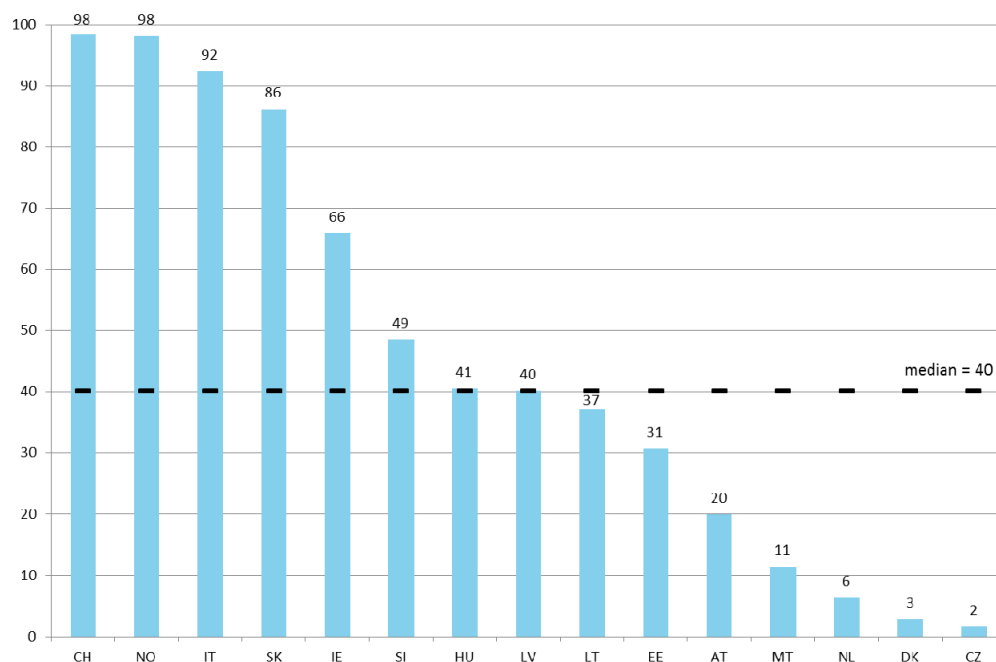
<sup>(17)</sup> Question to UK: for now we have followed the answers in the questionnaire, and we understand that institutions have the autonomy to determine fees in the second cycle. However, is it really correct that there are institutions which do not charge fees to master students?

**Figure 4.17: Criteria for determining fee-payers and the amount of fees they need to pay, 2013/14**



Eurostudent data are also available on the proportion of first cycle students paying fees, as well as on the fees charged for Bachelor and Master students not living with their parents (Figures 4.18, 4.19 and 4.20). [\[Analysis on Eurostudent data to follow\]](#).

**Figure 4.18: Percentage of Bachelor students who pay fees**

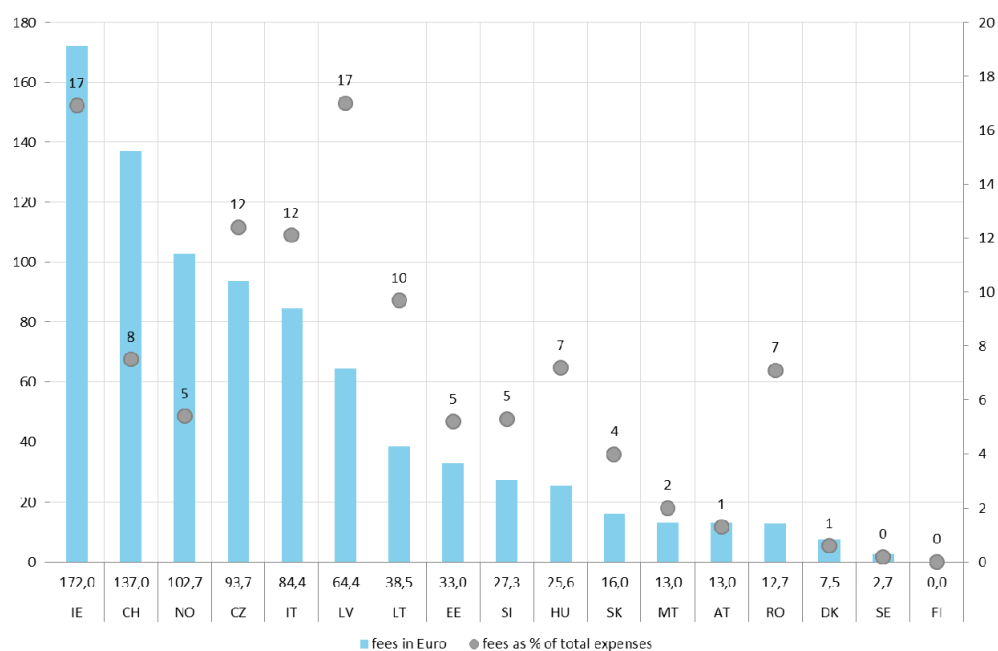


**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 3.7. What are your average expenses for the following items during the current semester?

No data is available for Germany, Finland, France and Romania. Too few cases for BA students who pay fees: Sweden.

**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, G.13.

**Figure 4.19: Monthly fees for Bachelor students not living with their parents, in euro and in % of total monthly expenses**

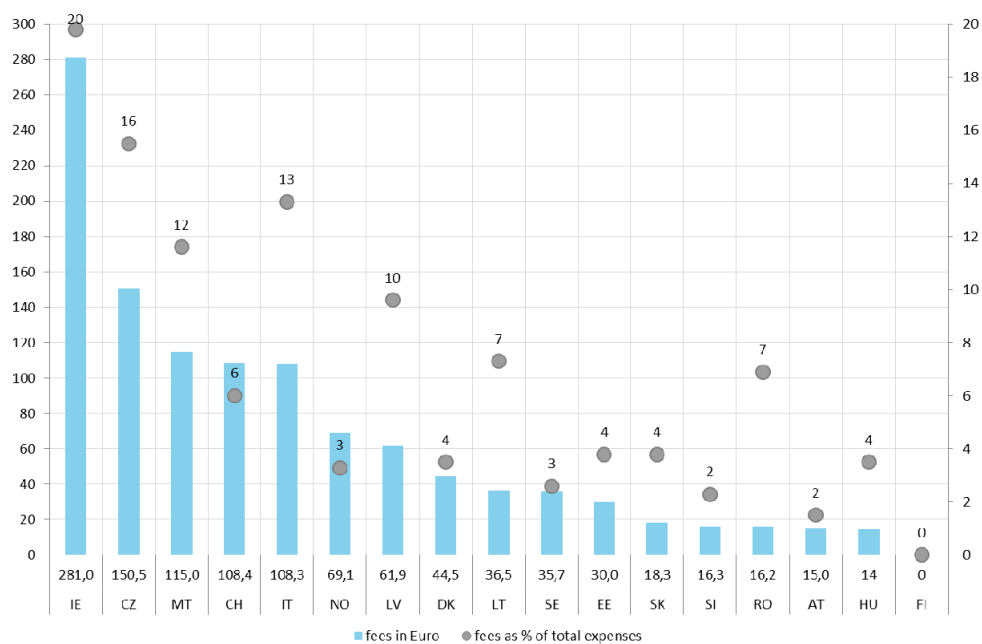


**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 3.7. What are your average expenses for the following items during the current semester?

No data is available for Germany, France and the Netherlands.

**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, F.2.

**Figure 4.20: Monthly fees for Master students not living with their parents, in euro and in % of total monthly expenses**



**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 3.7. What are your average expenses for the following items during the current semester?

No data is available for Germany, France and the Netherlands.

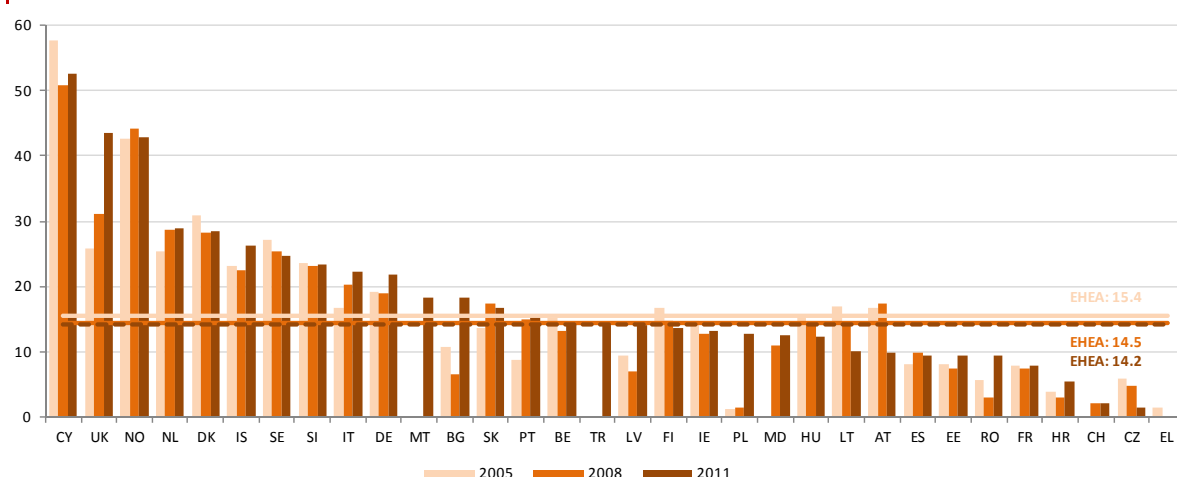
**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, F.2.

## 4.4.2. Student income and public support

Supporting students financially is an important measure to enable them to start and continue studying in higher education. Students from certain underrepresented groups may be especially affected by the level of student support. Financial assistance to students can take many forms: the most common form is public grants, but publicly subsidised loans, tax benefits to parents, family allowances or other forms of indirect support to students are also significant in a number of systems.

Figure 4.21 shows how student support has developed over recent years, indicating the share of public funding for higher education spent on financial support for students in 2005, 2008 and 2011. Again, this indicator needs to be interpreted with caution. First, different forms of student support might come from other sources in the public budget than the public expenditure on higher education. In addition, the mere sum of financial support does not take into account (indirect) student support in kind, such as dormitories or refectories supporting students by supplying affordable accommodation and meals. A second important caveat is that an increasing share of student support does not necessarily imply an increasing level of support; it can also be the result of a decrease in the total public expenditure on higher education.

**Figure 4.21: Support to students enrolled at tertiary education level as a percentage of public expenditure on tertiary education (2005 - 2008 - 2011)**



**Notes:** Data are sorted by support to students enrolled in tertiary education as a percentage of public expenditure on tertiary education in 2011.

**Source:** Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Similarly to the indicator on the share of household funding, the share of support to higher education students in public expenditure remained more or less constant within the EHEA between 2008 and 2011. However, significant changes occurred in some countries. The largest increase in the percentage of higher education public expenditure devoted to student support took place in Poland,

where the figure for 2011 is nearly 8.5 times higher than the one for 2008. [\[Link with public expenditure data\]](#).

In Romania and Bulgaria, the share of student support within public higher education expenditure nearly tripled between 2008 and 2011. As was shown above, the share of household expenditure for higher education also increased in this period in the two countries. In other words, households' increased contribution is offset by an increase in public student support. [\[Investigate if true; link with public expenditure data\]](#).

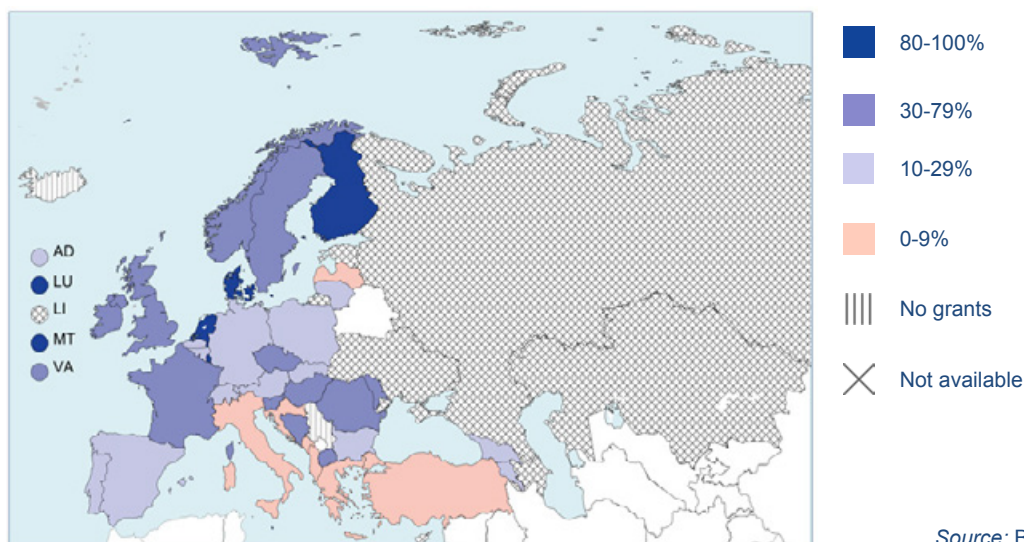
The largest decrease in the proportion of student support within public higher education expenditure took place in the Czech Republic, where this share dropped by 70 %. [\[Link with public expenditure data\]](#).

### Forms and coverage of student support

As was discussed above, for the current report, student support includes public grants, publicly subsidised loans, tax benefits for parents and family allowances. Among these different forms of student support, grants are generally considered as the most generous and direct form of public student support as, unlike loans, the funding provided does not need to be paid back, and unlike tax benefits or family allowances the payment is made directly to the student.

Students receive grants/scholarships in all EHEA countries except Iceland. Grants and scholarships are only available for first cycle students in Albania, Andorra and the United Kingdom, while in Serbia only second cycle students are eligible for receiving them. Figure 4.22 depicts the proportion of first cycle students receiving grants. Among the countries where data is available, 80 % or more students receive grants/scholarships in Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

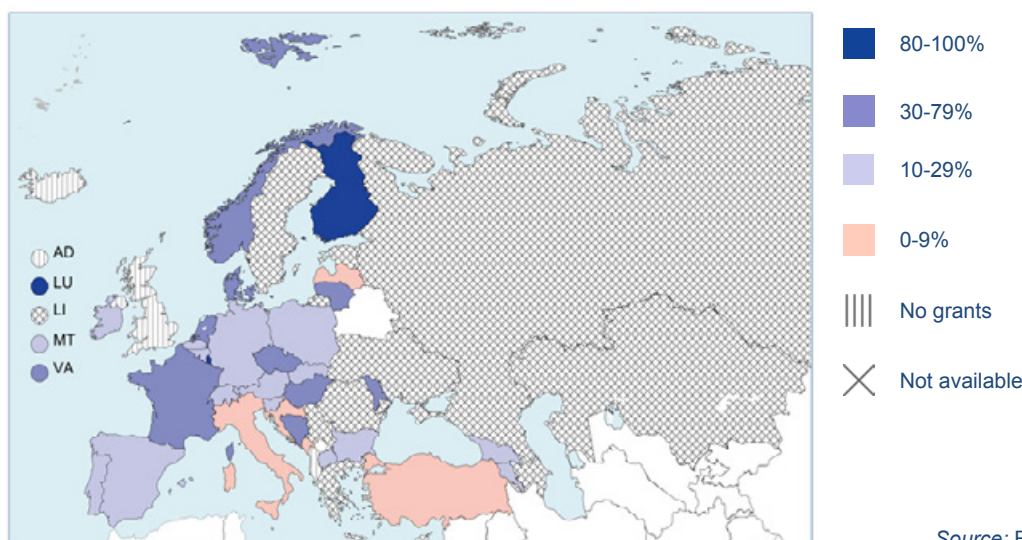
**Figure 4.22: Proportion of 1st cycle students receiving grants/scholarships, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

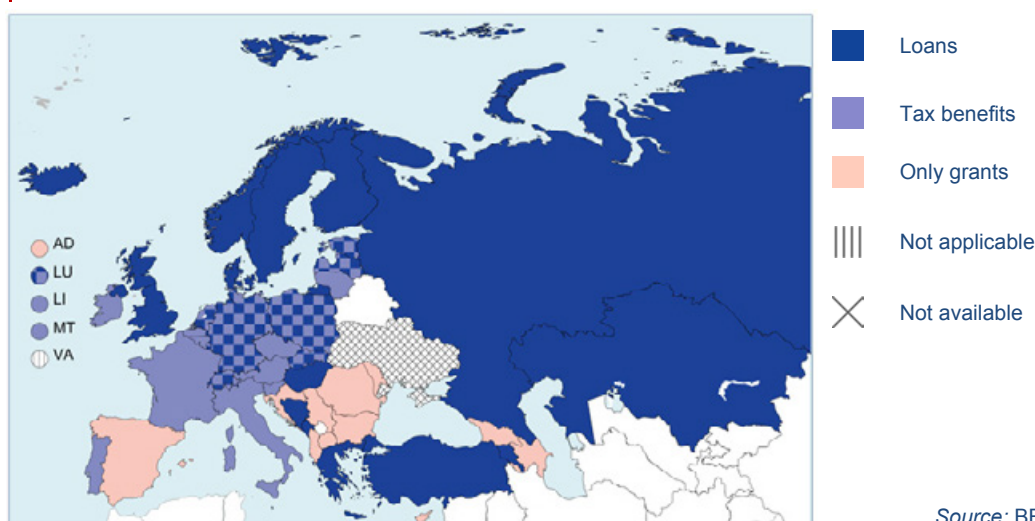
Regarding the second cycle (Figure 4.23), though data is less available, the proportion of students receiving grants is generally smaller than for the first cycle. The two countries where more than 80 % of students receive scholarships are Finland (90 %) and Luxembourg (100 %).

**Figure 4.23: Proportion of 2nd cycle students receiving grants/scholarships, 2013/14**



As Figure 4.24 shows, in 12 education systems, only grants are available for students. Loans exist in 23 education systems in the EHEA, most often in combination with grants (except in Iceland). Students' parents receive tax benefits in 20 education systems. All three forms of student support are available in Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia and Switzerland.

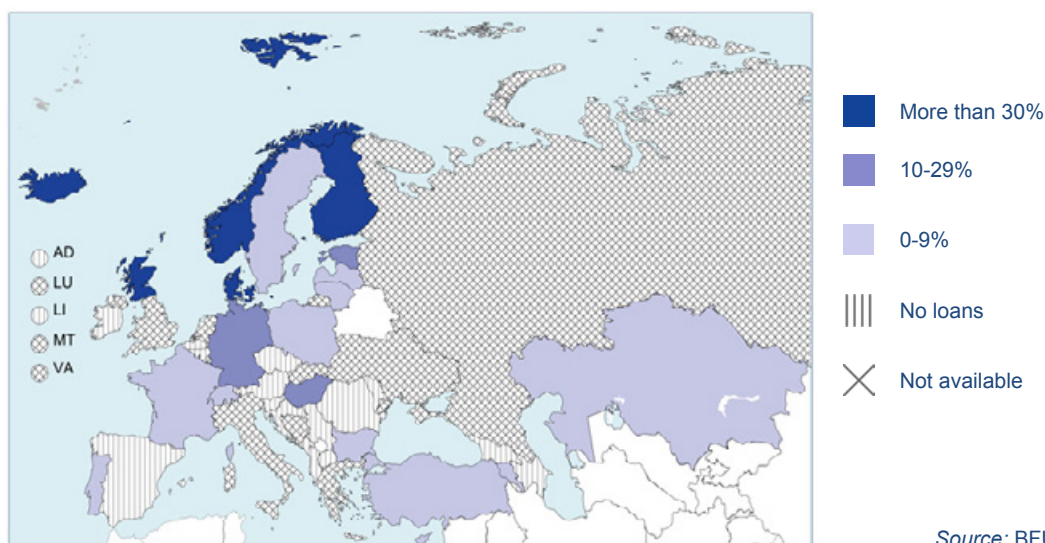
**Figure 4.24: Student support in the form of loans and tax benefits, 2013/14**



Information is limited regarding the proportion of students taking out loans (Figure 4.25). Among the countries where data are available, more than 30 % of students take out loans in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom (Scotland).

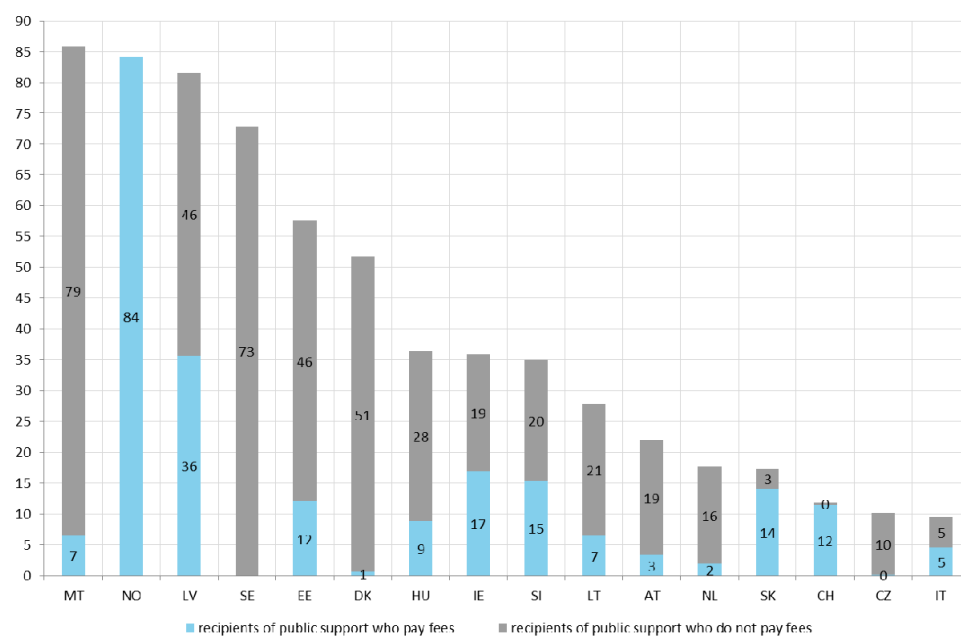


**Figure 4.25: Proportion of students taking out loans (both cycles combined), 2013/14**



Based on the Eurostudent survey, data are also available on the proportion of fee-payers among the recipients (Figure 4.26) and non-recipients (Figure 4.27) of public support. This is important to look at in order to see to what extent the payment of fees is offset by public support for students studying in the first cycle (Bachelor students). [\[Analysis on Eurostudent data to follow\]](#).

**Figure 4.26: Bachelor students who receive public support by (non-)payment of fees, %**

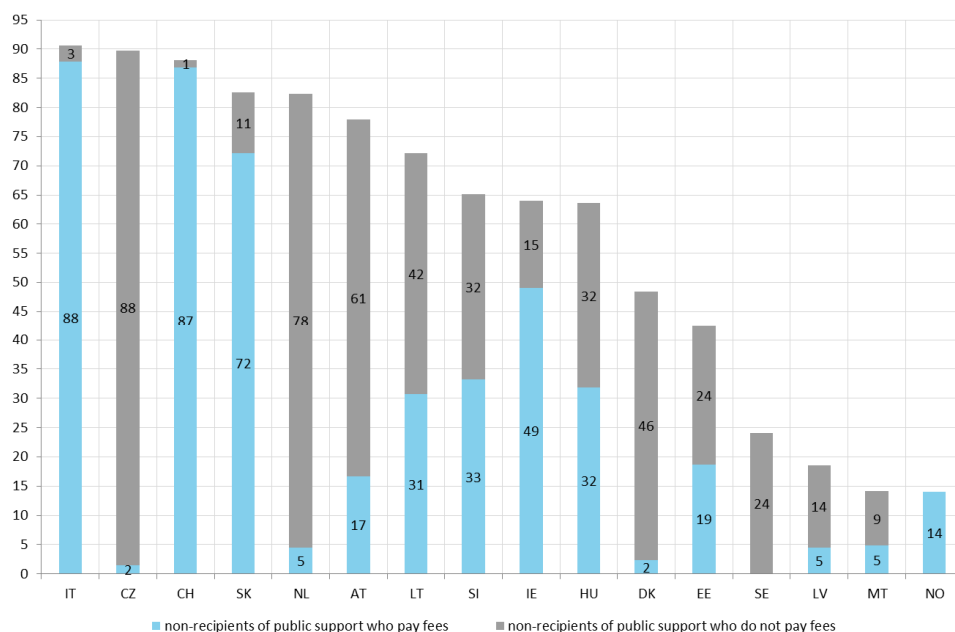


Notes: EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 3.7. What are your average expenses for the following items during the current semester?

No data is available for Finland, France, Germany and Romania. Too few cases for BA students who pay fees: SE. Too few cases for BA students who do not pay fees: NO.

Source: EUROSTUDENT V, G.13.

**Figure 4.27: Bachelor students who do not receive public support by (non-)payment of fees, %**



**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 3.7. What are your average expenses for the following items during the current semester?

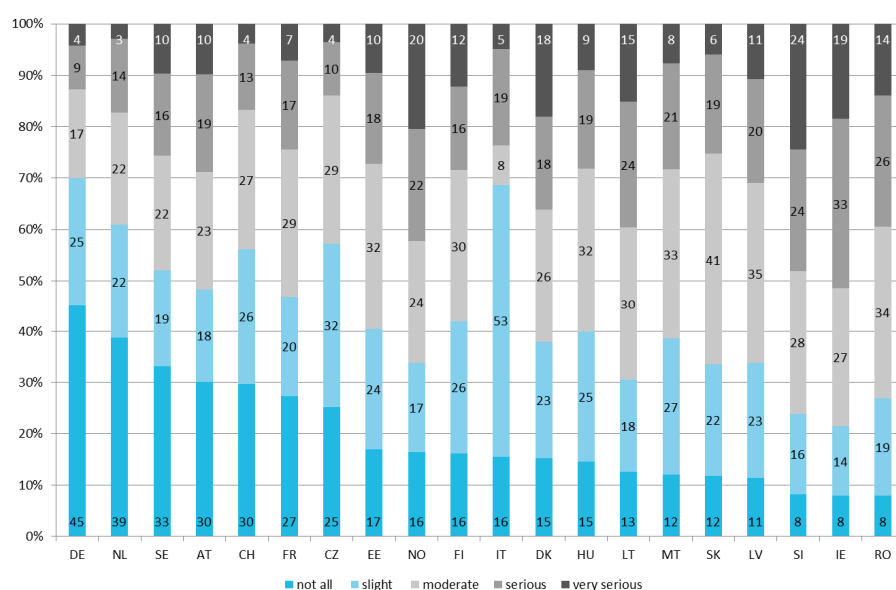
No data is available for Finland, France, Germany and Romania. Too few cases for BA students who pay fees: SE. Too few cases for BA students who do not pay fees: NO.

**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, G.13.

## Student perceptions on the sufficiency of funding

Students' assessment on their financial difficulties (Figures 4.28 and 4.29) also provides additional information on the adequacy of public support. [\[Analysis on Eurostudent data to follow\]](#).

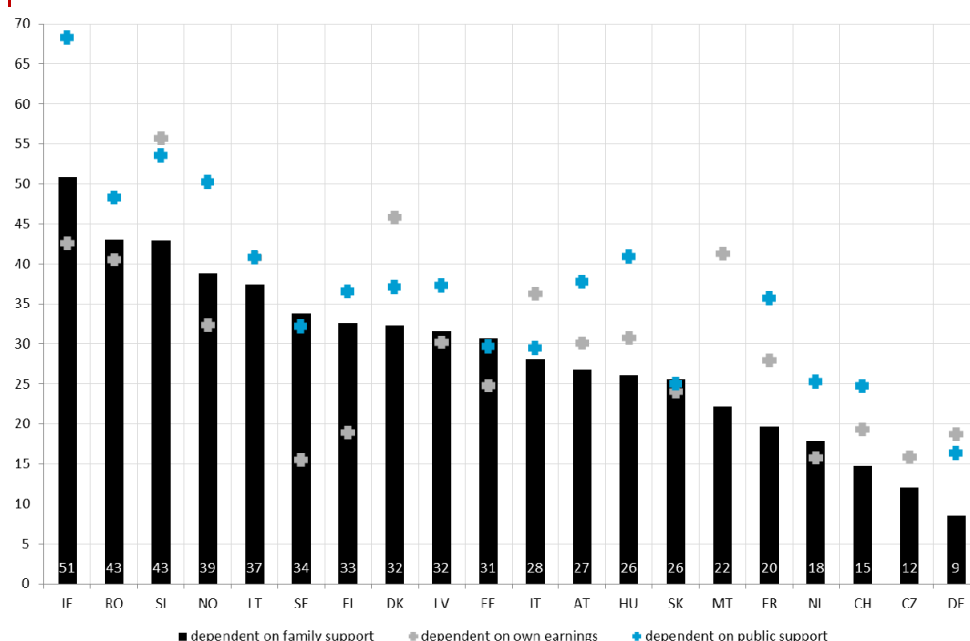
**Figure 4.28: Students' assessment of the extent of current financial difficulties, %**



**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): To what extent are you currently experiencing financial difficulties?

**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, F.6.

**Figure 4.29: Students' assessment of the extent of current financial difficulties by finance-related characteristics of students not living with parents, % of students with (very) serious difficulties**



**Notes:** EUROSTUDENT Question(s): To what extent are you currently experiencing financial difficulties?

No data for students dependent on public support: MT. Too few cases for students dependent on public support: CZ

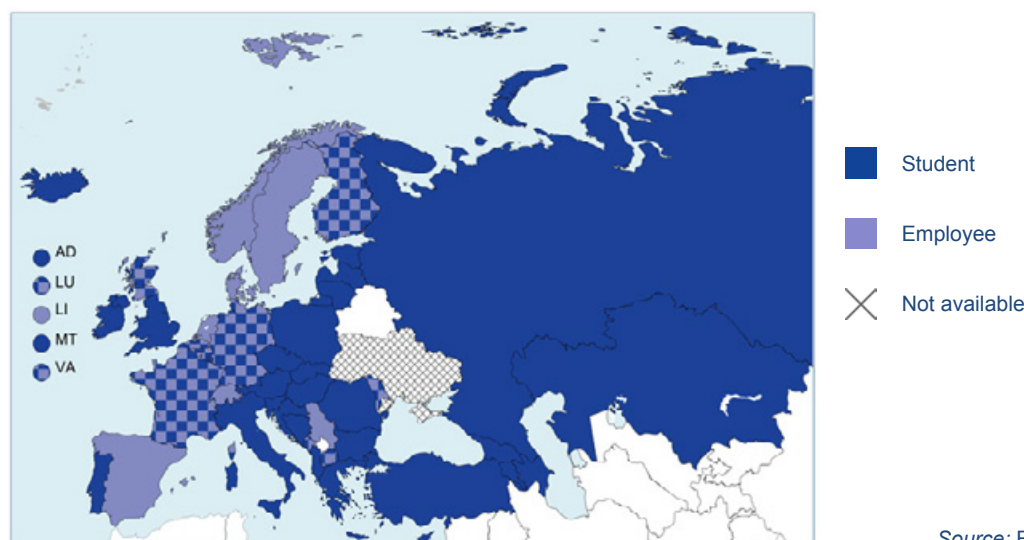
**Source:** EUROSTUDENT V, F.9.

## Fees and financial support in the third cycle

Third cycle students are often required to pay different amounts of fees than first and second cycle students. In some education systems, these fees are higher than for the first two cycles (e.g. in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, France and Latvia), but more often, doctoral students pay less than Bachelor or Master students (e.g. in Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Romania, Sweden and Switzerland). The same fee levels are reported to exist for all the three cycles in Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and Russia.

Financial support for doctoral candidates depends partly on the status that they have in their institutions. As Figure 4.30 shows, in the large majority of countries, doctoral candidates have a student status. In eight education systems they have an employment contract – most often with the higher education institutions, but in some cases with other organisations – and in eleven others the two statuses coexist.

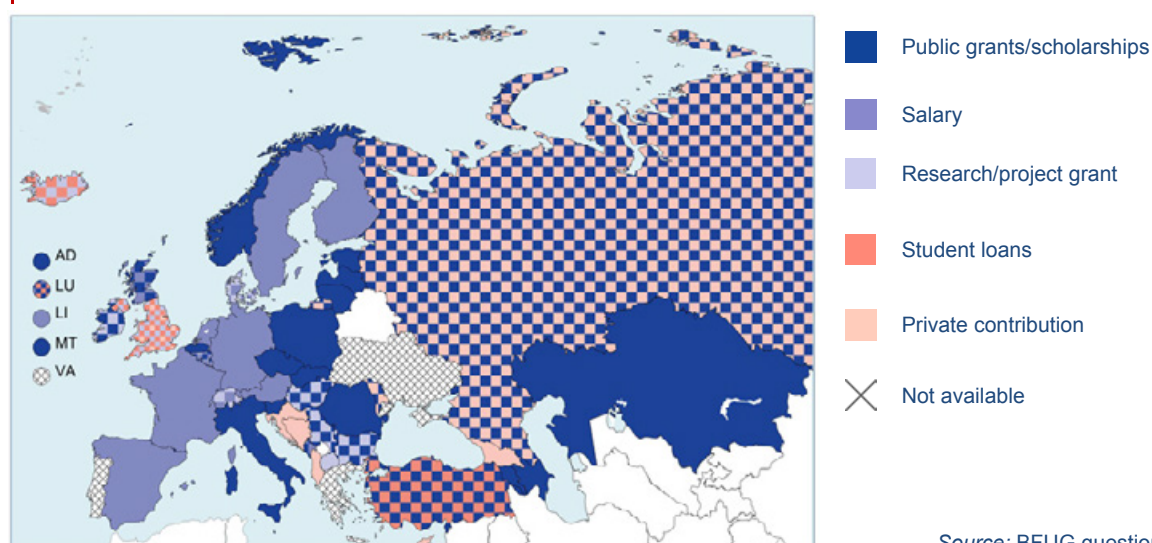
**Figure 4.30: Status of doctoral candidates, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Examining the main sources of funding for doctoral candidates highlights very diverse realities within the EHEA (Figure 4.31). Public grants and scholarships are available for third cycle (PhD) students in the majority of education systems under a variety of conditions, partly linked to status. When doctoral students receive public grants or scholarships, these are usually the same as or higher than those received by first and second cycle students (higher scholarships for doctoral candidates exist e.g. in Germany, Hungary, Latvia or Turkey). Doctoral candidates receive a salary as employees in 14 education systems. They also often benefit from project-based research grants (in ten education systems). Students' (or their employers') contributions constitute their main source of funding in eight education systems. Student loans are among the main sources of funding in Iceland, Luxembourg, Turkey and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

**Figure 4.31: Main sources of funding for doctoral candidates, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Conclusions

[To be drafted.]

## 5. LIFELONG LEARNING

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### The Bucharest Communiqué

The Bucharest Communiqué stated that *"Lifelong learning is one of the important factors in meeting the needs of a changing labour market, and higher education institutions play a central role in transferring knowledge and strengthening regional development, including by the continuous development of competences and reinforcement of knowledge alliances."*

In relation to this acknowledgement of the importance of lifelong learning, the ministers asked for more targeted data collection and referencing against common indicators including **lifelong learning**, and indicated their willingness to enhance **lifelong learning** provision in the development of educational programmes.

The 2012 report showed that cross-country differences in the understanding of lifelong learning in higher education are difficult to capture. Where definitions of lifelong learning exist, they are often very broad in character, which does not allow a full understanding of how lifelong learning in higher education is viewed and which activities fall under the concept. Nevertheless, according to the 2012 report, in most EHEA countries lifelong learning had become a recognised mission of all higher education institutions.

With regard to distinct elements of lifelong learning in higher education, the 2012 report showed that most EHEA countries recognise the need to enhance flexible delivery of higher education programmes and they address this issue through various policy actions. Around two-thirds of countries had established an official student status other than the status of a full-time student.

Data on the participation of students in part-time studies indicated that mature students are those who are the most likely to study part-time. Flexible delivery of higher education programmes and lifelong learning therefore appear as two interlinked thematic areas. The analysis also shows that cross-country comparisons related to alternative modes of study should be carried out with caution, taking into account conceptual complexity in this field.

### Chapter outline

Based on policy priorities identified within the above-mentioned documents, this chapter aims to examine key aspects of lifelong learning in the higher education sector. It first looks at how different countries understand and interpret the concept of lifelong learning in higher education. It then examines developments in lifelong learning becoming a recognised mission of higher education institutions as well as financial arrangements in place to promote lifelong learning provision. A substantial part of the chapter is dedicated to the theme of flexible modes of delivery of higher education programmes, with a specific focus on part-time higher education studies. Taking into account the information provided in all sections of the chapter, the final part looks at how successful different higher education systems are in attracting non-traditional learners to participate in formal higher education programmes.

The reader should be aware that other chapters of the report also provide information closely related to the theme of lifelong learning in higher education. Therefore, the content of this chapter should be complemented with information provided in other parts of the report, in particular in Chapter 4 on the social dimension in higher education and Chapter 6 on higher education outcomes and employability.



## 5.1. National understanding of the concept of lifelong learning

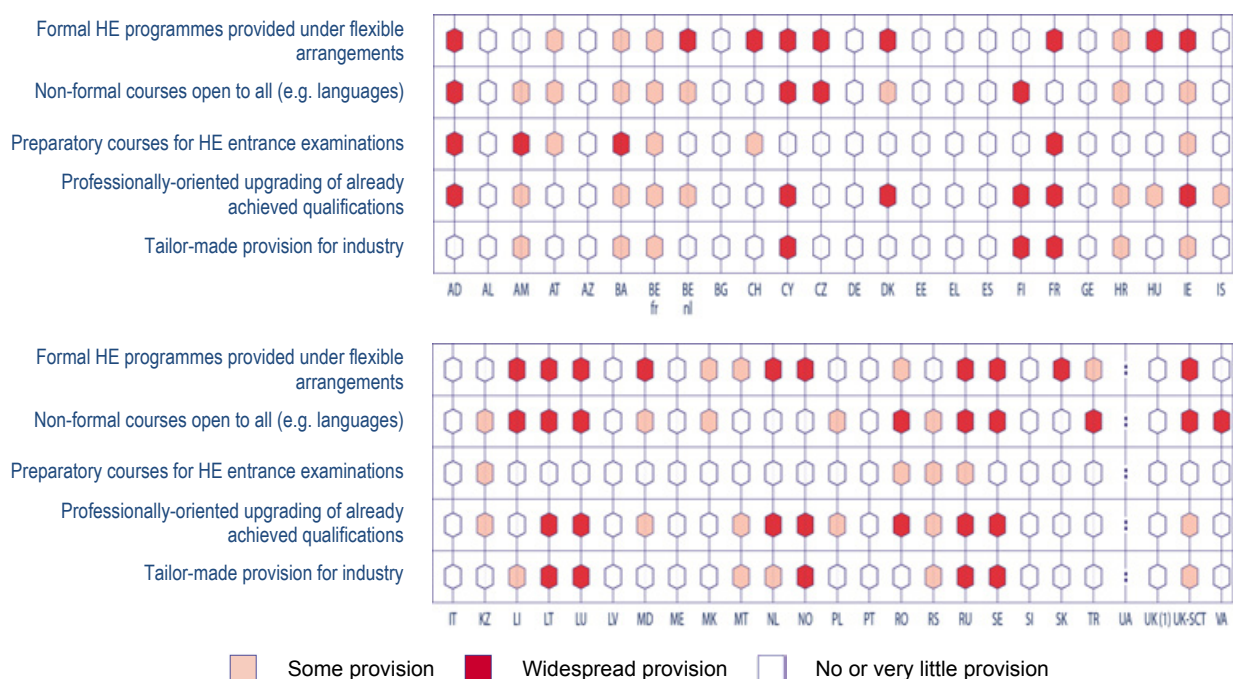
Higher education institutions play a central role in the provision of lifelong learning. This topic has been on the Bologna Process agenda from the very beginning, although often considered as a secondary consideration in relation to other objectives. Nevertheless higher education ministers have underlined the necessity to enhance the development of flexible learning pathways, to create opportunities for the recognition of prior learning, to establish national qualifications frameworks and to build closer cooperation between higher education institutions and various external partners, including employers.

The European Universities' Charter on Lifelong Learning recognises that "the terminology of lifelong learning embraces many concepts [...] and is subject to considerable local, regional and national interpretation" (EUA, 2008). This calls for the investigation of how different EHEA countries understand and interpret the concept of lifelong learning within their respective higher education systems.

The results of the Bologna follow-up group (BFUG) reporting exercise in 2012 showed that while in the majority of EHEA countries steering documents related to higher education refer to lifelong learning, they do not necessarily provide a definition of this term. Most definitions are still broad in the new reporting exercise, referring again to learning 'from cradle to grave' or to all learning activities undertaken by individuals throughout their lives, be they formal, non-formal or informal. However, in addition to the general definitions, there are some examples of focusing lifelong learning on upgrading vocational skills (Estonia, Serbia) and on meeting the needs of labour market and economy (Bulgaria and Serbia). In the Netherlands, the emphasis of lifelong learning is for adults who have entered labour-market after initial education, while the Czech Republic includes older citizens as a key target group.

In order to respond to the needs of non-traditional learners, higher education institutions may perceive a need to develop programmes to cater for their needs. The types of higher education programme that were reported to address the needs of this target group are most commonly formal higher education programmes. Such programmes are very well established in about one third of the countries (see Figure 5.1). Non-formal programmes, which include a focus on activities such as language learning and courses for updating professional skills were almost as common. Preparatory courses for entry into higher education were not very common, with only a few countries reporting well established provision (in over 75% of institutions) in this area. In the group of "little or no provision" countries that responded that the share of provision is impossible to estimate are also included.

**Figure 5.1 Types of Lifelong Learning provision as share of Higher Education Institutions by country, 2013/14**



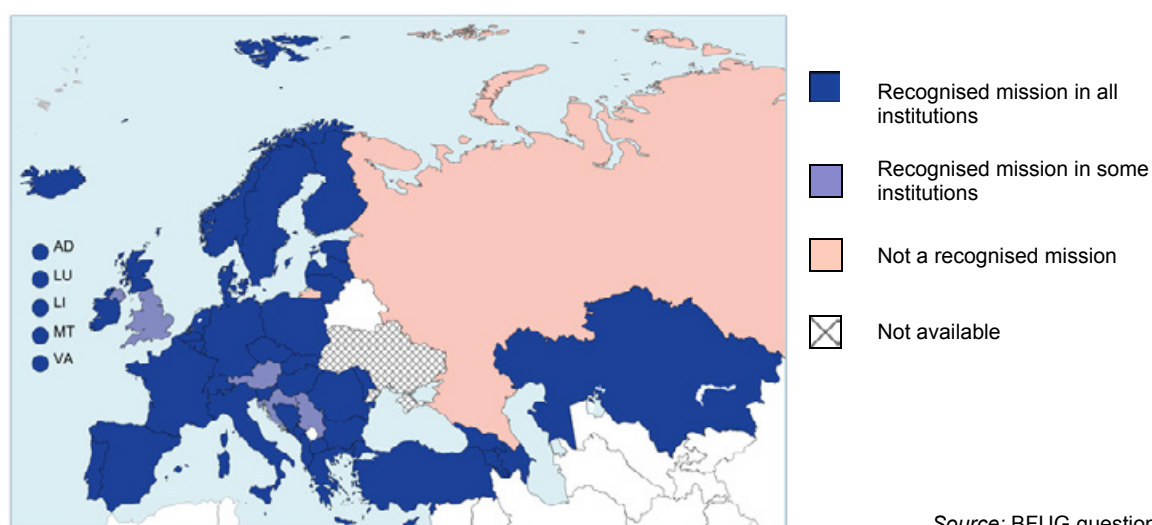
Source: BFUG questionnaire.

UK (!) = UK-ENG/WLS/NIR

## 5.2. Lifelong learning as a recognised mission of higher education institutions

The central position of lifelong learning in policy debates is reflected by the fact that in more than three-quarters of EHEA countries, lifelong learning is a recognised mission of all higher education institutions. The role of lifelong learning appears to be gaining ground, as a number of countries claim that lifelong learning has now become a recognised mission in all institutions where it was previously recognised only in some institutions (Armenia, Cyprus, Georgia, Moldova and Poland). Only Austria, Croatia, Serbia and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) now state that it is a mission for only some institutions, while Russia is the only country where lifelong learning is not a recognised mission in any higher education institutions (see Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Lifelong learning as a recognised mission of higher education institutions, 2013/14**



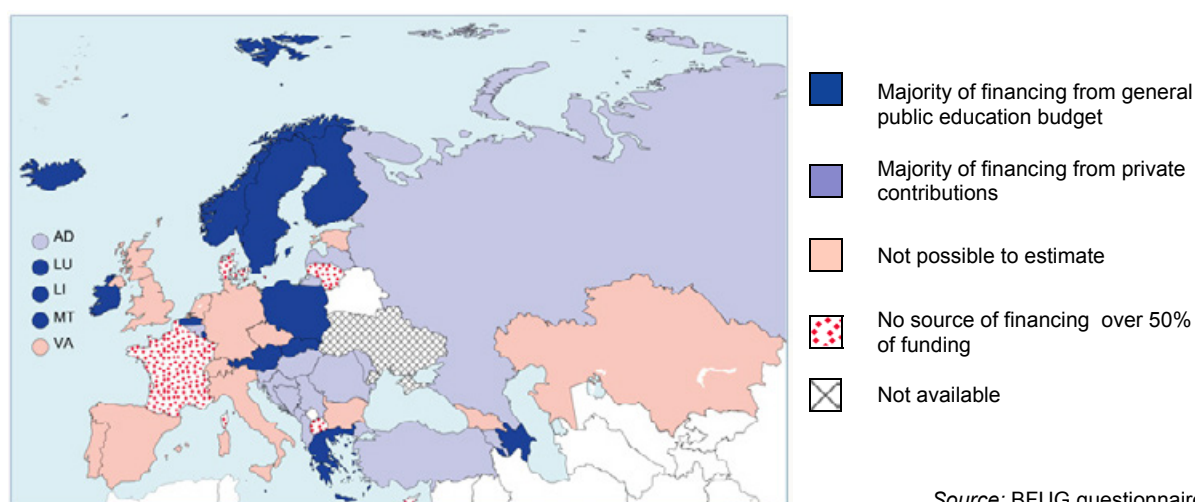
Source: BFUG questionnaire

The majority of EHEA countries do not identify any legal restrictions that could prevent higher education institutions from offering lifelong learning provision or services. Ten countries refer to legal constraints related to different segments of lifelong learning in higher education. For example, in Belgium (French Community), as part of continuous training programmes, it is possible to obtain a certificate or credits, but not an academic degree. In Denmark, university colleges and academies for professional higher education are only allowed to offer adult education and training covering short cycle and first cycle, but not covering second cycle.

### 5.3. Financing lifelong learning

The financing of lifelong learning is a difficult issue to cover as there are few shared conceptions of lifelong learning that can lead to clarity of comparative information regarding funding. However, many countries have been able to provide data on the funding sources for lifelong Learning, allowing more detailed analysis than in the 2012 report (see figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3: Sources of financing for Lifelong Learning, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

In 40 out of 49 of higher education systems, higher education institutions do not have a public budget earmarked specifically for lifelong learning. Only eight countries have a specifically ear-marked budget for lifelong learning provision. This means that public resources for lifelong learning come mostly from general public budgets, and are often combined with other financial resources, such as private contributions from students or businesses.

As Figure 5.3 shows, in 14 countries, the general education budget contributes the majority of funds to lifelong learning. Students' contributions form over half of Lifelong learning funding in 15 countries (Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Belgium (French Community), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey).

Private contributions from businesses do not comprise the majority of funding in any system, but they form at least 20% of lifelong learning funding in 11 systems (Albania, Andorra, Belgium (Flemish Community), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Denmark, France, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Italy, Lithuania, Russia and Serbia, being the highest in France (44%). Countries with at least 90% of funding coming from the two sources of students' contributions and contributions from businesses were Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Slovenia and Turkey.

## **5.4. Promoting flexible delivery of higher education programmes**

Flexibility in higher education refers to different ways of enabling individuals to follow educational paths adapted to their needs. This section focuses on one aspect of flexibility in higher education, namely flexible modes of delivery of higher education programmes. The issue of part-time student status, a central instrument in flexible provision, and its implications are dealt with in the sections that follow. Recognition of prior learning in both access and progression in higher education, which central to flexibility of study paths, is dealt with in chapter 4.

### **5.4.1. Policy approaches targeting flexible delivery of higher education programmes**

Even though the majority of countries cited a policy focus for delivering higher education programmes flexibly, only some countries reported that this was stated explicitly in policy documents. For example, in Ireland, the National Strategy for Higher Education (2011) recognises that the future delivery of higher education in Ireland must be characterised by flexibility, and the higher education institutions must accommodate and serve the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. In Austria, National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2020 states that the higher education institutions' self-understanding includes the use of group-appropriate teaching and learning methods and making programmes more flexible to allow working students to participate in other ways than daytime classes, for example. In the Czech Republic, the Higher Education Act 111/98 stipulates that on-site studies and distance studies (or a combination of them) have equal validity, and students are entitled to the same rights and benefits.

Distance, or e-learning, was the single most common approach to flexible course provision. Contrary to a common trend restricting the time allowed for completing degree studies, in Luxembourg, the flexibility of studies has been enhanced by abolishing the legal limit for the maximum study time for completing the degree. In Italy and Georgia, there have been measures that enable students to stop

their studies for a certain period, without them losing their student status, thus making the continuation of studies after breaks easier.

## **5.4.2. Studying in higher education with a formal status other than the status of a full-time student**

The concept of a full time student status is clear and understandable across the European Higher Education Area. However, to understand the reality of other kinds of student is more complicated than it may initially appear. This is because terms such as "part-time" for example, mean very different things in different countries – sometimes referring strictly to a notion of time related to teaching/learning hours, and sometimes related to funding arrangements. Rather than trying to analyse national definitions of all the different types of students in a system, this report attempts to identify whether or not there are other kinds of student status in systems.

The situation regarding student status remains very similar across Europe compared to the previous reporting exercise. Alongside the status of a full-time student, the majority of countries formally still recognise at least one additional student status. Figure 5.4 provides a picture of the situation across the EHEA. It shows that out of 49 higher education systems for which data is available, in around two-thirds there is an official student status other than the status of a full-time student, and this usually indicates some concept of "part-time" student.

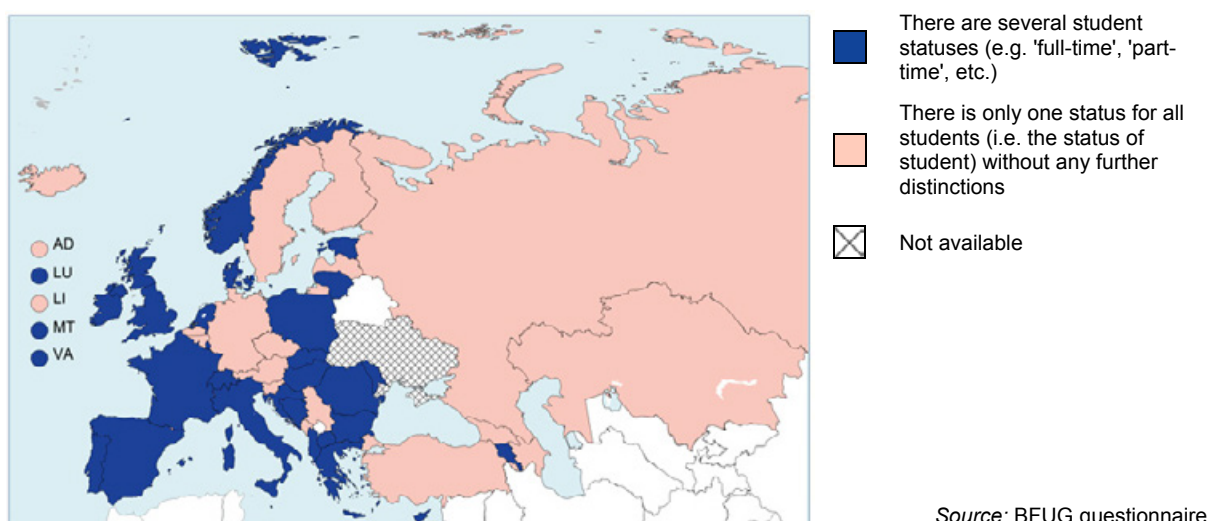
The way in which part-time studies are most commonly defined includes the number of credits, the time allowed for completing studies, hours devoted to studying. In some countries the definition included a combination of these factors.

For example, in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Estonia, Ireland and the United Kingdom (Scotland), part-time student is defined mainly in terms of a smaller number of credits they need to achieve within the same timeframe as full-time students. On the other hand, for example in Albania, Cyprus, Malta, Poland and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)), part-time studies are defined in terms of needing to achieve the same number of credits as a full-time student, but within a longer timeframe. These two definitions both emphasise what a part-time student needs to achieve within a given timeframe.

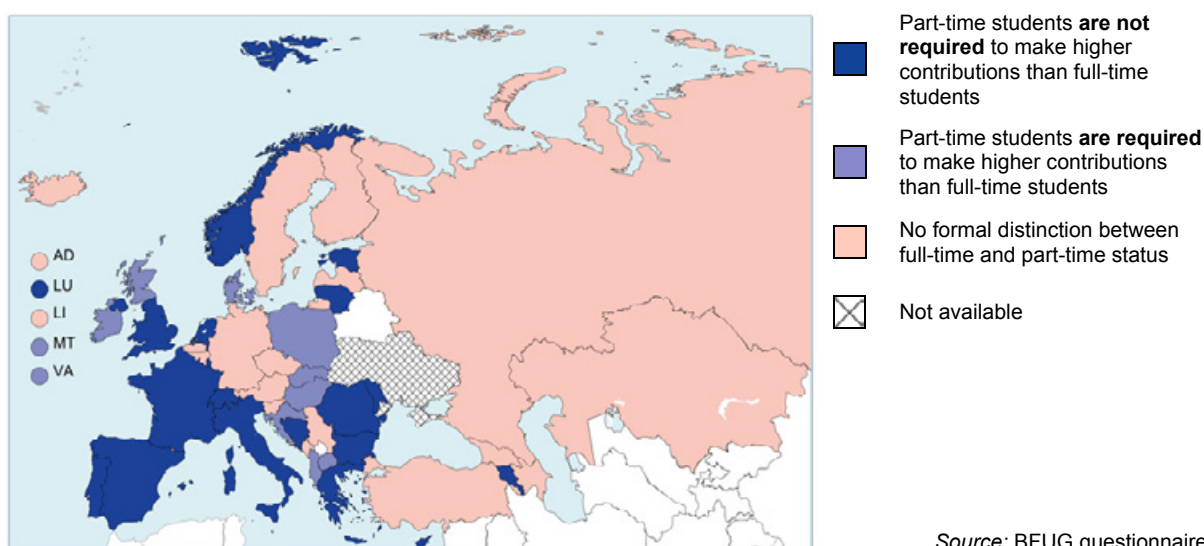
In Greece and Slovakia part-time studies are defined in terms of expected hours of study per week. In Greece, part-time students are expected to study at least 20 hours per week, according to law. In Slovakia, the required hours are defined as study hours per academic year, 750 to 1440 hours for part-time student, as opposed to 1500 to 1800 for full-time student. In Hungary and Moldova, part-time students are defined in terms of contact hours, as between 30 to 50% of those of full-time students, and as about 40% of those of full-time students (Moldova).



**Figure 5.4: Existence of a formal student status other than the status of a full-time student, 2013/14**



**Figure 5.5: Impact of formal student status on financial arrangements related to higher education studies, 2013/14**

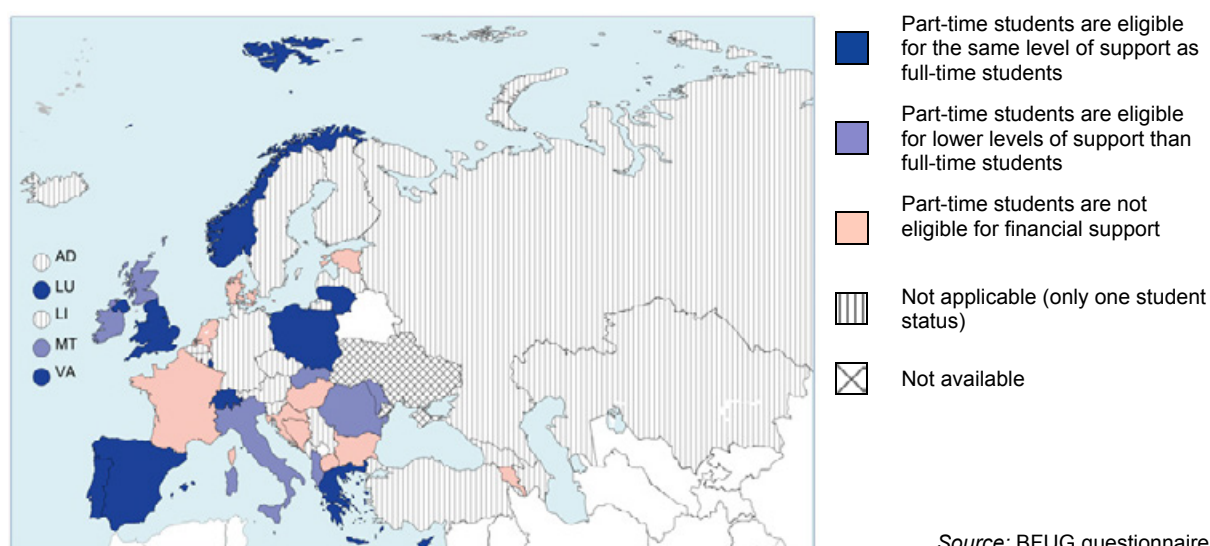


In eight systems (Albania, Croatia, Denmark, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, and Malta), part-time studies are likely to be related to higher private financial investment than full-time studies. For example, in Denmark there are no fees for full-time students, but part-time students are required to contribute financially to their studies, while in Hungary the fees are almost the same as for a full-time programme. In the majority of countries, part-time students are not required to pay higher financial contributions.

The picture regarding the amount of support part-time students receive for the same amount of credits compared to full-time students is also varied. In 11 countries, part-time students are eligible for the same amount of support as full-time students, in eight countries they receive lower support, while in 10 countries they are not eligible for support.



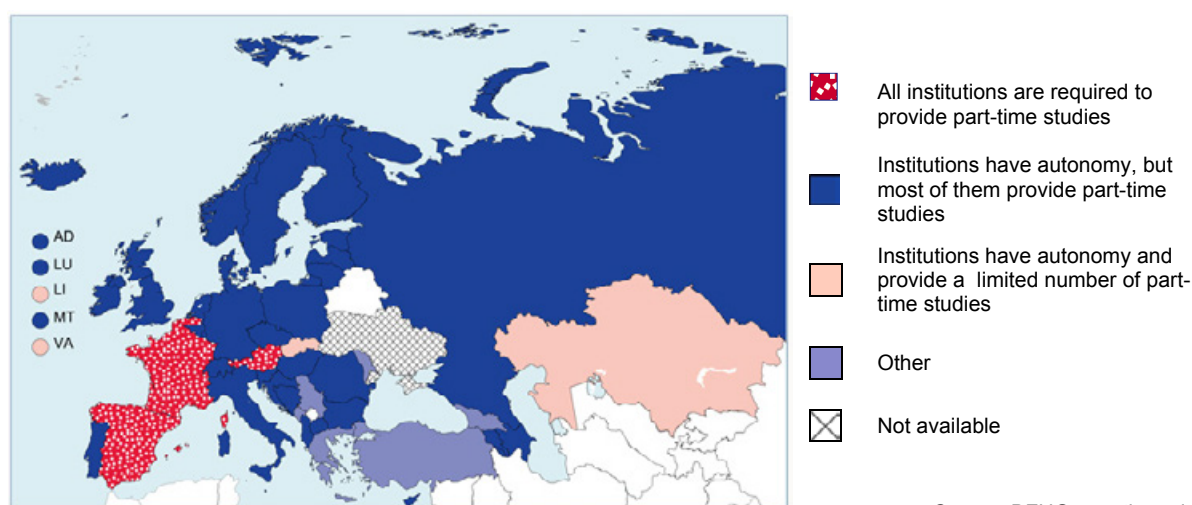
**Figure 5.6. Impact of student status on eligibility of financial support for students**



### 5.4.3. Provision of part-time studies by higher education institutions

In the majority of EHEA countries, higher education institutions have autonomy to decide whether they will offer studies other than full-time (see Figure 5.7). The situation has remained mostly stable since 2012, but some countries report changes in their provision of part-time studies. For example, Germany, Iceland and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) report that while the institutions still have autonomy, most of their higher education institutions now provide part-time studies, compared to only a limited number previously. Conversely, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kazakhstan and Lithuania, now only a limited number of institutions provide part-time studies. In Slovakia, there no longer is requirement for the provision of part-time studies, and now only a limited number of institutions provide part-time studies, while in Estonia, as a result of institutional autonomy, most institutions still provide part-time studies even though there is no requirement to do so.

**Figure 5.7: Provision of part-time studies by higher education institutions, 2013/14**

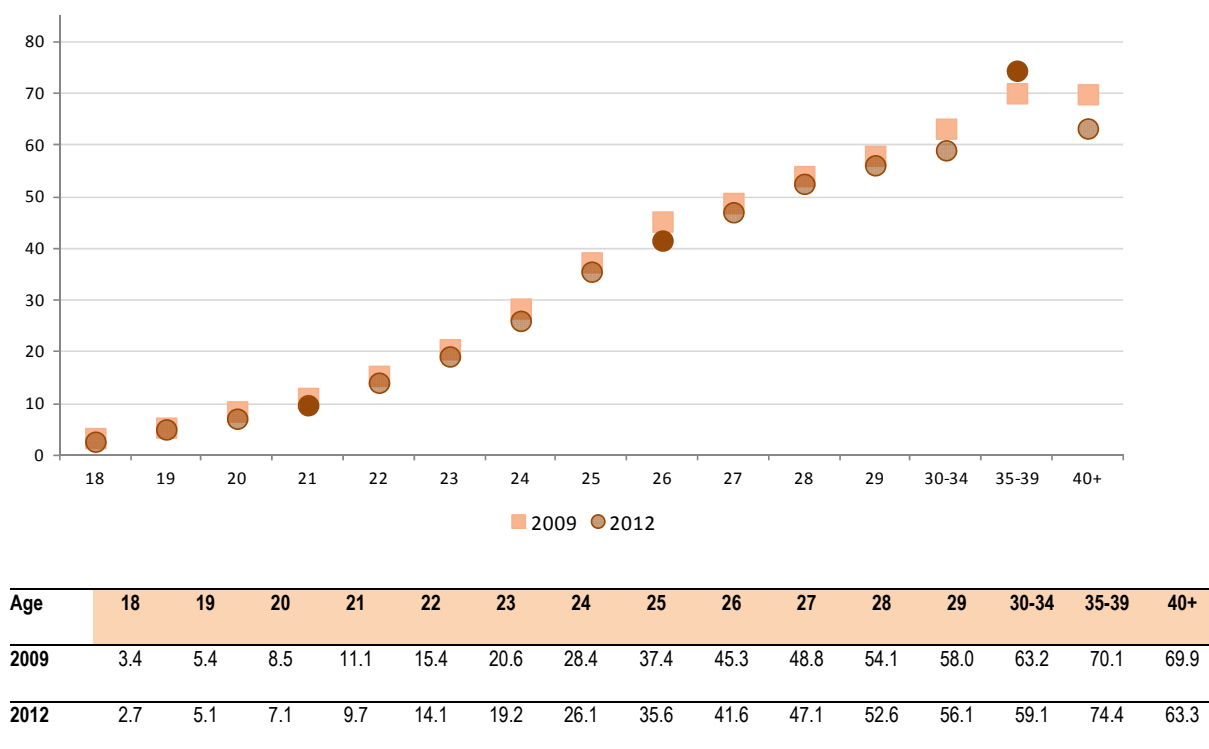


## 5.4.4. Statistical data on student participation in part-time studies

While the preceding section have been primarily devoted to different policy approaches to lifelong learning across the EHEA, the present section intends to assess how successful the higher education systems are in responding to the needs of lifelong learners. Although there is no perfect measure that would fully cover this area, available data on the participation of mature students (Eurostat) and delayed transition of students (Eurostudent) can be used as a proxy to evaluate the degree to which different higher education systems have already established a culture of lifelong learning.

Figure 5.8 presents the median of country percentage for student studying part-time in tertiary education by single age, providing a snapshot of the proportion of the student population by age studying part-time. This indicator is limited by the fact that countries may have different definition of part-time studies from the UOE definition.

**Figure 5.8: Median of country percentages for students studying part-time in tertiary education, by age, 2011/12**



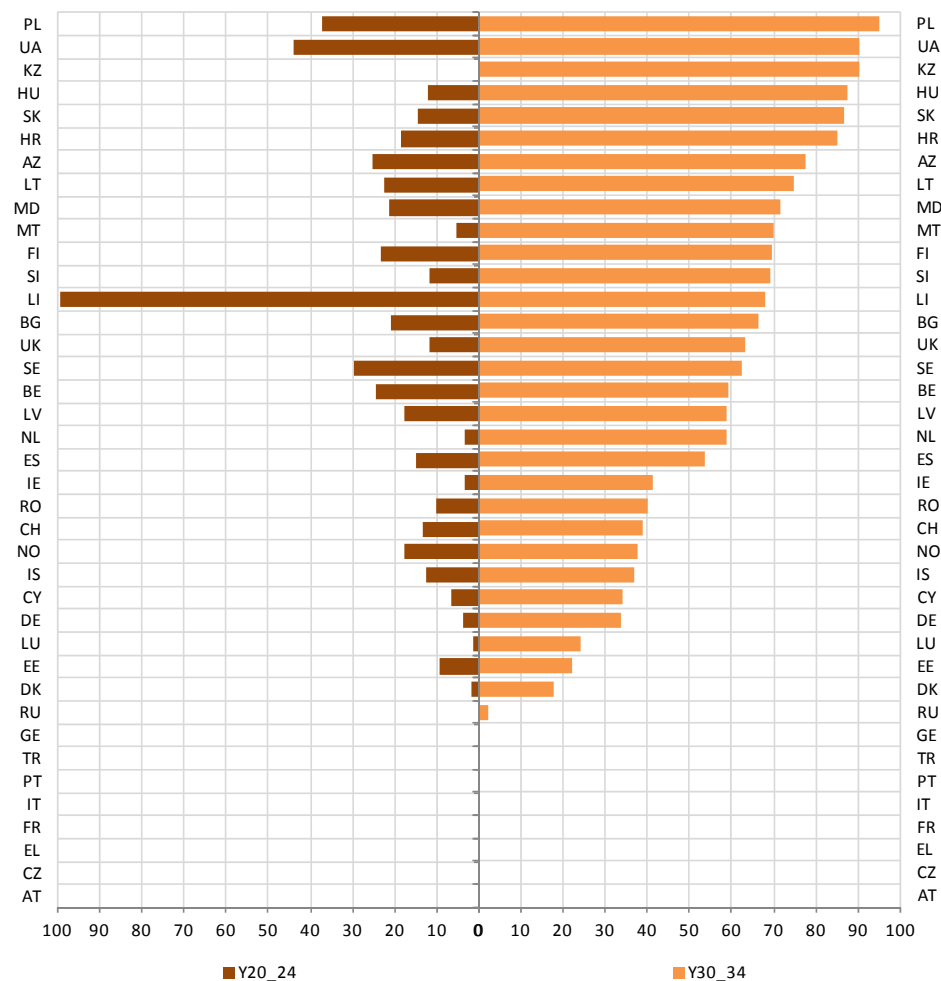
Notes: Moldova: data only cover ISCED level 5. [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Figure 5.8 clearly indicates that part-time studying is influenced by the age of the students. Older students are much more likely to study part-time than their younger peers. In half of the EHEA countries for which data is available, the percentage of part time students is lower than 20 % until the age of 23. For students in their late 20's, the majority of students are part-timers in half of the EHEA countries for which data is available. Part time tertiary studies become the most common way of studying for the adults aged 30 and more: in half countries, part-time students account for almost 60 % or more of all students of these ages enrolled in tertiary education.

Figure 5.9 provides information on the situation of each EHEA country for which data is available, showing the percentage of part-time students among students of two specific age groups 20 to 24 and 30 to 34.

**Figure 5.9: Percentage of students studying part-time in tertiary education, by country and by age, 2011/12**



Notes: **Moldova: data only cover ISCED level 5.** [To be included].

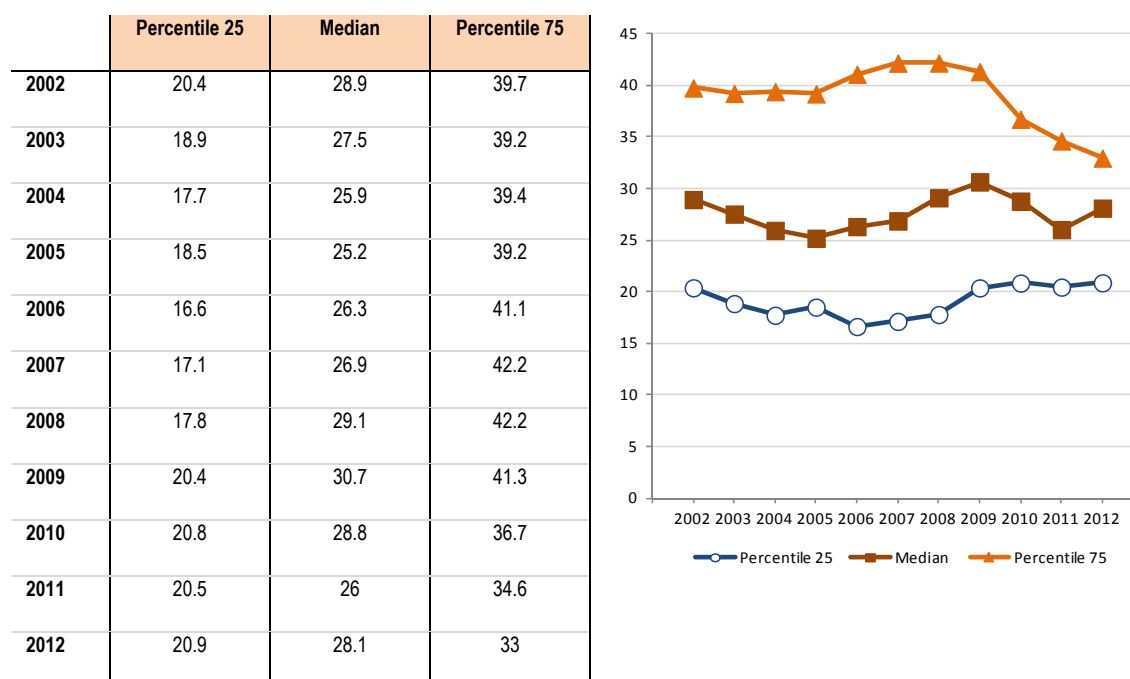
Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

In all countries, the older the students are, the more likely they are to study part-time. Part-time students among the 30-34-year-olds represent from 18 % (Denmark) to 95 % (Poland) of the total student population of this age group. In half of the EHEA countries, part-time students make the major part of older students and, in some countries (Poland, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Hungary; Slovakia and Croatia) even more than 80 % of higher education students aged 30-34. In some EHEA countries, a significant number of students in the younger age group studies part-time. Indeed, in several EHEA countries, more than one fifth of students in the younger age group are part-timers. This is for instance the case in Ukraine (43.9 %), Poland (37.2 %), Sweden (29.7 %) and Azerbaijan (25.3 %), but also in Belgium, Finland, Lithuania, Moldova and Bulgaria.

In all EHEA countries for which data is available, the share of part-timers in the older age group students is more than twice as much as in the younger age group. This picture is most pronounced in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Malta, Ireland and Denmark where the share of part-timers in the older age group is ten times higher than among their younger peers. In some countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Greece, France, Italy, Portugal, Turkey and Georgia), the percentage of part-time students is null in these age groups.

Figure 5.10 shows trend data covering all age categories. In half of the EHEA countries for which data is available, more than 28.1 % of all tertiary students are part-time students (academic year 2011/2012). Between 2008/2009 and 2010/2011, the number of part-time students declined, but rose again for the academic year 2011/2012. Such decline is also observed when considering the top fourth of the distribution of the EHEA countries for which data is available. In 2008/2009, part-time students accounted for more than 41 % in one fourth of the EHEA countries and then fall down to 33 % in 2011/2012.

**Figure 5.10: Median, percentile 25 and percentile 75 of the percentage of students studying part-time in tertiary education, by year, 2002-2012**

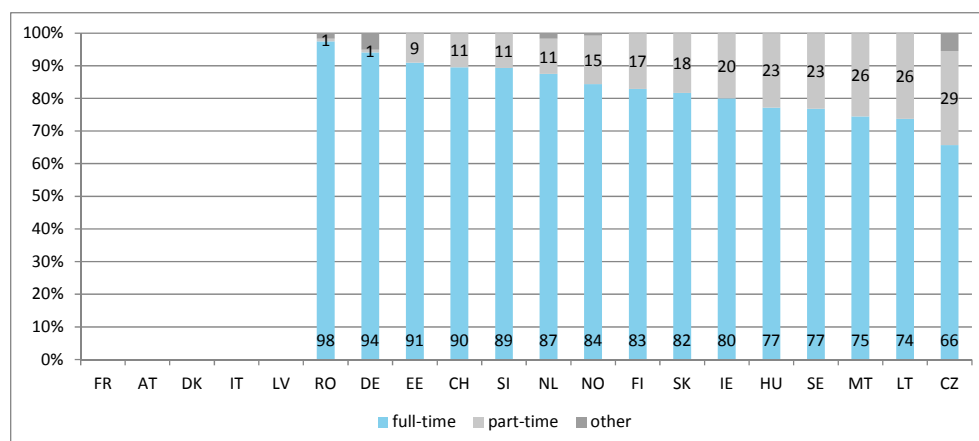


Notes: Percentiles and Median have been computed on available data for each year. Thus the geographical coverage varies according to the reference years.

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Eurostudent research also enables the evaluation of the relationship between the formal student status and the number of hours students spend during a typical week on study-related activities, i.e. taught courses and personal study (Figure 5.11).

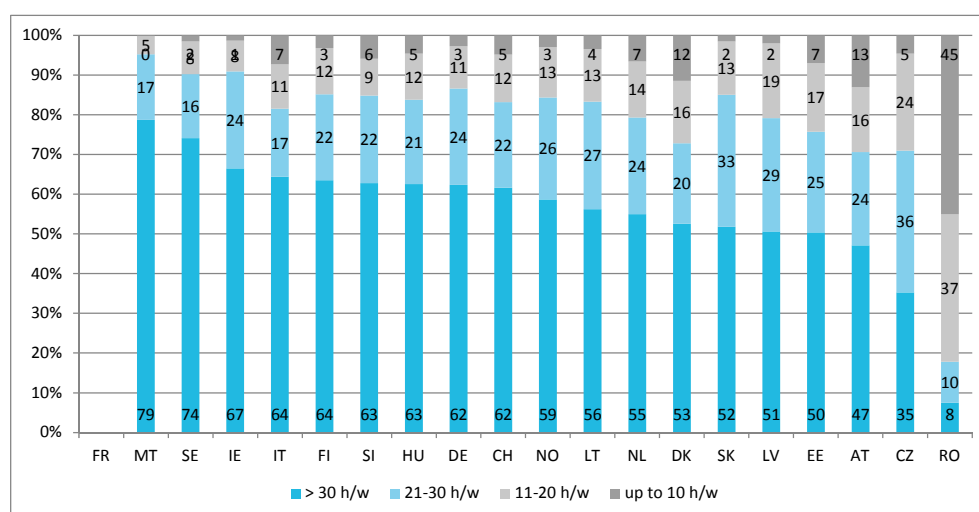
**Figure 5.11: Students by formal status of enrolment (self-reported) in %, 2013/14**



Source: Eurostudent.

Figure 5.12 looks at a typical study week of students who consider themselves as having a full-time status in their respective national system. It shows that a majority of full-time students (70% or more) declare that they dedicate more than 20 hours a week to their study-related activities, so the situation is very similar to the data from 2011. The exception is Romania, where less than 20% of students devote over 20 hours to studies. More than half of these students even devote over 30 hours a week to their studies.

**Figure 5.12: Full-time students by hours spent on study-related activities in a typical week in %, 2013/14**



Data source: EUROSTUDENT V, C.11. No data: FR.

In 2012 in some countries, a significant proportion of full-time students indicated that they only dedicate up to 20 hours a week to studies. This applied in particular to Austria, Finland and Slovakia, where at least one out of four full-time students was characterized by relatively low study intensity.

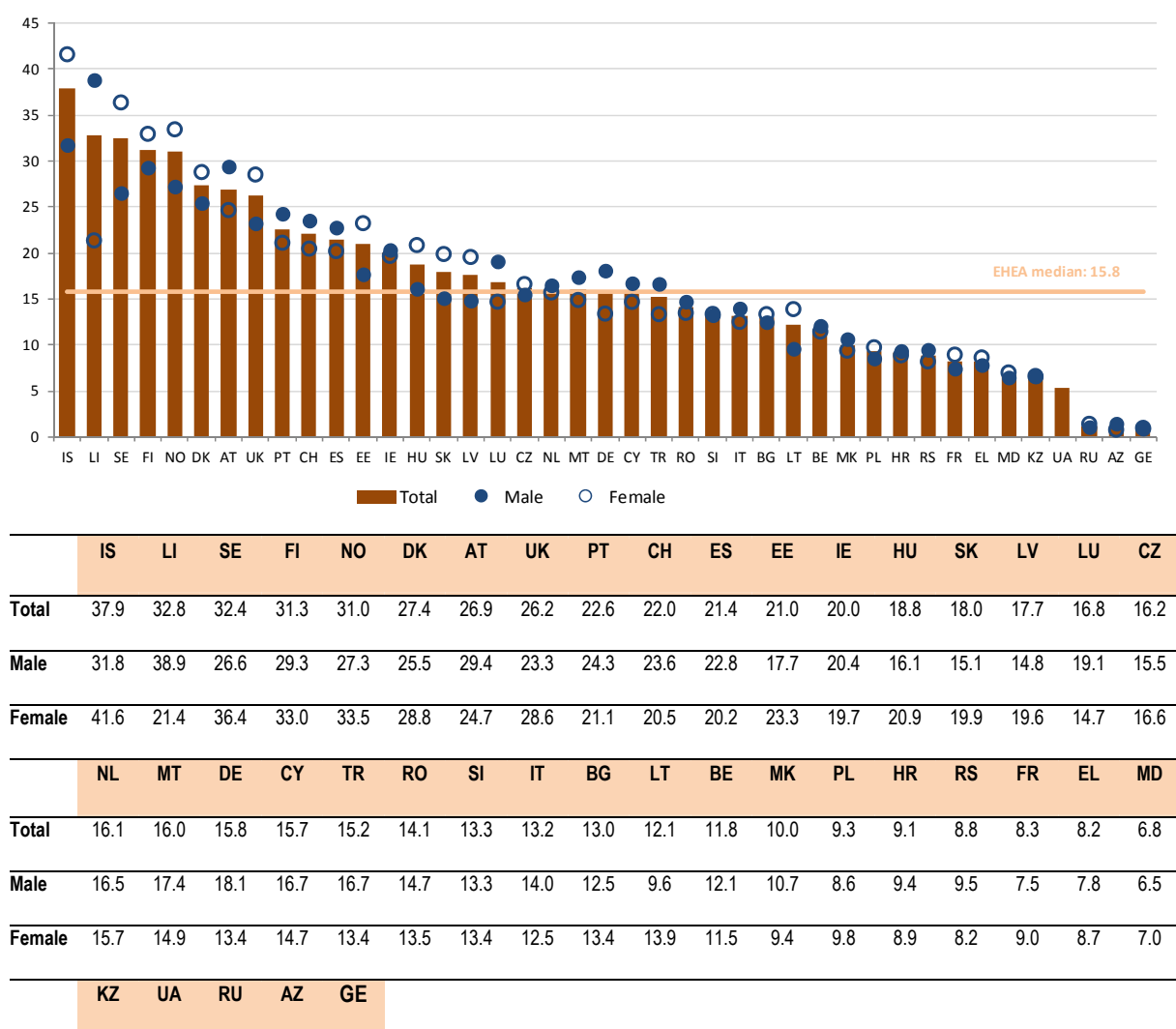
This applies now only to Austria of the countries above, and in addition to the Czech Republic, Denmark and Romania.

Taking into account the situation in all countries, on average, in 2012 17 % of students holding an official status of a full-time student declared that they do not spend more than 20 hours a week on study-related activities. Therefore, in terms of their study intensity, these students can be regarded as de facto part-time students. In the current reporting exercise, this figure has risen to 21%, but is partly due to the situation in Romania, where over 80% of full-time students do not spend more than 20 hours per week for studies, the average without Romania 19%.

## 5.5. Participation of mature students and delayed transition students in formal higher education provision

Figure 5.13 focuses on the age composition of the student population for a given reference year and allows identifying the countries where the population of “mature students” (i.e. 30 or more years)

**Figure 5.13: Percentage of students enrolled in tertiary education, total and by gender, 30 or more years old, 2011/12**





<b>Total</b>	6.6	5.3	1.2	1.1	1.0
<b>Male</b>	6.6	:	1.1	1.5	0.9
<b>Female</b>	6.6	:	1.4	0.8	1.0

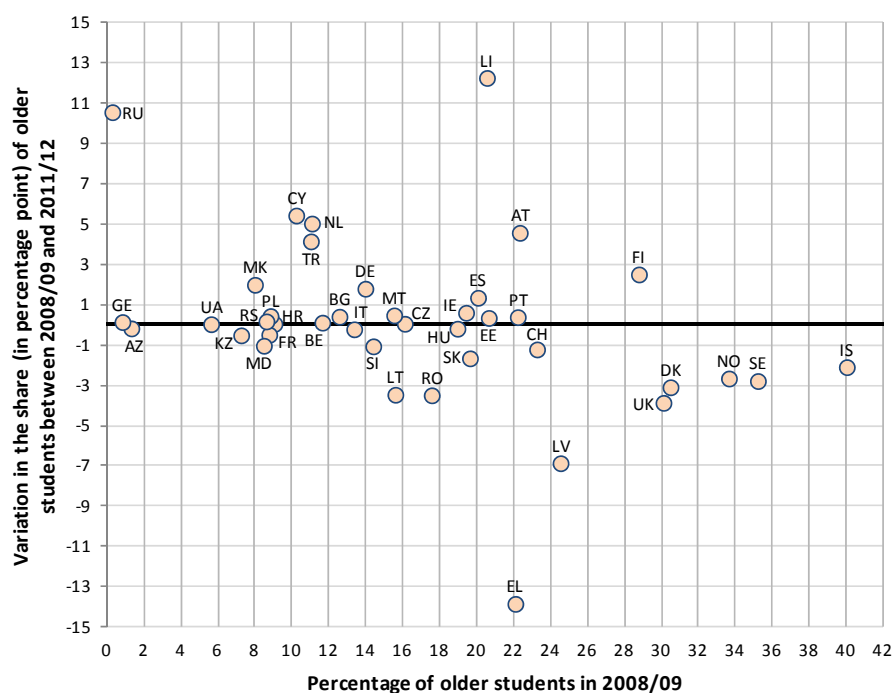
Notes: **Moldova: data only cover ISCED level 5.** [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The percentage of students aged 30 and over in the total student population varies significantly across EHEA countries for which data is available: it ranged from less than 2 % (Russia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) up to around 38 % in Iceland. The country median (academic year 2011/2012) is 15.8 % meaning that half of the countries have lower share than 15.8% of mature students, while the other half has more than that. In nearly half of the EHEA countries for which data is available, the share of over 30-year-old students is larger among female students than male students. This pattern is especially observed in the Nordic countries (which combine this feature with high percentages of “mature students”) and in the Baltic countries. The gap between male and female students is also significant in Slovakia, Russia and Hungary where the proportion of ‘mature students’ are around 1.3 times higher among female students than among male students. In few countries, the percentage of “older students” is nearly similar among male and female students. This is for instance what is observed in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Georgia, Slovenia, Kazakhstan and Ireland.

As figure 5.14 shows, out of the 40 EHEA countries for which data is available, nearly half has registered a decrease (but sometimes very moderate) in the percentage of students aged 30 or more in the total population between 2008/09 and 2011/12.

**Figure 5.14: Percentage of students enrolled in tertiary education, 30 or more years old, in 2008/09 and variation from 2008/09 to 2011/12**



	IS	SE	NO	DK	UK	FI	LV	CH	AT	PT	EL	EE	LI	ES	SK	IE	HU
2008/09	40.0	35.2	33.7	30.5	30.1	28.8	24.5	23.3	22.3	22.2	22.1	20.7	20.6	20.1	19.6	19.4	19.0
2008/09-2011/12 (variation in pp)	-2.1	-2.8	-2.7	-3.1	-3.9	2.5	-6.9	-1.2	4.6	0.4	-13.8	0.3	12.3	1.3	-1.7	0.6	-0.2

	RO	CZ	LT	MT	SI	DE	IT	BG	BE	NL	TR	CY	HR	PL	FR	RS	MD
2008/09	17.6	16.1	15.6	15.5	14.4	14.0	13.4	12.6	11.6	11.1	11.0	10.2	9.1	8.8	8.8	8.6	8.5
2008/09-2011/12 (variation in pp)	-3.5	0.1	-3.5	0.5	-1.1	1.8	-0.2	0.4	0.1	5.0	4.1	5.4	0.0	0.4	-0.5	0.2	-1.0

	MK	KZ	UA	AZ	GE	RU
2008/09	8.0	7.3	5.63	1.31	0.83	0.28
2008/09-2011/12 (variation in pp)	2.0	-0.5	0.03	-0.18	0.14	10.6

*Notes:* Greece: 2008 reference year, variation in the share between 2008 and 2012. Moldova: data only cover ISCED 5A and 6. [To be included].

*Source:* Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The strongest decrease in such a share is observed in Greece (where the percentage of older students moved from 22 % in 2007/08 to 8 % in 2011/12), in Latvia (a 6.9 percentage point (pp) decrease) and the United Kingdom (a 3.9 pp decrease). In many countries the proportion of older students did not change significantly between 2008/09 and 2011/12 with absolute changes of one percentage point (pp) or less between these two reference years. Such stability occurred either in countries where the proportion of older students is low (e.g. below 5 % in Azerbaijan, Georgia or below 10 % in Moldova, Kazakhstan, France, Ukraine, Croatia, Serbia and Poland) or in EHEA countries

where older students represent more than one fifth of the total population (e.g. in Estonia and Portugal).

Despite showing different proportions of older students at the beginning of the period, the Netherlands, Cyprus and Liechtenstein recorded significant increase in the share of old students with increases of 5 pp, 5.4 pp and 12.3 pp respectively between the two reference years.

## Conclusions

(To be drafted)

## 6. EFFECTIVE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

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### The Bucharest Communiqué

The effective outcomes of higher education, that is, higher education attainment and completion on the one hand, and the employability of graduates on the other have been an important focus of the Bologna Process from the very beginning. The 2012 Bucharest Communiqué further strengthens this output-oriented focus by reaffirming that both raising completion rates and enhancing employability are among the main goals of the 'consolidation' process within the EHEA.

The Bucharest Communiqué renews commitment towards the goal of raising completion rates within the widening participation agenda. It confirms the objective that the student body both 'entering *and graduating* from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations' <sup>(1)</sup>. In this context, the Communiqué emphasises the need to specifically focus on underrepresented groups in higher education policy.

Regarding the objective of enhancing employability, the Bucharest Communiqué highlights the importance of 'cooperation between employers, students and higher education institutions, especially in the development of study programmes' <sup>(2)</sup>. Such a cooperative project is envisaged to ensure that students are equipped with a combination of transversal skills and up-to-date subject-specific knowledge, enabling them to 'contribute to the wider needs of society and the labour market' <sup>(3)</sup>.

### The 2012 Bologna Implementation Report

The 2012 Bologna Implementation Report showed that a continuously increasing proportion of the population had been obtaining a higher education qualification within the EHEA. However, countries differed regarding the proportion of the student population completing their studies. Moreover, although the majority of EHEA countries reported putting in place policies to increase completion levels, there was a great variety in the scope and content of enacted measures. Only a small minority of countries adopted comprehensive national strategies addressing non-completion.

Statistical information on the labour market situation of graduates showed that obtaining a tertiary qualification improved the employment prospects of young people in almost all countries. However, graduates without work experience faced difficulties entering the labour market, and around 20 % of graduates were over-qualified for the job in which they were employed. This latter percentage remained stable between 2000 and 2010, suggesting that over-qualification rates were influenced more by labour market structures and innovation than by the growing number of students.

Since the publication of the last report, EHEA countries have continued to face the prolonged and deepened impacts of the economic crisis. This chapter illustrates how this has influenced the relative position and prospects of higher education graduates in the labour market, which is necessary for understanding the diversity of higher education policies on retention and employability.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 1, emphasis added.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter outline

This chapter centres attention on outcome-oriented policies in higher education. The first section focuses on higher education attainment and completion, looking at the current situation in the EHEA as well as national policies aiming at raising attainment levels and completion rates. The chapter then turns to the issue of graduates' employability. Firstly it discusses the current labour market situation of higher education graduates, highlighting recent trends to which higher education institutions need to respond. Secondly it looks at how EHEA countries try to enhance the employability of graduates through various types of policies. The final section presents the conclusions.

### 6.1. Higher education attainment and completion

The main output of higher education is higher education attainment: the share of the population having obtained a higher education qualification. Attainment levels are steadily rising in the EHEA (see Figure 6.1). The Bologna median value is now 37.3 % for the 25-34 age group, 29.4 % for the 35-44 year olds and 22.9 % for the 45-64 age group. This increasing tertiary attainment according to age is the dominating pattern in almost all Bologna countries. It is only Azerbaijan where 45-64 year olds have higher tertiary attainment rates than the youngest age group. However, attainment levels have increased even in this country more recently: 25-34 year olds have higher tertiary attainment rates than 35-44 year olds.

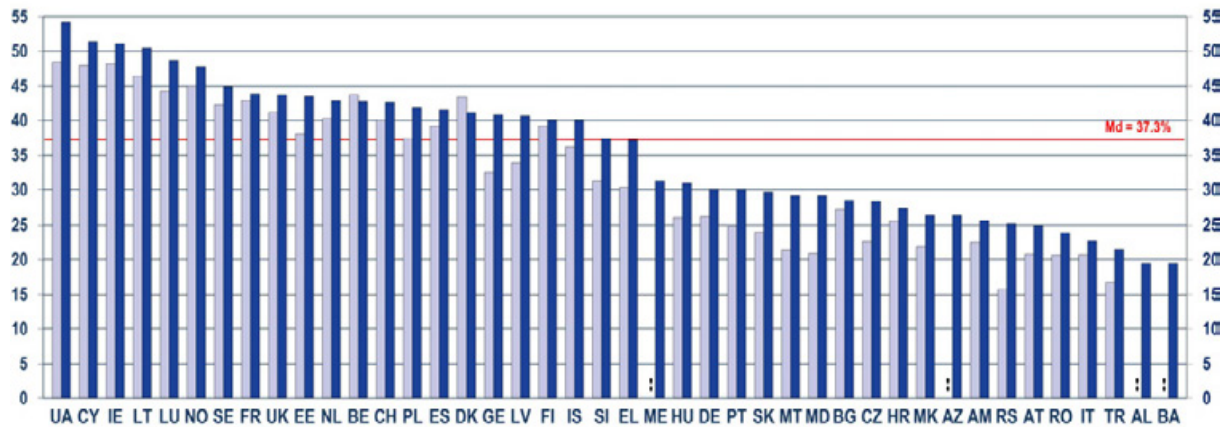
The countries where 35-44 year olds have higher tertiary attainment rates than the youngest age groups are Finland, and to a lesser extent Iceland, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. However, this pattern can be explained by the high share of mature students enrolled in tertiary education, particularly in Finland and Iceland (see Figure 5.13). These data show that a substantial share of the 25-34 year olds is still studying and will obtain a tertiary qualification in the future. At the other end of the scale, tertiary attainment rates of 25-34 year olds are more than 12 percentage points higher than those of the 35-44 year olds in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Lithuania and Poland, indicating an expansion in higher education in these countries.

In the youngest age group, higher education attainment has reached 50 % in Ukraine, Cyprus, Ireland and Lithuania. Higher education attainment is the lowest (less than 20 %) in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

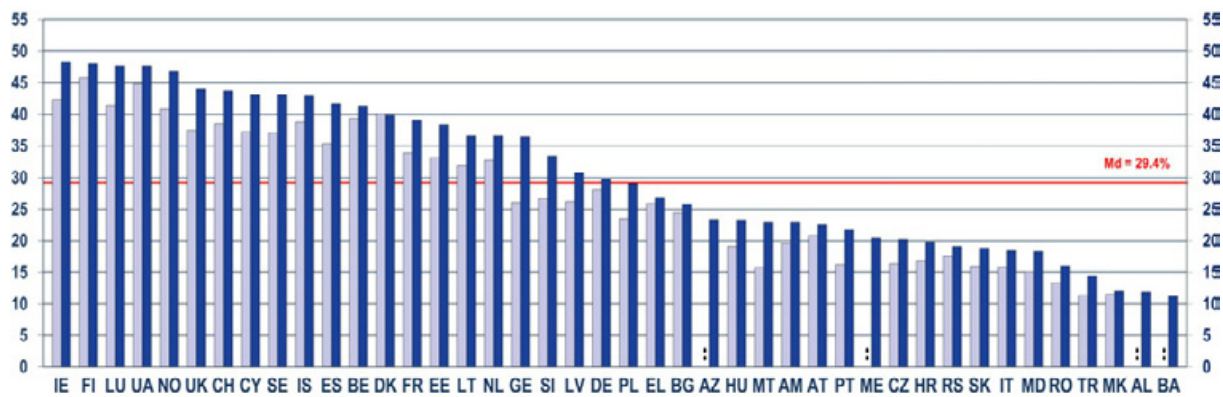
A comparison between tertiary attainment rates in 2010 and 2013 shows the directions of the most recent developments. In this last period, countries with the biggest increases in tertiary attainment among the youngest are Serbia, Moldova and Georgia. The countries where higher education attainment has not increased among the 25-34 year olds since 2010 are Belgium and Denmark.

Figure 6.1: Percentage of persons with tertiary education, 2010 and 2013

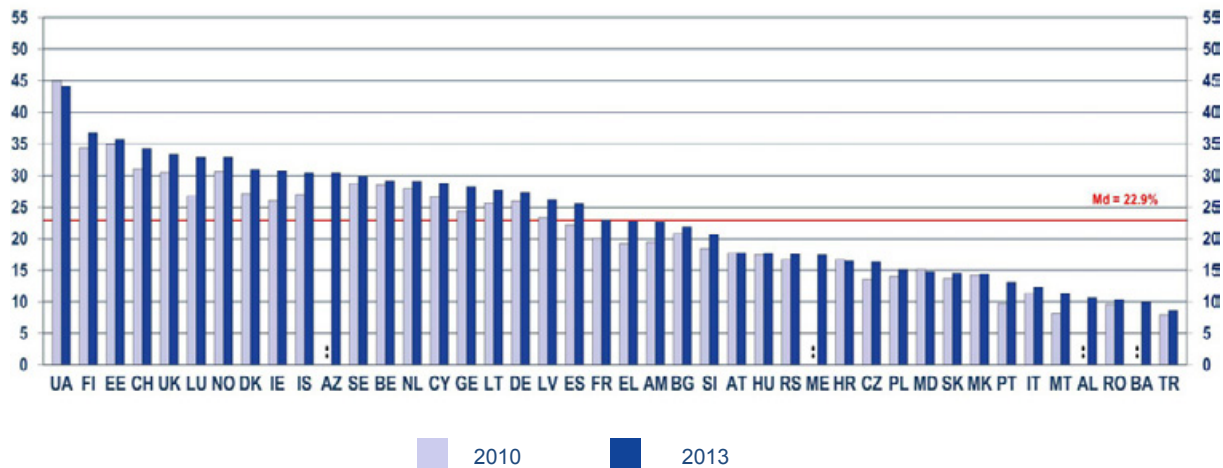
25-34 year olds



35-44 year olds



45-64 year olds



	2010	2013
25-34 year olds	54.2	51.4
35-44 year olds	47.7	43.1
45-64 year olds	44.1	28.8
EL	37.2	31.3
ME	30.9	30
HU	30	29.7
DE	29.1	29.1
SK	29.1	28.5
PT	28.4	27.3
MT	26.3	26.3
MD	25.7	25.2
BG	25	23.9
HR	22.7	21.5
CZ	21.5	19.5
MK	19.5	11.2
AZ	11.2	10.0
AM	10.0	
RS		
AT		
RO		
IT		
TR		
AL		
BA		



*Notes:* The reference year for Armenia is 2012 instead of 2013.

Data are sorted by the 2013 tertiary attainment levels in each age group separately. The table follows the order of countries in the 25-34 age group. Median values refer to the 2013 tertiary attainment level in each age group separately.

*Source:* Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Raising higher education attainment requires a dual focus on increasing participation (input) and improving completion rates (output). In this context, higher education institutions do not only need to make sure that they have an increasing number of students, but also that these students complete their studies. Increasing participation and completion are also inseparably linked within the widening participation agenda, since students coming from underrepresented groups are more likely to drop out from higher education than their peers (see also European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2014).

Non-completion in higher education can be influenced by a number of factors related to the higher education institution and the individual student. At the individual level, the wrong choice of programme or study subject, insufficient motivation to meet the demands of the curriculum as well as a wide range of other constraints, including financial barriers, health problems and psycho-social issues are among the factors related to dropping out from higher education. Structural barriers and institutional inflexibilities, e.g. the inability to serve the needs of an increasingly heterogeneous student body, may amplify individual risk settings. First-year students – and particularly first-year students from underrepresented groups – are the most vulnerable to dropping out if insufficient attention is paid to their first experiences and skills development. In addition, besides these 'push' factors, 'pull' factors from the labour market may also produce early leavers from tertiary education to some extent.

This section examines current levels of completion within the EHEA as well as national policy approaches towards non-completion and drop-out. First, comparative indicators on completion (completion rates as well as net entry and graduation rates) are analysed. Second, national policies addressing student retention are discussed, with special attention to how EHEA countries focus on and monitor the completion rates of underrepresented groups on the one hand, and first-year students on the other.

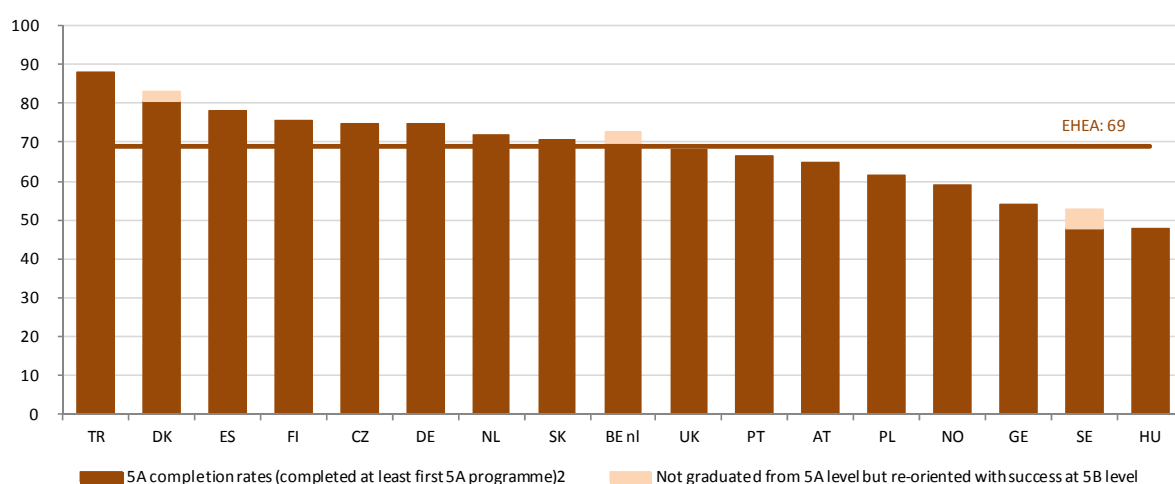
### 6.1.1. Levels of completion in the EHEA

#### Completion rates

The completion rate shows the share of students who enter and complete their studies (graduate) in tertiary type A programmes (ISCED 5A), expressed as a percentage of all entrants (Figure 6.2). However, instead of having one common international methodology, completion rates are calculated based on two main methods, limiting the comparability of the indicator across countries. The true-cohort method yields the most adequate results but it is very demanding in terms of data since it requires panel data (survey or registers) in which the individual student can be followed through the system from entry to graduation or drop out. In the absence of such data, the indicator relies on the cross-section method in some countries, in which the number of graduates in 2011 is divided by the number of new entrants into these programmes. In some countries, this method accounts for different study durations, in others not.

Nevertheless, despite this limited comparability across countries and the lack of data for many EHEA countries, this indicator shown in Figure 6.2 is an approximation to the extent to which higher education systems are successful in turning entrants into graduates.

**Figure 6.2: Completion rates in tertiary type A programmes (%), 2011**



	TR	DK	ES	FI	CZ	DE	NL	SK	BE nl	UK	PT	AT	PL	NO	GE	SE	HU
Completion rate	88	80	78	76	75	75	72	71	69	68	67	65	62	59	54	48	48
Re-oriented		3			:				4			:		:	:	5	
Method	TC	TC	CS	TC	TC	TC	CS??	CS	TC	CS	CS	CS	CS	TC	:	TC	CS
Year for new entrants	2007-08	2000-01	2008-09	2000	2001	2002	2003-04	2006-09	2007-08	2007-08	2006-10	2006-08	2006-09	1999-2000	:	2002-03 / 2009-10	2006-07

Notes: CS: Cross-section method. TC: True cohort method. Method unknown: Georgia.

Source: OECD, Education at a Glance 2013, Table A4.1 and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The median completion rate among the EHEA countries for which data is available is 69 %. The rate ranges between 88 % in Turkey and 48 % in Hungary and Sweden. The low completion rate in Sweden must be interpreted with caution because the data include single course students who may have never striven for a whole degree. Moreover, 5 % of new entrants are successfully reoriented towards an ISCED 5B level programme and graduation. Besides Turkey, high tertiary completion rates are observed in Denmark, Spain, Finland, the Czech Republic and Germany, where at least three quarters of all new entrants obtain a degree. In Georgia and Norway on the other hand, relatively low completion rates of less than 60 % are observed.

In general, completion rates may not only be influenced by the academic selectivity within higher education institutions but also by the selectivity in the admission to higher education. In countries in which student selection is based on aptitude tests or grades in the matriculation examination, student success might be higher than in countries with open access to higher education.

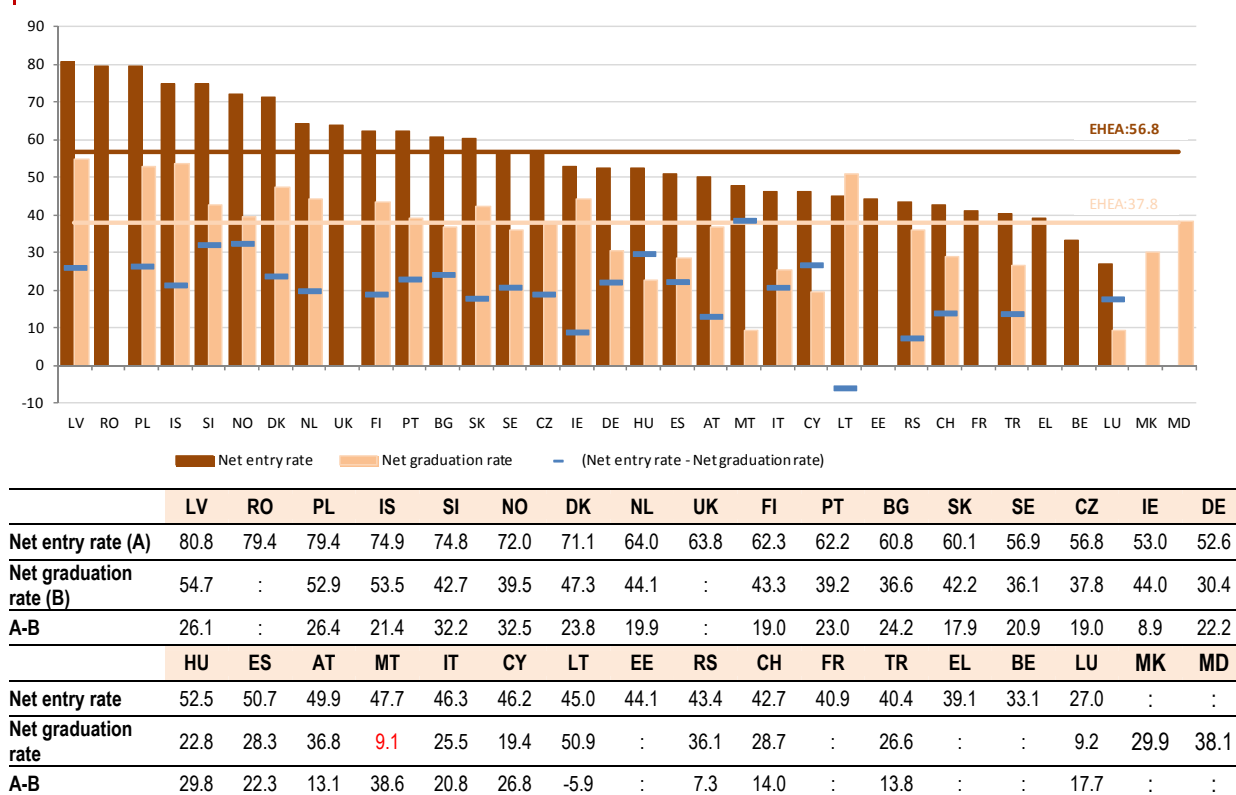
## Entry and graduation rates

Because data on completion rates is still scarce among the higher education systems in the EHEA, the indicators presented in this section aim at complementing the rather fragmentary picture by comparing entry and graduation rates as measured in the same academic year. Such a comparison for different types of tertiary education programmes is a proxy for educational progress that can be used as auxiliary information to assess educational outcomes. While it is clear that high graduation rates can only be achieved if entry rates are high, the difference between the two cannot be interpreted as the magnitude to which students drop out of higher education institutions. On the one hand, in strongly expanding tertiary systems a comparison between the two is misleading. On the

other hand, differences in the duration of programmes within and across countries limit the possibility of cross-national comparisons.

The advantage of comparing entry and graduation rates is that data is available for more countries. These net rates are computed as the sum of all entry rates and graduation rates, respectively, by single year of age, through every single age. The entry and graduation rates for a particular year of age, or an age range, are the ratio between the number of new entrants and graduates, respectively, of that age and the population size of the same age (for details on the calculation of the actual indicators, see the Glossary and methodological notes). While completion rates are available for only 17 EHEA systems, entry rates for programmes at the ISCED 5A level are available in 32 systems and graduation rates in 26 systems. Net entry and graduation rates as well as the difference between the two for ISCED level 5A programmes are shown in Figure 6.3, and for ISCED level 5B programmes in Figure 6.4.

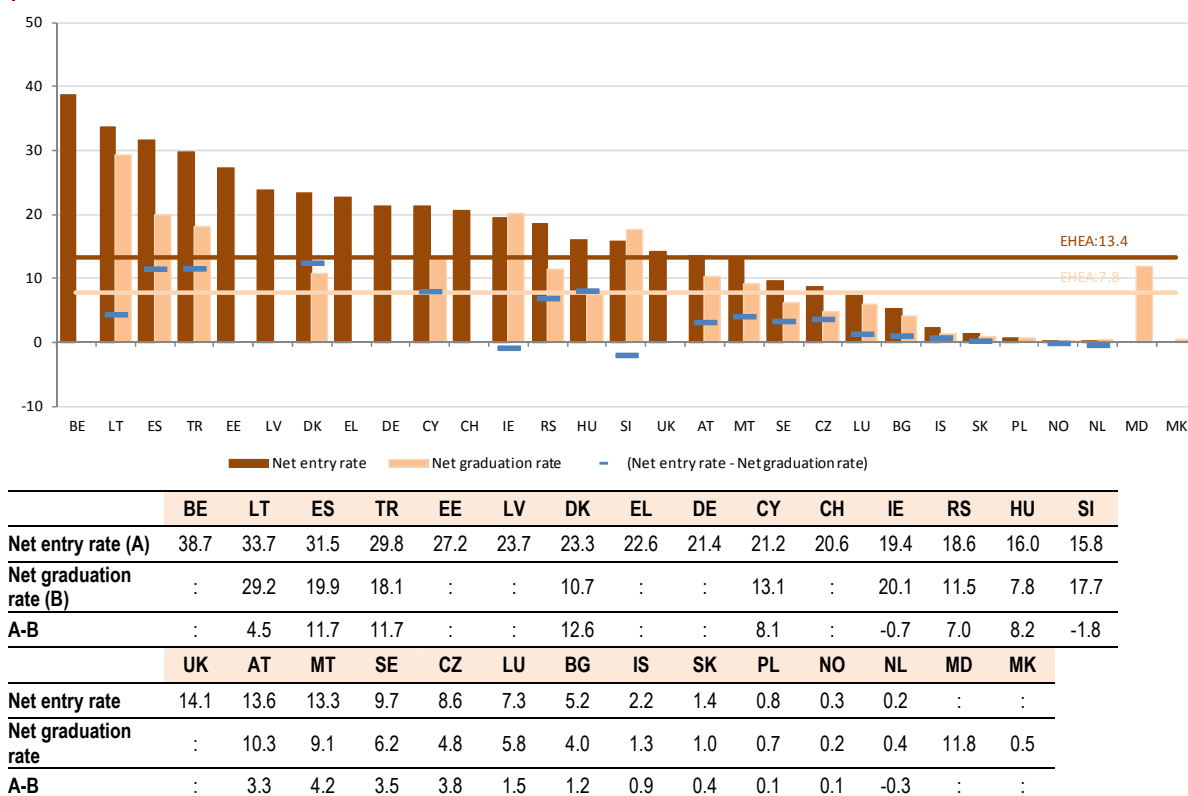
**Figure 6.3: Net entry rate and net graduation rate (%), tertiary type A programmes, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

**Figure 6.4: Net entry rate and net graduation rate (%), tertiary type B programmes, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

In the 2011/12 academic year, the median net entry rate was 56.8 % at ISCED level 5A, while the median net graduation rate was 37.8 % <sup>(4)</sup>. The median of the difference between the two indicators is 21.1 percentage points. Entry rates into ISCED 5A programmes are highest in Latvia, Romania and Poland, where the rate is around 80 %. In Iceland, Slovenia, Norway and Denmark, entry rates are beyond 70 %. The highest net graduations rates in the EHEA at this level are observed in Latvia, Iceland, Poland and Lithuania, all countries having a net graduation rate of more than 50 %. The lowest net entry rate is observed in Luxembourg with no more than 27 %, while the lowest graduation rates of around 9 % are seen in Luxembourg and Malta <sup>(5)</sup>.

The biggest differences between the net entry rate and the net graduation rate can be seen in Malta, Norway and Slovenia, where the two indicators spread by more than 30 percentage points. The lowest entry-graduation-differences of about 9 % or less are observed in Ireland and Serbia. However, as noted before, these differences do not reflect the real drop-out magnitude in these systems. Nonetheless, if the difference between the entry and the graduation rate is high *and* the completion rate as depicted in Figure 6.2 is low, as is the case for example in Hungary, this is an indication that the system has a drop-out issue. Yet, system expansion may still confound this result and a high difference is not necessarily associated with a high dropout rate.

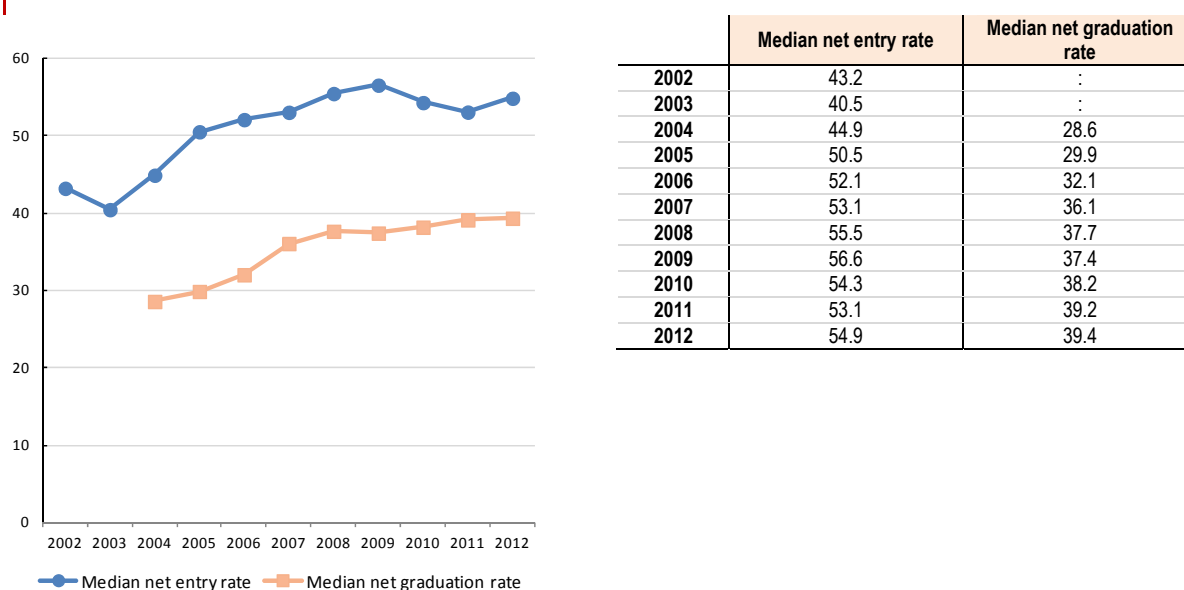
<sup>(4)</sup> The median values are calculated based on all 26 systems for which both entry and graduation rates are available and hence the difference between the two can be computed.

<sup>(5)</sup> The gap between entry and graduation rates and tertiary attainment levels among the population (Figure 6.1) in Luxembourg results from the fact that Luxembourg has a very small tertiary sector, so young people are studying abroad. Moreover, the share of tertiary qualified foreign workers is high.

With respect to ISCED 5B level programmes, the respective median levels in 2011/12 were 13.3 % (net entry rate), 7.8 % (net graduation rate). Entry rates into ISCED 5B programmes are highest in Belgium (38.7 %), Lithuania (33.7 %) and Spain (31.5 %). In Belgium, more young people enter ISCED 5B programmes than ISCED 5A programmes. In another eight systems the rate is higher than 20 %. At this level, the countries with the largest gap between net entry rates and net graduation rates were Denmark, Turkey and Spain with about 12 percentage points.

The development of the median net entry rate and the median net graduation rate at ISCED level 5A programmes since the academic year 2001/02 (entry rate) and 2003/04 (graduation rate) is depicted in Figure 6.5 (for the country coverage, see the Glossary and methodological notes). While the median net entry rate at ISCED level 5A substantially increased in the EHEA until the academic year 2008/09, when a peak of 56.6 % was reached, a dip followed in the course of the financial crisis, and in the academic year 2011/12 the median value for this geographical coverage still remains below the peak value. The median net graduation rate at ISCED level 5A shows a substantial increase until 2007/08. However, unlike the entry rate, the median graduation rate remained fairly stable afterwards and amounted to just below 40 % in the most recent academic year. As a result, the gap between the median entry rate and the median graduation rate at ISCED level 5A has decreased in recent years, from more than 20 percentage points around 2006 to 15.5 percentage points.

**Figure 6.5: Median net entry rate and median net graduation rate (%), tertiary type A programmes, by academic year, 2001/02 – 2011/12**



Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

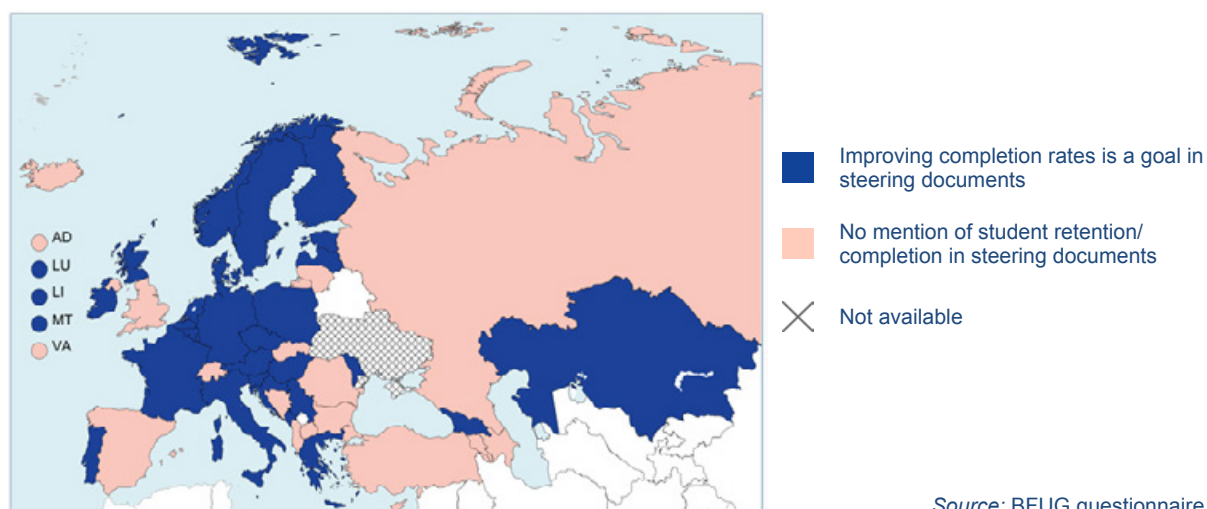
## 6.1.2. Policies for improving completion rates

This section provides an overview on national policies aiming to improve completion rates in the EHEA. After presenting the main directions of national policy frameworks, the section turns to the analysis of two types of measures: first, on the retention of first-year students, who are the most likely to drop out of higher education; and second, on incentives given to students to finalise their studies on time. Finally, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are examined, focusing on the monitoring of underrepresented groups as well as on performance-based incentives given to higher education institutions to improve completion rates.

## Policy framework

Raising completion rates is an objective of higher education policy in the majority of EHEA countries (Figure 6.6). This main aim is seen to be dependent on two related policy goals: reducing drop-out rates on the one hand, and shortening the time before graduation on the other.

**Figure 6.6: References to student retention/completion in steering documents, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Some countries have even set national targets related to these goals. Many countries have targets on tertiary attainment (see also Chapter 4); but in addition, some also specify targets on completion, drop-out, or study time. Regarding completion rates, Finland and Serbia aim to raise the completion rate in higher education by 2020 to 75 % and 70 % respectively. France defines various success rates to be reached by 2015: 42 % in first cycle university studies, 80 % in the second cycle, and 42 % in doctoral studies. These latter targets show awareness about evident retention problems in the first and the third cycles in France.

Concerning drop-out, Slovenia aims to lower it by two-thirds from the current 35 % by 2020, while Montenegro targets a 10 % drop-out rate by 2020. France concentrates efforts on specific programmes: there the objective is to lower the share of drop-outs from DUT (*Diplôme universitaire de technologie*), BTS (*Brevet de Technicien Supérieur*) or equivalent programmes to 17 % by 2015.

Finally, in relation to shortening study time, Denmark aims to reduce the average study time by 4.3 months by 2020. Higher education institutions might also be required to set their own targets regarding completion or drop-out rates, for example in performance agreements (e.g. in Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Liechtenstein and the Netherlands).

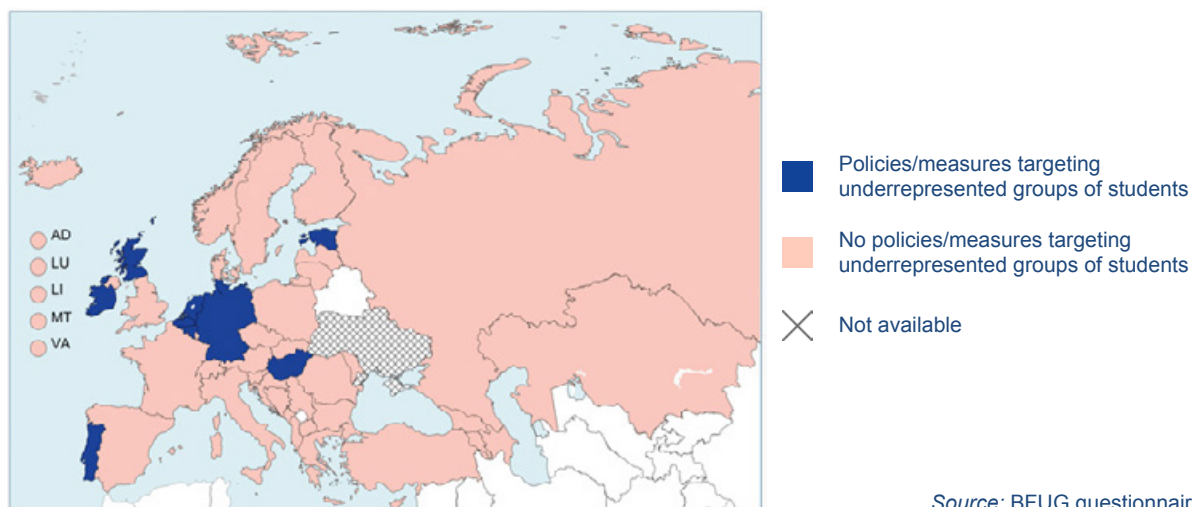
Steering documents in the EHEA list several potential measures higher education institutions are encouraged to take in order to improve completion rates. Such measures include providing guidance and counselling services to students; offering learning support or remedial activities; developing tailor-made courses, flexible pathways or a family-friendly learning environment; and providing incentives to students to finish their studies on time.

In the large majority of countries, such measures aim to improve the completion rates for all students, without paying specific attention to those who are more likely to drop out early: non-traditional students. Despite the fact that raising completion rates is part of the widening participation agenda in the Bologna Process, underrepresented groups are targeted by policy-makers in only nine higher



education systems of the EHEA (see Figure 6.7): Belgium (Flemish and French Communities), Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom (Scotland).

**Figure 6.7: Policies/measures on retention/completion targeting underrepresented groups of students, 2013/14**



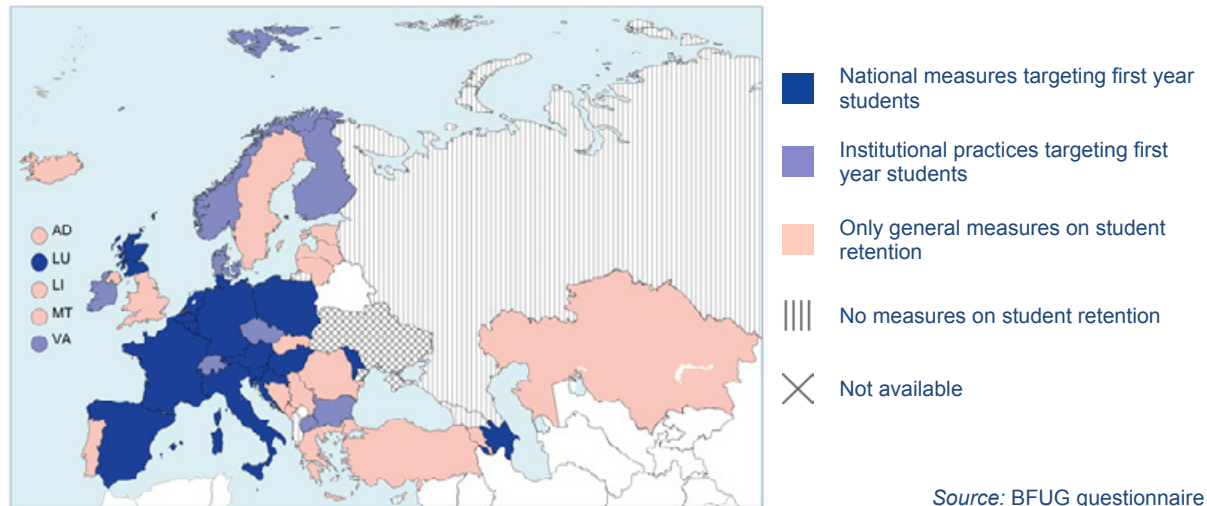
Source: BFUG questionnaire

Moreover, the definition of underrepresented groups differs widely in these countries. Thus policies focus on, inter alia, students with lower socio-economic background (Flemish Community of Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, the United Kingdom (Scotland)), students with parents without higher education qualification (Belgium, Hungary), adult or mature students (Flemish Community of Belgium, the United Kingdom (Scotland)), students combining work and study (Flemish Community of Belgium), students with disabilities (Flemish Community of Belgium, Germany, the United Kingdom (Scotland)), students with children (Germany), ethnic or language minorities (Flemish Community of Belgium, Estonia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (Scotland)), students from segregated neighbourhoods (Hungary), or immigrants (Flemish Community of Belgium, Germany).

### Reducing drop-out: improving the retention of first year students

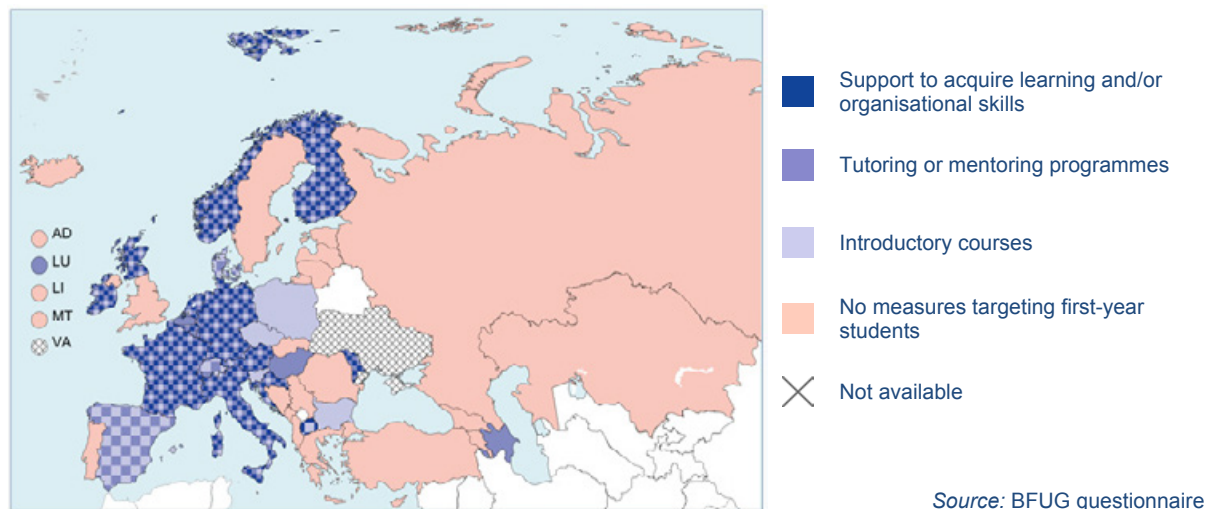
Research indicates that drop-out rates are the highest at the end of the first academic year. First-year students are particularly vulnerable to dropping out of higher education, since their expectations might be very different from what they actually encounter. Such mismatch can stem from the wrong choice of courses or study programme as well as the feeling of helplessness and failure at the start of higher education studies. For this reason, paying attention to newly admitted students' experiences and skills development is of particular importance. Yet, only about half of the EHEA countries have developed policy and practice focusing specifically on the retention of first-year students (Figure 6.8).

**Figure 6.8: Targeting the retention of first-year students, 2013/14**



The three most common measures targeting newly admitted or first-year students are introductory or insertion courses, tutoring or mentoring programmes, and support provided to students to acquire learning and/or organisational skills. Figure 6.9 shows the measures countries encourage their higher education institutions to use in helping first-year students to adjust to the new learning environment.

**Figure 6.9: Measures targeting the retention of first-year students, 2013/14**



Though first-year students are treated as a whole in most cases, examples of targeted measures also exist. For example, in Germany, The Quality Pact for Teaching (*Qualitätspakt Lehre*) and the 'Advancement through Education: Open Universities' (*Aufstieg durch Bildung: Offene Hochschulen*) programmes of the Federal Government and the *Länder* support projects at higher education institutions to improve the entrance phase for various target groups (people with vocational qualifications, students with a migration background, etc.) and/or assist higher education institutions with the implementation of diverse and diversified counselling. In Hungary, through the HÖÖK Mentoring Programme, a number of students with lower socio-economic background are supported by a personal mentor (a fellow student) in their first academic year.

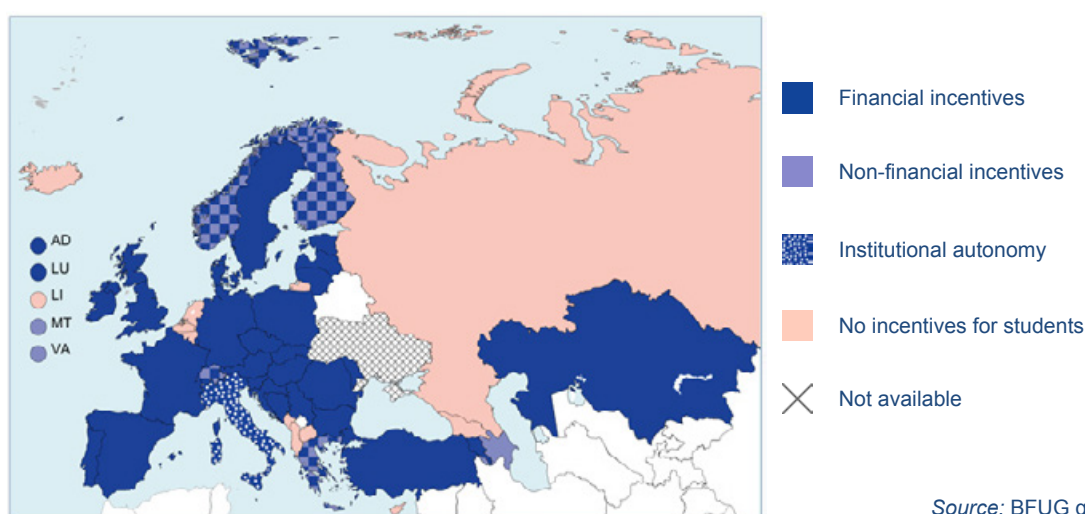
In addition, countries might also aim at lowering the chance of academic failure (or the sense of failure) by allowing students to retake exams multiple times or, as in Germany, to aim for abandoning examination-relevant marking for first-year students.

Pre-admission support is also provided to prospective students in many higher education systems (see Chapter 4 for more details). For example, in the Netherlands, new students can have a study choice talk with their institutions before the start of the first academic year.

## Shortening study time

A common way to improve completion rates is to give incentives for students to finish their studies within a limited period of time. Indeed, the large majority of countries in the EHEA provide financial or non-financial incentives to students to ensure the timely completion of higher education studies (Figure 6.10).

**Figure 6.10: Incentives given to students to finish their studies on time, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Non-financial incentives are typically about limiting the number of years in which students can finalise their studies. Other measures include, for example, students signing an 'Individual Education Plan' in Norway, through which students' progression can be followed up and non-fulfilment can be acted upon.

Financial incentives can be negative (support is taken away or extra fees are foreseen in case of non-completion) or positive (students receive extra support in case they study faster). Negative financial incentives are much more common in the EHEA. Most frequently, students stop receiving support or even have to pay extra fees if they do not finish their studies on time (e.g. this is the case in Armenia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom). In Hungary, students even have to pay back the grants received if they fail to complete their studies within a limited period of time. Alternatively, or sometimes in addition, students are only eligible to receive scholarships if they make enough progress in their studies (e.g. in Andorra, Armenia, Germany, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden). Thus, in these cases, grant entitlements are reviewed periodically during higher education studies.

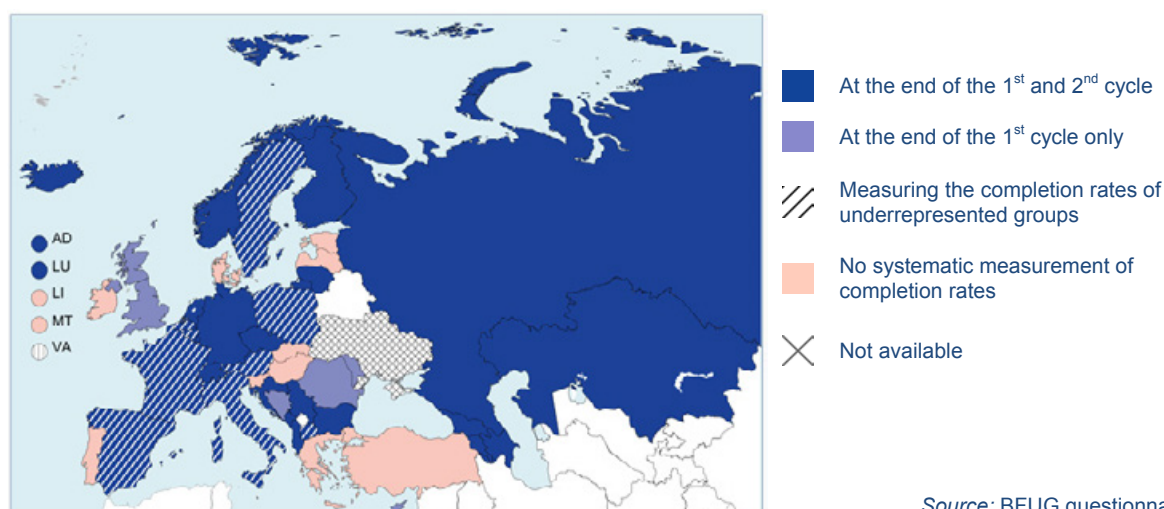
Positive financial incentives exist only in a few (mostly Nordic) countries. Denmark is introducing a cash bonus for students who complete their studies faster than the required time. In Sweden, some students in teacher training receive a lump sum after completing their studies. In Croatia, students

acquiring a given number of credits are entitled to receive a tuition waiver, while in Norway, student loans are converted into grants on the basis of timely and successful progression and completion of studies.

## Monitoring and evaluation

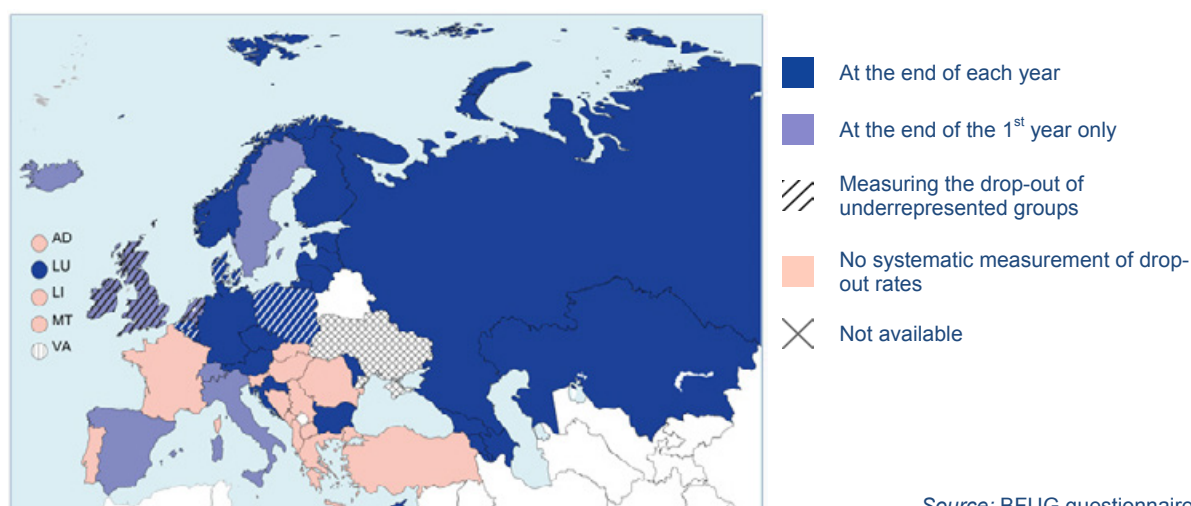
The evaluation of higher education institutions' performance is based on the calculation of completion and/or drop-out rates. As was discussed in section 6.1.1, measurements on the basis of such indicators are not without limitations. Nevertheless, the majority of EHEA countries do systematically measure completion rates at the end of both the first and the second cycle (Figure 6.11). Drop-out rates are also systematically monitored in more than half of the countries, at least at the end of the first year, but most often after each academic year (Figure 6.12).

**Figure 6.11: Systematic measurement of completion rates, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

**Figure 6.12: Systematic measurement of drop-out rates, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

In most cases, completion and drop-out rates are also publicly available. However, drop-out rates are not made public in Azerbaijan, the Flemish Community of Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Poland and Russia.



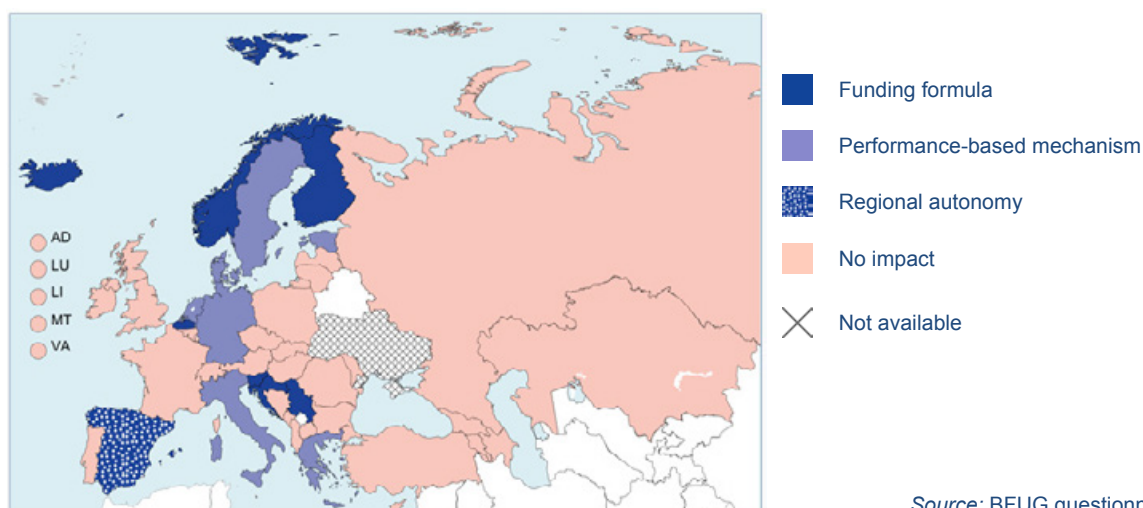
There are eight education systems of the EHEA where neither completion nor drop-out rates are calculated and monitored systematically: Greece, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Malta, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Yet, some form of data collection (at least at the institutional level) on graduates and/or drop-outs takes place also in these countries.

Where completion and drop-out rates are measured, monitoring generally focuses on the whole student population, without looking at different groups of students separately (see Figures 6.11 and 6.12). However, nine higher education systems monitor the completion rates of underrepresented groups: Austria, Belgium (Flemish and French Communities), France, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Drop-out rates are measured separately for specific groups in Belgium, Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland and the United Kingdom. However, the groups defined are again very different depending on the country. Common bases of monitoring include gender, age (mature students), socio-economic background and citizenship. Furthermore, it also has to be kept in mind that in several countries, while completion and/or drop-out rates of underrepresented groups of students are monitored, there are no policy measures targeting the retention of these groups.

Regarding evaluation mechanisms using completion and/or drop-out rates, several countries have established procedures outside external quality assurance frameworks in order to rate higher education institutions' performance (on quality assurance, see Chapter 3). One such mechanism is the institution of performance agreements that exist for example in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Liechtenstein and the Netherlands. In such frameworks, higher education institutions sign an agreement with national or regional authorities, in which they define a number of goals related to pre-set indicators. Higher education institutions' performance then can be evaluated based on the performance agreement.

In almost one third of the EHEA countries, higher education institutions' performance even influences the institutions' funding, either through a funding formula, or through performance-based mechanisms (Figure 6.13). In these cases, higher education institutions are given financial incentives to raise completion rates or reduce drop-out.

**Figure 6.13: Impact of completion performance on higher education institutions' funding, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Other alternative approaches to evaluation include the application of minimum standards (for example, in Moldova, at least 50 % of students should graduate in order for a programme to be accredited), or benchmarks (for example, in the United Kingdom, performance indicators show the actual performance of higher education institutions against benchmarks).

## 6.2. Employability of graduates

Within the Bologna Process, employability is understood as 'the ability to gain initial meaningful employment, or to become self-employed, to maintain employment, and to be able to move around within the labour market' (Working Group on Employability 2009, p. 5). In this context, the role of higher education is 'to equip students with the knowledge, skills and competences that they need in the workplace and that employers require; and to ensure that people have more opportunities to maintain or renew those skills and attributes throughout their working lives' (Working Group on Employability 2009, p. 5).

Regarding this definition, it has to be emphasised that employability does not equal employment. The skills and competences students gain during higher education can only enable them to find employment, but do not guarantee it. As was also described in the recent Eurydice report on *Access, Retention and Employability* (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2014), graduates' employment prospects depend largely on the general state of the economy on the one hand, and their individual characteristics (such as their age, gender, ethnicity or social class) on the other. Regarding this last set of factors, 'non-traditional' learners are at a disadvantage in the graduate labour market. For this reason, graduates' employability could also form part of the widening participation agenda: specific measures can ensure that non-traditional learners do not only access and successfully complete higher education, but can also harvest its benefits by gaining 'meaningful' employment (Ibid.).

Against this background, this section discusses graduates' labour market situation as well as policies aiming to enhance their employability. Indicators on graduates' labour market situation are not presented to measure their employability (i.e. their *ability* to gain employment). However, they do provide valuable information on graduates' employment prospects: on average, how likely it is that they will find a good and meaningful job after graduation. Labour market information can also be used by higher education institutions when they aim to respond to labour market needs.

### 6.2.1. Graduates on the labour market: transition from education to work

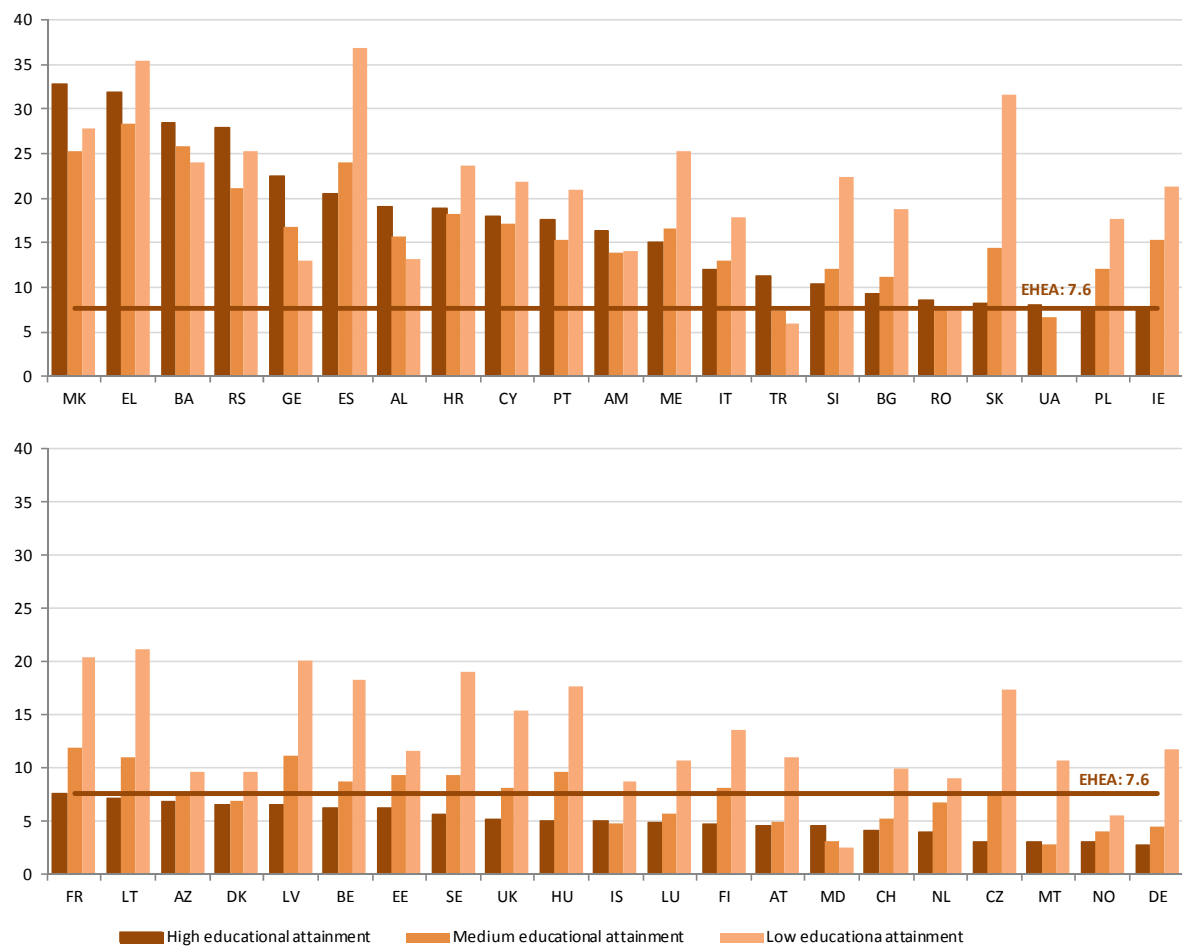
Several indicators can describe graduates' transition from education to work. Section 6.2.1 looks at graduates' labour market situation in EHEA countries based on unemployment ratios, income levels, as well as qualification mismatch. These latter two can serve as indicators for job quality (the 'meaningfulness' of a job).

#### Unemployment

Unemployment ratios comparing the unemployment situation of people aged 20-34 with different educational attainment provide valuable information on the relative value of tertiary education degrees. Rather than looking at unemployment rates, which take the labour force as the denominator in the calculation, the unemployment ratio compares the unemployed to the total population instead of the labour force. Thus it is the more appropriate comparative measure, because it is relatively insensitive to systematic differences in labour market participation across systems that arise from differences in post-compulsory education and training arrangements and in employment regimes. Figure 6.14 shows unemployment ratios by country in 2013, while Figure 6.15 depicts the average annual growth rate of unemployment between 2008 and 2013.



**Figure 6.14: Unemployment ratio of people aged 20-34 by educational attainment level (%), 2013**



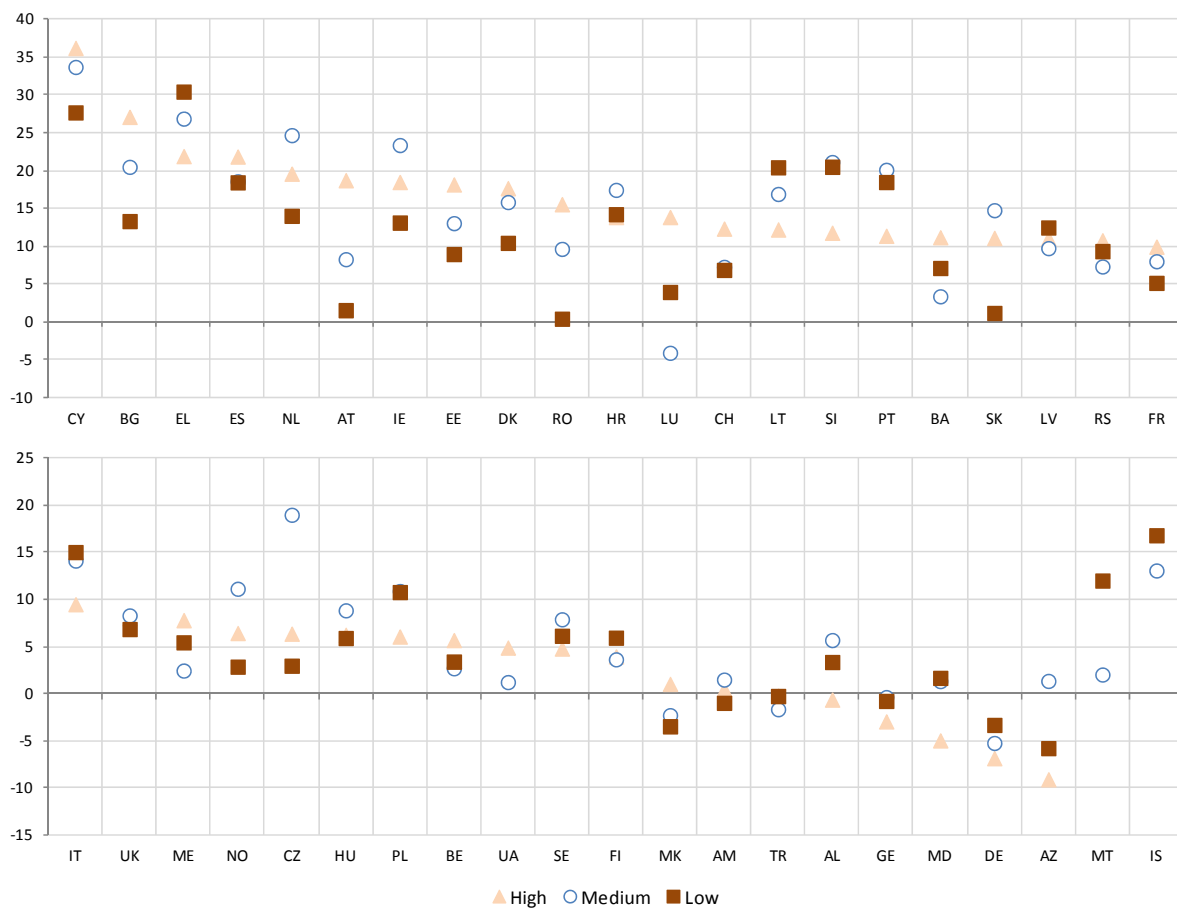
	MK	EL	BA	RS	GE	ES	AL	HR	CY	PT	AM	ME	IT	TR	SI	BG	RO	SK	UA	PL	IE
<b>High</b>	32.7	31.9	28.4	27.9	22.4	20.5	19.0	18.8	17.9	17.6	16.4	15.0	12.0	11.2	10.3	9.2	8.5	8.2	8.0	7.7	7.6
<b>Medium</b>	25.2	28.3	25.9	21.1	16.7	24.1	15.7	18.2	17.2	15.3	13.9	16.6	13.0	7.4	12.0	11.2	7.8	14.4	6.7	12.1	15.3
<b>Low</b>	27.9	35.4	24.0	25.2	12.9	36.9	13.1	23.7	21.8	20.9	14.1	25.3	17.8	6.0	22.4	18.7	7.7	31.7	:	17.7	21.3
	FR	LT	AZ	DK	LV	BE	EE	SE	UK	HU	IS	LU	FI	AT	MD	CH	NL	CZ	MT	NO	DE
<b>High</b>	7.6	7.1	6.9	6.6	6.6	6.3	6.2	5.6	5.2	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.1	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8
<b>Medium</b>	11.9	11.0	7.6	6.9	11.1	8.7	9.3	9.4	8.2	9.7	4.8	5.7	8.2	4.9	3.1	5.2	6.7	7.4	2.8	4.1	4.5
<b>Low</b>	20.4	21.2	9.7	9.6	20.1	18.3	11.6	19.1	15.4	17.7	8.7	10.7	13.6	11.0	2.5	10.0	9.1	17.4	10.7	5.5	11.7

**Notes:** Data are not reliable in the case of high educational attainment for Malta.

Data are sorted by the unemployment ratio of the highly educated. The median value (7.6%) refers to unemployment ratio of the highly educated.

**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

**Figure 6.15: Average annual growth rate of unemployment by education level (%), 2008-2013**



	CY	BG	EL	ES	NL	AT	IE	EE	DK	RO	HR	LU	CH	LT	SI	PT	BA	SK	LV	RS	FR
High	36.2	27.1	21.9	21.9	19.6	18.7	18.5	18.2	17.7	15.6	13.9	13.9	12.3	12.2	11.8	11.4	11.2	11.1	11.1	10.8	10.0
Medium	33.7	20.5	26.9	18.6	24.7	8.3	23.4	13.1	15.9	9.7	17.5	-4.1	7.3	16.9	21.1	20.1	3.4	14.8	9.8	7.4	8.0
Low	27.7	13.3	30.4	18.5	14.0	1.6	13.1	9.0	10.5	0.5	14.2	4.0	6.9	20.4	20.5	18.5	7.1	1.2	12.5	9.4	5.2
	IT	UK	ME	NO	CZ	HU	PL	BE	UA	SE	FI	MK	AM	TR	AL	GE	MD	DE	AZ	MT	IS
High	9.5	8.0	7.8	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.1	5.7	4.9	4.8	4.0	1.04	0.5	-0.2	-0.6	-2.9	-4.9	-6.8	-9.1	:	:
Medium	14.1	8.3	2.5	11.1	19.0	8.9	10.9	2.7	1.2	7.9	3.7	-2.27	1.5	-1.6	5.7	-0.4	1.3	-5.2	1.4	2.0	13.1
Low	15.0	6.9	5.5	2.9	3.0	5.9	10.8	3.4	:	6.2	6.0	-3.45	-1.0	-0.2	3.4	-0.8	1.7	-3.3	-5.8	12.0	16.8

**Notes:** Data are not reliable and not publishable in the case of high educational attainment for Iceland and Malta.  
Data are not reliable in the case of high educational attainment for Bulgaria, Estonia, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Austria; in the case of medium educational attainment for Lithuania and Malta, and in the case of low educational attainment for Croatia, Lithuania and Slovenia.  
Data are sorted by the growth rate of unemployment of the highly educated. The median value (10.4%) refers to the annual growth rate of unemployment of the highly educated.

**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries

Comparing 2013 median levels of unemployment ratios shows that the general expectation remains true, that is, the higher the level of education, the lower the unemployment ratio. The EHEA median of unemployment ratios for young people with low educational attainment (at most lower secondary education) is 17.7 %, for those with medium educational attainment (at most post-secondary non-tertiary education) it is 10.4 %, while it is 7.6 % for the highly educated with tertiary education. The biggest gaps between the unemployment ratios of young people with high and low educational attainment are in the Czech Republic (3 % vs. 17.4 %), Germany (2.8 % vs. 11.7 %), and Slovakia (8.2 % vs. 31.7 %). These are the countries where staying in education improves young people's labour market prospects the most. Nevertheless, gaps between the unemployment ratios of the high and the medium skilled are much less pronounced. Countries with the largest differences are the Czech Republic (3 % vs. 7.4 %) and Ireland (7.6 % vs. 15.3 %).

However, the inverse relationship between education and unemployment does not hold true all around the EHEA. In fact, in one third of the countries with available data, higher education graduates do not have the most secure position in the labour market. Two groups of countries can be distinguished among them.

First, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Albania, Armenia, Turkey, and Moldova, higher education graduates are actually in the worst position in the labour market: they face higher unemployment ratios than their peers with lower levels of education. In four of these countries (Georgia, Albania, Turkey and Moldova), young people with the lowest levels of education are the least likely to be unemployed; thus, higher levels of education go together with higher levels of unemployment. Among these countries there are systems with relatively low overall unemployment levels and a low level of educational inequality (e.g. Moldova), and systems with relatively high levels of unemployment combined with a high level of inequality in favour of the low-qualified.

Yet, in these countries, though higher education graduates face relatively high labour market insecurity, their position *has not actually worsened since 2008*. Looking at changes over time (Figure 6.15) reveals that in Georgia, Albania, Turkey and Moldova, unemployment ratios of the highly educated decreased since 2008, and the yearly increase has not been substantial in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Armenia either. This suggests that in these countries, both the higher education sector and labour market demand is expanding, and the current picture might only be a transition phase. This is all the more likely to be the case given that in all these countries, with the exception of Georgia, higher education attainment levels are among the lowest in the EHEA (see Figure 6.1). As will be shown below, in this context – and also given the political-economic history many of these countries share – most countries in this group tend to have more centralised policy approaches towards enhancing graduates' employability (e.g. through enrolment quotas, compulsory work placements or university rankings).

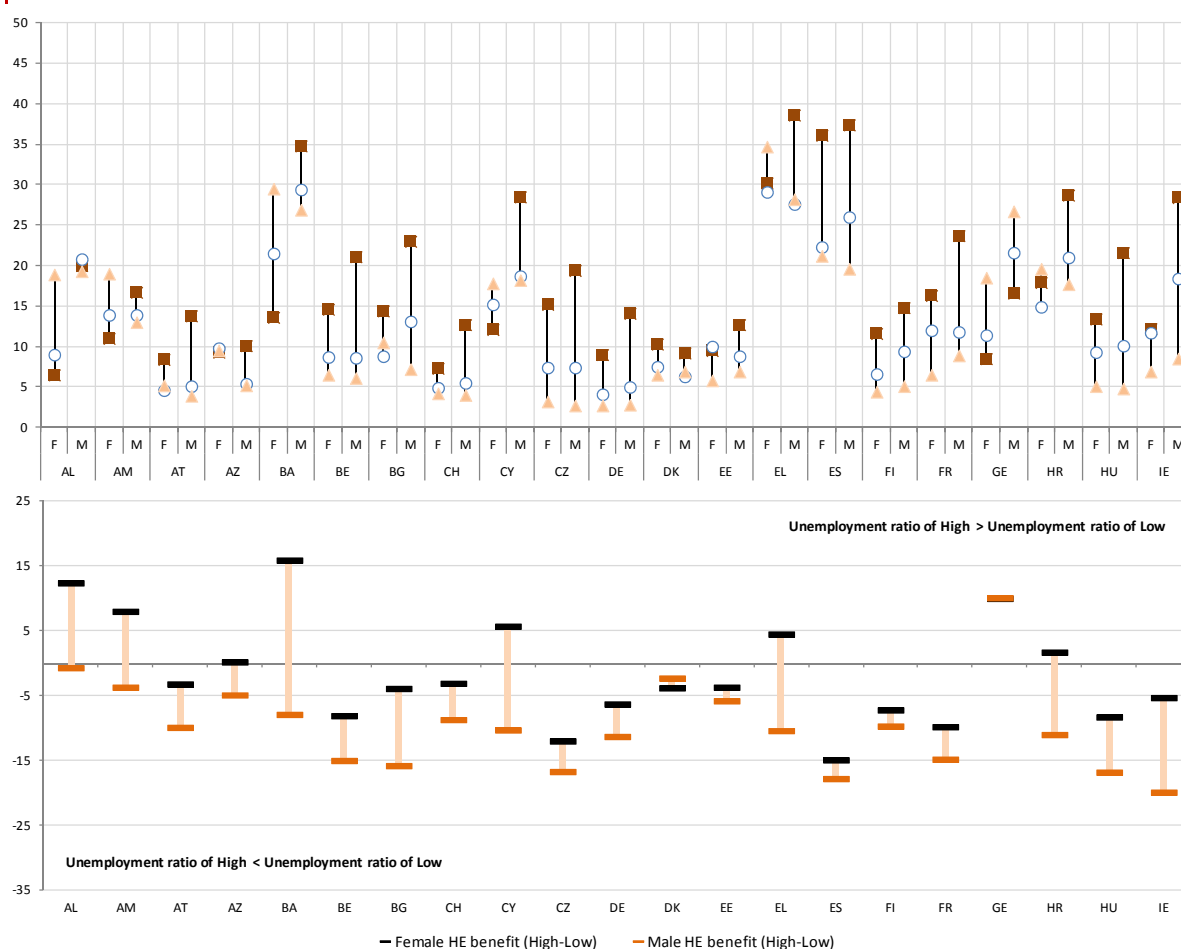
A second group of exceptions contains Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Cyprus, Portugal and Romania. In these countries, higher education graduates face higher unemployment ratios than young people with medium levels of education, and in some cases even have the worst position in the labour market in terms of employment prospects (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Romania). Thus, for this group it is also true that getting a higher education degree does not lead to a more secure labour market position. However, in contrast to the first group, the unemployment ratio of the highly educated has *increased* quite considerably in these countries since 2008, thus since the beginning of the economic crisis. This resulted in the relatively less secure labour market position of higher education graduates in comparison to those with medium (and sometimes even with low) educational attainment. In other words, these are the countries where a higher education degree could not provide a safeguard for young people against the impacts of the crisis.

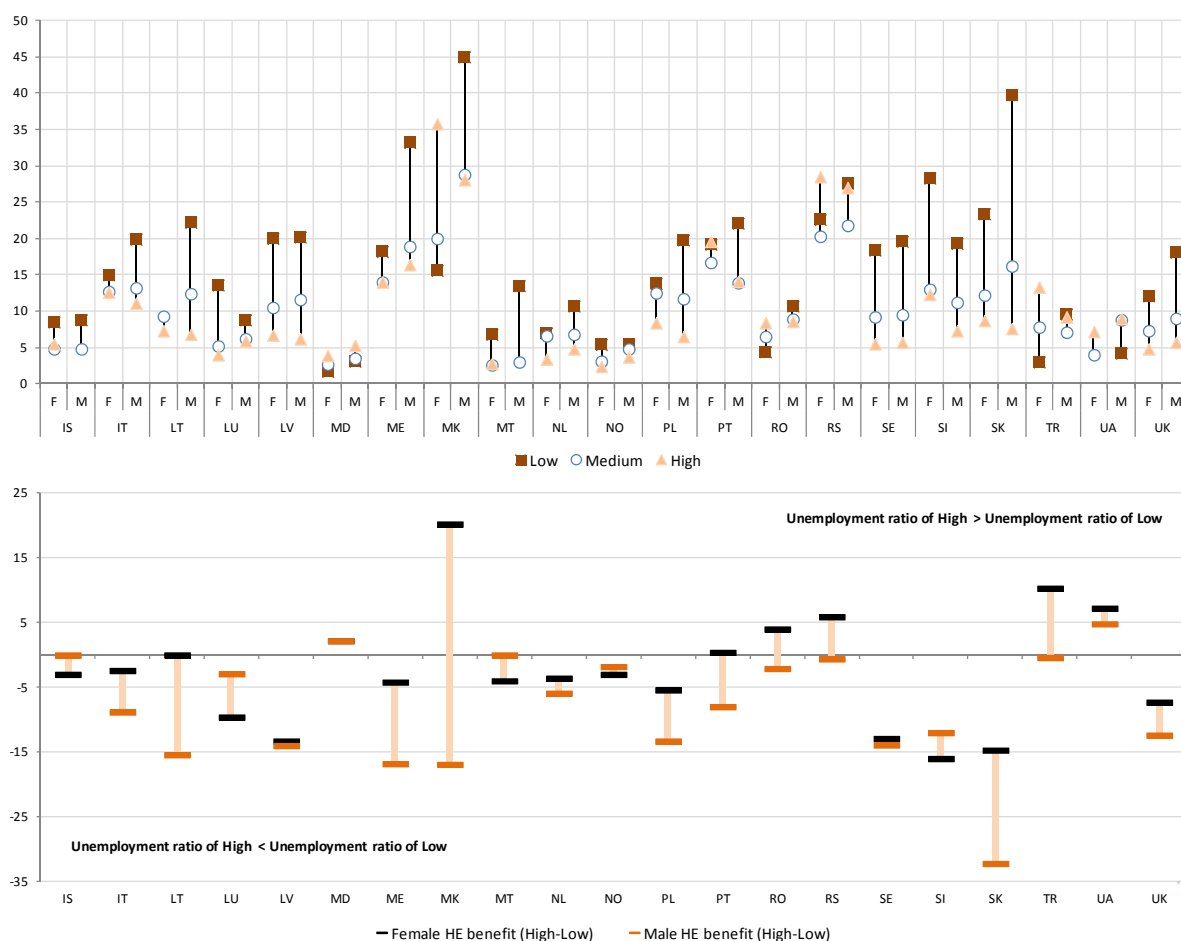
In fact, unemployment gaps between the high and the medium educated are narrowing all around the EHEA. Young tertiary education graduates have been the hardest hit by the economic crisis in comparison to their peers with medium and low educational attainment (see Figure 6.15). Between 2008 and 2013, the unemployment ratio of highly educated young people grew by more than 10.4 % yearly in half of the EHEA countries with available data, with the highest growth rates registered in Cyprus (36.2 %) and Greece and Spain (21.9 %). In comparison to those with medium level qualifications, the situation of tertiary education graduates worsened the most in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania and Montenegro.

The countries where the labour market position of the highly educated improved since 2008 are Turkey, Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Germany and Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, in Turkey, Albania and Georgia, the unemployment ratio remained at a rather high level, in particular with regards to higher education graduates. In contrast, Germany succeeded to further reduce its initially very low level of unemployment, and the decrease was substantial among the highly qualified, amounting to an annual growth rate of almost -7 %. The decrease among young graduates was even higher in Azerbaijan with an annual reduction of more than 9 %.

Looking at gender differences in unemployment ratios (Figure 6.16) also reveals important changes in the labour market.

**Figure 6.16: Unemployment ratio of people aged 20-34 by educational attainment level and by sex (%), 2013**





**Notes:** Data are based on small sample size in most medium and small countries.  
 "Female (resp. male) HE benefit" is the difference between the unemployment ratio of female (resp. male) having completed tertiary education and the unemployment ratio of female (resp. male) having completed at most lower secondary education.  
 Data are sorted by the total unemployment ratio of the highly educated.  
**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

In general, obtaining a higher level qualification lowers the probability of becoming unemployed for both women and men. However, the gap between the unemployment ratios of young people with high and low educational attainment is different for women and men. When looking at the EHEA region as a whole for the year 2013, while the unemployment ratios of young women and men were nearly identical among the highly educated, the difference is pronounced in the case of young people with low educational attainment. As Figure 6.16 also depicts, unlike observed in the 2012 Bologna Process Implementation Report, in almost all countries in the EHEA, men with low educational attainment have higher unemployment ratios than their female counterparts.

Two important conclusions can be drawn on this basis. First, education (still) reduces the gender gap in unemployment. Second, in contrast to pre-crisis years, obtaining a higher level qualification seems to improve men's employment prospects more than those of women. In fact, when looking at the gender gap in unemployment for the low and the highly educated, unemployment patterns are reversed in around half of the EHEA countries with available data (the male unemployment ratio is higher than the female one among the low skilled, but lower for the high skilled). In addition, in all but three EHEA countries (Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova), young males with higher education attainment have a lower unemployment ratio than young males with the lowest level of education. The pattern is not so clear for women.

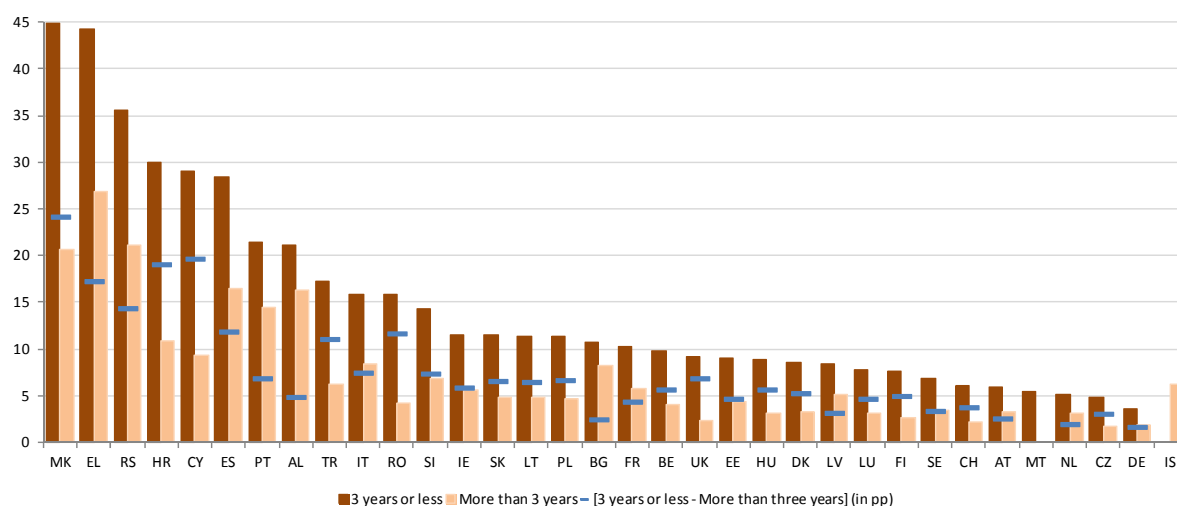
This illustrates well the impact of the crisis and how women and men have been differently affected. Labour markets are highly segmented across the EHEA: women and men – especially with lower levels of education – tend to be employed in different sectors. The economic crisis hit male-dominated sectors such as manufacturing and construction faster and more severely, so the male unemployment ratio increased faster (European Commission, 2013).

Certainly, gender patterns are not the same across the EHEA. In several countries, there are relatively large differences between the unemployment ratios of women and men even among the highly educated. For example in Georgia and the Netherlands, highly educated young women are less likely to become unemployed than highly educated young men. In contrast, in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey, highly educated young women have clearly worse employment prospects than their male peers.

It is also revealing to look more closely at differences among young people with high educational attainment. The transition from education into employment is a crucial stage in the life course of young people, which happens under conditions of declining employment opportunities and uncertainty. Poor early labour market experiences often have negative consequences for the whole professional career.

Figure 6.17 shows unemployment ratios of young tertiary education graduates by the number of years since graduation. The figure differentiates between young people who graduated three years or less before data collection (recent graduates), and those whose graduation was more than three years before data collection (experienced graduates). This indicator captures the labour market entry prospects of recent graduates in comparison to their more experienced peers.

**Figure 6.17: Unemployment ratio of tertiary education graduates aged 20-34, by the number of years since graduation (%), 2013**



	MK	EL	RS	HR	CY	ES	PT	AL	TR	IT	RO	SI	IE	SK	LT	PL	BG
3 years or less	44.9	44.2	35.5	30	29.1	28.4	21.4	21.2	17.3	15.9	15.9	14.3	11.5	11.5	11.4	11.4	10.8
More than 3 years	20.7	26.9	21.1	10.9	9.4	16.5	14.5	16.3	6.2	8.4	4.2	6.9	5.6	4.9	4.9	4.7	8.3
	FR	BE	UK	EE	HU	DK	LV	LU	FI	SE	CH	AT	MT	NL	CZ	DE	IS
3 years or less	10.2	9.8	9.2	9.1	8.8	8.6	8.4	7.8	7.7	6.9	6.0	5.9	5.4	5.1	4.8	3.6	:
More than 3 years	5.8	4.1	2.3	4.4	3.1	3.3	5.2	3.1	2.7	3.5	2.2	3.3	:	3.1	1.7	1.9	6.3

**Notes:** Data are based on small sample size in most medium and small countries. The category '3 years or less from graduation' excludes the first year after graduation.

Data are sorted by the unemployment ratio of recent graduates. The median value (10.8%) refers to the unemployment ratio of recent graduates.

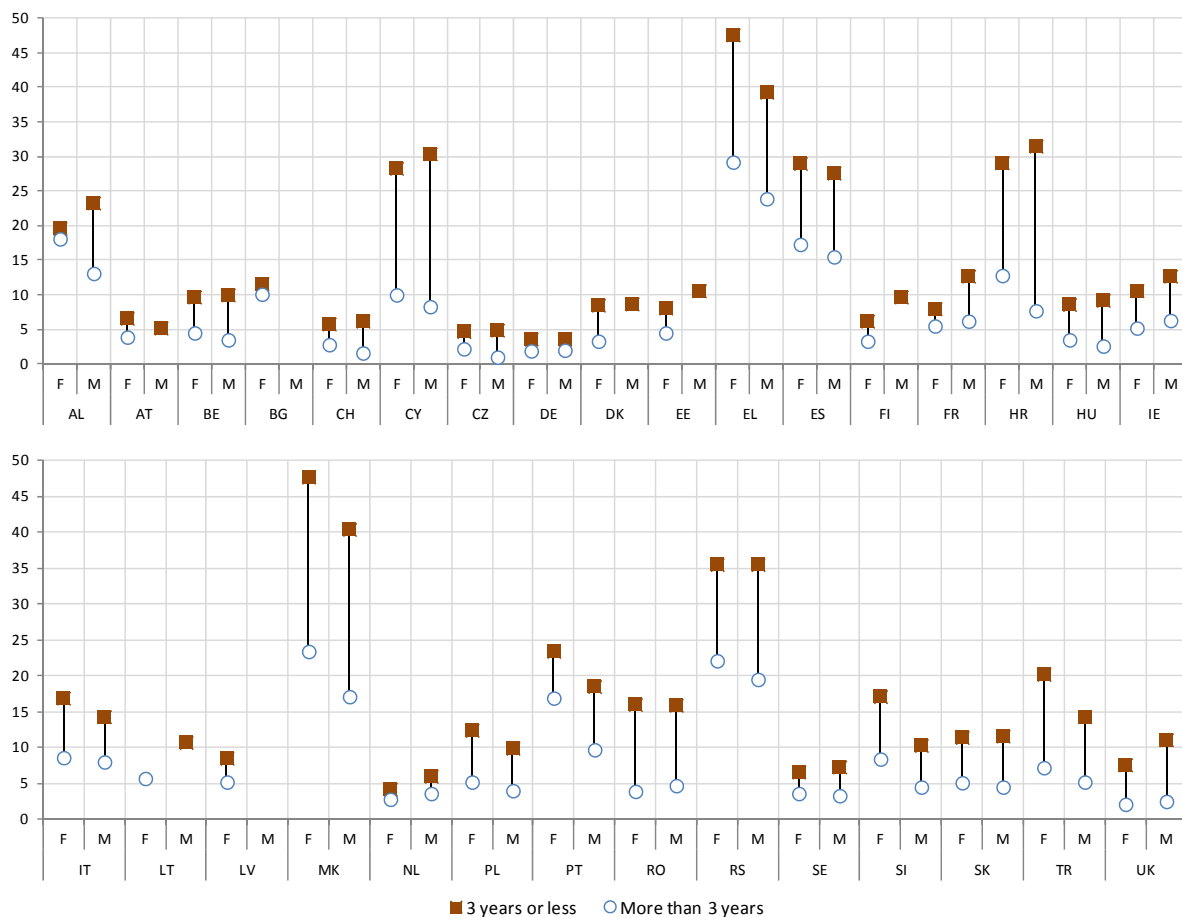
**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.



As Figure 6.17 depicts, the unemployment ratio of recent graduates is considerably higher than that of more experienced young people in all EHEA countries with available data. The unemployment ratio of graduates with less than three years of (potential) work experience is more than 10.8 % in half of the countries covered, which is more than double the median ratio of more experienced graduates (4.9 %). Countries with the largest gaps between recent and experienced graduates are the United Kingdom (9.2 % vs. 2.3 %), Romania (15.9 % vs. 4.2 %) and Cyprus (29.1 % vs. 9.4 %). Countries where recent graduates are the least disadvantaged in comparison to more experienced graduates are Albania (21.2 % vs. 16.3 %) and Portugal (21.4 % vs. 14.5 %). However, the gap is smaller in these countries not because the unemployment ratio of recent graduates is lower, but because the unemployment ratio of experienced young people is also relatively high.

As was shown above, the labour market situation of highly educated women and men is relatively similar. This statement remains true when looking at differences between recent and more experienced graduates (see Figure 6.18).

**Figure 6.18: Unemployment ratio of tertiary education graduates aged 20-34, by the number of years since graduation and by sex (%), 2013**



**Notes:** Data are based on small sample size in most medium and small countries.  
The category "3 years and less since graduation" excludes the first year after graduation.  
Data are sorted by the total unemployment ratio of recent graduates (graduated 3 years or less before data collection).

**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

In the large majority of countries with available data, the gap between more and less experienced young people is slightly bigger in the case of men than for women. Regarding the gender gap among recent graduates, among the countries with available and reliable data it exceeds 5 percentage points

in three countries, in each case to the disadvantage of females: Greece (47.6 % of females and 39.3 % of males), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (47.7 % and 40.4 %) and Turkey (20.2 % and 14.3 %).

Overall, while young people with tertiary qualifications have better employment prospects than their peers with lower educational attainment, they were the most hit by the economic crisis, and their relative position worsened in comparison to those with medium level qualifications. In addition, recent graduates still face difficulties in the labour market. Thus, the transition to the labour market has been far from smooth for many graduates in the EHEA.

### Income and educational attainment

The expected income of persons with tertiary qualifications also forms part of graduates' labour market prospects. The assumption is that higher educational attainment – and thus higher levels of investment in education – should be compensated by better paid jobs after graduation.

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**Figure 6.19: 25, 50 and 75 percentiles of annual gross income of employees in the EHEA by educational attainment, in PPS EUR, 2013**

[To be included]

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**Figure 6.20: Percentage difference between median annual gross income of employees with tertiary education and with lower levels of education, 2013**

[To be included]

### Qualification mismatches

Another common indicator of the labour market prospects of graduates is vertical mismatch, which occurs when there is a discrepancy between graduates' level of education or skills and the level of education or skills required by their job (Cedefop 2010, p. 13). Such vertical mismatch can occur in terms of *qualifications* or *skills*, and conclusions can be very different depending on which one of these two types of mismatches is being examined. For example, a recent analysis undertaken based on the Survey for Adult Skills (PIAAC) for a set of European Union member countries shows that the share of people who are both overqualified and overskilled is relatively low (around 15 % of the sample, see Flisi et al. 2014, p. 4.). A similar share of people was found to be overskilled but not overqualified, while twice as many were reported to be overqualified but not overskilled (Ibid.).

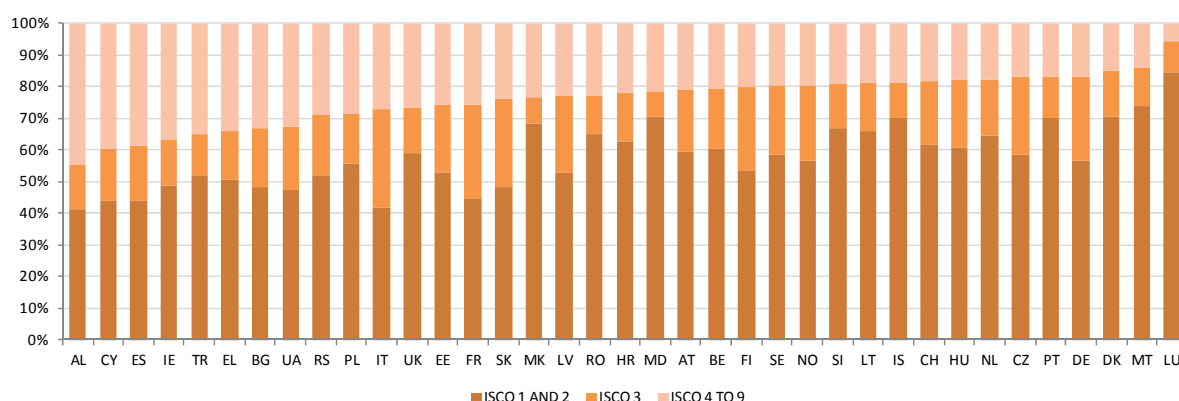
These scenarios suggest diverse forms of inefficiencies in how the education system responds to labour market needs. The relatively high proportion of overqualified but not overskilled people suggests that many stay too long in the education system while not receiving extra skills and competences. This can also indicate that tertiary education institutions were not able to provide graduates the skills necessary for a better labour market position. However, as was discussed above, factors influencing education mismatches – a sudden drop in labour market demand, labour market imperfections, discrimination, etc. – are not always in higher education institutions' control.

Qualification and skills mismatches can be measured based on several different indicators. In general, self-assessment is regarded as the most accurate measurement of vertical mismatch, particularly

skills mismatch. However, comparative survey data is not available for the EHEA region <sup>(6)</sup>. An alternative indicator assigns a fixed educational level to a given occupational category. While such indicator has many limitations (e.g. its rigidity or the need for detailed job-category lists which are not always feasible to compile), it can serve as a starting point for further analysis.

This sub-section looks at over-qualification rates defined as the percentage of young people with tertiary education occupying a post not regarded as necessitating a tertiary qualification (ISCO <sup>(7)</sup> occupation level 4 to 9). Figure 6.21 shows the distribution of people aged 25-34 with tertiary education qualifications and employed in ISCO 1 or 2 (legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals), in ISCO 3 (technicians and associate professionals) and in ISCO 4 to 9.

**Figure 6.21: Distribution of people with tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) aged 25-34 and employed in ISCO 1 or 2 (legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals), in ISCO 3 (technicians and associate professionals) and not in ISCO 1, 2 or 3 (%), 2013**



	Md	AL	CY	ES	IE	TR	EL	BG	UA	RS	PL	IT	UK	EE	FR	SK	MK	LV	RO
ISCO 1 or 2	58.3	41.4	44.0	44.2	48.6	51.9	50.7	48.3	47.4	52.1	55.6	41.8	58.7	53	44.5	48.1	68.2	53.0	64.8
ISCO 3	17.0	13.6	16.3	17.0	14.5	12.9	15.2	18.4	19.6	19.0	16.1	30.9	14.7	21.1	29.9	27.9	8.2	24.0	12.4
ISCO 4 to 9	21.9	45.0	39.7	38.8	36.9	35.2	34.1	33.3	32.9	28.9	28.3	27.3	26.6	25.8	25.6	24	23.6	23.0	22.8
	HR	MD	AT	BE	FI	SE	NO	SI	LT	IS	CH	HU	NL	CZ	PT	DE	DK	MT	LU
ISCO 1 or 2	62.5	70.5	59.5	60.5	53.1	58.3	56.4	66.7	66.1	70.1	61.9	60.8	64.4	58.6	70.1	56.8	70.6	73.7	84.3
ISCO 3	15.7	7.8	19.2	18.7	26.9	22.0	24.1	14.1	15.3	11.4	19.8	21.3	17.9	24.4	13	26.5	14.2	12.3	10.0
ISCO 4 to 9	21.9	21.7	21.3	20.8	20	19.7	19.5	19.2	18.6	18.6	18.3	17.9	17.8	17.0	16.9	16.7	15.1	14.0	5.7

Notes: ISCO 0 (armed forces) and ISCO missing excluded.

Data are sorted by the percentage of people working in ISCO 4 to 9.

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

In 2013, the median over-qualification rate was 21.9 %. This means that in half of the countries, more than one fifth of young graduates were employed in occupations for which a lower qualification level should be sufficient. The countries with the highest over-qualification rates (above 30 %) were Albania (45 %), Cyprus (39.7 %), Spain (38.8%), Ireland (36.9 %), Turkey (35.2 %), Greece (34.1 %), Bulgaria (33.3 %) and Ukraine (32.9 %). In contrast, the countries with relatively low over-qualification rates (below 15 %) are Malta (14 %) and Luxembourg (5.7 %).

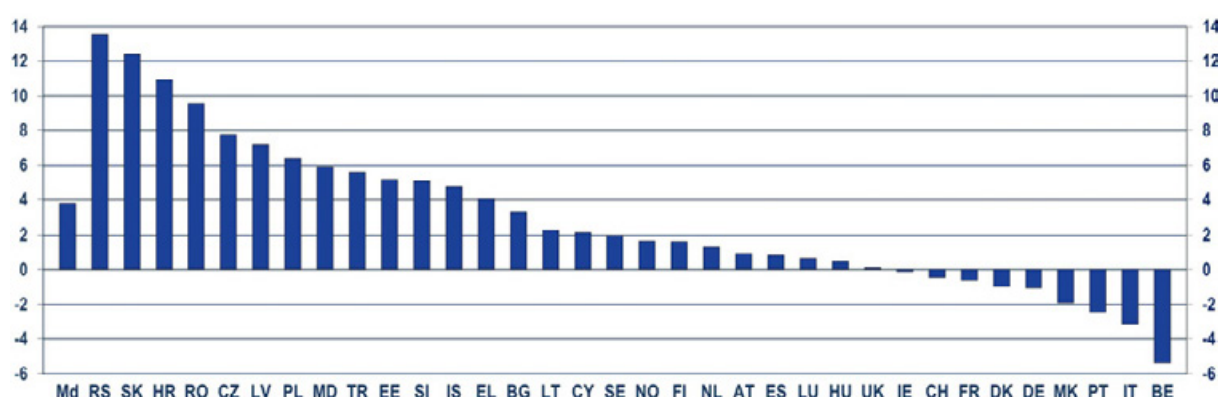
<sup>(6)</sup> The EUROGRADUATE feasibility study is currently exploring if and whether a sustainable study on Europe's higher education graduates could be established. The report is expected to be completed by October 2015. See more information at: <http://www.eurograduate.eu/>.

<sup>(7)</sup> International Standard Classification of Occupations; see the Glossary and Methodological Notes for more details.

In comparison to 2010, there are more countries on this list with over-qualification rates above 30 % and fewer with over-qualification rates below 15 %. Comparing median values between 2010 and 2013 <sup>(8)</sup> also shows an increase of people with tertiary education who are overqualified for their job. This means that in general, the proportion of overqualified tertiary education graduates grew in EHEA countries since 2010. Thus, not only has the unemployment ratio of highly educated young people increased since the economic crisis, but also those who are in employment are now more likely to accept jobs for which they are overqualified. Countries with high over-qualification rates also tend to have relatively high unemployment ratios for the highly educated (see Figure 6.14). This implies that when young graduates face difficulties in finding jobs that match their qualifications, they are more likely to accept jobs requiring lower levels of qualifications.

Figure 6.22 illustrates the change in the share of overqualified young graduates between 2010 and 2013 by country. As the figure shows, the share of overqualified young graduates grew considerably (by more than 10 percentage points) in Serbia, Slovakia and Croatia. In contrast, the largest decrease in the share of overqualified graduates took place in Belgium.

**Figure 6.22: Change in percentage points of the share of people with tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) aged 25-34 and not employed in ISCO 1, 2 or 3, 2010 to 2013**



	Md	RS	SK	HR	RO	CZ	LV	PL	MD	TR	EE	SI	IS	EL	BG	LT	CY	SE
2010	18.6	15.3	11.6	11.0	13.2	9.2	15.8	21.9	15.8	29.6	20.6	14.1	13.9	30.1	30.0	16.3	37.6	17.7
2013	22.4	28.9	24.0	21.9	22.8	17.0	23.0	28.3	21.7	35.2	25.8	19.2	18.6	34.1	33.3	18.6	39.7	19.7
Change	3.8	13.6	12.4	10.9	9.6	7.8	7.2	6.4	5.9	5.6	5.2	5.1	4.7	4.0	3.3	2.3	2.1	2.0

	NO	FI	NL	AT	ES	LU	HU	UK	IE	CH	FR	DK	DE	MK	PT	IT	BE
2010	17.8	18.4	16.5	20.4	38.0	5.1	17.5	26.5	37.0	18.7	26.2	16.1	17.8	25.5	19.4	30.4	26.2
2013	19.5	20.0	17.8	21.3	38.8	5.7	17.9	26.6	36.9	18.3	25.6	15.1	16.7	23.6	16.9	27.3	20.8
Change	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.6	-1.0	-1.1	-1.9	-2.5	-3.1	-5.4

Notes: Data are sorted by the change in percentage points between 2010 and 2013.

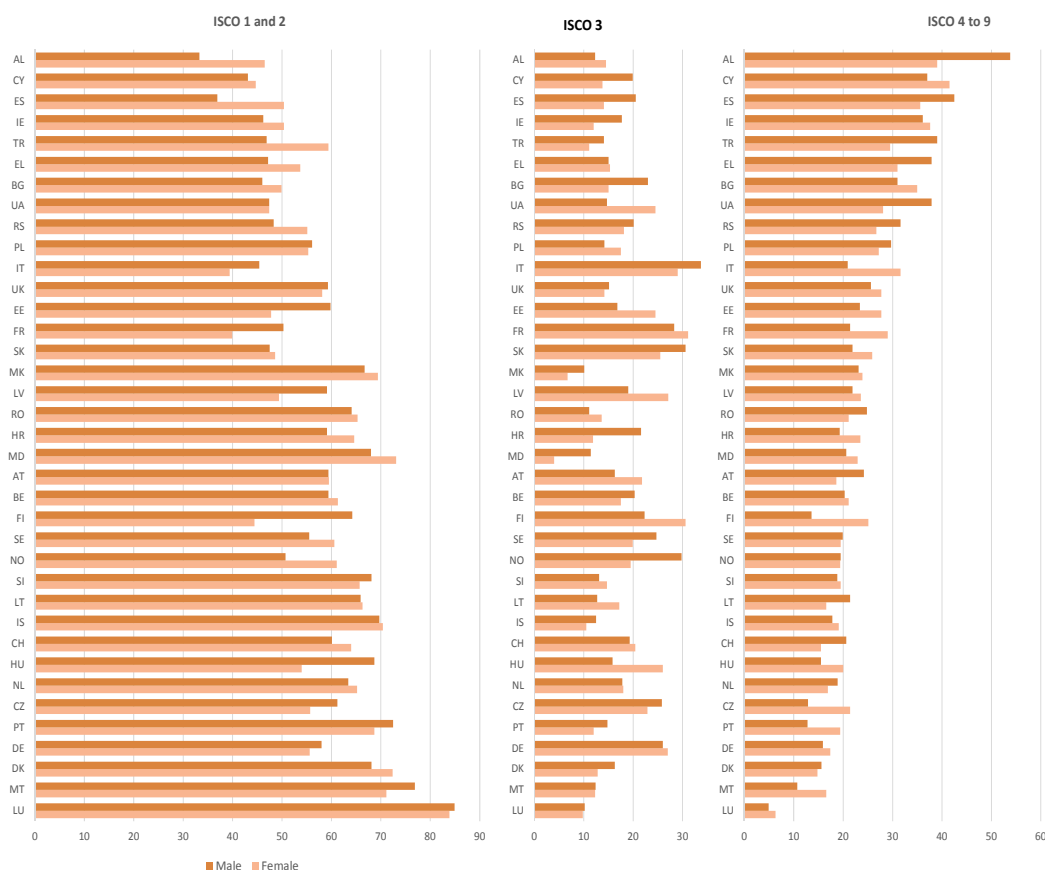
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Differences between the over-qualification rates of female and male graduates are relatively small, though women are more likely to get jobs under the level of their qualifications (see Figure 6.23). However, countries differ a lot in this regard. The biggest differences between female and male over-qualification rates are on the one hand in Albania, Ukraine, Switzerland, Turkey and Austria (with higher over-qualification rates for men) and on the other hand in Finland, the Czech Republic, Portugal and Italy (with higher over-qualification rates for women). It is interesting to note, however, that there

<sup>(8)</sup> For the comparison, Albania, Malta and Ukraine were excluded from the 2013 sample (no data were available for these countries in 2010).

are more countries with higher over-qualification rates for women, and the differences tend to be bigger between the sexes in these cases than in countries with higher over-qualification rates for men.

**Figure 6.23: Distribution of people with tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) aged 25-34 and employed in ISCO 1 or 2 (legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals), in ISCO 3 (technicians and associate professionals) and not in ISCO 1, 2 or 3, by sex (%), 2013**



**Notes:** ISCO 0 (armed forces) and ISCO missing excluded.

Data are not reliable for Croatia (ISCO 3, male and female, ISCO 4 to 9, male), Luxembourg and Malta (ISCO 4 to 9, male), and Albania (ISCO 3, male and female).

Data are sorted by the total percentage of people not working in ISCO 1, 2 or 3.

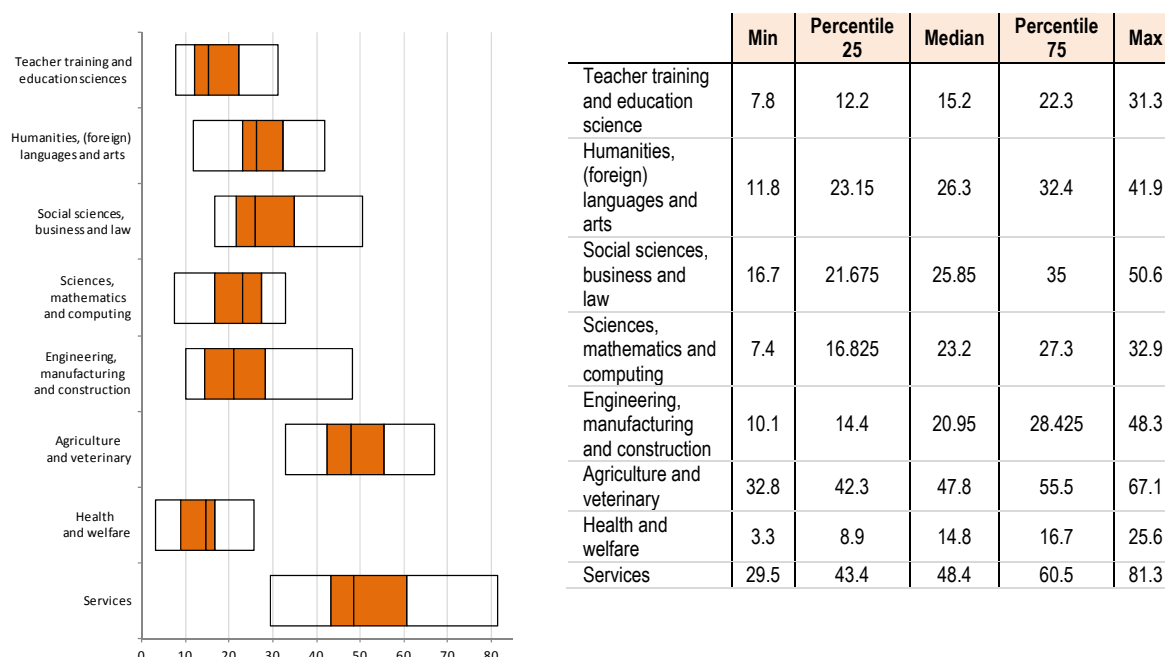
**Source:** Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Over-qualification rates might also be very different for young people graduating in different study fields. Figure 6.24 depicts the percentage of young graduates who are vertically mismatched by field of study. Similarly to what was found in the 2012 Bologna Implementation Report, data shows that young people with a qualification in services <sup>(9)</sup> and in agriculture and veterinary are the most likely to take up jobs under their qualification level: in services, more than 48.4 % of graduates are overqualified in this field in half of the countries covered, while the median rate is 47.8 % in agriculture and veterinary <sup>(10)</sup>. However, differences between countries are substantial: over-qualification rates in services range from 29.5 % (Italy) to 81.3 % (Cyprus), and in agriculture and veterinary from 32.8 % (Turkey) to 67.1 % (Switzerland).

<sup>(9)</sup> "Services" include a wide range of occupations from restaurant and tourism to defence and military services (for more details, see the ISCED classification for fields of education, e.g. Andersson and Olsson, 1999).

<sup>(10)</sup> For the country coverage, see the Glossary and methodological note.

**Figure 6.24: Percentage of people aged 25-34 with tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) who are vertically mismatched (not in ISCO 1, 2 or 3) by field of study, 2013**



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Again similarly to the findings of the previous report, study fields with the lowest over-qualification rates are health and welfare (median: 14.8 %) and teacher training and education science (median: 15.2 %). However, countries again show some variation. Over-qualification rates in health and welfare range from 3.3 % (Turkey) to 25.6 % (Ireland); in teacher training and education science from 7.8 % (Germany) to 31.3 % (Cyprus). However, it has to be stressed again that data are not available for all countries in all study fields. In addition, limitations of the figures stemming from potential discrepancies between qualifications and the skill levels as well as from the reliance on the ISCO classification have to be kept in mind.

Thus, while in general the labour market position of higher education graduates weakened since the beginning of the crisis, countries still need to respond to diverse challenges. The next section presents the main directions of employability policies in the EHEA.

## 6.2.2. Policies for enhancing graduates' employability

There is a broad range of policies influencing the employability of graduates. As described by the policy recommendations of the European Students' Union (ESU), most areas discussed in this report have relevance for the labour market prospects of higher education graduates, including Bologna tools like qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes, the system of ECTS, Diploma Supplements or the recognition of prior learning (ESU 2014, pp. 51-54).

When looking at policies with the primary aim of improving graduates' employability prospects, two main policy perspectives can be distinguished. First, highlighting the needs of the labour market focuses more on the demand-side: situations to what higher education institutions need to respond. Second, an emphasis on employable graduates implies a more supply-side perspective: what higher education institutions need to achieve in terms of output, e.g. providing graduates with a set of relevant skills and competences. In this regard, most discussions centre on the role of higher education institutions and how they should adapt to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge societies.



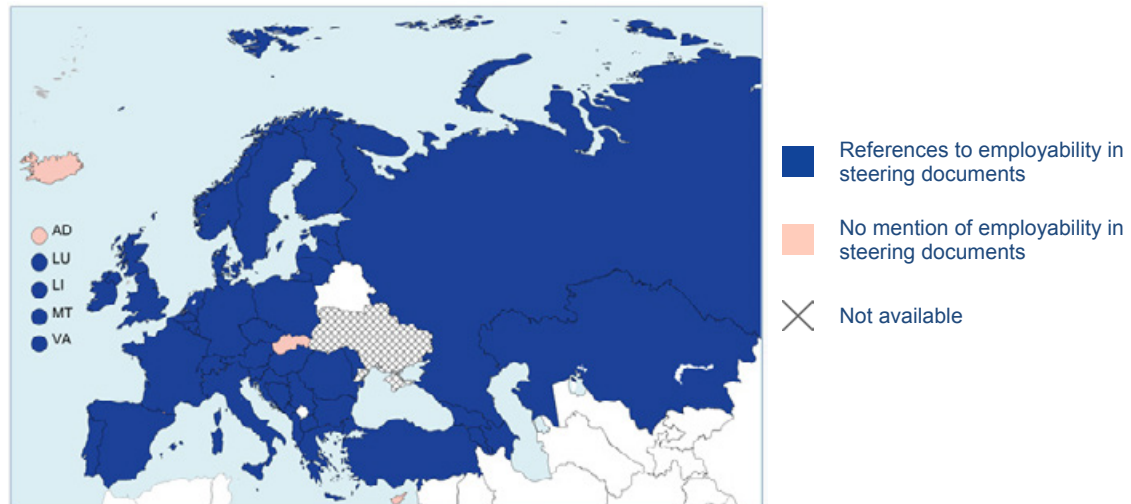
The role of educational authorities in this context is to facilitate the transformation of their higher education sector. Therefore, since this report focuses on national policy approaches, it can only present a limited picture on the on-going transformations.

Nevertheless, after presenting a general picture on the place of employability in higher education steering documents, this section shows examples of both demand-side and supply-side policy approaches. Regarding the objective of responding to labour market needs, an important question is where higher education institutions can look for relevant labour market information. The two most widespread possibilities are labour market and skills forecasting on the one hand, and involving labour market representatives (i.e. employers) in higher education governance on the other. Concerning graduates' adequate skills, one prevalent way to ensure that graduates gain the necessary competences is to include work placements in higher education programmes. In addition, career guidance services can equip students with important competences for their job search. Finally, this section also looks at how the employability of graduates is monitored and evaluated in EHEA countries and whether there are any incentives given to higher education institutions linked to their performance.

## **Policy framework**

The objective of meeting labour market needs and enhancing graduates' employability is mentioned in higher education steering documents in the vast majority of EHEA countries, the exceptions being Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland and Slovakia (Figure 6.25). In several countries (e.g. in Austria, France, Georgia, or Greece), improving the employability of graduates forms part of higher education institutions' mission. Others require higher education institutions to prove in the accreditation process that their programmes respond to labour market needs. Many countries encourage higher education institutions to include labour market information (based on forecasts or through the involvement of employers) when defining learning outcomes, developing or changing the content of programmes, or even managing the number of students in different study fields. Similarly, many emphasise the importance of specific measures such as making sure that students can get an easy access to work placements or counselling and career guidance services.

**Figure 6.25: References to employability in steering documents, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

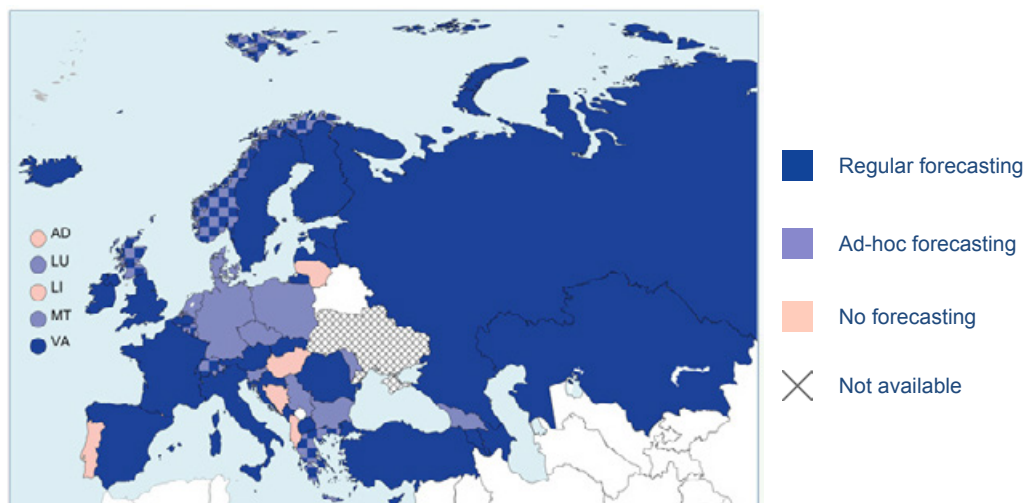
However, almost all EHEA countries aim to enhance the employability of graduates in general, without specific reference to underrepresented groups. Only in a few cases (e.g. in Estonia or Hungary) do higher education steering documents mention particular underrepresented groups in the context of employability. This shows that while more countries focus on facilitating access to higher education for people from underrepresented groups or even on providing measures to make sure that they complete their studies, the social dimension of graduates' employability is not prominent in the higher education policy agenda. Nevertheless, it also has to be noted that while steering documents might not refer to underrepresented groups, concrete policy measures can still target specific groups of students. For example, as will be shown below, targeted career guidance services exist in several EHEA countries.

### **Labour-market and skills forecasting as an information source**

In order to be able to respond to labour market demand, governments and higher education institutions need information on labour market trends. Despite its limitations (see European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2014), labour market forecasting is a common way to anticipate labour market needs in terms of skills demand and supply. On the one hand, labour market forecasting can inform policy planning, for example the planning and designing of study programmes, the fixing of the number of state funded places, or the allocation of public funding. On the other hand, guidance and information services can use labour market information to guide (potential) students in orienting themselves towards more 'demanded' fields of study. Labour market forecasting is usually conducted by occupation and qualification levels.

In the majority of EHEA countries, labour market and skills forecasting is undertaken regularly at national level (Figure 6.26). Such forecasting exercises are conducted on an ad hoc basis in 17 education systems, sometimes in addition to the regular forecast in place. There is no labour market forecasting in Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Lithuania and Portugal. In about one third of EHEA countries, regular labour market and skills forecasting is also undertaken at regional level, in addition to the national one.

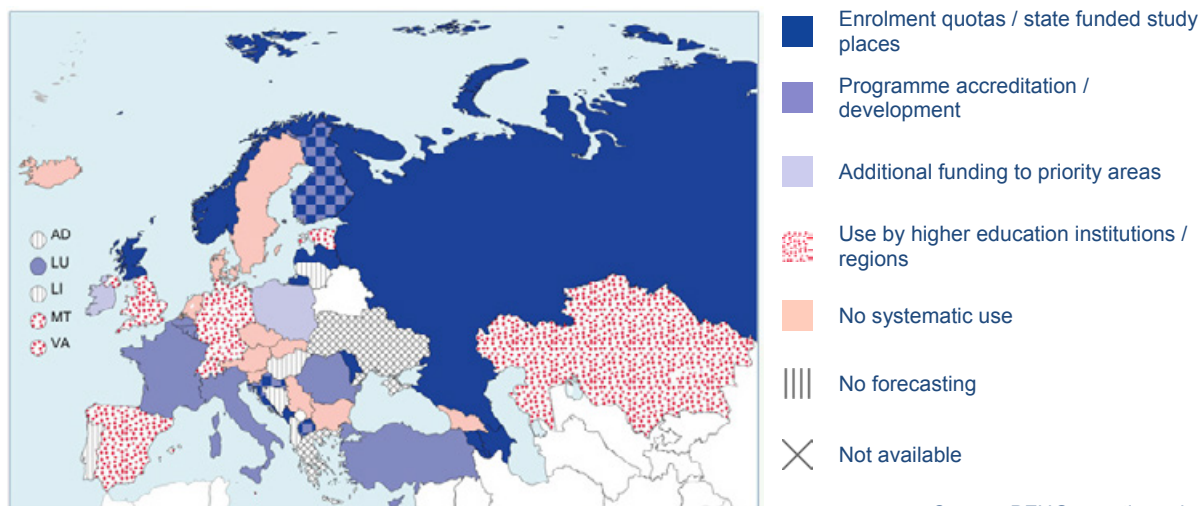
**Figure 6.26: Labour-market and skills forecasting at national level, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Most countries conducting labour market forecasts make efforts to take their results into account in higher education planning (see Figure 6.27). In 11 countries, labour market information is used to determine enrolment quotas or state-funded study places in all or certain higher education study fields. In ten EHEA countries, such forecasts are taken into account when deciding on the accreditation of new study programmes and/or to adapt the content of existing programmes to labour market needs. Countries also reported on how labour market forecasts are used to identify priority areas for additional funding (Ireland and Poland). In several countries, while labour market forecasts are not used systematically at national level, regional authorities (e.g. the *Länder* in Germany) or higher education institutions rely on them in programme planning or career guidance provision.

**Figure 6.27: Using labour-market and skills forecasting in planning, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Cooperation between employers and higher education institutions

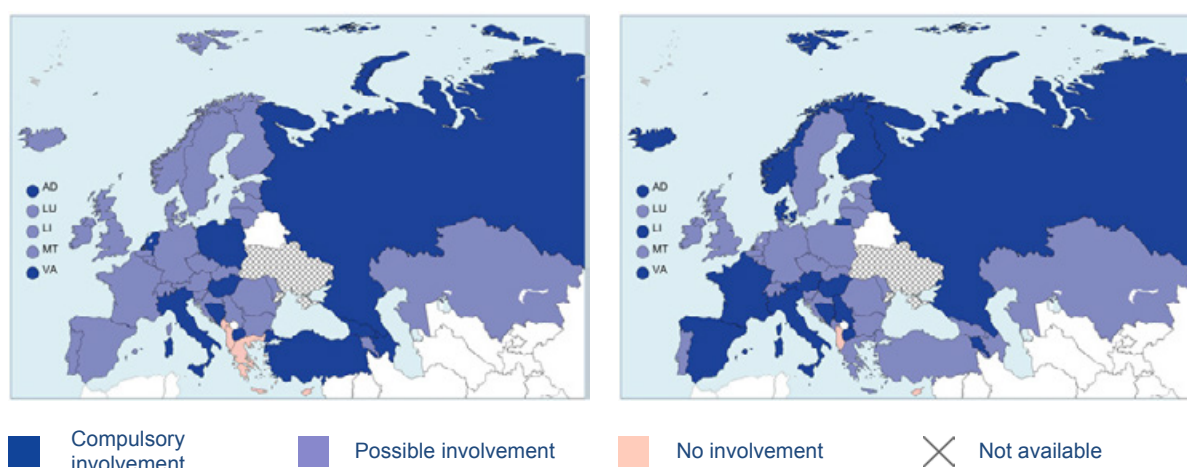
The Bucharest Communiqué regards cooperation between employers and higher education institutions as an important means to enhance the employability of higher education graduates. Indeed, consulting or involving employers, employers' organisations and business representatives in the various steps of developing and evaluating higher education study programmes is a direct and more decentralised mechanism through which labour market information can be included in higher education. Employers and business representatives are aware of the skills graduates need when entering the labour market<sup>(11)</sup>, and higher education institutions can use this knowledge when designing degree programmes.

Looking at the most important areas in which employers can be involved in higher education (curriculum development and participation in higher education institutions' decision-making bodies), it appears that employers do participate in higher education planning and governance across the EHEA. A common way to include employers is through quality assurance: in many countries, employers are required to participate in the accreditation and evaluation of higher education programmes. Such participation is analysed in Chapter 3 in more detail.

**Figure 6.28: Involvement of employers in higher education planning and management, 2013/14**

### A. Curriculum development

### B. Higher education institutions' decision-making bodies



Source: BFUG questionnaire

However, the extent of employers' participation differs across the EHEA. Regarding curriculum development, 12 countries make it compulsory for employers to participate in the design or revision of curricula (see Figure 6.28.A). In addition, in some countries, employers have to be involved in curriculum development in the case of certain types of higher education institutions (for example in the case of Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschule*) in Austria). Nevertheless, even in countries where their participation is not mandatory, employers' involvement can be widespread. Some countries have also created special degree programmes, designed principally to meet employers' demands, where curricula are developed with close cooperation with employers. Examples include the professional diploma in Albania, the professional bachelor degree (*licence professionnelle*) in France, or foundation degrees in the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland). In Ireland, in the

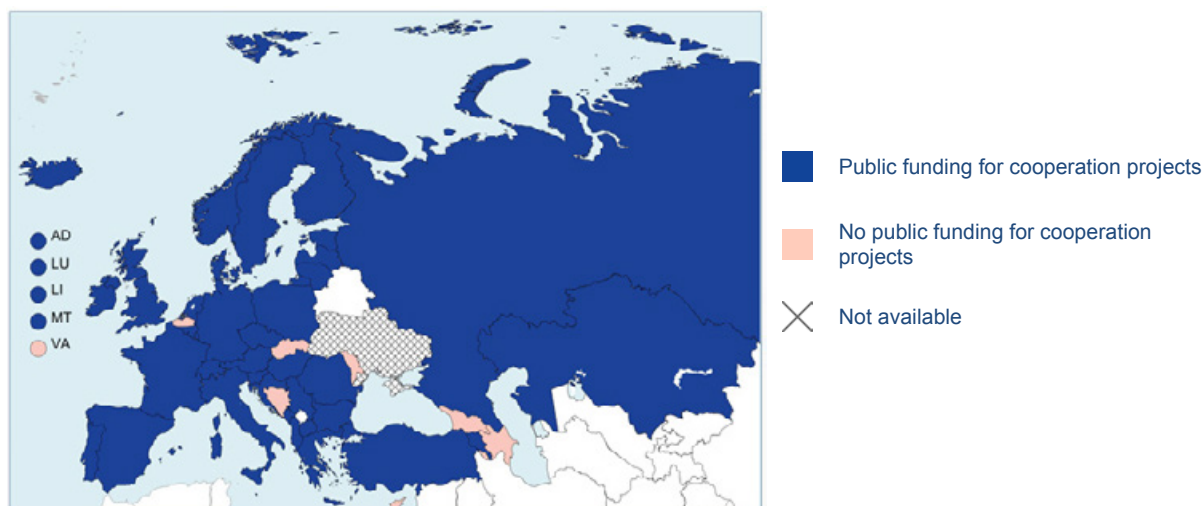
<sup>(11)</sup> On the relative importance of professional and various generic skills for employers, see for example Humburg, van der Velden and Verhagen, 2013.

framework of the ICT Skills Conversion programme, employers are involved in the development and delivery of specific programmes to address skills gaps in the economy.

Seventeen countries make it compulsory for higher education institutions to include employers in higher education institutions' governing bodies (Figure 6.28.B). Furthermore, in some countries, employers are also involved in various national (e.g. in Croatia, France, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden or the United Kingdom (Scotland)), regional (e.g. in Italy) or sectoral (e.g. in Montenegro) decision-making bodies.

Employers' participation can be facilitated by university-business cooperation projects, where higher education institutions and business organisations are developing innovative projects together. Through financial means, governments can provide incentives to one or both parties to participate in such projects. As Figure 6.29 shows, university-business cooperation projects receive some form of public funding in the large majority of EHEA countries. A number of countries (e.g. Croatia, Denmark, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, and Norway) established specific innovation funds from which university-business cooperation projects are funded directly. Alternatively, specialised government agencies can receive the task of financing such projects (e.g. in Sweden and Switzerland). In Sweden, the government also finances Innovation Offices at some universities. Ireland and Liechtenstein issue innovation vouchers to facilitate collaboration between enterprises and higher education institutions.

**Figure 6.29: Public funding for university-business cooperation projects, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Practical training and work placements

Public funds are also often allocated to finance work placements for students. Practical training is regarded as a key element in enhancing graduates' employability, especially when it comes to students from underrepresented groups. Through such practical training and work placements, students have the possibility of acquiring the skills demanded by employers.

Unfortunately, data on students' participation rates in practical training are not available in many EHEA countries. Countries reporting a high percentage of participation rates (over 70 %) for both cycles are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Russia. In the first cycle, participation is reported to be high in Andorra, Latvia and Romania. Very low participation rates (under 10 %) are reported from Cyprus, Iceland and Montenegro.



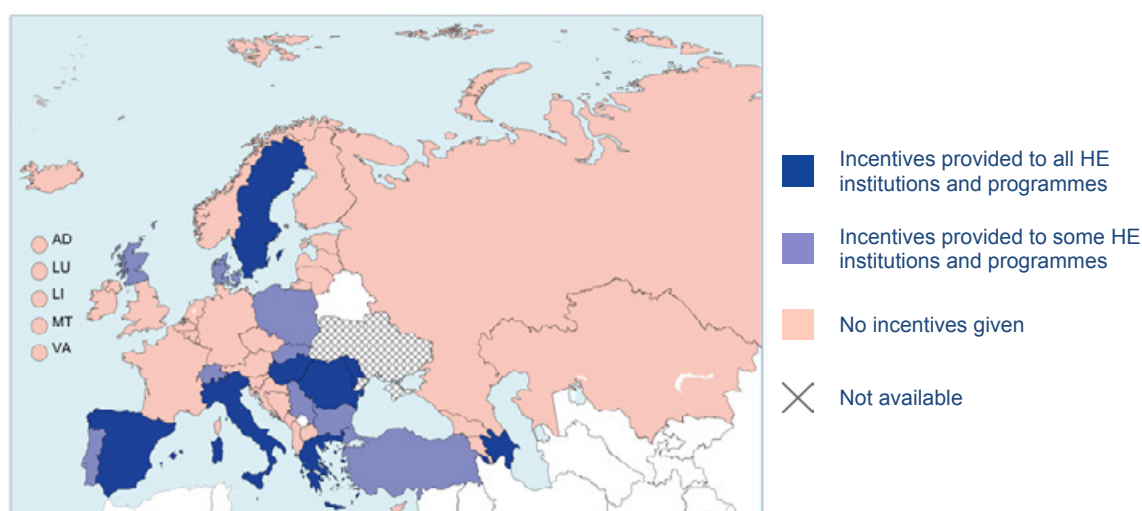
In the European Union (EU), Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications <sup>(12)</sup> regulates embedding practical training into certain, professionally oriented study programmes (e.g. for medical or pharmaceutical studies). Many non-EU member countries also apply similar regulations in some, more practice-oriented study fields. However, beyond these regulated professions, higher education institutions are mostly free to decide whether they include such structured work experiences in their study programmes.

Nevertheless, some countries make the inclusion of work placements compulsory for certain types of institutions or programmes. For example, in Denmark, practical training is required at Academies of Professional Higher Education and University Colleges for both first and second cycle students; in Austria, this is the case for Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschule*). Similarly, in Finland, all first cycle Polytechnic degrees should include work placements. Practical training is mandatory in Romania in the first cycle and in Portugal for short-cycle programmes. In France, gaining professional experience is compulsory for short cycle programmes, as well as for professionally-oriented *licence* and master programmes.

Practical training is an obligatory element of all higher education programmes in Azerbaijan, Moldova, Russia and Slovenia. In Montenegro, such an obligation is included in the draft legislation. In Kazakhstan, all students have the right to participate in practical training during their studies.

Besides regulations, another way in which authorities can encourage the inclusion of work placements in higher education study programmes is through the provision of public funding. Within the EHEA, 17 countries reported providing incentives to some or all higher education institutions to increase the number of available internships (Figure 6.30). Such incentives can be financial, when authorities fund or share the costs of internship programmes, even in cases where work placements are not compulsory (e.g. in Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom (Scotland)). Alternatively, authorities can contribute to the organisation and management of internships (e.g. in Bulgaria).

**Figure 6.30: Incentives given to institutions for work placements, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

In addition to obliging or encouraging higher education institutions to include such shorter work placements in study programmes, several countries established so-called 'dual' degrees that combine

<sup>(12)</sup> Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.



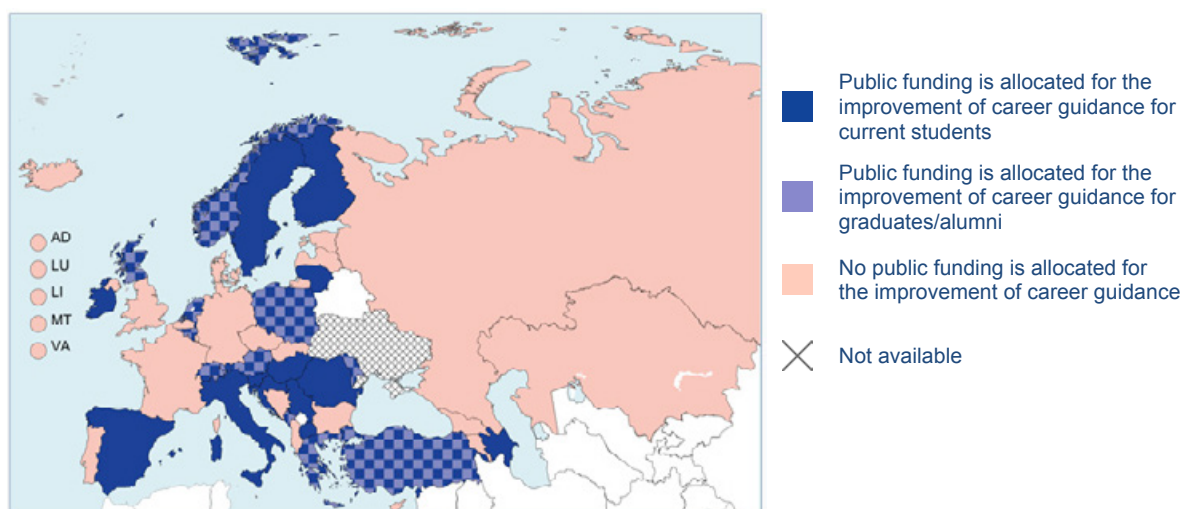
theoretical studies in higher education institutions with professional experience gained at work. In this system, higher education institutions and enterprises share the responsibility for equipping students with relevant skills and competences. Such dual degree programmes exist, for example, in the French Community of Belgium, Germany, France, Poland and Spain.

## Career guidance

Providing labour market information, career guidance or mentoring to students is another measure to enhance the employability of graduates. Career guidance is regarded as particularly important for non-traditional learners, especially if it is provided throughout the whole student lifecycle.

Half of the higher education systems within the EHEA reported allocating public funding to improve career guidance services for current students in higher education institutions (Figure 6.31). Such career guidance is extended to graduates and/or alumni in eleven higher education systems. In most cases, however, the funding higher education institutions receive is part of a general budget, and it is up to higher education institutions themselves to designate a part of such funds to the improvement of career guidance services.

**Figure 6.31: Allocation of public funding to improve career guidance services in higher education institutions, 2013/14**

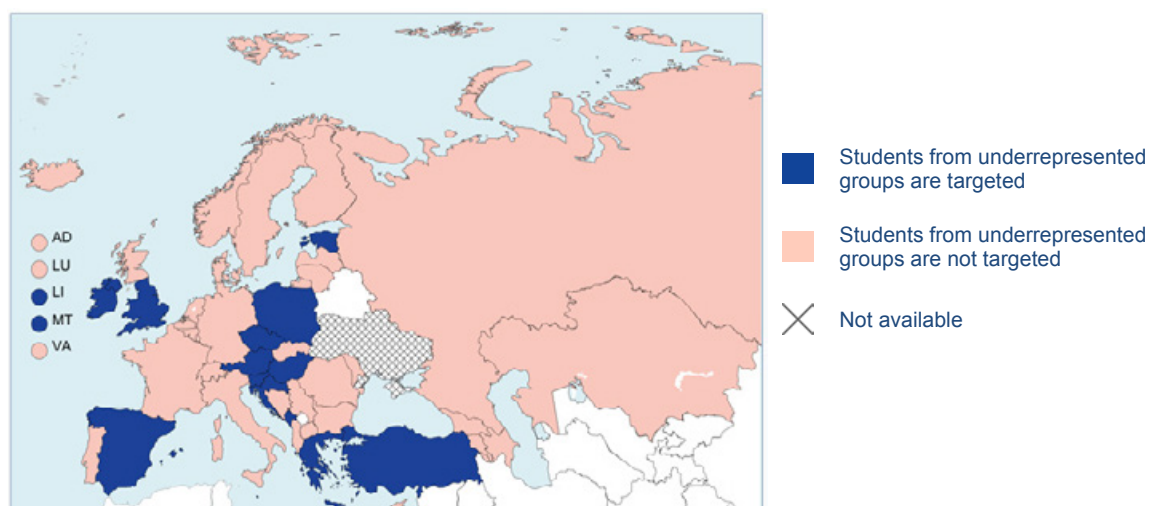


Source: BFUG questionnaire

More direct funding is made available for career guidance in Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland and Slovenia. In Greece, Innovation and Liaison offices, financed directly by public funds, have the role of providing career guidance services to students. In the other countries, public funding is allocated explicitly for the improvement of career guidance services via public tenders (Hungary), state projects (Lithuania), national strategies (Moldova), or specific national and European funds (Poland and Slovenia).

However, students from underrepresented groups are rarely targeted by career guidance services within the EHEA: only fifteen education systems reported having targeted career guidance services in higher education institutions (Figure 6.32). In almost all of them, career guidance services target students with disabilities. Gender counselling is available in Estonia and Liechtenstein. In Malta, guidance services target disadvantaged areas.

**Figure 6.32: Targeted career guidance services for students from underrepresented groups, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Monitoring and evaluation

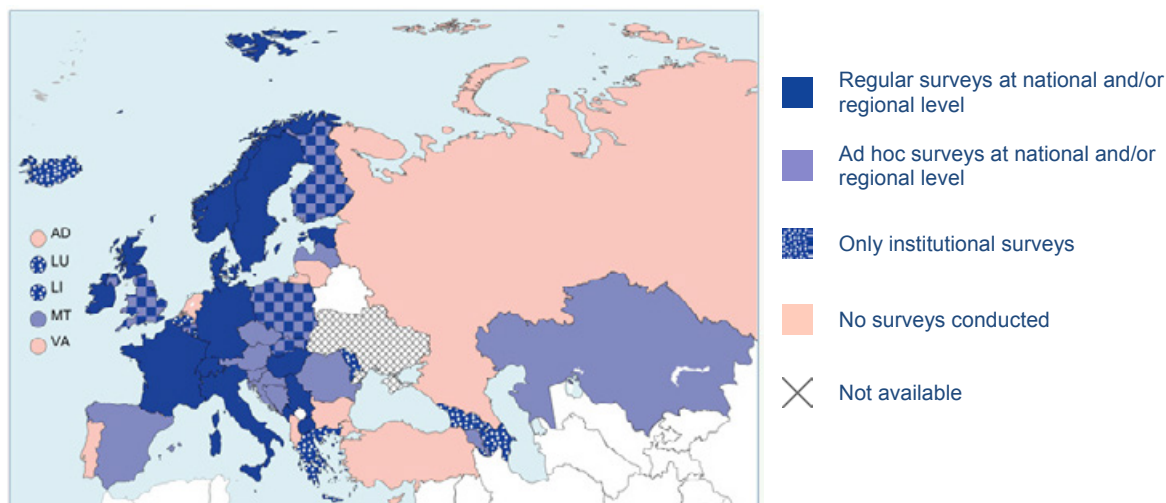
Higher education institutions' employability performance is often subject to external evaluation. The most common evaluation process is external quality assurance, where the employability of graduates is one of many criteria. More information on quality assurance can be found in Chapter 3. In addition, several countries have established procedures of evaluating how well higher education institutions perform in 'producing' employable graduates.

Measuring employability performance is less straightforward than calculating other performance indicators. Evaluations often rely on student and graduate surveys, where students and/or graduates can evaluate their study programme as well as can provide details on their transition to the labour market. Alternatively, employers' evaluations can also inform policy-making (e.g. this is the case in Montenegro).

Graduate surveys relying on the self-assessment of graduates are valuable tools for evaluating the employability of higher education graduates. Career tracking surveys do not only provide the means to measure the percentage of graduates finding employment after graduation, but they are also able to describe the quality of jobs, the length of the job search period, graduates' job satisfaction, and the match between graduates' skills and job requirements (see Teichler, 2011). Furthermore, based on graduate surveys, it is possible to conduct analyses on the relative impact of graduates' individual characteristics and the higher education programme they attended (Ibid.). This way, such surveys are useful tools for a multi-dimensional evaluation of employability in higher education.

Graduate surveys are organised at least from time to time in the large majority of EHEA countries (Figure 6.33). At the national and/or regional level, regular surveys are conducted in 19 education systems, while ad hoc surveys take place in 16, sometimes in parallel to the regular one. There are only institutional surveys in eight EHEA countries. Nevertheless, the number of countries establishing regular graduate surveys is increasing fast, with many countries introducing such a system in recent years. Currently, a regular tracking system is being developed in Croatia and Poland.

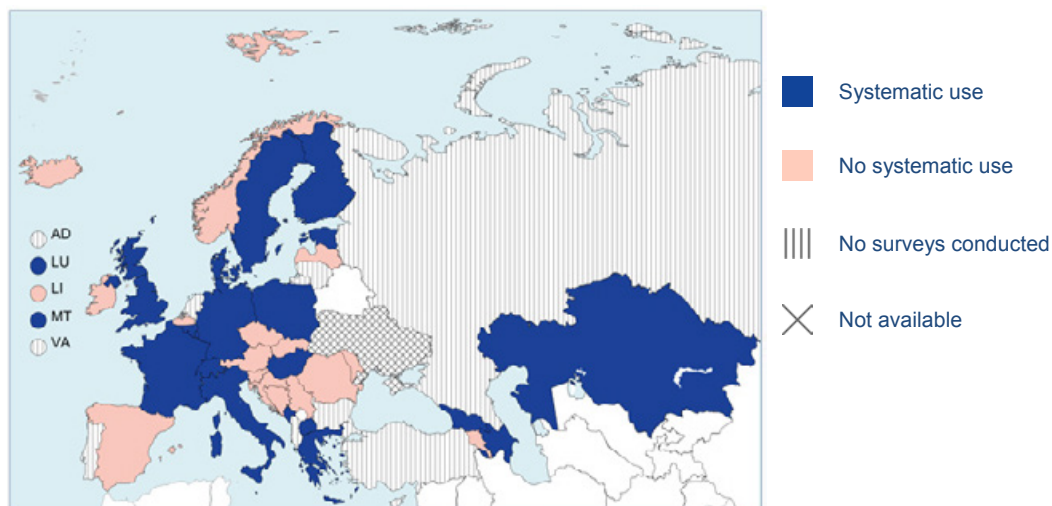
**Figure 6.33: Graduate tracking surveys, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Within the EHEA, 22 countries reported that authorities make use of graduate tracking surveys systematically, thus based on established mechanisms and well-defined roles for responsible authorities (Figure 6.34). Most often, graduate surveys are used in quality assurance procedures (e.g. in Denmark, France, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Italy, Poland, or Spain). Azerbaijan, Hungary and Kazakhstan use such survey results when setting the number of enrolment quotas or state-funded study places.

**Figure 6.34: Systematic use of graduate tracking surveys in planning, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

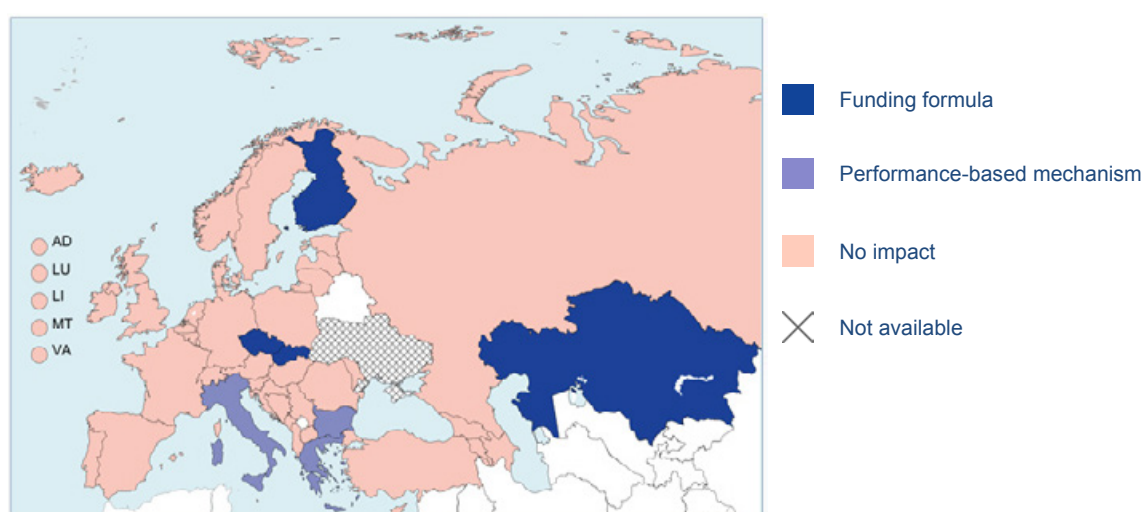
While quality assurance is the most common evaluation mechanism in the EHEA, some countries have established other procedures through which the employability performance of higher education institutions can be assessed. One prominent goal of setting up such evaluation processes is to make employability-related information on higher education study programmes public. This can inform current and future students on their potential career prospects. For example, several countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kazakhstan) have compiled ranking systems of higher education institutions, where graduates' employment is one of the

criteria. In Bulgaria, a higher education institution's place in the ranking even influences the level of state funding it receives.

Employability can also form part of performance agreements. In Austria and Liechtenstein, higher education institutions' plans for enhancing the employability of their graduates form part of the performance agreements in place.

However, the employability performance of higher education institutions influences the level of funding they receive in only a few countries: Bulgaria (see above), the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan and Slovakia (Figure 6.35). In the Czech Republic, Finland, Kazakhstan and Slovakia, graduates' employment is included in a funding formula based on which higher education institutions receive (a part of) their budget. Russia is planning to introduce such a system from 2015. In Greece and Italy, institutions can receive additional funding based on performance indicators such as the employment of graduates.

**Figure 6.35: Impact of employability performance on higher education institutions' funding, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Conclusions

[Conclusions to be drafted]

## References

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## 7. INTERNATIONALISATION AND MOBILITY

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### The Bucharest Communiqué

While internationalisation and mobility have increasingly moved centre stage in the European higher education policy agenda throughout the lifetime of the Bologna Process, the 2012 Bucharest Communiqué gave new impetus to this agenda through adopting a Mobility Strategy for the EHEA <sup>(1)</sup>. It also underlined that learning mobility, that is, mobility for the purpose of learning, is "essential to ensure the quality of higher education, enhance students' employability and expand cross-border collaboration within the EHEA and beyond" <sup>(2)</sup>.

Within the Communiqué, Ministers stressed the importance of sufficient support to students in ensuring equal access and mobility opportunities and reiterated their commitment to full portability of national grants and loans across the EHEA. Besides, they encouraged higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes and degrees, committed to examine national rules and practices as a way to dismantle obstacles to cooperation and mobility embedded in national contexts and asked for better balanced mobility in the EHEA. The importance of fair academic and professional recognition, including recognition of non-formal and informal learning, was also underlined, as it contributes directly to mobility and, thus, to the internationalisation of higher education.

### The 2012 Bologna Implementation Report

The 2012 Report mostly focussed on student and staff mobility, considered as a main tool of internationalisation <sup>(3)</sup>. Regarding student mobility, it revealed the first findings for mobility flows, as the collection of statistical data was still in an early stage. It addressed the question of balanced and imbalanced mobility, showing East-West patterns both in European and global terms. In addition, the previous report focussed on obstacles to student mobility and concluded that many countries lacked a clear strategy and measures to tackle these obstacles. It also showed that monitoring mechanisms were almost absent across the EHEA.

Regarding staff mobility, the 2012 Report stressed the need to agree on the scope and definition(s) and to set quantitative targets. It concluded that better monitoring and tackling obstacles than hinder staff mobility were essential things to put forward if countries were to foster staff mobility across Europe.

### Chapter outline

This chapter aims to assess the progress that EHEA countries have made since the 2012 Report regarding the internationalisation of their higher education systems. The first section focuses on the engagement of EHEA countries with the internationalisation of higher education. It brings new information as it looks at national strategies and steering documents, public agencies involved in internationalisation, budget and incentives for internationalisation, as well as institutional strategies and internationalisation instruments. It also presents the main regions of cooperation as regard to

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<sup>(1)</sup> EHEA, 2012. *Mobility for Better Learning – Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf) [Accessed 15 October 2014].

<sup>(2)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 3.

<sup>(3)</sup> EHEA, 2012. *The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report*, p. 151.



particular internationalisation activities. The second section addresses mobility issues. Firstly, it looks at student mobility issues, providing analysis on student mobility flows, examining the questions of target setting and reporting on obstacles to student mobility as well as on measures to tackle these obstacles. Secondly, it examines staff mobility issues, presenting national policy goals and programmes, addressing target issues and also reporting on obstacles and measures to tackle these obstacles.

## 7.1. Engagement with internationalisation

### Understanding Internationalisation and Mobility

"Twenty years ago, [the concept of] internationalisation was, for most observers, almost, if not fully, identical with mobility of students (and, to a lesser extent, faculty) across country borders"<sup>(4)</sup>. However, this concept has evolved over the years and there is now a clear distinction to be made between internationalisation and mobility. The Canadian scholar Jane Knight has defined internationalisation as: "The process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of postsecondary education"<sup>(5)</sup>. Internationalisation has thus become a "many-faceted phenomenon" <sup>(6)</sup> and entails now various forms of activities. International mobility (mostly student mobility), though, is still probably the most apparent concrete outcome of internationalisation.

#### 7.1.1. Engagement at national level

##### 7.1.1.1. National strategies for internationalisation

It seems that, until now, having a formal national strategy for internationalisation of higher education has not been a top priority for the majority of the EHEA countries. Indeed, the BFUG reporting data show that less than half of the EHEA countries have adopted a formal national strategy for internationalisation of higher education (see Figure 7.1).

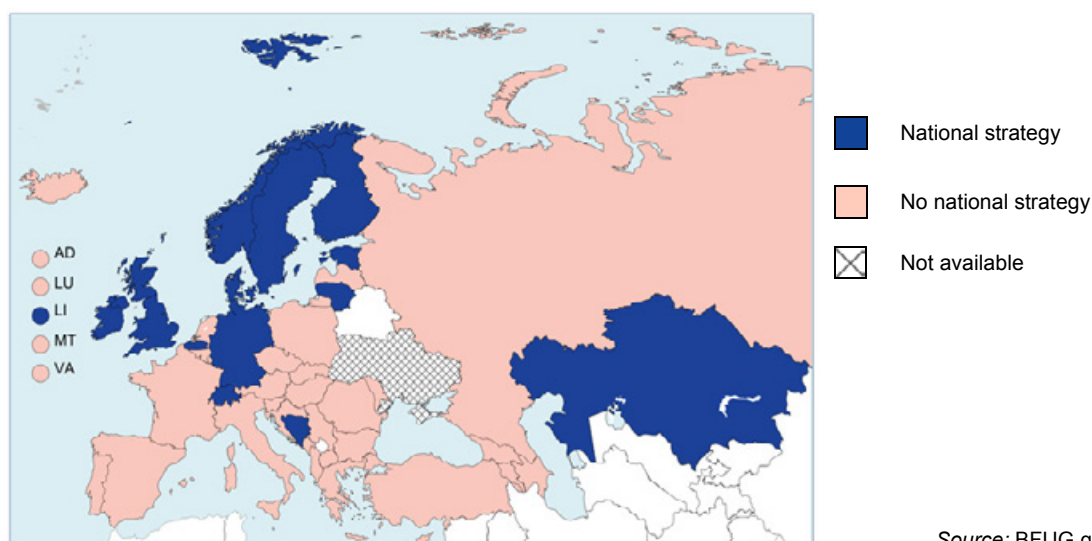
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<sup>(4)</sup> Bernd WÄCHTER (ACA), 2008. *Mobility and internationalisation in the European Higher Education Area in BEYOND 2010 – Priorities and challenges for higher education in the next decade*. [Online] Available at [http://www.lemmens.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Verlag/Buecher/ACA\\_Download\\_PDFs/2008\\_Beyond\\_2010\\_%E2%80%93\\_Priorities\\_and\\_challenges\\_for\\_higher\\_education\\_in\\_the\\_next\\_decade.pdf#page=15](http://www.lemmens.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Verlag/Buecher/ACA_Download_PDFs/2008_Beyond_2010_%E2%80%93_Priorities_and_challenges_for_higher_education_in_the_next_decade.pdf#page=15) [Accessed 7 November 2014], p.13-14.

<sup>(5)</sup> Jane KNIGHT, 2003. *Updating the Definition of Internationalization in International Higher Education*, Fall 2003. [Online] Available at [http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research\\_sites/cihe/pdf/IHEpdfs/ihe33.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cihe/pdf/IHEpdfs/ihe33.pdf) [Accessed 7 November 2014], p.2.

<sup>(6)</sup> Bernd WÄCHTER, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

**Figure 7.1: Countries that have adopted a formal national strategy for internationalisation of higher education**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

However, it should be underlined that the term "national strategy" is a broad one, and this may lead to difficulties in comparing country realities. Indeed, countries' national strategies are very diverse. In some countries, the strategy can be found in a self-contained document, while in others it is part of a global national higher education strategy. Strategies can also be very general, or they may focus on specific topics. Similarly, some contain general objectives whereas others list very concrete measures in order to implement internationalisation objectives.

For example, the Federal Government and the *Länder* in Germany have adopted a common strategy in April 2013, which defines nine fields of action for promoting the internationalisation of higher education institutions along with a joint policy goal with strategies for each field. Both Federal Government and *Länder* are responsible for implementing the joint internationalisation goals. The national strategy of the Flemish Community of Belgium differs significantly, as it has been developed as an action plan and focuses exclusively on mobility issues, while in Norway the strategy has been presented in the form of a report, with a list of objectives. In Estonia, the Strategy for the internationalisation of higher education is part of the global Strategy for Higher Education. It addresses several significant issues such as the legal environment that supports internationalisation (quality assurance, migration policy, recognition of qualifications), student mobility, the share of international academic staff and the internationalisation of study programmes. It plans to develop monitoring activities, but the entire strategy has not yet been assessed. In fact, among the countries that have adopted a national strategy, only four, namely, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania and the United Kingdom (Scotland) have assessed it or are planning to do so in the near future. These strategies are assessed by ministries of education in Finland, Ireland and Lithuania and by the Scottish Parliament and its committees in the United Kingdom (Scotland).

It is worth underlying that Croatia, the Netherlands and Spain expect to adopt a national strategy by the end of 2014. Besides, it might be interesting to see to what extent the 2013 European higher education in the world strategy <sup>(7)</sup>, which encourages member states to develop “comprehensive internationalisation strategies”, will have an impact on EU and non EU countries on this matter.

#### **7.1.1.2. Steering documents**

Although few countries have developed clear internationalisation strategies, it is nevertheless unusual to find no reference to internationalisation in steering documents. Indeed only five countries, namely, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Iceland, Luxembourg and Slovakia report that such references do not exist.

Based on information from reporting countries, the more common aims or objectives mentioned in steering documents refer to increasing the mobility flows of students and staff and improving the attractiveness and competitiveness of their national higher education institutions. Engaging in more joint programmes/degrees and in other types of international collaboration is also an important aim for many countries.

In order to achieve these objectives and carry on the implementation of internationalisation, EHEA member states have adopted a wide range of concrete measures. For example, in order to attract more foreign students, a certain number of countries have adopted measures aiming at improving existing or developing new information channels (mainly websites) about their programmes or their higher education institutions/systems. Among them, Poland has developed a new portal for candidates from abroad available in several foreign languages. The Czech Republic stresses the importance of participating in international fairs as another channel to promote Czech higher education abroad, while the government of Denmark has planned to enter into dialogue with private foundations and businesses in order to encourage them to provide scholarships or grants to attract skilled international students. Some countries also reported on the provision of courses or study programmes in foreign language as a means for recruiting foreign students.

In order to encourage mobility of their national students, a certain number of countries refer to giving more information/advice to students who would be interested in undertaking a part of their studies abroad. Other countries stimulate student mobility through the promotion of international work placements or the provision of study programmes that include a mobility window.

Many other significant measures are mentioned to foster mobility, such as promoting the learning of languages, improving the recognition procedures, guaranteeing the portability of loans and grants, including the social dimension in financial supports for mobility or simplifying visa procedures for students.

Some countries also mention measures to increase the recruitment of international staff. For instance, the Slovenian government aims to introduce supplementary support mechanisms for foreign experts such as assistance with child care or accommodation. Regarding the international cooperation between higher education institutions, a certain number of countries have adopted measures in order to increase the number of joint programmes/degrees, summer schools or other types of collaboration with strategic partners. For instance, steering documents in Denmark and Finland include measures

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<sup>(7)</sup> European Commission, 2013. *European higher education in the world*. Communication from the Commission to the European

Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. [Online] Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0499&from=EN> [Accessed 23 October 2014].

aiming at strengthening cooperation based on partnerships with emerging and/or developing countries in the fields of mobility and research, while in Italy the requirements that higher education institutions have to fulfil to open a joint programme or international programmes have been made less restrictive.

#### **7.1.1.3. National public agencies involved in the internationalisation process**

The internationalisation of higher education in the EHEA and the implementation of national strategies are usually not only the responsibility of ministries (education, foreign affairs, research and others) or higher education institutions. Indeed, in a certain number of countries, a public agency is playing a major role in the internationalisation of the higher education system. This is particularly the case of the French Community of Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Germany is the largest agency in Europe regarding internationalisation of higher education. It offers programmes and funding for mobility of students, academic staff and researchers. It also represents the German higher education system abroad, promotes Germany as an academic and research destination, and helps build ties between institutions around the world.

The Wallonia-Brussels Campus, in the French Community of Belgium, was established in 2010 by the ministry for higher education and Wallonia-Brussels International, with the main objective of promoting French-speaking Belgian higher education abroad. A similar agency, Campus France, operates in France. It is supervised by both the ministry for foreign affairs and the ministry responsible for higher education and research. This agency is responsible for promoting the French higher education system in the world and for better informing international students, to provide guidance to help them make the right decision for higher education programmes, make their own application forms and their requests for a visa, with the support of a network involving more than 200 Campus France centres and platforms abroad. It is also responsible for managing mobility for students, researchers and experts holding a grant from the French government.

In the Netherlands, the Nuffic Agency works to promote international cooperation in higher education and support mobility, but deals also with diploma and professional recognition. In Norway, the Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) was established as an administrative agency under the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The Centre aims to promote and facilitate co-operation and mobility, coordinate international programmes, promote cooperation between higher education institutions, create a knowledge base and analyse results and the impact of internationalisation.

Beside national agencies, other national stakeholder organisations can take part in the internationalisation of higher education, the most common being the national higher education associations or Rectors Conferences. Some countries have specific organisations, such as, for example, in the French Community of Belgium, the new established International Relations Commission, within the Academy for Research and Higher Education. It is responsible, among other things, for international representation and cooperation <sup>(8)</sup>.

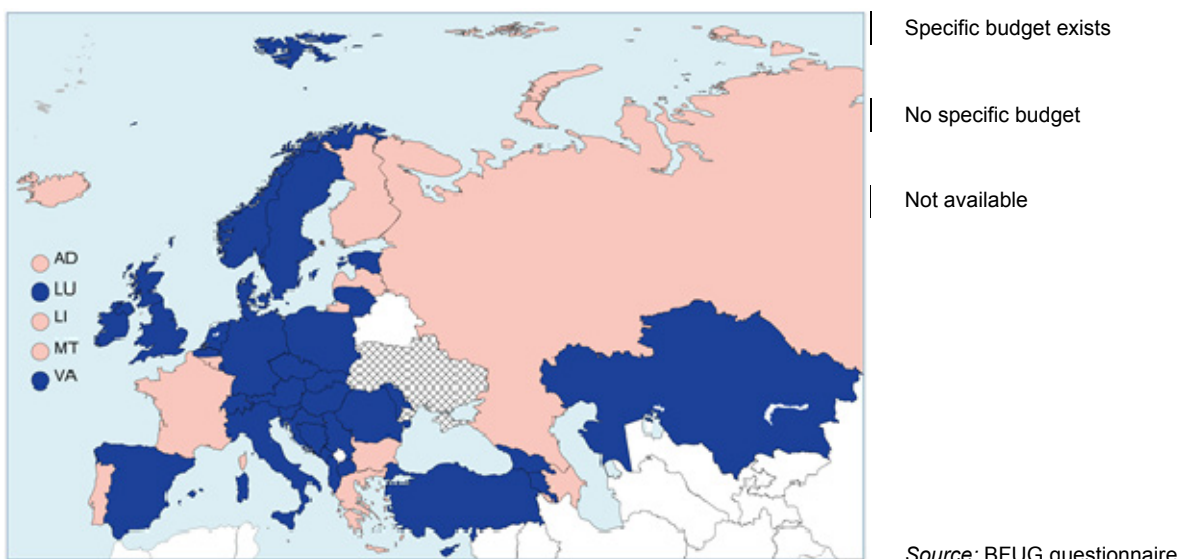
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<sup>(8)</sup> **Question to the French Community of Belgium:** Could you please clarify the relationships between the International Relations Commission and the Wallonia-Brussels Campus? What are the roles of each organisation?

#### 7.1.1.4. Budget and incentives for internationalisation

Around two thirds of countries report having a specific budget for funding internationalisation activities in higher education (see Figure 7.3). However, funding is mostly provided for mobility activities. For instance, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, the budget for mobility grants to students amounted to 3.8 M€ in 2013-2014, and it will increase up to 7.0 M€ by 2019-2020. In the Czech Republic, a special budgetary item, Indicator D - International Cooperation, comprises roughly 2% of the budget for all educational activities. In Denmark, part of the state funding for higher education institutions is allocated on the basis of the number of international exchange students, as well as Danish exchange students going abroad. In Italy the dedicated budget for internationalisation activities includes 12M€ for outgoing credit mobility, 5M€ for outgoing credit mobility for placements abroad, 1,5M€ for joint programmes and for international students. The multiannual strategic planning allocates further resources (up to 13M€) to internationalisation and mobility.

**Figure 7.2: Specific budget for internationalisation activities in higher education**

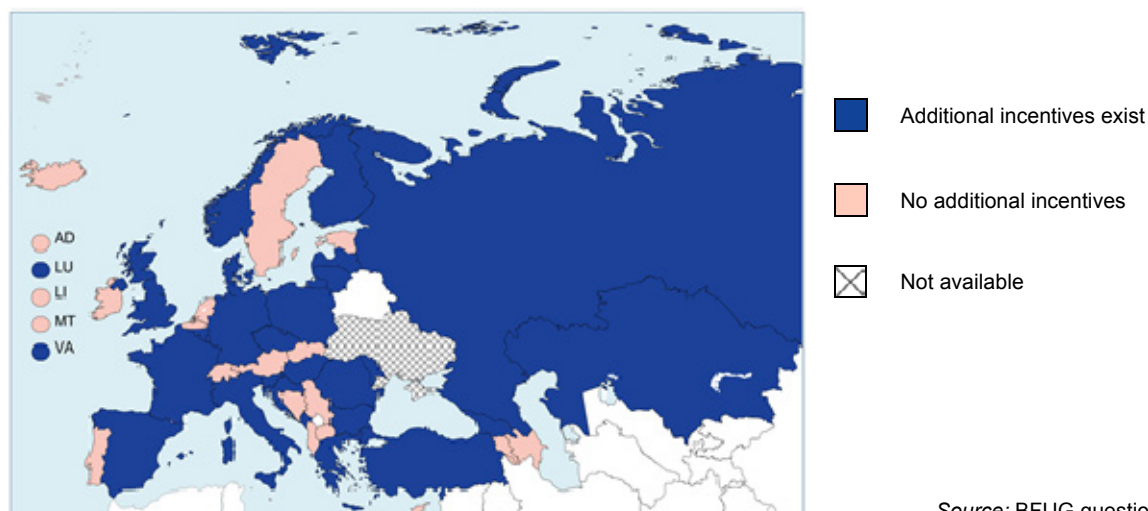


#### Other incentives

Around half of the countries provide other kinds of incentives for higher education institutions to engage in internationalisation activities (see Figure 7.4). A number of countries refer to internationalisation as one of the areas specified in the performance and funding contracts between

the higher education institutions and the government. A specific mention is also made of the EU funded programmes for mobility. These programmes represent important incentives, especially in non-EU countries like Moldova, Georgia and Turkey, as well as Bulgaria. In Lithuania and Slovenia, projects funded by the EU Structural funds, include the co-financing of internationalisation activities.

**Figure 7.3: Other incentives for higher education institutions to engage in internationalisation activities**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

In Croatia, within the Pilot Programme agreements concluded between the Ministry and higher education institutions on funding of teaching activities, some higher education Institutions have chosen internationalisation as a specific aim and they are entitled to a bonus. Additional measures have been envisaged by the Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources for 2014-2020.

In Finland, a higher level of internationalisation is rewarded through the funding model that is based on certain criteria ie. student mobility, the number of foreign staff at universities, etc. In the framework of national initiatives to support mobility and internationalisation, funding for higher education institutions is also allocated through various instruments by the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) as well as other actors.

In Luxembourg, the engagement in internationalisation activities is mandatory for higher education institutions. This obligation is specified in the contract between the university and the government and funding depends on compliance with the contract.

In Poland, an internationalisation index (calculated on the basis of the number of international students and doctoral incoming to a higher education institution and the number of outgoing students and doctoral students from the higher education institution) is one of the elements of the formula used to calculate the annual amount of funding for teaching.

[Short conclusion on engagement at national level]

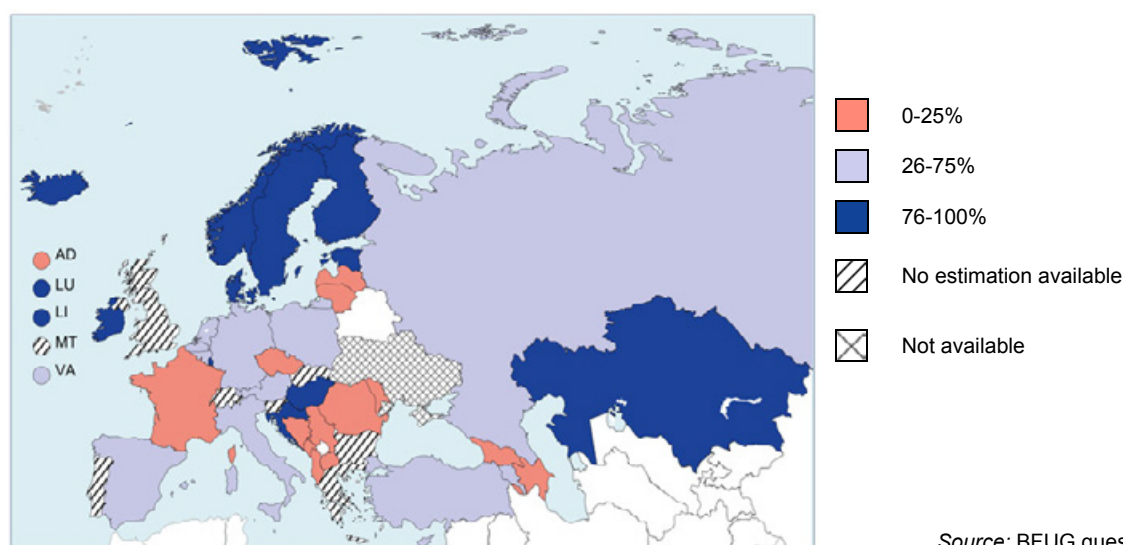
## 7.1.2. Engagement at institutional level

### 7.1.2.1. Institutional strategies

For the reporting exercise, countries were asked to give an estimate of their higher education institutions that have adopted an internationalisation strategy (see Figure 7.4 below).



**Figure 7.4: Estimate percentage of higher education institutions that have adopted an internationalisation strategy**



Around a quarter of the EHEA countries estimate that their national higher education institutions have widely adopted internationalisation strategies (76-100%). More precisely, six countries, namely Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Norway, stipulate that all higher education institutions have an internationalisation strategy.

Almost a third of the EHEA countries estimate that only few national higher education institutions have adopted an internationalisation strategy (0-25%). Andorra, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Montenegro state that none of their higher education institutions have such a strategy. However, this does not mean that these institutions are not engaged in internationalisation activities. For instance, in Georgia, 26% to 50% of higher education institutions are estimated as being engaged in international activities, despite the lack of any formal strategy. Similarly, Armenia and Austria estimate that a minority of their national higher education institutions (26% to 50%) have adopted an internationalisation strategy, but specify that 76% to 99% of their higher education institutions are involved in internationalisation activities.

The main conclusion that can be drawn from countries' answers is that it is widely perceived that higher education institutions are highly engaged in internationalisation activities whether or not they have a formal strategy. However, in the light of evidence-based policy-oriented research demonstrating that institutional strategies have a significant impact on internationalisation activities<sup>(9)</sup> giving higher education institutions the opportunity to respect and develop their individual profile and interests through international cooperation, the adoption of comprehensive institutional internationalisation strategies should be promoted and encouraged.

#### 7.1.2.2. Internationalisation instruments

[Short introduction on internationalisation instruments]

#### Joint programmes/degrees

An essential difference is to be made between the notions of joint programmes and joint degrees. A joint programme is an "integrated curriculum coordinated and offered jointly by different higher education institutions and leading to a (double/multiple or joint) degree". A joint degree is a "single

<sup>(9)</sup> EUA, 2013. *Internationalisation in European higher education: European policies, institutional strategies and EUA support*. [Online] Available at [http://www.eua.be/libraries/publications\\_homepage\\_list/eua\\_international\\_survey.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/libraries/publications_homepage_list/eua_international_survey.sflb.ashx) [Accessed 7 November 2014], p.10.

document awarded by higher education institutions offering the joint programme and nationally acknowledged as the recognised award of the joint programme" <sup>(10)</sup>.

Joint programmes and degrees have long been recognised as a key element in facilitating internationalisation strategies in higher education institutions, through encouraging institutions to address very pragmatic challenges in working together across national boundaries. From the early Ministerial declarations in the Bologna process onwards there have been commitments to develop further these important instruments – particularly in light of the launch of the Erasmus Mundus programme which began five years after the Bologna Declaration was signed.

While the challenges to higher education institutions in developing cross-border joint programmes have been quite wide-ranging, one of the main issues for governments has been to create a legal environment where joint programmes are able to be established and to be recognised without undue problems. Although the vast majority of countries have now amended their legislation to take on board joint programmes and joint degrees, this continues to be a preoccupation.

However, a number of countries, (Andorra, Armenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Malta, Montenegro, Moldova, Russia <sup>(11)</sup>, Slovakia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) point out that have not developed explicit notions of joint programmes and joint degrees. In these cases, national legislation may not explicitly allow joint degrees to be awarded, or there may be some ambiguity with regard to legislation. Moreover even in countries where the possibility exists to develop joint programmes and recognise joint degrees, there may be problems in recognising quality assurance decisions related to joint programmes. This was reported in more than half of the countries.

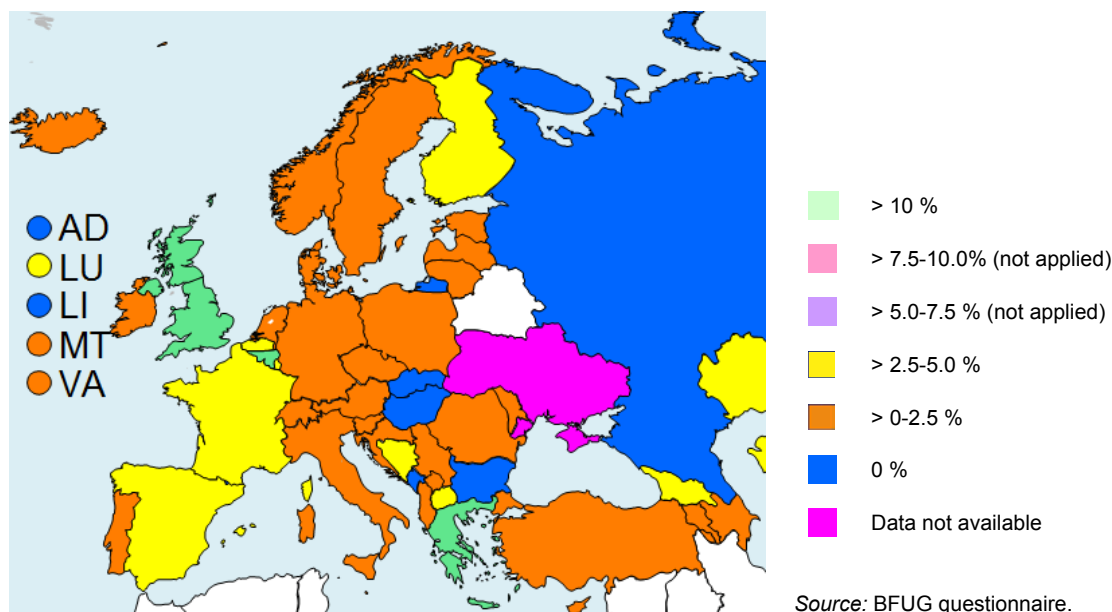
Similarly to the last collection of data in 2012, and not surprisingly, countries estimate a much higher number of higher education institutions participating in joint programmes than those actually issuing joint degrees (see Figures below). Seven countries consider that no institutions issue joint degrees, and this is likely to be an underestimation given the answers on adaptation of legislation to facilitate joint degree recognition. At the other end of the spectrum, only Belgium (Flemish speaking community), Greece and the United Kingdom answer that more than 10% of their higher education institutions issue joint degrees. The largest group of 29 countries estimate that only 0-2.5% of their institutions issue joint degrees.

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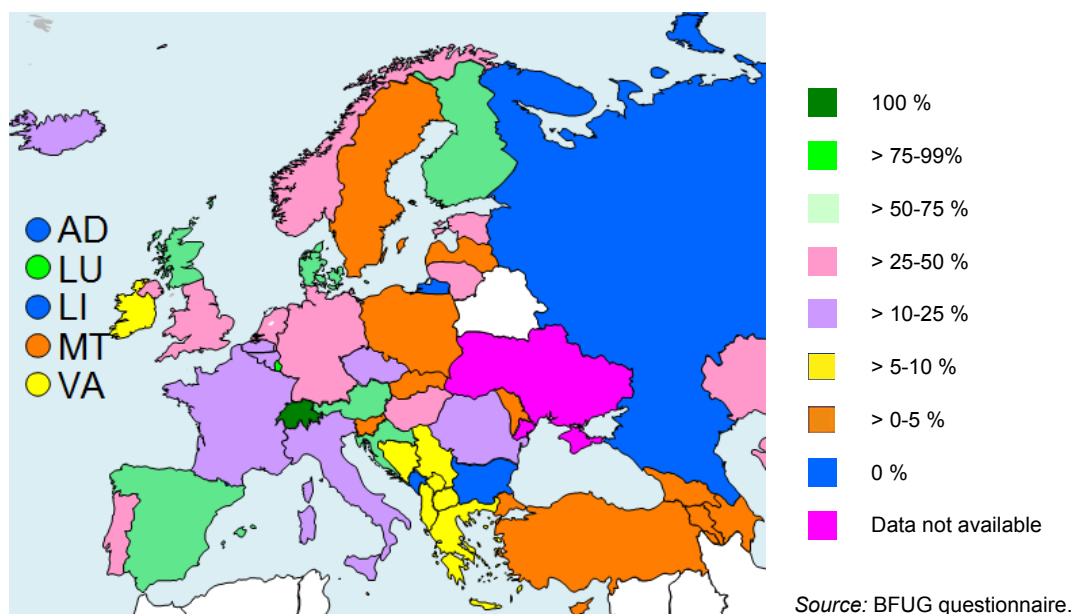
<sup>(10)</sup> European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), 2013. *Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees*, [Online] Available at [http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Guidelines\\_for\\_Good\\_Practice\\_for\\_Awarding\\_Joint\\_Degrees#The\\_Joint\\_Programme](http://ecahe.eu/w/index.php/Guidelines_for_Good_Practice_for_Awarding_Joint_Degrees#The_Joint_Programme) [Accessed 17 November 2014].

<sup>(11)</sup> **Question to RUSSIA:** Finland reports the development of joint programmes/degrees with universities in NW Russia. So please check your questionnaire information that there are no joint programmes/degrees in Russia.

**Figure 7.x: Estimated percentage of institutions that award joint degrees, 2013/14**



**Figure 7.x: Estimated percentage of institutions that participate in joint programmes, 2013/14**



From an institutional perspective a key condition for developing joint programmes as a significant feature of the EHEA is to ensure sustainable funding for these programmes. However, the key issue that emerges from country answers is that the vast majority of countries are not providing any additional funding for this kind of programme. As the costs associated to developing and maintaining programmes with several institutions in different countries exceed those for provision within a single institution, this provides a major barrier to joint programmes. Indeed, it appears that the majority of costs are currently met either by European funding mechanisms, or by higher education institutions prioritising the funding of flagship joint programmes over their other programmes.

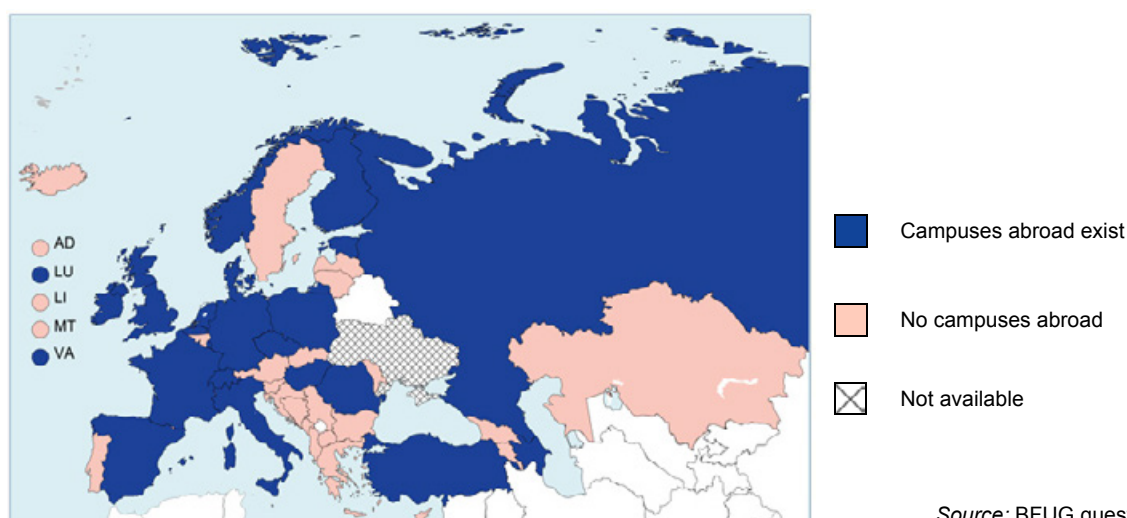
Only a minority of countries (Albania, Finland, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania and Spain) report that they provide specific, additional funding to higher education institutions for the development and implementation of joint/double degree programmes. European funding under the Erasmus Mundus Programme, as well as national funding is used to develop joint degrees with international partners. In Finland, for instance, the nationally funded instruments managed by CIMO include the Finnish-Russian Student Exchange Programme (FIRST) programme for cooperation with North-Western Russia and CIMO's China programme provide support for the development of joint/double degrees, among other cooperation activities. In Luxembourg, double degree programmes are mandatory for higher education institutions. This obligation is specified in the contract between the university and the government and funding depends on the good execution of the contract. In Italy, in 2012, 1M€ was allocated to higher education institutions which already had joint programmes as "premium" funding to further develop them. In 2013, 1,5M€ was allocated to higher education institutions on the basis of active joint programmes and international mobility. These resources can be used by higher education institutions to further develop joint programmes.

In Romania, the funding methodology for universities encourages them to develop programmes in foreign languages and joint doctoral programs by assigning an additional fund on these grounds ("at least 30% of the amount allocated to state universities nationwide as core funding").

### Abroad campuses

In half of all higher education systems there exist higher education institutions that have established campuses abroad (See Figure below).

**Figure x: Higher education institutions that have campuses abroad**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

Usually the number of campuses is limited to less than ten, with the exception of Germany and France where the total number of campuses abroad reaches 55 and 50 respectively. Furthermore, higher education institutions in Russia, Hungary and Spain have established 36, 28 and 12 campuses respectively. According to unofficial data, in 2013 higher education institutions in the United Kingdom (England) had 21 campuses abroad. The Holy See reports having established 400 campuses abroad.

It should however be noted that "campuses abroad" is an umbrella term which denotes various institutional arrangements. Thus around 235,000 students at more than 40 locations study in German higher education projects abroad, ranging from bi-national universities to branch campuses and faculties/study programmes abroad. The majority of these projects comprise individual degree

programmes offered at partner higher education institutions. In addition, German universities currently engage in 14 branch campuses and bi-national universities abroad.

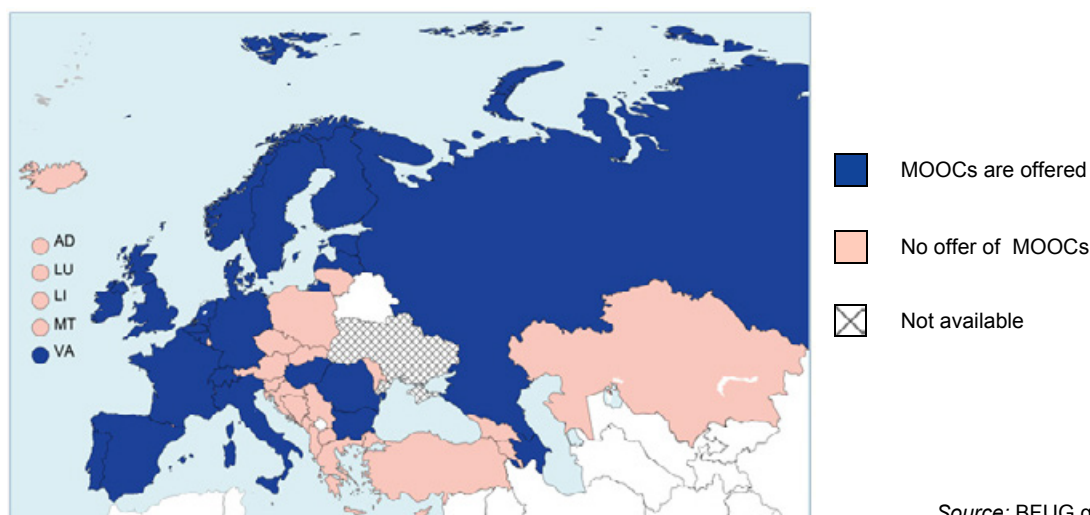
In the cases where foreign campuses are not high in numbers, they are often situated in other European countries and in particular neighbouring countries. However, there are examples of foreign campuses in China (Denmark, Italy and Norway), USA (Spain and the United Kingdom (Scotland)), South Africa, Qatar, Thailand, Indonesia (the Netherlands) and others.

On the other hand, in the case of Germany, branch campuses and bi-national universities are located in a variety of countries (Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Turkey, China (2), South Korea, Vietnam, Singapore, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Hungary and Bulgaria). Further German projects are based in, for instance, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ethiopia, Brazil, Chile, Georgia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, South Africa, Russia, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

## Massive open online courses (MOOCs)

Concerning the use of massive open online courses (MOOCs), in half of all EHEA systems there are higher education institutions which offer such courses (See Figure below).

**Figure X: Existence of higher education institutions that offer MOOCs**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

However, in most countries the share of higher education institutions that offer MOOCs is very low and rarely goes beyond 10%. Notable exceptions are Russia where 54% of institutions MOOCs, as well as Denmark and Spain where 38% and 30% of institutions respectively are concerned. In addition, in Italy, Ireland and the United Kingdom (Scotland) the rate of involvement of higher education institutions ranges between 25% and 12%. In terms of actual numbers of MOOCs that are currently offered, such courses are most numerous in Russia (1200 courses), Spain (80 courses), and Azerbaijan (50 courses).

[Short conclusion on engagement at institutionnal level]

### 7.1.3. Regions of cooperation

Nowadays, international cooperation activities of individual countries and higher education institutions across the world are numerous and diverse. They are seen as a key factor to the development of the EHEA <sup>(12)</sup> as they influence both its attractiveness and competitiveness.

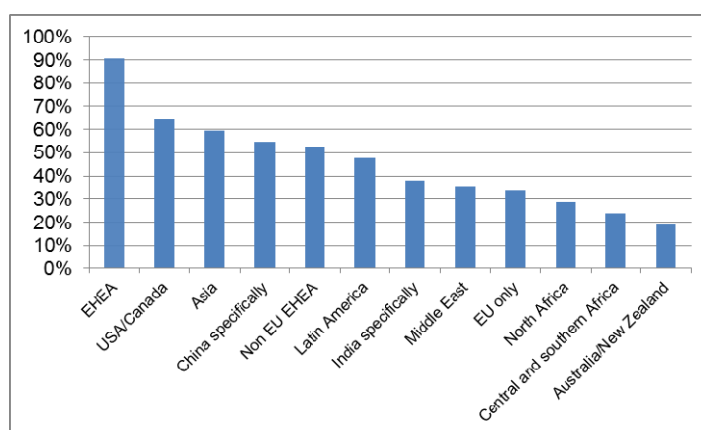
For the reporting exercise, countries were asked to identify the main regions where they have specific internationalisation activities, namely, international student mobility, joint programmes/degrees, campuses abroad and international cooperation in research. The results below show the result in percentages for each region <sup>(13)</sup>. It is important to note that the answers gathered are perceptions, and are not based on empirical evidence.

The EHEA appears to be the priority region of cooperation for all four types of activities, with a clear advantage regarding student mobility and the implementation of joint programmes/degrees. It seems that Asia and USA/Canada are also important region for cooperation, regardless the types of activities.

#### Student mobility

All higher education systems that provided estimations actually have priority regions regarding international student mobility. Data available show that (see Figure below), as mentioned above, EHEA countries prioritise the EHEA region (90%), some countries targeting neighbouring countries or a particular group of countries (e.g. Western Balkans, Nordic countries).

**Figure 7.x: Countries' perceptions: Main regions of operation for international student mobility (Percentage of EHEA higher education systems were estimations are available)**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

The EHEA region is followed by USA/Canada (64%), Asia (60%) and China specifically (55%). The Australia/New Zealand region stands at the end of the spectrum, but according to the 2013 European Strategy on internationalisation, the share of mobile students who choose to study in Australia [and] New Zealand [...] is growing fast <sup>(14)</sup>.

<sup>(12)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 4.

<sup>(13)</sup> The United Kingdom (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) does not collect information on these particular issues. Albania, the Flemish Community of Belgium, Liechtenstein, Portugal and Slovakia have not provided any estimation.

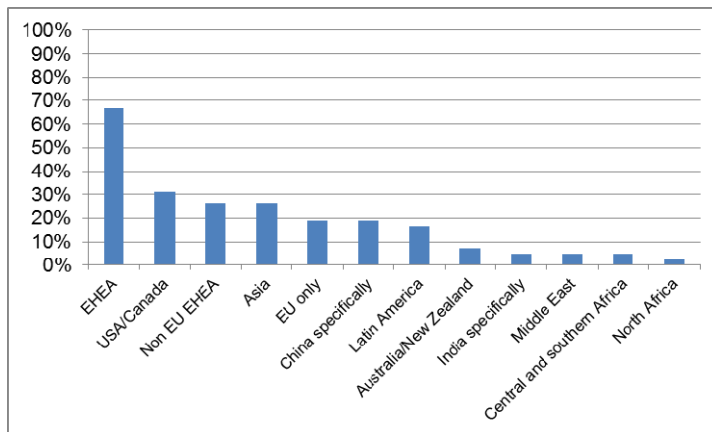
<sup>(14)</sup> European Commission, 2013, *op. cit.*, p. 4.



## Joint programmes/degrees

More than half of the EHEA higher education systems where estimations are available answered they have priority regions for joint programmes/degrees (see Figure below).

**Figure 7.x: Countries' perceptions: Main regions of operation for joint programmes/degrees (Percentage of EHEA higher education systems where estimations are available)**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

As regard to the development of joint programmes/degrees, estimations show that the EHEA region is the priority region (67%), followed by USA/Canada (31%) and equally by Asia and "non EU EHEA countries" (both 26%). Australia/New Zealand, India, the Middle East and Africa in general are estimated to be less chosen for implementing joint programmes/degrees.

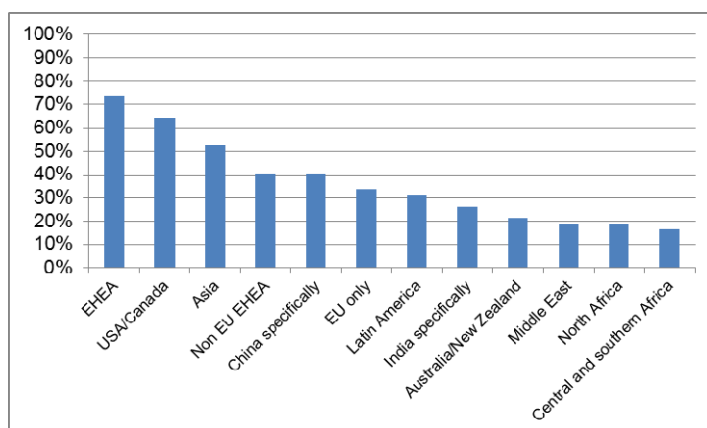
The reasons for which the EHEA countries are focussing on specific regions for creating joint programmes/degrees may be explained by a certain numbers of factors. Firstly, developing and implementing a joint programme or a joint degree involve quite a lot of resources and time in a higher education institution point of view. Indeed, there are often many details to foresee and administrative obstacles to overcome for both partners. Higher education institutions are therefore limited in the number of partners they can cooperate with and they need to choose strategic partnerships. The choice of strategic partnerships is often driven by the geographic proximity, available funding, the expertise in a particular area of study, cultural similarities (similarity in manner of doing things) or the length and the quality of the bilateral relation involving students and professors/researchers. For instance, it can be interesting for two higher education institutions to develop a joint programme/degree after being involved in a satisfying student mobility agreement for a certain period of time. Secondly, it is evident that migration policies play an important role in allowing joint programmes/degrees to be created or not. In some cases migration policies are clear obstacles to this form of internationalisation with certain regions of the world.

## International cooperation in research

International cooperation in research is a widespread activity across many regions of the world through strategic partnerships. More than half of the EHEA higher education systems where

estimations are available answered they have priority regions for cooperation in research (see Figure below).

**Figure 7.x: Countries' perceptions: Main regions of operation for international cooperation in research (Percentage of EHEA higher education systems were estimations are available)**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

For the reporting exercise, countries' perceptions show that there is high degree of activity with the EHEA region and USA/Canada (more than 60%). These regions are followed by Asia (52%) and by China and "non EU EHEA countries" (both 40%). Australia/New Zealand, the Middle East and Africa stand at the end of the spectrum, but they remain priority regions of activities for a certain number of EHEA countries.

## Campuses abroad

The implementation of campuses abroad is a more limited activity as about one third of EHEA higher education systems provided estimations on priority regions. These countries seem to prioritise the EHEA region, Asia and China specifically. These choices can be influenced by several different factors such as the potential number of students, the national demand, existing relations between two specific countries and administrative and operational obstacles. According to the reporting data, none of the EHEA countries prioritise the Australia/New Zealand region for implementing campuses abroad.

In conclusion, it is clear that there still are disparities or imbalances regarding the regions of cooperation in higher education. Migration policies, security issues, operational obstacles or simply the geographical remoteness can slow down the development of relations in higher education in these parts of world. The main challenge is to remove these obstacles when possible, in order to give the opportunity to all regions of the world to cooperate in higher education and to benefit from these activities.

[General conclusion on the first section to be developed]

## 7.2. Mobility

Mobility is a significant instrument of internationalisation and it has always been at the heart of the Bologna Process. However, it is a complex issue and one has to take into account the several aspects included in the term "mobility".

This section will examine student and staff mobility. It will first address student mobility questions. It will show and analyse new data on mobility flow, it will then examine the obstacles to student mobility that still remain and present some measures countries adopt to support mobility. The second part of the section will address staff mobility issues.

### 7.2.1. International student mobility

According to Eurostat, **degree mobility** is a long-term form of mobility which aims at acquiring a whole degree or certification in the country of destination. **Credit mobility** is a short-term form of mobility – usually a maximum of one year – aiming at acquiring credits in a foreign institution in the framework of on-going studies at the home institution.

While information on degree mobility has for some years been collected through administrative sources, credit mobility data has not yet been collected this way. The only credit mobility data systematically collected is currently collected through EU sponsored programmes such as Erasmus. However, even though all programme information data are put together, it is clear that the coverage of credit mobile students would be incomplete unless efforts at national level could be increased to cover all students who have had a recognised stay abroad within formal education.

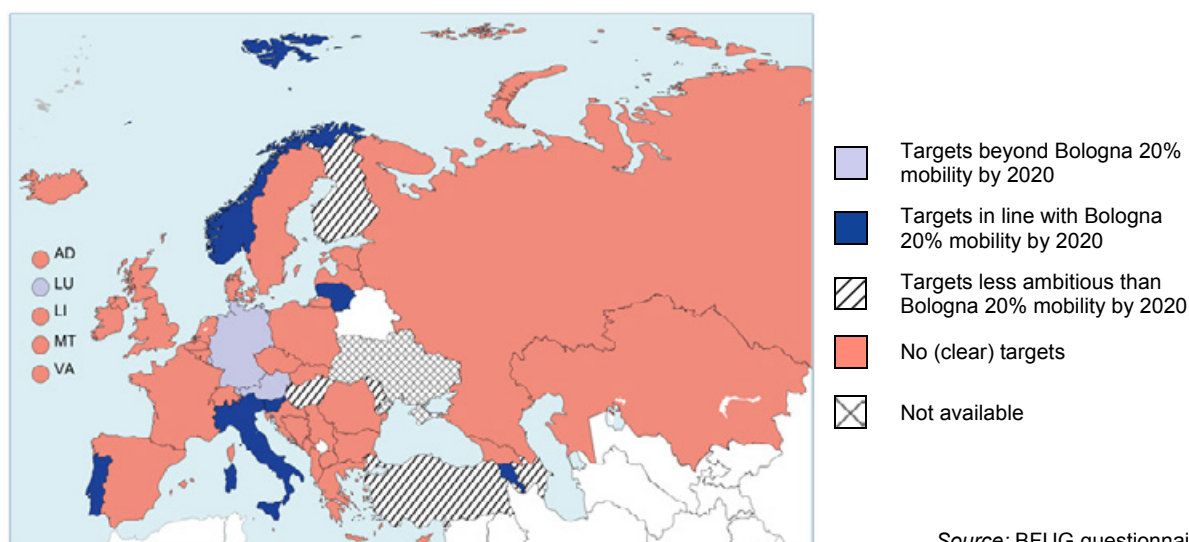
The other distinction to be made concerns the mobility flows. **Incoming mobility** takes the perspective of the country of destination – the country where the student moves to in order to study. The incoming mobility rate may be considered as an indicator of the country's attractiveness, relative to the size of its tertiary education system. **Outward mobility** takes the perspective of the country of origin – the country from where the student moves. While for many students this will be identical to the country of the student's nationality, it is more accurate to consider the country of permanent/prior residence or prior education. The outward mobility rate may be considered as an indicator of a proactive policy for students to acquire international experience (particularly for credit mobility). However, it may also be an indicator of possible insufficiencies in the education system of the country of origin (particularly for degree mobility).

While degree and credit mobility are the main forms of mobility under consideration in this report, other forms should not be forgotten. Mobility encompasses a wide range of short-term provision such as internships/work placements, summer schools, language courses and voluntary work. Statistical data on these types of mobility are, however, not collected at European level.

#### 7.2.1.1. Target setting

At the 2012 Bologna Ministerial Conference, ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the mobility target formulated at Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve in 2009, that is, that at least 20 % of those graduating in the EHEA should have had a study or training period abroad by 2020. It is a benchmark at European level, but countries are free to adopt more or less ambitious targets, depending on their national situations (see Figure below).

**Figure 7.x: Countries with outward mobility targets**



**Explanatory note**

Outward targets include either degree, credit or both degree and credit mobility

The figure 7.x shows that, at national level, a majority of countries do not have any (clear) targets regarding outward degree or credit mobility <sup>(15)</sup>. Armenia, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal and Slovenia have adopted national targets in line with the European one. In most cases targets have only been defined for credit mobility, the short-term form of mobility. This could be explained by the fact that, from a certain perspective, outward credit mobility might be preferred to outward degree mobility. Indeed, in credit mobility students spend a short period abroad and typically return to the home institution in order to finish the programme. Generally, this form of mobility does not entail a loss of revenues for national institutions. Conversely, outward degree mobility implies that students leave the country in order to acquire a degree and can be associated with a loss of revenues and/or a potential brain drain. However, it should be underlined that outward degree mobility is not necessarily always associated with loss of revenues and brain drain. Indeed, in a long-term perspective, this type of mobility can bring benefits such as tightened relations with specific countries. Moreover, in some cases, former mobile students return in their countries after a long period spent abroad, contributing to the development of the society. The challenge for countries is to create the conditions to attract people back after their studies abroad.

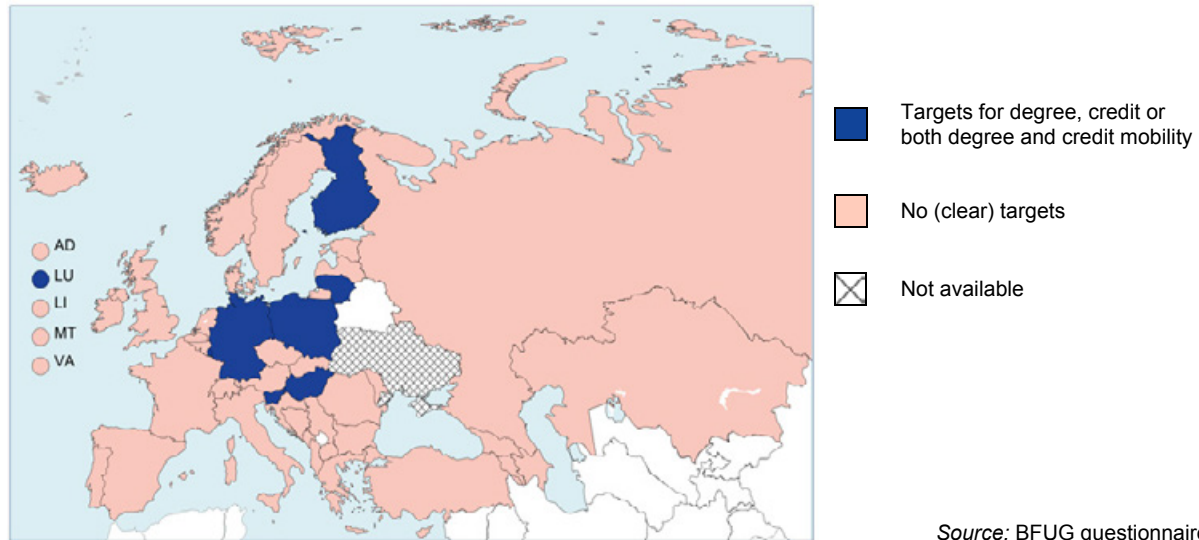
Austria, Germany and Luxembourg have adopted more ambitious targets. Austria and Germany have a 50% target and Luxembourg, a special case, has a 100% target since all students must have a study experience abroad. Azerbaijan, Finland, Hungary, Moldova and Turkey have less ambitious targets than the Bologna 20% mobility <sup>(16)</sup>. These cases show that reaching the European benchmark may be desirable for many countries, but that some national situations do not allow adopting the 20% mobility target.

<sup>(15)</sup> A "clear target" should be either quantitative or qualitative and associated with a timeline or a year when the target should be reached.

<sup>(16)</sup> Question to Azerbaijan, Finland, Hungary, Moldova and Turkey: Could you please confirm?

Regarding incoming mobility, figure 7.x (see Figure below), shows that very few countries have defined clear targets. The fact that incoming credit mobility might be seen as a normal outcome of outgoing credit mobility could explain the low rate of countries with targets. However, it is surprising that the vast majority of countries have no targets regarding incoming degree mobility. Indeed, this type of mobility is usually desirable for countries as it entails potential benefits such as additional revenues and brain gain. A small number of countries focus on the share of doctoral students in 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle programmes, such as Finland, where the share of non-Finnish students should be 20%.

**Figure 7.x: Countries with incoming mobility targets**



## Targets for incoming students with a first degree outside the EHEA

In order to better assess the international attractiveness of the EHEA, countries were asked whether targets have been defined for incoming international students with a first degree obtained outside the EHEA. According to reporting data, no countries have adopted clear targets on this particular topic.

## Other targets

Some countries have defined other targets related to the internationalisation of higher education, such as percentages of mobile academic staff or international partnerships. Target setting regarding staff mobility will be further developed in the section 7.2.2.2. of the current chapter. Regarding international partnerships, for example, the percentage of cooperative agreements on joint degrees between international and Danish educational institutions should increase by 20% by 2020, compared to 2012 (measured per sector). Latvia has set the target of 30 successfully implemented joint study programmes by 2020. In France, the target concerns the annual numbers of foreign doctoral candidates registered in a « co-tutelle » or in joint international supervisions of thesis. They should be 2000 in 2015 according to the target defined by the 2014 annual performance plan (versus 1695 in 2013). Finally, by 2020, at least one fifth of doctoral students will study in joint programmes in Slovenia.

[Short conclusion to be included]

### 7.2.1.2. Student mobility flows

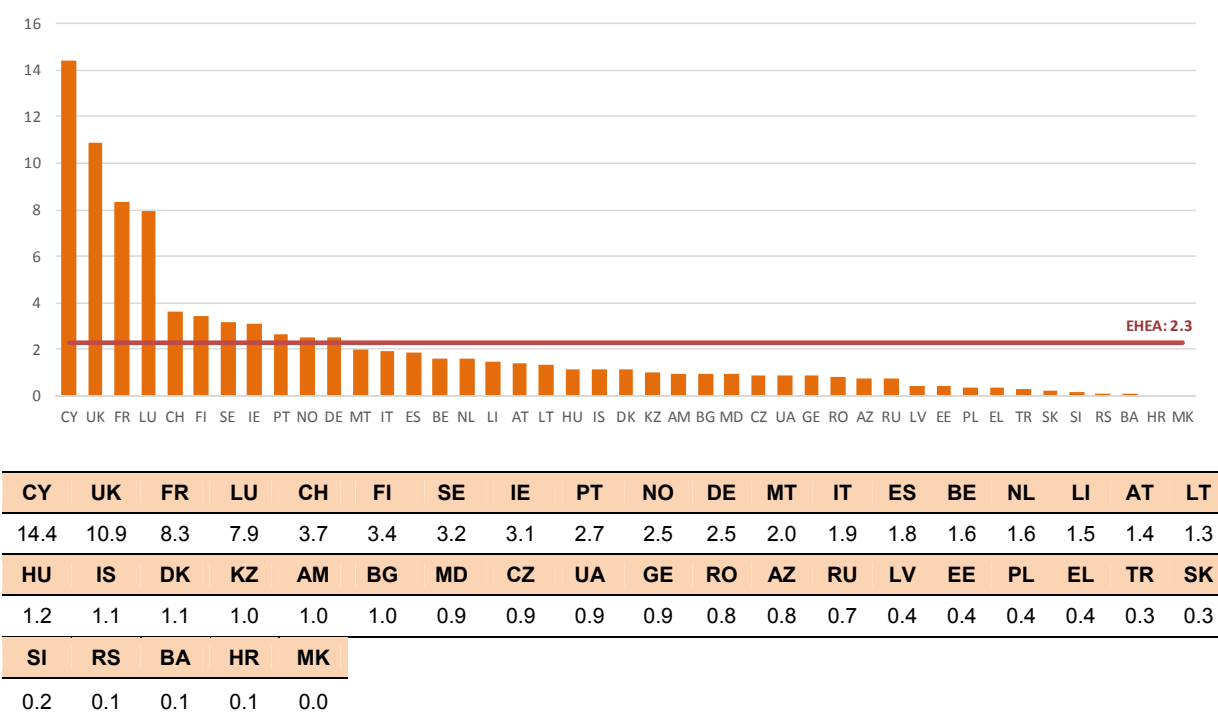
Mobility in Europe should not, and cannot, be separated from trends at global level. Even when the focus is on European countries, mobility flows from other continents to Europe as well as flows of European students worldwide form a significant part of the picture. Overall, three main student mobility flows can be distinguished: degree mobility flows from outside the EHEA to the EHEA; degree mobility flows from inside the EHEA to outside the EHEA and, finally, degree and credit mobility flows within the EHEA. Such data is not available for credit mobility, apart from the Erasmus programme.

#### Inward degree mobility flows from outside the EHEA to the EHEA

Figure 7.1 depicts the incoming degree mobility rate to EHEA countries, showing mobile students from the whole world coming to each EHEA country for which data is available. Thus, this indicator shows only part of the inflow of students for a given country, it compares the number of students from outside the EHEA that were attracted in the country, with the total population of student enrolled in the country concerned. The value of the indicators thus depends on the relative size of the hosting tertiary education system and on the mobility patterns of domestic students: *ceteris paribus*, two tertiary education systems that attract the same number of students from outside the EHEA but that send out different flows of students abroad will display different incoming mobility rate from outside EHEA.

It should be underlined that for less than a third of the countries in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, the concept used is foreign citizenship/nationality and not mobile students *per se*. This makes the statistics less relevant in terms of measuring mobility flows.

**Figure 7.1 (indicator 7.1): Incoming degree mobility rate – tertiary education mobile students from outside the EHEA studying in the country as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled, by country of destination, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]. EHEA is the EHEA weighted average.

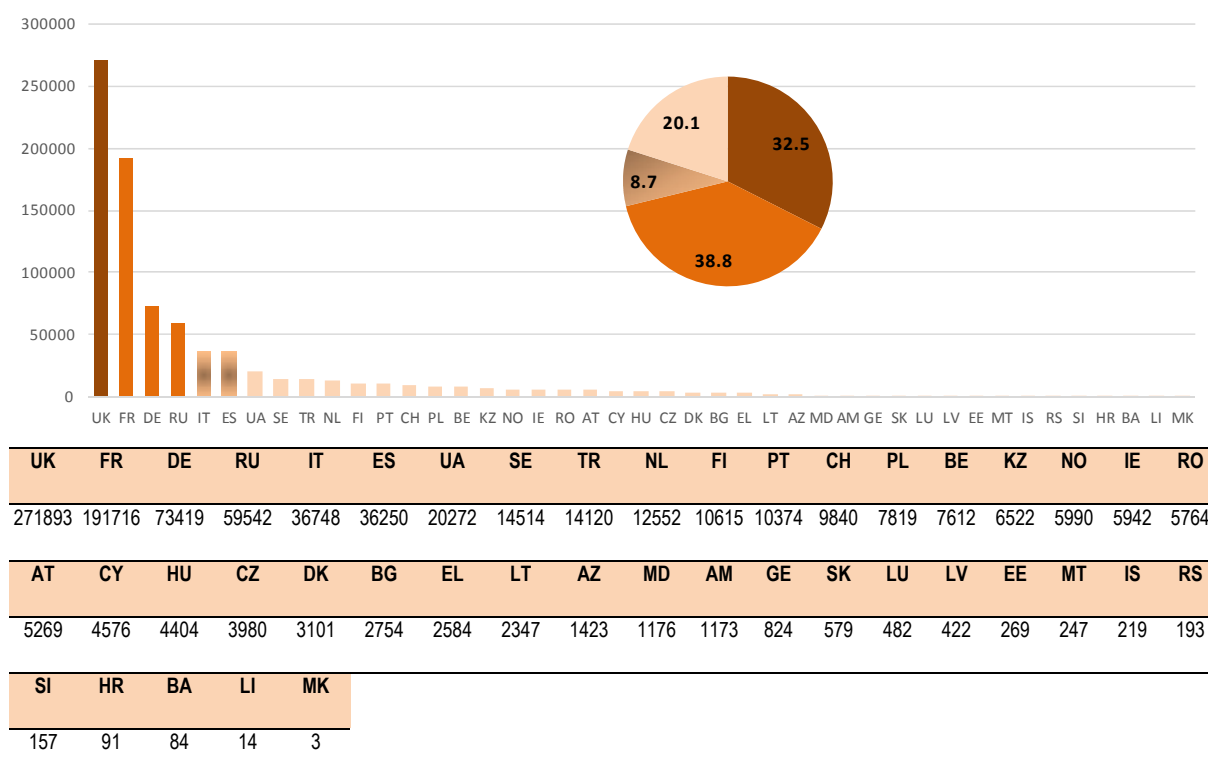
Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.



Students from outside the EHEA make up for more than 5 % of the total student population in only four countries, namely Cyprus, the United Kingdom, France and Luxembourg. At the other end of the spectrum, 17 countries reach less than 1 %. The weighted average of all EHEA countries is 2.27 % (Andorra, Albania, Montenegro and Holy See not included).

Figure 7.1 should be complemented by the distribution of tertiary mobile students from outside the EHEA (see Figure 7.2). Indeed, the most attractive EHEA countries are those countries which attract the lion's share of the total flow of mobile students from outside the EHEA. Four countries – the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Russia – attract 71.2 % of all non-EHEA mobile students enrolled in the EHEA.

**Figure 7.2 (indicator 7.2): Distribution of incoming degree tertiary education mobile students from outside the EHEA by country of destination, 2011/12**



Note: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The United Kingdom with more than 270 000 students is the EHEA country that attracts the most of mobile students from outside the EHEA (32.5 %); France is second with slightly more than 191 000 students (accounting for nearly 23 % of the total inflow from outside the EHEA). Germany and Russia belong to the top four but with far lower shares of the inflow (8.8 % and 7.1 % respectively). In these countries, students from outside the EHEA account for 2.5 % and 0.7 % of the total population of enrolled students (see Figure 7.1). Italy and Spain show a similar profile: they both host around 36 000 students from outside the EHEA which represents 1.9 % and 1.8 % of their total population of students.

The remaining EHEA countries host altogether around 168 000 students from outside the EHEA. It is four times less than the total registered by the top six countries.

## Outward degree mobility flows from inside the EHEA to outside the EHEA

The outward degree mobility rate of a country shows mobile students that are enrolled abroad, as a percentage of the total number of students from that country (i.e. the total number of students having the same country of origin). For a given country (of origin), the compilation of outward mobile students relies on the records of all other countries in the world. Indeed, only each hosting country is capable to collect data on students from this country of origin in its own tertiary education system.

Thus, students from a given country of origin are recorded through the mobility data provided by the host countries. To obtain a comprehensive and reliable picture of outwards mobility flows across the world, all countries would need to compile data from their tertiary education system on this issue and use the same mobility criterion (e.g. prior education or usual residence). This is far from being the case.

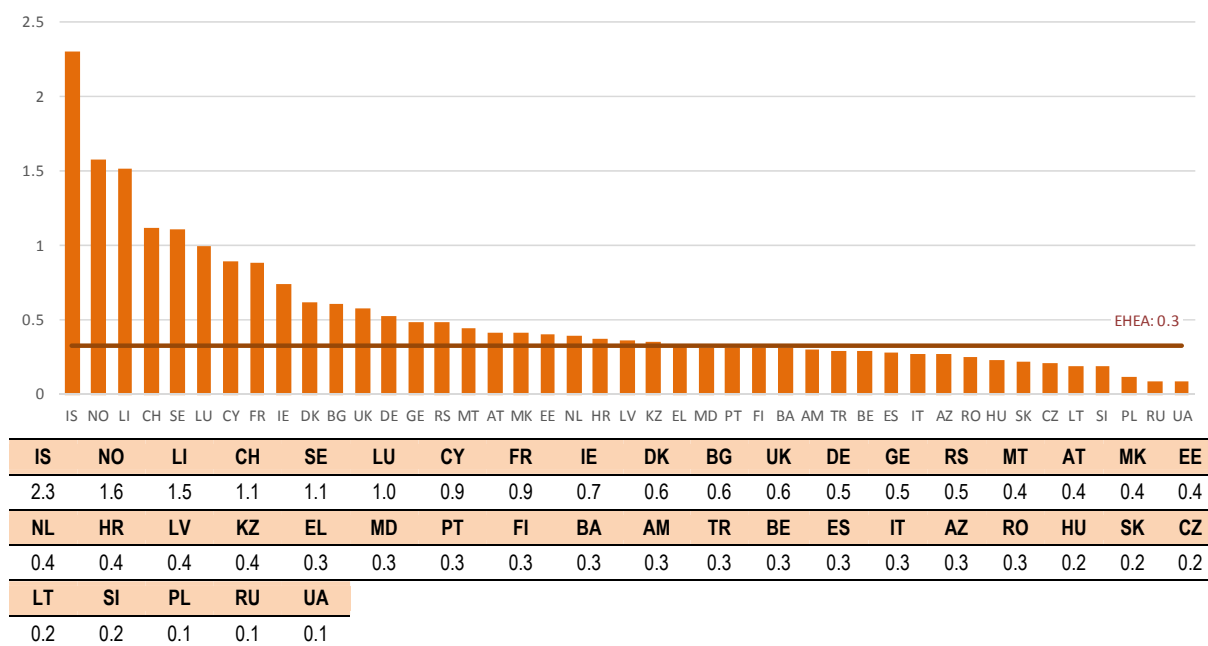
Currently, the reliability of outward mobility data is limited by:

- The availability of data in the countries covered and the number of countries covered: the data exploited here included the mobility data from the EHEA (excluding the following missing countries: Andorra, Albania, Montenegro and Holy See) and a selection of non-EHEA countries: Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. Those non-EHEA countries are hereafter referred to as “the rest of the world”;
- The quality of data provided: whenever provided, as stated above, mobility data may rely on different criteria (i.e. citizenship, prior/permanent residence, prior education) which do not measure exactly the same phenomenon.

As for mobility inflow, data do not provide any indication on what motivates the mobility of students. The fact that few populated countries rank at the top in terms of outward degree mobility rate suggests that there is a ‘size’ effect. Furthermore, it could be assumed that the high outward mobility rate of these countries is caused by a limited supply of tertiary educational programmes (e.g. the lack of programmes in some fields of study).

The outward degree mobility rate is highest in Iceland – reaching slightly more than 2 % (see Figure 7.3). This country is followed by Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Sweden, and Luxembourg, where the range is from 1 % to 1.5 %, far higher than the weighted average of the EHEA countries which reaches only 0.33 %.

**Figure 7.3 (indicator 7.3): Outward degree mobility rate – tertiary education students from a country of the EHEA studying abroad outside the EHEA as a percentage of the total number of students of the same country of origin, 2011/12**

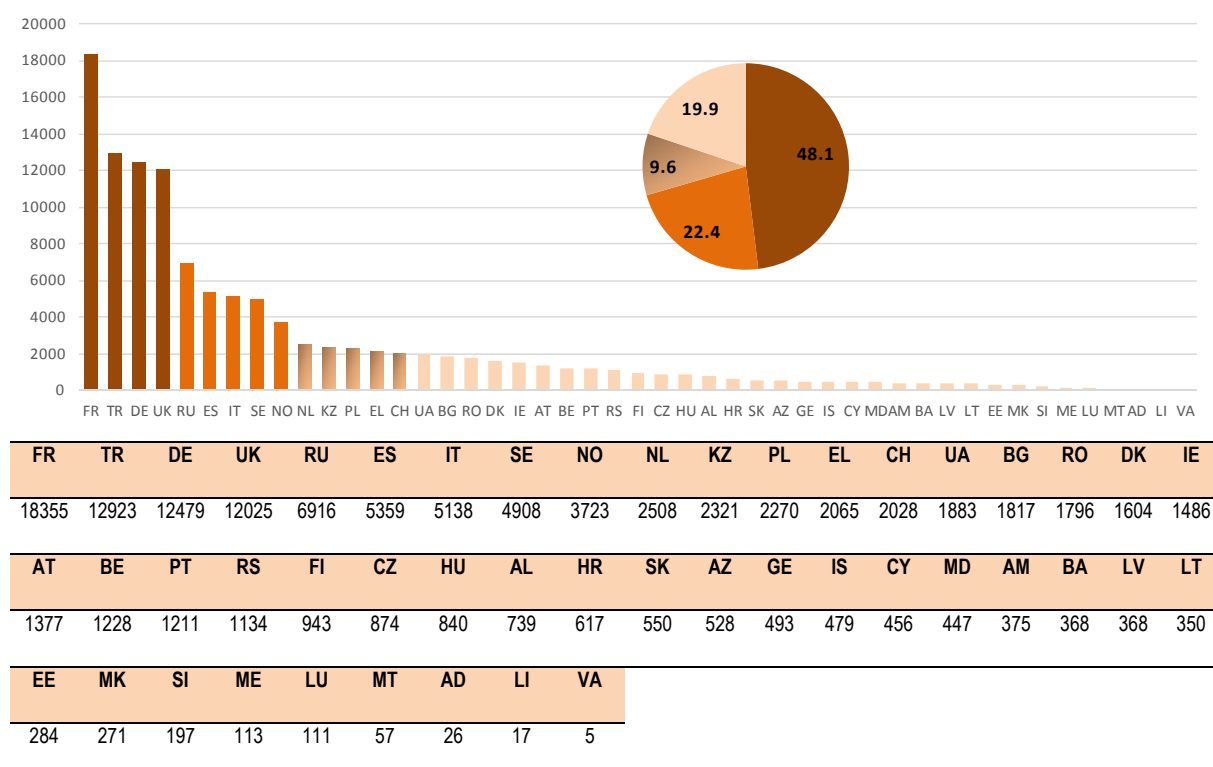


Notes: [To be included]. Destinations outside of the EHEA considered are Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. Data refer to foreign students instead of mobile students for the following country of destination: Japan. EHEA is the EHEA weighted average.

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The make-up of the population of outward students to the 'rest of the world' by country of origin is very imbalanced (see Figure 7.4). In 2012, the students originating from four countries (France, Turkey, Germany and the United Kingdom) account for nearly half (48.1 %) of all outward mobile students from the EHEA. These four countries sent from around 12 000 students (the United Kingdom) to slightly more than 18 300 students (France) to the 'rest of the world'.

**Figure 7.4 (indicator 7.4): Distribution of outward degree tertiary education students from the EHEA to abroad outside the EHEA by country of origin, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]. Destinations outside of the EHEA considered are Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. Data refer to foreign students instead of mobile students for the following country of destination: Japan.

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

A second group of countries accounts for 22.4 % of all outward mobile students from the EHEA going 'worldwide'. These countries send less than 10 000 students (from 3723 students for Norway to 6916 students for Russia).

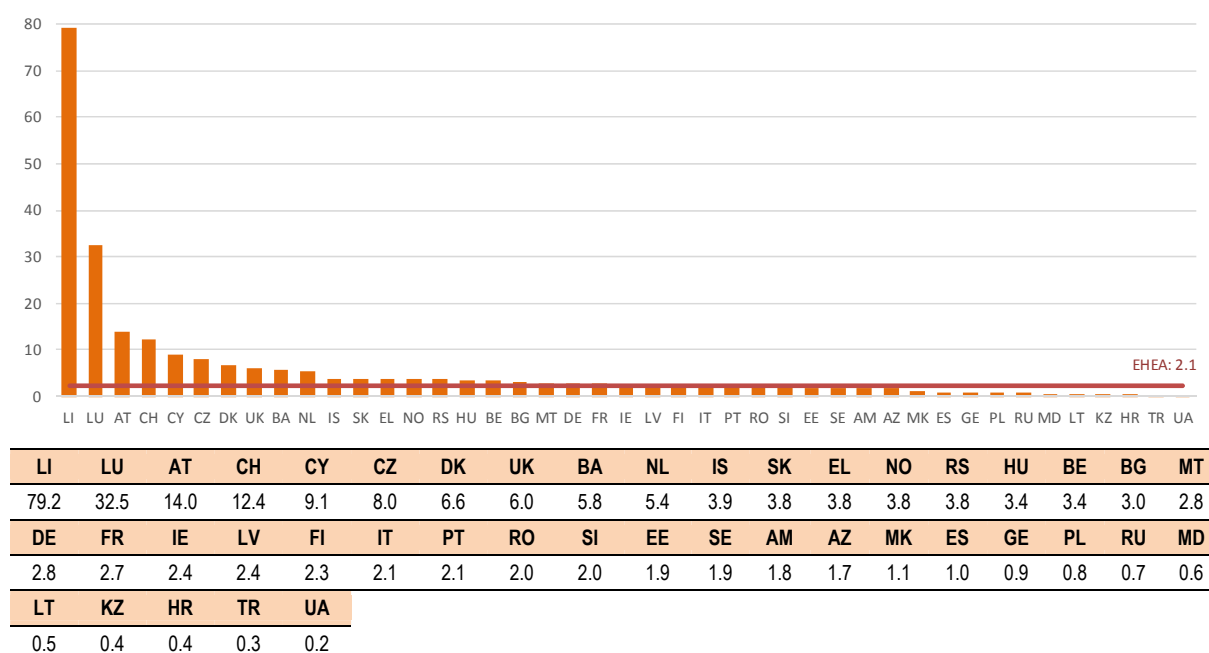
Despite the fact that it should be balanced by the relative size of their student population (see Figure 7.3), it is remarkable that the size of the mobility outflow to the rest of the world is very limited for more than two-third of the EHEA countries, sending less than 2 000 students each (and even less than 500 students for half of the countries of this group).

## Outward and inward mobility flows within the EHEA

Mobility from and to outside the EHEA is rather limited in relative terms and imbalanced in terms of country of destination and country of origin (i.e. EHEA countries hosting students from the 'rest of the world' vs. EHEA countries sending students to the 'rest of the world'). The purpose of this section is to analyse mobility flows within the EHEA.

Figures 7.5 and 7.6 show the incoming mobility flows within the EHEA. Austria with 14 % and Switzerland with 12 % have the highest incoming mobility rate of the EHEA, along with smaller states such as Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Cyprus (see Figure 7.5). All other countries show levels below 10 % out of which all but five (Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Denmark, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Netherlands) are below 5 %. The EHEA weighted average stands at 2.1 %.

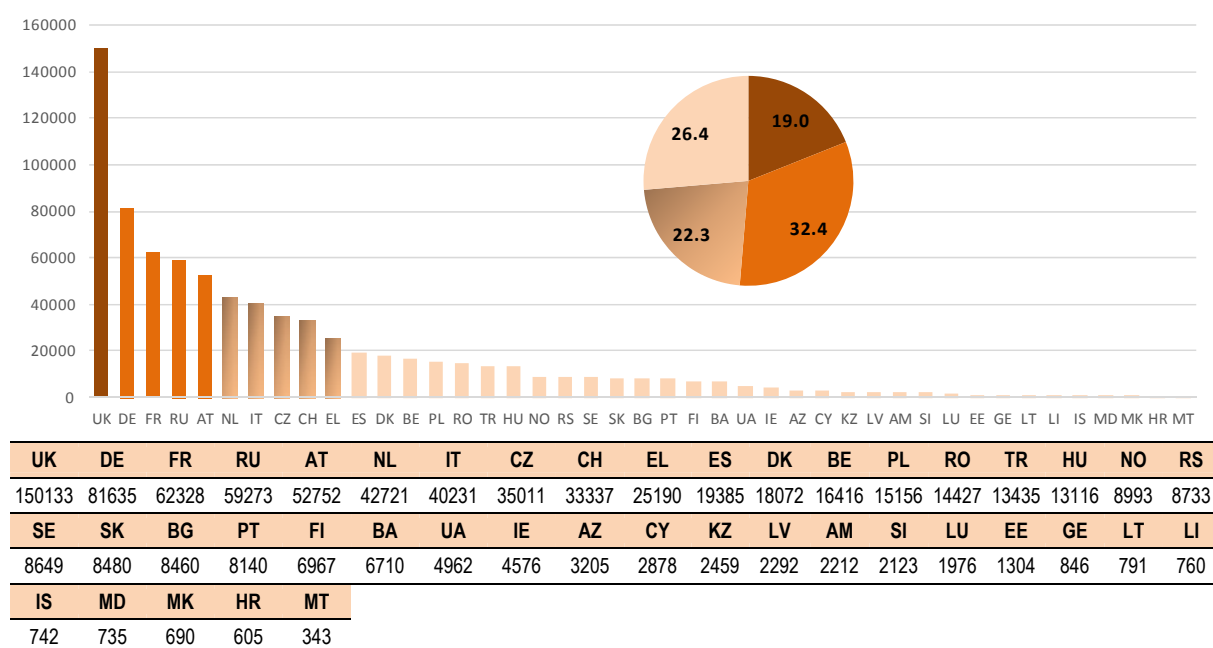
**Figure 7.5 (indicator 7.5): Incoming degree mobility rate – tertiary education mobile students from inside the EHEA studying in the country as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled, 2011/12**



Note: [To be included]. EHEA is the EHEA weighted average.

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

**Figure 7.6 (indicator 7.6): Distribution of incoming degree tertiary education mobile students from inside the EHEA by country of destination, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat, UOE and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Figure 7.6 depicts the incoming mobility within EHEA in absolute terms for each country. It turns out that 51.3 % of all incoming students from inside the EHEA choose the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia or Austria as their destination of study. Similarly to the situation presented in Figure 7.2 (incoming students from outside the EHEA), the United Kingdom is by far welcoming the highest number of mobile students from the EHEA. With 150 133 students, the United Kingdom hosts nearly twice as much students from the EHEA than Germany and 2.8 times the number of hosted students in Russia. Each country that belongs to this group welcomes more than 50 000 students from the EHEA.

Overall, the Netherlands, Italy, Czech Republic, Switzerland and Greece host 22 % of incoming students from the EHEA. Nonetheless, their situation varies as the Netherlands welcome slightly more than 40 000 students from the EHEA while Greece hosts 25 190 students.

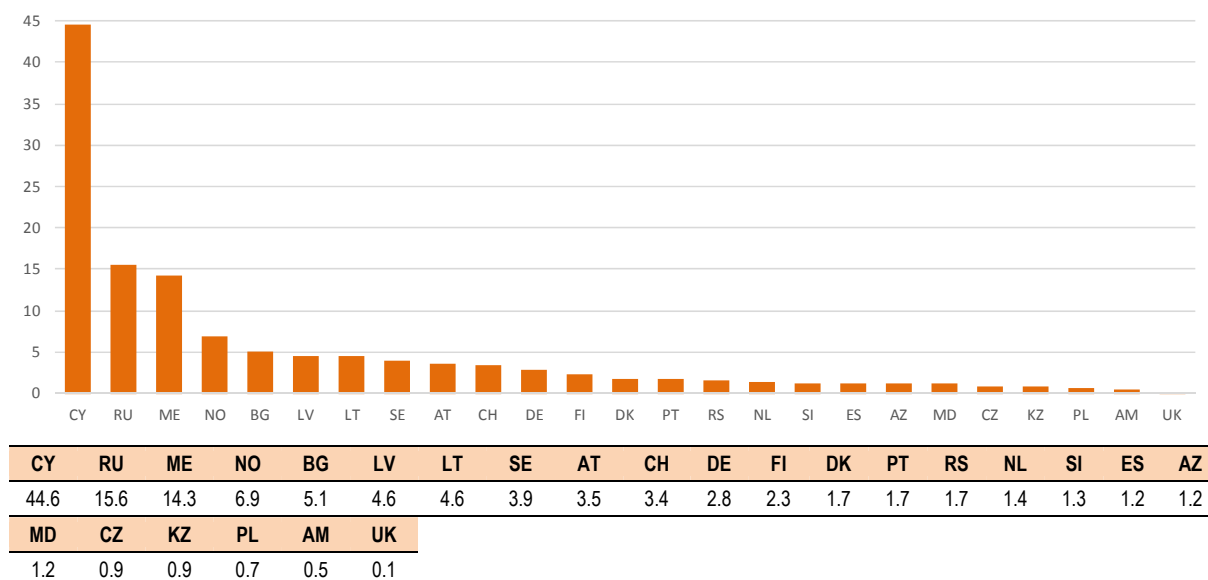
Taking into account the “size factor” of education systems (i.e. total enrolments, which can be seen as their capacity), Austria and Switzerland may also be deemed as top hosting countries.

Overall, degree mobility currently seems to be a relatively minor phenomenon and does not reach significant values compared to the tertiary student population. Based on Eurostat data, the average number of students studying in the EHEA coming from any country from abroad (i.e. incoming mobility from outside the EHEA plus incoming mobility from inside the EHEA) reaches slightly less than 4.4 % of total enrolments (see Figures 7.1 and 7.5).



The purpose of the indicator of Figure 7.7 is to assess how much EHEA students from a specific country of origin graduated in other EHEA countries. However, according to the current state of data collection systems across the EHEA, this indicator should be taken with extreme caution due to the low country coverage (only 19 countries provided data on graduates by country of origin).

**Figure 7.7 (indicator 7.7): Outward degree mobility rate – tertiary education graduates from a country of the EHEA graduating inside the EHEA as a percentage of the total number of graduates of the same country of origin, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

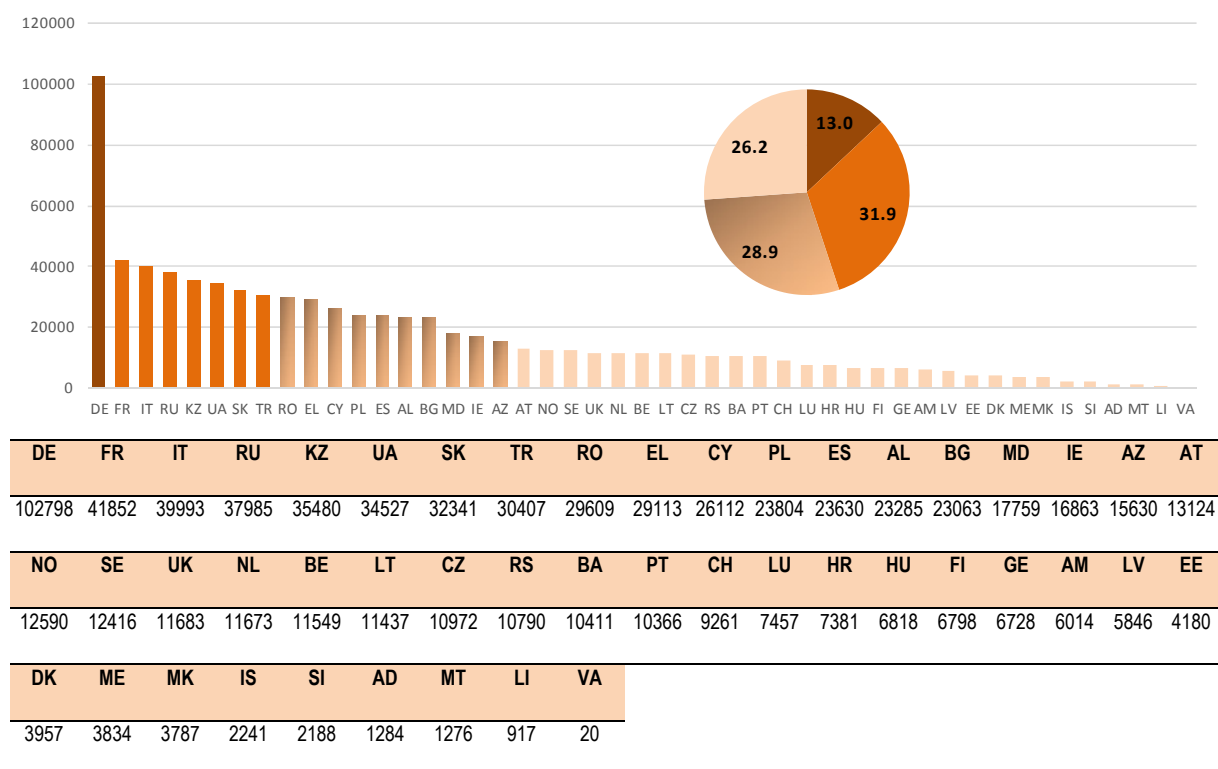
In addition, at present, the indicator is “geographically biased”. First, the under-coverage of countries leads to an underestimation of the number of outward graduates for every country due to the low number of reporting countries. Secondly, this under-coverage has different impact on countries for which data is available and thus limits the comparability across countries: in case the preferred destinations of students fall in the set of available countries, the under-estimation of outwards graduates will be lower for some countries than for others.

Besides Cyprus with outward degree mobility rates of graduates of around 44 %, Russia, Montenegro, Norway and Bulgaria display the highest values, between 5 % and 15.6 %. The vast majority of EHEA countries for which data is available, however, reach values of less than 5 %.

The under-coverage of the indicator on graduates (see Figure 7.7) calls for the use of data on enrolments to get a better picture of outward and inward mobility within the EHEA.

Figure 7.8 presents information on outward degree mobility within the EHEA. Germany is the country that sends the highest number of students for a degree in another EHEA country. Nearly 102 800 students move away from Germany to study in another EHEA country, representing 13 % of the total number of EHEA students being abroad within the EHEA.

**Figure 7.8 (indicator 7.8): Distribution of outward degree tertiary education mobile students from the EHEA to abroad inside the EHEA (enrolment) by country of origin, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included].

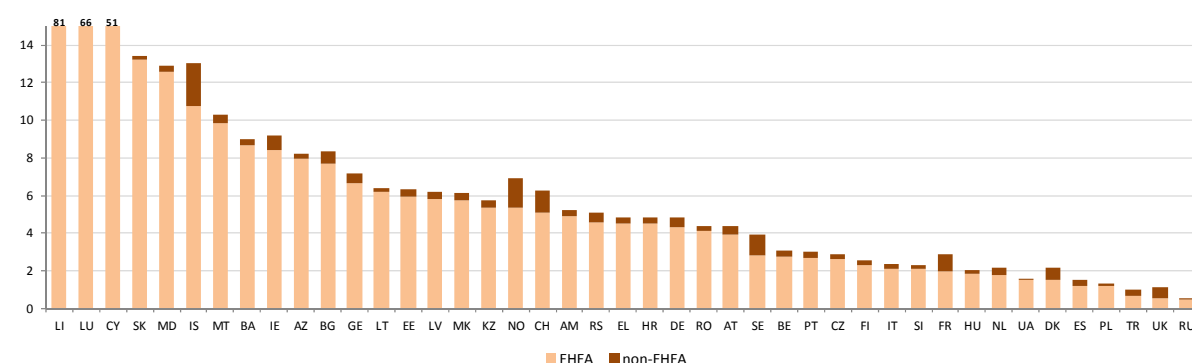
Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Far behind Germany, a group of seven countries send more than 30 000 students each towards other EHEA countries. The situation is still disparate among them: France and Italy send around 40 000 students in the EHEA, while 30 407 students were from Turkey.

At the other end of the spectrum, the number of outward degree student to the EHEA is lower than 14 000 in 60 % of EHEA countries.

However, such information is advantageously balanced by information in relative terms, since large countries are obviously more likely to “export” more students (see Figure 7.9).

**Figure 7.9 (indicator NEW 1): Outward degree mobility rate by destination (within and outside EHEA) , 2011/12**



Area	LI	LU	CY	SK	MD	IS	MT	BA	IE	AZ	BG	GE	LT	EE	LV	MK	KZ	NO
EHEA	81.9	66.7	51.3	13.2	12.6	10.7	9.9	8.7	8.4	8.0	7.7	6.7	6.2	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.4	5.3
non-EHEA	1.5	1.0	0.9	0.2	0.3	2.3	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.6

Area	CH	AM	RS	EL	HR	DE	RO	AT	SE	BE	PT	CZ	FI	IT	SI	FR	HU	NL
EHEA	5.1	4.9	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.1	3.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.8
non-EHEA	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.4

Area	UA	DK	ES	PL	TR	UK	RU
EHEA	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.5
non-EHEA	0.1	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.6	0.1

Notes: [To be included]. Destinations outside of the EHEA considered are Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States.

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Figure 7.9 shows the outward degree mobility rate by area of destination, distinguishing between the EHEA and non-EHEA countries. It links the outward mobile students of a country to the total population of students with the same country of origin. It is thus a measure of the mobility of a population that has the same country of origin (i.e. the same prior education or the same usual residence or the same citizenship). As for other indicators, the results provided by this indicator should be considered with caution since countries do not all use the same criterion to define the mobile population. For instance, the fact that the citizens of the United Kingdom permanently lived in countries of the Commonwealth could lead to an over-estimation of outward flows if these countries use the citizenship criterion to report enrolment by country of origin.

Three countries show a specific profile in the EHEA, namely Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Cyprus. They present particularly high outgoing mobility: students abroad are more numerous than those who stay studying in their own country. This phenomenon is often referred to as ‘vertical mobility’ and may be explained by two main factors: a limited provision of programs for some fields of study as well as short distances from the borders.

Apart from these countries, Slovakia, Moldova and Iceland are the only countries to reach 10 % of students enrolled abroad in the EHEA. On the opposite, three countries do not reach the threshold of 1% (Turkey, the United Kingdom and Russia).

One clear feature of mobility of EHEA students is their preference to study in the EHEA rather than in other parts of the world (being understood here as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States). This is true for most of the EHEA countries with some exceptions, where mobility outside EHEA is a significant part of the overall mobility. The United Kingdom is the EHEA country which has the most balanced situation, as mobility outside the EHEA is slightly higher than mobility within the EHEA. Mobility outside the EHEA is also a strong component of the overall mobility of students originating from France, Turkey, the Nordic countries (except Finland), Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands. In all other countries, mobility outside the EHEA accounts for less than 20 % of the overall mobility.

### **Balanced vs. imbalanced mobility**

The London Communiqué <sup>(17)</sup> was the first one in the Bologna Process to highlight more equitably balanced mobility within the EHEA, and thus turned attention to mobility flows across the EHEA. The aspiration for a more balanced mobility was reinforced with the Bucharest Communiqué <sup>(18)</sup> and the 2012 Mobility Strategy in which ministers ask for more balanced mobility (especially for degree mobility), "since it have a sustained effect on the host and home countries, can facilitate capacity building and cooperation and may lead to brain gain on the one side and to brain drain on the other"<sup>(19)</sup>.

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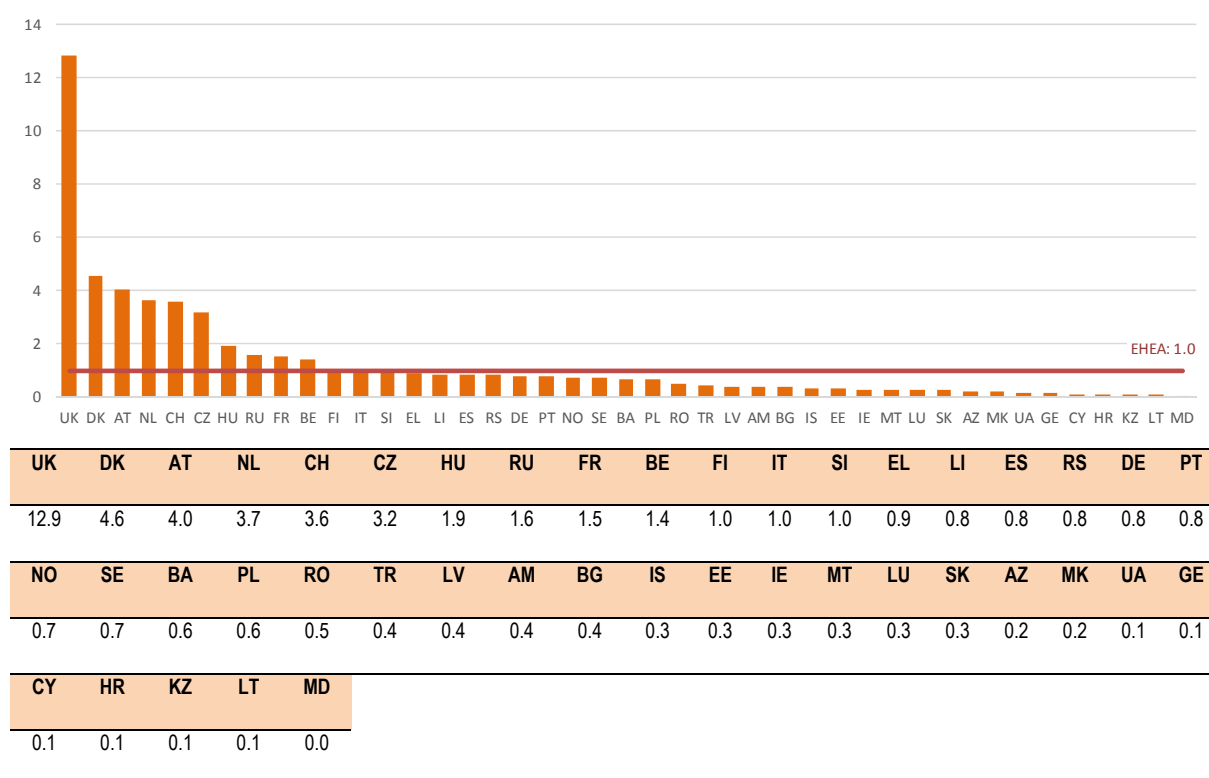
<sup>(17)</sup> London Communiqué: Towards the European Higher Education Area: responding to challenges in a globalised world, 18 May 2007.

<sup>(18)</sup> Bucharest Communiqué: Making the Most of Our Potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area, 26-27 April 2012, p. 4.

<sup>(19)</sup> EHEA, 2012. *Mobility for Better Learning – Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area*. [Online] Available at: [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/\(1\)/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/(1)/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf) [Accessed 15 October 2014].

This section quantifies the balance between outward and incoming mobility flows and reports the national incoming/outgoing mobility ratio with EHEA partners on the one hand and with countries of the “rest of the world” on the other hand. The purpose of this indicator is to identify ‘net importing countries’ (ratio greater than 1 – the country receives more mobile students than it sends) and ‘net exporting countries’ (ratio below 1 – the country sends abroad more students than it hosts). It should be kept in mind that a balanced mobility hides different realities. Assuming that mobility is desirable, balanced mobility at low levels of mobility is less positive than at high levels. Balanced or imbalanced mobility, as measured by the incoming/outgoing mobility ratio, may also hide geographical disparities as it only considers two areas: the EHEA (see Figure 7.11) and the “rest of the world” (see Figure 7.12). Such overall incoming/outgoing mobility ratios hide imbalances of bilateral mobility flows.

**Figure 7.11 (indicator 7.9): Mobility balance: incoming/outgoing tertiary students ratio within the EHEA, 2011/12**

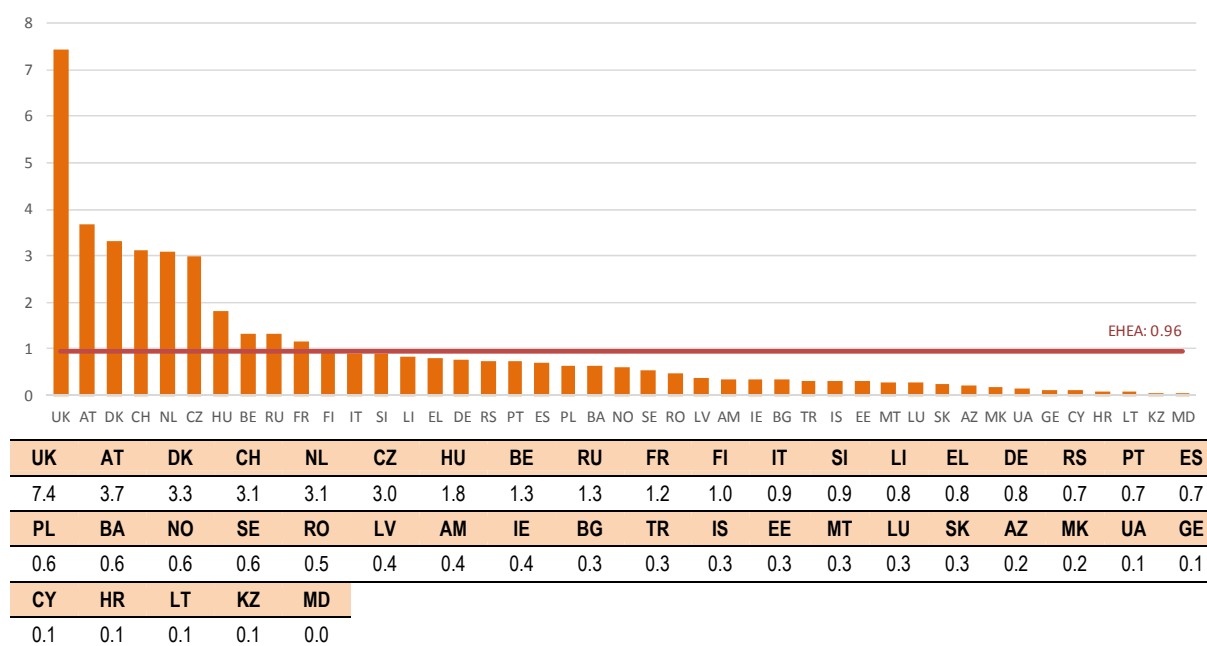


Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Most EHEA countries (30 countries out of 43 for which data is available) are net exporters of students towards other EHEA countries. Only three countries (Finland, Italy and Slovenia) show a balanced mobility with the rest of EHEA countries (ratio equal to 1). Few EHEA countries are net importers of students with the rest of the EHEA (i.e. incoming students outnumber outgoing students). This is especially the case of some western European countries (the United Kingdom, Denmark, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland and to a lesser extent France and Belgium); central Europe (the Czech Republic and Hungary) and Eastern Europe (Russia).

**Figure 7.12 : Mobility balance: incoming/outgoing tertiary students ratio within and outside the EHEA, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

The incoming/outgoing ratio outside the EHEA suffers from a clear under-coverage as only a selection of countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States) is considered as the “rest of the world”. This under-coverage has a differentiated impact on countries. It is expected that countries that established privileged links with some areas of the world because of shared languages (English-speaking area, francophone community, etc.), common history (Commonwealth, former colonies, etc.) or specific regional agreements are more impacted by the geographical under-coverage of the data. The impact on the indicator is reinforced when specific bilateral relationships are not balanced and leads to ‘brain drain’/‘brain gain’ mechanisms towards the EHEA. Moreover, the incoming/outgoing ratio focuses on the balance of mobility flows but not on their absolute size when comparing them for two geographical areas.

Nearly all countries that are net importers of students from the rest of the EHEA (i.e. incoming students outnumber outgoing students) keep a similar position when considering the ‘world’. However, the imbalance is less pronounced for most of them.

Finland show balanced mobility flows with EHEA partners and also when considering the ‘world’, while Italy record an balance with the EHEA but short imbalance with the “world” at ratio of 0.9 (i.e. net exporter).

It is also possible to measure the absolute imbalanced mobility between two countries defined as the absolute difference between students from country A in country B and students from country B in country A. Following Grabher, Wejwar, Unger, Terzieva <sup>(20)</sup>, only absolute imbalances greater than 1 000 students is considered. This measure is only a proxy of the imbalance of mobility flows as countries do not use the same criterion to report incoming students. The United Kingdom is a net

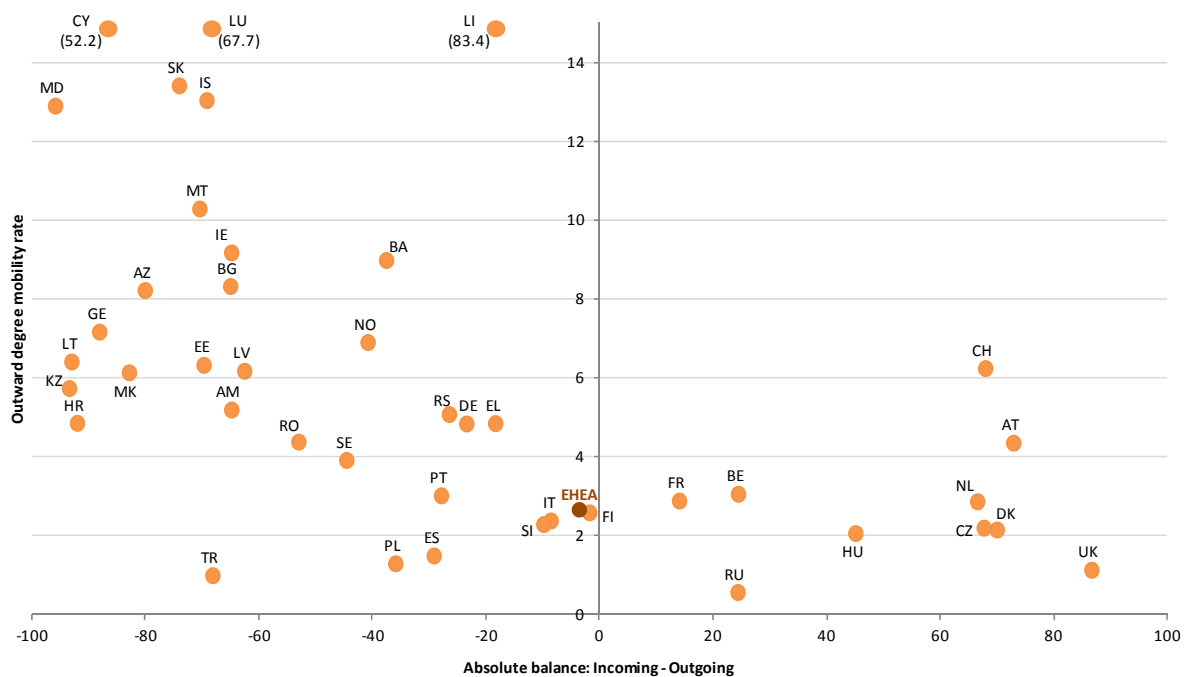
<sup>(20)</sup> Institute for Advanced Studies , Grabher, Wejwar, Unger, Terzieva, 2014. "Student mobility in the EHEA. Underrepresentation in student credit mobility and imbalances in degree mobility. [Online] Available at [http://www.equi.at/dateien/Student\\_mobility\\_in\\_EHEA.pdf](http://www.equi.at/dateien/Student_mobility_in_EHEA.pdf) [Accessed 18 November 2014].



importing country whatever the EHEA partners. The imbalance is especially high with Ireland, Greece, Germany and Cyprus. Each of these countries sends far more students (a surplus of more than 10 000 students) to the United Kingdom than they receive from it. Austria is also a net importing country especially from Germany, Italy and Turkey and numerous eastern European countries, but is a net exporting country with the United Kingdom. Germany displays large imbalanced mobility with several EHEA countries. In addition to Austria and the United Kingdom, Germany sends far more students to the Netherlands, Switzerland and France than it receives from them. On the opposite, students from Spain, Poland, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine hosted in Germany largely outnumber German students enrolled in these countries (the net incoming balance exceeds 3 000 students). France also shows imbalanced bilateral mobility with several countries. On the one hand, French students enrolled in Belgium and Switzerland exceed the number of incoming students from these countries. On the other hand, the French higher education system hosts far more students from Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Romania and Russia than it sends to these countries.

As already mentioned, incoming/outgoing ratios do not provide any information on the relative size of mobility flows. Figure 7.13 below allows to add some information to the mobility balance, considering (Y axis) the outward degree mobility rate (both axis include mobility flows within and outside the EHEA). The X axis is the same balance concept as shown above, but computed on a different scale for graphical readability purpose <sup>(21)</sup>.

**Figure 7.13 : Mobility balance versus outward degree mobility rate, within and outside the EHEA, 2011/12**



Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

Figure 7.13 shows an obvious – almost tautological – relationship between the mobility balance and the outward mobility rate: the higher the importing balance, the lesser the outward mobility rate. However, it allows highlighting some atypical countries.

<sup>(21)</sup> In order to avoid a scale ranging to more than 10 units while most countries are below 1 (incoming/outgoing ratios, see Figure 7.11), the absolute difference (incoming – outgoing students) is computed and then divided by the total number of incoming students (when the balance is positive) or by the total number of outgoing students (in case of negative balance). This results in a smoother continuum, more readable when plotted.

Despite being much more importers than exporters, Austria and Switzerland display a relatively high outward mobility rate. In other words, even though they are hosting a lot of mobile students – in comparison to the number of students they send abroad – their students going abroad are relatively numerous – in comparison to the number of students originated from those countries. Those systems are therefore both attractive and exporting.

Conversely, the Baltic countries, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia and Kazakhstan are much more sending than receiving students, but such exportation does not result in the highest outward mobility rates. The number of students sent abroad is therefore relatively low (when reported to the number of students originated from there), even though high compared to the number of hosted students.

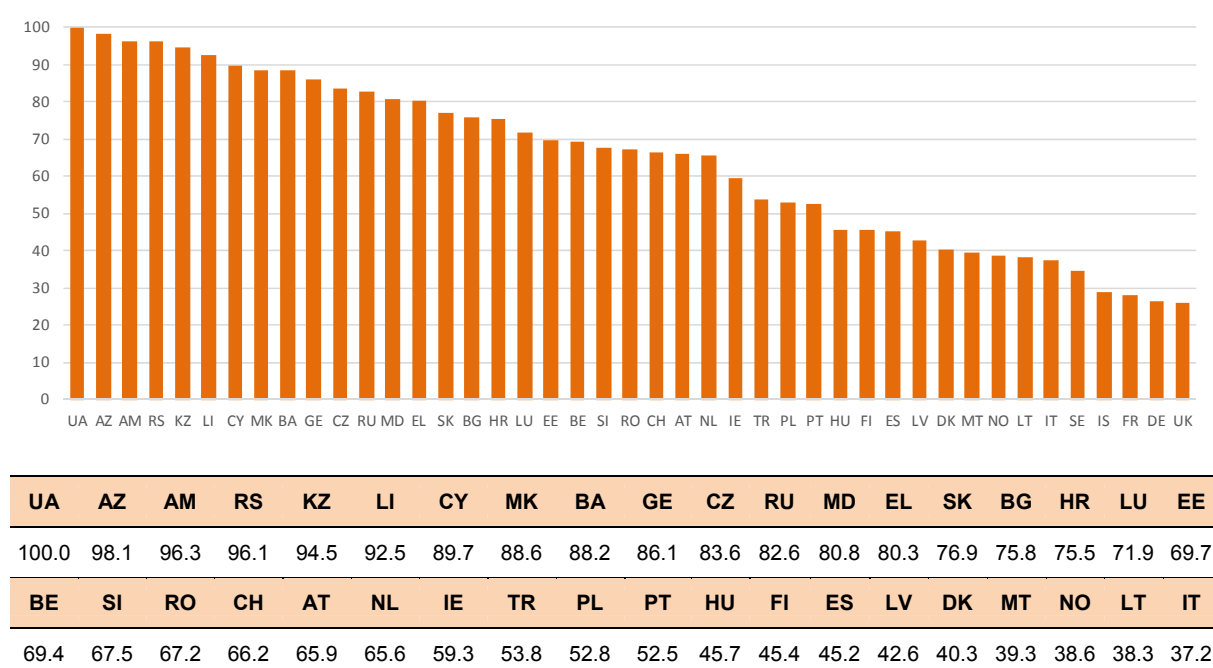
Slovenia, Italy and Finland are countries where the balanced flows hide a low mobility intensity (in terms of both incoming and outgoing mobility). Liechtenstein is the only countries where balanced mobility flows come along with a relatively high outward degree mobility rate, meaning intense mobility flows from and to this country.

## Mobility diversity

From a more qualitative perspective, balanced mobility flows could also be understood in terms of origin (for host countries) and destination (for sending countries). The purpose of the following indicators is to depict the diversity of origins of incoming students (see Figure 7.14) and the diversity of destinations of outgoing students (see Figure 7.15) for each EHEA country.

The indicator on inward degree mobility diversity (see Figure 7.14) computes the number of mobile tertiary students enrolled in a given country from the top three countries of origin, as a percentage of all mobile students enrolled in the country. A high percentage outlines that the top three countries provide most of the incoming students in the declaring country. As for other indicators, the restriction of the geographical coverage to some countries outside the EHEA is a clear limitation of the explanatory power of this indicator especially for those countries that receive students from countries from other parts of the world that are not covered here.

**Figure 7.14: Inward mobility diversity: countries of origin of incoming mobile tertiary students, 2011/12**



SE	IS	FR	DE	UK
34.6	28.9	28.0	26.2	25.9

Notes: [To be included].

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

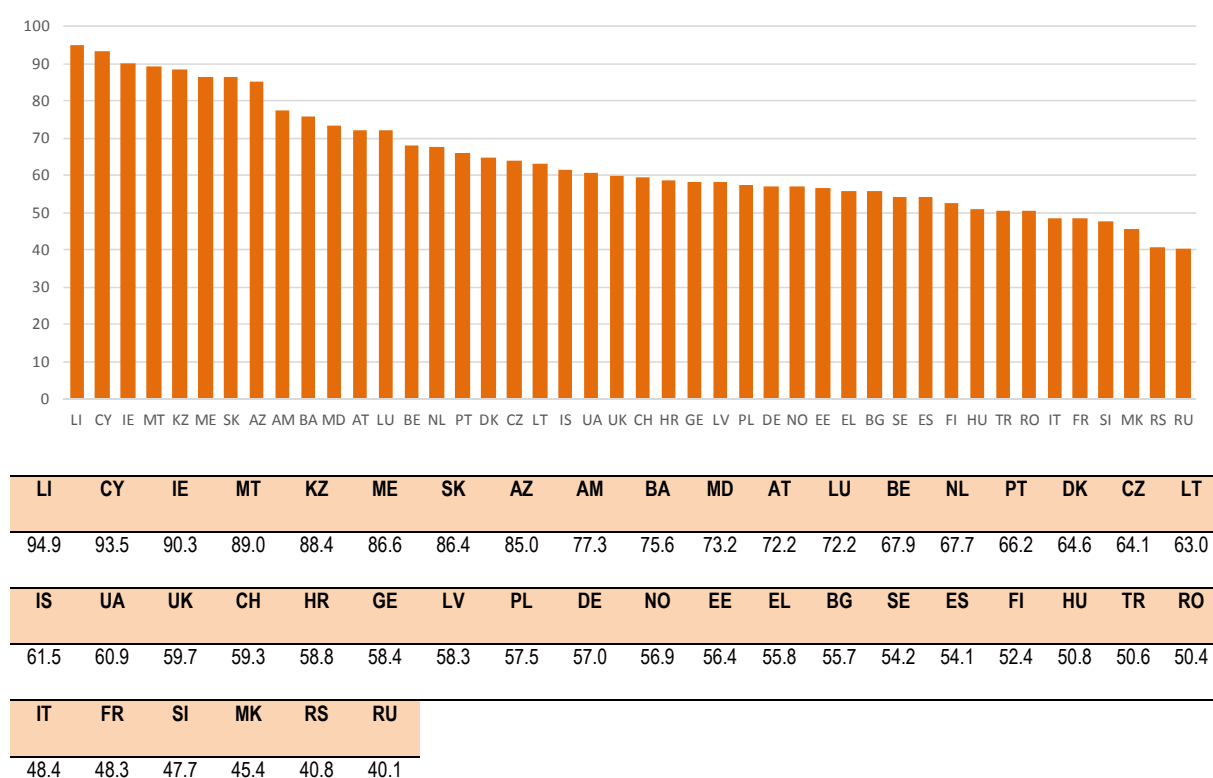
In the majority of the EHEA countries for which data is available, the origin of incoming students is not so diverse. Indeed, more than 65 % of the total incoming degree mobility flow involves students from three countries of origin. In some countries, the inflow of students is even more concentrated as more than 90 % of incoming students come from three countries. This is especially the situation in Azerbaijan (where nearly all mobile students are from Turkey, Russia and Georgia), Serbia (from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia), Kazakhstan (from Russia, Turkey and Azerbaijan) and Liechtenstein (Austria, Switzerland and Germany). Ukraine offers a particular picture as all incoming students come from Russia, Moldova and Turkey.

At the other end of the spectrum, the low percentage of the top-three providers suggests a far more widespread distribution of incoming students. This is for instance the case of the three countries that host the highest number of EHEA students (see Figure 7.6). Indeed, in the United Kingdom, France and Germany, students from the top-three origins account for 28 % or less of the total number of incoming students. In the United Kingdom 25.9 % of incoming students originate either from Germany, Ireland or the United States. In Germany, 26.3 % of incoming students originate from Russia, or Austria and Bulgaria while in France, students from Germany, Italy and Spain account for 28 % of all incoming tertiary students. In addition to the United Kingdom, US students are among the top-three most represented origins in three EHEA countries: Ireland, Malta and Sweden. In Ireland, 59 % of hosted students come from the United Kingdom, the US and Canada.

Geographical proximity (neighbouring countries), the share of common languages of instruction or historical legacies may not be negligible in determining the origin of incoming students in some countries. For instance, such factors may explain the pattern of student received in Belgium (from France, the Netherlands and Germany); in Switzerland (from Germany, France and Italy), Estonia (from Finland, Russia and Latvia); Finland (from Russia, Estonia and Sweden); Georgia (from Turkey, Azerbaijan and Russia) as well as in other countries.

The indicator on outward degree mobility diversity computes (see Figure 7.15) the number of mobile tertiary students of a given country of origin enrolled in the top three destinations, as a percentage of all mobile tertiary students of that country. The variety of the destination is impacted by several similar factors as for the origin of incoming students. In addition, at national level, the various measures aiming at fostering student mobility have an impact of such diversity since they usually prioritise particular geographical regions, sub-geographical areas or specific countries for privileged cooperation in this matter.

**Figure 7.15: Outward mobility diversity: countries of destination of outgoing mobile tertiary students 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]. Destinations outside of the EHEA considered are Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United States.

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

More than 90 % of outgoing students from Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Ireland are pursuing their tertiary studies in three countries. Most students away from Liechtenstein are enrolled for a degree either in Switzerland but also to a lesser extent in Austria or Germany, which can surely be explained by their shared language and geographical proximity. Those away from Cyprus are mainly studying equally in Greece or in the United Kingdom. The US are the third destination but for fewer Cypriot students. The geographical proximity with Greece as well as the historical legacy with the United Kingdom may explain such pattern. The United Kingdom, the US and France are the top three destination of students away from Ireland. However, the United Kingdom accounts for the lion's share as it is the destination of nearly 82 % of Irish students abroad.

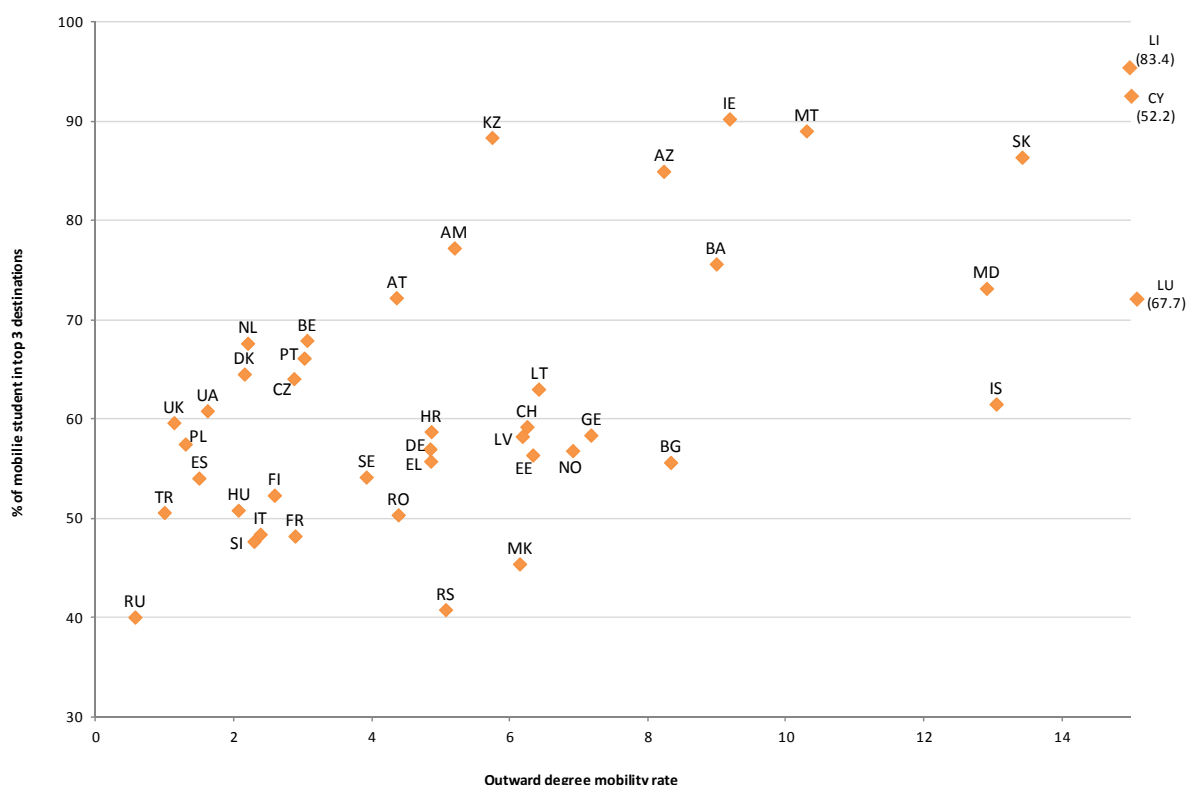
As the United Kingdom is by far the EHEA country that is receiving the highest number of mobile students, it is not surprising that it is the top destination for students from numerous other countries: Switzerland (24 %), Denmark (28 %), Estonia (27 %), Greece (38 %), Spain (20 %), Finland (25 %), France (21 %), Italy (18 %), Lithuania (42 %), Latvia (36 %), Norway (27 %), Poland (24 %), Romania (19 %) and Malta (83 %). The US is the favourite destination of outgoing student from three EHEA

countries: Sweden (22 %), Turkey (27 %) and the United Kingdom (38 %). Germany is the top destination for students from Austria, Bulgaria, Georgia, Hungary, Luxembourg and Russia.

Some countries show more specific patterns. For instance, 42 % of Czech mobile students go to Slovakia which sends 75 % of its mobile students to the Czech Republic. Germany, France and the United Kingdom receive 40 %, 18 % and 14 % respectively of Luxembourgish mobile students. Most of mobile students from Montenegro move to the neighbouring countries: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy.

Having high numbers of students moving abroad increases the possibility for multiple individual choices as the population of mobile student is more diverse. Plotting the diversity of country of destination and the outward mobility rate does not confirm this intuition (see Figure 7.16).

**Figure 7.16): Relation between outward mobility rate (within and outside the EHEA) and diversity of countries of destination, 2011/12**



Notes: [To be included]

Source: Eurostat (UOE data collection) and additional collection for the other EHEA countries.

To some extent, countries having the highest mobility rates are also often those who show a low diversity of destinations. Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Cyprus are the EHEA countries that present the highest outward rate. Two of them (Liechtenstein and Cyprus) display a low diversity of destinations despite showing different patterns: 85 % of mobile students from Liechtenstein move to Switzerland while mobile Cypriot students go studying to Greece (48 %) and to the United Kingdom (44 %).

Some other countries show specific patterns. Kazakhstan records an outward mobility rate of 5.7 % but a very large majority of mobile students (78 %) go to Russia. Differently, the outward mobility rate of Serbia is 5.1 % but the top three destinations (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria and Hungary) accounts each for less than 17 %. Russia is in a similar position, outward mobility rate is relatively low (0.6 %) and the top three destinations account altogether for only 40 %.

#### 7.2.1.4. Obstacles to student mobility

In order to assist in their efforts to reach the targets and foster mobility, countries, based on BFUG reporting, have identified the three most important obstacles that they perceive towards mobility. Here, obstacles concern both credit and degree mobility.

Similarly to the 2012 reporting exercise, funding continues to be the most often cited obstacle to both incoming and outgoing student mobility. This concern is equally spread across EHEA countries. However, for incoming mobility, language-related barriers are considered to be equally important as funding. The significance of language obstacles diminishes by half in the context of outgoing mobility. Several countries (Austria, France, Moldova, Hungary, Switzerland, the United Kingdom) note that the majority of courses are still offered in only one language. In some cases prospective mobile students are required to learn the language of the host country which could be time consuming and can result in additional financial burden.

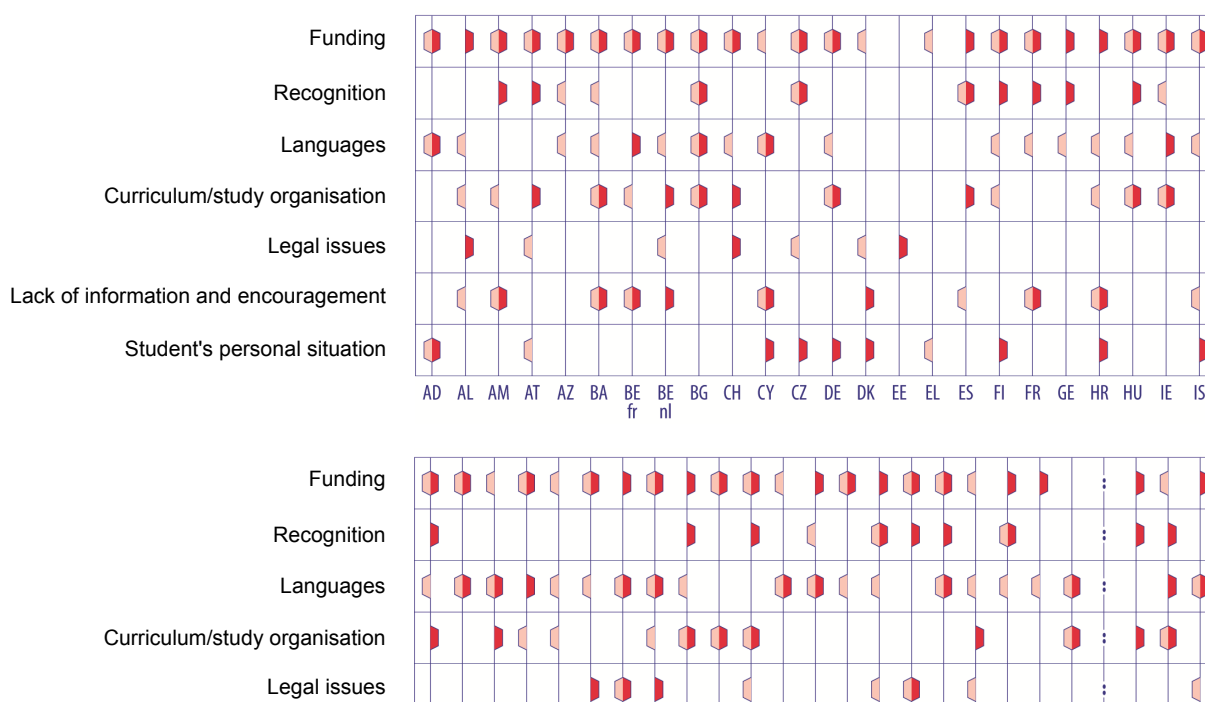
The third most often cited obstacle to both outgoing and incoming mobility is the lack of sufficient motivation and information.

Recognition issues are cited twice more often in relation to outgoing mobility as compared to incoming one, signalling, as in the case of languages, a possible issue of perception.

Only a small minority of countries mention legal obstacles like immigration regulations and visa procedures. In most cases these are non-EU countries for outgoing mobility and EU countries for incoming mobility.

Personal and family issues are more often cited as an obstacle to outgoing mobility. Germany, the Czech Republic and Switzerland mention that an additional obstacle to outgoing mobility could be the need to extend the overall duration of studies due to recognition, curriculum and language problems.

**Figure 7.x. 11: Obstacles to student mobility**





Lack of information and encouragement

Student's personal situation

Incoming mobility Outward mobility

Source: BFUG questionnaire.

UK (1) = UK-ENG/WLS/NIR

These findings suggest that there is a tendency for countries to see their own systems and students more positively than those elsewhere. Thus these perceptions on mobility obstacles might not reflect reality objectively (recognition may well be a problem for students wishing to enter the system, as well as for those wishing to go abroad, for example), but rather provide a picture of how attitudes to "nationals" and "foreigners" are also critical in addressing mobility obstacles.

Countries have also reported whether some obstacles as identified above are particularly relevant for a specific study cycle, field of study and/or credit or degree mobility. The majority of countries highlight persisting difficulties with recognition and inflexible curricula. Regarding various fields of studies, medical and natural sciences, law and teaching appear to be more challenged in promoting mobility. Indeed in subjects leading to professional qualifications, mobility can be difficult as students often stay in the home country to ensure they can meet the specific requirements (course elements or course modules) to the satisfaction of the relevant national professional regulator / body. Most often countries report specific obstacles related to either credit or degree mobility. The most common concerns for credit mobility lie in recognition and curriculum organisation. The issue of increasing demand for traineeships abroad and persisting problems related to it has been particularly singled out. Once again, the most relevant obstacles to degree mobility appear to be funding and languages.

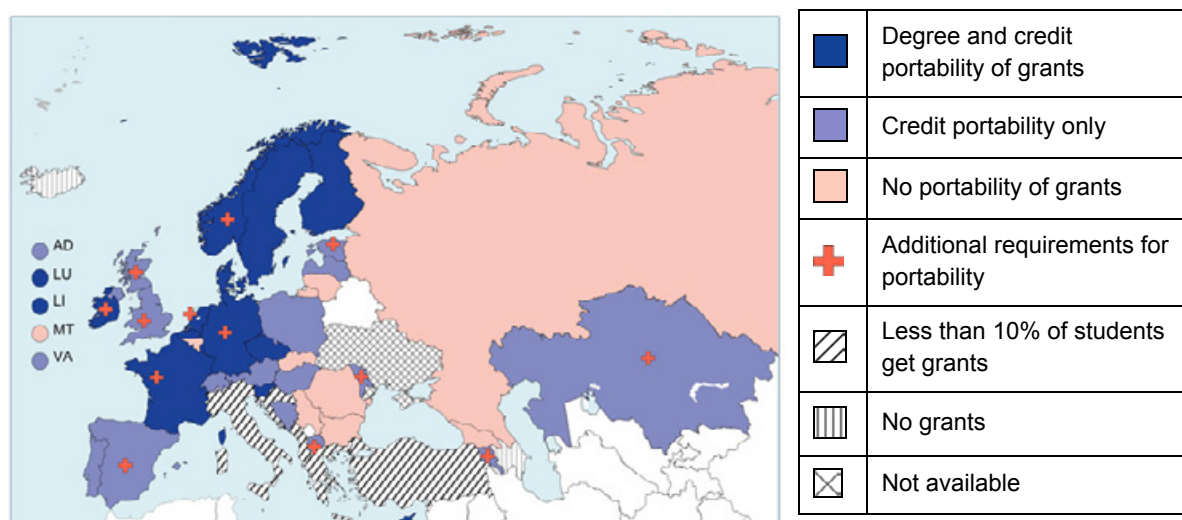
Countries in the EHEA implement a range of measures in order to foster mobility and tackle these obstacles. Some obstacles such as the re-organisation of programmes and strengthening of information provision can be perhaps addressed more easily – provided that there is the will to do so. On the other hand, funding, improving language skills, recognition and legal issues might be more difficult to tackle as they require either increased financial means or further dialogue and coordination among various stakeholders at national or European level.

#### 7.2.1.5. Financial measures to support student mobility

##### Portability of grants and loans

Maps 7.X and 7.X (see Figures below) illustrate the main characteristics of portability of grants and loans. In this regard, this section distinguishes between credit portability (portability of grants or loans for credit mobility) and degree portability (portability of grants or loans for degree mobility). Furthermore, restrictions on portability have been examined, mostly in terms of additional requirements that students and/or the chosen study programme abroad need to fulfil for the grant or loan to become portable. Such restrictions include, for example, a limitation on countries where students can take their support (e.g. portability within the European Economic Area only), limits on the time that can be spent abroad, or the requirement that students need to study full time. The most severe restriction is when students can only take support abroad to study if no equivalent programme is available in the home country. Since this means that portability is allowed only in exceptional cases, countries applying this condition are listed as having 'no portability'.

**Figure 7.x: Portability of grants, 2013/14**



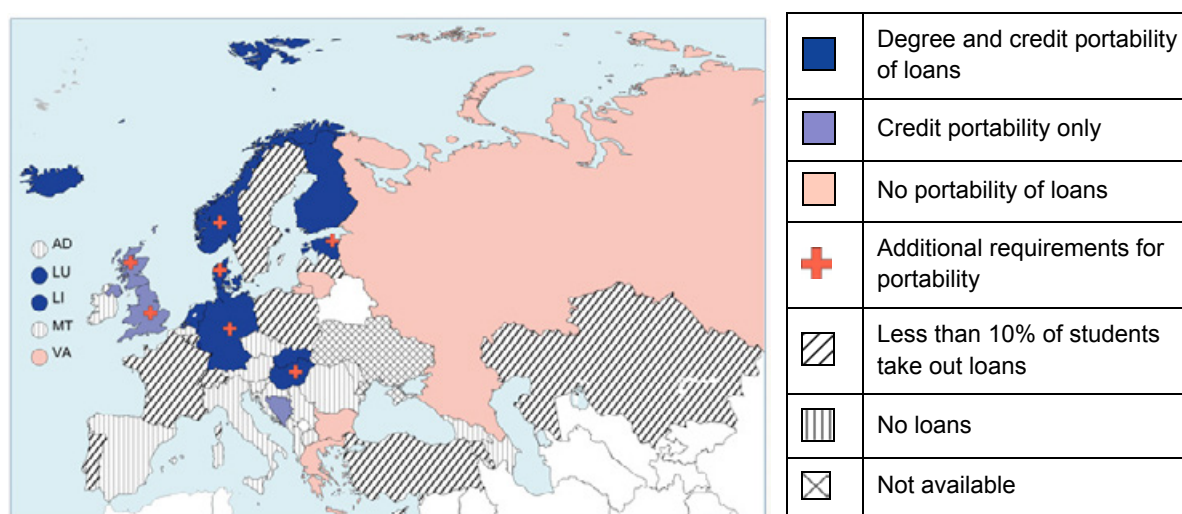
Source: BFUG questionnaire

In almost three quarters of education systems in the EHEA, grants are portable for either degrees or credits taken abroad. However, portability of grants is far more common for credit than for degree mobility. Similar patterns can be seen with regard to loans, although there are fewer countries offering publicly subsidised loans as part of the student support system. Thus overall, portable loans are offered in fewer than half of the countries.

Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway offer portability for degree and credit portability for both grants and loans, while Sweden, Ireland, the Czech Republic, France and Slovenia offer both degree and credit portability for grants only. In Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia and the Holy See, there is credit portability for grants only, as there is no loan system.

In many countries however, there are some additional requirements that need to be fulfilled for both grants and loans. Looking only at grants, there are additional requirements to be fulfilled in 13 countries, and for portability of loans, additional requirements need to be fulfilled in Estonia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Norway.

**Figure 7.x: Portability of loans, 2013/14**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

## Other financial supports

Some countries report a number of specific financial instruments in support of incoming and outgoing students. In Austria for instance, incoming mobility is encouraged by providing possibilities for student part-time work, CEEPUS grants for Central and South-eastern European students (Central European Exchange Program for University Studies), special scholarships for students of literature, etc. Outgoing mobility is supported through the national co-funding for ERASMUS+ grants, needs-based grants plus extra funds for study abroad that can be used for degree mobility.

In Germany, for outgoing mobility, the DAAD offers various scholarships. A special support scheme is the Bologna Mobility Package (integrated exchange programmes, based on inter-university agreements, double degree programme, pilot programme Bachelor Plus -4 years.), as well as programmes to foster the mobility of free movers (grants for research internships of BA students, semester grants and summer academies, language preparation for languages other than English).

For incoming mobility, the DAAD offers scholarships and administers programmes to support, inform and welcome foreign students in German universities.

## Other measures to support student mobility

Other measures are linked to other obstacles to student mobility as presented in Figure 7.x.11. Recognition continues to be perceived as a significant barrier halting student mobility, and thus an issue in need of improved practice. In France, for instance, specific measures to increase recognition include the arrangements for international joint supervisions of theses (« co-tutelles internationales de thèses ») and more flexible arrangements for genuine joint degrees, together with legal diploma models with international partners set for the concrete award of these joint degrees, as set out in a 2011 ministerial note (“circulaire”). In Turkey, the National Agency is carrying out audit visits to higher education institutions to see the extent of the recognition problem and propose solutions. The outcomes of these visits are shared with other institutions during national events. Institutions are also advised to fully implement the principles of Erasmus University Charter which advocates the full recognition of mobility. In Bulgaria, higher education institutions are encouraged to develop internal procedures for recognition. Thematic seminars on recognition have been organised in the framework of the National Teams of Bologna Experts.

Language competency is an ultimate pre-condition for studying abroad and thus often one of the main obstacles. Consequently, around half of the countries mention measures such as the provision of language courses for outward and incoming students, as well as for academic staff, when required, and developing curricula/programmes in English or other foreign languages, including joint programmes degrees. In Italy, for instance, the Ministerial Decree 104 of 2014 and Ministerial Decree 1059 of 2013 provide for new measures to overcome the language barrier for incoming students and, where numerous clausus is compulsory, entrance exams are conducted in English and can be sat at a distance.

Despite an increasing offer, the situation for credit and degree mobility differs to some extent. Teaching in a widely spoken foreign language might be sufficient for a period of credit mobility, but often knowledge of the language of instruction for the whole period of study may be required for degree mobility. This poses the question of language of instruction for the degree programme and whether the student has a sound knowledge of this language. To this end, the Norwegian example shows that a country might support learning languages by providing financial measures in the form of a state loan to spend an extra semester to learn the language and culture of the country prior to the studies abroad.

In spite of introducing and enlarging programmes in foreign languages, studies at higher education institutions in a language different to the official language of the country might fall under restrictions. This can be the case when, based on national legislation, higher education institutions are allowed to organise only a certain percentage of learning activities in a foreign language. Joint programmes might however be exceptions to this rule. In France, the law on higher education and research from 22 July 2013 allows higher education institutions to set up courses in foreign languages in the framework of international partnerships, while ensuring the offer French-taught modules. In Belgium (Flemish Community) the rules for establishing English taught master courses have become more flexible and now up to 35% of all master courses may be taught in English.

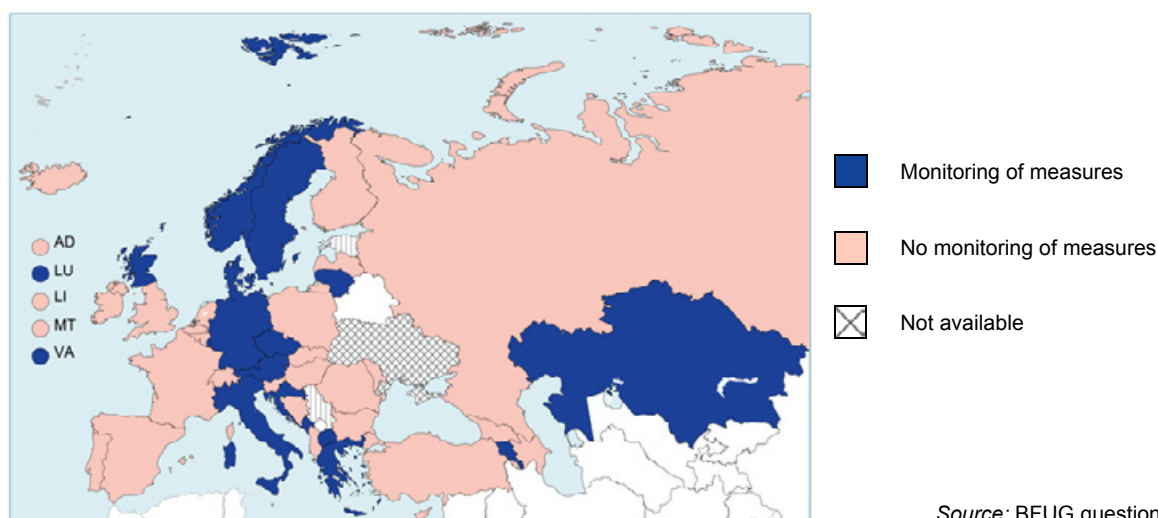
Overall in the EHEA, higher education programmes taught in widely spoken, non-native languages usually fall under the same legal regime as programmes taught in official languages. Different legal regimes exist only in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Turkey, where students in such programmes usually pay additional fees, as well as in Italy, where there are differences in the quality assurance and accreditation procedures. Moreover, in Ireland and the United Kingdom no higher education programmes in non-native languages are being offered.

Finally, some countries mention persisting legal issues including visa arrangements. Dialogue with the authorities concerned aims to improve conditions of mainly incoming non-EU students. In particular, Italy, Croatia and Latvia mention recent measures to simplify legal frameworks and visa regimes regarding incoming students.

#### 7.2.1.6. Monitoring

Only around one third of all the countries that adopt programmes or measures to tackle obstacles to student mobility monitor their effects (see Figure below).

**Figure X: Monitoring the effects of measures to tackle the obstacles to student mobility**



Source: BFUG questionnaire

In some countries like Belgium (Flemish Community), Spain and the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) the implementation of a mobility strategy or action plan has started only recently and first outcomes are not yet due. Countries that already undertake monitoring do so annually or biannually. Various institutions like the Ministry of Education or other government agency, quality assurance agencies, higher education institutions or national student unions could be involved in the monitoring process. Monitoring is often done in the framework of general statistical monitoring or focus only on certain vertical or horizontal student mobility issues. For instance, they monitor recognition,

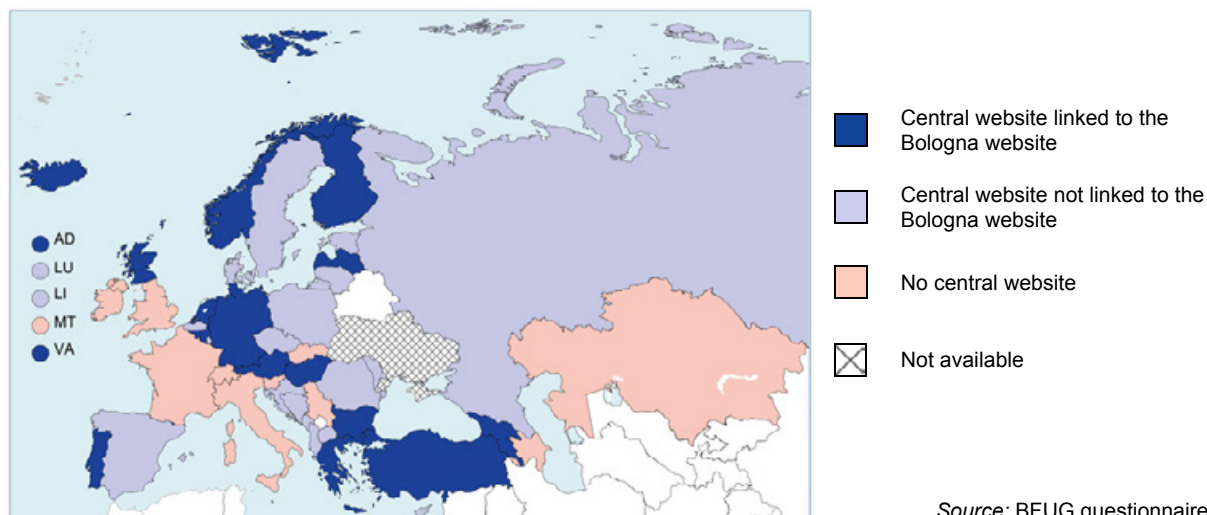
update statistics on financial measures or prepare overarching Erasmus reports summarising various mobility indicators together. Hence, monitoring tends to be focused on reporting on European mobility programmes and often does not extend into a comprehensive national framework.

#### 7.2.1.7. Information on mobility opportunities

Support services, including the provision of better information on mobility programmes, need to be continuously strengthened. Several countries have launched campaigns with the aim of motivating students to study abroad. Additionally, former Erasmus students as well as incoming students may be engaged to help in promotion activities.

The majority of countries have established a central website which provides information about all mobility schemes for national and international students (see Figure below). In around 20 countries these websites are also linked to the Bologna website. In some countries without a comprehensive website, as for instance in the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), higher education institutions operate their mobility programmes and provide opportunities on an institution by institution basis.

**Figure 7. X: Existence of a central website with information about all mobility schemes for national and international students**

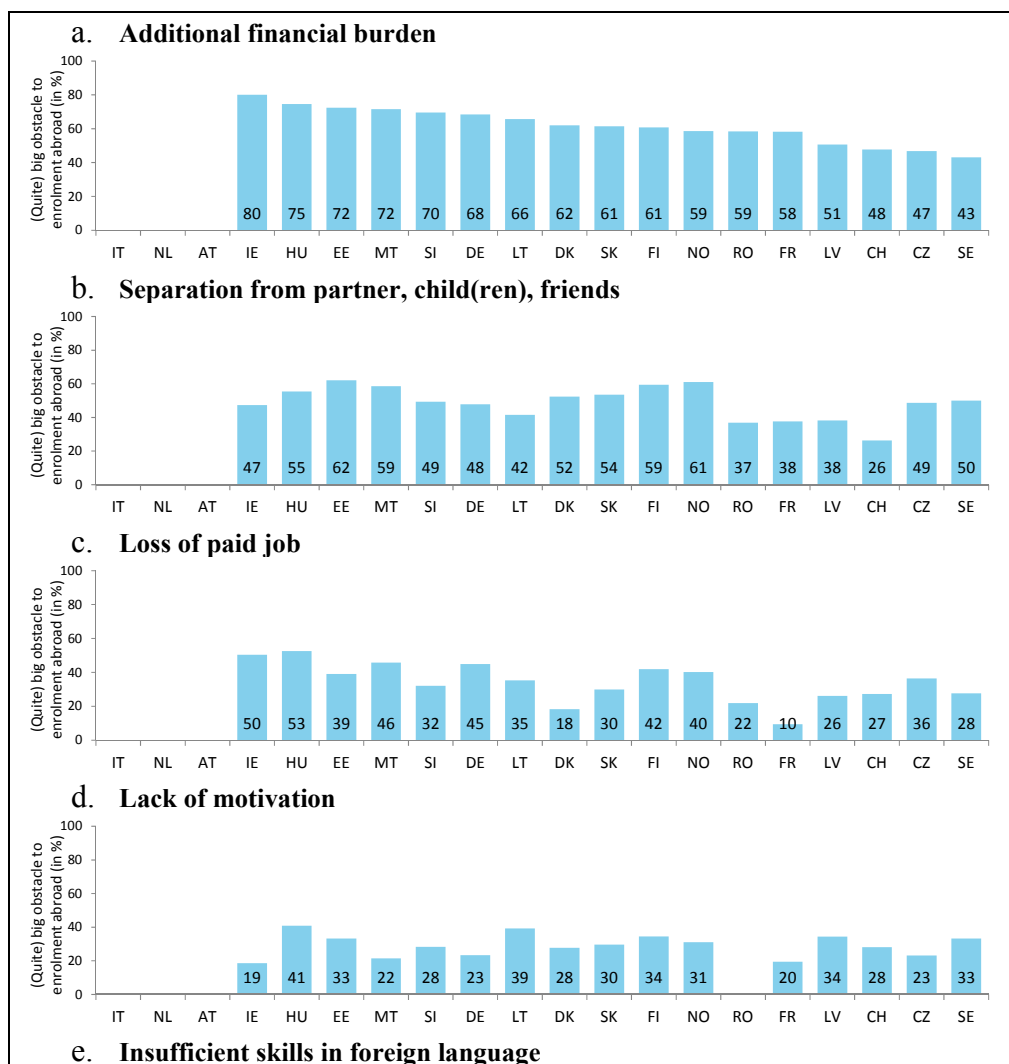


#### [Introduction Eurostudent figures]

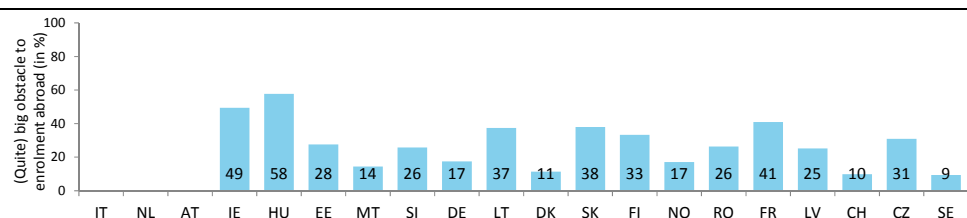
Students who plan to enrol abroad temporarily may face various problems in doing so. This subtopic specifies the main obstacles to an enrolment period abroad and quantifies the relevance of different obstacles based on students' subjective assessment.

The analysis concentrates on students who have not been enrolled abroad and do not plan to do so (see Figure below). Students assessed possible obstacles to an enrolment period abroad on a five-point scale, ranging from "no obstacle" to "big obstacle". The figures show how large a share of students considered certain aspects to be either (4) "quite big" or (5) "big" obstacles.

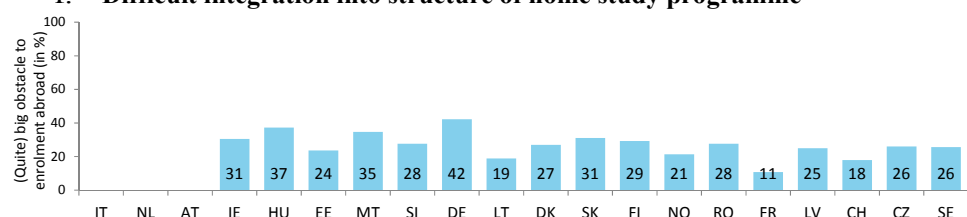
**Figure 7. x : Obstacles to enrolment periods abroad:**Share of students who have not been enrolled abroad considering certain issues as (quite) big obstacles to an enrolment abroad (in %)



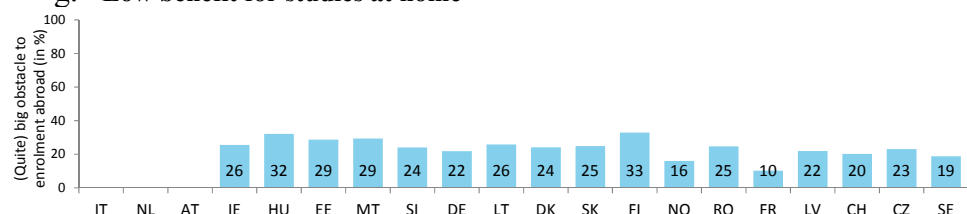




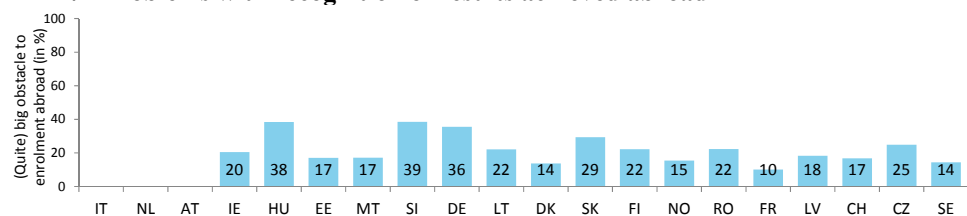
**f. Difficult integration into structure of home study programme**



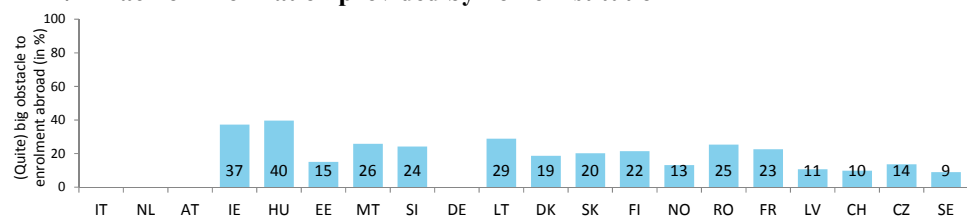
**g. Low benefit for studies at home**



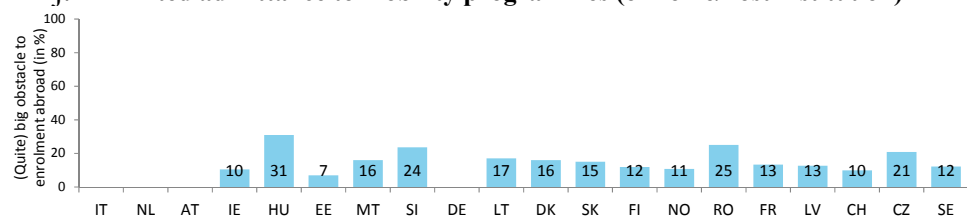
**h. Problems with recognition of results achieved abroad**



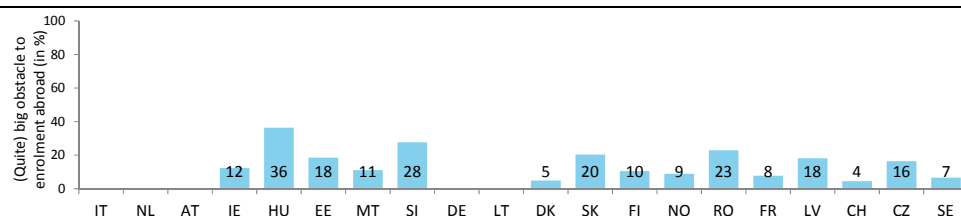
**i. Lack of information provided by home institution**



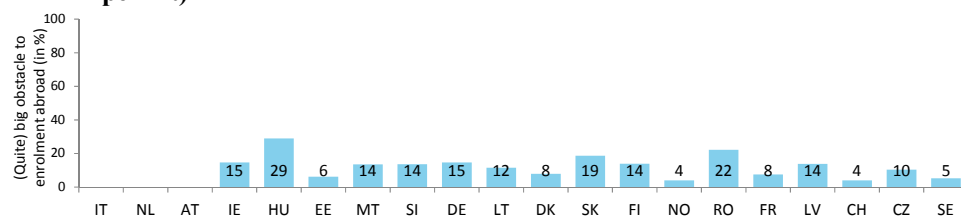
**j. Limited admittance to mobility programmes (of home/host institution)**



**k. Insufficient marks for studying abroad**



# 1. Problems with access regulations to the preferred country (visa, residence permit)



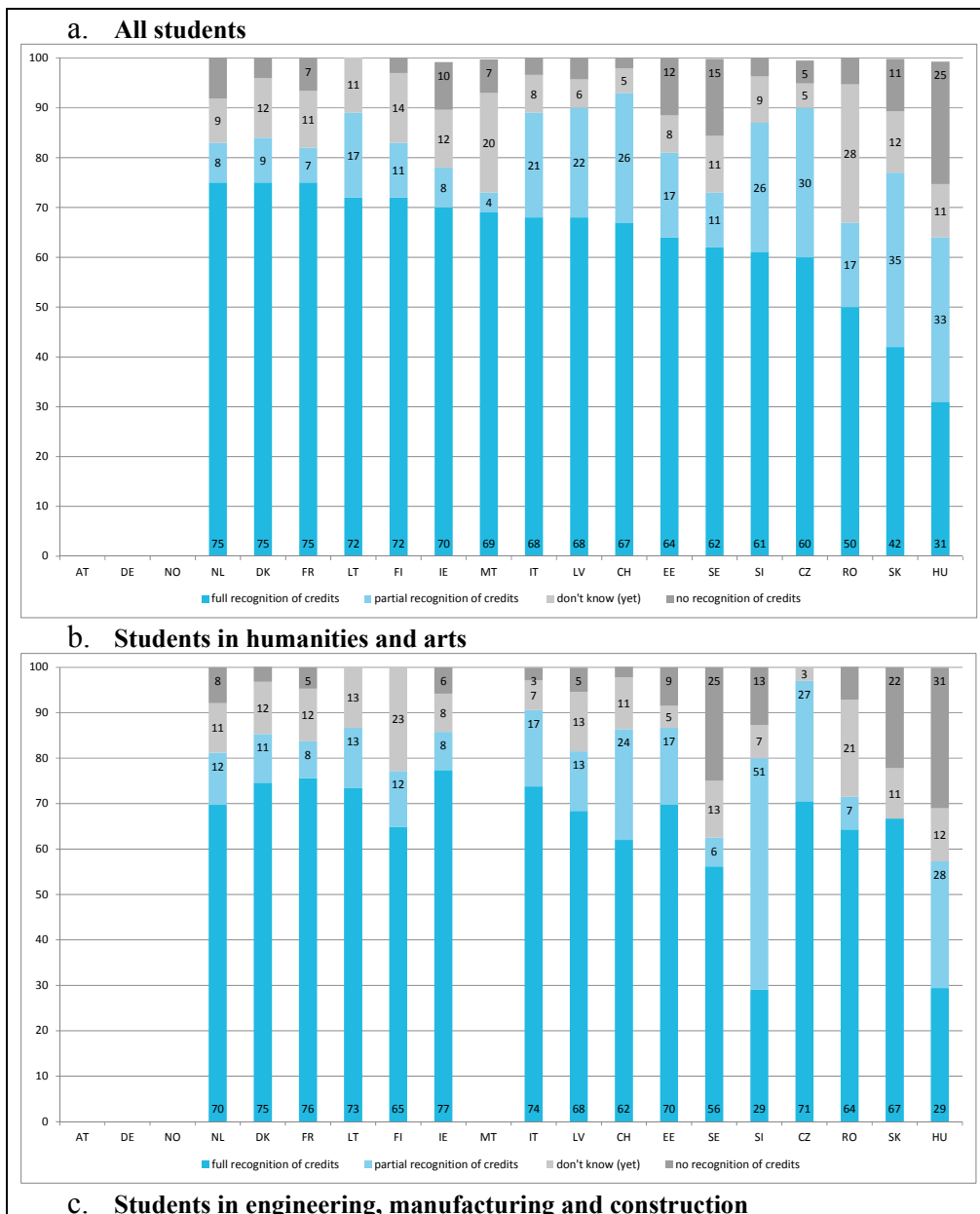
**Data source:** EUROSTUDENT V, K.15. **No data:** AT, IT, NL. No data for “lack of information provided by home institution”: DE. No data for “lack of motivation”: RO. No data for “insufficient marks for studying abroad”: DE, LT. No data for “limited admittance to mobility programmes”: DE. **EUROSTUDENT Question(s):** 4.9. To what extent are or were the following aspects an obstacle to studying abroad for you?

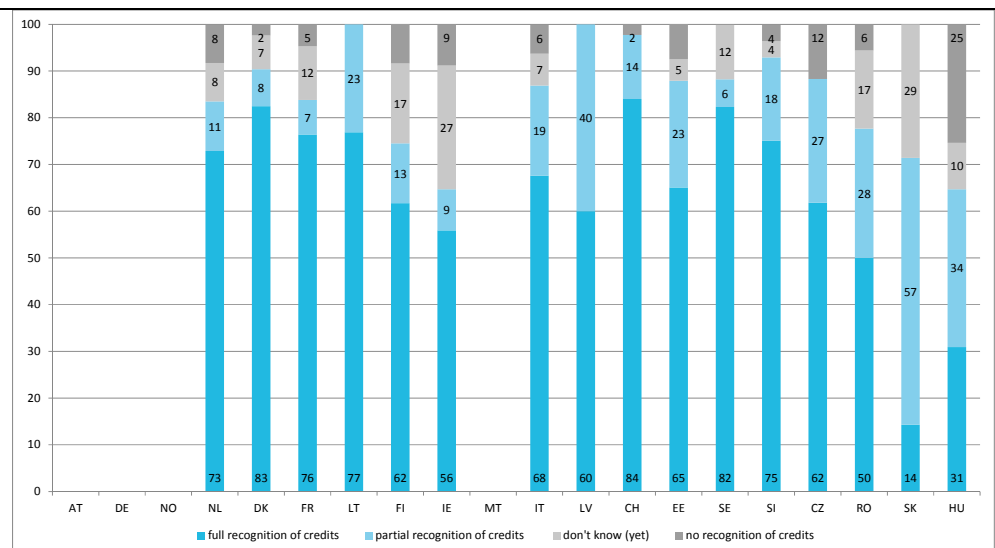
**Notes:** Students assessed possible obstacles to an enrolment period abroad on a five-point scale, ranging from “no obstacle” to “big obstacle”. The figures show how large a share of students considered certain aspects to be either (4) “quite big” or (5) “big” obstacles.

This following subtopic (see Figure below) addresses the formal success of students who have been temporarily enrolled abroad. It looks at the extent of recognition of credits (ECTS, certificates) they have gained abroad after returning to their home institution.

In the (admittedly rather seldom) case that students have realised several enrolment periods abroad, only the most recent one is considered in this subtopic. In answering the question on recognition of enrolment periods abroad, students could choose from five items: “full recognition of credits”, “partial recognition of credits”, “no recognition of credits”, “don't know (yet)” and “no credits were gained abroad”. For the figure below, however, only the first four items were used, i.e. the share of students indicating that “no credits were gained abroad” were taken out and the shares choosing one of the remaining four items were altogether re-scaled to 100%.

**Figure 7.x: Recognition of credits gained during (most recent) enrolment abroad: Share of students who have been enrolled abroad (in %)**



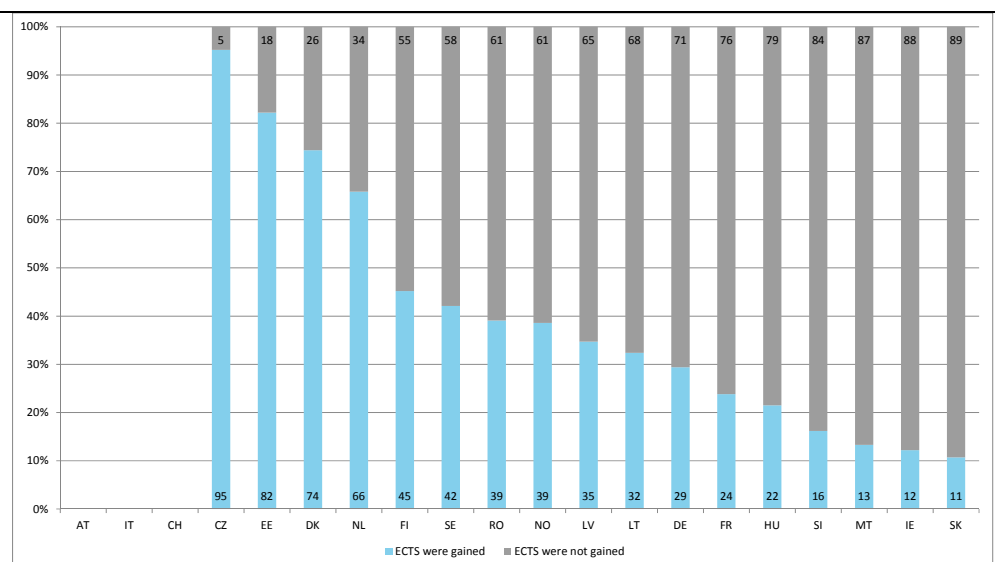


**Data source:** EUROSTUDENT V, K.8. **No data:** AT, DE, NO. No data for “Students in humanities and arts”: MT. No data for “Students in engineering, manufacturing and construction”: MT.  
**EUROSTUDENT Question(s):** 4.4. Were the credits (ECTS, certificates) you gained for your studies abroad recognised by your home institution?

The following subtopic (see Figure below) addresses the formal success of students who have been abroad for study-related activities other than enrolment periods. It looks at the extent of recognition of credits (ECTS, certificates) they have gained abroad after returning to their home institution.

Study-related activities other than enrolment periods abroad can be internships/work placements, language courses, research stays, summer schools and yet other, undefined study-related experiences abroad.

**Figure7.x : Attainment of ECTS for study-related activities abroad (other than enrolment): Share of students who have been abroad (in %)**



**Data source:** EUROSTUDENT V, K.20. **No data:** AT, IT, CH.  
**EUROSTUDENT Question(s):** 4.10. Have you ever been abroad for other study-related activities as a student in higher education? If so, did you gain ECTS?

[Short conclusion on student mobility to be developed]

## 7.2.2. International staff mobility

Staff mobility has become an issue of increasing importance within the Bologna Process. It is now considered as a key element of internationalisation of higher education, as it contributes, with other international activities, to reinforce the attractiveness and the competitiveness of national higher education institutions. However, despite the political attention to the topic, there is still no definition of the concept of staff mobility at European level.

In common with student mobility, staff mobility is a complex topic and several elements are to be taken into account: the direction of mobility flows (outward or inward), the length of mobility periods (short or long term – from a few days to a few years), the categories of staff, that is, academic staff (mostly teachers and researchers, but to some extent doctoral candidates <sup>(22)</sup>), technical and administrative staff (including international officers and guidance counsellors, for example). In addition, the purposes of periods spent abroad are essential to know in order to categorise staff mobility. For example, academic staff may be mobile "to participate in international conferences, for study visits, for periods of teaching or academic exchange, for a sabbatical with defined objectives, etc. <sup>(23)</sup>.

This part of the report will first examine national policies and programmes regarding staff mobility. Then it will turn to the topics of target setting and participation rates, obstacles to mobility, measures to tackle these obstacles and monitoring.

### 7.2.2.1. National policy goals for staff mobility

While there seems to be general policy support for mobility, including staff mobility, it appears that less than half of EHEA countries have defined any specific national policy goals that explicitly seek to promote staff mobility in higher education (see Figure below).

**Figure 7. x: Existence of national policy goals explicitly aimed at promoting staff mobility<sup>(24)</sup>**



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<sup>(22)</sup> Doctoral candidates might not always be employed by the university but treated as students, in which case their mobility would not count as staff mobility.

<sup>(23)</sup> EHEA, 2013. *Staff Mobility in Higher Education – National Policies and Programmes*. [Online] Available at: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/focus-on/documents/156EN.pdf> [Accessed 26 October 2014].

<sup>(24)</sup> **Question to** Denmark, Montenegro and Serbia: Could you please confirm?

- National policy goals exist
- National policy goals do not exist
- Not available

Source: BFUG questionnaire

The national policy goals that have been reported are sometimes very general in character, for example stating in law that the mobility of students and academic personnel is encouraged. However, in some cases policy goals are more concrete with quantitative targets and detailed objectives. The countries where staff mobility goals include quantitative targets are Estonia, Finland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia (target setting for staff mobility will be addressed later in this section).

Other countries have developed detailed national policy goals, but without quantitative targets. For example, in the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has included mobility of academic staff in public higher education institutions as a priority in its Strategic Plan. This envisages programmes to support staff mobility as well as to create suitable conditions for the permanent employment of foreign experts. The Strategic Plan also contains recommendations to higher education institutions. They are advised to support two-way international mobility of researchers and academic staff, with long-term mobility forming part of the path to successful career progression, while for other (administrative) staff, mobility should also become a normal expectation. In Luxembourg, the government encourages international scientific collaboration and the mobility of researchers. It aims to increase the participation of Luxembourg's higher education staff in programmes and initiatives for scientific and technological cooperation at European and wider international levels. In Germany, goals refer to expanding international research cooperation and establish a culture that welcomes staff not only at institutional level but also in the overall social environment. Thus a number of other societal structures are considered in the strategic goals (e.g. consulates, foreign office authorities, job centres, childcare institutions, etc.).

#### 7.2.2.2. Target setting

The vast majority of countries do not have any clear quantitative targets regarding staff mobility, whether it be for incoming or outgoing mobility (see Figure below). When they exist, quantitative targets mostly concern the teaching staff category, and are formulated either in terms of stating a percentage of academic staff that should be mobile, or in terms of a targeted increase of this percentage to be achieved in the future.

**Figure 7. x: Existence of quantitative targets staff mobility**





Regarding outgoing staff mobility, the Higher Education Act in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia stipulates that, on a yearly basis, at least 3% of the professors of any higher education institution need to realise activities as visiting professors in another foreign higher education institution. In this case, however, it should be borne in mind that neighbouring states that were formerly also part of Yugoslavia may easily account for this percentage of research and teaching cooperation. The share of Lithuanian teachers who are taking part in the Erasmus mobility programme is defined at 10% for 2020<sup>25</sup>, while the annual Working plans of the National Agency for Community programmes in Romania foresee an increase of 5% per year in the number of outgoing staff under Erasmus.

Russia is a particular case, as its target does not differentiate between international and internal mobility (mobility within Russia). The 2011 – 2015 Federal Target Programme of Education Development states that the share of teachers at higher education institutions involved in inter-university cooperation and in research at other institutions should change from the baseline value of 5% (as per 2010 year-end) to the target value of 52% (2015 year-end). This dramatic increase indicates a strong will for greater mobility in higher education, whether at national or international levels.

As for incoming staff mobility, Estonia aimed at reaching 3% of foreigners in permanent teaching staff positions by 2015. In France, the share of foreign professors or « researcher-teachers » among newly recruited staff should reach 20% by 2015, whereas the target in Slovenia is to include at least 10% of foreign teachers, staff and researchers in higher education.

Finland has defined targets for both incoming and outward staff mobility. Indeed, outgoing university teachers and researchers should reach 29%, while outgoing staff in polytechnics should reach 62% of all teacher and expert staff by 2015. For the same timeline, incoming teachers and researchers in university should reach 29%, whereas incoming staff in polytechnics should reach 47%<sup>26</sup>.

[Short conclusion on target setting to be drafted]

### 7.2.2.3. National mobility programmes for staff mobility



In some countries, staff mobility is made possible with European programmes such Erasmus + or regional programmes as CEEPUS. However, a certain number of EHEA countries, but less than half of them, have developed national mobility programmes in order to foster staff mobility (see Figure below).

**Figure 7. x: Existence of national mobility programmes for staff**



<sup>25</sup> **Question for Lithuania:** Could you provide the current data on staff participating in Erasmus mobility, so that the difference with the target becomes clear

<sup>26</sup> **Question for Finland:** Could you provide the current data on incoming and outgoing staff mobility, so that we can understand the difference with the target

-  No national mobility programmes for staff
-  Not available

Source: BFUG questionnaire

In most cases, such programmes exist to support both inward and outward mobility and are designed for the mobility of researchers. These are often financed by national research councils or foundations. For example, Albania has a national programme in collaboration with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy which aims to conduct joint scientific research and plans exchanges of researchers. The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) with its career funding schemes focus also on researchers. Within the scope of a project, researchers can apply for a fellowship or salary for themselves and –depending on the funding scheme – for further funding to carry out their project. The International Short Visits scheme is aimed at researchers in Switzerland who wish to go abroad for a short period or for researchers abroad who wish to collaborate with counterparts in Switzerland. During the visit, which may last from one week to three months, they pursue a small joint research project. There are no geographical or subject-specific restrictions.

A smaller number of national mobility programmes are targeting teaching staff mobility. In Germany, various grant programmes exist for both incoming and outgoing mobility and it is the national agency for exchange and internationalisation (DAAD) that is in charge of the administration of these programmes. In Finland, mobility of teaching staff is funded in CIMO programmes: FIRST for exchange with Russia, the CIMO China programme, North-South-South programme for cooperation with developing countries. The Finland Distinguished Professor Programme provides competitive grants to projects recruiting highly esteemed scientists, who are able to commit to long-term cooperation with a Finnish university or research institute. The Programme is financed by the Academy of Finland and the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation (Tekes).

Beyond these examples, however, no countries have provided evidence of having national mobility programmes for other types of staff, such as administrative or technical staff. This therefore appears to be a rather neglected aspect of internationalisation efforts.

### 7.2.2.3. Information on participation rates

Information on participation rates in mobility is collected in more than half of higher education systems across the EHEA. It is often collected either by the authority in charge of administering mobility programmes in ministries, by foundations/organisations funding research, or by national agencies. In some cases, collected data are made public and disseminated in reports and on specific websites.

Countries such as Azerbaijan, Croatia, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Serbia report that the information is collected by the higher education institutions individually. In Liechtenstein, there is no obligation to publish the information or to forward results to national authorities. In some cases, data collection is the responsibility of several bodies (e.g. higher education institutions individually and other national institutions). In very rare cases, national offices of statistics also collect data on staff mobility (Italy and Moldova).

Some countries report on other bodies collecting data on staff mobility such as national agencies in charge of European programmes such as Erasmus + and Euraxess. Overall, however, a lack of attention to monitoring participation in staff mobility appears to be a widespread characteristic of countries in the EHEA.

#### 7.2.2.4. Obstacles to staff mobility

The 2012 Report identified three main categories of obstacles perceived to be preventing different types of staff from being mobile, namely language knowledge, legal issues and personal situations (<sup>27</sup>). Language knowledge was clearly the most commonly identified obstacle.

For the current report, countries were asked to rank a certain numbers of obstacles for both incoming and outgoing staff mobility. As in most countries there are no surveys, studies or evaluations on obstacles to staff mobility, answers are based on perceptions.

Lack of funding now seems to be the most important obstacle particularly for outgoing mobility, followed by administrative burdens, language issues and a lack of motivation among personnel. Other obstacles such as recognition and legal issues, immigration restrictions or incompatibility of pension and/or social security systems are also cited, but they are deemed to be slightly less important according to countries' perceptions. Regarding the two last topics, immigration restrictions appear to be more a concern for non-EU countries, while the incompatibility of pension and/or social security systems appears to be mainly a preoccupation within the EU countries.

Countries also report other obstacles to outgoing staff mobility, in particular the difficulty for staff to find time to fit a mobility period into their work programme, or the difficulty of identifying human resources to cover duties when staff go abroad.

As for incoming staff mobility, two types of obstacles dominate: the first are related to language issues and the second to lack of funding. The incompatibility of pension and/or social security systems appears again to be a concern for EU countries. The lack of assistance and support services for matters such as housing, schooling for children, employment for a spouse or partner are also among the reasons reported as a hindrance to incoming staff mobility.

#### Measures and programmes to remove obstacles to staff mobility

Around half of the EHEA countries report having measures and/or programmes to tackle obstacles to staff mobility. Five categories of measures/programmes emerge: the provision of language training for both incoming and outgoing mobility, measures to facilitate recognition procedures, measures to ease visa and immigration procedures, the promotion of mobility opportunities/provision of counselling services, and the provision of grant schemes/financial incentives.

For example, in the United Kingdom (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland UK), the promotion of mobility opportunities is carried out via diverse means, such as a dedicated campaign and website, specific promotion events, posters and leaflets and targeted emails. Previously mobile staff is also used as ambassadors.

The provision of a unique website which provides information about all international mobility schemes for staff is also a way to tackle some obstacles to staff mobility. In the previous report, countries reported that the provision of information for employees interested to make use of opportunities to work abroad was generally insufficient<sup>28</sup>. This situation does not seem to have evolved greatly. Indeed, the information about staff mobility opportunities seems to be either inexistent or scattered in different websites. Some countries have one or several websites, but they are rarely covering all possibilities (incoming and outgoing mobility, all types of staff). However, there are some European websites which give access to information and support services to certain types of staff. For example, Euraxess provides information for researchers wishing to pursue their research careers in Europe.

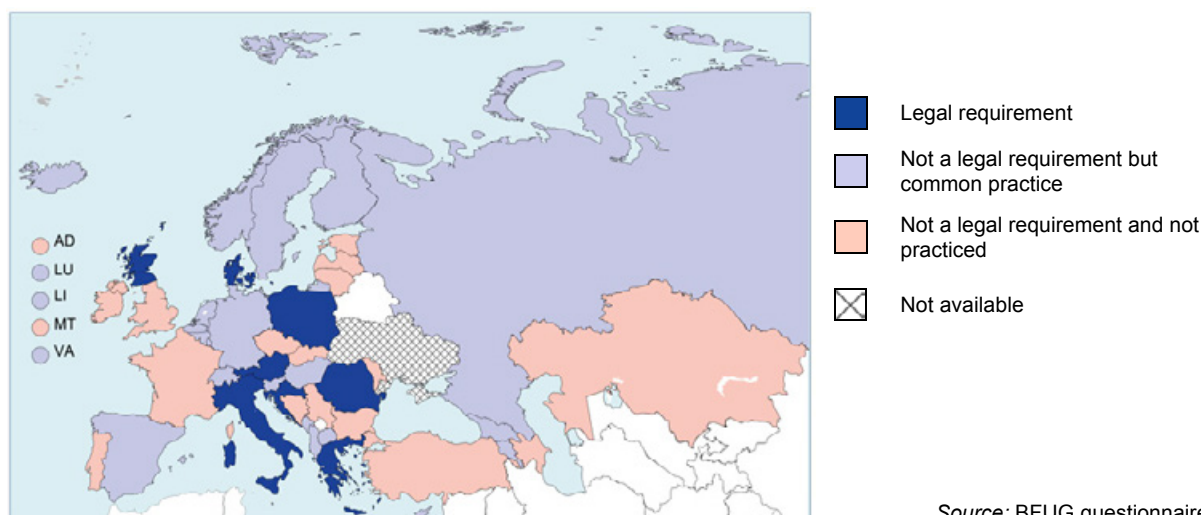
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(<sup>27</sup>) EHEA, 2012. *The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report*, p. 171.

<sup>28</sup> EHEA, 2012. *The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report*, p. 172.

Publishing vacancies for academic staff in media operating outside their countries is another way to promote staff mobility. It appears that it is a common practice in the majority of EHEA countries (see Figure below). In some cases this is done as a legal requirement (Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania and the United Kingdom (Scotland)). More often, however, such publication is a common practice, without being mandatory. At the same time, seventeen systems report that publishing academic vacancies in foreign media is not required and would be very unusual.

**Figure 7. x: Legal requirement to publish vacancie in foreign media**



Finally, rewarding mobile staff can be another means used to remove obstacles to staff mobility. Many countries report having rewards for members of staff who participate in mobility programmes, but only a small number of countries have national systematic reward mechanisms. Indeed, individual higher education institutions are often the provider of rewards.

The most common mechanism is related to career development. For instance, in Denmark, the new collective Agreement for University Colleges and the Academies for professional higher education states that in order to qualify for a position of lecturer, academic staff have to demonstrate international competences, while the Strategic Plan of the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports recommends to higher education institutions that long-term mobility should be part of career progression for academic staff. In Slovenia, one of the conditions for the appointment to the title of university teacher, researcher and associate is the involvement in an international activity (at least 3 continuous months at a foreign university or research institute).

Other mechanisms such as financial benefits seem to be less common across the EHEA. Where they exist, they are predominantly provided in the form of grants or others types of financial incentives. Some countries reported also on non-financial benefits such as recognition by higher education leaders or the possibility to be excused from some types of task at work.

[Short conclusion: Removing obstacles to staff mobility remains an issue to be taken forward in the future]

## Monitoring

Systematic monitoring of the impact of the measures/programmes to remove obstacles to higher education staff mobility is missing in most countries. When it exists, monitoring is usually conducted annually or biannually by ministries (education, research), quality assurance agencies, national agencies in charge of the higher education internationalisation and/or higher education institutions individually.

[Short conclusion to be written on staff mobility]

[General conclusion on both student and staff mobility-to be written]

[General conclusion on the Chapter 7 Internationalisation and Mobility-to be developed]