

# EUROSTUDENT VII (2018-2021)

## LIVING AND STUDY CONDITIONS IN FRANCE AND ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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The EUROSTUDENT program, established in the 1990s, provides an opportunity to compare living and study conditions in 26 European countries. Its latest edition (2018-2021) allows for the examination of the situation of students in France in relation to those enrolled in other member states, using standardized indicators (Box 1). While the Bologna Conference (1999) laid the groundwork for the harmonization of European higher education systems and

prioritized equal access to higher education within this area<sup>1</sup>, analyses reveal notable differences in the social composition of student populations and study conditions across countries. These disparities (in age structure, housing situation, or financial resources) illustrate national models "linked to distinct welfare state traditions"<sup>2</sup>. These excerpts from the publication EUROSTUDENT VII - *Synopsis of Indicators of the 7th EUROSTUDENT program (2018-2021)*,

supplemented by some additional results and references, highlight the situation of students in France. They show that the current model in France is still strongly characterized by the linearity of educational paths—reflected notably in the young age of students—and by family dependency.

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*This publication reflects the view of the author only, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.*

<sup>1</sup> The 2020 Rome Communiqué stresses that "socially inclusive higher education will remain at the core of the EHEA and will provide opportunities and support for equitable inclusion of individuals from all parts of society".

<sup>2</sup> Charles, N. & Delès, R. (2018). L'individualisation des parcours étudiants en Europe : ce que faire des études veut dire [The individualization of student paths in Europe: what studying means ?]. *Administration & Éducation*, 160, 85-96. <https://doi.org/10.3917/admed.160.0085>.



## BOX 1: THE DATA FROM THE EUROSTUDENT VII PROGRAM

The majority of the 26 countries participating in the EUROSTUDENT VII program conducted their survey with a reference period before the COVID-19 pandemic. These countries are Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Germany (indicators from 2016), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Slovenia, and France. Some countries (Germany [indicators from 2020 in some cases], Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey) had to adjust their survey period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore do not have the same reference period. Germany's data is primarily from the 2016 survey, but some indicators are from the 2020 survey with a reference period after the pandemic began. Countries (or indicators in the case of Germany) that do not have the "normal" pre-COVID reference period are presented on the right side of the graphs. The average only considers data referring to the "normal" pre-COVID period.

The EUROSTUDENT scope includes all students who are, at the time of their response (generally during the semester), enrolled in a study program considered in that country as "normal" higher education. These programs correspond to levels 5, 6, and 7 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, 2011). Excluded are:

- Students who have (temporarily) interrupted their studies, officially or unofficially, at the time of the survey
- Students in highly specialized institutions, such as military or police training programs, institutions directly affiliated with a company, or public service training programs
- Students in temporary international mobility programs, such as Erasmus
- Students in ISCED level 8 study programs, i.e., doctoral students
- Students in distance learning programs

For France, the indicators are based on data from the 2020 Student Living Conditions Survey (CDV2020), administered online

between March 12 and May 11, 2020, to a sample of more than 250,000 students representative of the student population in France. The results presented here correspond to the analysis of the 52,389 questionnaires fully completed by students that fell within the EUROSTUDENT scope. This scope is narrower than that of the CDV2020 survey. More specifically, the scope of the two surveys differs from the last three exclusion criteria. It should be noted that some countries or indicators may occasionally deviate from the general framework set by EUROSTUDENT, limiting their comparability. These deviations are identified under the figures, and additional details can be found in the EUROSTUDENT report, available online (see "General methodological notes" pp. 24 and "Notes on national samples and deviations from the EUROSTUDENT standard target group" pp. 27-29). Indicators not commented on here particularly require consideration of the comparability restrictions described in these methodological notes.

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## COUNTRY ABBREVIATIONS

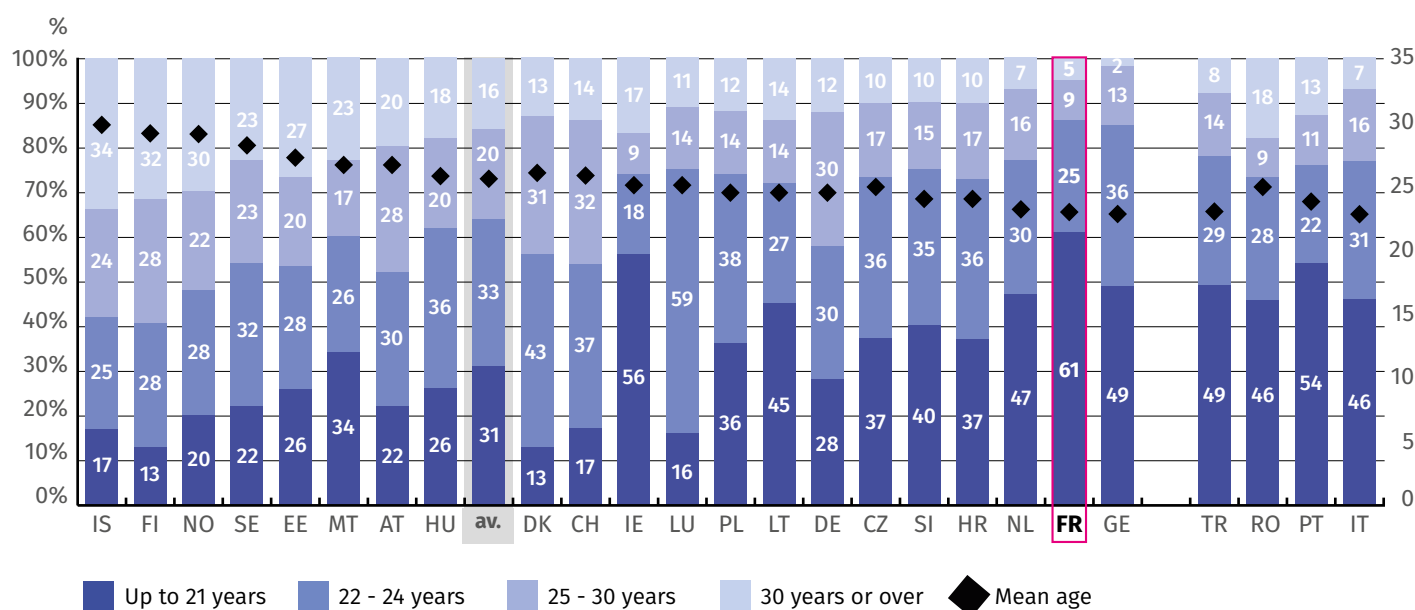
THE FOLLOWING ABBREVIATIONS ARE USED IN ALL FIGURES AND TABLES TO REFER TO THE EUROSTUDENT COUNTRIES:

<b>AL</b> Albania	<b>IS</b> Iceland
<b>AT</b> Austria	<b>IT</b> Italy
<b>CH</b> Switzerland	<b>LT</b> Lithuania
<b>CZ</b> The Czech Republic	<b>LU</b> Luxembourg
<b>DE</b> Germany	<b>MT</b> Malta
<b>DK</b> Denmark	<b>NL</b> The Netherlands
<b>EE</b> Estonia	<b>NO</b> Norway
<b>FI</b> Finland	<b>PL</b> Poland
<b>FR</b> France	<b>PT</b> Portugal
<b>GE</b> Georgia	<b>RO</b> Romania
<b>HR</b> Croatia	<b>SE</b> Sweden
<b>HU</b> Hungary	<b>SI</b> Slovenia
<b>IE</b> Ireland	<b>TR</b> Turkey



# IN FRANCE, THE YOUNGEST STUDENTS IN EUROPE THAT OFTEN LIVE ALONE

FIGURE 1 : SHARE OF STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS (IN %) AND MEAN AGE (IN YEARS)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT VII, A.1 (Figure B1.3).

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

Data collection: Spring 2019 except CH, FR (Spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: IS, IT, NO, SE.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: DE, IE, IT, PL.

In France, 86% of students are under 25 years old, and the median age is 21.2 years, making it the youngest student population among EUROSTUDENT countries (Figure 1). On average, across these countries, students under 25 represent 64% of the student body (only 41% in Finland). The median age is 23.7 years on average and exceeds 26 years in Finland and Iceland. The average age of students varies notably depending on the time of entry into higher education. The transition period between secondary and higher education is over two years for 16% of students on average in EUROSTUDENT countries. This proportion rises to 30% in Finland and Iceland, while it is only 5% in France.

Likely due to their younger age, students in France are less often parents (3%) than

the average in the program countries (11%). Conversely, 20% of students in Iceland, Norway, and Estonia have at least one child. In Finland, Iceland, and Malta, a relatively high proportion of student are parents since their first year of study. Specifically, between 13% and 17% of students in these countries began their studies while expecting a child or already being parents.

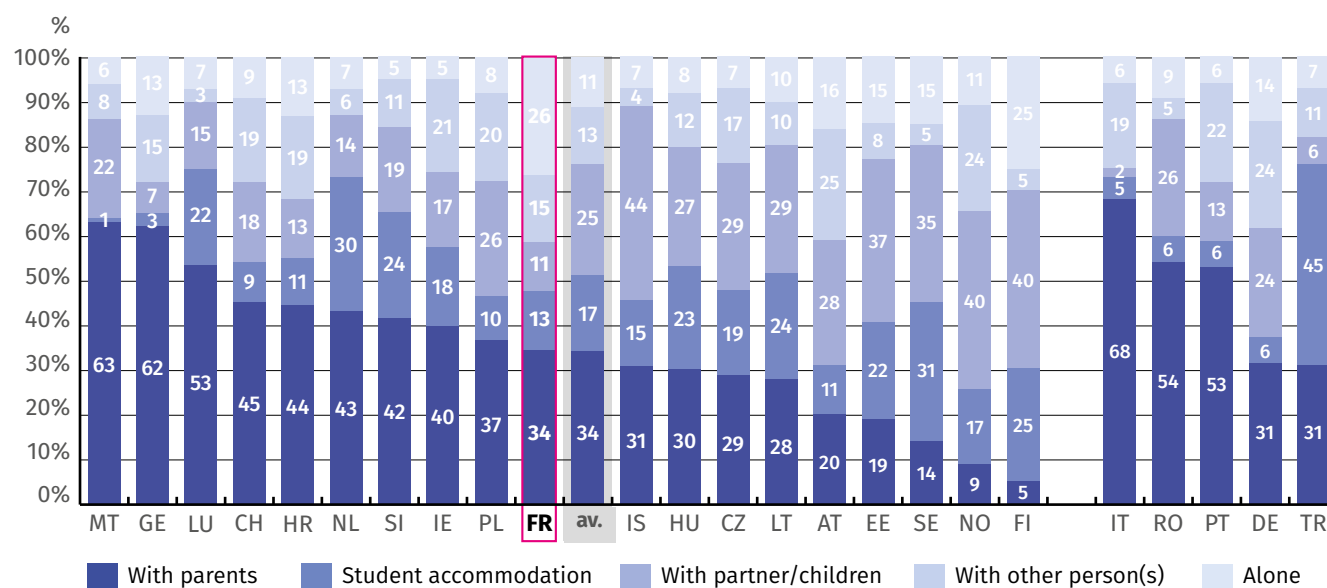
As in most EUROSTUDENT countries, living with parents or one parent is the most common housing arrangement among students in France (34% in France and on average in EUROSTUDENT countries) (figure 2). However, differences appear between countries: the proportion of students living with parents is much higher in Luxembourg (53%), Romania, Portugal, Malta, Georgia, and Italy (68%). In Southern European countries,

leaving the parental home occurs much later, and moving out is often associated with establishing a new household<sup>3</sup>.

As students age, they are less likely to live with their parents or in student accommodation and more likely to live with a partner. Thus, the second most common housing situation on average in EUROSTUDENT countries is living with a partner and/or children (25%). France is an exception, where the second most common form of housing is living alone. Living alone is the most common housing situation in France (26%, compared to 11% on average in EUROSTUDENT countries), far behind living with a partner (only 11%). Since the average age of students in France is particularly low (22.4 years), cohabitation with a partner occurs later and remains a minority<sup>4</sup>.

3 C. Van de Velde, Devenir adulte. Sociologie comparée de la jeunesse en Europe [Becoming An Adult. A comparative Sociology of Youth in Europe], Le Lien social (Paris cedex 14: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), <https://www.cairn.info/devenir-adulte--9782130557173.htm>.

4 C. Giraud, A. Regnier-Loilier, Coupler couple et études : chaque chose en son temps ? [Coupling couple and studies: one thing at a time?], in Être étudiant avant et pendant la crise sanitaire, La Documentation française, coll. Études et recherche, 2023.

**FIGURE 2 : STUDENTS' HOUSING SITUATION (IN %)**


Data source: EUROSTUDENT VII, A.1 (figure B9.2). No data: AL, DK.

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?

Data collection: Spring 2019 except CH, FR (spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: IS, IT, NO, SE.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: DE, IE, IT, PL.

# CONTRASTING RESOURCES BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN COUNTRIES

## STRUCTURE OF RESOURCES

Across all countries, three sources constitute on average more than 90% of total student income: 43% comes from paid activities, 36% from family or partner contributions<sup>5</sup>, and 14% from public support (Figure 3). At the country level, several trends emerge. In nearly a third of the countries, contributions from the student's family and/or partner are the main source of income. This is the case in France, as well as in Georgia, Luxembourg, Germany, Croatia, Turkey, and Romania, where students receive nearly half or more of their income from their family or partner.

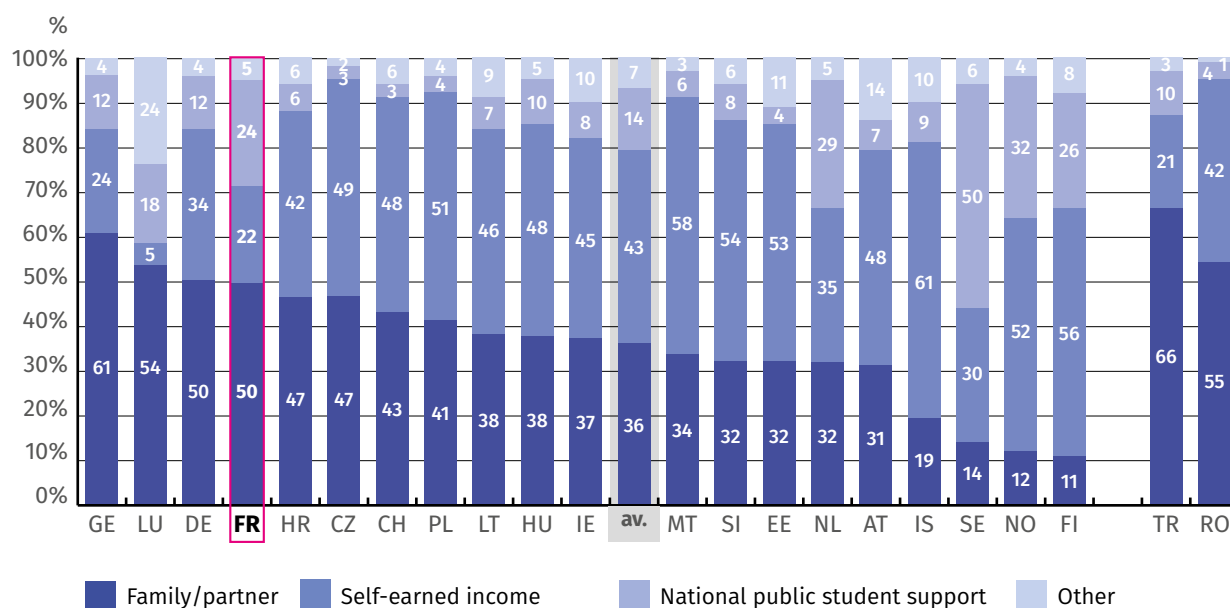
In almost all other countries, students' paid activities are the most important source of income in relative terms. Particularly in Poland, Malta, Slovenia, Estonia, Iceland, Norway, and Finland, more than half of student income comes from their own employment. In the other countries in this group, including the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Lithuania, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Austria, the share varies from 35% to 49%.

Sweden stands out in this regard as the only country where the main resource is public support, which accounts for half of student income. It should be noted that public support is particularly strong in all Nordic countries, with proportions ranging from 26% to 50%, and is associated with the institutionalization of a youth phase of experimentation<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> The total income of students includes direct payments made by family members or partners for the benefit of the student. Bringing together these two resources, although referring to different models, is justified by the contrast with other resources coming from third parties, the student themselves, or the state.

<sup>6</sup> Van de Velde (2008). Op. cit.

FIGURE 3 : COMPOSITION OF STUDENTS' FUNDING (INCLUDING TRANSFERS IN KIND) (IN %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT VII, G.87, G.88, G.89, G.90, & G.91 (figure B7.3). No data: AL, DK, IT, PT.

EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 4.16 What is the average monthly amount available to you in cash or via bank transfers from the following sources during the current lecture period?, 4.17 What are your average expenses for the following items during the current lecture period?

Note(s): The category 'other' also includes in this case income from sources outside the respective country. Transfers in kind are goods and services for students financed or provided by their parents, partner, or others.

Data collection: Spring 2019 except CH, FR (spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: IS, IT, NO, SE.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: DE, IE, IT, PL.

The median monthly income of students in EUROSTUDENT countries is 861 PPS (Purchasing Power Standards - Box 2). At the extremes, Switzerland, Estonia, Iceland, and

Norway have median monthly student incomes exceeding 1000 PPS, while Luxembourg, Georgia, and Turkey have median monthly incomes below 700 PPS. In France, the median

monthly income of students is 705 PPS, which is below the average for EUROSTUDENT countries and falls on the lower end of the spectrum.

## BOX 2 : THE UNIT OF MEASUREMENT PPS (PURCHASING POWER STANDARD)

It is used by EUROSTUDENT countries to make data comparable, despite using different currencies such as the Euro, Danish Krone, Croatian Kuna, and Swiss Franc. PPS is an artificial monetary unit that eliminates differences in price levels between countries. One PPS allows the purchase of the same volume of goods and services across the 28 European Union countries (based on 2019 data when the EU had 28 member states).

For example, if the income of a beneficiary in country A is 800 PPS and in country B it is 500 PPS, this clarifies that beneficiaries in country A can buy 800 units of the goods basket, while those in country B can buy 500 units, even if the prices in both countries are the same. To convert amounts into PPS, values reported by EUROSTUDENT countries in their national units were converted into Euros. Conversion factors were based on 2019 Purchasing

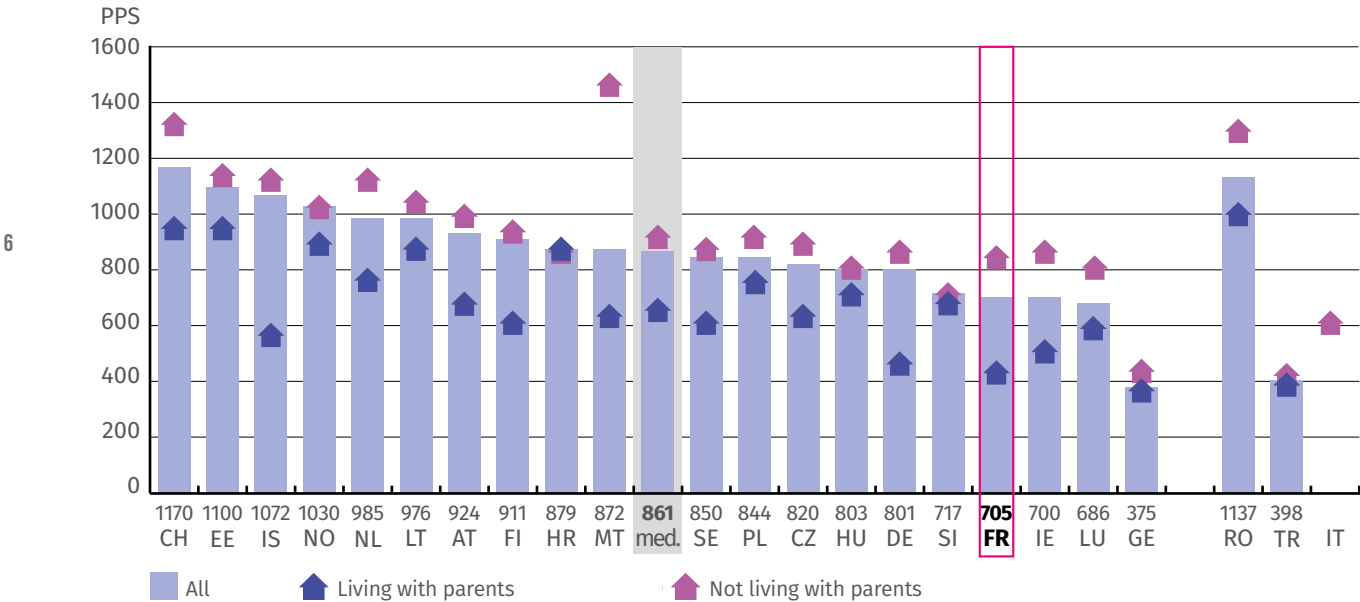
Power Parities from Eurostat (Eurostat (2021). Purchasing power parities (PPPs), price level indices and real expenditures for ESA 2010 aggregates) and by the World Bank for Georgia (World Bank (2021). PPP conversion factor, GDP (LCU per international \$). Retrieved from <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/ppp-conversion-factor-gdp-lcu-international-3>).

In France, students who live with their parents<sup>7</sup> have median monthly resources of 435 PPS, whereas the median resources of those living independently are 846 PPS per month (Figure 4). Although the income gap between students living with their parents and those living independently (in favour of the latter) is present in over 80% of EUROSTUDENT countries, the magnitude of this difference is particularly pronounced in France compared to the EUROSTUDENT average. In France, the median monthly income of students living independently is 1.9 times higher than those living with their parents, whereas this ratio is only 1.4 times

higher for the average of other EUROSTUDENT countries (659 PPS for students living with parents and 906 PPS for students not living with parents). A similar income gap between these two sub-populations as observed in France is only found in Iceland and Malta. Apart from housing costs, differences in food and other living expenses seem particularly significant between these groups in these countries, possibly due to varying student profiles in different housing situations, and perhaps also due to certain costs covered directly by the family, which might not be fully accounted for.

On the other hand, the income gap between students living with parents and those not living with parents is less than 20% in Norway, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia, and Georgia, where students may contribute more to the common resources associated with family housing.

FIGURE 4 : STUDENT INCOME BY FORM OF HOUSING (INCLUDING TRANSFERS IN KIND) (MEDIAN INCOME, IN PPS)



**Data source:** EUROSTUDENT VII, G.1 (PPP), G.2 (PPP) & G.3 (PPP) (figure B7.1). **No data:** AL, DK, PT. **Too few cases:** IT: all students, students living with parents.

**EUROSTUDENT Question(s):** 4.16 What is the average monthly amount available to you in cash or via bank transfers from the following sources during the current lecture period?, 4.17 What are your average expenses for the following items during the current lecture period?

**Note:** The values above the country abbreviations represent the median income of all students. Transfers in kind are goods and services for students financed or provided by their parents, partner, or others.

**Data collection:** Spring 2019 except CH, FR (spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions:** FR, RO, SI.

**Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group:** DE, IE, IT, PL.

<sup>7</sup> As students' resources are linked to their expenses, in particular their housing costs, the analysis is made by distinguishing between students who live with their parents and those who do not.

## FRENCH STUDENTS ARE HEAVILY DEPENDANT ON FAMILY FINANCIAL AID

In France, 79% of students receive financial support from their family, partner, or other family members, whether through direct monetary transfers or indirect payments on their behalf. This resource constitutes 63% of their total monthly income. These proportions are significantly higher than the EUROSTUDENT average, where 70% of students receive family financial support, comprising 53% of their total monthly resources.

The relatively greater reliance on family funding for monthly expenses among French students is also reflected in its share of total budgets of all students. In France, family support accounts for 50% of all student resources, compared to 36% on average

across EUROSTUDENT countries (Figure 3).

Thus, funding for higher education in France heavily depends on students' families. This pattern is also predominant in Southern Europe (Croatia, Portugal, Georgia), Western Europe (Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg), Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, Poland) and in Lithuania. In these countries, the proportion of students receiving family support ranges from 71% (Poland) to 89% (Croatia), and family contributions constitute between 57% (Hungary) to 89% (Portugal) of these students' resources, without taking into account the expenses avoided by students living with parents, which lasts particularly long in Southern countries.

Conversely, countries where the proportion of students receiving family support is below the EUROSTUDENT average include Northern countries (Estonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Iceland, Sweden), countries based on an emancipatory and collectivized conception of adulthood<sup>8</sup>, Slovenia, and Malta. The proportion of beneficiaries of family support is particularly low in Sweden (36%). Family support covers between 21% (Norway) and 52% (Estonia and Malta) of resources of beneficiaries.

## PUBLIC FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN FRANCE EXCEEDS THE EUROSTUDENT AVERAGE

Public financial support in EUROSTUDENT VII is defined as payments received by students directly from the state where they permanently study, typically due to their student status. These payments may either require repayment (public loans) or be grants (scholarships). It includes State support at all levels (national, regional, municipal) and institutional support (from higher education institutions). Not all State support can be included due to EUROSTUDENT's declarative data approach, such as tax reductions for students and their families or costs borne directly by the State for the benefit of students (e.g., tuition fee waivers)<sup>9</sup>.

On average, 42% of students receive public financial support, which constitutes 42% of their total monthly resources. However, there are significant variations among EUROSTUDENT countries. In France, 63% of students receive public financial support, and this type of resource constitutes nearly half (46%) of the total monthly income of beneficiaries. These proportions place France, along with Sweden, Norway, Finland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Turkey, and Georgia, above the EUROSTUDENT average, albeit with significant differences among these countries. In this group, the proportion of recipients ranges from 42% (Georgia) to 77% (Sweden), and public financial support

constitutes between 43% (Luxembourg) and 78% (Sweden) of total resources of the beneficiaries.

Conversely, the lowest share of public financial support in higher education funding is found in Slovenia, Lithuania, Estonia, Croatia, Romania, and Switzerland. The proportion of recipients ranges from 9% (Switzerland) to 36% (Slovenia), and public support accounts for only 22% (Lithuania) to 39% (Switzerland) of student resources.

<sup>8</sup> Van de Velde (2008). Op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> In Georgia, for example, approximately 30% of students do not pay tuition fees. These fees are covered by the State through corresponding payments made directly to universities.

# A LESS FREQUENT PAID EMPLOYMENT IN FRANCE

In France, 48% of students earn income from employment, and these earnings constitute an average of 57% of their total resources (Figure 5). These proportions are lower than the averages observed across EUROSTUDENT countries, which stand at 60% and 64%, respectively. Other countries where the proportion of students engaged in paid employment is relatively low, along with the share of income from this source, include Luxembourg and Sweden.

On the opposite, Malta, Estonia, Iceland, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, and Slovenia

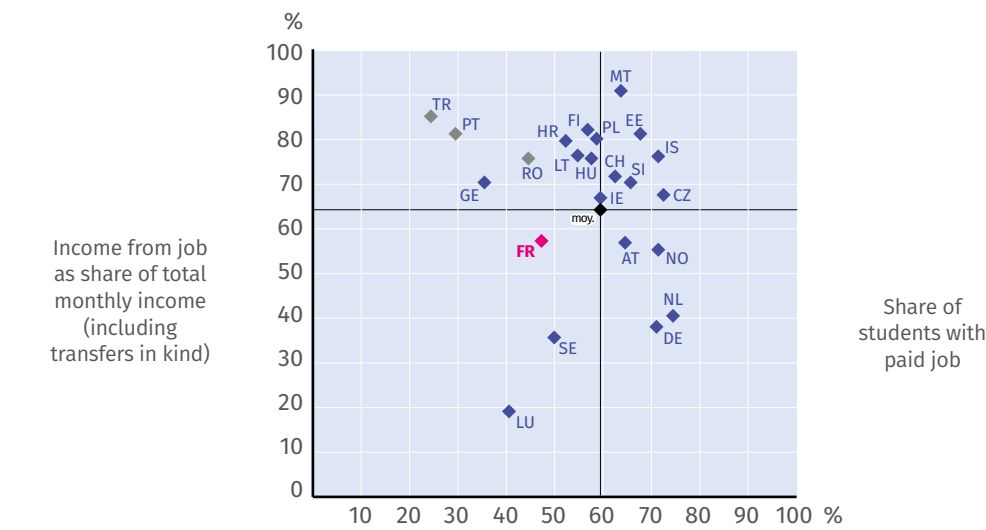
in paid employment, with earnings from employment representing a significant portion of their budgets.

In Austria, Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands, many students have a paid activity, but these earnings constitute a smaller share of their resources. In these countries, students typically work fewer hours per week, supplementing other sources of income.

Finally, in Finland, Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Croatia, Georgia, Turkey, Portugal, and Romania, a small proportion of students

engage in paid employment, yet earnings from these activities constitute a significant part of their resources, likely substituting for family support.

FIGURE 5 : SHARE OF STUDENTS WITH A PAID JOB AND STUDENTS' INCOME FROM CURRENT PAID JOB AS SHARE OF TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME (IN %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT VII, G126, G127 (figure B6.8). No data: DK, IT.

EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 4.5. Do you have (a) paid job(s) during the current #lecture period? 4.16. What is the average monthly amount available to you in cash or via #bank transfers from the following sources during the current #lecture period?

Data collection: Spring 2019 except CH, FR (spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH, SI.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: DE, IE, PL.



On average, half of all students' resources (regardless of the source) come from their employment income. The median amount averages 557 PPS across EUROSTUDENT countries. In France, this median amount is 136 PPS per month (across the entire student population). It remains below 400 PPS in Ireland, Georgia, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Turkey, but exceeds 800 PPS in Estonia, Malta, and Romania, where earnings from paid employment make up more than two-thirds of students' resources (compared to 22% in France).

When asked about their motivation for engaging in paid employment, French students more often than elsewhere state that they do so to gain professional experience (74% in France compared to 57% on average), and less frequently to cover their living expenses (48% in France compared to 68% on average). Acquiring professional experience is also a primary reason in Lithuania, Estonia, and Romania (with more than two-thirds of students), while students in Finland (87%), Iceland (85%), and Lithuania (83%) most often state that paid employment

helps them cover their living expenses.

Across EUROSTUDENT countries, students living apart from their parents more frequently report working out of necessity (to cover their expenses, support their studies, and/or financially assist others), while those living with their parent(s) tend to work to purchase things they desire.

# THE CHALLENGING DEMOCRATIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

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## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PRIMARILY IN THE FORM OF TEMPORARY ENROLMENT

The development of mobility in Europe, alongside the convergence of higher education systems, is part of the objectives set by the Bologna Process in 1999, with the aim of creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)<sup>10</sup>.

According to the mobility target set for the year 2020, 20% of EHEA graduates were expected to undertake a study or training period abroad of at least three months or 15 ECTS credits.

In EUROSTUDENT countries, 7% of students were temporarily enrolled abroad, and 4% completed an internship or apprenticeship abroad related to their studies, while

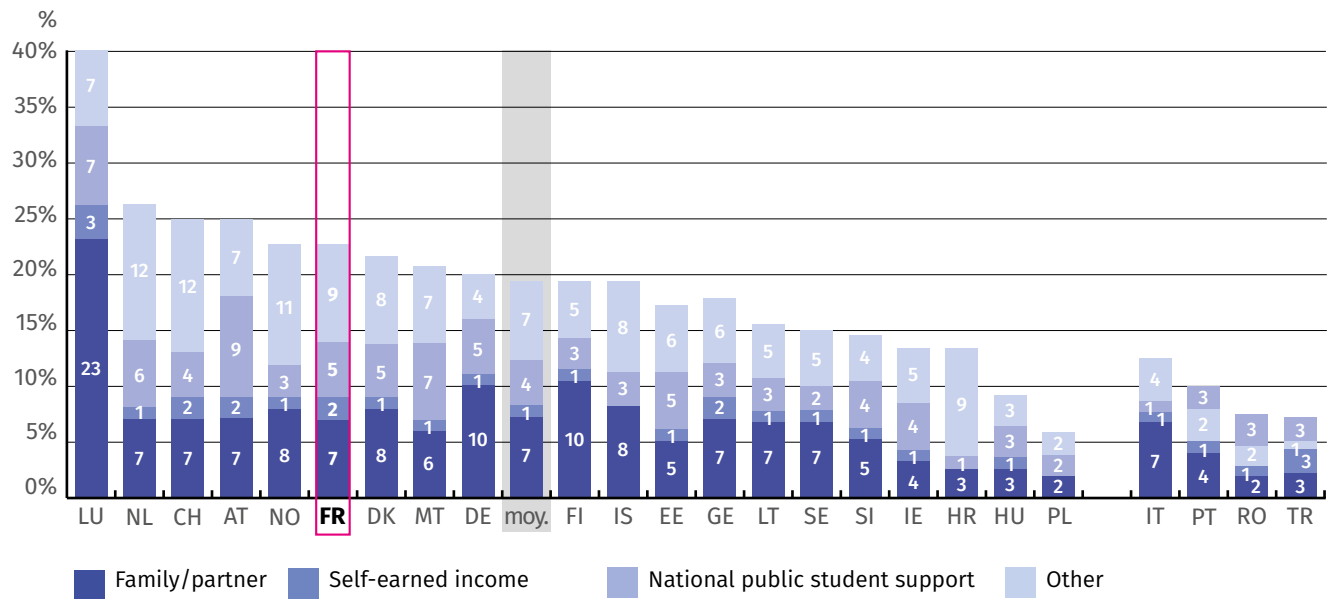
1% did both (Figure 6). Additionally, 7% spent time abroad for other study-related reasons (research stays, field studies, language courses, summer schools). Thus, the total proportion of students who had a study experience abroad reached 19% in EUROSTUDENT countries. This proportion varies greatly between countries, as do the most common types of stays. France, with a rate of 23%, is among the countries with the highest proportion. This is also the case in Luxembourg (39%), the Netherlands (26%), Switzerland (25%), Austria (25%), and Norway (24%). On the opposite, relatively low proportions are observed in Poland (7%), Romania (8%), and Turkey (7%)<sup>11</sup>.

Temporary enrolments abroad (e.g., within Erasmus+ programmes) are the most common type of mobility in Luxembourg (26%), Germany (11%), and Finland (11%). In France, this proportion is 9%, the same as study-related activities abroad besides temporary enrolments and internships. Internships abroad are preferred by students in Austria (11%) and Malta (8%) compared to other types of mobility. In France, 7% of students completed an internship abroad. Other types of stays abroad, besides temporary enrolments or internships/work placements abroad, are most often cited by students in the Netherlands (12%), Switzerland (12%), and Norway (11%).

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/fr/le-processus-de-bologne-questions-reponses-47254>

<sup>11</sup> According to the Mobility Scoreboard in Higher Education Background Report 2022/2023 by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, Eurydice (<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2797/001589>), France is particularly well evaluated across the six main chapters of the report: information and guidance, foreign language preparation, portability of grants and loans, participation of disadvantaged learners, recognition of learning outcomes, and recognition of qualifications in 2015-2016 and 2022-2023. Additionally, the proportion of students who have experienced international mobility somewhat mirrors the distribution of countries according to the importance of outgoing international mobility strategy in each: this strategy is particularly emphasized in Switzerland and Norway, integrated into higher education internationalization strategies in Austria and the Netherlands (which is the most common case), and remains less pronounced in Poland and Romania where this aspect is simply part of the overall education strategy.

FIGURE 6 : TYPES OF STUDENTS' INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY EXPERIENCE (EN %)



Data source: EUROSTUDENT VII, I.4 (figure B10.3). No data: CZ.

EUROSTUDENT Question(s): 4.20 Have you done any internships (of at least one week, mandatory or voluntary) since you first entered higher education in #country? 5.1 Have you ever taken part in any of the following temporary study-related activities abroad since you first entered higher education in #country?

Data collection: Spring 2019 except CH, FR (spring 2020 – reference period before COVID-19 pandemic), DE (summer 2016), IT, PT, RO, TR (reference period during COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and/or 2021).

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT survey conventions: CH, FR, IT, MT, SE, PT, RO.

Deviations from EUROSTUDENT standard target group: DE, IE, IT, PL.

Furthermore, the proportion of students who stayed abroad for a study-related activity varies by field of study. In France, this proportion is minimal in Information and Communication Technologies (resp. 15% in France and 14% on average in EUROSTUDENT countries). Taking all fields of study

together, it is in Engineering, processing and construction industries (mainly engineering schools) that the proportion in France is the highest (31%), as in Malta, but not in the other EUROSTUDENT countries. On average in EUROSTUDENT countries, it is Arts and humanities students that are the most likely

to spend time abroad for study-related activities (one student in four), a situation which is certainly largely accentuated by foreign language disciplines.

## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY IS MORE FREQUENT WHEN PARENTS HAVE HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

The level of education of parents, classified according to the International Standard Classification of Education 2011, has an impact on the likelihood of planning a temporary enrolment abroad and the perceived obstacles to realize this plan.

The proportion of students in EUROSTUDENT

countries who have undertaken international mobility, regardless of type, is lower among students whose parents do not have higher education qualifications. This impact is particularly strong in France (6% vs. 24%), and to a lesser extent in Malta (17% vs. 26%), Norway (18% vs. 26%), Estonia (14% vs. 21%), and Sweden (11% vs. 18%), while it appears

almost negligible in Iceland (18% vs. 20%), Portugal (10% vs. 12%), and Romania (8% vs. 9%). For France, one could hypothesize a partial consequence of socially marked career choices that value more or less this type of experience (especially short and vocational programmes).

12 The socioeconomic status of parents is not available in the EUROSTUDENT programme.

13 See for example B. Convert, « Espace de l'enseignement supérieur et stratégies étudiantes » [Higher Education Space and student Strategies], Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales 183, no 3 (2010), pp.14-31 : <https://doi.org/10.3917/arss.183.0014>.

Taking into account the type of international mobility, again, students whose parents have higher education qualifications are relatively more likely to have been temporarily enrolled abroad compared to students whose parents do not have higher education qualifications (9% vs. 7%). This observation holds true in most EUROSTUDENT countries, especially in France where 10% of students with parents with tertiary education qualifications have experienced a period of enrolment abroad, compared to 6% of those whose parents do not have higher education qualifications. However, there are exceptions: in Luxembourg, the proportion of students who have been temporarily enrolled abroad is lower among those whose parents have higher education qualifications (26% vs. 28%), and in Georgia, the parents' education level does not differentiate (9%).

In France, more than half of the students who were temporarily enrolled abroad received financial support from their family as their main resource (53%). Only 15% primarily financed their stay through their own income, or savings (12%), and 11% mainly relied on European or home country scholarships or loans. The distribution of these different funding sources for temporary enrolments abroad in France differs significantly from that observed in other EUROSTUDENT countries, where on average EU scholarships and loans constitute the primary source of funding for 28% of temporary enrolments abroad, with family being the second most common source (23%). Other major sources of funding in EUROSTUDENT countries, on average, include home country scholarships (19%), personal income or savings (17%), or special scholarships from the home or host country or earnings during the stay abroad.

Specific cases also stand out, such as funding primarily relying on EU loans and scholarships in Malta (66%) and Slovenia (61%), on home country scholarships and loans in Norway (64%) and Sweden (73%), or on students' own income or savings in Iceland (36%) and the Netherlands (32%), among others.

## INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY PRIMARILY IN THE FORM OF TEMPORARY ENROLMENT

11

Immediately following temporary enrolment abroad, 77% of students in France who completed a period of study abroad indicate that the credits obtained were fully recognized in their home studies. This proportion is slightly higher than the average among EUROSTUDENT countries (70%).

In comparison, internships abroad are less frequently recognized in the form of credits (ECTS) by the home institution (43% on average in EUROSTUDENT countries), but still the case for over half of the students concerned in France (58%).

Regarding the assessment of their chances on the labour market in their home country, there is no significant difference between students who have completed international

mobility and those who have not (52% vs. 53%). However, students who have temporarily studied abroad during their studies generally feel better prepared for the international job market (32% vs. 38%). In France, the differences are more pronounced, and students who have had international mobility also feel better prepared for the national job market. On one hand, the chances on the labour market in the national territory are considered good or very good by 73% of students who have had international mobility in their studies and 68% of those who have not had international mobility. On the other hand, the chances on the labour market abroad are considered good by 57% of students in France who have had international mobility, compared to only 40% of those who have not. It is worth noting that

in France, students who have stayed abroad are more often enrolled in engineering schools and come from more privileged/educated backgrounds than those who have not experienced mobility, which undoubtedly affects their prospects for both international and national labour markets<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> See also O. Ferry, « Rapport à l'avenir des étudiants en France » [Future Perspectives of Students in France], OVE Infos n°32, 2016.

## BOX 3 : CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY (HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY CONDUCTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO "COVID-19: REOPENING AND REINVENTING UNIVERSITIES")

The survey launched by the UNESCO Higher Education Section among the 193 Member States and 11 Associate Members of the Organization provides an overview of the higher education system's situation and measures the impact of the pandemic between the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The survey questionnaire was conducted online from December 15, 2020, to February 12, 2021. Sixty-five countries participated, and the results are based on valid responses from 57 countries. Nearly half of the responses came from high-income countries in Europe and North America.

This survey highlights a widespread decrease in the physical international mobility of students during these periods. Among participating countries, the average number of incoming and outgoing students decreased by 17% and 59% respectively. This decline is attributed to the travel restrictions imposed

to limit the spread of the pandemic. Key figures for 2021 from Campus France<sup>15</sup> specify that at the start of the 2020 academic year, the overall decrease in the number of new arrivals in France was 25%, while it was 43% in the United States and 63% in Australia.

Furthermore, the "COVID-19: Reopening and Reinventing Universities" survey identified that while all students were affected by the pandemic, international students were affected more than local disadvantaged groups. Among the countries reporting an impact on students, 23 mentioned the case of international students, while 19 other countries mentioned disadvantaged students (students facing economic difficulties, ethnic minorities, disabled students, etc.), and 18 countries mentioned national students. In France, this observation is supported by the results of the "Life during Lockdown" survey conducted

by the National Observatory of Student Life (2020), which highlighted the difficulties faced by international students during the lockdown period due to their separation from family and more precarious living and working conditions<sup>16</sup>.

Finally, the UNESCO report specifies that countries have generally implemented new modes of teaching, relying on digital platforms to compensate for the lack of physical mobility. Programmes taking place abroad have thus evolved towards hybrid forms, which suggests the continuation of some form of virtual mobility in higher education institutions. Source: COVID-19: Reopening and Reinventing Universities; Higher Education Survey conducted with the support of national commissions for UNESCO, 2021, program and meeting document, Paris: UNESCO, 2021, accessed online on 01/25/2022, 36p.

<sup>15</sup> [https://ressources.campusfrance.org/publications/chiffres\\_cles/fr/chiffres\\_cles\\_2021\\_fr.pdf](https://ressources.campusfrance.org/publications/chiffres_cles/fr/chiffres_cles_2021_fr.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Belghith F., Ferry O., Patros T., Tenret É., « La vie étudiante au temps de la pandémie de COVID-19 » [Student Life during COVID-19 pandemic], OVE Infos n°42, 2020



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