Chapter B5
Students' time budget

Cordelia Menz & Sylvia Mandl
Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Vienna

Key

Time budget

Students' schedules are packed: on average, a student spends 48 hours per week on study-related activities (personal study time and taught studies) and work. In Latvia and Poland, students' time budget is highest with 54 hours spent on studying and working. In Finland, France, and Sweden – where students report the lowest time budget – the average is lower by more than 10 hours per week.

Time spent on work

On average, students spend 14 hours per week on paid work. Whether working while studying affects time available to spend on free time and/or study time depends on how many hours a week students work. While mostly free time suffers when working between 1 and 10 hours per week, working more than 10 hours per week is associated with reduced study time, too. Students who work 37 hours per week, on average, only spend 26 hours on their studies, compared to students without paid work who spend 38 hours on studying.

Time spent on study-related activities

On average, students studying mostly/completely online report spending 5 hours less on study-related activities (30 hours) than students studying mostly/completely in person (35 hours). This difference is mainly due to less time spent on taught studies. Differences in time spent on study-related activities also occur between students who identify as 'students' and those who identify as 'workers'. On average, 'workers' invest about two thirds of the time 'students' invest in studying. For the total time budget including time spent on work, the pattern is reversed (but less pronounced).

Menz, C., & Mandl, S. (2024). Students' time budget. In K. Hauschildt (Ed.), *Social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. EUROSTUDENT 8 Synopsis of indicators 2021–2024.* wbv Publikation. DOI: 10.3278/6001920ew005

findings

Study time by degree level and by field of study

On average, students spend 16 hours per week on taught studies. Master students spend the least (12 hours), followed by Bachelor students (17 hours), and students in long national degrees (19 hours). On average, students spend 18 hours per week on personal study time. With 17 hours a week, the average Bachelor student tends to spend slightly less time on personal studies than a typical Master student (18 hours). However, in nearly all countries that offer a long national degree, those students spend a lot more time on personal studies (23 hours on average) than Bachelor or Master students do. Students in fields of Medicine and Dental Studies spend the most time on study-related activities (47 hours), whereas students in Education Science spend the least time on these activities (28 hours).

Study intensity and mental well-being

On average across all EUROSTUDENT countries, about one fifth of students studies up to 20 hours a week, half of the students study up to 40 hours a week, and nearly every third student studies more than 40 hours a week. On average, high-intensity students indicate a slightly lower level of mental well-being compared to low-intensity students. The differences between the two groups vary, with a large well-being gap between high- and low-intensity students in Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Sweden, and no differences in Finland and Georgia. However, there is no country in which high-intensity students indicate a higher level of mental well-being than low-intensity students.

Main issues

This chapter focuses on students' time budget in isolation as well as in relation with various factors (e.g. level of degree, teaching type, mental well-being). Gaining insights into students' time budget – and consequently into their time poverty (Vickery, 1977) – is of specific interest because this feeling of having too much to do and not enough time to do it is associated with reduced well-being, mental health, productivity, and creativity among others (for an overview, see Giurge et al., 2020).

Students' time budget

Logically, time is a limited resource, with every day consisting of only 24 hours. With time being that limited, sufficient time management skills are important. Students comprise a specific group whose time management skills are not only particularly necessary, but also regularly put to the test (see van der Meer et al., 2010; Wolters & Brady, 2021). When starting higher education directly after school, many students are faced with more freedom of choices and an expectation of being an independent learner compared to when they were enrolled at secondary school (Cifuentes Gomez et al., 2022; Leese, 2010; van der Meer et al., 2010). In addition, adult life offers new opportunities and especially students in their first year of higher education need to spend time on making new friends and engaging in social activities (van der Meer et al., 2010). However, students with a delayed entry into higher education might face different challenges (e.g. balancing family, work, and study life). Unsurprisingly, spending time on study-related tasks is generally considered being positive for study success (e.g. Diseth et al., 2010). However, spending time in taught classes is not equivalent to successful learning, e.g. due to using technology for non-academic reasons while in class (i.e. cyber-slacking), a common occurrence which is detrimental to learning (e.g. Kornhauser et al., 2016). Nevertheless, aspects that are beyond students' direct influence also have an effect on how much time they can spend on different (study-beneficial or study-detrimental) activities: for example, data from various countries show that some fields of study require more teaching hours than other fields of study (DZHW, 2018). In addition, a lot of universities moved their courses online as a result of the recent COVID-19 outbreak (see Barratt & Duran, 2021), which makes it worthwhile to explore how virtual studies relate to students' time budget. Taken together, there are many demands regarding students and their time budget, making it essential to understand what students spend their time on. Within this chapter, we will therefore investigate students' time budget in detail and have a look at further aspects that are associated with how students spend their time.

Combining studies and working

Being both a student and a worker is the reality for many higher education students (> *Chapter B6*). Research results regarding the effects of working while studying are ambiguous. On the one hand, positive effects are reported, for example, regarding future employment chances (e.g. Di Paolo & Matano, 2022; Masevičiūtė et al., 2018). On the other hand, negative effects – especially regarding study performance – are not to be denied (e.g. Benner & Curl, 2018). Irrespective of whether working while studying is supportive or detrimental for students' long-time study and work success, it is a fact that many students do (need to) work during their studies. Whether the time students invest in working is taken from time they would otherwise spend on leisure activities or study-related tasks gives an insight into how students manage their numerous responsibilities.

Mental well-being and time

Mental health issues among students are a rising issue of concern (Brown, 2018; Duffy et al., 2019). It has been argued that working a lot while studying can pose a threat to students' mental well-being (Benner & Curl, 2018). With EUROSTUDENT 8 data, it is possible to also investigate whether spending a lot of time on study-related tasks is associated with a high or low level of mental well-being.

Data and interpretation

Students' time budget for study and work

How many hours do students invest in their studies and their paid jobs in a typical week? On average, students spend 48 hours in total on their ◉ personal study time, ◉ taught studies, and ◉ paid job(s)[1] (Figure B5.1).

Box B5.1

Methodological note: Measurement of students' time budget

Students indicated how many hours they spend on taught courses and personal study time for every day (including weekends) in a typical week. Students who indicated to engage in paid work during the current lecture period, were additionally asked how many hours per week they spend on their work.

Students devote most of these hours, namely 18 hours, to personal study time, followed by taught studies (16 hours), and paid work (14 hours). There are large differences between EUROSTUDENT countries, with students in Latvia and Poland spending 54 hours and students in France spending 41 hours on studying and working in total. Interestingly, in each country, the average student invests at least 41 hours, which is comparable to regular full-time employment contracts in many EUROSTUDENT countries. Romania, Portugal, and Switzerland are the only countries in which students spend more than 20 hours in a typical week on taught studies.

Regarding full-time and part-time students, there are some differences to be reported: on average, part-time students' total time budget is 10 hours higher compared to full-time students' time budget. The large difference is mainly due to part-time students spending an average 32 hours on their paid job(s), whereas it is only 11 hours for full-time students. On the other hand, full-time students spend 19 hours on personal study time and 17 hours on taught studies, whereas it is only 13 hours and 12 hours among part-time students, respectively.

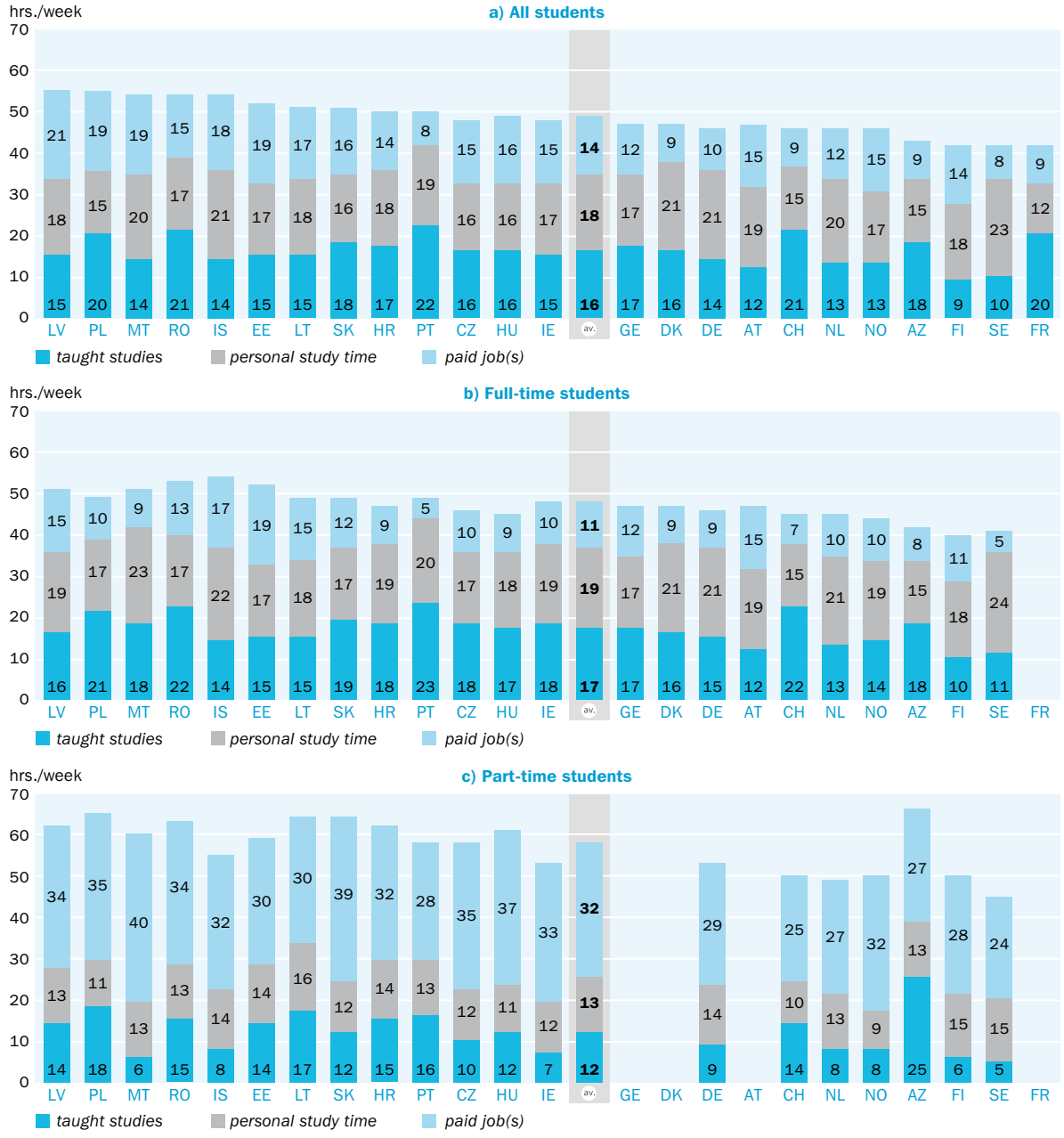
- This pattern, namely that part-time students spend more of their time on their paid work than on their study-related activities, is depicted in most countries, except for Lithuania, Portugal, and Azerbaijan.
- Especially in Azerbaijan, part-time students nearly spend the same amount of time on their taught studies (25 hours) and their work (27 hours). Spending 25 hours on taught studies in an average week is the highest number of hours in all EUROSTUDENT countries, for both full-time as well as part-time students.

1 *Students not working while studying are considered spending 0 hours on paid work (i.e. averages of all students are depicted); specific data on students working while studying only are reported in* *> Chapter B6*.

Figure B5.1

Students' time budget by type of activity and formal status

In hours per week (mean)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32, H.38.* ***No data:*** *ES; full-time students: FR; part-time students: DK, FR; no part-time students exist in AT, GE.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period? 4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *CH, FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

Weekly hours spent on childcare – a substantial factor adding to student parents' time budget – are not included in this chapter. Detailed information on students with childcare duties is available in > *Chapter B1*.

Students' total time budget is also compared between students studying at different types of higher education institutions (HEIs) as well as students with or without disabilities limiting them in their studies (Table B5.1). The average university student spends more time on personal study time (19 hours) than the average non-university student (14 hours), whereas they spend the same amount of time on taught studies (16 hours) and remarkably less time on paid job(s) (13 vs. 20 hours). This results in a different total time budget of university and non-university students; in a typical week, non-university students invest two hours more (50 hours) in their studies and job(s) than university students do (48 hours). The especially large difference of 7 hours spent on working can be partly explained by students at non-universities in extra-occupational study programmes. With 32 and 36 hours, non-university students in Malta and Slovakia report a particularly high number of hours working in paid job(s). Even though those students also report a high total time budget (55 and 60 hours, respectively), this comes at costs of study time with 23 hours spent on study-related activities in Malta and 24 hours in Slovakia.

On average, both students with and without disabilities limiting them in their studies have a total time budget of 47 hours. A small difference can be found regarding time spent on paid work: on average, students with disabilities work 12 hours in a typical week, whereas students without disabilities work 14 hours. Time spent on taught studies is the same among both groups (16 hours) and time spent on personal studies is slightly higher (19 vs. 17 hours) among students with disabilities.

Over the last four rounds of EUROSTUDENT, students not living with parents show a quite stable investment in study-related activities for many countries (maximum change of 2 hours since EUROSTUDENT V, Figure B5.2). There are six countries with a variation of 3 hours or more in both taught studies and personal study time.

- Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Ireland, and Finland show a (slight but steady) decline in time spent on taught studies (e.g. Hungary starting with 21 hours in EUROSTUDENT V to 16 hours in EUROSTUDENT 8).
- In Finland, the decline in time spent on taught studies is most pronounced with 7 hours less in EUROSTUDENT 8 than in EUROSTUDENT V.
- In the Netherlands, there was a slight increase in time spent on taught studies (from 13 hours in EUROSTUDENT V to 16 hours in EUROSTUDENT VII), however, this dropped to 12 hours in the current round.

Regarding personal study time, differences over the time span are even smaller and exist less frequently.

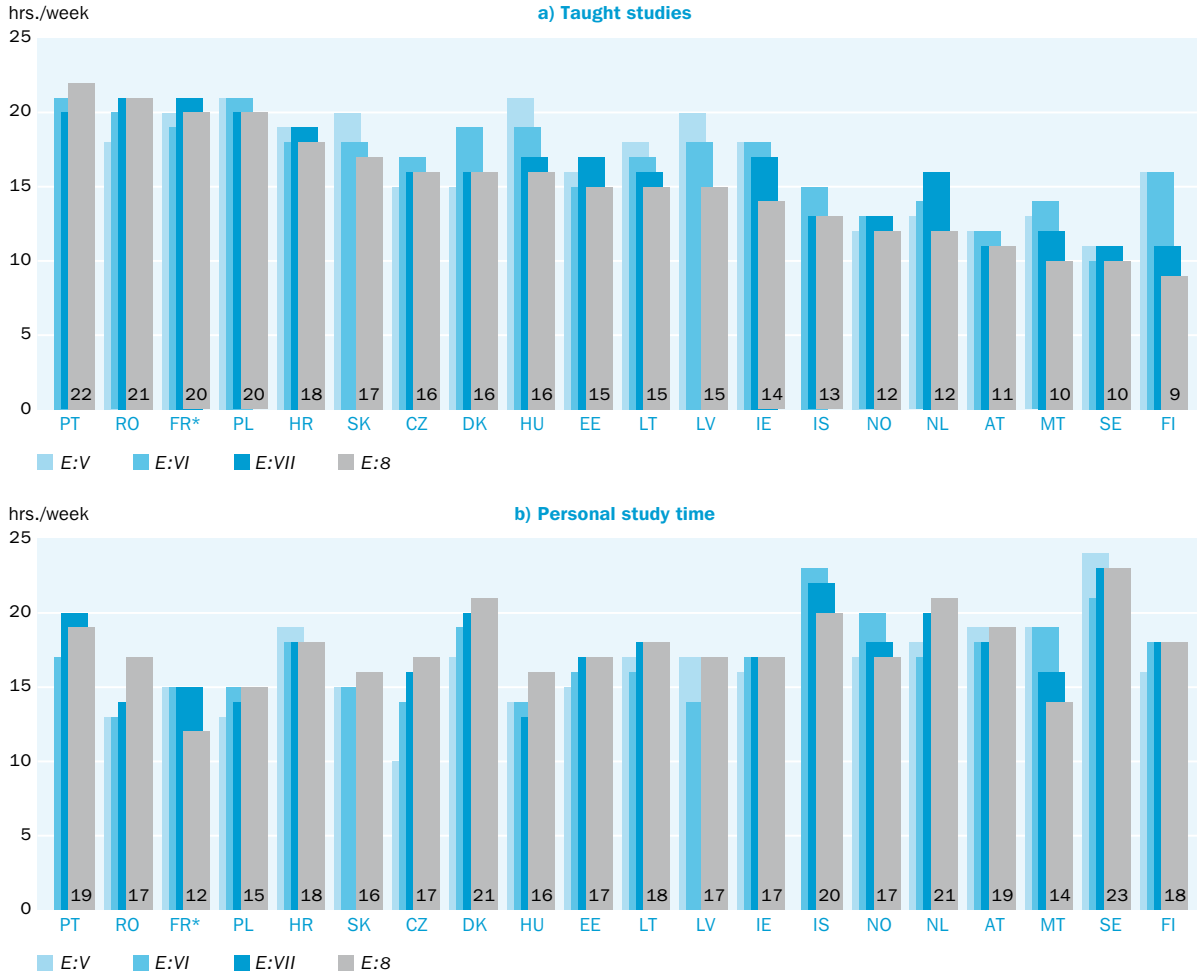
- The Czech Republic and Denmark show a steady increase of personal study time (starting with 10/17 hours in EUROSTUDENT V to 17/21 hours in EUROSTUDENT 8, respectively).
- Students from Romania and Hungary steadily reported to spend 13–14 hours on personal studies from EUROSTUDENT V to EUROSTUDENT VII, but this round it increased to 16–17 hours.
- Iceland is the only country with a steady decline of time spent on personal studies, however, it has to be kept in mind that there are no data available from EUROSTUDENT V.
- Students from France[2] reported steadily to spend 15 hours on personal study time during the last EUROSTUDENT rounds, however, in the current round it dropped to 12 hours (being the lowest number of hours spent on personal study time in all EUROSTUDENT countries for the current round).

2 *The phrasing of the question changed in the French survey for this round (> Chapter C2) which may limit comparability between the current round and the previous ones.*

Figure B5.2

Time spent on study-related activities in EUROSTUDENT V to EUROSTUDENT 8

In hours per week (mean), only students not living with parents



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32.* ***No (comparable) data:*** *AZ, CH, DE, ES, GE.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period?*

Note(s): *For information on previous rounds, see eurostudent.eu.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

B 5

Relationship between study time and work time

With time being a limited resource, students need to decide how much time they spend on their various tasks and duties. Especially for students in paid work, the question is from where to take the time needed for their jobs or – adding another perspective – from where to take the time needed for their studies: do they reduce their personal free time or does working come at the expense of their study time? This trade-off between study time and time spent on working – as unweighted cross-country average – is depicted in Figure B5.3. Students who work up to 15 hours per week sacrifice more of their free time for their jobs, however, also the time spent on study-related activities decreases gradually with more hours spent on work: students without work spend 38 hours on

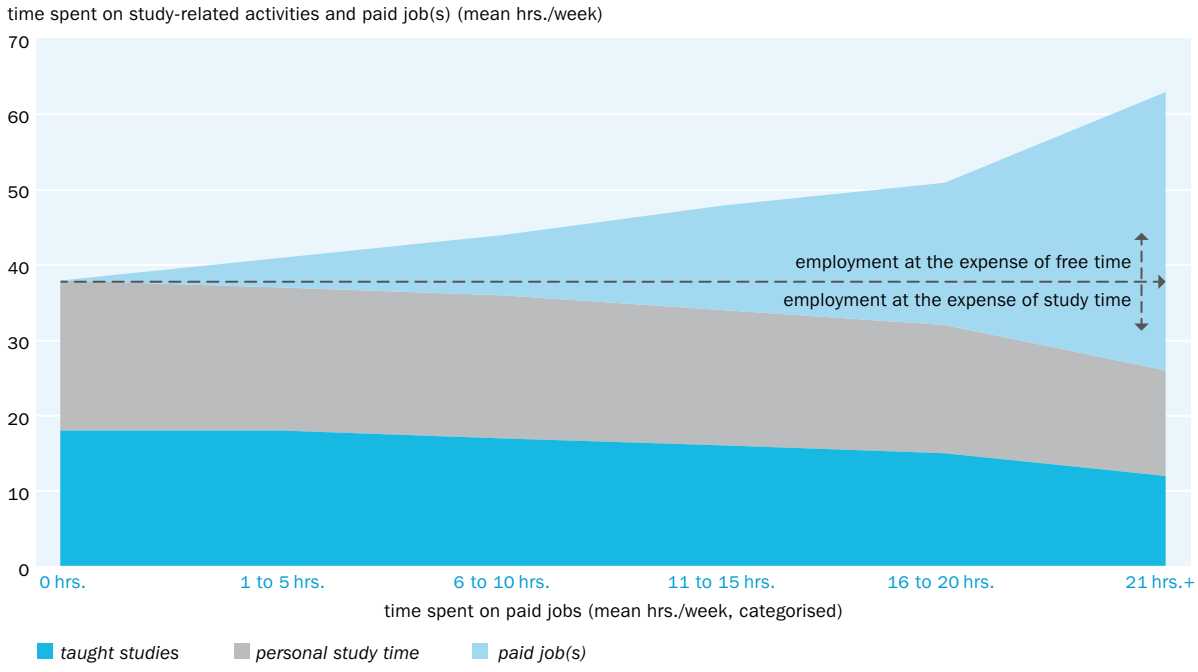
study-related activities, students working 1 to 5 hours spend 37 hours on study-related activities, students working 6 to 10 hours spend 36 hours on study-related activities, and students working 11 to 15 hours only spend 34 hours on study-related activities. For students working up to 20 hours per week, study time suffers even more (only 32 hours), whereas especially for students who work more than 20 hours per week, working clearly also comes at the expense of study time: they spend only 26 hours per week on study-related activities. Even though this clearly indicates students sacrificing study time for working, students first sacrifice their free time for their paid work. This again is most pronounced for students working more than 20 hours per week with an overall workload of 63 hours compared to the workload of students without work (38 hours).

Working while studying comes at the expense of free time and study time.

Figure B5.3

Relationship between time spent on studying and working as unweighted cross-country average

In hours per week (mean)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32, H.38.* ***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): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period? 4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *CH, FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

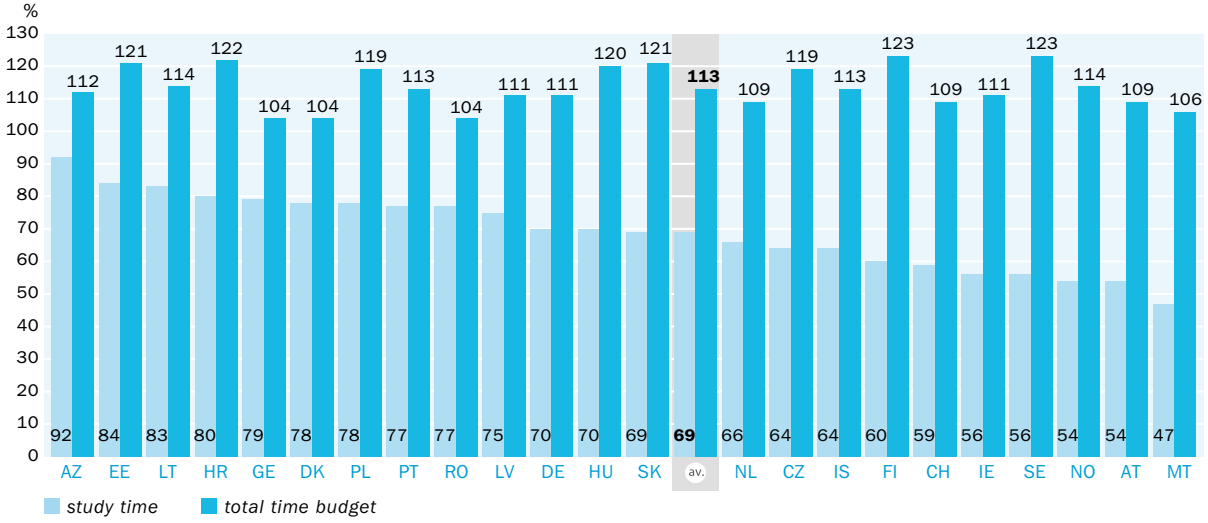
Figure B5.4 shows the relative time budget (study time and total time budget) of working students who perceive themselves to be 'workers' compared to working students who perceive themselves to be 'students' (> *Chapter B6* for more information on 'workers' and 'students'). On average, 'workers' only spend 69 % of the time 'students' spend on their studies. Adding working hours to the time budget leads to an increase: 'workers' spend 13 % more time on studying and working together than 'students' do.

- In Azerbaijan, the difference in study time is very small; 'workers' spend 92 % of 'students'' study time budget on it.
- In Malta, 'workers' do not even study half of the time 'students' spend on studying.
- The largest difference regarding the total time budget can be found in Finland and Sweden: 'workers'' time budget is higher by 23 % compared to 'students'' time budget of a typical week.

Figure B5.4

Relative time budget (study time and total time budget) of working students perceiving themselves as 'workers' compared to 'students'

Proportion of hours spent by 'workers' averaged on hours spent by 'students' (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32, H.38.* ***No data:*** *ES, FR.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period? 4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?*

Note(s): *Only students who are working during the current lecture period included.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *CH.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

B 5

Time spent on study-related activities

The average student in EUROSTUDENT countries spends 16 hours on taught studies and 18 hours on personal study time (Figure B5.1).

Box B5.2

Methodological note: Measurement of teaching type

Regarding their teaching type, students indicated the actual current ratio of their online and in person teaching on a five-point scale (completely online to completely in person). Based on this, the two groups 'studying mostly/completely online' and 'studying mostly/completely in person' were built (i.e. not based on whether students' programmes are officially classified as distance learning programmes).

Whether a student reports studying mostly/completely online or in person is associated with how many hours they spend on studying. On average, students receiving completely

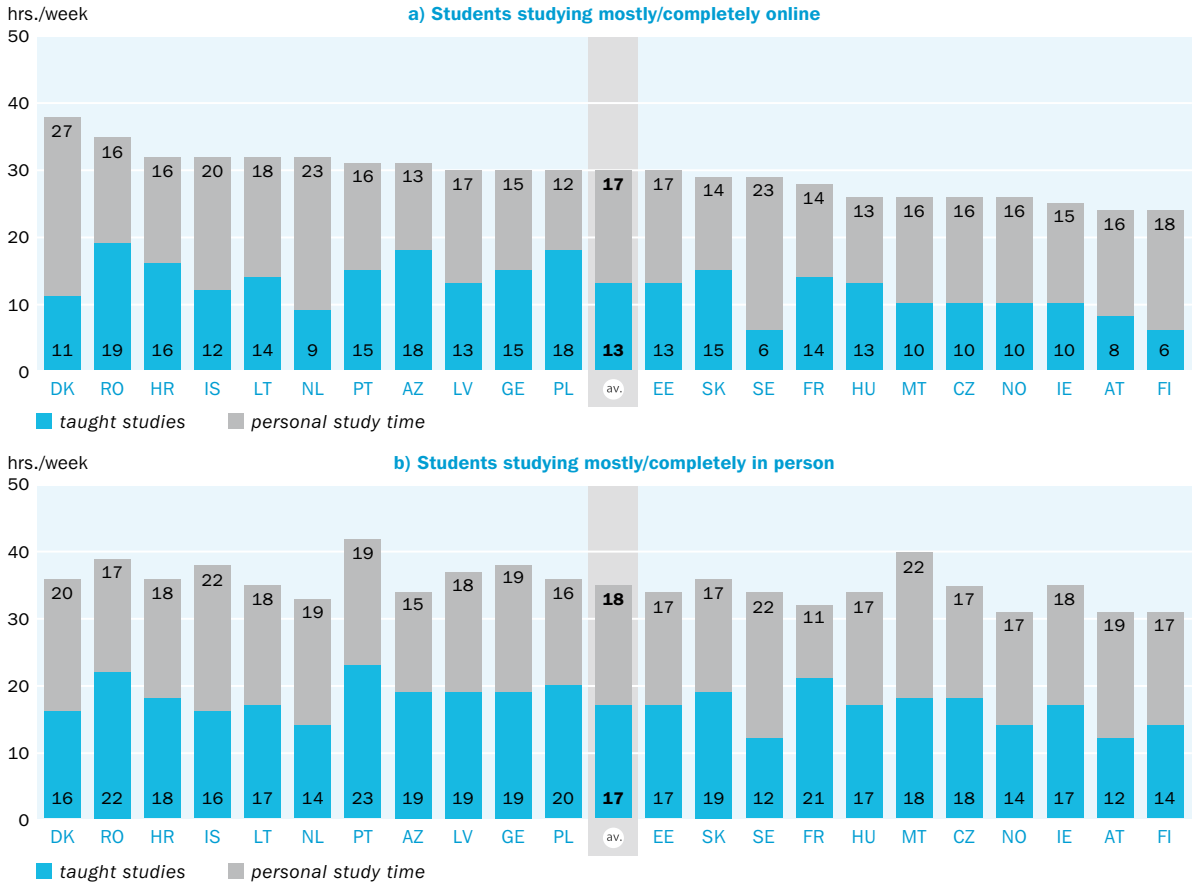
or mostly online teaching spend 30 hours on study-related activities, whereas it is 35 hours for students who are mainly taught in person (Figure B5.5). The large difference between both groups of students occurs due to their time spent on taught studies (13 hours for students studying mostly/completely online vs. 17 hours for students studying mostly/completely in person). Regarding personal study time, both groups only differ by 1 hour. This pattern holds true for nearly every country, with the largest difference of 14 hours found in Malta, followed by 11 hours in Portugal. The only country showing the opposite pattern is Denmark, where students in programmes with more online teaching spend 38 hours on their studies compared to 36 hours for students studying mostly/completely in person. Even though there is a noticeable time difference in study-related activities overall, the differences in personal study time and taught studies in detail should not be exaggerated because for students studying mostly/completely online, it might be difficult to distinguish between taught and self-study. In addition, it has to be noted that students studying mostly/completely online or in person can differ regarding several aspects (> Chapter B4).

Students studying mostly/completely in person spend 5 hours more per week on study-related activities compared to students studying mostly/completely online.

Figure B5.5

Time spent on study-related activities by delivery mode of teaching

In hours per week (mean)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32.* ***No data:*** *CH, DE, ES.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period?*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *FR.*

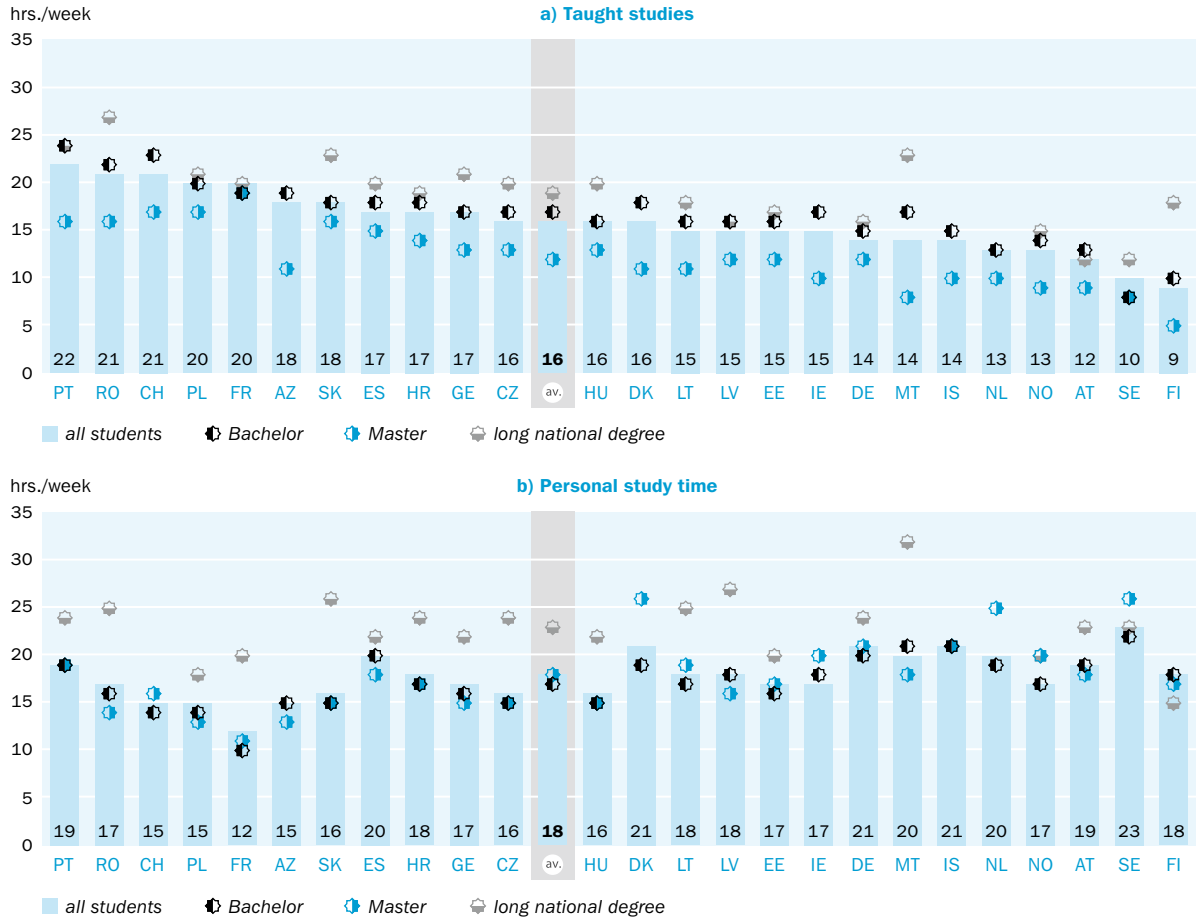
Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

Differences in study time become apparent according to the type of study programme (Figure B5.6). On EUROSTUDENT average, in a typical week, students spend 16 hours on taught studies and 18 hours on personal study time. Master students spend the least amount of time on taught studies (12 hours), followed by Bachelor students (17 hours), and students in long national degrees (19 hours). This pattern holds true for most countries, except France (Master and Bachelor students both spend 19 hours on taught studies), Portugal, Latvia (long national degree students and Bachelor students spend the same amount of time on taught studies), and Austria (long national degree students spend one hour less on taught studies than Bachelor students).

Figure B5.6

Time spent on study-related activities by type of study programme

In hours per week (mean)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32.* ***No data:*** *long national degree: CH; no long national degree exists in AZ, DK, IE, NL.* ***Too few cases:*** *long national degree: 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): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period?*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *CH, FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

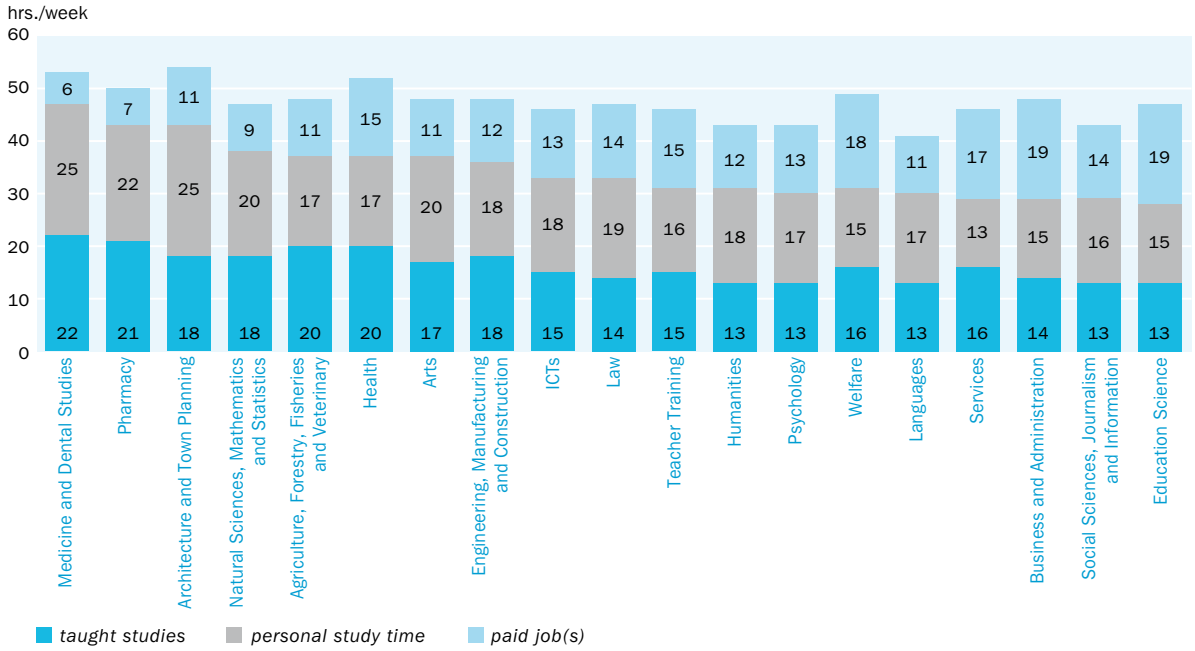
Bachelor students spend the least amount of time on personal studies (17 hours), closely followed by Master students (18 hours), whereas students in long national degrees spend clearly more time on their personal studies (23 hours). While it differs between countries whether Bachelor students (e.g. Azerbaijan, Malta) or Master students (e.g. Ireland, the Netherlands) spend more time on personal studies, in nearly every country that offers a long national degree (or has enough valid cases to report data), those students in long national degrees spend most time on personal studies and taught studies. The Nordic countries Sweden, Finland, and Norway present an exception in this regard, however. In Norway, for example, the highest share of long national degree students studies in teacher training, which is not the case in most other EUROSTUDENT countries. Long national degrees in many countries comprise mainly fields of study like Medicine, Law, and Teacher Education; sometimes also Arts or Religion (and are not offered in all countries, as depicted in Figure B5.6).

In most countries, students in long national degrees spend the highest amount of time on study-related activities compared to Bachelor and Master students.

Figure B5.7

Time budget by field of study as unweighted cross-country average

In hours per week (mean)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32, H.38.* ***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): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period? 4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?*

Note(s): *Adapted from ISCED-F 2013 to reflect content similarity.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *CH, FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

Therefore, having a closer look at students' time budget by field of study is worthwhile (depicted as unweighted cross-country average in Figure B5.7). Regarding time spent on study-related activities, students in Medicine and Dental Studies have the highest time budget with 47 hours a week spent on those activities, followed by students in Pharmacy as well as Architecture and Town Planning (43 hours each). Students in fields of Education

Students in Medicine and Dental Studies spend the most hours on study-related activities, whereas students in Education Science and Business and Administration spend the most hours on paid job(s).

Science (28 hours), Services, Social Sciences, Journalism and Information as well as Business and Administration (29 hours each) spend the least time on study-related activities. However, when also taking time spent on paid job(s) into account, the differences in the total time budget become smaller. For example, students in Education Science spend 19 hours a week on their work, whereas Medicine and Dental students only work 6 hours a week, on average. The highest total time budget is reported by students of Architecture and Town Planning; on average, those students spend 54 hours a week on study-related activities and paid work. The lowest total time budget with 41 hours can be found for students of Languages.

Mental well-being and study intensity

Mental well-being is an increasingly important topic, both in society and among students. EUROSTUDENT 8's special focus on mental well-being as one topical module (see also Cuppen et al., 2024) gives us the opportunity to investigate whether students' study intensity is associated with their self-reported mental well-being (Figure B5.8). The average student from EUROSTUDENT countries has neither a very high nor a very low level of mental well-being, indicating a 51 on a scale from 0 to 100.

B 5

Box B5.3

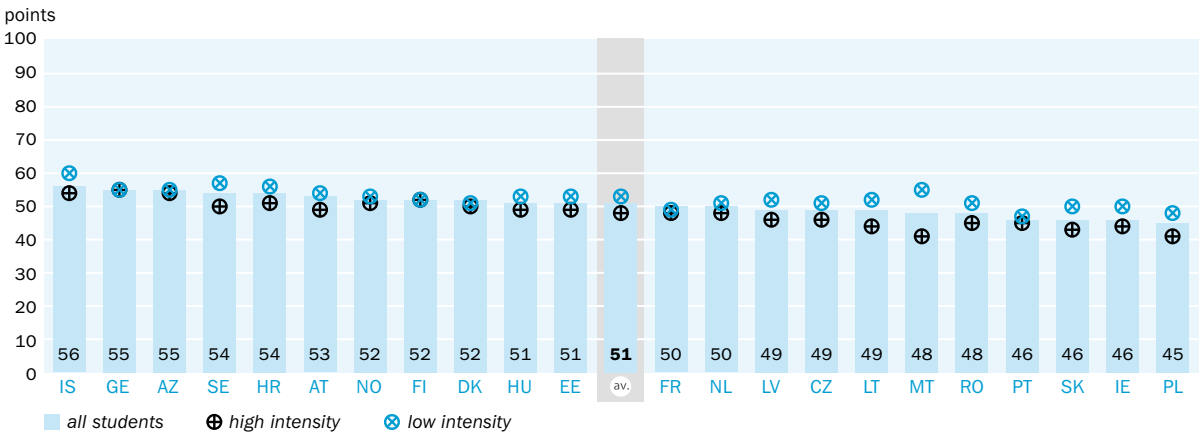
Methodological note: Measurement of students' well-being

The scale on mental well-being is based on the World Health Organisation-Five Well-Being index (WHO-5; see also Cuppen et al., 2024). It comprises five items, answered on a six-point scale (0 to 5). The total score (ranging from 0 to 25) is multiplied by 4, resulting in a scale between 0 (worst well-being possible) and 100 (best imaginable well-being).

Figure B5.8

Students' mental well-being by study intensity

Points (mean) on a 100-point scale



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, TM.31.* ***No data:*** *CH, DE, ES.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *M1.6 Please indicate for each of the 5 statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the past 2 weeks. a) I have felt cheerful and in good spirits b) I have felt calm and relaxed c) I have felt active and vigorous d) I woke up feeling fresh and rested e) my daily life has been filled with things that interest me. Source: World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (1998). Wellbeing measures in primary health care/the DEPCARE Project: report on a WHO meeting: Stockholm, Sweden, 12–13 February 1998. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *FR, NO.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

Within all EUROSTUDENT countries, the mental well-being of students differs: students from Iceland report the highest mental well-being (56), whereas students in Poland report the lowest (45).

Box B5.4

Methodological note: Measurement of students' study intensity

Study intensity is an indicator built on students' indication of time spent on study-related activities. Students are either classified as low-intensity students (i.e. spending less than 20 hours per week on study-related activities), medium-intensity students (i.e. spending between 20 and 40 hours per week on study-related activities), or high-intensity students (i.e. spending more than 40 hours per week on study-related activities).

On average, students with a high study intensity indicate a score (48) which is 5 points lower than students with a low study intensity (53). There is no country in which high-intensity students have a higher mental well-being score than low-intensity students, but in Georgia and Finland students with both intensities indicate the same score, 55 and 52, respectively. The small country Malta shows the largest difference between both groups of students (14 points), their high-intensity students being among those with the lowest mental well-being score of all EUROSTUDENT countries and their low-intensity students being among those with the highest mental well-being score. In Lithuania, the difference of 8 points is also remarkable. These data show an association between study intensity and mental well-being. Of course, with these data, there is no possibility to analyse any causal effects. However, it is important to note that students who are spending a lot of time on their studies – maybe too much time – might also feel less cheerful and relaxed, for example.

Discussion and policy considerations

The central finding from this chapter is that being a student in a EUROSTUDENT country means being very busy. On average, students spend 48 hours in a typical week on their studies and their paid work (not even considering care time, > *Chapter B1*). Whether students' schedules are full or very full is related to various aspects: part-time students and students at non-universities – which are often overlapping groups with students who are frequently working while studying (> *Chapter B3*) and comparably older (> *Chapter B1*) – dedicate (a lot) more time to studies and work compared to their counterparts, whereas regarding students with(out) disabilities, the differences are less pronounced. Given such a packed schedule, it is evident that students require advanced time management abilities (see van der Meer et al., 2010). For example, in the U.S., it is state of the art to offer time management courses to first semester students (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse, 2016). It would probably help students if policymakers – especially in countries where students spend a lot of time on study-related activities (e.g. Portugal and Romania) – encourage HEIs even more to support students in developing those highly needed skills.

Students who are working alongside their studies (> *Chapter B6*) experience time pressure the most. EUROSTUDENT 8 data in this chapter show that working, irrespective of the number of hours, comes at the expense of both students' study and free time. Working more than 10 hours is associated with a noticeable decrease in time spent on study-related activities. Students who work 21 hours or more spend the extremely high number of more than 60 hours on study-related tasks and work every week. Additionally, we compared the time spent on study-related activities between working students who consider themselves 'workers' and working students who consider themselves 'students': on average, 'workers' spend only 69 % of 'students'' study time on their studies. However, when considering the total time budget, it is 113 % of that of 'students'. A high time budget for working students has been associated with negative outcomes such as a feeling of stress or poor sleep (Lederer et al., 2015; Mounsey et al., 2013). Combining studies and working many hours constitutes an enormous challenge which could be alleviated offering specific settings for those working students. Policymakers should therefore support HEIs in designing and implementing supportive structures for working students more and more. Also, spending very much time (maybe even too much time) on study-related activities seems to be associated with undesirable outcomes: data presented in this chapter show that those high-intensity students, on average, display lower mental well-being scores than low-intensity students (who spend less than 20 hours per week on their studies). Mental health issues among students are an increasingly important topic. Providing insights into associations of mental health indicators might help policymakers and institutions improve and fine-tune their support for afflicted students.

Digitalisation in higher education has been an important topic for many years now (see Orr et al., 2020; see also Schirmer, 2024). As stated by Alina and colleagues (2023), the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst for online and hybrid education. This chapter shows that students who report studying mostly/completely online spend less time on taught lectures than those students who experience more in-person teaching. Online classes are especially interesting for students with many duties (e.g. working, caring), who therefore might have less time to spend in taught classes and are in need of more flexibility. However, the lesser time spent on taught studies is also accompanied by a slightly smaller number of hours spent on personal study time in many countries. One explanation that offers an opportunity for further research could imply that accurately designed online classes meet students' needs perfectly and, therefore, students personal study time is lower.

Time spent on taught studies varies between levels of degree: on average, long national degree students spend most time on taught studies, closely followed by Bachelor students, whereas Master students spend clearly less time on taught studies. Regarding personal study time only – the time students themselves have most influence on – data in this chapter show that also students in long national degrees invest more of it compared to Bachelor or Master students. Between Bachelor and Master students, the picture is less clear: there are some countries in which Bachelor students devote more time to personal studies than Master students and vice versa, however, in most countries there is hardly any difference between both levels of degree. It can only be speculated why this is the case; for example, the study of Medicine is classified as a long national degree in many countries and previous data from Austria (Unger et al., 2020;

Zaussinger et al., 2016) as well as EUROSTUDENT 8 data in this chapter show that Medicine students typically spend a lot of time on study-related activities.

To sum up, this chapter shows that the lazy student life is no more than a stereotype. In contrast, students have a full and busy schedule, especially if they work alongside their studies. Institutions and policymakers should take students' different worlds and diverse living conditions into account to enable all students to have a fruitful study experience.

Tables

Table B5.1

Time spent on taught studies, personal studies, and paid job(s) by type of HEI and students with(out) disabilities limiting them in their studies

In hours per week (mean)

	Type of HEI						Disabilities limiting in studies					
	University			Non-university			Students without disabilities			Students with disabilities		
	Taught studies	Personal study time	Paid job(s)	Taught studies	Personal study time	Paid job(s)	Taught studies	Personal study time	Paid job(s)	Taught studies	Personal study time	Paid job(s)
AT	11	20	14	17	16	18	12	19	15	11	20	14
AZ	18	15	9	n/a	n/a	n/a	18	15	10	18	17	8
CH	21	16	7	22	12	12	21	14	9	21	16	10
CZ	17	17	14	14	12	27	16	16	16	17	18	14
DE	14	22	9	16	19	13	15	21	11	14	21	9
DK	12	23	9	20	18	9	16	21	9	16	22	7
EE	14	17	18	20	14	22	15	17	20	16	18	16
ES	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
FI	8	19	11	10	16	17	9	17	16	10	18	11
FR	18	13	9	23	9	9	20	12	9	19	12	9
GE	18	17	12	13	14	16	17	17	12	16	17	14
HR	17	19	13	17	14	23	17	18	14	17	19	12
HU	16	17	14	13	12	24	16	16	16	17	18	14
IE	14	19	13	16	14	18	15	17	16	16	18	12
IS	14	21	18	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	20	20	14	23	15
LT	15	19	16	17	16	20	15	18	17	15	21	15
LV	15	18	19	15	15	27	15	17	21	16	19	17
MT	17	22	13	9	14	32	14	19	20	15	24	16
NL	11	22	9	14	18	14	13	20	12	12	21	11
NO	13	18	14	12	15	17	12	17	16	13	18	11
PL	20	16	16	20	12	29	19	14	19	20	17	16
PT	21	20	7	24	17	10	22	19	8	22	21	8
RO	21	17	15	n/a	n/a	n/a	21	16	16	21	19	12
SE	10	23	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	22	9	10	24	6
SK	18	17	13	13	11	36	17	16	17	19	18	13
av.	**16**	**19**	**13**	**16**	**14**	**20**	**16**	**17**	**14**	**16**	**19**	**12**

n.d.: no data. n/a: not applicable.

Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, H.26, H.32, H.38.*

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): *3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period?*
4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT conventions: *CH, FR.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: *IE, NL.*

References

Alina, J., Donéeová, H., Kislingerová, E., Leitmanová, I. F., & Šetek, J. (2023). The use of digital technologies for positive economic benefit in the preparation of students. *17th International Scientific Conference INPROFORUM Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital World, November 2–3, 2023, České Budějovice.* https://doi.org/10.32725/978-80-7694-053-6.27

Barratt, J. M., & Duran, F. (2021). Does psychological capital and social support impact engagement and burnout in online distance learning students? *Internet and Higher Education*, 51, 100821. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2021.100821

Benner, K., & Curl, A. L. (2018). Exhausted, stressed, and disengaged: Does employment create burnout for social work students? *Journal of Social Work Education*, 54(2), 300–309. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2017.1341858

Brown, J. S. (2018). Student mental health: Some answers and more questions. *Journal of Mental Health*, 27(3), 193–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2018.1470319

Cifuentes Gomez, G., Guzmán, P., & Santelices, M. V. (2022). Transitioning to higher education: Students' expectations and realities. *Educational Research*, 64(4), 424–439. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2022.2087712

Cuppen, J., Muja, A., & Geurts, R. (2024). *Well-being and mental health among students in European higher education.* EUROSTUDENT 8 topical module report. https://www.eurostudent.eu/download_files/documents/TM_wellbeing_mentalhealth.pdf

Di Paolo, A., & Matano, A. (2022). The impact of combining work with study on the labour market performance of graduates: The joint role of work intensity and job-field match. *International Journal of Manpower*, 43(7), 1556–1578. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-03-2021-0182

Diseth, Å., Pallesen, S., Brunborg, G. S., & Larsen, S. (2010). Academic achievement among first semester undergraduate psychology students: The role of course experience, effort, motives and learning strategies. *Higher Education*, 59, 335–352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9251-8

Duffy, M. E., Twenge, J. M., & Joiner, T. E. (2019). Trends in mood and anxiety symptoms and suicide-related outcomes among US undergraduates, 2007–2018: Evidence from two national surveys. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 65(5), 590–598. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.04.033

DZHW (Ed.) (2018). *Social and economic conditions of student life in Europe: EUROSTUDENT VI 2016–2018. Synopsis of indicators.* W. Bertelsmann Verlag. https://doi.org/10.3278/6001920cw

Giurge, L. M., Whillans, A. V., & West, C. (2020). Why time poverty matters for individuals, organisations and nations. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 4(10), 993–1003. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-020-0920-z

Lederer, A. M., Autry, D. M., Day, C. R., & Oswalt, S. B. (2015). The impact of work and volunteer hours on the health of undergraduate students. *Journal of American College Health*, 63(6), 403–408.

Leese, M. (2010). Bridging the gap: Supporting student transitions into higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34(2), 239–251. https://doi.org/10.1080/03098771003695494

Kornhauser, Z. G. C., Paul, A. L., & Siedlecki, K. L. (2016). An examination of students' use of technology for non-academic purposes in the college classroom. *Journal of Teaching and Learning with Technology*, 5(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.14434/jotlt.v5n1.13781

Masevičiūtė, K., Šaukeckienė, V., & Ozolinčiūtė, E. (2018): EUROSTUDENT VI. *Combining studies and paid jobs*. https://www.eurostudent.eu/download_files/documents/TR_paid_jobs.pdf

Mounsey, R., Vandehey, M., & Diekhoff, G. (2013). Working and non-working university students: Anxiety, depression, and grade point average. *College Student Journal*, 47(2), 379–389.

Orr, D., Luebcke, M., Schmidt, J. P., Ebner, M., Wannemacher, K., Ebner, M., & Dohmen, D. (2020). *Higher education landscape 2030: A trend analysis based on the AHEAD international horizon scanning*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44897-4

Schirmer, H. (2024). *Digitalisation of teaching, learning, and student life*. EUROSTUDENT 8 topical module report. https://www.eurostudent.eu/download_files/documents/TM_Digitalisation.pdf

Unger, M., Binder, D., Dibiasi, A., Engleder, J., Schubert, N., Terzieva, B., Thaler, B., Zaussinger, S., & Zucha, V. (2020). *Studierenden-Sozialerhebung 2019; Kernbericht* [*Student social survey 2019; key report*]. IHS-Forschungsbericht, Studie im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung (BMBWF). Wien.

U. S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse (2016). *Studies of interventions for students in developmental education intervention report: First year experience courses for students in developmental education*. Retrieved February 20, 2024, from http://whatworks.ed.gov.

van der Meer, J., Jansen, E., & Torenbeek, M. (2010). 'It's almost a mindset that teachers need to change': First-year students' need to be inducted into time management. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(7), 777–791. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070903383211

Vickery, C. (1977). The time-poor. A new look at poverty. *Journal of Human Resources* 12(1), 27–48.

Wolters, C. A., & Brady, A. C. (2021). College students' time management: A self-regulated learning perspective. *Educational Psychology Review*, *33*(4), 1319–1351. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09519-z

World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (1998). *Wellbeing measures in primary health care/the DEPCARE Project: Report on a WHO meeting: Stockholm, Sweden, 12–13 February 1998.* World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.

Zaussinger, S., Unger, M., Thaler, B., Dibiasi, A., Grabher, A., Terzieva, B., Litofcenko, J., Binder, D., Brenner, J., Stjepanovic, S., Mathä, P., & Kulhanek, A. (2016): *Studierenden-Sozialerhebung 2015. Bericht zur sozialen Lage der Studierenden. Band 2: Studierende [Student social survey 2015. Report on the social situation of students. Volume 2: Students].* IHS-Forschungsbericht, Studie im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Wissenschaft und Forschung (BMWFW). Wien.