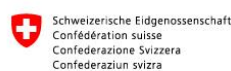




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Annual Report 2014 – 2015



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Content

Editorial	4
Part A: EUROSTUDENT in 2014 and 2015	5
1. Activities 2014 - 2015	5
2. Dissemination	14
3. Activities Related to the EUROSTUDENT V Network	17
4. EUROSTUDENT V Events, Meetings, and Presentations	20
5. Financial Overview	22
6. EUROSTUDENT VI	25
Part B: General information on EUROSTUDENT	26
7. EUROSTUDENT in a Nutshell	26
8. The EUROSTUDENT V Goals	28
9. Organisational Structure	28
10. Funding and Duration	31

Editorial

Dear friends and colleagues of EUROSTUDENT!

You are reading the last Annual Report of the fifth round of the EUROSTUDENT project. 2014 and 2015 were eventful years for the EUROSTUDENT project.

One of the main results of the project, the Synopsis of Indicators, was officially published at the joint EUROSTUDENT and PL4SD conference, which took place in February 2015. The conference provided a wonderful opportunity for EUROSTUDENT national teams, policy-makers, and researchers to get together and share results and experiences on the social dimension of higher education. We were very happy to meet many of you there – thank you for coming! (Not only) those of you not able to make it might be interested in watching the short video documenting the conference on our new EUROSTUDENT YouTube channel¹ or browsing the conference documentation available on the conference website.²

The Synopsis provides a comprehensive overview of the social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. For the first time, the well-known EUROSTUDENT figures are complemented with additional tables providing information on the focus groups of students not covered within the main chapter.

In 2014, national teams had delivered their data to the EUROSTUDENT team at DZHW. Several rounds of feedback loops helped secure the quality of the data. Data delivery was supported by manuals and a model syntax, which, as the 3rd quality report by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office shows, facilitated data delivery for many national teams. Several teams also attended an intensive seminar on data delivery in Vienna in August 2014.

Although the delivery and checking process took longer than originally planned, the analyses of the

data as well as the writing of the EUROSTUDENT Synopsis of Indicators could be completed on time.

At the conference, we were also able to provide a first glimpse of the online data reporting module, which by now is up and running on the project website. We are quite excited about this as we think it is a great improvement with better graphics and improved functionality! Visit the database to compare any countries that interest you on the indicator of your choice³. We believe both the final conference and the accessible and easy-to-use database constitute a great step towards the EUROSTUDENT goal of facilitating the use of EUROSTUDENT data in evidence-based policy.

To further highlight specific issues and disseminate EUROSTUDENT results, short Intelligence Briefs will be released in the coming months. Have you already read the latest Intelligence Brief on the mobility of teacher training students?⁴

Finally, the end of the EUROSTUDENT project also marks the end of Dominic Orr's time at the DZHW. After more than 10 years of leading the EUROSTUDENT project, he has chosen to make a change. Those active in higher education research and policy will most likely come across him in the future, as he is now active in the field of Open Education. The EUROSTUDENT team and Consortium will miss working with him and wish him all the best!

As new project leader, I am aware that Dominic leaves big EUROSTUDENT shoes to fill. I will do my best to fill them and take the project further on its successful journey so that the social dimension in European higher education remains well represented in European research and policy. I very much look forward to working with you all.

Kristina Hauschildt, May 2015.

¹ <http://ow.ly/NUUKF>

² <http://ow.ly/NUURF>

³ database.eurostudent.eu

⁴ <http://ow.ly/Qgxmw>

Part A: EUROSTUDENT in 2014 and 2015

1. Activities 2014 - 2015

EUROSTUDENT V is organised in five distinct project phases. In 2014 and 2015, the project focussed on data delivery and control, reporting, and dissemination. The first round of data review began in 2013, final feedback was sent to country teams in July 2014.

In February 2015, the Synopsis of Indicators was completed on time and released at the joint EUROSTUDENT/PL4SD final conference in Vienna.

All data delivered by the national teams, along with national interpretation and comments, has also been made available in the online database. The database, after extensive re-design, now has a modern, user-friendly interface. The project and the database were promoted through social media.⁶

Phase	Dates	Milestones and comments
Data delivery	August 2013 - May 2014	<p>Achievements Additional tools – model syntax, handbook, intensive seminars to harmonise data cleaning and delivery were provided to the national teams</p> <p>Challenges DDM and the handbook were delayed due to the incorporation of broad range of sub-topics and newly defined focus groups. Additionally (and only partially related to this), national delivery of data was delayed</p> <p>Lessons learnt This is the consequence of a late start to the project. Should be avoided in E:VI</p>
Data analysis, comparative control, feedback loop, reporting	December 2013 - August 2014	<p>Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up to four feedback loops of data control per country, improvement of data quality • Synopsis of Indicators completed with country involvement <p>Challenges Several delays due to extensive data checks and delays in country responses</p> <p>Lessons learnt Clearer communication of expectations and timelines to national teams</p>
Dissemination (final conference) & exploitation	September 2014 - May 2015	<p>Achievements Intelligence Brief “Mobility of Teacher Training Students” Twitter campaign – 315 followers and counting Data delivered for Bologna Process Implementation Report 2015 Final conference in Vienna Online database (Data Reporting module – DRM)⁵ Short videos on YouTube channel Project presentations National Profiles available via DRM</p> <p>Challenges High density of dissemination activities</p> <p>Lessons learnt Diversification of channels and use of social media successful – should be strengthened and professionalised in future rounds Dissemination should be continuous throughout project (previous round results)</p>

⁵ database.eurostudent.eu

⁶ Visit our twitter page and follow us on @eurostudenttw

Release of the EUROSTUDENT V comparative report: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe

On 25 February 2015, the EUROSTUDENT V comparative report Synopsis of Indicators was officially released at the final conference in Vienna.

The EUROSTUDENT V – Synopsis of Indicators is the central publication of the EUROSTUDENT project and the result of the collaboration of a European-wide network including researchers, data collectors, representatives of national ministries, and other stakeholders. It comprises data from student surveys conducted in 29 countries in the European Higher Education Area during the fifth round of the EUROSTUDENT project.



Figure 1: Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe 2012 - 2015. Synopsis of Indicators

Adopting a broad, comparative perspective, the EUROSTUDENT V – Synopsis of Indicators provides information on topic areas such as access to higher education, study conditions, as well as international student mobility, assessment of studies, and further plans with the aim of inspiring policy debates while laying the ground for further research.⁷

⁷ The EUROSTUDENT V – Synopsis of Indicators is available for download at www.eurostudent.eu

The release of the EUROSTUDENT V –Synopsis of Indicators reached the interested public through several communication channels.

EUROSTUDENT V Final Conference in conjunction with PL4SD, 25 – 27 February in Vienna, Austria

From 25 to 27 February 2015, the joint final conference of the projects EUROSTUDENT and PL4SD took place in Vienna, Austria. Around 250 participants from all over Europe attended the conference and actively contributed to a peer learning process on the social dimension.



Figure 2: EUROSTUDENT V Final Conference, February 2015, Vienna

The aim of this conference was to create a discursive forum for representatives of research, action, and policy in order to foster collaboration, coordination, and the development of joint strategies of all stakeholders in the field of the social dimension. The release of the EUROSTUDENT V – Synopsis of Indicators as well as the presentation of key results from PL4SD were the central aspects of this event.

The conference and report thus played an important role in attaining the EUROSTUDENT V project goal of providing a broad policy-relevant cross-country comparison of data on the social dimension of European higher education⁸

⁸ See part "8. EUROSTUDENT V Goals" for a detailed description of this goal

EUROSTUDENT V Wrap-Up Session

Before the official start of the conference, a EUROSTUDENT V wrap-up session was organised to reflect on the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT together with the Project Consortium and the national teams. The main purpose of the wrap-up session was to learn about countries' experiences of participating in EUROSTUDENT V and their suggestions for EUROSTUDENT VI.



Figure 3: EUROSTUDENT V Wrap-Up Session, February 2015, Vienna

This session provided an opportunity for exchange between members of the EUROSTUDENT Network in the sense of peer learning. Consequently, the national teams actively shared their experiences and challenges of participating in the project and their ideas for the next round.



Figure 4: EUROSTUDENT V Wrap-Up Session, February 2015, Vienna

During a poster session each participating country presented a poster which showed the metadata on execution of the survey as well as at least one chart or graphic using results from their national data set, which were of particular relevance to discussions in the particular country. This led to an intense exchange of experiences and discussions of the results. In the form of a World Café focusing on experiences of participating in EUROSTUDENT V, a fruitful discussion based on three questions took place:

- What new things did you learn from taking part in EUROSTUDENT?
- What surprised you about participating?
- What made participation particularly challenging?

The positive and negative feedback which the Project Consortium received during this session is very helpful and will be considered in the sixth round of EUROSTUDENT. A positive feedback, for example, was that in some countries EUROSTUDENT data are the first ever data available on students' study conditions – confirming the capacity-building function of the project. One negative feedback raised was the high workload associated to data delivery. With our efforts to continually improve quality and comparability of data, this task is likely to remain challenging for national teams. However, in EUROSTUDENT VI, we will ensure that this expectation is communicated to the teams more specifically. In general, the collected comments from this session will be systematically reviewed and, if possible, taken into account in the next round of EUROSTUDENT.

Main Conference

A main focus of the conference was put on networking and exchange of knowledge and experience in improving social dimension of higher education. During the conference, four key note speakers presented on the social dimension in European Higher Education.



Figure 5: EUROSTUDENT V Final Conference, February 2015, Vienna

As the first key note speaker of the conference, Jan Sadlak, who is the President of the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence, gave a presentation based on his worldwide experience on the “The Social Dimension in European Higher Education”. The second key note presentation was given by Katja Urbatsch from “arbeiterkind.de”. Her presentation “First Generation Students: From a student’s experience to a nationwide support network” focused on how individual mentoring activities for first generation students have expanded in Germany into a national informal support network. On the last day of the conference, Blaženka Divjak from the University of Zagreb and Liz Thomas from Liz Thomas Associates - Higher Education Research and Consultancy, gave two very interesting presentations on the topic “The institutional role in student support”. Both called for dedicated cross-departmental and cross-faculty activities to support student success.



Figure 6: EUROSTUDENT V Wrap-Up Session, February 2015, Vienna

On the last conference day, the panel discussion on the topic “The future of the social dimension in the European Higher Education Area” aimed at answering four central questions concerning the future of the social dimension in the European Higher Education Area. These four questions were:

1. From a policy perspective: what does the social dimension of higher education mean? How strong is this policy issue compared to others such as policy issues of excellence and efficiency?
2. What is the relevance of the Social Dimension for practice in Higher Education? Can we improve the performance of higher education institutions (HEI) and make them more inclusive at the same time?
3. How can research programmes react to these challenges? What are we doing well currently; and where are the gaps?
4. What role will the issue of the Social Dimension have for Higher Education policy and practice in five years’ time?

The discussion was chaired by Dominic Orr. Members of the panel were Tomislav Vodička (Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports), Louisa Abrahamyan (Armenian National Students’ Association), Brian Power (Chair of Bologna Social Dimension Working group), Mette Andersen (European Commission) and Liz Gehrke (Chairperson of the European Students’ Union).



Figure 7: EUROSTUDENT V Final Conference, February 2015, Vienna

The core element of the conference composed of more than fifty presentations of recent research on the social dimension as well as EUROSTUDENT V and PL4SD resulted in the framework of nine thematic tracks. Conference documents (e.g. Book

of Abstracts, presentations) can be found at the conference website.⁹ The descriptions of the different tracks provided by the track rapporteurs can be found in the following:

> Towards a National Strategy

(Rapporteur: Matija Sinković)

The objective of this track was to follow on from the goal of the PL4SD project of thinking about how a national strategy of national action plan for improving the social dimension might look like. Whilst the social dimensions has been a focal point for the Bologna Process, at least since it was expressly defined as objective for the European Higher Education Area in 2007, it has been difficult to translate it into a manageable policy agenda. This is largely because concrete definitions and the identifications of concrete definitions and the identification of concrete problems are needed for the social dimension, but these are national-context specific and evolving. A major effort to overcome this challenge led to three Country Reviews of national higher education systems from the evaluative perspective of the social dimension. Each of these three Country Reviews were presented by both the leader of the expert reviewing team and a ministerial representative. In each case, the presentations showed that the Country Reviews had led to some new activities to support the social dimension or at least confirmed activities which had already commenced.

> Access

(Rapporteur: Julia Litofcenko)

The track on access to higher education included eight presentations, namely one overview of the EUROSTUDENT V countries, one case from Armenia, three cases from Ireland and another three from the United Kingdom. At the beginning of the track, data on entry routes and the characteristics of students who choose these various routes was presented based on the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT. Within this track, the Armenian higher education system was presented as a case study regarding (equitable) access to higher education. Another presentation briefly introduced two expanding programmes for widening access to higher education in Ireland,

namely DARE and HEAR. These are designed to make it easier for physically impaired and socio-economically disadvantaged potential students to get into higher education. The next initiative to be presented was GAPS, which was created in the UK out of the desire to professionalise the worldwide attempts to make access and participation in higher education more equitable. Later on, the College for Every Student project from Ireland was presented. This project focuses on informing pupils and raising awareness and confidence for higher education among socio-economically disadvantaged groups, based on the three pillars mentoring, pathways and leadership. Thus, both GAPS and the experiences from the College for every Student project suggest that the issue has to be addressed not only within HEIs, but as well by cooperation with schools and using local structures. Another case study about alternative access routes to medicine degrees in Scotland reached similar conclusions. A further case study from Scotland focused on the transition from college to universities. There was also a qualitative study presented on students in Ireland who entered higher education on non-standard routes, coming from a non-higher education background. Summing up the whole track, two issues were raised repeatedly: On the one hand, concerning evaluation procedures and deepening the knowledge about the status quo in higher education access, there is a need to synchronise and sharpen definitions of the social dimension (e.g. who is impaired and why?). This forms the basis for any future policies. On the other hand, regarding actual policies aimed at making access more equitable, there is a broad consensus that quotas for certain student groups are not sufficient for this task (although this might be an important part in a comprehensive strategy). What is needed the most is to inform and individually support potential students from these underrepresented groups, from school up to their time in higher education and maybe also even after completing their higher education career.

> Special Student Groups

(Rapporteur: Iris Schwarzenbacher)

Within the track “Special Student Groups”, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners contributed presentations covering a broad

⁹ <http://ow.ly/NUURf>

thematic field. The first session consisted of presentations on the social background of students in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and in individual countries. The second and third session focused on specific underrepresented groups, namely Roma students and students with disabilities. The track was wrapped up with a workshop on the role of higher education institutions for the implementation of lifelong learning strategies in its fourth and last session.

Within the first session, EUROSTUDENT V results on students without higher education background, also known as first generation students, were presented. Following the EUROSTUDENT presentation, several national studies on individual countries were presented within the track. One presentation gave an insight into the EUROSTUDENT V results on the social background of students in Georgia. Subsequently, a study based on a sibling-analysis on tertiary education transition in Germany was presented. Within the same session, two innovative methods in order to measure socioeconomic disadvantages regarding access to higher education in the UK were presented. Another presentation gave a multifaceted insight into study conditions and the socioeconomic, demographic, and academic profile of students in France – using both national and international data. Within the second session of the track, a focus was put on one group of students that face severe educational disadvantages: Students belonging to the Roma minority. A second presentation focused on educational choices of Roma students and on the question of employability. The third session was opened with a presentation on the EUROSTUDENT V results on underrepresented groups. The remaining time of the session was dedicated to the thematic field of students with disabilities. One presentation addressed issues related to surveying students with disabilities. The following presentation analysed the student support structures and the academic performance of students with disabilities at Charles University in Prague. The track was wrapped up with a workshop concentrating on the role of higher education institutions for the implementation of lifelong learning strategies in its fourth and last session.

> Mobility

(Rapporteur: Hanna-Stella Haaristo)

Within this track, eight different presentations were given regarding the topic of international mobility of students. The first presentation provided an insight into some results of EUROSTUDENT V examining the extent to which different student groups (mainly based on their educational background) realise different types of international student mobility. It focused on the organisation and financing of mobility periods abroad as well as on the main obstacles perceived. The second presentation gave an overview of student mobility in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina based on the EUROSTUDENT V survey that was carried out for the first time in these countries. Subsequently, the audience was presented an overview of the results of a study carried out among the students of the University of Bergamo in Italy. The next contribution gave an overview of the main results regarding mobility of the EUROSTUDENT V study carried out in Russia for the first time. Another presentation focused on the differences and inequalities in student mobility in the European Higher Education Area mainly from two perspectives – looking at underrepresented groups in credit mobility as well as imbalances in long-term degree mobility flows between countries. The next presentation introduced an overview of some of the outcomes of a project carried out in Finland focusing on the theoretical aspects of equity in internalisation as well as a more practical point of view. The final presentation within the mobility track gave insight into the results of a study examining monetary returns to international student mobility and the mechanisms explaining these returns based on the data of two German graduate panel surveys.

> Student Support and Funding

(Rapporteurs: Christoph Gwosć and Iris Schwarzenbacher)

The first presentation of this track gave an insight into the EUROSTUDENT V results on student housing. The second presentation on an Irish study discussed the question whether student accommodation supports the social dimension of higher education. Subsequently, a Czech policy measure was presented. The programme provides

HEIs with a lump sum grant in order to subsidise student accommodation. The second session of the student support and funding track was opened with a presentation on the EUROSTUDENT V results on students' resources and costs. The next presentation gave insight to a programme of the University of Oviedo in Spain providing emergency financial assistance for their students. The last presentation within this track gave insight into measures aiming at integration of first year students conducted by Vilnius University Students' Representation.

> Study and Work

(Rapporteur: Christine Scholz)

Within the first session of the track "Study and Work", four cases from Norway, Serbia, Malta, and Austria were presented. The second session was used for a workshop on the influence of student jobs on potential scientific careers. Norway presented findings on students' time budget from an annual student survey regarding quality assurance carried out in Norway. Serbia presented data from the national student surveys conducted for EUROSTUDENT V in Serbia, Montenegro, and the Federal State of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the working status and aspirations of students in the Western Balkans. Malta also presented findings from the national student survey carried out and delivering data for EUROSTUDENT V. Finally, Austria presented data on the link between student workload, attainment, and labour market integration. The track was wrapped up with a workshop concentrating on the impact student jobs might have on potential scientific careers in its second session. A strong focus of the workshop was put on gender differences regarding scientific careers and on measures aiming at empowering young female scientists.

> Expectations and Student Assessments

(Rapporteur: Froukje Wartenbergh-Cras)

The first presentation of this track highlighted EUROSTUDENT V results as described in Chapter 11 of the Synopsis which deals with students' assessment of their studies and plans for the future. The second presentation gave insights into a student's dissertation in which the student looked into experiences of mature students who

have entered higher education in a later stage of their lives. Finally, in the last presentation recent data for Croatia were presented.

> Retention and Success

(Rapporteur: Julia Litofcenko)

The track on "Retention and Success" included eight presentations, covering topics from the composition of the student body, highlighting how many non-traditional students there could actually be in HEIs, to special case studies which introduced programmes and initiatives which were designed to support these non-traditional students so as to raise their chance on success within higher education. Further on, there were more general theoretical issues to be discussed, such as the difficulties in measuring retention rates ensuring comparability between the Bologna countries, or the challenges in developing frameworks which raise awareness for the needs of non-traditional students or students without higher education background among higher education providers, to the benefit of both sides. The discussion on the first presentation, which gave a brief overview of the diversity of the student body at the Austrian University of Vienna, centred around the lack of high quality data on students' characteristics (such as their socioeconomic background). The next presentation introduced HEFCE, an initiative from the UK which tries to investigate how and why students' success within higher education depends on socioeconomic characteristics. A case study from Ireland centred on the needs of students who are already parents during their time in higher education. Another case study came from the UK, namely about the University of Wolverhampton, which is faced with the difficulty of having a quite non-traditional student body, with a relatively high share of low income and deaf students. Yet another case study from Ireland investigated the situation of adult learners in a lifelong learning programme by means of a qualitative survey. Further on, there was data presented on the main dropout factors at the Spanish University of Oviedo. A more general approach was taken in the presentation on difficulties in comparatively measuring and interpreting retention rates among different countries. Another issue that was discussed was the aim of developing equity enhancing "quality labels" in countries where there

is not much awareness for these topics yet, which was elaborated using the example of Croatia.

> The EUROSTUDENT Network

(Rapporteur: Alexander Chvorostov)

This track was organised for the presentations of the first outcomes of the EUROSTUDENT survey in several countries of the region of Newly Independent States (NIS): Armenia, Georgia, Russia, and Ukraine – in these countries the EUROSTUDENT survey was organised for the first time. An additional cross-regional perspective was provided through a summarising presentation of survey experiences in three countries of the West Balkans (WB), namely Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia – also “newcomers” to the EUROSTUDENT network. Another common feature of these groups of countries is of socio-political character, namely the fact that they all have generally accomplished their transition from past “state-socialist” pattern of governance and follow new paths of development aiming for an adequate balance between institutional autonomy, student choice, and steering from central government.

Five papers presented by national and regional coordinators of the project highlighted major survey outcomes and thus demonstrating a series of social “portraits” of higher education students from these countries. Furthermore, the papers also outlined methodological peculiarities of the implementation of nationwide student surveys.

EUROSTUDENT VI Pre-Kick-Off Meeting

The EUROSTUDENT VI pre-kick-off meeting brought together representatives from countries interested in participating in the project’s sixth round. During this meeting, Kristina Hauschildt gave a brief introduction to EUROSTUDENT VI. Furthermore, she described the current state of play, the organisation plan as well as the planned work programme. In addition, she explained the requirements for national researchers. Lastly, Carole Waldvogel (France), Åsa Rurling (Sweden) and Ksenja Hauptman (Slovenia) were elected as EUROSTUDENT VI Steering Board country representatives.



Figure 8: EUROSTUDENT VI Pre-Kick-Off Meeting, February 2015, Vienna

Meetings of the Steering Board

The Steering Board has the functions of providing strategic advice on the progress of the project and representing the fee-paying countries in supervising the proper execution of the project, in supervising the proper accounting of the Consortium, in accepting the annual report, and mediating in case of a conflict of interests of the fee-paying countries and the Consortium.

The members of the EUROSTUDENT Steering Board came together in Berlin on 11 April 2014 to advise on the project activities and agree on the next steps. Discussions covered a wide range of administrative and financial topics including the Annual and the Financial Report 2013, dissemination and exploitation of the results of EUROSTUDENT V, the preparation of EUROSTUDENT VI and the NIS-Cluster.

The Steering Board offered significant feedback on the Annual and the Financial Report 2013. They raised several questions and comments and made useful recommendations for changes. The revised documents have since been approved by the Steering Board and the Annual Report is available on the project website¹⁰. The Steering Board also provided critical inputs on effective measures for dissemination and exploitation of EUROSTUDENT V results, preparation of EUROSTUDENT VI, and the NIS-Cluster. The Steering Board agreed on the venue and the dates for the EUROSTUDENT V final

10

http://www.eurostudent.eu/download_files/documents/Annual_Report_2013.pdf

conference to be held in conjunction with the final conference of the PL4SD project.



Figure 9: Steering Board Meeting, April 2014, Berlin

The next physical meeting took place in Vienna on 26 February 2015 at the EUROSTUDENT V conference. During this meeting the outline of the Annual Report 2014 – 2015 was presented and discussed. Besides this, the central coordination team informed the Steering Board about the status of the total project budget which had been audited by an external company. The yearly external audit has proven to be helpful in terms of budget control. As final point on the agenda, an internal discussion on the proposed nominees for country representatives in the Steering Board for EUROSTUDENT VI was held.¹¹

Meetings of the Consortium

Working Group Meeting on Reporting Structure and Content, Lisbon, 12-13 March 2014



Figure 10: Working Group Meeting, March 2014, Lisbon

The members of the EUROSTUDENT Project Consortium came together with external experts for a two-day working group meeting on the reporting structure and content for the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT. The meeting was held 12-13 March 2014 in Lisbon, Portugal. At the meeting, participants discussed the structure of the Synopsis of Indicators for EUROSTUDENT V. The objective of the meeting was to identify relevant policy issues, key questions, and variables and focus groups to be included in the final report. The meeting involved active discussions on the EUROSTUDENT V set of indicators covering all topic areas – demographics, transition into higher education, time budget and employment, students' resources and expenses, housing, international mobility, assessment, and future plans. The basic structure of the report was agreed upon including such innovations as an appendix of tables for each chapter.

Seminar on Exploitation, Malta, 14-15 May 2014

The members of the EUROSTUDENT Project Consortium came together for a two-day seminar on exploitation and Intelligence Briefs for the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT. The meeting was held 14-15 May 2014 in Malta. The focus of the meeting was on identifying the key target audiences for EUROSTUDENT V data and results, key issues relevant to the identified target audiences, and the effective media for data use and dissemination. The discussions were based on effective measures for exploitation developed during the last round of EUROSTUDENT by the central coordination as well as the national research teams.



Figure 11: Consortium Meeting, May 2014, Pembroke

¹¹ Minutes from all the meetings of the Steering Board are available on the project wiki-pages.

Furthermore, new possibilities for using EUROSTUDENT data were explored for wider dissemination. In this regard, an exploitation strategy targeted at the European level as well as using EUROSTUDENT data effectively at the national levels was sketched. To coordinate these instruments and modes, Hanna-Stella Haaristo (Praxis) was appointed the communication officer of EUROSTUDENT V. She is now responsible for managing Twitter and other social networking accounts, devising communication strategies, developing dissemination toolkits (graphs, video), updating newsletter / website content, and monitoring policy events. As an important platform for promoting the results of the project, the group also talked about the EUROSTUDENT V final conference to be held in February 2015 in Vienna in conjunction with the final conference of the project Peer Learning for the Social Dimension.

Tallinn, October 2014

The final meeting of the EUROSTUDENT Consortium took place in Tallinn in October 2014. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the third Quality Check report, the concept of the Data Reporting Module (DRM), strategies for supporting national exploitation initiatives and the draft of the Synopsis of Indicators.

Two Quality Checks Released

The third Quality Check report was released in 2014. It follows the third project phase “data cleaning and delivery”. This quality check has been implemented by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) as part of work package 6 “Quality Assurance”. The quality check of the third project phase is based on the quality assurance action plan¹², which the Consortium agreed upon in October 2012. It discusses the fulfilment of the quality goals defined for five quality dimensions.¹³ The fourth and final Quality Check is currently being completed and will be presented at the final meeting of the EUROSTUDENT Steering Board in early July.

¹² See document on wiki pages:
https://eurostudent.his.de/wiki/images/9/93/QA_action_plan.pdf

¹³ Both reports are available at
www.eurostudent.eu/about/docs



Figure12: Third Quality Check

Intensive Seminar 2014

An important objective of the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT was to work closely with the national teams and provide them with additional support in data preparation and delivery in order to establish policy-relevant and robust national monitoring structures for the social dimension of higher education. A two day seminar to this aim took place 12-14 August 2014 in Vienna, Austria. Seven participants attended. The training was provided by staff from the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS, Austria) and ResearchNed (the Netherlands).

2. Dissemination

In the later project stages, the EUROSTUDENT project has increased its efforts to effectively reach different target groups. Key aspects of the dissemination strategy were improving the online data reporting module (DRM) as well as adding new communication channels by use of videos and social media.

All dissemination activities aim to support countries in their efforts to use the insights from

the international comparison to review and improve the social dimension of higher education in their country.¹⁴

Release of the EUROSTUDENT V Comparative Report

The new EUROSTUDENT V comparative report “Synopsis of Indicators” was released at the final conference. It is the central publication of the EUROSTUDENT project and the result of the collaboration of a European-wide network including researchers, data collectors, representatives of national ministries, and other stakeholders. It comprises data from student surveys conducted in 29 countries in the European Higher Education Area. Printed copies were shipped to all participating countries for distribution to policy makers, universities, and the interested public.¹⁵

The final conference has shown a direct effect on the level of awareness of the EUROSTUDENT project. The number of visitors of the project’s website increased significantly during the conference.

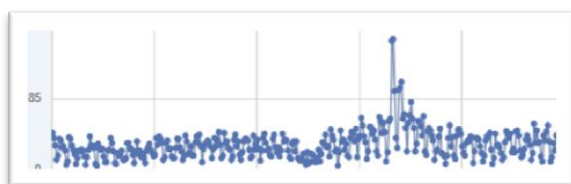


Figure 13: Users of www.eurostudent.eu during April 2014 and May 2015¹⁶

Additionally, the EUROSTUDENT Synopses of Indicators of the third and fourth round are now also available under a Creative Commons Licence and can be retrieved for free via the website of the publisher Bertelsmann¹⁷ and at www.eurostudent.eu.



¹⁴ See part “8. EUROSTUDENT V Goals” for a detailed description of this goal

¹⁵ The EUROSTUDENT V – Synopsis of Indicators is available for download at www.eurostudent.eu

¹⁶ This chart does not include visitors who were directed to www.eurostudent.eu through another link.

¹⁷ <https://www.wbv.de>

Release of the New Version of the Data Reporting Module (DRM)

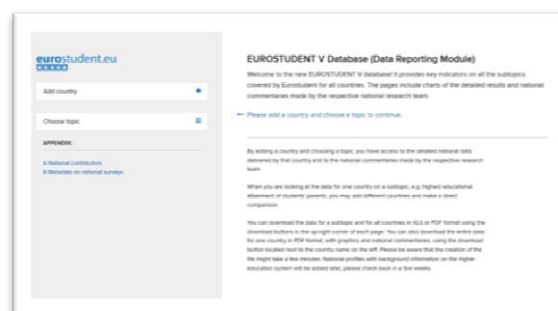


Figure 14: EUROSTUDENT V – Data Delivery Module (DRM)

In May 2015, a completely new EUROSTUDENT V Database was launched – the Data Reporting Module (DRM). It includes National Profiles on each of the EUROSTUDENT V participating countries as well as introductory remarks to each of the topics covered. The new version of the database allows the user to compile data for one or several countries for each of the covered topics and subtopics individually. It generates figures and tables for the selected configurations on-the-fly and allows the user to download data as excel files for further use and calculations. The development and launch of the Data Reporting Module for follows the EUROSTUDENT V goal to provide a broad policy-relevant cross-country comparison of data on the social dimension of European higher education.” Furthermore, the better availability of the data enables users to easily make international comparisons in order to review and improve the social dimension of higher education in their country.¹⁸

Publication of Intelligence Briefs

In addition to the main report, several Intelligence Briefs were prepared and published by the EUROSTUDENT V Consortium. Intelligence Briefs are short, stimulating documents presenting information and interpretative help on specific topics covered in the EUROSTUDENT data set. Intelligence Briefs were or will be published covering topics related to access to studies,

¹⁸ See part “8. EUROSTUDENT V Goals” for a detailed description of this goal

studying, and student characteristics based on the new data set. The next Intelligence Brief to be published will look at student accommodation and is prepared in cooperation with ECStA.

New EUROSTUDENT YouTube channel¹⁹

YouTube now has a EUROSTUDENT channel, which includes a video with impressions from the final conference as well as 10 short videos covering topics from the EUROSTUDENT V Synopsis of Indicators. In these videos, the members of the EUROSTUDENT central coordination team introduce the topics “students with children”, “students’ employment”, “students’ expenditure on fees”, “students’ international mobility”, “students in short-cycle studies”, “students’ housing”, “students’ time budget” and “students’ income”. Moreover, the members of the EUROSTUDENT central coordination team talk about some of the results of EUROSTUDENT V. Representatives of the participating countries in EUROSTUDENT are welcome to use these videos in order to disseminate the results of the project in their country as well.

Twitter Teaser Campaign²⁰

In the run up to the final conference, the EUROSTUDENT team used a very successful teaser campaign on social media to highlight the data set. From January 2nd on, weekly infographics were posted to Twitter presenting data for different EUROSTUDENT topics for three unnamed countries asking viewers to guess which countries these were.

During this period, the numbers of followers of the EUROSTUDENT Twitter account doubled. During the final conference, participants were also asked to post something to Twitter using a special conference hashtag #sdinhe. These comments were shown in a live feed on a screen during breaks of the conference.



Figure 15: Twitter #sdinhe

After the conference, when the final report had been published, the initial teaser infographics were posted to Twitter with the correct answers. Twitter was also used to spread information about the published reports and events where EUROSTUDENT was presented. When in the beginning of January 2015, EUROSTUDENT Twitter account had 115 followers, then by the end of May 2015 there were already 327 followers and EUROSTUDENTs post have been actively retweeted and favorited by the followers throughout this period.

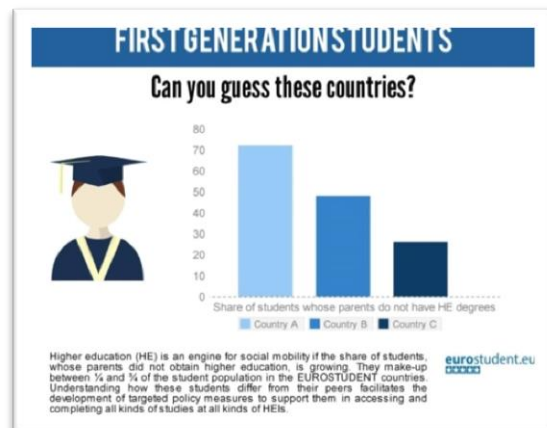


Figure 16: EUROSTUDENT V Teaser Campaign

¹⁹ You can follow the EUROSTUDENT V project on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0tn082it2xYBs7-7ZYpkQ>

²⁰ You can follow the EUROSTUDENT V project on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/EUROSTUDENTtwT>

3. Activities Related to the EUROSTUDENT V Network

Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG)



In 2015, the European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report was released. This report was prepared for the European Ministerial Conference, which took place in Yerevan, Armenia 14-15 May 2015. The implementation report provides information about the implementation of the Bologna process from several perspectives, which includes both qualitative information and statistical data. In the implementation report, EUROSTUDENT data provides insights into students' finances, time budget, and mobility.²¹

Participating in BFUG meetings has been very important for the EUROSTUDENT Coordination Team. As data collector for the BFUG, staying up-to-date with the ongoing discussions is necessary in order to provide relevant data and discussions in the final report. EUROSTUDENT also regularly updates the BFUG members about the current status of the project as well as future plans. The BFUG also supports the EUROSTUDENT Network by distributing information to its members on behalf of EUROSTUDENT.

BFUG Meetings on 26-27 January and 24-25 March 2015 in Riga

EUROSTUDENT participated in the recent BFUG meetings in Riga, Latvia, in January and March. At the January, meeting possible content and organisation related matters of the Ministerial Conference 2015 and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum 2015 were discussed. In January,

²¹ The full report can be downloaded at <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice>

EUROSTUDENT informed participants about the plans for EUROSTUDENT VI and the current state of funding of the project.

EHEA Ministerial Conference and Fourth Bologna Policy Forum

The Ministerial Conference and Fourth Bologna Policy Forum took place from 14-15 May 2015 in Yerevan, Armenia²². During this event, the Bologna Process Implementation Report, which includes EUROSTUDENT data, was presented. Furthermore, an interactive panel on the Bologna Process Implementation was held and the future of higher education and the Bologna Process was discussed.

Presentation of EUROSTUDENT Results at the International Perspective on Education Seminar, 11 March, Barcelona

On invitation by Fundacio Bofill, Kristina Hauschildt presented the most recent EUROSTUDENT results at the International Perspective on Education Seminar which was held on 11 March 2014 in Barcelona, Spain. At the seminar, a presentation by Miquel Martínez and Ernest Pons offered an insight into the social dimension of student life in Catalonia, contrasting their findings with EUROSTUDENT results. In the future, more data will be available on the situation of students in Catalonia thanks to the project "Via Universitària", a joint initiative of the Fundació Jaume Bofill and the Vives Network. The survey will cover Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Andorra, and Northern Catalonia.²³

²² <http://bologna-yerevan2015.ehea.info/>

²³ Please find more details on their presentation at http://www.fbofill.cat/intra/fbofill/documents/Presentacio_EUROSTUDENT_martinez_pons.pdf

Presentation of EUROSTUDENT Data and Database at ET2020 Working Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education Meeting on 28 May 2015 in Brussels

Kristina Hauschildt presented the EUROSTUDENT project, data, and database at a meeting of the ET2020 Working group meeting in Brussels. Under the heading of “Improving evidence-base for policy-making – Support from European tools”, attendees could learn about how to use EUROSTUDENT data for higher education policy. Other projects presenting were U-Multirank and the European Tertiary Education Register (ETER).

EUROSTUDENT – NIS Initiative in 2014



As previously reported, it has been an important goal of the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT to reach out to countries which had not previously participated in the project. A special focus was set on the Newly Independent States. A final preparatory meeting was held in Minsk on 14 February 2014 with the participation of representatives from Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and the Ukraine. This initiative has led to the countries Armenia, Georgia, Russia, and the Ukraine providing carrying out student surveys and providing their data for the EUROSTUDENT data set.



Figure 17: EUROSTUDENT NIS- Initiative, February 2014, Minsk

EUROGRADUATE - Feasibility Study for a European Graduate Study



The aim of the EUROGRADUATE project is to systematically explore the possibility of establishing a study on Europe's higher education graduates.

The project will be finalised this year and the final report is expected to be published at the end of this year during the final workshop in December. Other events this year will be the workshop on the topic of “Towards a joint study design? Advancements of national-level graduate studies and prospects for a European-level study”. This workshop will be held on 15 October 2015 in Hanover and aims to provide an opportunity for mutual learning on (planned) revisions of studies and explore potentials for aligning revisions with a view to a possible European graduate study. Further objectives of this workshop are to have an expert discussion on the design of a potential European graduate study as suggested by the findings of the EUROGRADUATE feasibility study as well as to exchange on cooperation in a European graduate study.

Another important event is the 2nd Project & Board Meeting, which will take place from 22 – 23 September 2015 in Brussels at EUA. Representatives of the European Commission, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, BUSINESSEUROPE, EUROCHAMBRES, and ETUCE will participate at the meeting. The state of research of the feasibility study will be discussed with the two project boards, the Scientific Board and the Stakeholders Board, to consider their view in conducting the final report.

Earlier in 2015, three short research digests have been published by EUROGRADUATE. They cover the existing national and international data capacities as well as the interests and requirements of stakeholders with regard to a European graduate study and provide first insights into the results of the EUROGRADUATE feasibility study.²⁴ The results indicate a high level of interest

²⁴ The results are available at <http://www.eurograduate.eu/>

in a European graduate study from all sides. Design and contents of a European graduate study are starting to take shape even if views on some requirements are divergent. Based on its findings, the project also suggests ways of organising and setting up a European graduate study.

Findings of the EUROGRADUATE feasibility are based on a mix of standardized surveys, guided expert interviews, as well as focus group discussions with stakeholders. In summer 2014, EUROGRADUATE has conducted surveys among national ministries responsible for higher education, national rectors' conferences, and higher education researchers involved in national level graduate studies. These surveys covered the EU+EFTA countries and achieved high response rates. In parallel, experts of European level stakeholder organisations have been interviewed on their view regarding a potential European graduate study. Representatives of the European Commission, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, BUSINESSEUROPE, EUROCHAMBRES, and ETUCE have participated in these interviews.

In summer 2015, a second set of expert interviews has been conducted aiming at large scale international survey projects. These interviews specifically focussed on the question of how such projects are developed and organised. By now, experts involved in the European Social Survey, EUROSTUDENT, PIAAC, PIRLS, REFLEX, and TIMSS have shared their experience with the EUROGRADUATE team. Interesting insights have been gathered in these interviews helping the project team to suggest ways of how a sustainable European graduate study could be set up and organised.

PL4SD – Peer Learning for the Social Dimension



An Interim Conference of the project Peer Learning for the Social Dimension (PL4SD) was held 2-3 April 2014 in Vienna, Austria. The conference was attended by 70 participants from 22 countries. The

participants represented universities, ministries, research organisations, student unions, the European Commission, and the Bologna Secretariat. The conference presented six plenary sessions with 20 speakers.

Country reviews in three countries - Lithuania, Armenia, and Croatia – were carried out in 2014 with the assistance of international experts. The review team for each review combined three international experts and four representatives of the PL4SD team: Dominic Orr (DZHW), Martin Unger (IHS), Melinda Szabo (EQAR, DZHW), and Petra Wejwar (IHS). For each review, a preparatory background report was written containing general information on the national higher education system and useful contextual information. The results from all three country reviews were presented at the conference "The Social Dimension in European Higher Education" and are now available on-line on the project website.²⁵

²⁵ <http://www.pl4sd.eu/index.php/country-reviews/reports-by-country>

4. EUROSTUDENT V Events, Meetings, and Presentations

There have already been many opportunities for the EUROSTUDENT V Consortium to present and discuss the outcomes and the benefits of the EUROSTUDENT project. The following tables list major presentations and events related to the EUROSTUDENT project in 2014 and 2015.

EUROSTUDENT Internal

Date(s)	Location	Country	Occasion	Major Topic Area	Purpose	Consortium partner(s) participating
14.02.2014	Minsk	Belarus	Meeting EUROSTUDENT – NIS Initiative	Joining of Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, and the Ukraine to the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT	Project Event	IHS, DZHW,
12 - 03.03.2014	Lisbon	Portugal	EUROSTUDENT Working Group meeting on reporting structure and content	Reporting structure and content for the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT	Project Event	DZHW, IHS, ResearchNed, Praxis, NCFHE, FSO
11.04.2014	Berlin	Germany	EUROSTUDENT Steering Board meeting	EUROSTUDENT Internal (Annual and Financial Report 2013, dissemination and exploitation of the results of EUROSTUDENT V, preparation of EUROSTUDENT VI, and the NIS – Cluster)	Project Event	DZHW, IHS, FSO
14 – 15.05.2014	Pembroke	Malta	Seminar on exploitation	EUROSTUDENT V – identifying the key target audiences for data and results, key issues relevant to the identified target audiences, and the effective media for data use and dissemination	Project Event	All members
12 – 14.08.2014	Vienna	Austria	Intensive Seminar 2014	Data delivery	Project Event	IHS, ResearchNed
06 -07.10.2014	Tallinn	Estonia	EUROSTUDENT Consortium Meeting	EUROSTUDENT V third quality check report, concept of the Data Reporting Module (DRM), and strategies for supporting national exploitation initiatives	Project Event	All members

25.02.2015	Vienna	Austria	EUROSTUDENT V Wrap-Up Session	Reflection on the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT together with the Project Consortium and the national teams.	Project Event	All members
25 – 27. 2. 2015	Vienna	Austria	EUROSTUDENT V Final Conference	Presentation of EUROSTUDENT:V results, presentation of PL4SD, recent research, exchange of knowledge and experiences	Project Event	All members
26.02.2015	Vienna	Austria	EUROSTUDENT Steering Board meeting	EUROSTUDENT Internal (Annual and Financial report 2013, preparation of EUROSTUDENT VI)	Project Event	DZHW, IHS, FSO

EUROSTUDENT External

Date(s)	Location	Country	Occasion	Major Topic Area	Purpose	Consortium partner(s) participating
18 – 19.09.2014	Rome	Italy	BFUG Meeting	Defining an overall vision for the European Higher Education Area, planning a strategic assessment for its implementation	Participation at Meeting	DZHW
26 – 27.01. 2015	Riga	Latvia	BFUG Meeting	Discussion of possible content and organisation related matters of the Ministerial Conference 2015 and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum 2015	Participation at Meeting	DZHW, IHS
11.03.2015	Barcelona	Spain	International Perspective on Education Seminar	Presentation on the social dimension of student life in Catalonia	Presentation at meeting	DZHW
24 – 25.03.2015	Riga	Latvia	BFUG Meeting	Discussion of the content and organisation related matters of the Ministerial Conference 2015 and the Fourth Bologna Policy Forum 2015	Participation at Meeting	DZHW, IHS
28.05.2015	Brussels	Belgium	ET2020 Working Group of Higher Education	Improving evidence-base for policy-making – Support from European tools	Presentation at Meeting	DZHW
14 – 15.05. 2015	Yerevan	Armenia	EHEA Ministerial Conference and Fourth Bologna Policy Forum	Future of Higher Education and the Bologna Process	Participation at Meeting	DZHW, IHS

5. Financial Overview

This overview shows the total expenditures planned in the original project budget and the costs incurred since 2012. The full financial report and the project book keeping were reviewed by external auditors in June 2015 and their comprehensive assessment was presented for approval by the Steering Board in July 2015.²⁶

Total Costs	Overall budget for project in Euro (2012-2015)	Cumulative Costs in Euro (until 31 May 2015)	Relation to overall budget
STAFF COSTS	879,027	1,001,968	114.0%
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ²⁷	142,974	84,157	58.9%
EQUIPMENT	0	0	-
SUBCONTRACTING	0	14,300	-
OTHER COSTS	119,938	108,721	90.6%
Total	1,141,939	1,209,147	105.9%
Details on selected costs			
Overall staff spending			
German Centre for Research on Higher Education and Science Studies (DZHW), Germany	856,026	893,399	104%
Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria	126,846	149,272	118%
Praxis Centre for Policy Studies (Praxis), Estonia	61,920	54,182	88%
European Council on Student Affairs (ECStA), Belgium	4,600	4,875	106%
ResearchNed, Netherlands	72,670	82,796	114%
National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE), Malta	12,467	12,387	99%
Federal Statistical Office (FSO), Switzerland	11,074	12,236	110%

²⁶ The summary of the financial statements may not entail sufficient information for a full understanding of the financial situation of the EUROSTUDENT V Project

²⁷ Only of Consortium members

Revenues

EUROSTUDENT V is financed by three sources:

- Countries' participation fees
- the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands

The table below shows the budgeted income sources and amounts as planned and received per 31.12.2014. The final instalment made by the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research will be received in 2015.

Source	Budgeted income	Income received per 31.12.2014	Income to be received in 2015
Participation Fees ²⁸	€ 849,653 ²⁹	€ 849,653	€ 0
German Ministry	€ 320,769	€ 311,889	€ 8,880
Dutch Ministry	€ 50,000	€ 50,000	€ 0
Total	€ 1,220,422	€ 1,211,542	€ 8,880

The funds were transferred to non-interest bearing bank accounts, thus no interest income was derived in connection with the funds received.

²⁸ See next section

²⁹ Total amount of participation fee was reduced by 62,947 € because of VAT

Participation Fees

The amount of countries' participation fees is based on the number of students in ISCED 5A courses and the GDP per capita (Eurostat, latest year available: 2009). All participating countries were classified into 4 country groups using weighting quartiles (bottom 25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, top 25%). For LLP-Countries, the participation fee was co-funded by the European Commission (75%).

Group	Country		Contribution of participating country	EC Funding	Total Fee
1	EE	Estonia	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	HR	Croatia	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	LT	Lithuania	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	LV	Latvia	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	MT	Malta	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	SI	Slovenia	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
1	SK	Slovak Republic	3,800 €	11,400 €	15,200 €
2	AT	Austria	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
2	CZ	Czech Republic	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
2	HU	Hungary	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
2	IE	Ireland	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
2	PT	Portugal	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
2	RO	Romania	7,300 €	22,050 €	29,350 €
3	CH	Switzerland	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
3	DK	Denmark	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
3	FI	Finland	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
3	NL	Netherlands	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
3	NO	Norway	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
3	SE	Sweden	13,100 €	39,450 €	52,550 €
4	DE	Germany	19,400 €	58,350 €	77,750 €
4	FR	France	19,400 €	58,350 €	77,750 €
4	IT	Italy	19,400 €	58,350 €	77,750 €
4	PL	Poland	19,400 €	58,350 €	77,750 €
Non-LLP country	AM	Armenia	3,800 €	-	3,800 €
		Sum	230,400 €	682,200 €	912,600 €

6. EUROSTUDENT VI

The original schedule for EUROSTUDENT VI has unfortunately been delayed. In June 2015, the countries were informed about the funding model for the EUROSTUDENT VI coordination budget, which provides information on the expected country fees and the current state of planning.

The total budget for EUROSTUDENT covers the coordination work of the International Consortium. This coordination entails setting and implementing conventions incl. the EUROSTUDENT core questionnaire, providing instruments for communication, data delivery and analysis of national data sets, and producing final comparative reporting. Based on the number of letters of intent received (until 23 May 2015), the budget is set at 1.6 Million Euro. The European Commission is currently exploring the possibility of providing a funding contribution to the project via part-covering the costs of the country participation fees for eligible countries through the ERASMUS+ programme. (To be approved by the ERASMUS+ Committee in July and confirmed in September/October 2015, once the 2016 Annual Work Programme of ERASMUS+ is adopted by the EU Commission). If this is the case, ERASMUS+ programme countries as well as Western Balkan countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro; and Albania) will likely be eligible for co-financing of their country participation fees.

Part B: General information on EUROSTUDENT

7. EUROSTUDENT in a Nutshell

EUROSTUDENT provides robust and comparative data on the social dimension of higher education in Europe.

EUROSTUDENT is a network of researchers and data collectors, representatives of national ministries, and other stakeholders working together to examine the social and economic conditions of student life in higher education systems in Europe. In the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT, 30 countries were active contributors to the EUROSTUDENT Network and two countries had an observer status. The EUROSTUDENT project's geographic span reaches from Norway in the north to Malta in the south and from Portugal in the west to Russia in the east. This means that the EUROSTUDENT project now covers most of larger Europe, providing data on approximately 210,000 students.

The EUROSTUDENT approach is based on the conviction that cross-country comparisons facilitate learning about strengths and weaknesses or simply idiosyncrasies of national higher education systems and thereby help countries to see their own higher education system in a new light.

The EUROSTUDENT data set uniquely covers all aspects of student life in European higher education. In the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT, data based on surveys of more than 210,000 students were provided. The resulting data set focuses not only on the socio-economic background and on the living conditions of students, but also investigates temporary international mobility. In this, it differentiates the information by policy-relevant student characteristics such as social background, age, transition route into higher education, and study intensity.

The EUROSTUDENT outputs are published via an elaborate reporting infrastructure: (i) Comparative report: This report is the central product of the EUROSTUDENT project. It adopts a broad, comparative perspective on the topics being analysed; (ii) National reports: Most national teams publish national reports (14 reports in the fourth round of the project). They offer in-depth analyses of students' social and economic conditions within a specific country; (iii) Intelligence Briefs: Intelligence Briefs are short, stimulating documents presenting information and interpretive help on specific topics covered in the EUROSTUDENT data set; and (iv) the EUROSTUDENT data-base: This is a publicly accessible online data-base containing all of the data gathered from the national contributors. It can be used by researchers and the interested public. For more information, please visit our website: www.eurostudent.eu

The primary users of the findings from EUROSTUDENT are higher education policy-makers at national and European level, researchers in this field, managers of higher education institutions, and students all over Europe. EUROSTUDENT data has been used, for instance, to evaluate policies related to students' time budget, alternative access routes into higher education, promoting international mobility amongst students, and tuition fee policies. The data has been used to show, respectively, (i) that students' field of study affects how they spend their time between attending lectures, working, and self-study periods, (ii) that alternative routes into higher education can improve inclusion, but that this new student group is more likely to work alongside their studies and less likely to go abroad for temporary periods, (iii) that a major obstacle to mobility besides funding, for those not considering going abroad, is these students' own social embeddedness (family and friends), which they cannot or do not want to

leave, and (iv) that tuition fee and study aid schemes are sometimes based on student status (e.g. full- or part-time) and merit as opposed to economic needs, so that some students pay lower fees and gain student aid, whilst others pay higher fees with no student aid. In addition to policy evaluation, EUROSTUDENT is participating in the Bologna Follow-Up-Group as an official data provider alongside Eurostat and Eurydice.

As such, **“EUROSTUDENT has acquired a strategic importance in European higher education policy making.”**

(Professor Patrick Clancy, University College Dublin)

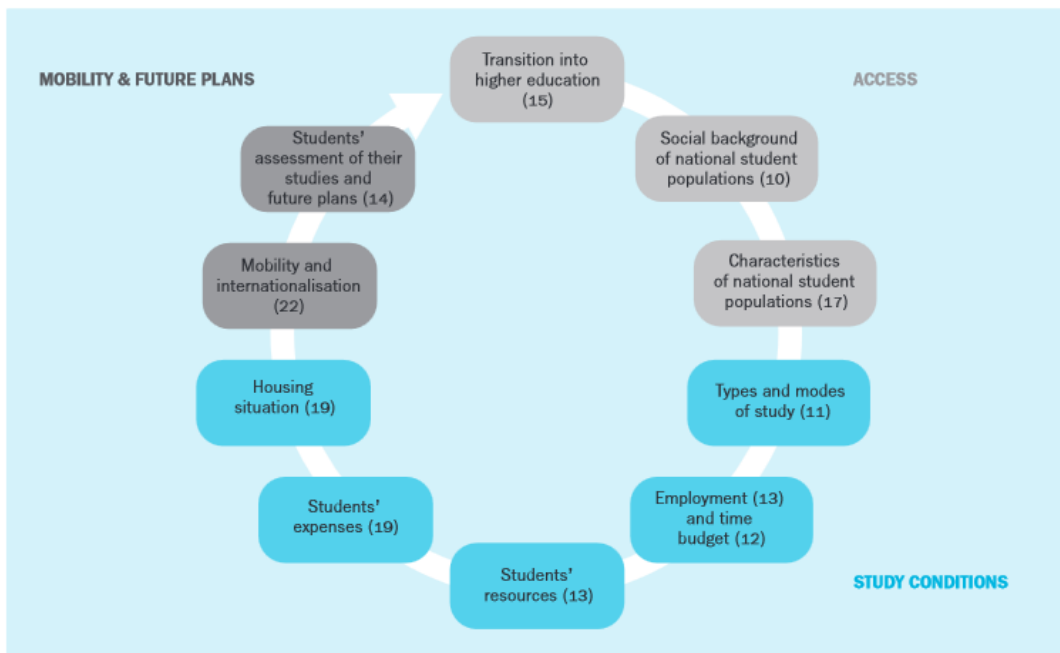


Figure 18: Structure and Chapter Sequence of the EUROSTUDENT V Synopsis of Indicators



Figure 19: The EUROSTUDENT Network – Overview of Contributors and Observers

8. The EUROSTUDENT V

Goals

- *To assist in capacity building in order to establish policy-relevant and robust national monitoring structures for the social dimension of higher education.*

This involves drafting and agreeing on common standards for data collection and delivery. The project adds value through the creation of opportunities to develop and exchange know-how on how to carry out effective national surveys. The work accomplished in the previous rounds of EUROSTUDENT has already achieved a high level of acceptance. Using previous work as a basis for this round of EUROSTUDENT will make the achievement of this goal feasible.

- *To provide a broad policy-relevant cross-country comparison of data on the social dimension of European higher education.*

This involves recruiting a sufficient number of participating countries. In EUROSTUDENT V, 30 European countries are participating. Each country is represented by both researchers and policy-makers. This constellation of researchers and policy-makers continues to assure that the development stage of the project takes account of the methodical and analytical challenges involved in fulfilling the goal of supporting evidence-based policy.

- *To support countries in their efforts to use the insights from the international comparison to review and improve the social dimension of higher education in their country.*

The findings of the comparative study can only support evidence-based policy on national and European levels if the interests and needs of the users are considered. The project will build on previous experience within EUROSTUDENT to create and utilise reporting structures which are

informative, sound and facilitate policy evaluation, and discussions on further developments. Special efforts will be made throughout the project's lifespan to assure that results of the project are not only reflected in publications made by the project Consortium, but also made by other data users on national and European levels. This diversity of output will help to assure that the individual products are relevant to their respective context.

The EUROSTUDENT project entered its fifth round in 2012. This means that it is reaching a certain level of maturity and can focus on **specific objectives** over and above the general goals. They are:

- To focus on the adherence to the common conventions set forth in EUROSTUDENT. This will entail working more closely with national teams (i) regarding how to utilise common conventions in the execution of national surveys and (ii) on how to calculate the comparative data.
- To focus on assuring the use of the comparative and national data to support evidence-based policy on the national and European level. This will entail working more closely with national teams and policy-makers (i) on understanding their needs and (ii) on collating national context information which supports the understanding of a country's national situation in comparison and facilitates a more context-related reflection on the comparative results. This process will be facilitated by the research and analysis done in the flanking project, Peer Learning for the Social Dimension, which commenced in November 2012 and is led by IHS Austria.

9. Organisational Structure

Since the creation of the EUROSTUDENT network in 1999, the project has been managed by combining a central coordination approach with the principle of shared responsibility. The central coordination is led and supported by the international partners in the project Consortium. The work of the Consortium is supported by an international Steering Board, which gives strategic advice.

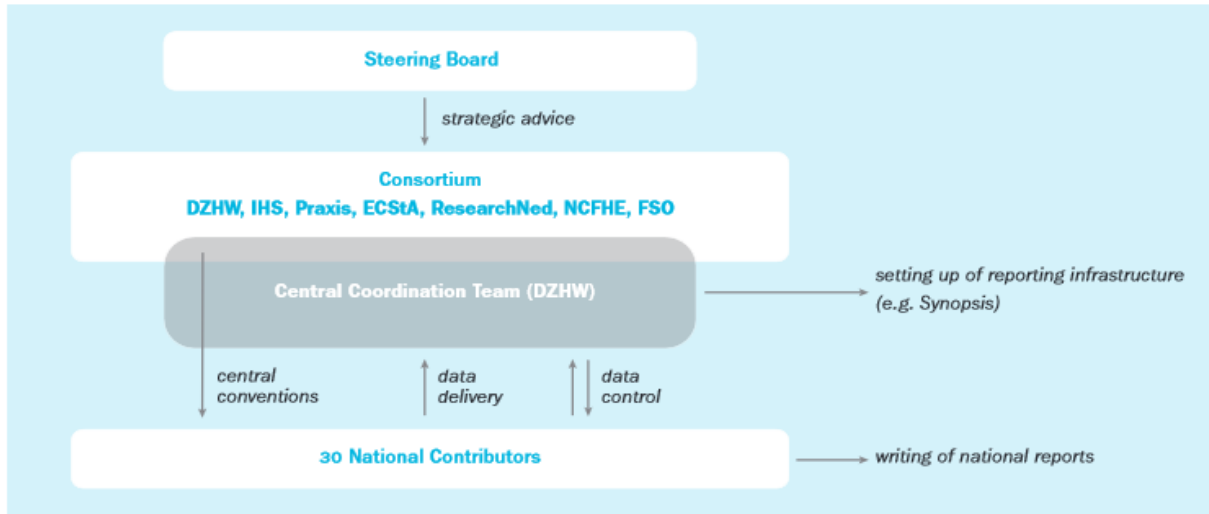


Figure 20: Organisation of Responsibilities within the EUROSTUDENT V Network

The implementation of the national student surveys lies within the responsibility of the contributing countries. Throughout the project, the central coordinators work closely with the members of the participating countries to assure a common understanding of data conventions and their compliance. Once the data are delivered by the national contributors, they are reviewed by the central coordinators. The national teams then check the data once more for plausibility before the results are published in the comparative report.

The network character of the project brings together the knowledge of experts from different countries. This assures that the design of the project is suitable for international comparative analyses and that country-specific context information is taken into account. This information is indispensable for a balanced interpretation of data from such a large and diverse group of countries. The introduction of “buddy-system” in the current round of EUROSTUDENT further expands and strengthens the network character of the project. The buddy-system allows for national teams to have a first point of contact to discuss queries and challenges experienced during the project. This ensures a regular exchange of information between the countries and their buddies and builds a stronger support network.

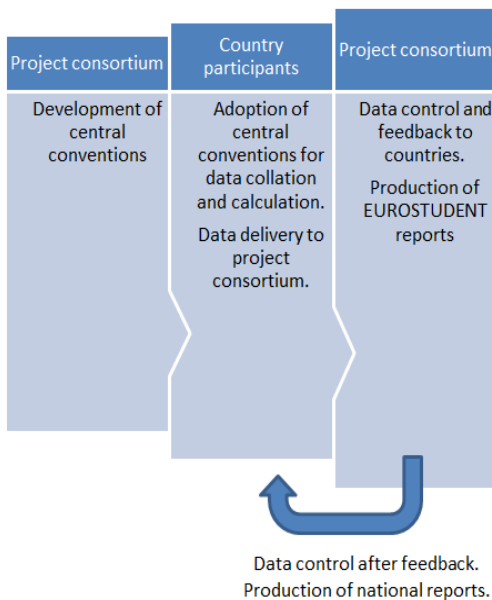


Figure 21: Process of Data Checks between National Teams and Coordinators

The Consortium and the 30 participating countries cooperate closely in the collection, processing, and interpretation of internationally comparative data on the social dimension of higher education. In each case, the participating countries and the coordinators have specific responsibilities. The country teams carry out the national surveys with the help of the Consortium.

Consortium

The central coordination team is made up of seven member organisations. These organisations are:

- German Centre for Research on Higher Education and Science Studies (DZHW), Germany
- Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria
- Praxis Centre for Policy Studies (Praxis), Estonia
- European Council on Student Affairs (ECStA), Belgium
- ResearchNed, The Netherlands
- National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE), Malta
- Federal Statistical Office (FSO), Switzerland

The Consortium as a whole has the responsibility for the following tasks:

- Assure the overall coordination and management of the EUROSTUDENT project
- Manage the central coordination budget
- Support countries by cooperating closely, discussing and cross-checking results, and provide updated methodical guidelines
- Maintain and regularly update a central EUROSTUDENT website and a Wiki area (based on Wikimedia technology) only open to EUROSTUDENT participants
- Develop an internet-based data delivery module (DDM) and reporting system
- Produce comparative reports (main report, national profiles and Intelligence Briefs) based on the EUROSTUDENT data set

Each of these partners is additionally responsible for specific work packages and tasks.

Participating Country Teams

Each participating country establishes a national coordination team and invests resources in order to carry out the national survey in coordination with EUROSTUDENT.

The country teams are expected to work within the overall project time schedule. National surveys in each country are executed on the basis of the EUROSTUDENT core questions, data conventions, and reference populations. National teams deliver their data in a prescribed format via the data delivery module (DDM), together with the metadata and interpretational help. The teams remain owners of the data and are ultimately responsible for the representativity, validity, reliability, and overall quality of their data.

Steering Board

The Steering Board guides the EUROSTUDENT Consortium in the development of a reliable, contextually sensitive and policy relevant comparative study of the social dimension in European higher education. Such a body is very important for the project, which has a very strong output focus and endeavours to balance policy relevance with statistical robustness. The membership of the Steering Board therefore reflects key stakeholders in European higher education and consists of experts who have experience of working with similar international comparative projects. The members of the Steering Board stay in touch with developments in the area of higher education policy, especially the social dimension of European higher education, and remain up-to-date with advances within the EUROSTUDENT project. In the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT, the Steering Board has also been assigned the additional task of assuring cost-effectiveness and transparency of the projects' expenses.

In summary, the main tasks and competences of the Steering Board include:

- Approval of the Annual Report presented by DZHW
- Approval of the Financial Report presented by DZHW
- Strategic advice on the progress and the future of the project
- Discussion on quality management of the project

- Settlement of disputes between Consortium and fee-paying countries

On the basis of these tasks, the Steering Board makes an active contribution to the middle and long term development of the project.

The Steering Board is moderated by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office FSO. The current members are: European Commission – EC (Mette Moerk Andersen), European Students’ Union – ESU (Lea Meister), Bologna Follow-Up Group – BFUG, German Federal Ministry for Education and Research – BMBF (Frank Petrikowski), Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science – MinOCW (Melissa Keizer), as well as three country representatives for the fee-paying countries (currently from France, Croatia and Denmark): Carole Waldvogel, Jesper Risom and Tomislav Vodička.

10. Funding and Duration

EUROSTUDENT V is funded through contracts with ministries responsible for higher education in the participating countries. The country participation fee is co-funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme. The project also receives additional support from the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research and the Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science. The fifth round of EUROSTUDENT lasted from 1 April 2012 until 31 May 2015.