eurostudent.eu

Well-being and mental health among students: Eurostudent findings

Joris Cuppen Ardita Muja September 2024

Consortium members



Funded with the support of all participating countries. Co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union and the following bodies.



The funders are not responsible for the content.

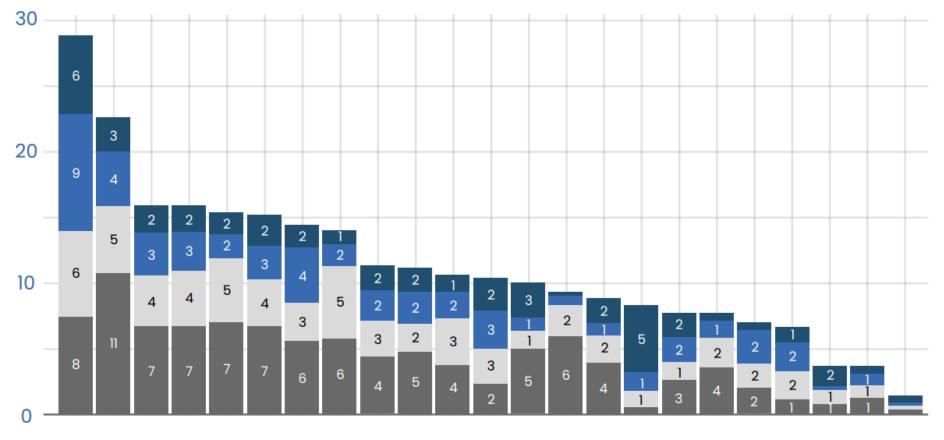


Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra

Well-being and mental health

- In wake of COVID-19 increased concerns and attention on students' mental health and well-being
- In response, EUROSTUDENT 8 included a topical module (i.e. questions) on mental health and wellbeing
- Two reports on well-being:
 - Topical module report (published April)
 - In-depth report (to be published)

Mental health per country



SE FI EE IE DK PL CZ NL av. MT NO LT IS AT PT AZ SK FR HU GE LV HR RO

Mental health problem, not limiting

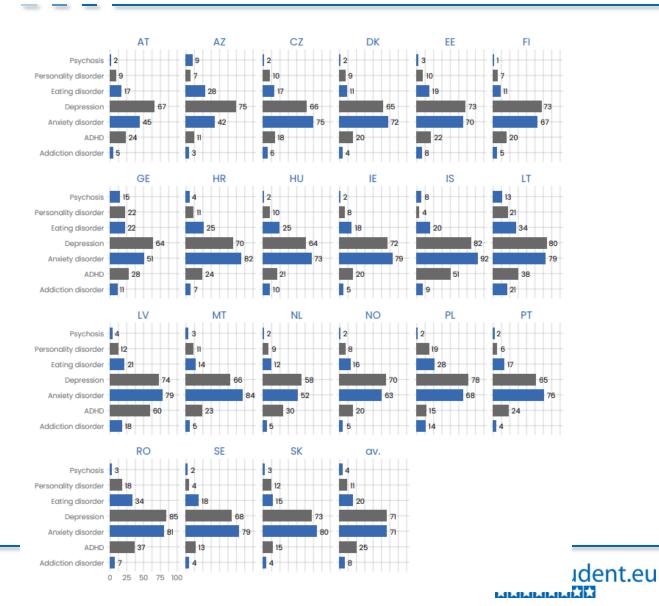
Mental health problem, not diagnosed

Mental health problem, diagnosed but not treated for it

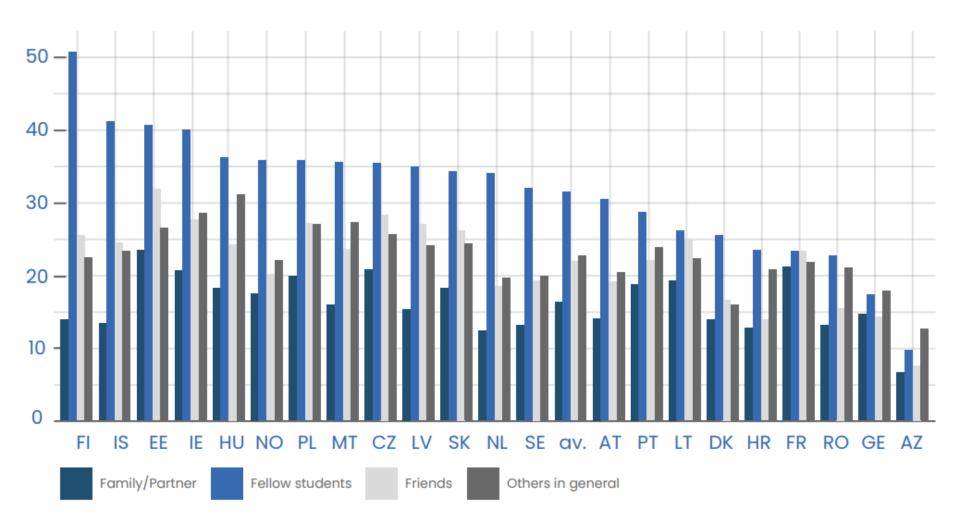
Mental health problem, diagnosed and being treated for it



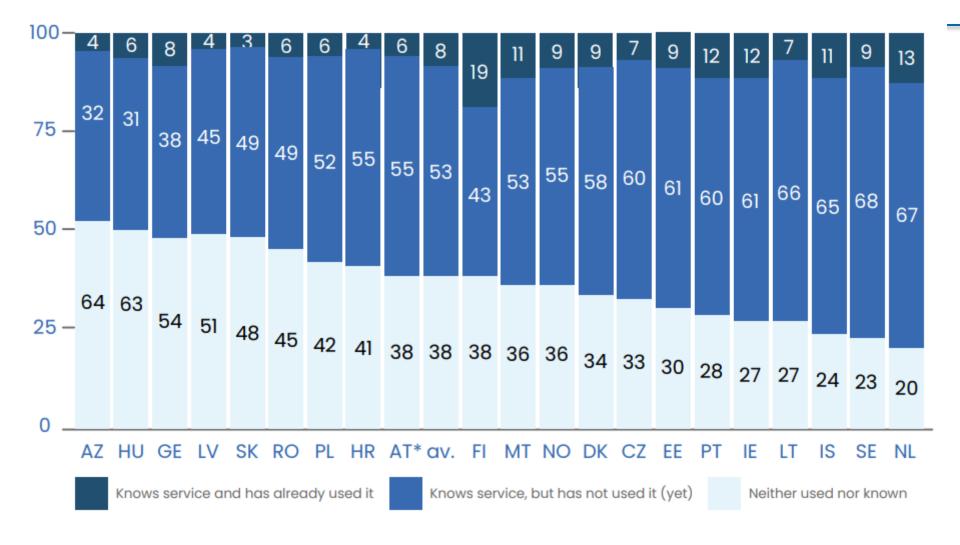
What type of mental health problems do students have?



Isolation

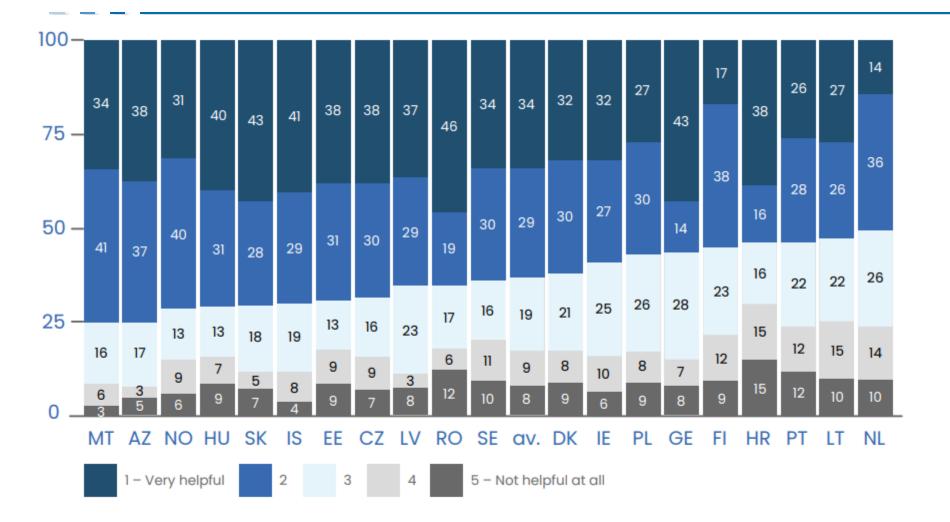


Counselling: Use of psychological counselling services





Counselling: Satisfaction





- Measured with 5 items, which is combined in one score, ranging from 0-100.
- With this range, thresholds of 50 and 28 are used in the literature to indicate:
 - Low well-being: <= 50
 - Very low-wellbeing: <= 28

Example of well-being scores:

Please indicate for each of the 5 statements which is closest to how

you have been feeling over the past 2 weeks.						
			_			
Over the past 2 weeks	All of the time	Most of the time	More than half the time	Less than half the time	Some of the time	At no time
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	0	0		0	0	0
I have felt calm and relaxed	0	0	0	•	0	0
I have felt active and vigorous	0	0	•	0	0	0
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	0	0	0	-	0	0
my daily life has been filled with things that interest me	0	0	0	\$	0	0

M1.6.

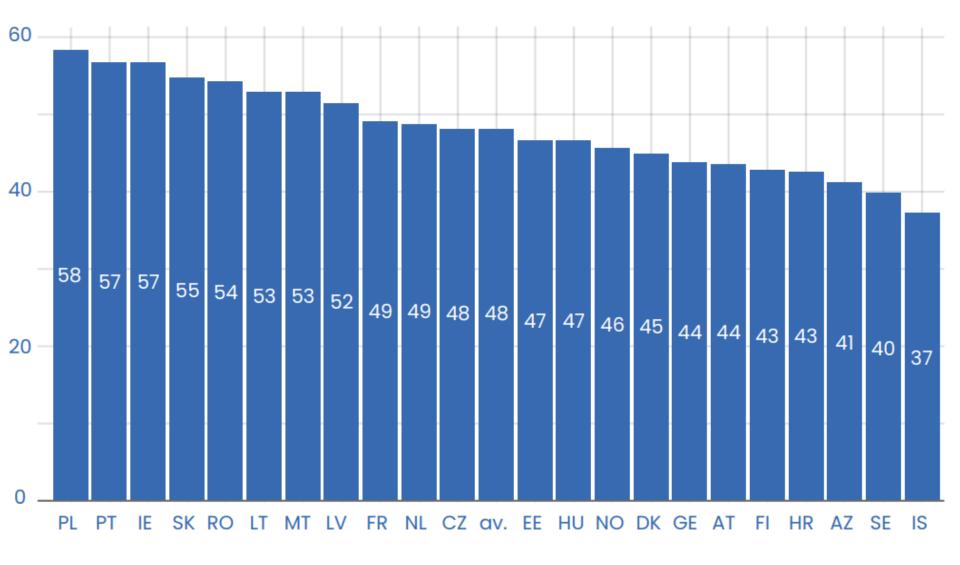
Student 1: 48

M1.6. Please indicate for each of the 5 statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the past 2 weeks.

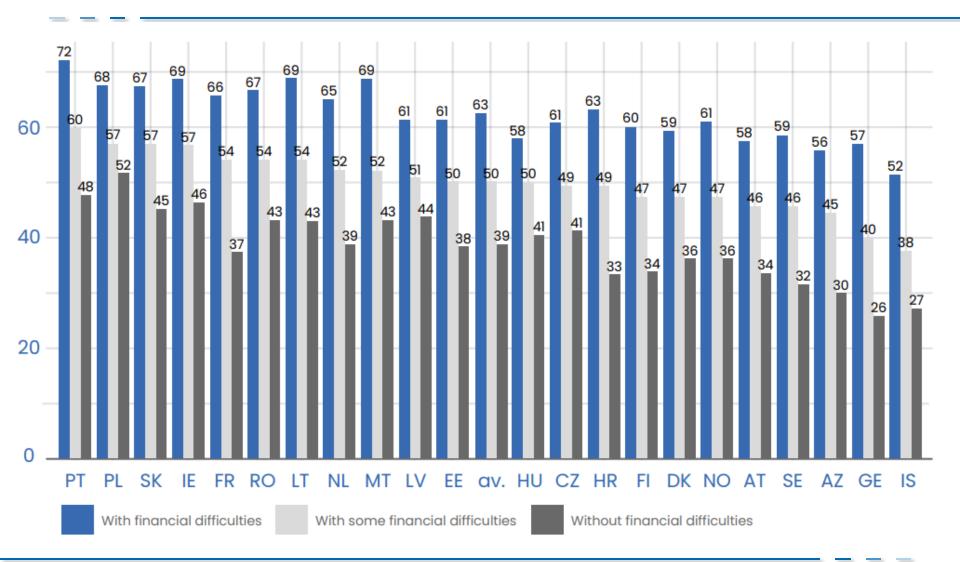
Over the past 2 weeks	All of the time	Most of the time	More than half the time	Less than half the time	Some of the time	At no time
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	0	0	0	0		0
I have felt calm and relaxed	0	0	0	•	0	0
I have felt active and vigorous	0	0	0	0	•	0
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	0	0	0	•	0	0
my daily life has been filled with things that interest me	0	0	0	0	4	0

Student 2: 28

Well-being: share of students <= score of 50



Well-being, by financial difficulties

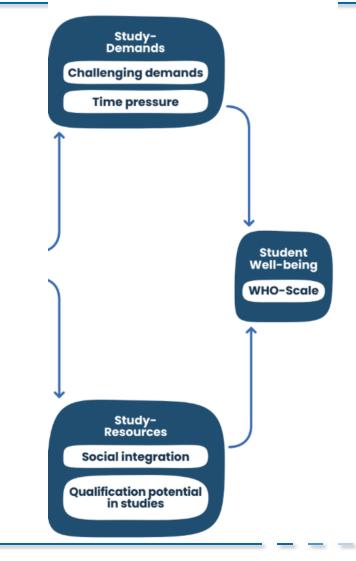


Main research question:

- To what extent do students report poor well-being? And how does this vary across countries?
- 2. Which students are more at risk of a poor well-being? And why?

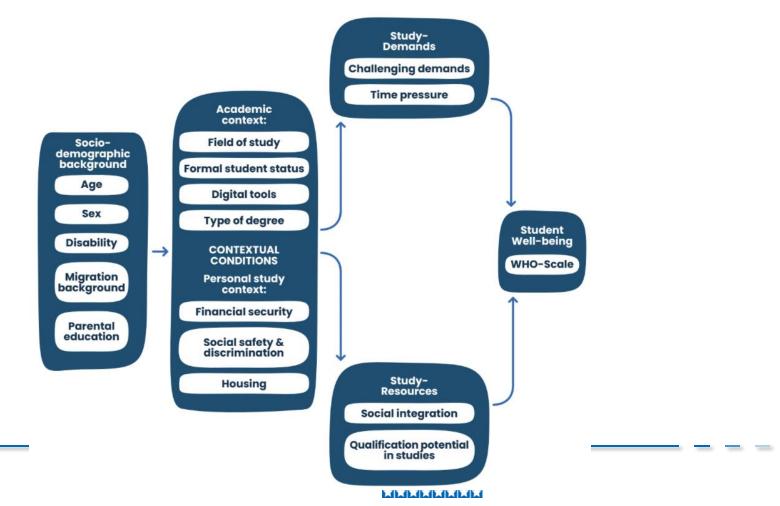
Theoretical background (1)

- Study demands-resources
 (SD-R) framework
 (Gusy et al., 2016)
- Study demands: e.g. heavy workload
- Study resources: e.g. social support from fellow students



Theoretical background (2)

Which students are more at risk of poor well-being and why?

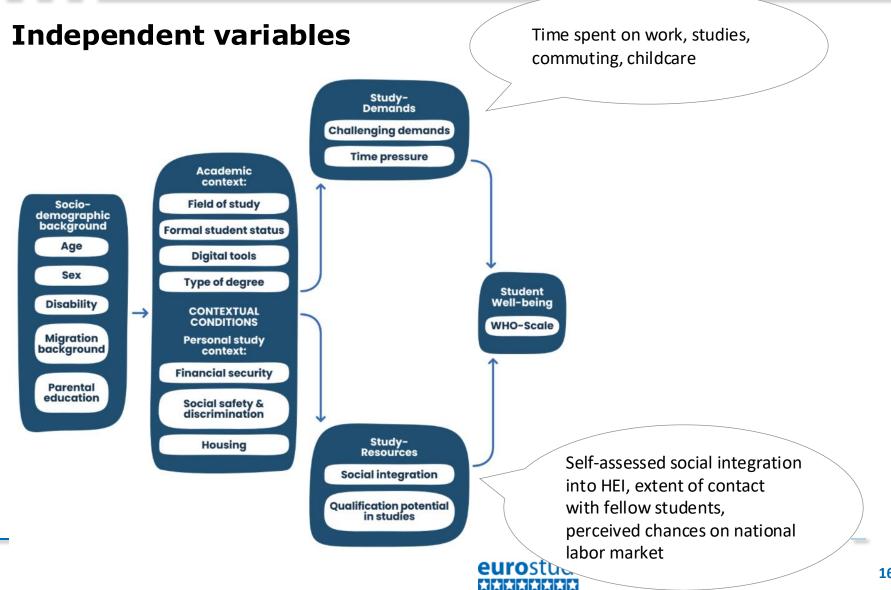


Hypotheses

We expect a relatively lower well-being among:

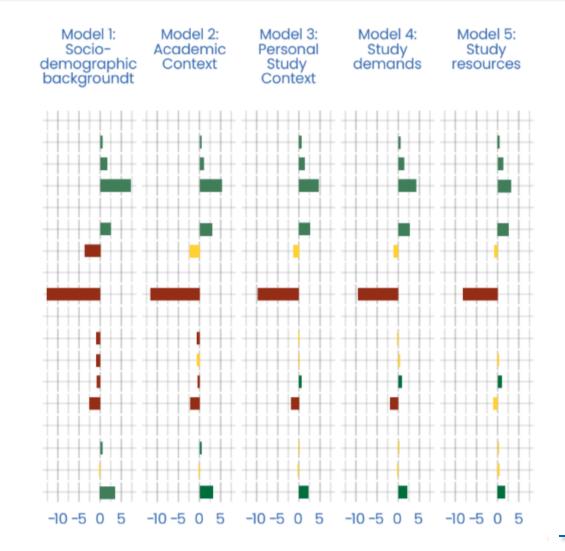
- Students with vulnerable backgrounds (e.g. low SES, migration background, with disability)
- Students with less resources
- Students with more demands

Data



Results multivariate analysis

- Multi-level lineair regression model on well-being
- 5 models; each adding one element from our theoretical model



Socio-demographic background

Age: up to aged 21 (ref.) Age: 22-24 Age: 25-29 Age: 30 and over Gender: female (ref.) Gender: male Gender: other Having a disability: no (ref.) Having a disability: yes Migration background: none (ref.) Migration background: 2nd gen. Migration background: 1st gen. Migration background: international Migration background: other Parental tertiary education: yes (ref.) Parental tertiary education: no Parental tertiary education: don't know Parental financial status

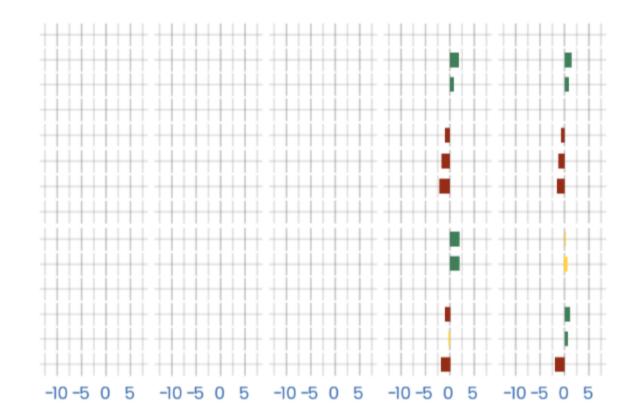
eurostudent.eu

-

Well-being and (study) demands

Study demands

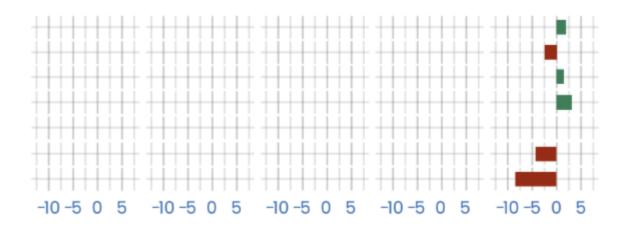
Working hours: 0h (ref.) Working hours: 1-20h Working hours: >20h Commuting hours: 0-15 min (ref.) Commuting hours: 16-30 min. Commuting hours: 31-60 min. Commuting hours: >1h Childcare hours: 0h (ref.) Childcare hours: 1-39h Childcare hours: >40h Study hours: 30-40h (ref.) Study hours: 0-19h Study hours: 20-29h Study hours: >40h



Well-being and (study) resources

Study resources

National job opportunities (Z-scores) National job opportunities: don't know Contact with other students Teaching quality scale Sense of belonging HE: high (ref.) Sense of belonging HE: mid Sense of belonging HE: low



Conclusion

- Substantial part of the European student population indicate that they have a poor well-being (average all countries: 48%)
- There is a clear <u>inequality</u> in having a poor well-being:
 - Student backgrounds matters
 - More privileged students are more likely to have better well-being
 - Study demands and resources matter
 - Students with the highest time spent on studies have lower well-being
 - Stimulate academic integration with fellow students and teachers to improve well-being



Thank you for your attention



Reports are (to be) published on:

Eurostudent.eu

Joris Cuppen: j.cuppen@researchned.nl

Ardita Muja: <u>a.muja@researchned.nl</u>

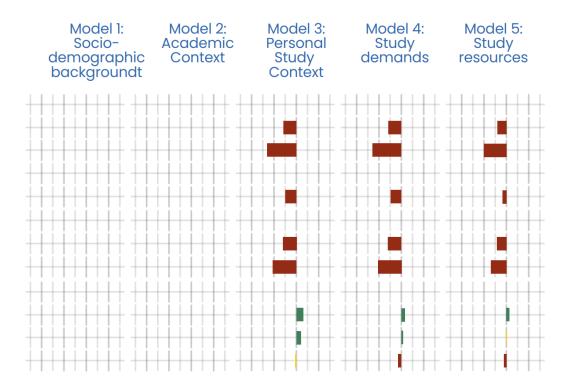


Academic context

Model 1: Model 2: Model 3: Model 4: Model 5: Socio-Academic Personal Study Study demographic Context Study demands resources backgroundt Contéxt Academic context Field: Business Administration (ref.) Field: Education Field: Arts and Humanities Field: Social Sciences, Journalism and Information Field: Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics Field: ICTs Field: Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction Field: Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary Field: Health and Welfare Field: Services Formal student status: full-time student (ref.) Formal student status: part-time student Access to (digital) tools: high (ref.) Access to (digital) tools: mid Access to (digital) tools: low Type of degree: non-master level (ref.) Type of degree: master level

Personal study context

Experienced financial difficulty: none (ref.) Experienced financial difficulty: mid Experienced financial difficulty: yes Experienced discrimination: no (ref.) Experienced discrimination: yes Experienced social safety: high (ref.) Experienced social safety: mid Experienced social safety: mid Experienced social safety: low Housing: living with parents (ref.) Housing: living with partner, children Housing: living with others Housing: living alone



The role of financial stress in student wellbeing

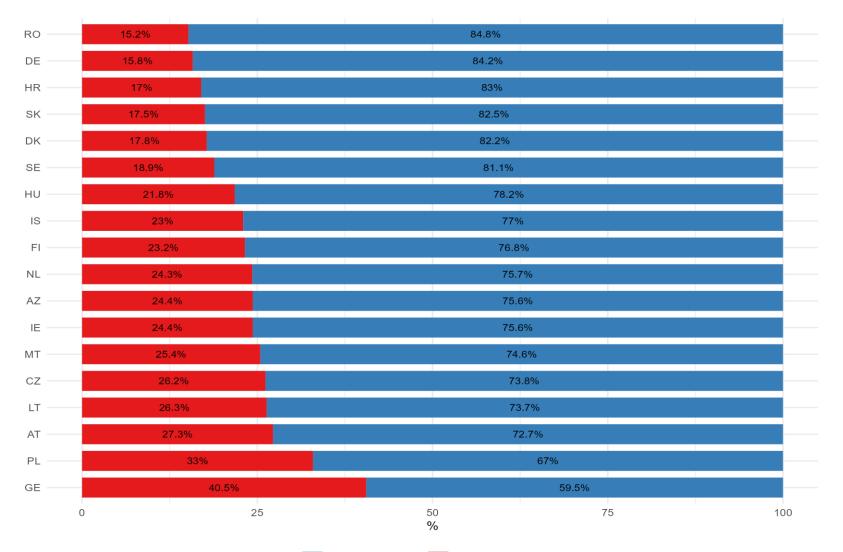
Authors: Elisabeth Kendrali, Mikael Raihhelgauz

Financial stress

Financial stress is a subjective measure of one's inability to meet their financial obligations.

1 in 4 report serious or very serious financial stress.

Prevalence of financial stress by country



None or moderate Serious or very serious

Factors linked to mental well-being

- **Demographic** age, gender
- Academic *e.g.* study intensity
- Social and relational *e.g.* social isolation
- Family background *e.g.* parental education level

Prevalence of financial stress



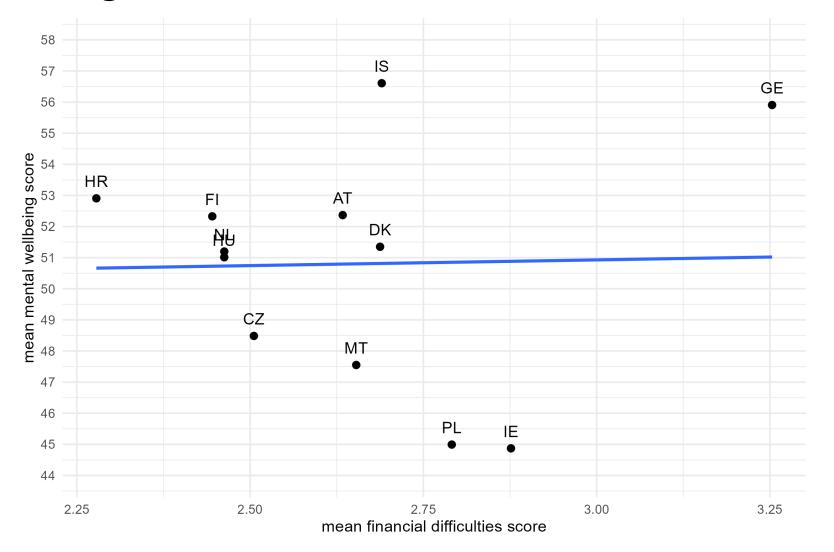
Hypothesis 1: Financial stress is linked to mental well-being, even after accounting for all the other factors.

Hypothesis 2: In countries where financial stress is more widespread among students, it has a lesser impact on their mental wellbeing.

Analysis

- WHO-5 Mental Wellbeing Index (0 – 100 scale)
- Experience of financial difficulties (1 – 5 scale)

Country-level data



Variables employed in the study

Category	Variable
Mental well-being	WHO-5 index
Financial stress	Financial difficulties
Control variables	
Demographic variables	Age (years)
	Gender
	Study intensity
Academic characteristics	Total weekly hours spent on various forms of study
	Social isolation
Social and relational characteristics	Frequency of feeling isolated from friends (1-5 scale)
Family background characteristics	Father's education
Country level variables	
	Country
	Prevalence of financial difficulties

Results



Results #2



Policy recommendations

- 1. More funding for student financial support
- 2. Increase the availability of mental health support + financial counselling
- 3. Include financial health screening in mental health assessments

PRAXIS | MÕTTEKODA