



Who are our students and how should we organise higher education provision appropriately?

A European Perspective



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Sustainability of European higher education

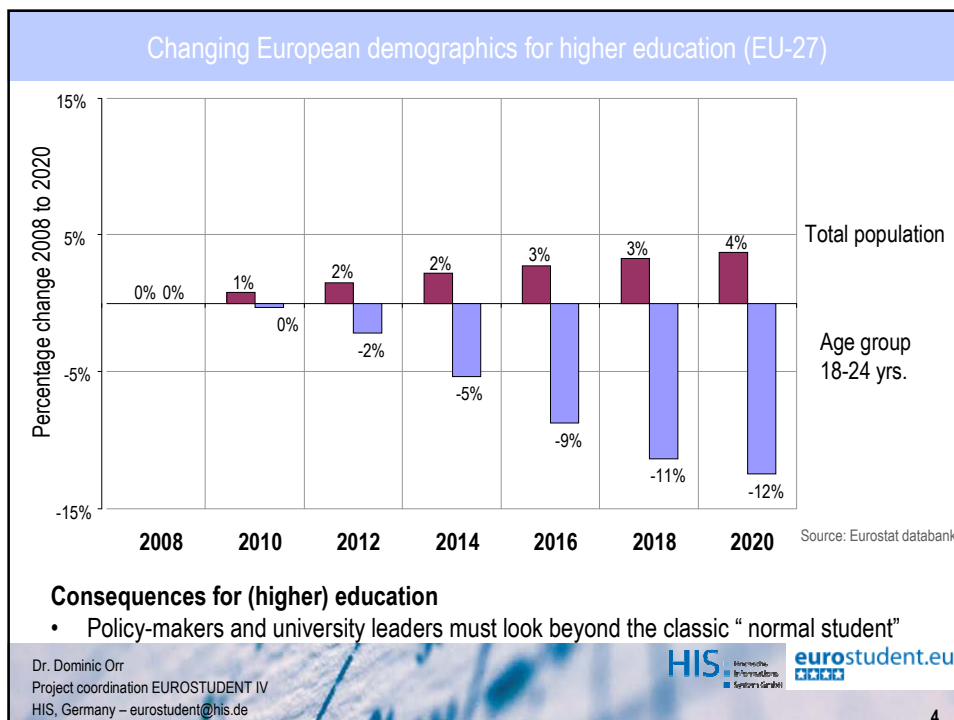
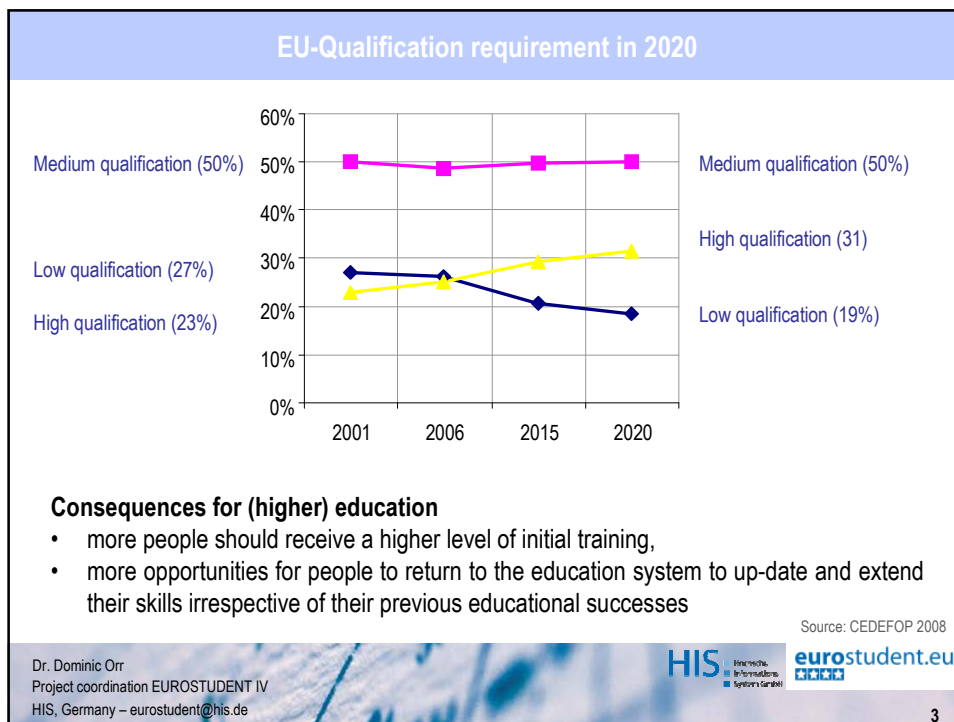
- Number of students (EU-27) grown by 20% 2000-2006
- 1/3 of population between 25 and 34 has completed HE
 - Very different completion rates ranging from 45% to 87%
 - People over 25 rarely embark on higher education
- People whose parents have a high educational level have better chances of accessing and completing tertiary education than others
 - 17% of persons with parents with only primary education manage to access and complete higher education, while 63% of those with parents with higher education manage to do so

Equity and the social dimension may become the litmus test for **sustainability** in higher education in view of the concurrent middle and long term trends towards **higher skilled jobs**, an **aging population** and **declining numbers** of young people.

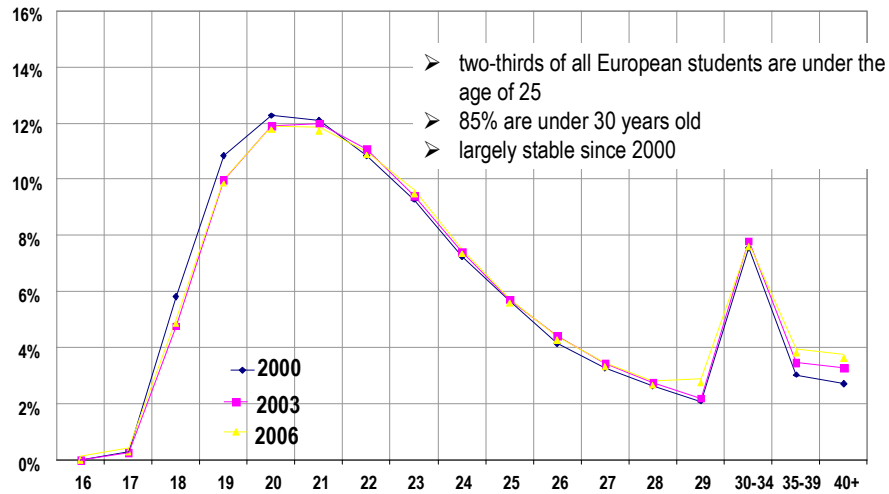
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Current age profiles of students (EU-27, ISCED 5A)



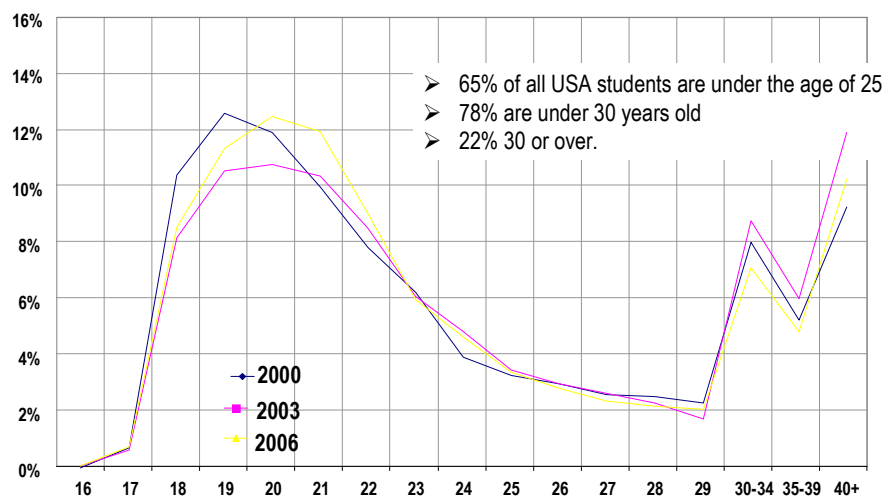
Source: Eurostat databank

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Current age profiles of students (USA, ISCED 5A)



Source: Eurostat databank

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Sustainable HE and societies through knowing your clients

- (...) Faced with the challenge of an ageing population Europe can only succeed in this endeavour if it maximises the talents and capacities of all its citizens and fully engages in lifelong learning as well as in widening participation in higher education.

from: Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve-Communique (Bologna Process, 2009)

- (...) Policy makers and institutions of higher education need to provide an appropriate study framework for students, which recognises students divergent living conditions during their studies.

from: Chapter "Policy considerations", Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe (EUROSTUDENT 2005-2008), 2008

- European universities will respond positively to the increasingly diverse demand from a broad spectrum of students (...)

from: European Universities' Charter on Lifelong Learning, 2008

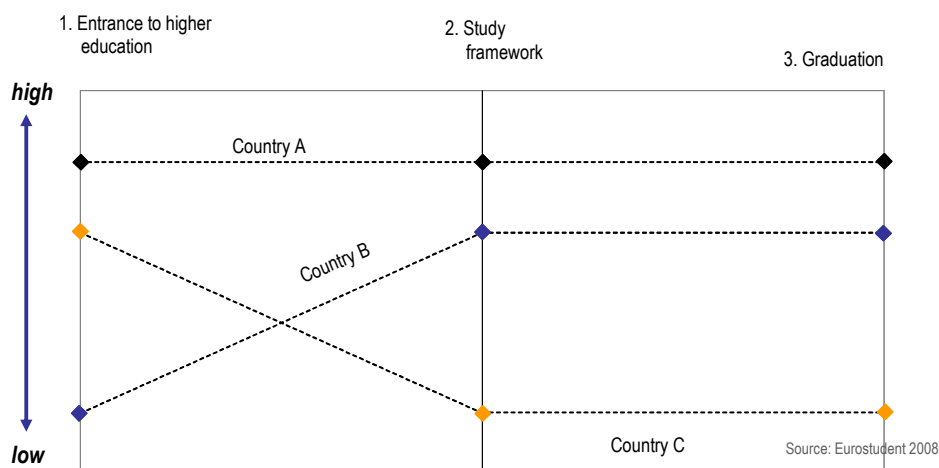
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Differences in "moments" of participative equity

Participative equity: "(...) the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations."



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Overview of presentation

Argument: Opening higher education creates a lot of new challenges for higher education policy and practice

1. Social selection in the student body
2. Non-traditional routes into HE
3. Range of income disparities
4. Composition of income
5. Models of student financing
6. Adequate study structures

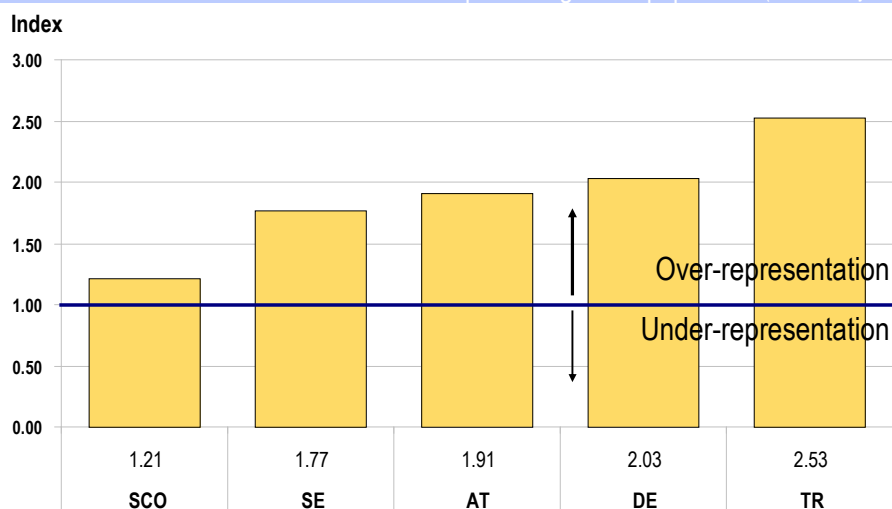
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Higher education participation by social background – Ratio of highest education attainment of students' fathers compared to general population (men 40-60 yrs., %)



Source: Eurostudent 2008

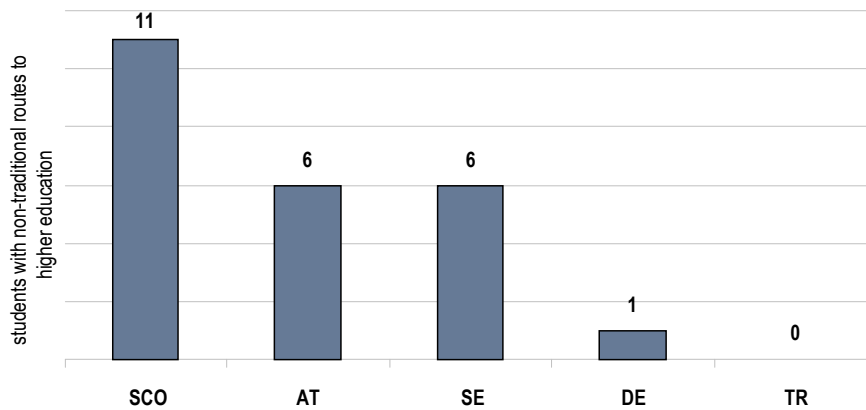
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Non-traditional routes to higher education – narrow definition
Share of all students with non-traditional routes to higher education (in %)



Narrow definition: Access to higher education through the validation of prior learning and work experience – with or without a higher education entrance examination.

Source: Eurostudent 2008

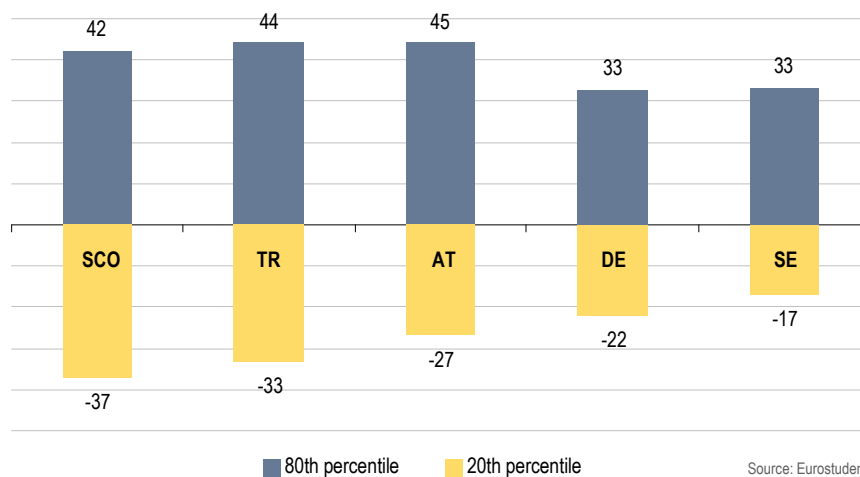
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Range of total income – Percentage deviation from the average income level of all students (median) – Difference in % (students maintaining own household)



Source: EUROSTUDENT III, Subtopic 27. Financial amounts have been rounded to the nearest 10 Euros.

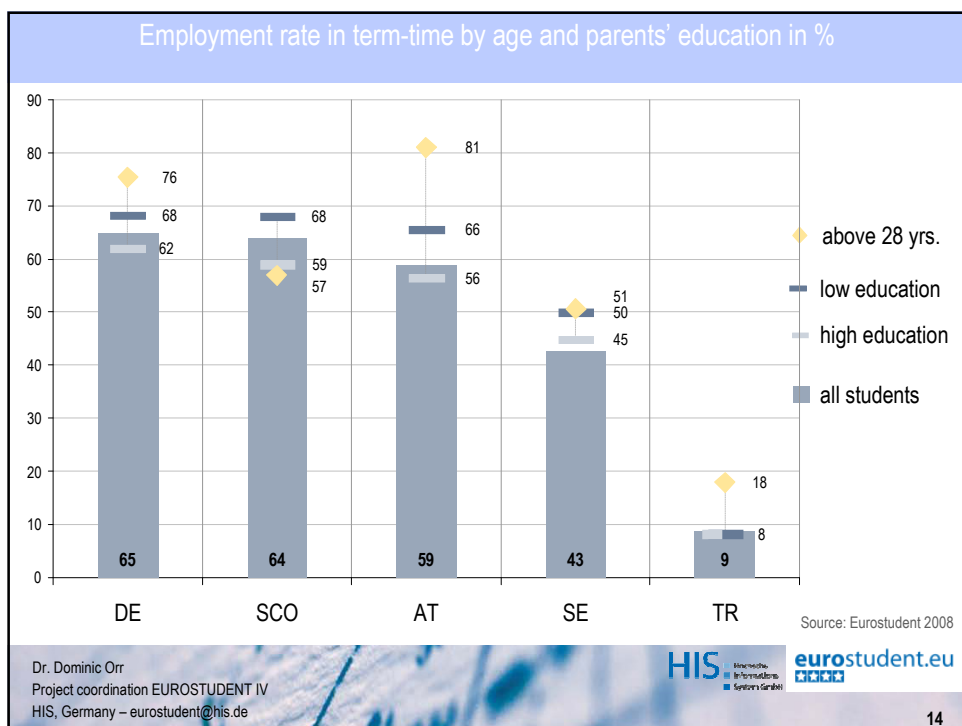
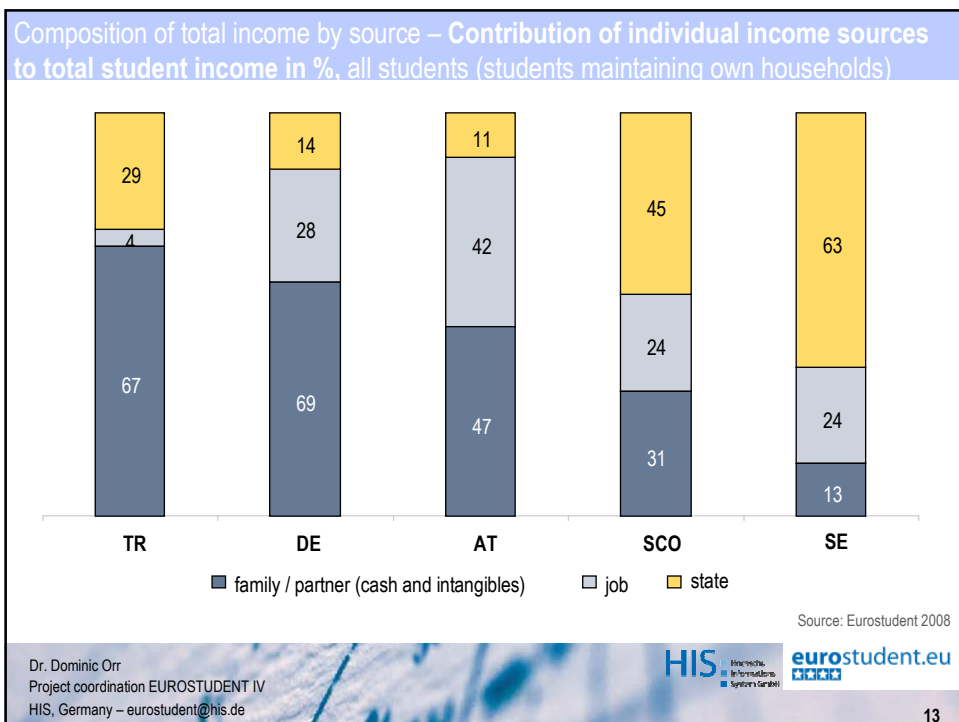
Source: Eurostudent 2008

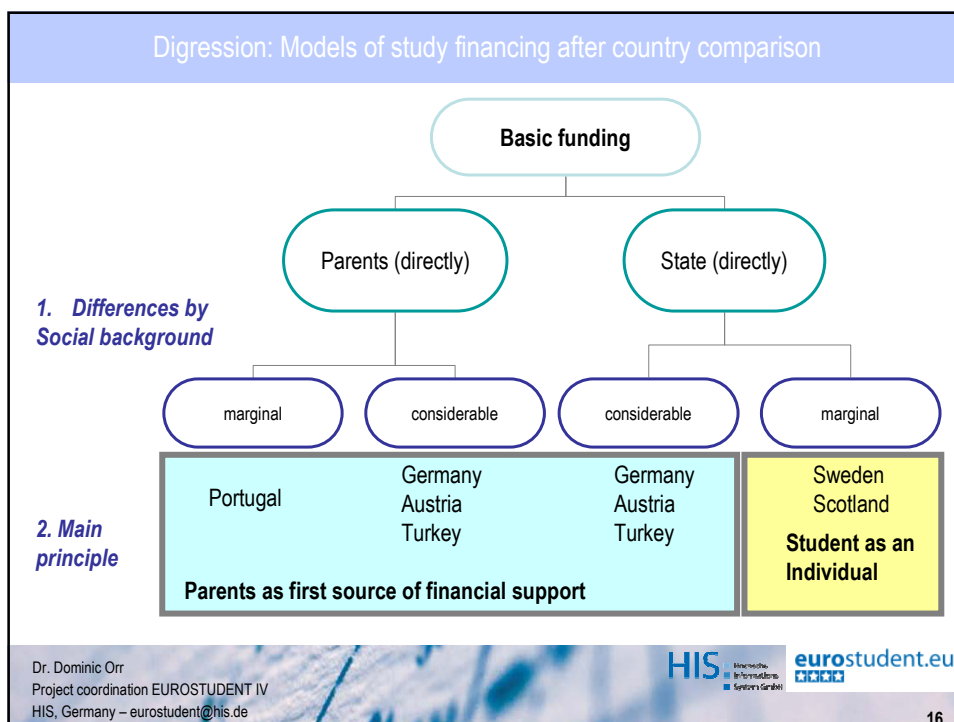
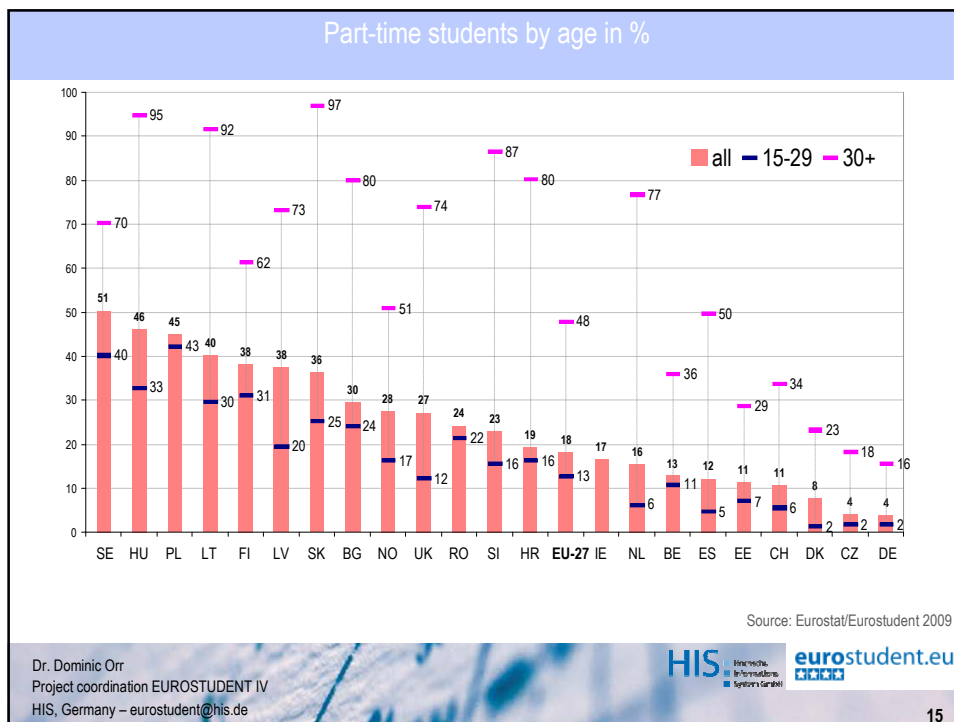
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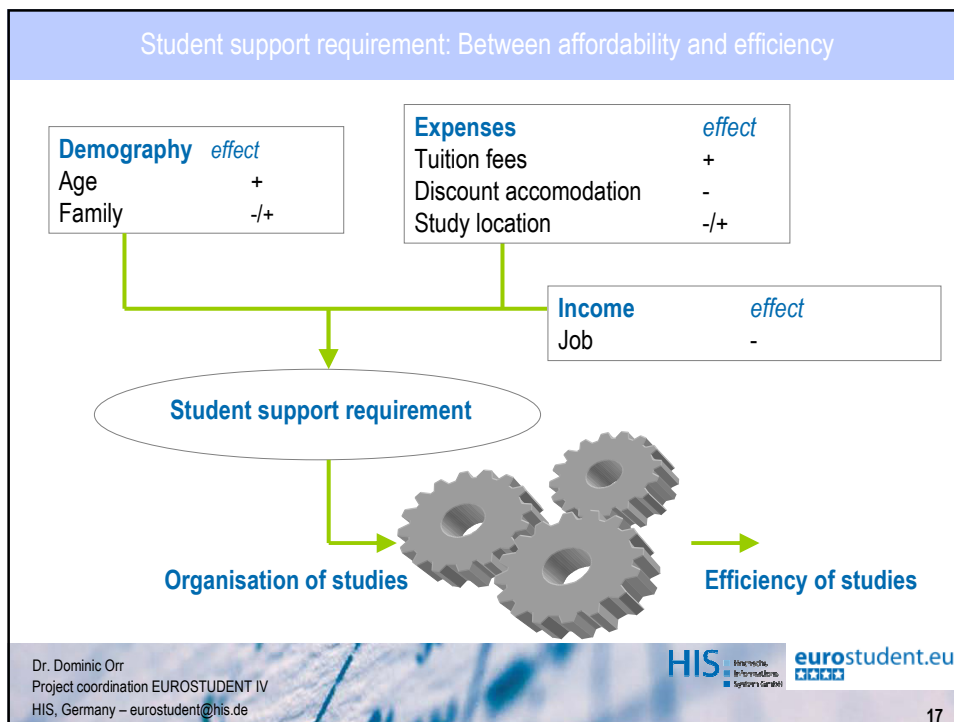
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Challenges for study provision

Appropriate study conditions between

- an individual's requirements and possibilities for studying and
- a university's requirements and possibilities for organising a feasible and effective course of study

Two guiding principles:

making students more *equal*

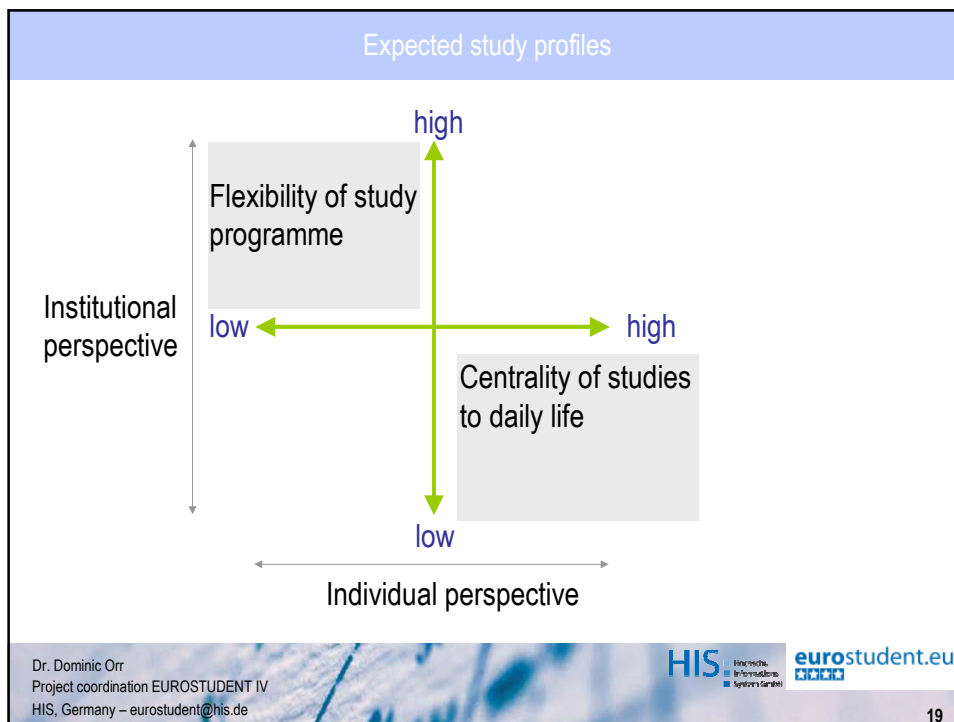
and *accepting difference*.

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EUROSTUDENT IV

News & Events

- 28-Apr-09 New study describes the profile of Bologna students in Europe. [Read press information.](#)
- 20-Mar-09 EUROSTUDENT IV Newsletter No 2 released [here](#).
- 16/17-Feb-09 Den Haag, Kick-off Workshop. For information and thematic presentations please see [here](#).
- 18-Dec-08 First circular letter for EUROSTUDENT IV released [here](#).
- 10/11-Dec-08 Vienna, Intensive seminar on [EUROSTUDENT IV conventions and definitions](#)
- 12-Nov-08 Rome, Italian Eurostudent Conference. Visit the conference website [here](#). A conference video is

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Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe

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