



Lifelong Learning Programme



Inequity in access to higher education in Europe – measurement, size, country variation, and possible reasons

A selection of results of the first EQUINET report

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Overview

- 1) Topics of the first EQUINET report
- 2) Definition & measurement of inequity in access to higher education
- 3) Data sources & data availability
- 4) Entry into higher education
- 5) Inequity in access to higher education
- 6) Inequity, entry rates & routes to HE
- 7) Key messages
- 8) Outlook

Topics of the first EQUINET report

- Data & measurement
- Entry to higher education (magnitude, routes)
- Inequity due to socioeconomic background
- Students' income & students' expenditures
- Studying & competing responsibilities
- Good practice examples
- Conclusions & recommendations

Definition & measurement

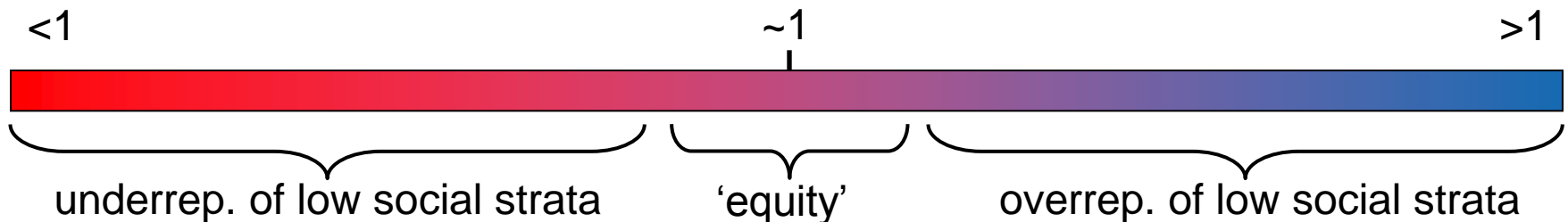
- „the student body [...] should reflect the diversity of our population” (London Communiqué of Bologna ministers 2007)

1. Equity as proportional representation,
i.e. as equality of chances

- Equity indicator:

Chance to be a student for persons of low social strata

Chance to be a student for persons of high social strata

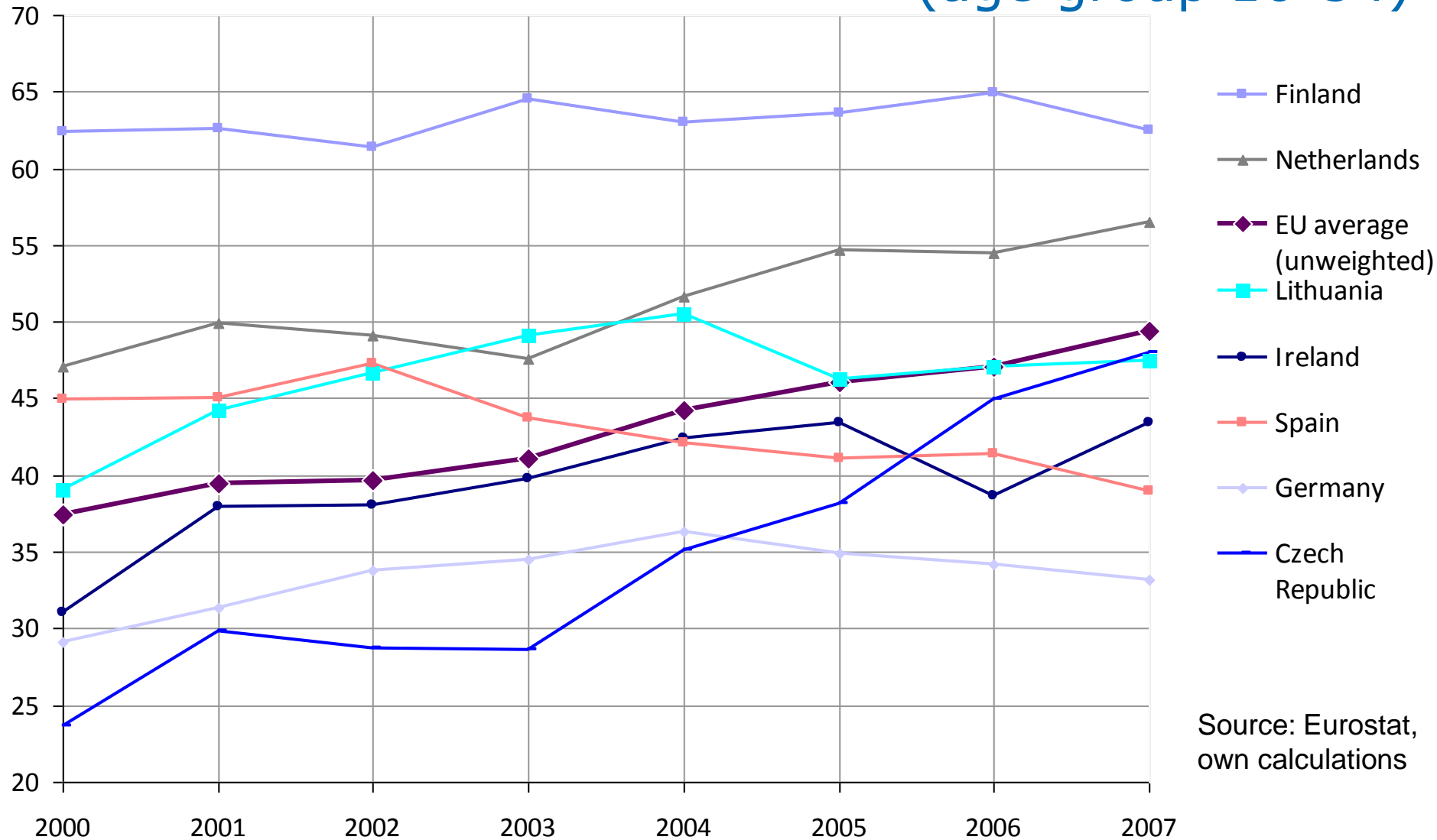


Data sources & data availability

- Main sources: EUROSTUDENT, Eurostat, UOE
 1. Aggregate level data fairly adequate & accessible
- Micro level data would allow for more flexible analyses
- Major European surveys are very restricted regarding the analysis of inequity in HE
 1. Number of actual students insufficient (ESS*)
 2. Actual students (EU-SILC*, EU-LFS*) or graduates of academic HE can not be identified (ESS, EU-SILC) due to the rough measurement of education (no ISCED 5A)
 3. Socioeconomic background can not be measured (EU-SILC, EU-LFS)

*) ESS – European Social Survey, EU-SILC – EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, EU-LFS – EU Labour Force Survey

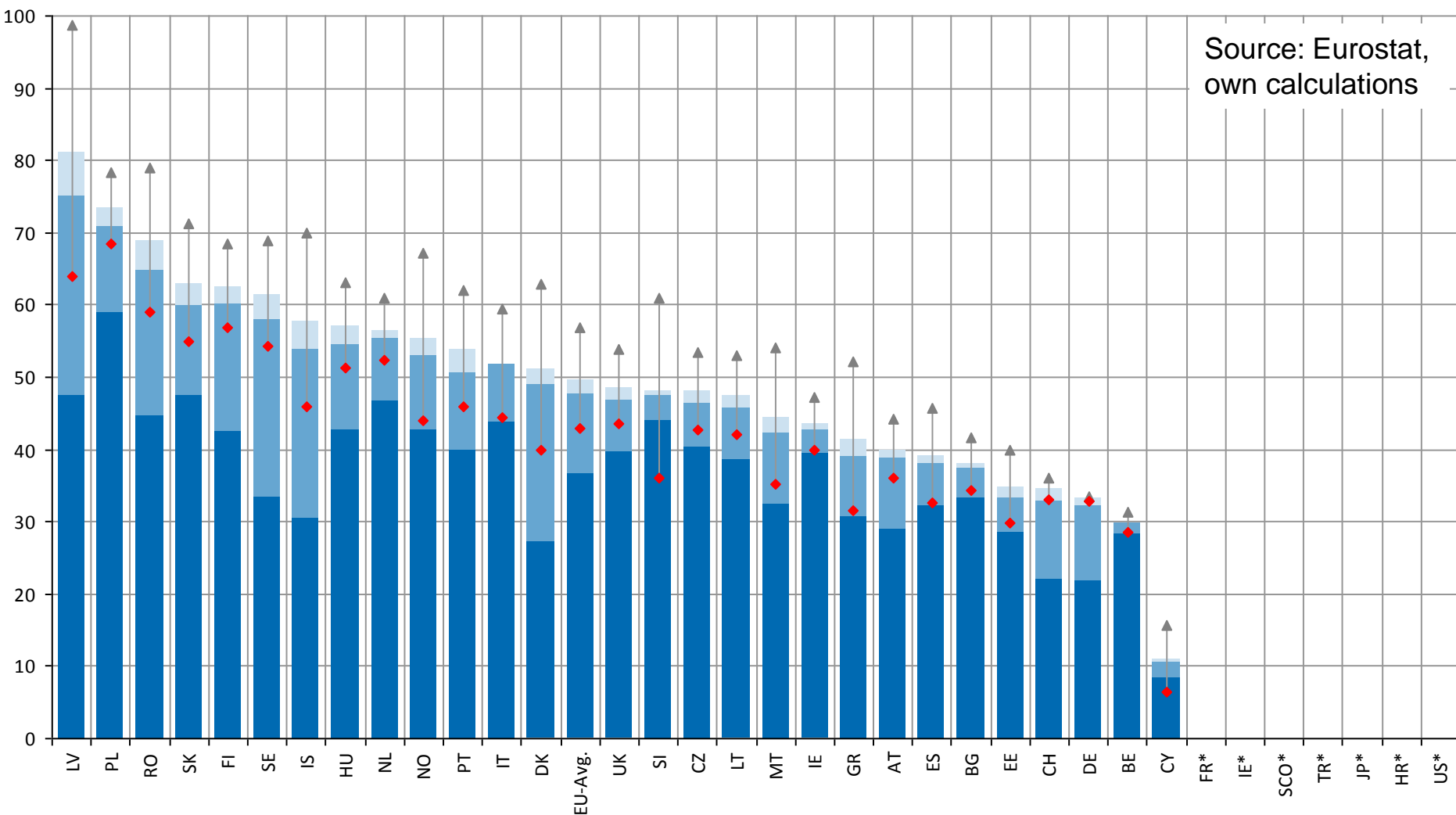
Entry into higher education: trend in net entry rates (age group 16-34)



► Overall trend: expansion of HE 2000-07

Entry into higher education: net entry rates 2007

Source: Eurostat,
own calculations

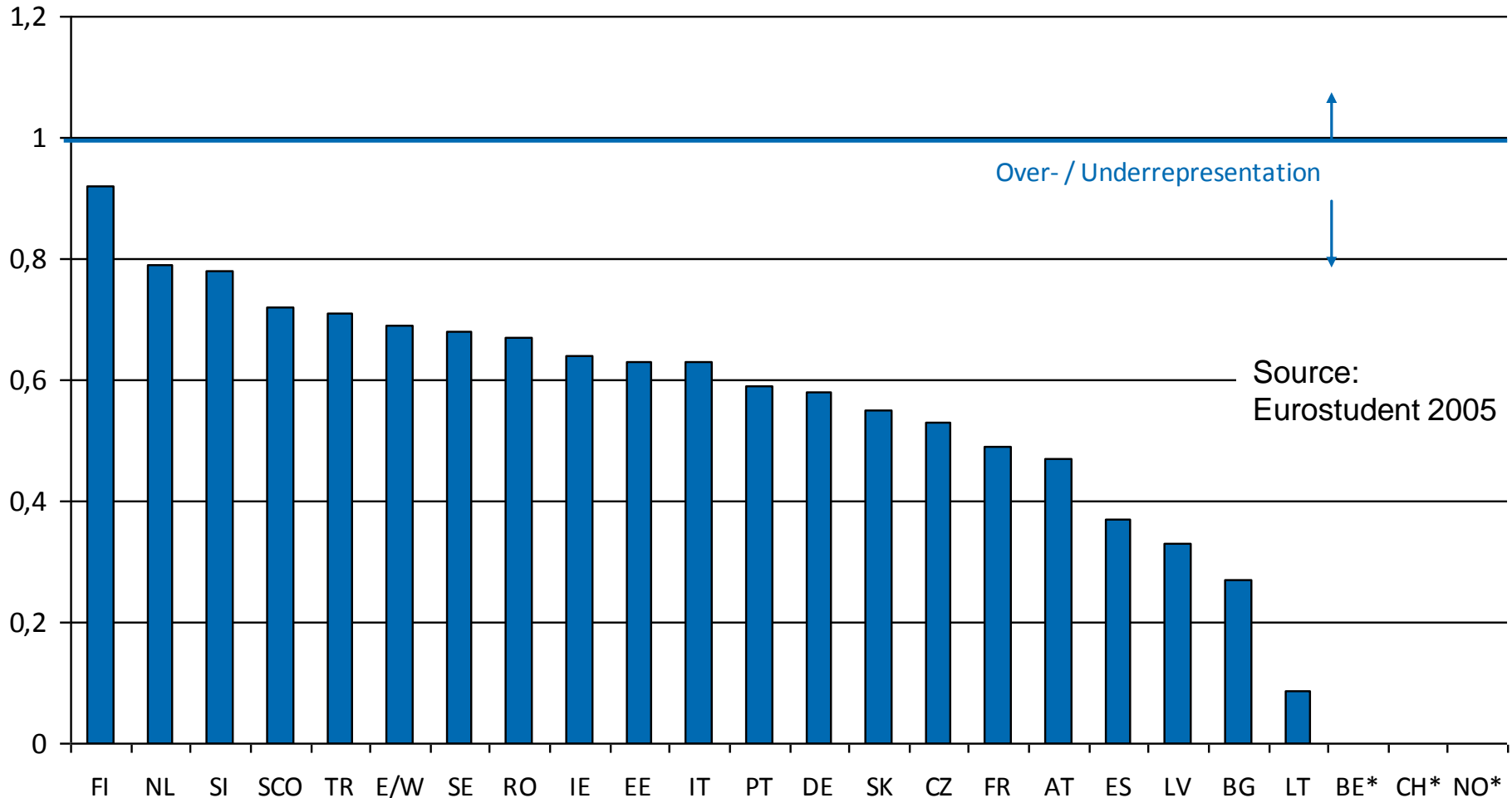


■ Total 16-21 years ■ Total 22-27 years ■ Total 28-34 years ▲ Female 16-34 years ◆ Male 16-34 years *no data available

► Enormous bandwidth of the volume of entry to HE

Inequity in comparative perspective

■ Father's occupational status

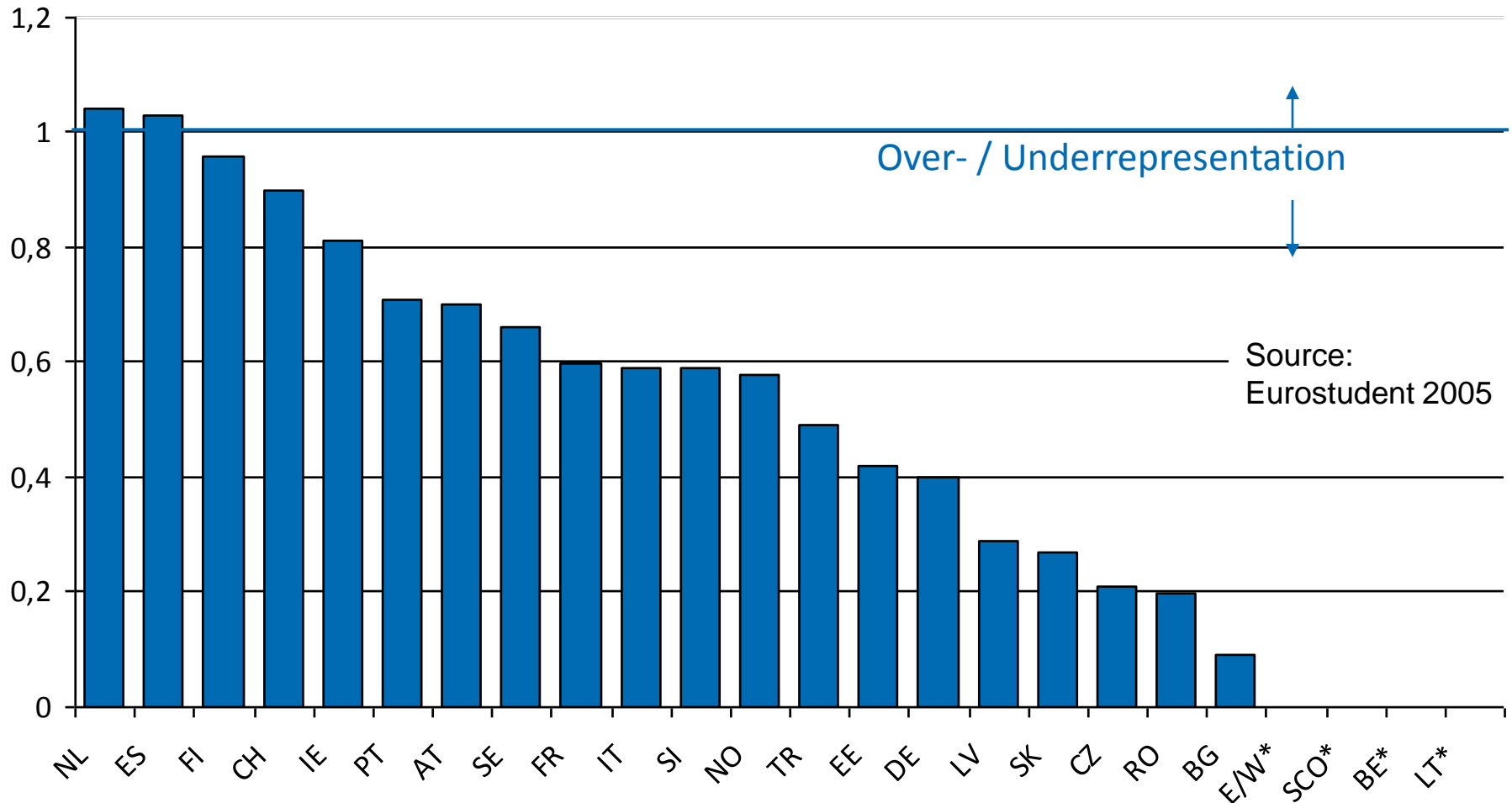


■ Ratio: students' fathers with blue-collar occupation to all men aged 40-60 with blue-collar occupation

*no data

Inequity in comparative perspective

■ Father's educational attainment

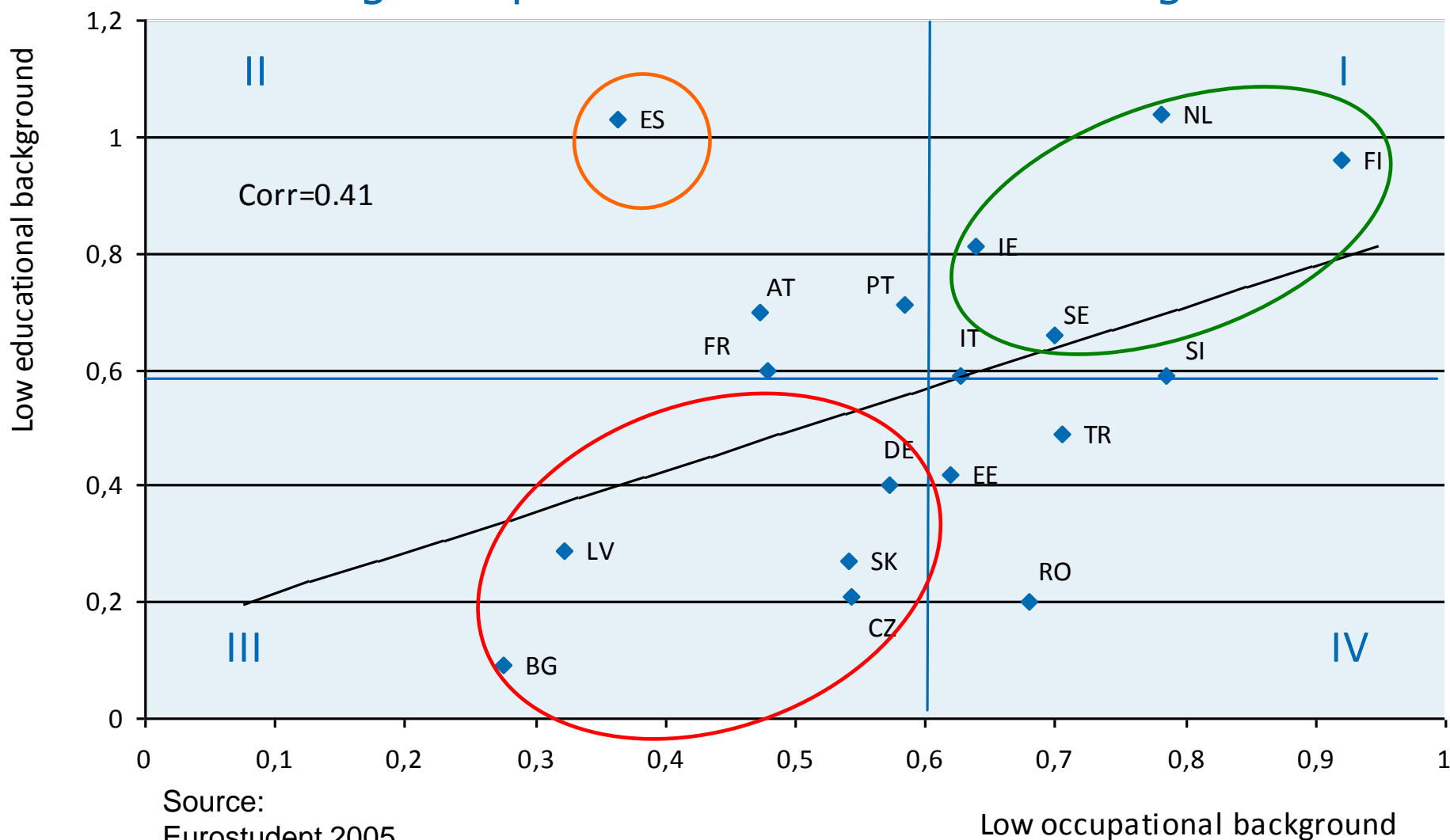


■ Ratio: students' fathers with up to lower-stage secondary education to all men aged 40-60 with same education

*no data

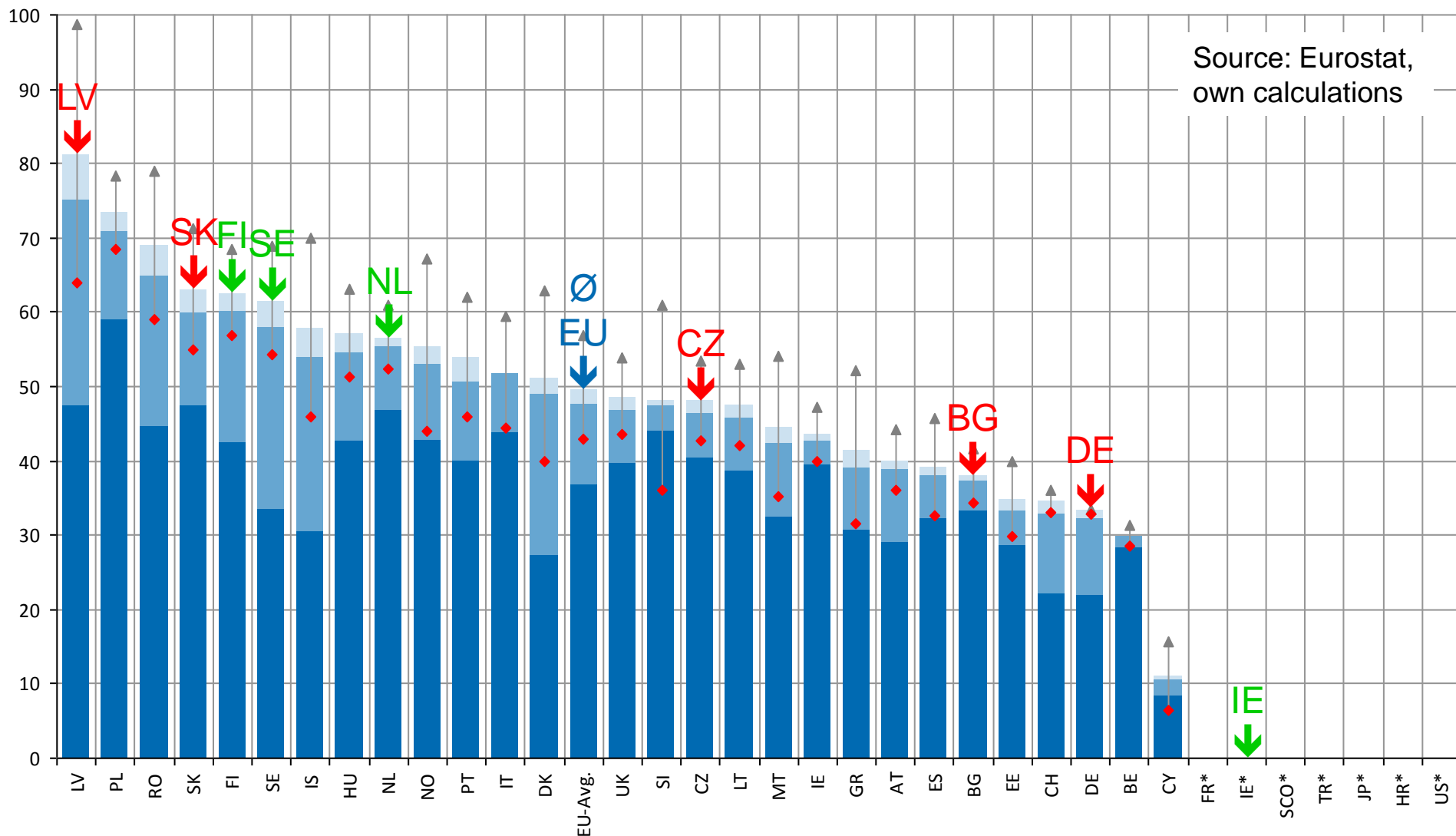
Inequity in comparative perspective

Combining occupational & educational background



Inequity, entry rates & routes to HE: net entry rate

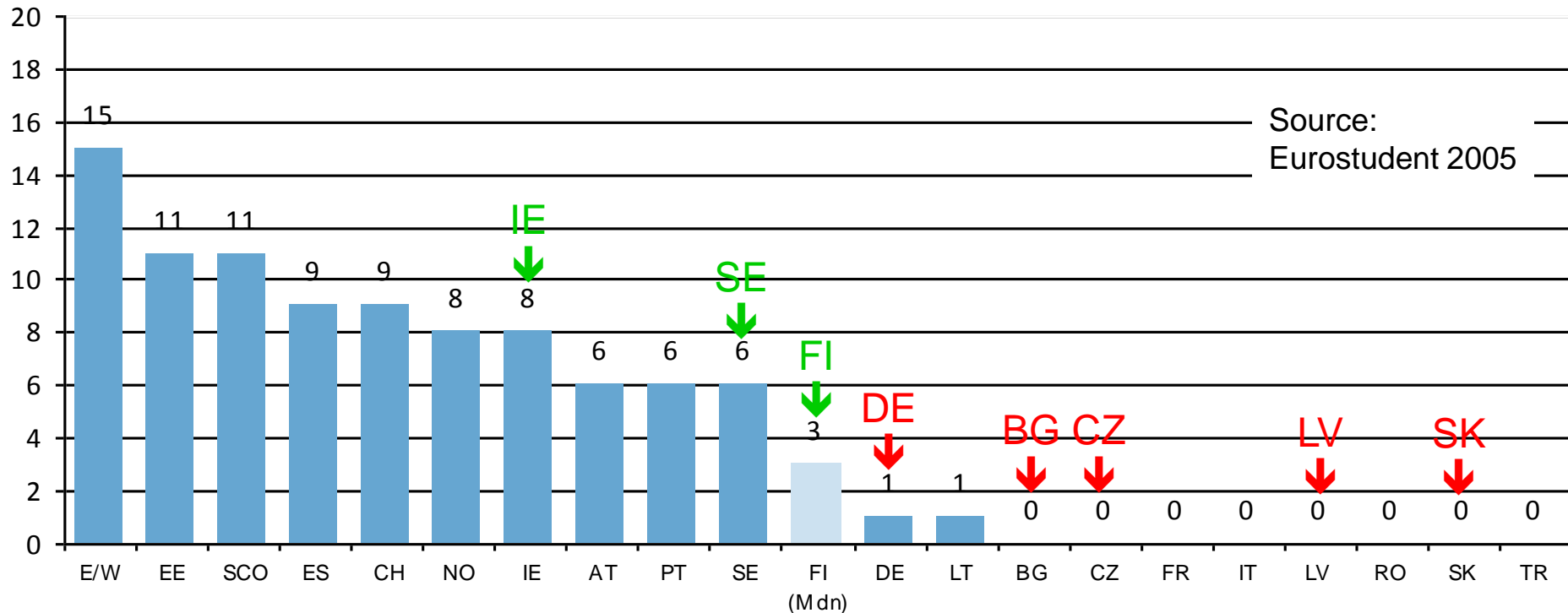
Source: Eurostat,
own calculations



■ Total 16-21 years
 ■ Total 22-27 years
 ■ Total 28-34 years
 ▲ Female 16-34 years
 ◆ Male 16-34 years
 *no data available

► High entry rates not necessarily lead to low inequity

Inequity, entry rates & routes to HE: Share of all students with alternative routes* to higher education in %



*access to HE through validation of prior learning or work experience

- ▶ Close connection between equity and provision of alternative routes to HE
- ▶ Important role for professional HEIs in reducing inequity

Key messages

- Inequity due to socioeconomic background is still sizeable in many European countries
- Adequacy & accessibility of comparative micro level data should be enhanced
- Flexibility & permeability of higher education systems seem to matter more than the sheer volume of access

Outlook

- Intensify communication with stakeholders
- Cover further dimensions of inequity in access to HE
 1. Lifelong learners
 2. Persons with a migrant background
 3. Persons with special needs
 4. Persons from rural areas
- In-depth analysis of exemplary countries
- Best-practice examples of HEI's