Chapter B9
Students' housing situation

Christoph Gwosć
German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW)

Key

Types of housing

On average across EUROSTUDENT countries, 34 % of students live with their parents. 26 % of students share their homes (and lives) with a partner and/or children. 15 % of students reside in student accommodation and another 13 % share their accommodation with other persons. Living alone is the least common form of housing (12 %).

Living with parents

Students who are living in the parental home are found particularly often among those who do not have financial difficulties (38 % on cross-country average). By contrast, students with financial difficulties and students from low educational backgrounds live with their parents to a clearly below-average extent (30 % resp. 28 %).

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Student accommodation

Across EUROSTUDENT countries, 15 % of students have decided to live in student accommodation. Student groups who utilise this form of housing rather frequently include, e.g. students depending on national public student support (30 %), young students below the age of 22 years (20 %), and students depending on family/partner contributions (18 %). Students who perceive themselves as 'workers' are hardly found in dormitories (4 %).

Gwosć, C. (2024). Students' housing situation. In K. Hauschildt (Ed.), *Social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. EUROSTUDENT 8 Synopsis of indicators 2021–2024*. wbv Publikation. DOI: 10.3278/6001920ew009

findings

Student accommodation in time comparison

When comparing the share of Bachelor students residing in student accommodation between the fifth and the current eighth project round, it comes to light that in 58 % of countries their share has decreased. The decrease was most pronounced in Slovakia, Latvia, and Finland, with at least 12 percentage points. In 37 % of countries, Bachelor students use dormitories now more frequently than before.

Students' access to sufficient internet connection

On average across countries, 7 % of students living in student accommodation report that they seldom or never have sufficient internet connection in their home. The respective proportions in the other forms of housing are as follows: living with other persons, living alone, and living with parents: 4 %, living with partner/children: 3 %.

Students' access to a quiet place to study

Students living with partner/children have the greatest difficulties finding a quiet place to study in their homes (cross-country average: 13 %). Their peers who are living in student accommodation and in the parental home are slightly less concerned (both 12 %). The share for students living with other persons is 10 % and students who live alone have the least difficulties in this respect (5 %).

Commuting between home and the HEI

Students living with parents spend the longest time commuting from their home to the HEI they attend; the cross-country median time for one way is 45 minutes. Their fellow students in student accommodation have the shortest commuting time of 15 minutes one way.

Main issues

Housing is a key element for living and studying, which can help fulfil a plethora of needs (in reference to Maslow, 1943). A home is a place that may satisfy students' physical needs, such as the need for eating and sleep. It satisfies safety needs for physical and mental shelter (Paltridge et al., 2010), health, and – in case students are gainfully employed alongside studies and work from home – a secure working place. If the accommodation is shared with others, it helps satisfy social needs, e.g. for integration, communication, and organisation of family life. Student halls of residence – as a special type of housing – appear to be supportive for students' socio-academic integration (Riker & Decoster, 2008; Schudde, 2011) and may even help reduce dropout (Bozick, 2007). Setting up one's own household may satisfy the needs for independence (e.g. from parents) and freedom. It is also a place where students can develop their talents, creativity, and skills, especially but not solely with respect to their studies. Thus, it is not surprising that especially student accommodation is found to be of greatest importance (Parameswaran & Bowers, 2014) and housing in general an essential influencing factor for life satisfaction (Diaz-Serrano, 2006; Dukeov et al., 2001; Davis & Fine-Davis, 1991).

Until recently, housing was not explicitly mentioned in the ministerial declarations of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Bucharest Communiqué, 2012; Yerevan Communiqué, 2015; Paris Communiqué, 2018). It is only in the Rome Communiqué that the issue was taken up by pointing out that accommodation becomes "increasingly problematic for students across the EHEA due to the increased housing, living, and transportation costs" and that public support – where needed – should mainly contribute to cover these costs as well (Annex II to the Rome Communiqué, p. 6, 2020). As part of the further development of the 'Principles and guidelines to strengthen the social dimension of higher education in the EHEA', four indicators have been proposed, among others, to monitor and evaluate the aspect of student funding in the EHEA countries. One of these indicators is the existence of indirect top-level support for students' accommodation, transport, and meals, which is also included into a composite scorecard indicator (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2022). Thus, the topic of housing is receiving increasing attention, even if not yet as much as students and their representatives might feel it deserves.

Forms of housing

For many students, the use of different forms of housing is the result of a conscious choice and in some cases perhaps the rather unconscious continuation of an already existing living arrangement. The choice of a particular form of housing can be subject to many influencing factors. This includes, for example, the availability of housing in terms of quantity and quality in reach of the higher education institution (HEI) as well as the level of rent and ancillary costs. In addition, students' preferences for housing arrangements – which can be influenced by their social development as well as their learning and experiences –, income and wealth of students and of their families, and any social norms and expectations about young people's living arrangements also play a role (Middendorff et al., 2013; Fischer et al., 2017; Unger et al., 2020; Luetzelberger, 2014). Every form of housing has its up- and downsides for students. For instance, students who have started their own family are likely to want to live with them.

This way of living certainly promotes independence from students' parents. For living with their own family, students need a sufficiently large living space, for which they have to pay higher rents. In fact, students living with partner/children often have the highest accommodation costs of all housing forms investigated (Hauschildt et al., 2015, 2021). Students who continue to live with their parents can simply keep up their current living arrangement, which may be comfortable. They can save on living expenses as they often have to pay no or only little rent and may receive free meals, clothing, and other goods and services from their parents (transfers in kind). At the same time, these students usually have the longest daily commuting times for reaching their HEIs and maybe also higher commuting costs for using adequate modes of transport (Hauschildt et al., 2015, 2021). Furthermore, the wish or need to live with their parents limits students' choice of HEIs to those that are within reach of their parental homes. In this way, the academic mobility of the students concerned is restricted (Frenette, 2006; Spiess & Wrohlich, 2010). The subsequent analyses investigate in more detail which groups of students make use of the different forms of housing.

Students' personal study infrastructure

While guided learning in the form of lectures and tutorials usually takes place on campus, students' self-organised learning, such as preparing for exams (alone or in groups), reading specialist literature, writing term papers or theses, also takes place in the students' homes. For this to be successful, certain framework conditions are required. Some of these requirements include, for instance, access to a desk, computer, sufficient internet connection, and a quiet place to study (see Bonard, 2023, and Doolan et al., 2021, with respect to online studying). It will be investigated whether there are differences between various forms of housing in the availability of some of these items.

Commuting between home and the HEI

When students are enrolled in attendance study programmes, living in geographical proximity to their HEI is a necessary requirement for participating in higher education (for Germany, Spiess & Wrohlich, 2010; for Canada, Zarifa et al., 2018). Living with parents, for instance, may be comfortable and cost-saving with respect to rent, food, and other items. However, this form of housing may be associated with a longer journey – in terms of distance and time – from home to the HEI, especially for students living in the outer boroughs of big cities, who may not be able to reach their HEI by walking or cycling. Students who live with parents have indeed been shown to have clearly longer commuting times than their peers in other forms of housing in many European countries (Hauschildt et al., 2021; Orr et al., 2012). This could also mean that these students have to bear higher direct costs for transportation compared to students living in other forms of housing in closer vicinity to the university. Furthermore, the commuting time of students living in the parental home can negatively affect their study time, as the total commuting time for the outward and return journey of some of these students amounts to more than 2 hours per day in several European countries (Orr et al., 2011). By contrast, to be able to attend university at all, it is sometimes unavoidable for students to move out of the parents' home (Bonaccorsi, 2017). Student accommodation is then most often the form of housing with the shortest commuting times, as students in this form of housing often literally live on campus (Hauschildt et al., 2021; Orr et al., 2011). Such a proximity to university is also associated with less need for public and private transportation, parking spaces, and less traffic congestion around campus (Ike et al., 2016). The students' time required for

daily commuting between different forms of housing and the HEIs attended will be analysed in more detail.

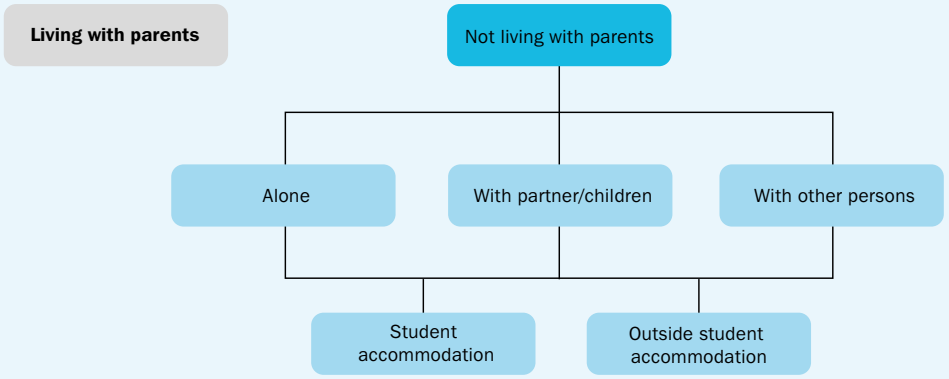
Box B9.1

Methodological note: Typology of student housing

The following data refer to students' housing situation during the week (Monday to Friday) in the lecture period. For analysis purposes, a first fundamental distinction is made between students living with parents and those not living with parents (Figure B9.1). The two groups differ, among other things, in their personal responsibility for financing and organising their accommodation (Hauschildt et al., 2021). Among students not living with parents, a further differentiation is made between the housing forms 'alone', 'with partner/children', and 'with other persons' (e.g. friends, fellow students, professionals, etc.), which are all mutually exclusive in our analysis. In practice, these three forms of housing can be found both inside and outside of student accommodation. In the analysis of student accommodation, however, no distinction will be made between these three forms of housing. The category 'student accommodation' generally refers to all sorts of accommodation in dormitories or halls of residence that are especially designated for the use of students in higher education and often subsidised by government, churches, HEIs, or other organisations.

Figure B9.1

Types of student housing



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Data and interpretation

The housing situation of students: an overview

Living with parents continues to be the single most common form of housing in EUROSTUDENT countries (cross-country average: 34 %).

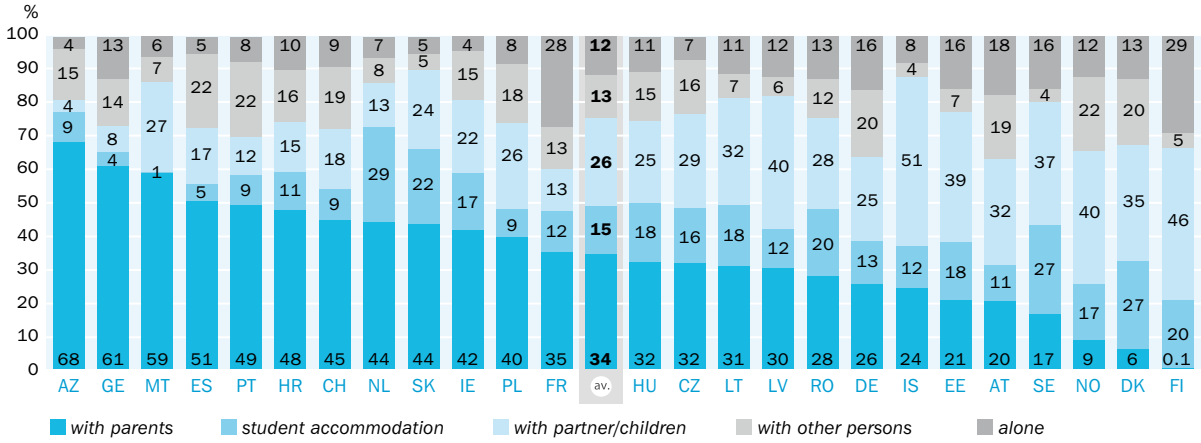
Students in EUROSTUDENT countries continue to predominantly live outside the parental home. In 84 % of countries, the majority of students live away from their parents (Figure B9.2). However, across all countries, living with parents is the type of housing with the single highest share of the five housing forms under comparison (cross-country average: 34 %).

- In Azerbaijan, Georgia, Malta, and Spain, most students live with their parents. In another 12 countries, it is also the single most common living arrangement.

Figure B9.2

Students' housing situation

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.*

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): *4.1 Who do you live with during the current lecture period (Monday to Friday)? 4.2 Do you live in a student accommodation?*

Note(s): *Decimal points shown for values < .5.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *AT.*

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

Living with partner/children is the second most frequent form of housing. Across countries, 26 % of students, on average, live together with their partner and/or children.

- In 36 % of countries, the single highest share of students can be found in this form of housing. This applies to Lithuania, Latvia, Iceland, Estonia, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland. In Iceland, it is even the majority of all students who are living this way.

Student accommodation is a type of housing that 15 % of students have chosen, on average across countries.

- Relatively large shares of students living in student halls of residence can be found in the Netherlands, Slovakia, Romania, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, with at least 20 %.
- By contrast, the use of student accommodation is quite rare in Georgia and Malta, with less than 5 %.

Sharing accommodation with other persons such as friends or fellow students outside student accommodation is a form of housing for which, on average across countries, 13 % of students have opted. Finally, living alone outside student accommodation continues to be the least used form of housing. On average across EUROSTUDENT countries, 12 % of students have decided to live this way.

Compared to the last round, there is indication that the utilisation of student accommodation has decreased (on cross-country average by 2 percentage points), while residing with partner/children or alone is a bit more frequently used. This might, inter alia, be due to distance students, which have now been taken into account in the data collection, as they are likely to use student accommodation less frequently.

The utilisation of housing forms changes with students' educational background (Table B9.1). When drawing on the cross-country average, it appears that with higher educational background, students increasingly tend to live with parents, in student accommodation, with other persons, and alone. By contrast, the share of students living with partner/children decreases markedly the higher the students' educational background is. This may also be related to students' age structure, transition into higher education, and the levels of their income (> *Chapters B2, B3, B7*).

Students living with parents

Students from low educational backgrounds and those with financial difficulties live with their parents to a below-average extent.

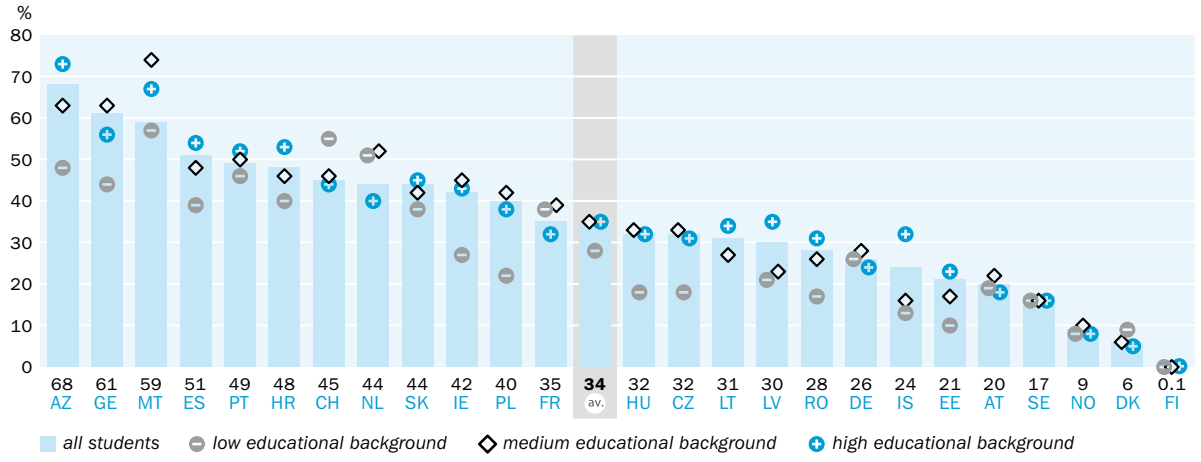
Living with parents during studies can be the result of either a conscious decision or the unconscious continuation of an already existing housing situation. One factor that may affect living with parents is students' educational background. The breakdown of the students' proportions living with parents by students' educational background is, on average across countries, as follows: students from low educational backgrounds: 28 %, from medium and high educational backgrounds: 35 %, (Figure B9.3). In all but four countries, the share of students living with parents among those with low educational background is below the national average for all students.

- Furthermore, in 63 % of countries, students from low educational backgrounds live least often in the parental home out of all compared groups. Exceptions can be found in Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland.

Figure B9.3

Students living with parents by educational background

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.* ***Too few cases:*** *Low educational background: LT.*

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): *4.1 Who do you live with during the current lecture period (Monday to Friday)?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of all students living with parents. Decimal points shown for values < .5.*

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

Students with low educational background are, on international average, clearly older than their fellows with medium or high educational background (mean age of the three groups in years: 30.3, 26.4, 24.7, > *Database*). Older students generally tend to

live with their parents less often than younger ones, as the first group is more likely to be married / live in a long-term relationship and to have children (> *Chapter B1*). This family status does not seem to be well accommodated in the parental home.

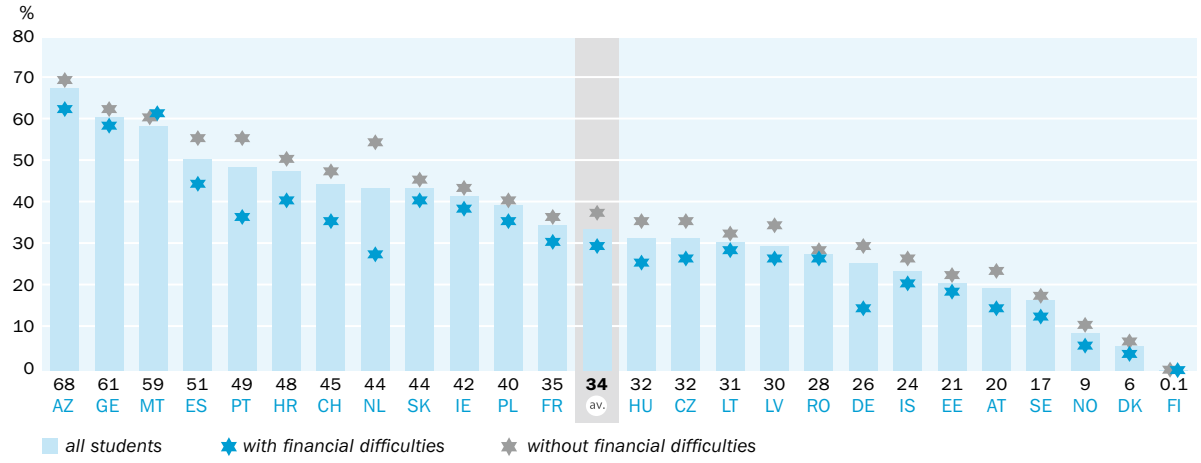
Students who live with their parents can save money in several ways compared to their fellow students living away from their parents. The first group usually pays no rent, or only relatively small amounts, and often receives free meals or other transfers in kind. If students can save on expenditure-intensive factors such as housing and food, this should also be reflected in the extent of their financial difficulties. In fact, such a relation is shown in the data below (Figure B9.4). Among students who do not report current financial difficulties, clearly more than one third (38 %) live with parents, on cross-country average. This exceeds the share of all students living with parents (cross-country average) by 4 percentage points. When looking at students who report current financial difficulties, the share of residents in the parental home amounts to just 30 % across countries.

- In all countries, students without financial difficulties live with parents to an above-average extent. The share of students living with parents in the group of those without financial difficulties is clearly above the national average with at least 5 percentage points in Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Latvia.

Figure B9.4

Students living with parents by the extent of students' financial difficulties

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.*

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): *4.1 Who do you live with during the current lecture period (Monday to Friday)?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of all students living with parents. Decimal points shown for values < .5.*

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

In all but two countries, students with financial difficulties live with their parents to a below-average extent.

- The difference between the national average and the share of students living with parents among those with financial difficulties is largest in Portugal, the Netherlands, and Germany, with at least 11 percentage points. In Croatia and Switzerland, the difference is also rather large with 7 to 9 percentage points.

Students living in student accommodation

Students who reside in student accommodation are particularly often found among young students and those depending on public support.

The share of students residing in student accommodation still varies with students' age (Figure B9.5a). The general pattern according to which students are less likely to live in student accommodation as they grow older continues to apply. On cross-country average, the share of dormitory residents decreases continuously across the different age groups: from 20 % in the group of those younger than 22 years to 4 % in the group of students who are 30 years and over. At country level, the continuous decrease across the four age groups is reflected in more than two thirds of countries (68 %). Older students are more likely to be married or live in a stable relationship and to have children. At this stage of life, their housing needs may be less well met in a student residence than in another form of housing. Furthermore, with advancing age, students usually receive higher incomes (> *Chapter B7*) due to increasing employment alongside studies. This basically opens the possibility of renting larger and possibly better equipped living space than would be possible in student halls of residence.

Students' choice of housing is also clearly linked to their primary income source (Figure B9.5b). Students who depend on national public student support most frequently live in student accommodation (cross-country average: 30 %). The respective share among students who depend on family/partner contributions amounts to 18 %, which is still above the international average for all students (15 %). Only 10 % of students who depend on self-earned income have decided to move into student accommodation. This basic pattern emerges in 64 % of countries.

- Particularly large shares of students depending on national public student support living in dormitories can be found in the Netherlands, Slovakia, Romania, Estonia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Portugal, and Poland. Their share is at least 22 percentage points above the respective national average.

The residential behaviour of the three groups can, inter alia, be explained by their income situation. Students depending on national public student support have by far the lowest monthly income (cross-country median: 602 PPS, > *Chapter B7*). The tight budget constraint forces them to search for a form of housing that is as cost-effective as possible. Outside the parental home, they find this in a student accommodation. Their peers who depend on self-earned income generate the highest income of the three groups (1,472 PPS). This gives them additional options on the housing market, so that they have to resort less frequently to halls of residence.

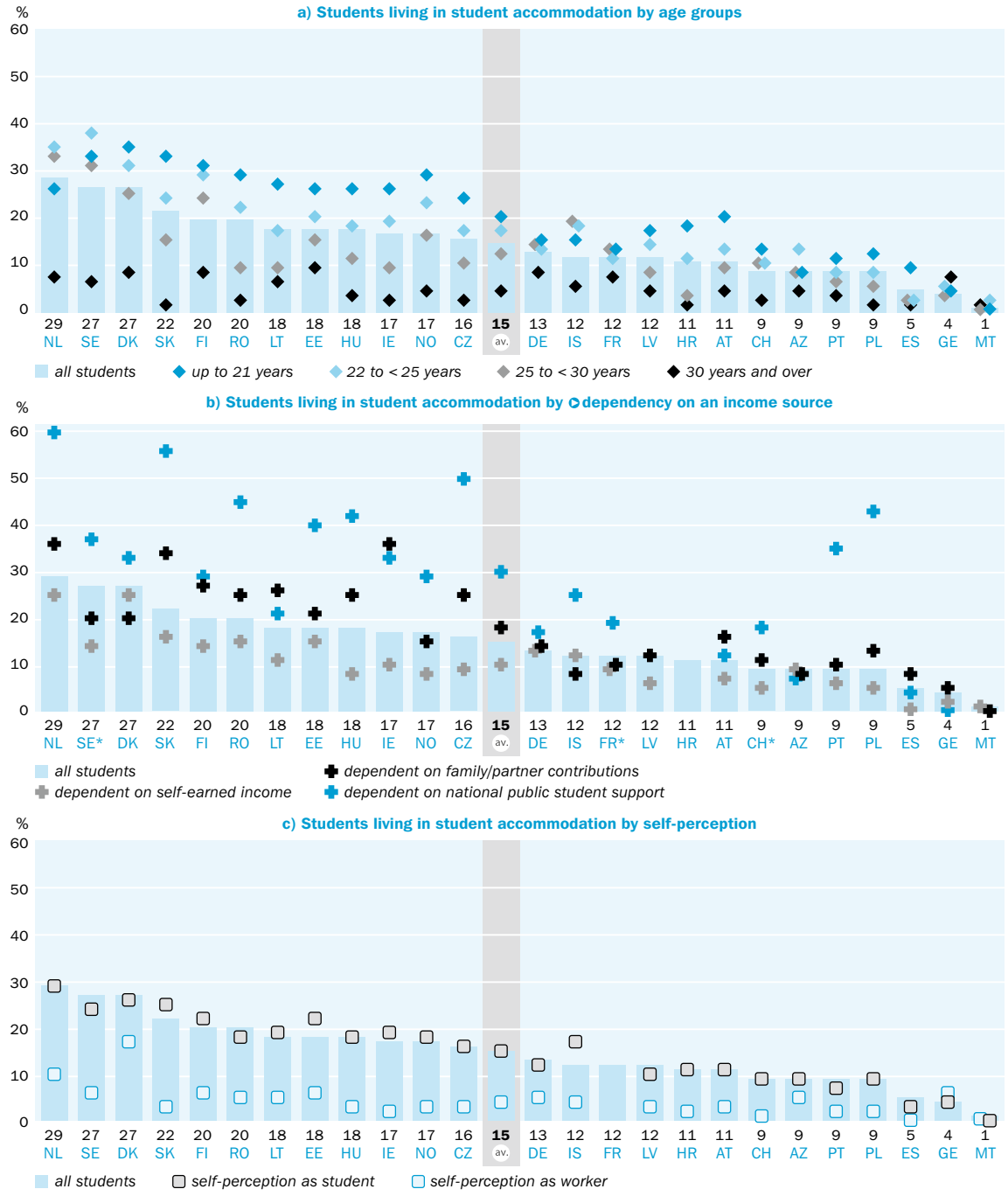
Living in student accommodation is also associated with students' self-perception as either a student or a worker (Figure B9.5c). Students who regard themselves as 'workers' live in student accommodation much less often than their counterparts. On cross-country average, only 4 % of students who perceive themselves as 'workers' live in student halls of residence, while the share for their peers is more than three times as high and coincides with the average of all students living in student accommodation (15 %). In all countries except Georgia and Malta, the share of students perceiving themselves as 'workers' is lower than the percentage of their fellow students who consider themselves as 'students'.

- The largest differences between the two groups are to be found in the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovakia, Estonia, and Ireland, with at least 17 percentage points.

Figure B9.5

Students living in student accommodation by age, dependency on an income source, and self-perception

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.* ***No data:*** *Dependency on an income source: HR; self-perception: FR.* ***Too few cases:*** *Dependent on national public student support: LV, 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): *4.2 Do you live in a student accommodation?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of all students living in student accommodation.*

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

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

In a group comparison, students who see themselves as 'workers' are considerably older than their peer group (cross-country average: 32.6 vs. 24.3 years, > *Database*) and spend much more time on gainful employment alongside studies (cross-country average: 35.3 vs. 17.8 hours per week, > *Database*). Furthermore, the share of students having children is in the first group more than five times as high as in the other group (cross-country average: 33 vs. 6 %, > *Database*). This again reflects various age-related characteristics that make living in student accommodation rather unattractive for students who see themselves as 'workers'.

When differentiating further by socio-demographic, institutional, study-related, and finance-related characteristics, it shows that – on international average – male students utilise student accommodation more often than their female counterparts (17 % vs. 13 %) (Table B9.2). The higher students' educational background, the higher is, on principle, the share of dormitory residents (low: 13 %, medium: 13 %, high: 16 %). Students at universities opt for this form of housing almost twice as often as their fellows at non-universities (17 % vs. 9 %), possibly reflecting the different student populations at the two types of institutions (> *Chapter B4*). Bachelor students live in dormitories a bit more often than Master students (15 % vs. 14 %) and the same holds true for students with financial difficulties compared to their peers without such problems (16 % vs. 14 %).

In the majority of EUROSTUDENT countries, the share of Bachelor students living in student accommodation has decreased between E:V and E:8.

Comparison over time: Bachelor students in student accommodation

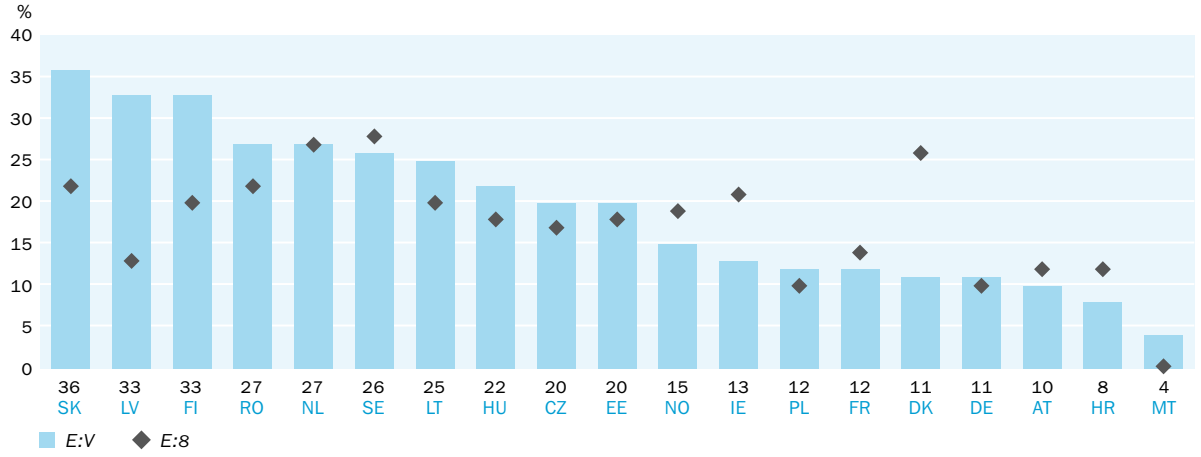
How did the utilisation of student halls of residence by Bachelor students change over time? In a comparison of data from the fifth and the eighth round of EUROSTUDENT, three cases can be distinguished (Figure B9.6).

In a majority (58 %) of countries, the share of Bachelor students in student accommodation has decreased.

Figure B9.6

Comparison over time: Bachelor students living in student accommodation

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT V: E.1 and EUROSTUDENT 8: E.2.* ***No data:*** *E:V: AZ, ES, GE, IS, PT; E:8: CH.*

Data collection: *E:8: Spring 2022 – summer 2022 except DE (summer 2021), AT, FR, RO (spring 2023 – summer 2023).*

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *3.2/4.2 Do you live in a student accommodation?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of Bachelor students living in student accommodation from E:V.*

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

- This holds true for Slovakia, Latvia, Finland, Romania, Lithuania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Germany, and Malta. The decrease was most pronounced in Slovakia, Latvia, and Finland, with at least 12 percentage points.

In another group of countries (37 % of countries), Bachelor students use dormitories now more frequently than before.

- This group includes Sweden, Norway, Ireland, France, Denmark, Austria, and Croatia. The change is clearly less pronounced compared to the first country group. The largest difference can be found in Denmark with 15 percentage points. In the other countries, the difference varies between 2 and 8 percentage points.
- Finally, the Netherlands is the only country in which the proportion of Bachelor students living in student accommodation has not changed between the two project rounds (27 %).

The decrease in the share of dormitory users among Bachelor students in the first group of countries, on average more pronounced than the rise in the second group, might stem from various factors that could also differ by country. If students enter higher education at an older age, this reduces their likelihood of moving into a hall of residence. The same applies if students receive higher total income. In addition, the preferences for forms of housing within a student population could, of course, also change over time to the detriment of student halls of residence. A more in-depth analysis would be needed here to shed some light on this phenomenon.

Access to personal study infrastructure by form of housing

Students living in student accommodation report most often insufficient internet access compared to students in other forms of housing (cross-country average: 7 %).

In today's digitalised world, it is difficult to imagine studying without access to the internet. In fact, it is one important element forming part of students' 'digital capital' (Ragnedda et al., 2020; Schirmer, 2024). As part of the E:8 topical module 'Digitalisation of teaching, learning, and student life', students were therefore also asked about this aspect of their living situation. The underlying question was: 'In your home, when you need it for your studies, do you have access to sufficient internet connection?' Students could respond on a 5-staged answer scale ranging from 'always' to 'never'. In the following figure, only data for those students are displayed who answered with 'seldom' or 'never' (Figure B9.7).

A first encouraging finding is that in 87 % of countries, the level of insufficient internet access does not exceed the 10 % mark in any form of housing.

- In Denmark, Austria, the Czech Republic, Malta, Slovakia, Norway, Estonia, Spain, Iceland, and Finland, all values are even below 5 %.
- Only in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Portugal do the values for certain types of housing exceed 10 %.

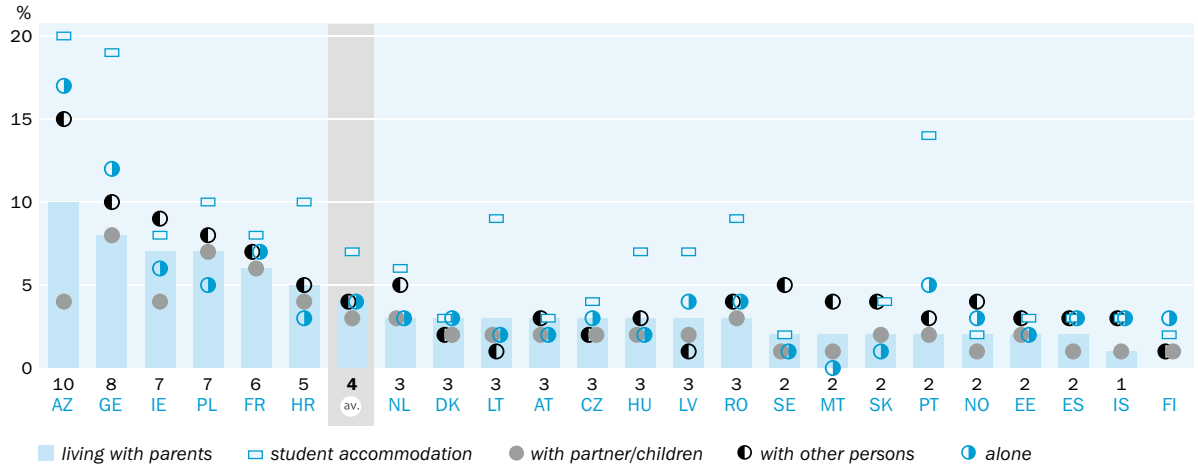
When looking at the various housing forms, it appears that students living in student accommodation clearly most often report that they have insufficient access to the internet (cross-country average: 7 %). The respective share among students living with other persons, alone, or with parents is 4 %. Students living with partner/children report this problem least often (3 %).

- In 64 % of countries, students residing in dormitories state the highest shares of those with insufficient internet access. The highest proportions are reported by students in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Portugal, with 14 % and more.

Figure B9.7

Students' study-required access to sufficient internet connection by form of housing – only students who responded with 'seldom' or 'never'

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, L.TM 55.* ***No data:*** *CH, DE.* ***Too few cases:*** *Living with parents: FI; Student accommodation: MT.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *M3.2 In your home, when you need it for your studies, do you have access to sufficient internet connection?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of students living with parents.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *AT.*

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

If this result is related to student groups, the problem affects to a higher degree, inter alia, students depending on national public student support, students whose parents are not very well-off, students with financial difficulties, international students, and students with high study intensity, as these groups live in student accommodation to an above-average extent (Figure B9.5b; > *Database*). The lack of internet access seems particularly serious for students receiving public support and their fellow students with high study intensity as both groups often need to provide proof of performance in order not to lose their eligibility for public support.[1] They would then have to switch to other locations, such as libraries, for internet-based work. However, this will not always be possible due to limited capacities.

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Students living with partner/children have the greatest difficulty finding a quiet place to study compared to students in other forms of housing (cross-country average: 13 %).

Another element of students' personal study infrastructure with great meaning for their personal study time is access to a quiet place to study in their homes. In the EUROSTUDENT survey, students were asked: 'In your home, when you need it for your studies, do you have access to a quiet place to study?' Students were asked to use the same 5-staged answer scale ranging from 'always' to 'never'. In the following figure, again only data of those students are displayed who answered with 'seldom' or 'never' (Figure B9.8).

The lack of available quiet study place varies across countries and forms of housing.

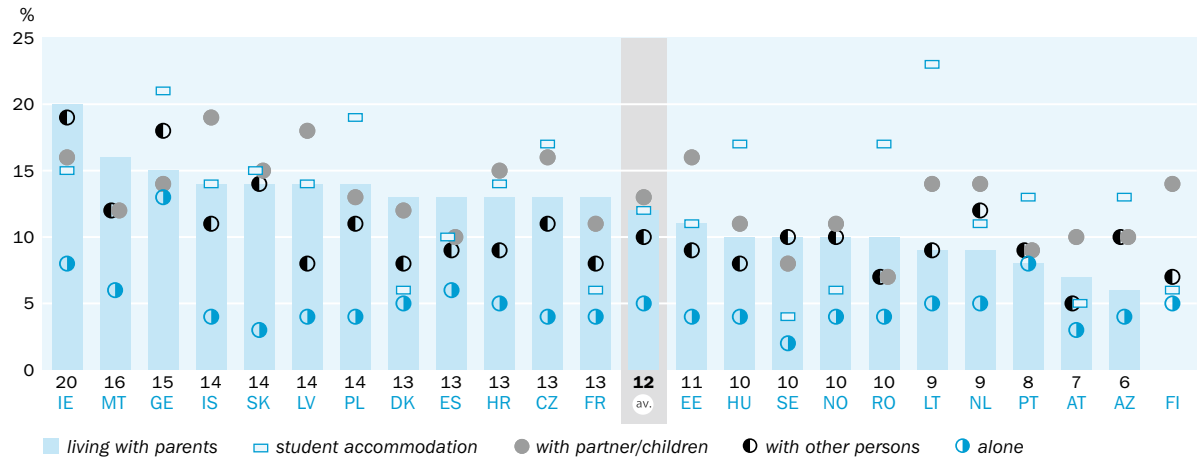
- In 43 % of countries, including Denmark, Spain, France, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Austria, Azerbaijan, and Finland, the values for all forms of housing are below 15 %. In the other countries, at least one value exceeds this mark.

1 *Students with high study intensity receive national public student support particularly often (> Database).*

Figure B9.8

Students' study-required access to a quiet place to study by form of housing – only students who responded with 'seldom' or 'never'

Share of students (in %)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, L.TM 56.* ***No data:*** *CH, DE.* ***Too few cases:*** *Living with parents: FI; Student accommodation: MT.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *M3.2 In your home, when you need it for your studies, do you have access to a quiet place to study?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the share of students living with parents.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *AT.*

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

When comparing the results for the different housing forms, it becomes apparent that finding a quiet place to study is most challenging for students living with partner/children (cross-country average: 13 %). Students who are living in student accommodation or with their parents are marginally less concerned (12 %). When students share their accommodation with others (e.g. friends, fellow students), 10 % report that they can never or only seldom retreat in their home to a quiet place for their studies. As expected, students who live on their own outside student accommodation have the least difficulties in this respect (5 %).

- Students living with partner/children show the highest proportions on this indicator in 35 % of countries. This holds true for Iceland, Latvia, Croatia, Estonia, Norway, the Netherlands, Austria, and Finland.

It is easy to imagine that family life, especially with little children, makes retreating to a quiet room difficult.

In another 41 % of countries, students living in student halls of residence most often indicate a lack of a quiet place to study.

- This group of countries includes Georgia, Slovakia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Portugal, and Azerbaijan. This problem appears to be very pronounced in Georgia and Lithuania, where more than 20 % of the dormitory residents are concerned.

A student accommodation is a highly dynamic place where very heterogenous actors come together. The residents differ by social background, country of origin, ethnic affiliation, family bonds, and other characteristics (Holton, 2016). This may create an atmosphere that makes it rather difficult to find peace.

In these cases, too, students would then have to look for other locations to find a quiet place for their personal studies.

Commuting between home and the HEI

Students living with parents have the longest commuting time to get from home to their HEI (cross-country median: 45 minutes).

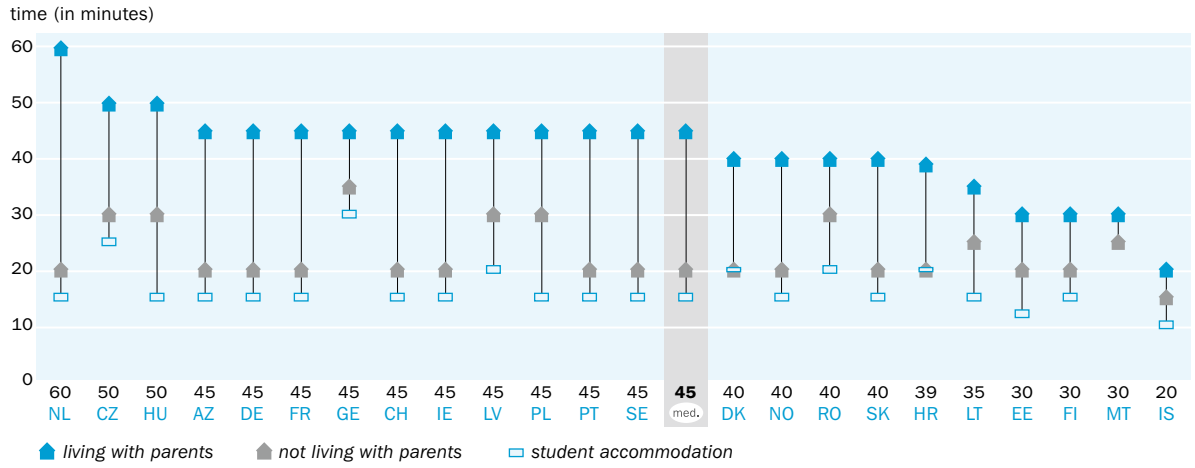
Students' form of housing not only has implications for their social life and finances, but it also affects their time allocation, as they have to spend time commuting between home and the HEI. Data on the commuting time of students were analysed for the two basic forms of housing 'living with parents' and 'not living with parents' and – as part of the latter – 'student accommodation' (Figure B9.9). The ◔ median time is displayed in minutes for students' regular commuting one way on a typical day in the current lecture period.

In all countries, students spend most time commuting when they are staying at their parents' home. According to the international median, the time for commuting from the parental home to the HEI (one way only) amounts to 45 minutes across all countries. Students who do not live with their parents have a markedly shorter commuting time of 20 minutes one way. Their peers residing in student accommodation have the shortest commuting time at 15 minutes. This general pattern indicated by the international median values is reflected in 91 % of countries with available data on all three forms of housing. Only in Denmark and Croatia is the commuting time for students not living with parents and those in student accommodation the same.

Figure B9.9 ⬇

Regular time for commuting from home to the HEI (one way) by basic type of housing

Median one-way commuting time (in minutes)



Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.4.* ***No data:*** *AT, ES.* ***Too few cases:*** *Student accommodation: MT.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *4.3 On a typical day, how much time does it take you to get from your home to your higher education institution during the current lecture period?*

Note(s): *Values above the country abbreviations represent the median commuting time of students living with parents.*

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

- Students in the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, and Hungary have the longest commuting times among those who are living with parents. They have to dedicate between 50 and 60 minutes to one way.

- By contrast, students living with parents in Estonia, Finland, Malta, and Iceland, do not spend more than 30 minutes on commuting.

Students who live away from parents spend, on cross-country median, less than half as much time on their commute. Also, the range of commuting time across countries is rather small. The difference between the longest ride (35 minutes in Georgia) and the shortest (15 minutes in Iceland) amounts to just 20 minutes; this difference is just half as large as in the group of students living with their parents (40 minutes).

In EUROSTUDENT countries, student accommodation is generally characterised by close proximity to the HEIs. Students often can cover the distance between their homes and their HEIs within a quarter of an hour (cross-country median).

- The longest commuting times are reported by students in the Czech Republic and Georgia, with at least 25 minutes. Their fellow students in Iceland have it best with spending only 10 minutes on the journey.
- When comparing within-country data for students living with parents and those in student accommodation, it shows that student accommodation in the Netherlands and Hungary is particularly timesaving. There, the one-way journey for students living with parents is more than three times as high as for their peers in dormitories. In another eight countries, Azerbaijan, Germany, France, Switzerland, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, and Sweden, the factor is exactly three.

Further data on students' commuting time can be found in Table B9.3. This time, the average instead of the median was used to check whether differences are more pronounced. Across all countries and all forms of housing, students' average commuting time amounts to 39 minutes (one way). Students enrolled at ○ non-universities spend more time commuting than their peers at ○ universities (cross-country average: 43 vs. 39 minutes). When the size of the study location increases, there is at least a general pattern of slightly increasing commuting time, although not in a strictly linear way (< 100,000 inhabitants: 38 minutes, > 100,000–300,000 inhabitants: 37, > 300,000–500,000 inhabitants: 38, > 500,000 inhabitants: 41). In the capital city, the commuting time is longest on international average (43 minutes). Some clear differences can be found between the various forms of housing (living with parents: 49 minutes, with partner/children: 44, alone: 35, with other persons: 29, student accommodation: 23).

Discussion and policy considerations

The parental home is still the single most important form of housing in most EUROSTUDENT countries. From an economic point of view, it is still the most inexpensive form of housing (> *Chapter B8*), as students usually not only pay no or little rent but also receive various other transfers (in cash and in kind) from their parents. Therefore, it is not surprising that students without financial difficulties live clearly more often with parents than those in financial distress. The importance of the parental home as a place to live is also particularly evident in times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many students who used to live away from their parents moved – at least temporarily – back into their parents' house (for Germany, Kroher et al., 2023). However, it should be noted that the parents' home continues to be a form of housing which is used more

often by students from medium or high educational backgrounds or students whose parents are financially (very) well-off (> *Database*) compared to those students who come from economically disadvantaged families. This means that the latter group is missing out on a particularly large economic advantage, as expenditure on housing and food, which typically make up most of their total expenditure (> *Chapter B8*), is only especially low in the parents' home. If the university these students attend is, however, not within reach of their parents' home, the loss of this benefit seems unavoidable.[2] However, there are of course also students – especially from low-income families – who cannot afford to move out of their parents' home (Dohmen et al., 2021); living with parents is then a prerequisite to take part in higher education.

Student accommodation is a form of housing that symbolises the university phase of life in a particularly visible way. Although it is still an important form of housing utilised by 15 % of all students across EUROSTUDENT countries, it seems to have lost a bit of importance. Compared to the last round, the frequency of use decreased by 2 percentage points. Furthermore, in a comparison with the fifth round of EUROSTUDENT, the proportion of Bachelor students living in student accommodation has decreased in more than half of countries. A lower utilisation of student accommodation might still be an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which many students moved back in with their parents.[3] Despite this development, it can be assumed that student residences continue to be heavily utilised.[4] Student groups using student accommodation more often than average include students depending on national public student support, young students below the age of 25 years, and students ○ depending on family/partner contributions. Also, in most countries students with financial difficulties live more often in dormitories than their counterparts without such worries. This illustrates that halls of residence are a place that is – not exclusively, but often – a preferred choice for low-income students. This is not surprising as in most countries student accommodation is the cheapest form of housing outside the parents' home (> *Chapter B8*). The revitalisation or further development of state-subsidised halls of residence, therefore, appears to be a reasonable instrument for alleviating the housing shortage for students. This is also a requirement of the European Students' Union: "Regarding student housing, four principles must guide policy aimed at it: affordability, accessibility, quality, and sustainability. States and higher education institutions must make sure that anyone who wishes to study in Higher Education has access to an affordable place to live. This can be achieved through designated student housing, but in cases where that isn't sufficient, policies and systems must be in place to ensure affordability in the rental market. Support for housing can be offered both through grants for students or indirect means of covering the costs (e.g. subsidising student housing)." (European Students' Union, p. 24, 2024).

It is true that developable land for building student accommodations is particularly scarce in large cities (OECD, 2023). Nevertheless, there still appears to be development potential as analyses for private construction developers show, recommending invest-

2 *Attending a HEI far away from the parents' home is not always the result of a students' free decision though, but sometimes the consequence of a randomised procedure for the allocation of study places or overcrowding. In Germany, for example, 10 % of first-year students state that they have not received admission to their desired HEI (Kroher et al., 2023).*

3 *In 2020, the first year in which the pandemic spread in Europe, the occupancy rate for student accommodation declined Europe-wide by around 10 % (Catella, 2021).*

4 *To illustrate this with data on private dormitories: In 2022, occupancy rates in privately developed student accommodation across Europe averaged 98 %, with the lowest value (95 %) found in Austria and Switzerland (Bonard, 2023).*

ment opportunities for student housing in major cities such as Rome and Madrid in particular, but also Lisbon, Berlin, and Greater London (Bonard, 2023).[5] Also, a previous analysis for Poland estimated that state- and privately operated student housing facilities meet only 33–35 % of actual demand in Polands' largest cities (CBRE, 2020). In the case of public student accommodation, innovative forms of housing, such as co-operative student accommodation[6], are also being tried out in order to provide students with sufficient living space. However, these are still little known and not (yet) widespread (Busse et al., 2022).

The housing forms of students differ in their equipment with personal study infrastructure. Insufficient internet connection is a lack which is most often found in student accommodation. When a quiet place to study is called for, it is above all students living with partner/children but also again students living in student accommodation who have great difficulties finding such a place in their homes. Both elements, sufficient internet connection and a quiet place to study, are important for students' personal study time as they need to prepare for exams, read specialist literature, and write homework and theses. If one or both elements are not sufficiently available, there could in principle be substitutes, for example in university libraries. However, capacities there are limited and sometimes (e.g. at times during the COVID-19 pandemic) not available at all. At least the problem of internet access in public student accommodation should be the easiest to solve.

Related to the form of housing is the time for daily commuting of students from their home to their HEI. The current data reveal a well-known pattern when differentiating three (basic) forms of housing: Students living with parents have the longest commute (cross-country median: 45 minutes for one way). Their peers who are living away from parents spend less than half as much time on it and – as part of the latter group – students residing in student accommodation dedicate the least time on commuting (15 minutes). The commuting time is a feature of student accommodation that dormitory residents are typically (very) satisfied with (Hauschildt et al., 2021; DZHW, 2018). As expected, this is different for students who are living with parents. Out of the three groups, they show the highest levels of dissatisfaction with their commuting times in the large majority of countries (Hauschildt et al., 2021). If living with parents – due to the typically lower costs – is a prerequisite for students to be able to participate in higher education at all, these students may face a double disadvantage: firstly, they are limited in their choice of HEI (and maybe study subject) to those that are within reach of their parents' home. Secondly, long commuting times are perhaps at the expense of study time. These problems could in principle be solved by increasing the regional spreading of student halls of residence and/or HEIs. However, both options are rather expensive and also very difficult to realise because universities (and their housing supply) are competing with other public and private purposes for scarce construction ground, especially in big cities.

5 *Such privately developed student accommodations, however, will not be available to students for a similar price as publicly subsidised halls of residence. To illustrate this: When expressing the average rent for student accommodation in the EUROSTUDENT countries in Euro, the value amounts to 364 Euro. In 2022, the average rent for a single studio in purely private student accommodation in Europe (without UK) amounted to 664 Euro (Bonard, 2023).*

6 *Co-operative student accommodations are social projects in which either several generations and families live together and the focus is on a joint organisation of living together, or co-operations that go beyond shared living and offer rent-free housing for students in exchange for e.g. providing tutoring and leisure activities for pupils of nearby schools (for Germany, Busse et al., 2022).*

Tables

Table B9.1

Students' housing situation by educational background

Share of students (in %)

	Low educational background					Medium educational background					High educational background				
	With parents	Student accommodation	With partner/children	With other persons	Alone	With parents	Student accommodation	With partner/children	With other persons	Alone	With parents	Student accommodation	With partner/children	With other persons	Alone
AT	19	9	41	13	19	22	9	35	16	18	18	14	27	24	17
AZ	48	25	3	25	0	63	11	3	20	2	73	7	4	11	5
CH	55	7	20	8	10	46	7	21	17	9	44	11	16	21	9
CZ	18	18	46	13	6	33	13	33	14	7	31	20	24	18	8
DE	26	18	32	13	12	28	10	28	18	16	24	14	23	22	17
DK	9	22	44	15	11	6	29	36	16	14	5	28	32	22	13
EE	10	30	41	6	13	17	17	46	7	13	23	17	35	7	18
ES	39	2	22	32	6	48	3	17	26	5	54	8	11	22	5
FI	0	9	68	2	21	0	16	51	3	30	0.2	25	39	5	31
FR	38	14	16	10	22	39	13	15	10	24	32	11	12	15	30
GE	44	8	10	28	10	63	3	5	16	13	56	6	8	16	13
HR	40	17	24	12	7	46	12	17	16	9	53	10	11	15	12
HU	18	15	37	16	14	33	17	31	12	8	32	18	21	17	12
IE	27	8	48	10	7	45	14	23	14	4	43	22	14	18	4
IS	13	8	70	3	7	16	11	61	3	9	32	14	42	5	8
LT	t.f.c.	t.f.c.	t.f.c.	t.f.c.	t.f.c.	27	18	39	7	9	34	18	28	8	12
LV	21	12	52	5	10	23	13	50	4	10	35	11	34	7	13
MT	57	1	31	6	6	74	0.3	18	4	4	67	0.3	14	12	7
NL	51	18	22	3	7	52	19	18	5	6	40	34	11	9	6
NO	8	10	64	7	11	10	16	47	15	13	8	18	35	27	12
PL	22	6	55	8	10	42	7	29	16	7	38	10	22	21	10
PT	46	8	19	21	7	50	10	11	22	7	52	9	7	23	9
RO	17	23	45	8	8	26	20	31	12	12	31	20	21	12	16
SE	16	14	52	4	14	16	23	43	3	15	16	31	31	4	17
SK	38	13	38	4	7	42	22	27	4	5	45	26	16	6	6
av.	**28**	**13**	**38**	**11**	**10**	**35**	**13**	**29**	**12**	**11**	**35**	**16**	**21**	**15**	**12**

t.f.c.: too few cases.

Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.*

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): *4.1 Who do you live with during the current lecture period (Monday to Friday)? 4.2 Do you live in a student accommodation?*

Note(s): *Decimal points shown for values < .5.*

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: *AT.*

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

Table B9.2

Students living in student accommodation by sex, educational background, type of HEI, study programme, and extent of financial difficulties

Share of students (in %)

	Sex		Educational background			Type of HEI		Study programme		Extent of financial difficulties	
	Female	Male	Low educational background	Medium educational background	High educational background	University	Non-university	Bachelor	Master	With financial difficulties	Without financial difficulties
AT	11	12	9	9	14	12	8	12	10	13	10
AZ	8	10	25	11	7	9	n/a	9	7	12	9
CH	9	10	7	7	11	13	5	8	12	12	9
CZ	13	21	18	13	20	18	4	17	13	19	16
DE	10	16	18	10	14	15	10	10	18	20	11
DK	24	30	22	29	28	31	21	26	29	22	29
EE	15	22	30	17	17	18	16	18	14	18	16
ES	5	5	2	3	8	5	5	5	2	4	6
FI	16	27	9	16	25	29	13	20	20	17	22
FR	11	14	14	13	11	11	15	14	11	14	11
GE	3	5	8	3	6	5	3	3	5	5	5
HR	11	12	17	12	10	12	9	12	9	13	11
HU	16	19	15	17	18	19	9	18	15	18	17
IE	18	16	8	14	22	20	13	21	12	18	16
IS	11	16	8	11	14	12	n/a	13	12	21	7
LT	16	22	t.f.c.	18	18	20	15	20	13	22	18
LV	8	17	12	13	11	12	11	13	11	14	9
MT	0.3	1	1	0.3	0.3	1	1	0.3	1	2	0.1
NL	29	29	18	19	34	42	16	27	39	36	24
NO	14	20	10	16	18	19	12	19	14	18	15
PL	7	10	6	7	10	10	2	10	7	8	9
PT	8	10	8	10	9	10	7	9	7	12	8
RO	19	21	23	20	20	20	n/a	22	13	22	19
SE	22	34	14	23	31	27	n/a	28	34	27	26
SK	20	25	13	22	26	26	1	22	17	23	22
av.	**13**	**17**	**13**	**13**	**16**	**17**	**9**	**15**	**14**	**16**	**14**

t.f.c.: too few cases. n/a: not applicable.

Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.2.*

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): *4.2 Do you live in a student accommodation?*

Note(s): *No non-universities exist in AZ, IS, RO, SE. Decimal points shown for values < .5.*

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

Table B9.3

Regular commuting time from home to the HEI (one way) by type of HEI, size of study location, and form of housing

Mean (in minutes)

		Type of HEI		Size of study location					Form of housing				
	All students	University	Non-university	< 100,000 inhabitants	> 100,000–300,000 inhabitants	> 300,000–500,000 inhabitants	> 500,000 inhabitants	Capital city	Living with parents	Student accommodation	With partner/children	With other persons	Alone
AT	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
AZ	44	44	n/a	22	n.d.	37	n.d.	48	51	22	46	28	37
CH	40	37	43	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	49	20	46	25	35
CZ	50	50	53	58	52	45	n.d.	50	58	44	52	39	48
DE	41	39	45	36	41	37	45	47	56	20	53	26	36
DK	30	28	32	36	30	24	n.d.	30	45	24	35	26	29
EE	33	32	37	32	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	35	38	17	41	27	31
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.	n.d.
FI	44	41	46	55	49	34	38	41	t.f.c.	20	59	37	37
FR	44	44	44	46	38	39	43	58	63	27	44	37	30
GE	46	47	41	37	35	n.d.	n.d.	48	50	36	47	39	39
HR	35	34	37	30	27	n.d.	n.d.	41	42	23	36	23	28
HU	42	41	50	47	36	n.d.	n.d.	45	55	22	50	27	39
IE	38	39	37	34	32	n.d.	n.d.	46	52	17	36	29	36
IS	24	24	n/a	26	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	23	24	12	27	20	24
LT	37	37	38	38	34	n.d.	n.d.	39	42	24	43	29	33
LV	49	47	61	55	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	46	54	36	52	34	51
MT	32	34	26	32	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	35	t.f.c.	26	28	27
NL	46	40	52	41	45	50	47	48	63	23	52	32	38
NO	36	35	38	36	30	n.d.	n.d.	32	43	22	49	22	36
PL	42	41	45	42	42	41	41	44	54	20	42	29	34
PT	38	40	34	23	38	n.d.	n.d.	49	51	20	36	21	30
RO	38	38	n/a	38	34	n.d.	n.d.	46	46	22	44	33	36
SE	33	33	n/a	34	28	38	32	43	50	17	43	30	28
SK	44	43	52	49	43	n.d.	n.d.	39	53	25	51	27	40
av.	**39**	**39**	**43**	**38**	**37**	**38**	**41**	**43**	**49**	**23**	**44**	**29**	**35**

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

Data source: *EUROSTUDENT 8, E.4.*

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

EUROSTUDENT question(s): *4.3 On a typical day, how much time does it take you to get from your home to your higher education institution during the current lecture period?*

Note(s): *No non-universities exist in AZ, IS, RO, SE.*

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

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