

Chapter B1

Characteristics of national student populations

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Key

Students' age

Students' age presents a diverse picture across the EHEA, with a 10.5-year span between the two countries with the youngest (Azerbaijan) and oldest (Iceland) population according to mean age.

Women in higher education

Women represent the majority of higher education students in almost all EUROSTUDENT countries, with between 50 % and 66 % of students being female. Despite being the overall majority, gender representation is severely skewed across subjects and institutions.

Student parents

Currently, an average of 12 % of students report being parents, with an average number of children of 1.9. Student parents spend significant time on childcare, especially if their children are young. Correspondingly, student parents in almost all countries are more often studying at a low intensity, spending less than 20 hours per week on their studies.

findings

Migration background

Every fourth student (24 %) across EUROSTUDENT countries has an international background through their family or education. 14 % of domestically educated students were born abroad or have at least one parent born abroad; and 10 % of students possess an international entry qualification into higher education, i.e. went to school abroad. On average, 78 % of international students hold a foreign citizenship.

Students with disabilities

19 % of students report limitations to their studies by a disability, functional limitation, or health problem. Most commonly, students indicate experiencing mental health issues (13 % of students across countries), followed by physical chronic diseases and other long-standing health problems / functional limitations / impairments. Compared to the population, in almost all countries students in higher education more often indicate a disability than their counterparts in the population, with only Denmark showing the reverse pattern.

Discrimination experiences

On average, 22 % of students report having felt discriminated against in the context of their studies. In Spain, Portugal, and Austria, around a third of students indicate having experienced discriminatory behaviour. On average, the most common grounds for discrimination, as perceived by the students themselves, are gender and age, with 8 and 6 %, respectively, attributing experienced mistreatment to this characteristic.

Main issues

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The adoption of the Rome Communiqué and the ‘Principles and guidelines to strengthen the social dimension’ (Annex II to the Rome Communiqué, 2020) marks a significant reaffirmation by the countries within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) of the fundamental importance of the Social Dimension in higher education strategies at every level. With their adoption, the EHEA ministers have committed to “strengthening the social dimension of higher education and fostering equity and inclusion to reflect the diversity of society” (p. 4), an endeavour that involves creating higher education systems that are inclusive and supportive of the access, participation, progress, and completion of all students, with a special emphasis on those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged, or underrepresented. The categories that often define these students include individuals with low socio-economic backgrounds, identifiable by either low income or the educational background of their parents, as well as factors such as gender, disability, immigrant or minority status, and age, particularly for mature students (Crosier & Haj, 2020, Social Dimension Strategy). It is crucial to note that these categories are not isolated; they intersect and influence each other (Gross et al., 2016), and would ideally be investigated in a holistic and integrated manner to gain a comprehensive understanding of their interconnected impacts.

The EUROSTUDENT survey covers many aspects of student diversity, including gender, age, students with children, migration background, and disability. This chapter presents data on these aspects, as well as students’ experiences of discrimination based on various aspects of diversity. Parental socio-economic background is analysed in [> Chapter B2](#), and aspects of accessibility of higher education systems are covered in [> Chapter B3](#).

Students’ age

Students’ age is a key characteristic distinguishing higher education systems in Europe (DZHW, 2018; Hauschildt et al., 2021). This age diversity is largely due to variances in access policies, educational traditions, and the flexibility of the higher education system ([> Chapter B3](#)). Age distribution within the student body serves as a gauge of an education system’s inclusivity and its capacity to facilitate lifelong learning. Additionally, students’ age can provide initial insights into their specific needs concerning their higher education studies. With increasing age, students tend to live in more settled circumstances (Hauschildt et al., 2021), so that mature students have different requirements for balancing their studies with work and/or family. Age may also play a role in determining eligibility for financial student support, health insurance, or alternative access routes into higher education.

Gender balance

Gender balance among students in higher education, once significantly skewed towards men, has tipped towards women in recent history, with female students now constituting the majority in tertiary education in almost three quarters of countries globally (UNESCO & UNESCO IEASALC, 2021). Nevertheless, gender imbalances still exist with regard to subject choice, with women remaining significantly underrepresented in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction and ICT degrees (ibid.). In contrast, men less often choose Humanities, Social Sciences, and Teacher Training.

Such differences do not appear to correlate with differences in skills or abilities (Barone & Assirelli, 2020; Declercq et al., 2018). Rather, cultural influences, social norms, and prevailing gender stereotypes perpetuate educational and professional segregation across fields of study (Anagnostou, 2022). The concept of a ‘chilly climate’ characterising the institutional context (Hall & Sandler, 1982) has also been posited to act as a deterrent for women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields. Additionally, gender variations in expectations of earnings, risk aversion, confidence, and preferences are acknowledged as contributing factors to these gender differences (Declercq et al., 2018). The European Commission (2022) has pledged to address underrepresentation of women in STEM fields in its Strategy for Universities.

EUROSTUDENT data provide a lens to examine the experiences of students by gender across a broad spectrum of indicators. This chapter concentrates on the gender balance in STEM-intensive institutions, with the remaining chapters often drawing on sex as a characteristic to analyse differences between male and female students across a wide range of student life.

Students with children

Student parents need to balance their academic responsibilities with the demands of parenting. The challenge of juggling multiple roles – as students, parents, and often also as employees – can lead to significant role conflict and time poverty, particularly for parents of younger children (Ajayi et al., 2022; Brooks, 2012a; Conway et al., 2021). Variations in support services offered by different institutions and discrepancies in national policies across Europe result in diverse experiences for student parents (Brooks, 2012b), with a lack of adequate childcare facilities on campus and inflexible academic paths and schedules adding to the challenges faced by students with children (Ajayi et al., 2022; Brooks, 2012b; Conway et al., 2021). The resulting stress, as well as general feelings of isolation and not-belonging within the academic setting, can also negatively impact studying mothers’ and fathers’ mental health and well-being (Ajayi et al., 2022; Bogossian, 2021; Brooks, 2012a; Conway et al., 2021) and may result in lower academic performance and increased dropout risks (Ajayi et al., 2022; Conway et al., 2021). This chapter therefore analyses the share of students with children in Europe as well as the time they spend on childcare.

Migration background

Students with a migration background – i.e. born abroad themselves or with at least one parent born abroad – are often disadvantaged, compared to the native-born population (Giudici et al., 2021; Hadjar & Gross, 2016; Krempkow, 2022). Mishra and Müller (2022) contrast two theories on immigrant students’ academic outcomes: on the one hand, ‘social background and ethnic disadvantage’ highlights structural and socio-economic challenges that can impede their educational success. The socio-economic background of immigrant families significantly impacts educational outcomes, with lower parental education and income levels frequently correlating with diminished opportunities for academic success (Oberdabernig & Schneebaum, 2017). Factors such as language proficiency, acculturation processes, and the legal status of both students and their families may also impact negatively migrant students’ educational trajectories (Griga, 2013).

On the other hand, ‘immigration optimism’ emphasises the positive impact of migrant-specific resources and resilience (Mishra & Müller, 2022). In fact, they showed that for a German sample, high norms and aspirations prevalent in networks of migrant students serve a shielding role for dropout from higher education (Mishra & Müller, 2022). Similarly, for pupils in schools, empirical findings show that self-efficacy beliefs, positive home environment, and language attitudes increase resilience against socio-economic disadvantages (Gabrielli et al., 2022). Hadjar and Scharf (2019) report a higher value assigned to education by immigrants.

EUROSTUDENT analyses focus on students with a second-generation migration background – that is, domestically educated students with at least one parent born in another country. From one perspective, this provides a clear distinction to ‘international students’, who have (temporarily) migrated for the purpose of degree completion. Conversely, a comparison between these students and native-born students is best suited to uncover systemic differences, as these students, especially those with only one foreign parent (Camilleri et al., 2013), are less likely to face language-related barriers and problems related to their legal status.

Students with disabilities

The inclusion of persons with disabilities has been a stated goal at both European and international levels since the Salamanca Declaration reaffirmed that education, including higher education, should be accessible to all (Pavone et al., 2019; UNESCO, 1994). Students with disabilities encounter additional challenges in higher education and face barriers to their academic success. A recent systematic review (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022) highlights that obstacles pertain to access, as well as academic progress and success, categorising barriers for students with disabilities into three types: architectural and infrastructural barriers, such as outdated, non-accessible buildings; challenges within the teaching-learning process, including unprepared teaching staff and a lack of access to supportive technology and resources; and insufficient financial and counselling support at the institutional level.

Investigating success factors for students with disabilities, Moriña and Biagiotti (2022) revealed that both personal and external factors play a crucial role in the access to and progress in higher education. Key personal characteristics include self-advocacy, self-awareness, self-determination, self-esteem, and executive functioning, while external factors such as support from family, disability offices, staff, faculty members, and peers are instrumental in academic success.

Students with disabilities are by no means a homogeneous group. The spectrum of conditions, including physical disabilities, chronic diseases, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, and mental health issues, can significantly affect a student’s ability to achieve academic success and social integration. Indeed, student mental health has received increased attention in recent years, not least due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (Cuppen et al., 2024; European Students’ Union, 2022). Mental health as well as other conditions are usually not visible (Hauschildt et al., 2021; Moriña, 2022), which poses a risk of students not receiving the necessary support and jeopardising their academic success (Newman et al., 2021).

Discrimination

Discrimination in higher education institutions (HEIs) has garnered significant attention in recent research. Notably, the European Education Area's Working Group has contributed to this discourse with an issue paper based on the Working Group's discussions and insights on how to tackle discrimination in education based on ethnic or racial origin, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, and social and territorial inequalities (European Commission et al., 2023). Discrimination, defined as unfavourable treatment based on identity aspects (Devakumar et al., 2022), spans various attributes like gender, sexuality, and nationality, affecting students in myriad ways (Billingsley & Hurd, 2019; Mason et al., 2021; Puhl et al., 2008; Thornicroft et al., 2022; Vargas et al., 2020). Investigations reveal that experiencing discrimination adversely affects college satisfaction (Del Toro & Hughes, 2020), sense of belonging (Hussain & Jones, 2019), learning outcomes (Karuppan & Barari, 2011), and educational aspirations (Chykina, 2024). Furthermore, detrimental impacts on mental (Jochmann et al., 2019), physical (Williams et al., 2019), and general health (Devakumar et al., 2022) have been reported. Despite its prevalence, comparative insights into discrimination within HEIs remain limited, highlighting a critical area for further exploration. This chapter therefore investigates to which extent students feel discriminated against based on a variety of socio-demographic aspects.

Data and interpretation

Students' age

Students' age presents a diverse picture across the EHEA, with a 10.5-year span between the two countries with the youngest (Azerbaijan) and oldest (Iceland) population according to mean age (Table B1.1).

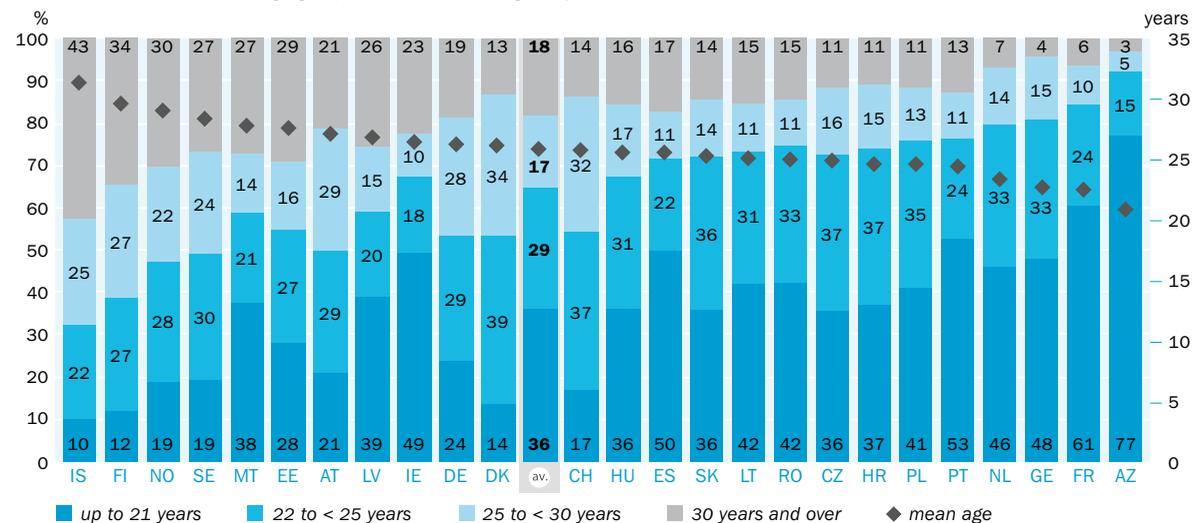
- In Iceland, a notable 43 % of the student population are aged 30 or over, indicating a substantial proportion of mature students in higher education (Figure B1.1). Likewise, in Finland and Norway, mature students form a significant demographic, with 34 % and 30 %, respectively, in the 30 and over age bracket. In these countries, as well as in Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland, students up to 21 years constitute only a minor segment, at most 19 %.
- Contrarily, in Portugal, France, and Azerbaijan, the younger demographic dominates, with between 53 and 77 % of students falling into the youngest age bracket.

Students' age varies by more than 10 years across countries. On average, around two thirds are up to 25 years old.

Due to the fact that students' age is often clearly linked to various study and living conditions, it presents a simple yet informative indicator. The variation in student age can be linked to different educational trajectories, such as delayed entry into higher education or alternative access paths which accommodate those who enter university after gaining work experience or other qualifications (see Table B1.2; also > [Chapter B3](#)). In particular, students with a non-tertiary educational background, who often enter higher education later in life or via alternative routes, are typically older than their peers. Additionally, students who are engaged in substantial part-time work, over 20 hours per week, tend to be older across the board. This older student demographic is also more likely to be independent of their parental home, relying on personal income rather than family or public financial support. This aspect of student life is also linked with policies on state financial support, which can influence the age profile of the student body (> [Chapter B7](#)).

Figure B1.1 [↓](#)**Age profile of students**

Share of students in different age groups (in %) and mean age (in years)

**Data source:** EUROSTUDENT 8, A.1.**Data collection:** Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).**EUROSTUDENT question(s):** When were you born?**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions:** CH, DK, NO, IS.**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group:** IE, NL.**Gender balance**

While women represent the majority of students in most countries, gender imbalances at subject and institutional level persist.

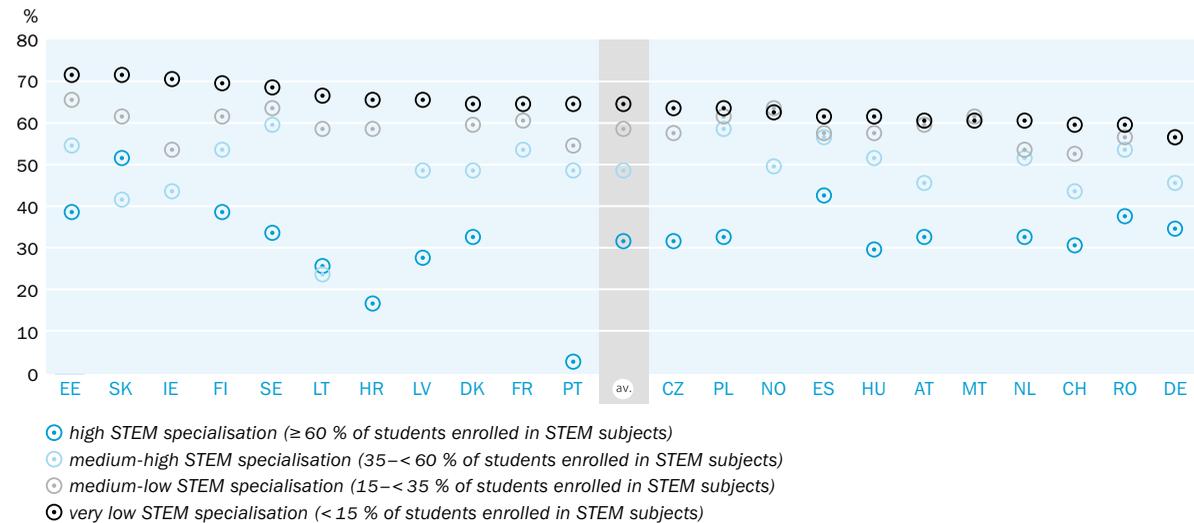
Women represent the majority of higher education students in almost all EUROSTUDENT countries (Table B1.3), with between 50 % and 66 % of students being female. Despite being the overall majority, gender representation is severely skewed across subjects (Table B1.3). Education and Health and Welfare are subject areas in which on average 78 and 72 % of students are women. This pattern is almost reversed in the more technically oriented fields Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction, where on average across countries at most a third of students are women.

- In Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Sweden, the gender distribution in ICTs study programmes is comparatively balanced, with between 39 and 40 % of students being women. In Iceland and Malta, at least 41 % of students in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction programmes are women.
- Education is less female-dominated in Georgia and the Netherlands, with a third of male students in these programmes. In Azerbaijan and Georgia, the same holds true for Health and Welfare, where shares of female students are comparatively low (54 and 47 %, respectively).

These patterns show that subject choice is largely still unequal by gender, a fact also reflected at the institutional level (Figure B1.2). When analysing the share of women depending on a higher education institution's specialisation in STEM, it becomes evident that the gender balance is very uneven at both ends of the spectrum. At HEIs with a very low STEM programme offering, women make up at least 57 % of students. Conversely, at highly specialised HEIs, men are the majority in all but one country (Slovakia), representing on average around two thirds of students.

Figure B1.2 [↓](#)
Share of female students by degree of STEM-specialisation of HEI

Share of women (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.3. **No data:** AZ, GE, IS; medium-low STEM specialisation: LV; medium-high STEM specialisation: HR, CZ, MT; high STEM specialisation: IE, FR, NO, MT.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.2 What is your #sex?

Note(s): An institution's STEM specialisation is measured as the ratio of students enrolled in ISCED levels 5 to 7 within fields 05 (Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics), 06 (Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)), and 07 (Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction) to the total number of students at ISCED levels 5 to 7 based on the European Tertiary Education Register.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, DK, NO, RO, GE, HU, LV, PL.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

The degree of STEM-specialisation of the HEI provides a clearer picture than the type of HEI (university vs. non-university): while there are large differences between the two types with regard to the share of women enrolled in some countries, no clear pattern emerges that would indicate women generally favoring one or the other (Table B1.4).

■ In most countries, the share of women at non-universities is slightly higher, however, in the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Croatia, Ireland, and Malta, the pattern points, often strongly, in the opposite direction with women more often enrolled at universities.

Differences between Bachelor and Master programmes are also not consistent across countries (Table B1.4). Large discrepancies between the genders relating to enrolment at the different levels of higher education could signal inequalities with regard to progression but can also be due to different course offerings at the different educational levels (which could be interpreted as inequality in its own right). In around a third of the EUROSTUDENT countries, the gender distribution in Bachelor and Master programmes is roughly the same. In another third, women represent the majority of Master students, and in the final group, men dominate Master programmes.

■ A difference of at least 5 percentage points between Bachelor and Master programmes exists in Estonia, Georgia, Croatia, Latvia, Poland, and Romania, where women are more often enrolled in Master than in Bachelor programmes, and in Denmark, Hungary, and Sweden, where women are more often enrolled in first-cycle programmes.

Except in Azerbaijan, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, and Malta, women are more often represented among students without tertiary educational background than men. In accessing higher education, some differences between men and women become apparent (Table B1.4). In Switzerland, the Czech Republic, France, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, and Sweden, women tend to enter higher education with a delay of at least 2 years after leaving the regular school system rather than directly (with differences of at least three percentage points). In Austria, Germany, Spain, Georgia, Ireland, Malta, Norway, Portugal, and Romania, larger shares of women chose the direct route. A standard entry path is at least slightly more often used by women than an alternative access route in all countries except Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Malta, and Sweden.

The share of females by migration background does not vary on average across countries (Table B1.4). On country level, however, marked differences become apparent with either clearly higher or lower shares of women found among second-generation migrant students. Except for Austria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Malta, and Portugal, women are more likely to be living in separate accommodation than with their parents (Table B1.4).

Students with children

12% of students are parents, mainly among older age groups.

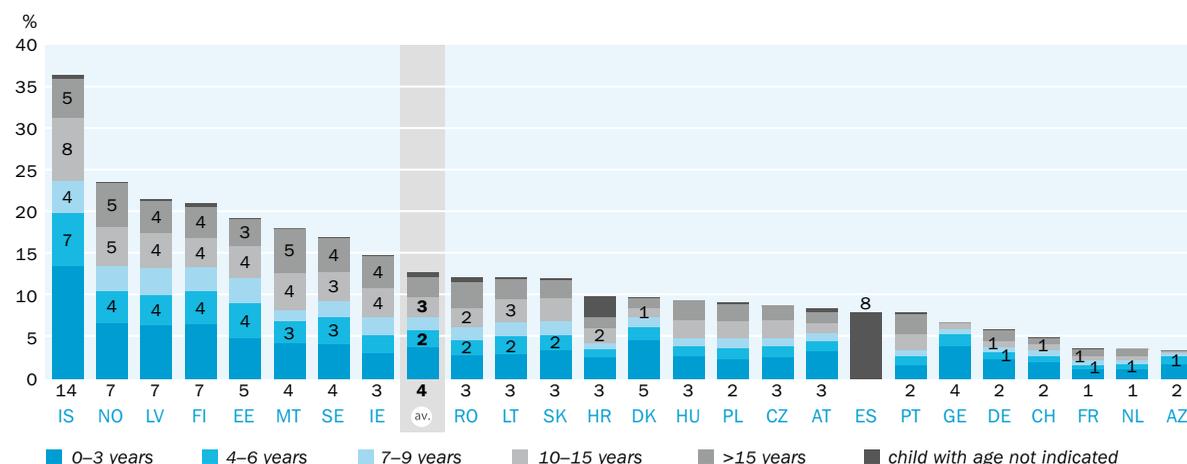
Across EUROSTUDENT countries, the prevalence of parenting students shows considerable variation (Figure B1.3). Currently, an average of 12% of students report being parents, with an average number of children of 1.9 (Table B1.5).

■ In Iceland, Norway, Latvia, and Finland, at least 21% of students have children, showing a significant population of student parents. Conversely, in Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, and Azerbaijan, no more than 5% of students have a child.

Figure B1.3 ↓

Students with children by age of youngest child

Share of students (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.18. No data: for children's age: ES.

Data collection: Spring 2022–summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023–summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.9 Do you have children? 6.10 How old is your youngest child?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Student parents tend to be among the older demographic of students. On average, in the age group of 30 years and over, more than half of students report having children (Table B1.6). Among first-year students, the proportion who are parents averages 8 % across the surveyed countries (Table B1.6).

- Among first-year students, the highest percentages of those who are parents are observed in Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Malta, and Slovakia, where 12 % to 23 % have entered higher education as expectant or actual parents (Table B1.6).

There are more mothers than fathers typically found among students (Table B1.6). In line with the older age of students, student parents are usually more often found in Master vs. Bachelor programmes. Additionally, student parents have more often made use of non-traditional access routes and are more often found at non-universities than universities in almost all countries.

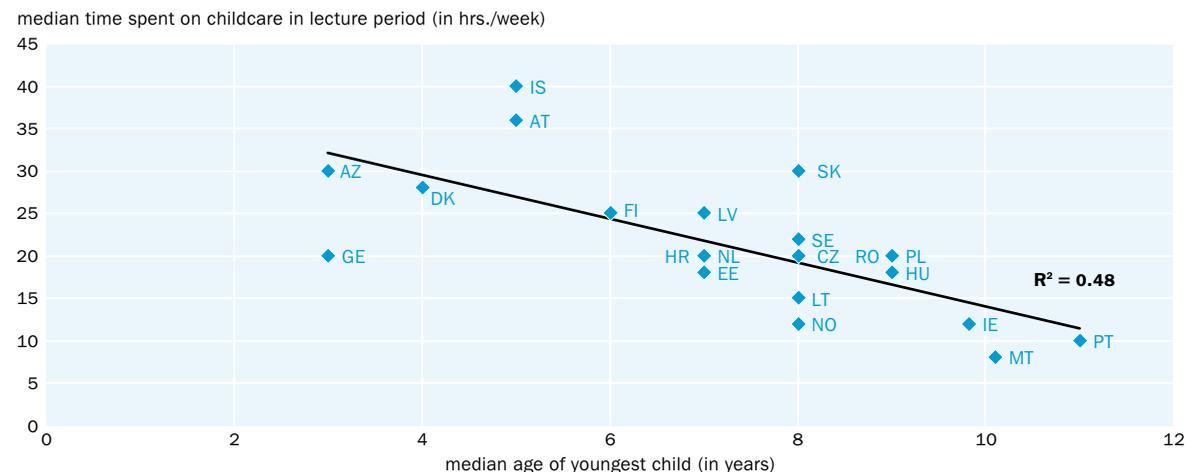
Approximately half of the student parents have a youngest child under the age of six, indicating significant childcare requirements alongside their academic responsibilities (Table B1.5).

- This is particularly notable in Austria, Azerbaijan, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, and Iceland, where over half of the student-parents' youngest children fall into this age category.
- Remarkably, Ireland, Malta, and Portugal report a different trend with at least 60 % of student-parents' children being older than 6 years.

Figure B1.4 ↓

Time spent on childcare in relation to age of youngest child

Median time (in hrs./week) and age of youngest child (in years)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.19. **No data:** CH, DE, ES, FR.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except AT, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.11 [Only students who have children] How many hours do you spend on childcare in a typical week in the current lecture period? Childcare refers to active care given to your child(ren) (e.g. feeding or playing).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Student parents spend an average of 21 hours per week on childcare. As depicted on the vertical axis in Figure B1.4, student parents spend a significant amount of time on childcare. On average, mothers and fathers spend 21 hours per week caring for their child(ren). However, there is a notable variation across countries.

- Parents in Lithuania, Norway, Ireland, Malta, and Portugal are spending less than 15 hours per week taking care of their offspring, whereas students in Iceland, Austria, Slovakia, and Azerbaijan are involved in childcare at least 30 hours.

Correspondingly, student parents in almost all countries are more often studying at a low intensity, spending less than 20 hours per week on their studies (Table B1.6).

14 % of domestically educated students were born abroad or have at least one parent born abroad. 10 % of students possess an international entry qualification into higher education.

This large span in time spent on childcare can be explained by the age of the students' youngest child (Figure B1.4). There is a very clear relationship between the median time spent on childcare and the youngest family member's age, with childcare hours decreasing the higher the average age of children in a country is.

Migration background

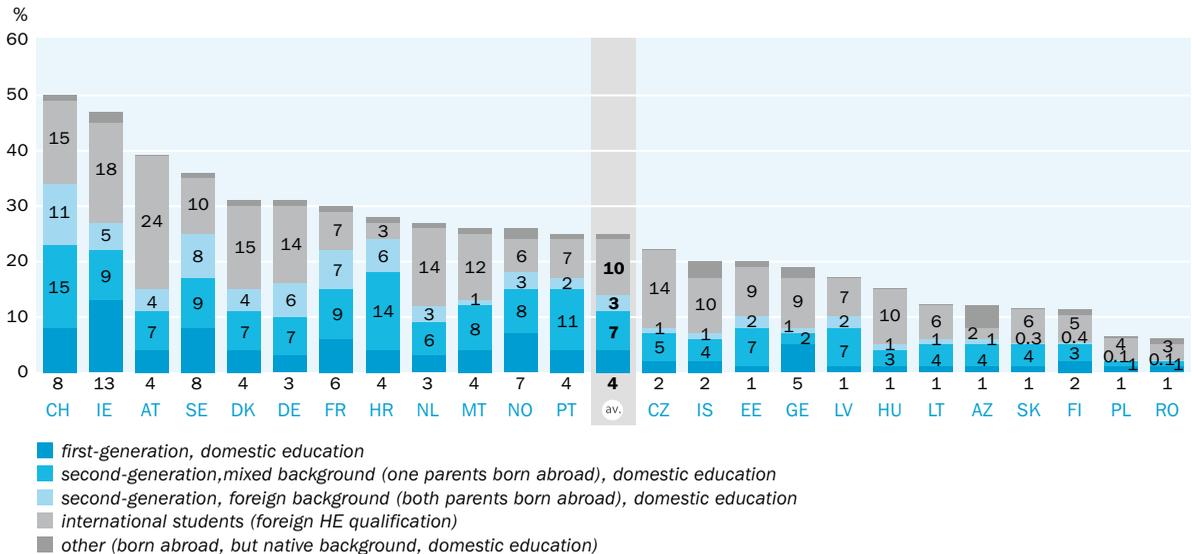
Every fourth student (24 %) across EUROSTUDENT countries has an international background through their family or education (Figure B1.5). 14 % of domestically educated students were born abroad or have at least one parent born abroad; and 10 % of students possess an international entry qualification, i.e. attended school abroad.

- Particularly high shares of students with an international background are found in Switzerland, Ireland, Austria, and Sweden. In these countries, between a third and a half of students either have a migration background or are international students.

Figure B1.5 ↓

Migration and educational background of students

Share of students (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.20. No data: ES.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (Spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.4 In which country were you and your parents (or those who raised you) born?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

- On the other hand, this is the case for less than 15 % of students in Lithuania, Azerbaijan, Slovakia, Finland, Poland, and Romania.
- More than 5 % of students enrolled in Switzerland, Ireland, Sweden, France, and Norway were born abroad (first-generation migrants), whereas comparatively many students with a second-generation migration background, i.e. at least one parent born abroad, can be found in Switzerland and Croatia (26 % and 20 %, respectively).
- Switzerland, Ireland, Austria, and Denmark register the highest shares of international students with at least 15 % holding a foreign entry qualification.

It is important to recognise that not all international students with foreign educational qualifications also possess foreign citizenship, which suggests a possible familial connection to the country for those international students with national citizenship who attended school abroad. On average, 78 % of international students hold a foreign citizenship (Table B1.7).

Box B1.1

Methodological note: Measuring migration background

The EUROSTUDENT focus group distinction categorises students according to their migration background, based on their own and their parents' place of birth. In addition, to be able to distinguish international students, EUROSTUDENT considers the place of attainment of the higher education entry qualification, or, in the absence of this, the place of last attending the regular school system.

Application of this scheme results in the following categories:

- students without a migration background, domestically educated: students who were born in the country of survey, as were their parents, and who attended/completed the school system in the country of the survey
- first-generation migrants, domestically educated: students born abroad who attended/completed the national school system
- international students: students who attended/completed a foreign school system
- students with a second-generation migration background, domestically educated: students with at least one parent born abroad, who were born in the country of survey, and who attended/completed the national school system
- other students, domestically educated: students born abroad, with parents born in the country of survey, who attended/completed the national school system

This categorisation is employed in Figure B1.5 and throughout the report when 'migration background' is used as a focus group. Figure B1.6 depicts students with a second-generation migration background regardless of their place of education for the sake of comparison with population statistics.

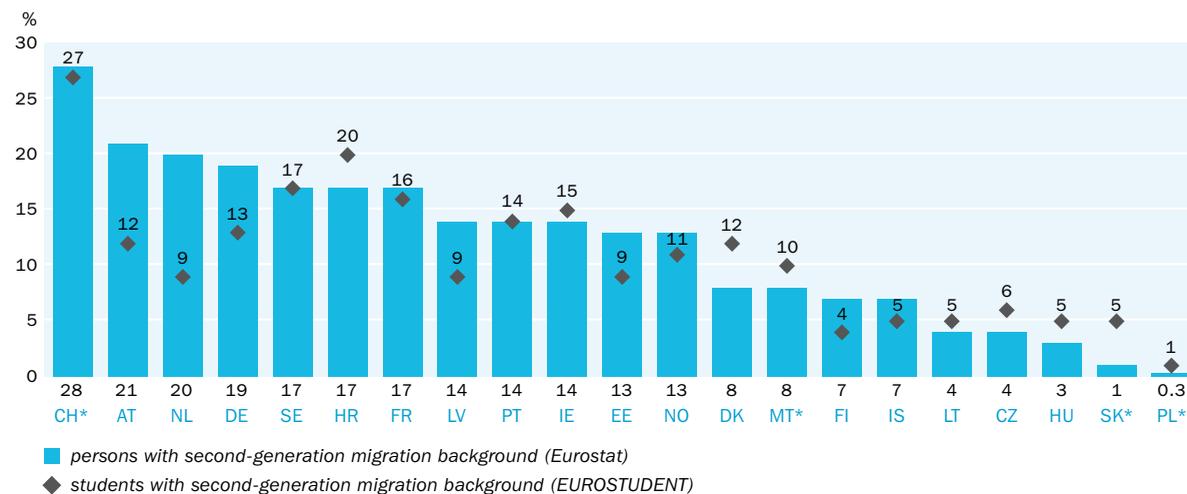
Compared to the population of a similar age (Figure B1.6), on average students with at least one foreign-born parent are relatively well-represented in higher education. However, notable discrepancies can be found.

Students with at least one foreign-born parent are relatively well-represented compared to the population.

Figure B1.6 [↓](#)

Students' migration background compared to the population (in %)

Share of students (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.20. Population data: Eurostat Labour Force Survey 2022 (lfsa_pganedm) except CH (European Social Survey 2018). Population values refer to the population aged 15–29. **No data:** ES. No Eurostat data: AZ, GE, RO; second-generation mixed migration background: MT, PL, SK.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, FR, PT (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.4 In which country were you and your parents (or those who raised you) born?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

- In Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Iceland second-generation migrants are underrepresented compared to the general population: only 50 %–75 % as many students as would be expected, based on the representation of second-generation in the general population aged 15–29, are enrolled in higher education.
- In contrast, in Denmark, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland, the representation of such students exceeds the anticipated level – based on the share of second-generation migrants in the population – by at least 33 %.

Students with disabilities

Almost every fifth student reports limitations to their studies by a disability.

On average, 21 % of students in EUROSTUDENT countries indicate being at least somewhat limited by a disability in their daily life (Figure B1.7), and 19 % report limitations to their studies by a disability (Table B1.8).

- At least a quarter of students indicate a disability limiting to daily life in Finland, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Iceland, and Denmark.
- Low shares of students with disabilities are found in Croatia, Portugal, Hungary, and Romania, where no more than 15 % of students report a limitation in their daily life.

Mental health problems are the most common type of disability, whereas mobility impairments are least frequent

Among the different types of impairments, mental health problems are the most commonly reported type, indicated by 13 % of students across countries, and are also the most widespread in most countries (Table B1.8). Exceptions are Austria, France, Georgia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia, where mental health issues take second or third place. Next to mental health problems, on aggregate, physical chronic diseases and other long-standing health problems / functional limitations / impairments are the most common types of impairment across countries. Least often named on average and in most countries are mobility impairments.

Box B1.2

Methodological note: Students with disabilities in EUROSTUDENT

In the EUROSTUDENT context, the term ‘disability’ is used to refer to any self-perceived disability, impairment, long-standing health problem, or functional limitation. The EUROSTUDENT focus group takes into account only those students who report some limitations in their studies due to such a disability or impairment. This focus on limitations represents an adaptation of the Global Activity Limitation Indicator (GALI), a measure that is also used in official European statistics (Bogaert et al., 2018). It should also be noted that, compared to the GALI, the EUROSTUDENT survey likely underestimates the share of students with limitations, as only students indicating a disability, impairment, long-standing health problem, functional limitation or learning disability are asked to indicate the extent of their limitation to their studies and in their daily life.

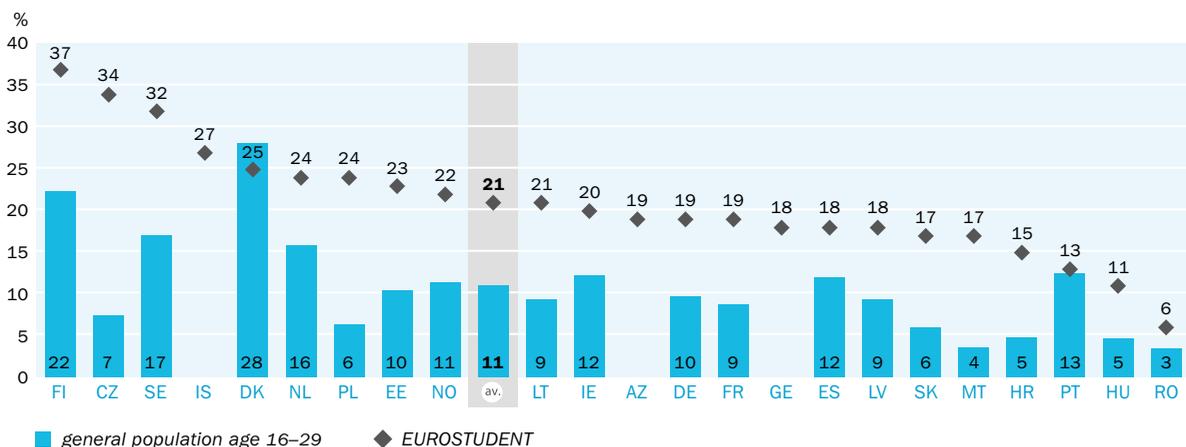
It should be noted that measuring impairments and activity limitations in a cross-national comparison is challenging. Previous studies have confirmed the relevance of the GALI for measuring activity limitations in Europe, but caution against direct comparisons between two countries (Berger et al., 2015). Instead, the authors advise focusing on patterns and trends.

- Compared to the population, in almost all countries students in higher education more often indicate a disability than their counterparts in the population, with only Denmark showing the reverse pattern.

Figure B1.7 ↓

Students with disabilities in EUROSTUDENT and the general population

Share of respondents indicating severe or somewhat severe limitations in their daily life due to a disability (in %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.11. Eurostat: EU-SILC 2022 [hlth_silc_07], age group 16-29. **No data:** AT, CH. No EU SILC data: IS, AZ, GE.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except ES, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.12 Due to your impairment(s), to what extent are you limited in activities people usually do? Adapted from Global Activity Limitation Indicator (Eurostat).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH, RO, SE.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

22% of students report discrimination experiences during their studies, most often due to gender and age.

Discrimination experiences

How welcome do students with different backgrounds and characteristics feel in higher education? The EUROSTUDENT 8 survey investigated students' experiences of discrimination with an in-depth module in its questionnaire. Figure B1.8 shows the reported discrimination students have experienced in the context of their studies and the perceived reason for it.

Figure B1.8 ↓

Reported incidences and perceived reasons for discrimination in academic context

Share of students having experienced discrimination by students, teaching staff, or other HEI staff and perceived reason for the discrimination (in %)

	Any discrimination experience	Perceived reason										
		Gender	Age	Ancestry/Nationality	Weight	Income	Mental health	Sexuality	Religion	Disability	Skin colour	Parents' education
ES	33	11	8	7	9	8	8	6	3	2	2	3
PT	31	8	7	7	8	7	6	5	3	4	4	3
AT	30	13	7	9	3	6	5	3	3	2	2	4
RO	26	7	6	5	9	9	4	4	3	3	1	3
DK	26	11	8	7	5	5	6	3	3	5	4	3
PL	25	12	6	3	6	6	5	4	5	2	1	3
IE	25	9	7	6	5	7	5	4	3	3	4	3
MT	24	9	4	7	6	5	5	3	2	3	1	3
NL	24	6	6	7	3	4	6	3	3	3	3	2
SE	23	9	7	6	3	2	4	2	3	3	3	2
CZ	23	9	5	5	5	4	3	2	2	1	1	1
LT	22	8	4	4	5	5	4	5	2	1	2	1
IS	21	8	9	4	3	2	4	1	1	3	2	1
HR	20	7	5	3	5	3	4	3	4	1	1	2
LV	20	8	6	7	3	4	2	3	2	1	2	1
EE	20	8	6	6	4	4	3	2	1	2	2	0
HU	19	4	6	4	6	4	4	3	3	2	3	2
SK	19	6	4	4	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	1
FI	16	5	6	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	1
GE	16	9	6	8	8	7	6	6	7	5	6	4
FR	15	5	4	6	2	2	n.d.	1	2	2	4	n.d.
AZ	15	3	2	1	6	2	2	0	3	1	1	0
NO	12	4	3	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1
av.	22	8	6	5	5	5	4	3	3	2	2	2

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, TM.92, TM.76, TM.80, TM.72, TM.82, TM.89, TM.87, TM.78, TM.74, TM.84, TM.70, TM.91. **No data:** CH, DE; mental health and parents' education: FR.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): M4.2 Have you ever felt discriminated against in the context of your studies due to your ...[reason]. Adapted and expanded from the European Social Survey (2018).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: FR, PL, RO.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

On average, 22 % of students report having felt discriminated against in the context of their studies.

- In Spain, Portugal, and Austria, around a third of students indicate having experienced discriminatory behaviour.

- Students in Hungary, Slovakia, Finland, Georgia, France, Azerbaijan, and Norway indicate relatively less often that they have been mistreated due to one of 11 personal characteristics (see Figure B1.8) – between 12 and 19 % of students have felt discriminated against in the context of their studies.

On average, the most common grounds for discrimination, as perceived by the students themselves, are gender and age, with 8 and 6 %, respectively, attributing experienced mistreatment to this characteristic. These two characteristics also fall among the top three reasons for discrimination in most countries.

Exceptions are found in Malta and Georgia, where ‘weight’, ‘income’, ‘ancestry/nationality’, ‘mental health’, or ‘religion’ are more common reasons than age. Overall, ‘sexuality’, ‘religion’, ‘disability’, ‘skin colour’ and ‘parents’ education’ are the least often named categories.

While the data indicate a higher incidence of reported discrimination based on age or gender compared to nationality, disability, or weight, this trend aligns with expectations. This is because age and gender are universal attributes that apply to everyone, whereas not everyone identifies with a specific nationality, has a disability, or considers their weight a distinguishing factor. Among the groups in question, rates of reported discrimination are much higher: For example, while 10 % of women have experienced gender-based discrimination, this is only true of 4 % of men (Menz & Mandl, 2024). Among students with a disability, almost every tenth student (9 %) reports to have been discriminated against because of it.

Discussion and policy considerations

The data presented in this chapter underscore that student populations across Europe vary significantly, as already highlighted in previous EUROSTUDENT reports (DZHW, 2018; Hauschildt et al., 2021), indicating a large variety of living situations and study needs. Average student age spans more than a decade from Azerbaijan to Iceland. While women are the majority in higher education across EUROSTUDENT countries, they remain underrepresented in STEM fields, with notable variations in gender distribution by field of study, institution type, and degree level. In many countries, a considerable portion of students are parents, which requires them to reconcile the needs of their family with study and possibly work requirements, especially in the case of young children. Approximately one in four students across EUROSTUDENT countries has an international background, either through being born abroad, having parents born abroad, or having obtained their entry qualification for higher education abroad. Around every seventh student reports being limited in their daily life or studies by a disability, and circa every tenth student reports a limiting mental health issue.

It must be noted that the present analysis is only able to investigate one characteristic at a time. It is important to acknowledge and further investigate the intersectionality at play in shaping students’ distinct experiences in higher education (European Commission et al., 2023). This nuanced understanding is key in designing measures to support the entry, participation, and successful completion of higher education for

all students, as pledged by the ministers responsible for higher education in the EHEA in the Rome Communiqué (2020). The data in this chapter show that discrimination is not an uncommon occurrence for students in higher education, and even a numerical majority, such as female students, may be subject to discrimination. As Mishra (2020) notes, it is “important to bring discussion surrounding discrimination and segregation to the forefront” (p. 13) in order to ensure that students from all backgrounds are integrated into the higher education system.

To foster an inclusive higher education system, policymakers should strive to understand the different potentially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups’ living and study situations in order to adequately develop targeted measures of support in national social dimension strategies. In addition to the dimensions analysed in this chapter, students’ parental education and financial status are very relevant (> Chapter B2). At the national level, it may be important to also consider other characteristics which may make students potentially vulnerable to discrimination and place other barriers in their way to successful completion of higher education. This may be the case, for example, for specific national ethnic minority groups, students in other difficult personal situations, such as caregivers to elders (Knopf et al., 2022), or other minority groups at risk, e.g. non-binary or trans students (Dau, 2023; Stern, 2019).

At the level of HEIs, different support measures can be and are offered, e.g. guidance and counselling, professional development for HEI staff, or outreach activities (U-Multirank, 2022). The approach should be strategic and comprehensive, and its implementation should be monitored subject to evaluation, as not all measures reach the intended goals (Römhild & Holleder, 2024). In this, the tools developed in the European SMILE project¹ could serve as a guiderail for institutions – it offers an audit model which allows institutions to set up activities to progress in the further development and/or implementation of inclusive strategies, continuing professional development courses for HEI staff on specific areas or one of the identified areas of inequality and disadvantage in higher education, as well as policy recommendations and action plans that provide further guidance on implementation. Measures taken by HEIs may need to begin before higher education, as supporting the transition from secondary to higher education have been pointed out to be particularly promising (Fernández-Batanero et al., 2022; Erdmann et al., 2023).

Researchers can support and accompany these processes at the societal and institutional level through detailed studies based on micro data as well as qualitative data to inform and refine educational policies and intervention with a particular focus on intersectional effects of students’ (socio-)demographic characteristics on their higher education experiences from a comparative perspective. In addition to identifying and addressing the challenges faced by diverse student populations, a strength-based perspective can focus on investigating which strategies and measures have proven effective (Mishra & Müller, 2022). Further research on the positive outcomes of diversity for the individual students, academic excellence and societal benefits can also contribute to an appreciation of the promise an inclusive, diverse higher education system holds (Smith, 2020).

¹ <https://smile.eucen.eu>

Tables

Table B1.1
Age profile of students and mean age by time in higher education, sex, type of HEI, and study programme

Share of students in different age groups (in %) and mean age (in years)

	Up to 21 years	22 to <25 years	25 to <30 years	30 years and over	Mean	SD	Median	First-year students	Mean age					
									Sex		Type of HEI		Study programme	
									Female	Male	University	Non-university	Bachelor	Master
AT	21	29	29	21	27.1	7.6	25.0	22.7	26.5	27.9	27.2	26.9	25.9	29.2
AZ	77	15	5	3	20.9	3.2	20.1	18.7	20.8	20.9	20.9	n/a	20.5	24.1
CH	17	37	32	14	25.8	5.7	24.3	23.5	25.8	25.8	25.0	26.8	24.8	28.3
CZ	36	37	16	11	24.9	6.4	22.9	23.0	25.2	24.5	24.6	28.1	24.3	27.2
DE	24	29	28	19	26.3	6.6	24.6	22.9	26.2	26.5	26.3	26.4	25.4	28.4
DK	14	39	34	13	26.2	5.8	24.8	23.5	26.3	26.0	25.6	26.8	25.6	27.2
EE	28	27	16	29	27.6	8.2	24.2	23.1	28.1	26.8	27.3	28.6	26.3	32.4
ES	50	22	11	17	25.6	9.0	22.8	23.5	25.0	26.5	23.5	29.8	24.6	31.3
FI	12	27	27	34	29.6	8.7	26.4	26.1	29.9	29.4	28.0	31.0	28.5	33.0
FR	61	24	10	6	22.5	5.4	21.1	20.1	22.7	22.3	23.0	21.4	21.4	25.7
GE	48	33	15	4	22.7	3.6	22.0	21.4	22.7	22.7	22.5	24.0	22.2	25.2
HR	37	37	15	11	24.6	6.0	22.9	21.2	24.6	24.6	24.0	27.6	23.8	27.5
HU	36	31	17	16	25.6	7.4	23.0	21.9	25.7	25.5	25.1	28.3	25.1	29.3
IE	49	18	10	23	26.5	9.9	22.0	22.0	26.4	26.7	25.5	27.9	23.2	32.4
IS	10	22	25	43	31.4	9.9	28.2	26.5	31.5	31.2	31.4	n/a	28.7	35.7
LT	42	31	11	15	25.1	7.2	22.4	21.9	25.2	24.9	24.4	26.5	24.3	29.2
LV	39	20	15	26	26.9	8.5	23.3	23.6	27.4	26.1	26.0	31.5	24.6	31.1
MT	38	21	14	27	27.8	10.1	23.3	24.9	26.8	29.4	24.8	33.8	24.2	32.5
NL	46	33	14	7	23.4	5.4	22.3	20.6	23.2	23.5	23.3	23.5	22.5	26.3
NO	19	28	22	30	28.9	9.2	25.3	23.3	29.3	28.3	28.5	29.7	26.1	32.6
PL	41	35	13	11	24.6	6.5	22.5	21.7	24.7	24.4	23.4	28.8	23.5	27.8
PT	53	24	11	13	24.4	7.8	21.8	21.1	23.7	25.1	23.9	25.0	23.2	28.3
RO	42	33	11	15	25.0	7.3	22.5	21.6	24.7	25.4	25.0	n/a	24.2	28.6
SE	19	30	24	27	28.4	9.2	25.1	24.3	29.0	27.6	28.4	n/a	26.5	29.7
SK	36	36	14	14	25.3	6.7	22.9	23.3	25.3	25.4	24.0	34.1	24.7	27.4
av.	36	29	18	18	25.9	7.3	23.4	22.7	25.9	25.9	25.3	27.9	24.6	29.2

n/a: not applicable

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.1

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.1 When were you born?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH, DK, NO, IS.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.2

Students' mean age by study intensity, educational background, transition duration, dependency on income source, extent of paid employment, entry qualification, and housing situation
Mean age (in years)

	Study intensity		Educational background		Transition route		Dependency on income source			Extent of paid employment		Entry qualification		Housing situation	
	Low intensity	High intensity	Without tertiary educational background	With tertiary educational background	Direct	Delayed	Dependent on family	Dependent on self-earned income	Dependent on public student support	No paid employment during semester	Employed during semester > 20 hrs./week	Alternative access route	Standard access route	Living with parents	Not living with parents
AT	30.1	25.1	28.1	26.3	25.8	31.5	23.8	29.5	26.7	25.3	31.5	30.8	25.8	23.5	28.0
AZ	21.8	21.0	20.6	21.0	20.2	26.0	20.3	23.5	20.0	20.2	22.9	t.f.c.	20.8	20.5	21.7
CH	28.1	24.5	26.4	25.2	24.9	32.3	24.1	28.2	26.1	24.5	29.6	28.8	25.3	23.8	27.5
CZ	27.6	23.0	25.8	24.0	23.6	36.2	22.6	27.8	22.7	22.6	30.0	34.2	24.8	22.9	25.9
DE	29.0	25.3	26.9	25.8	25.2	30.7	24.6	29.3	25.6	24.8	32.5	30.0	25.6	23.2	27.4
DK	25.9	26.6	27.1	25.9	25.2	29.2	28.3	26.1	25.2	27.0	28.4	30.1	25.8	23.3	26.4
EE	28.1	28.0	29.0	27.1	26.0	34.8	24.0	30.1	23.9	24.3	31.1	32.9	27.3	23.1	28.8
ES	32.6	23.1	24.8	23.5	23.9	34.9	23.0	33.6	21.9	23.1	n.d.	31.0	22.3	22.4	29.0
FI	31.3	29.2	32.2	28.4	27.7	33.5	29.7	32.1	25.7	27.6	34.4	34.9	29.3	24.9	29.8
FR	23.2	22.2	23.3	22.2	22.2	29.8	21.5	25.7	22.1	21.3	25.8	31.5	22.4	20.8	23.5
GE	22.9	22.3	22.2	22.8	22.5	25.9	22.4	24.0	23.3	22.2	23.7	24.4	22.6	22.3	23.2
HR	26.1	23.5	25.0	24.1	23.7	31.6	25.1	30.3	22.0	22.5	28.5	31.4	24.2	23.5	25.6
HU	27.9	23.7	27.1	24.6	24.3	34.9	23.0	28.9	23.2	22.9	30.3	36.3	25.2	23.2	26.8
IE	32.9	24.4	30.2	24.8	24.7	37.9	23.1	30.6	23.3	24.9	33.5	31.9	25.9	22.1	30.4
IS	34.3	29.6	35.2	28.8	28.7	36.7	29.8	31.2	29.4	30.5	36.0	36.5	29.5	24.3	33.9
LT	26.0	25.0	26.1	24.3	23.8	33.3	22.7	27.6	23.5	22.9	27.5	29.2	24.9	22.7	26.1
LV	29.2	25.3	29.6	25.6	24.6	35.0	23.2	28.5	t.f.c.	23.4	30.1	32.9	26.4	22.5	28.8
MT	33.6	23.5	27.5	25.4	25.3	38.3	23.2	32.3	t.f.c.	24.0	35.1	31.5	26.9	22.7	35.2
NL	25.4	23.0	24.6	22.8	22.6	27.4	22.1	26.9	23.1	23.0	27.2	27.7	22.9	21.3	25.0
NO	32.2	26.7	31.7	28.0	27.3	33.9	29.9	32.6	24.6	25.8	36.4	33.5	28.2	23.5	29.4
PL	24.7	23.5	25.8	23.3	23.2	34.7	22.4	26.7	23.3	22.3	27.1	30.5	24.1	22.8	25.7
PT	28.7	23.0	24.9	23.2	23.0	34.2	22.2	30.8	21.7	21.8	33.2	33.2	23.7	22.3	26.3
RO	26.9	24.1	26.5	24.5	23.9	35.7	23.6	28.0	24.3	22.5	30.0	30.9	24.9	23.4	26.5
SE	31.1	27.5	30.0	27.3	26.5	32.3	28.4	35.6	25.7	27.0	37.6	34.8	27.8	23.5	29.4
SK	28.0	23.6	26.4	23.9	23.4	36.4	23.7	27.5	24.3	22.8	31.0	31.3	24.8	23.4	27.1
av.	28.3	24.7	27.1	24.9	24.5	33.1	24.3	29.1	24	24	30.6	31.7	25.3	22.9	27.5

t.f.c.: too few cases. n.d.: no data
Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.1.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.1 When were you born?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH, DK, NO, IS.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.3

Share of female students by field of study

Share of students (in %)

	Field of study										
	Female students	Education	Arts and Humanities	Social Sciences, Journalism and Information	Business, Administration and Law	Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	ICTs	Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary	Health and Welfare	Services
AT	56	72	66	65	55	52	22	33	63	68	53
AZ	51	72	65	55	45	67	49	30	26	54	25
CH	53	72	62	67	46	45	13	23	70	71	67
CZ	57	78	65	63	58	55	18	27	74	73	47
DE	50	76	64	62	53	48	23	26	61	73	43
DK	58	72	64	63	54	55	26	31	60	77	56
EE	61	89	68	64	64	58	31	37	72	86	53
ES	57	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
FI	58	84	71	70	59	59	27	28	66	83	65
FR	56	77	69	68	59	48	32	27	50	73	41
GE	53	66	71	71	57	48	42	24	37	47	46
HR	59	72	64	70	68	48	26	36	61	74	52
HU	55	79	64	63	58	41	16	30	50	67	56
IE	53	81	61	64	53	53	22	25	66	73	48
IS	66	80	64	74	59	57	27	41	79	82	t.f.c.
LT	58	80	65	69	64	39	18	23	t.f.c.	75	t.f.c.
LV	58	85	69	67	67	62	22	25	55	75	48
MT	59	73	62	74	58	54	23	46	n/a	66	t.f.c.
NL	54	66	57	71	48	46	19	25	58	74	52
NO	61	72	65	68	54	49	27	31	62	80	46
PL	59	85	68	65	64	62	16	35	60	73	60
PT	54	79	54	62	57	53	16	29	59	77	43
RO	56	95	63	73	65	58	31	34	52	67	53
SE	61	79	64	63	62	55	39	34	66	76	42
SK	59	78	64	68	62	65	21	24	68	72	42
av.	57	78	65	67	58	53	25	30	60	72	49

t.f.c.: too few cases. n.d.: no data

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.3.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.2 What is your #sex?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, DK, NO, RO, GE, HU, LV, PL.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.4

Share of female students by type of HEI, educational background, transition duration, migration background, entry qualification, and housing situation

Share of students (in %)

	Female students	Type of HEI		Study programme		Educational background		Transition route		Migration background		Access route		Housing situation	
		University	Non-university	Bachelor	Master	Non-tertiary educational background	Tertiary educational background	Direct transition	Delayed transition	Second-generation migrant, domestically educated	Without migration background, domestically educated	Alternative access	Standard access route	Living with parents	Not living with parents
AT	56	55	59	56	54	57	55	58	48	56	56	45	57	57	55
AZ	51	51	n/a	51	50	49	52	51	52	51	52	t.f.c.	51	54	45
CH	53	52	54	53	53	55	52	53	57	54	53	53	53	52	54
CZ	57	57	56	56	55	60	54	56	69	58	58	55	57	54	59
DE	50	52	47	50	47	50	51	51	45	55	51	42	52	45	52
DK	58	55	61	60	55	59	59	58	58	59	60	52	58	53	60
EE	61	60	65	59	65	64	60	61	62	58	64	67	61	55	63
ES	57	55	60	56	55	59	54	58	52	n.d.	n.d.	56	57	54	60
FI	58	58	58	57	61	63	56	58	58	57	59	67	58	49	58
FR	56	61	44	59	59	59	55	56	60	57	56	54	56	55	57
GE	53	53	55	55	60	58	53	54	47	52	55	42	54	56	51
HR	59	60	51	56	61	64	53	58	61	60	58	53	59	56	61
HU	55	54	58	55	49	58	52	54	57	56	56	51	55	53	55
IE	53	59	46	53	55	53	53	54	49	54	53	48	54	51	54
IS	66	66	n/a	64	67	68	65	66	65	63	66	65	66	62	68
LT	58	58	59	58	57	64	55	58	58	66	60	25	59	50	62
LV	58	57	63	54	63	64	56	57	61	56	61	59	58	55	60
MT	59	62	52	62	58	60	61	61	50	67	58	68	58	61	55
NL	54	53	55	55	54	58	53	54	55	55	54	52	55	51	57
NO	61	60	63	60	58	66	60	62	56	59	61	59	61	55	61
PL	59	58	64	53	66	65	53	59	62	62	60	56	59	56	61
PT	54	53	56	55	55	58	49	56	43	54	55	48	55	54	54
RO	56	56	n/a	53	59	58	48	56	51	40	50	43	57	51	55
SE	61	61	n/a	62	52	68	57	60	64	59	61	62	61	54	62
SK	59	59	64	60	57	62	53	59	60	62	58	59	59	55	60
av.	57	57	57	56	57	60	55	57	56	57	57	53	57	54	58

t.f.c.: too few cases. n/a: not applicable. n.d.: no data

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.3.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.2 What is your #sex?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT, CH, DK, NO, RO, GE, HU, LV, PL.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.5

Students with children, number of children, and age of youngest child

Share of students (in %), mean, median, and SD

	Share of students with children (in %)	Number of children			Age of youngest child – share of students with children (in %)				
		Mean	Median	SD	0–3 years	4–6 years	7–9 years	10–15 years	>15 years
AT	9	1.8	2.0	0.9	41	17	11	15	17
AZ	3	1.6	1.0	0.7	54	27	11	6	2
CH	5	1.8	2.0	0.9	41	16	14	14	15
CZ	9	1.9	2.0	0.8	29	15	12	26	19
DE	6	1.7	2.0	0.9	40	15	10	14	21
DK	10	1.8	2.0	0.9	47	16	12	12	12
EE	19	2.0	2.0	1.0	26	22	16	20	17
ES	8	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
FI	21	2.1	2.0	1.1	32	19	14	17	18
FR	4	2.0	2.0	1.0	32	17	13	18	21
GE	7	1.5	1.0	0.9	58	22	9	10	1
HR	10	1.8	2.0	0.9	36	13	9	24	18
HU	9	1.9	2.0	0.9	29	14	10	24	24
IE	15	2.2	2.0	1.0	21	15	14	24	26
IS	37	2.0	2.0	1.0	37	18	11	21	13
LT	12	1.8	2.0	0.9	24	18	14	24	20
LV	22	2.0	2.0	1.2	30	16	15	20	18
MT	18	1.8	2.0	0.7	24	14	8	24	30
NL	4	2.2	2.0	1.0	32	15	13	15	25
NO	23	2.1	2.0	1.0	29	17	12	20	22
PL	9	1.7	2.0	0.7	26	16	13	23	23
PT	8	1.8	2.0	1.1	21	14	10	25	31
RO	12	1.5	1.0	0.7	24	16	13	21	27
SE	17	2.0	2.0	0.9	24	20	12	20	25
SK	12	1.8	2.0	0.7	28	16	14	23	19
av.	12	1.9	2	1	33	17	12	19	19

n.d.: no data

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.14., A. 15., A.17.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.9 Do you have children? 6.10 How old is your youngest child?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.6

Students with children by age, sex, type of HEI, study programme, study intensity, entry qualification, and study progress

Share of students (in %)

	Students with children	Age groups				Sex		Type of HEI		Study programme		Study intensity		Access route		Study progress	
		Up to 21 years	22 to <25 years	25 to <30 years	30 years and over	Female	Male	University	Non-university	Bachelor	Master	Low intensity (<20 hrs./week)	High intensity (>40 hrs./week)	Alternative access route	Standard access route	First-year students	Students in second year or higher
AT	9	0.4	1	4	34	9	8	8	11	8	10	16	4	17	6	5	9
AZ	3	0.4	2	16	64	4	3	3	n/a	3	10	4	4	t.f.c.	3	1	4
CH	5	0.0	0.2	2	32	6	4	3	7	4	8	11	2	11	4	3	5
CZ	9	0.1	1	6	66	11	6	8	21	9	10	18	2	41	8	8	9
DE	6	0.1	0.1	2	29	7	5	5	8	5	8	11	3	15	4	5	4
DK	10	0.0	1	7	56	11	8	6	16	10	9	8	11	29	8	6	10
EE	19	0.4	1	10	60	23	13	17	28	17	31	20	21	50	18	10	22
ES	8	0.2	0.0	2	45	8	9	3	18	7	15	22	3	18	2	7	8
FI	21	0.2	2	7	54	23	18	12	29	19	28	27	18	43	20	16	22
FR	4	0.1	1	4	51	5	3	5	1	3	7	6	3	30	3	3	4
GE	7	3	6	14	29	8	6	6	11	6	14	9	3	11	7	4	7
HR	10	3	4	7	60	11	9	8	20	9	16	13	7	34	8	7	10
HU	9	0.1	1	4	54	11	8	8	18	9	16	16	4	39	8	4	10
IE	15	0.1	1	6	59	15	15	11	20	7	24	33	7	34	13	7	17
IS	37	1	4	23	68	40	29	37	n/a	28	52	46	29	60	28	23	38
LT	12	1	1	10	69	15	8	8	21	11	22	17	12	27	12	6	13
LV	22	0.3	4	14	73	27	14	17	46	13	31	32	14	47	19	17	23
MT	18	0.1	1	3	64	17	20	8	38	9	30	38	4	28	16	13	19
NL	4	0.0	1	1	50	4	3	1	6	3	5	10	1	13	3	4	4
NO	24	0.3	2	8	69	28	17	21	29	15	33	38	14	42	21	9	26
PL	9	0.5	2	9	64	11	6	4	27	7	15	8	6	30	7	6	10
PT	8	0.4	1	3	55	7	10	6	10	7	13	19	5	34	6	5	9
RO	12	0.4	1	9	63	13	12	12	n/a	12	20	17	7	32	11	6	14
SE	17	0.1	0.2	6	58	22	10	17	n/a	10	14	25	14	38	15	9	19
SK	12	0.0	1	10	69	14	9	6	54	13	14	22	4	41	10	12	12
av.	12	1	2	8	56	14	10	10	21	10	18	19	8	32	10	8	13

t.f.c: too few cases. n/a: not applicable. Decimal points shown for values < .5

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.14.**Data collection:** Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).**EUROSTUDENT question(s):** 6.9 Do you have children?**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions:** CH.**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group:** IE, NL.

Table B1.7

Students with foreign citizenship by migration background

Share of students (in %)

	All students	Second-generation, domestically educated	First-generation, domestically educated	Students without migrant background, national ed. background	International students (foreign HE qualification)	Other (born abroad, but native background, national ed. background)
AT	26	9	53	0.0	95	1
AZ	2	1	t.f.c.	0.1	t.f.c.	1
CH	20	9	46	1	86	1
CZ	14	1	49	0.2	95	t.f.c.
DE	15	5	28	1	85	t.f.c.
DK	16	4	55	0.3	86	0.3
EE	10	9	40	1	88	t.f.c.
ES	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
FI	7	2	47	0.3	87	5
FR	12	1	67	0.0	93	11
GE	12	6	71	1	80	4
HR	1	0.1	5	0.2	18	0.0
HU	9	1	20	0.1	79	t.f.c.
IE	19	1	41	0.2	82	1
IS	8	0	26	0.1	70	0.0
LT	5	3	t.f.c.	0.2	82	t.f.c.
LV	11	7	t.f.c.	3	85	t.f.c.
MT	14	3	t.f.c.	0.0	89	t.f.c.
NL	14	1	37	0.3	86	0.0
NO	6	3	27	0.1	68	n.d.
PL	5	1	78	0.1	88	0.0
PT	6	0.1	36	0.2	69	1
RO	2	0	40	1	33	0.0
SE	9	2	14	0.0	69	0
SK	6	0	44	0.1	87	t.f.c.
av.	10	3	41	0.4	78	2

t.f.c.: too few cases. n.d.: no data. Decimal points shown for values <.5

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.21.

Data collection: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).

EUROSTUDENT question(s): 6.5 Do you and your parents (or those who raised you) have the #country citizenship?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: AT.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: IE, NL.

Table B1.8

Share of students indicating any type of impairment, disability or other long-standing health problem / functional limitation, and type of disability

Share of all students (in %)

	Disabilities limiting in their studies	Physical chronic disease	Mental health problem	Mobility impairment	Sensory impairment (vision or hearing)	Learning disability (ADHD, Dyslexia)	Another long-standing health problem / functional limitation/ impairment/ etc.
AT	21	15	12	2	3	2	4
AZ	16	3	13	1	12	3	5
CH	16	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
CZ	25	11	15	4	9	7	14
DE	18	8	13	2	4	2	3
DK	24	8	16	3	5	9	7
EE	20	10	16	1	3	2	10
ES	18	5	14	1	4	4	6
FI	31	13	23	2	2	8	13
FR	22	8	8	1	4	7	10
GE	17	9	7	2	6	2	5
HR	14	5	7	1	6	2	7
HU	10	4	7	1	3	4	11
IE	21	6	16	1	5	7	7
IS	30	8	19	2	5	15	8
LT	16	12	11	1	8	2	10
LV	15	10	8	1	6	4	6
MT	15	6	11	1	2	5	6
NL	25	9	14	2	2	10	6
NO	21	10	11	5	5	6	4
PL	21	12	15	1	9	6	8
PT	12	8	9	1	12	3	5
RO	5	3	3	1	6	1	4
SE	30	7	29	2	2	10	10
SK	14	7	9	1	5	4	11
av.	19	8	13	2	5	5	8

n.d.: no data.

Data source: EUROSTUDENT 8, A.6, A.7. **No data:** AT, DE, FR. No EU-SILC data: AZ, GE, IS.**Data collection:** Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except CH (spring 2020), DE (summer 2021), AT, ES, FR, PT, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).**EUROSTUDENT question(s):** 6.13 Please indicate if you have a disability, impairment, long-standing health problem, functional limitation or learning disability. 6.14 [only students who have indicated an impairment in 6.13] For at least the past 6 months, to what extent have you been limited [in your studies] because of your health problem(s)? Adapted from Global Activity Limitation Indicator (Eurostat).**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions:** AT, CH, RO, SE.**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group:** IE, NL.

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