

Mobility is not for all

*An international comparison of students' mobility aspirations
and perceptions of barriers to temporary enrolment abroad
using the EUROSTUDENT data set*

Dr. Dominic Orr

International Project Leader of EUROSTUDENT

Mobility policy

The concerted push for mobility suggests two main assumptions behind policy initiatives on European and national level:

- + There is a general agreement on the **benefit** of study-related periods abroad both for the individuals involved, but **also for society** (or parts of it, e.g. the labour market) in general.
- + Assumption that a large share of students should graduate having had this experience, but that this share will remain a **minority** (e.g. 1 in 5) of the total population.

Mobility policy challenges

The two challenges, which emerge for these goals and from the assumptions behind them, are:

- + To assure that unnecessary **barriers** to mobility are removed
- + To assure that every student has the same **opportunity** to go abroad

This means looking at mobility behaviour and particularly possible mobility barriers both in general but especially for any differences in barriers by **student attributes**.

Recognised barriers according to EHEA Mobility Strategy

Common barrier to study periods abroad

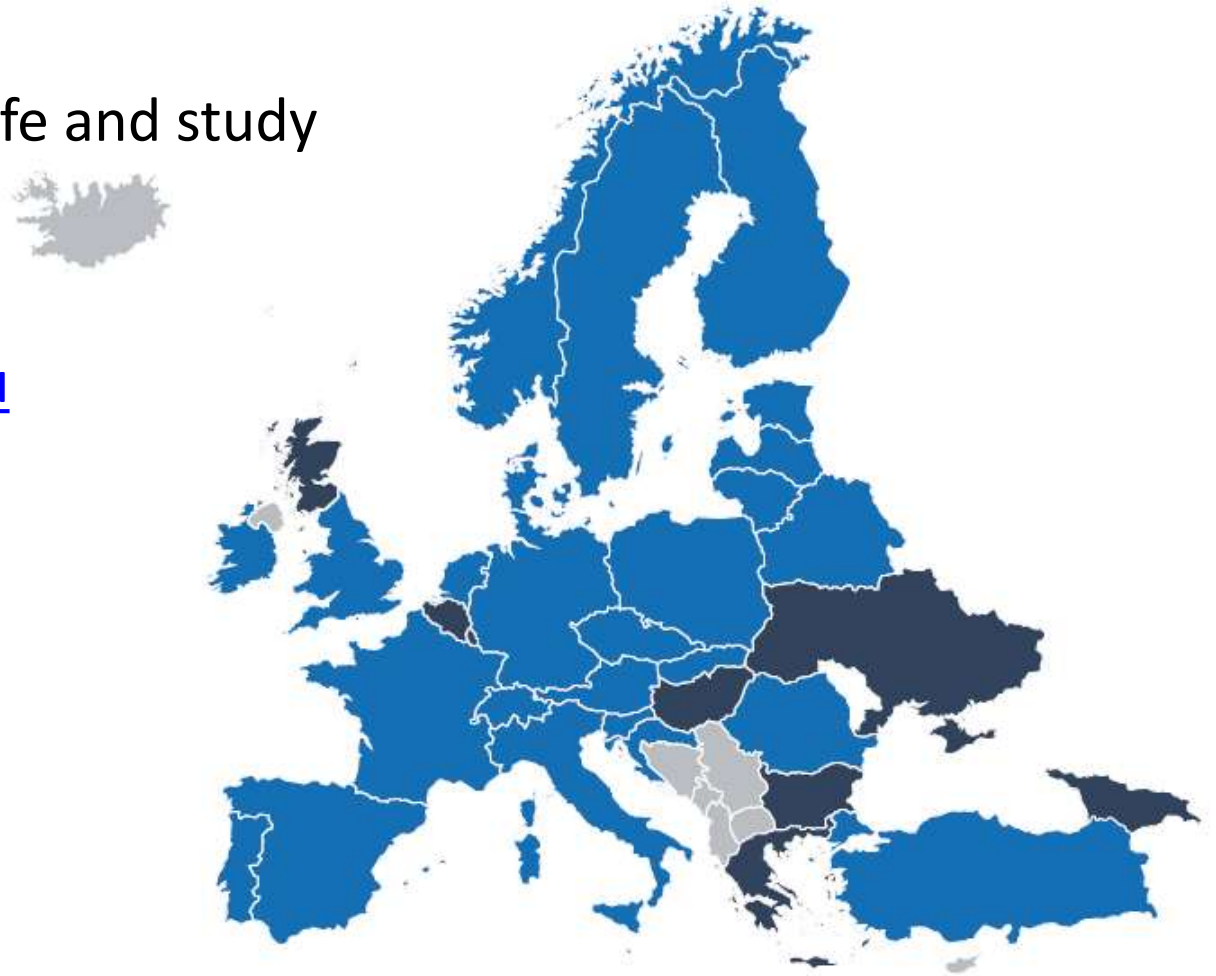
- Recognition of periods abroad at home institutions of higher education and possibility to integrate study period abroad into home curriculum
- Information availability on benefits of and provisions for studying abroad
- Foreign language capability of students
- Funding support for mobile students

Measures proposed in EHEA Mobility Strategy (excerpt)

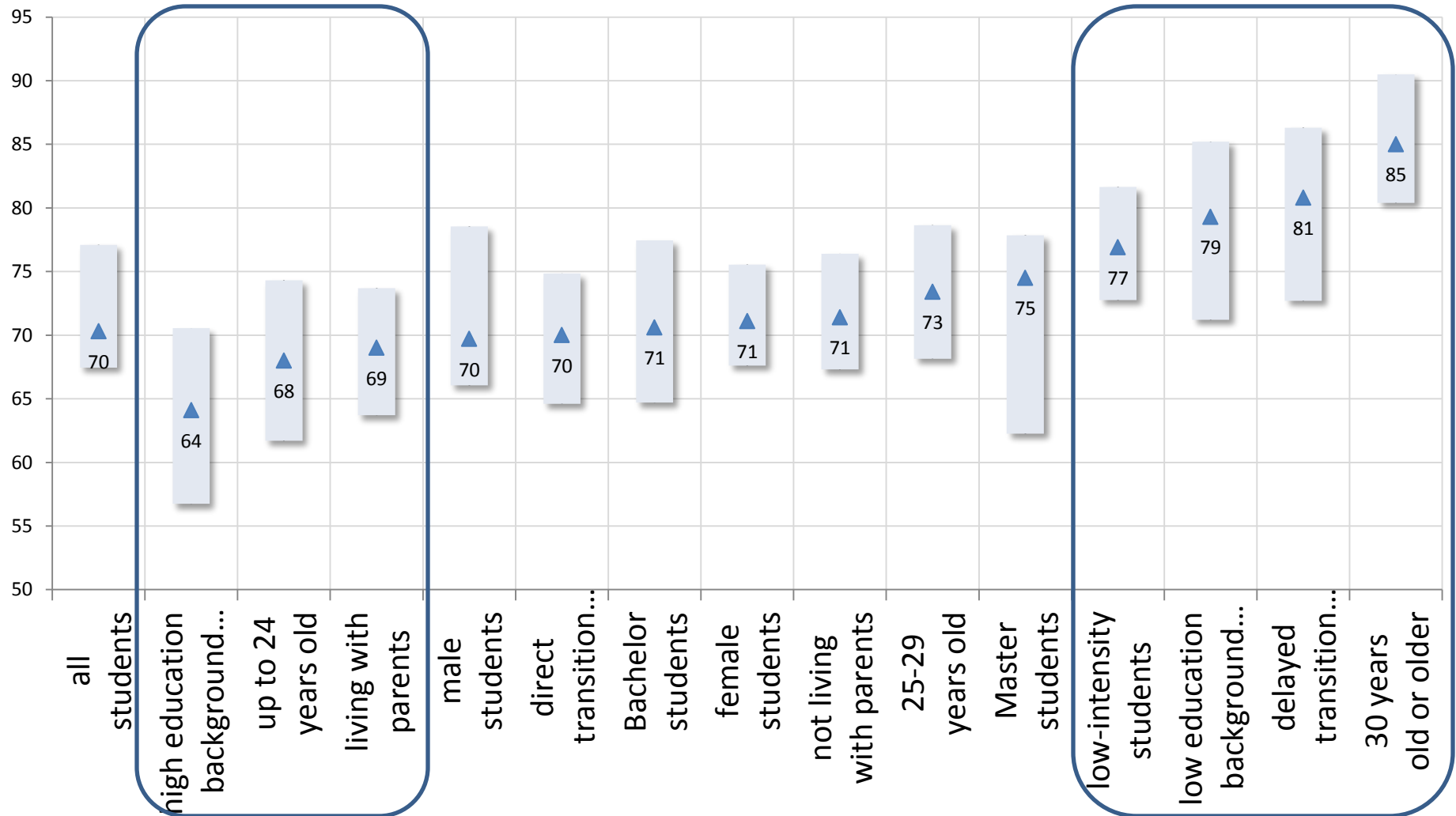
- “We call on higher education institutions...to create mobility-friendly structures and framework conditions for mobility abroad”
- “We want to increase mobility through improved information about study programmes.”
- “We will improve the communication of the individual, institutional and social benefits of periods spent abroad.”
- “As a prerequisite for mobility and internationalisation, we support the teaching of foreign languages at all levels, starting from primary education.”
- “[We intend] to expand mobility funding and to enable a wide-reaching portability of grants, loans and scholarships...”

The EUROSTUDENT data set

- + 25 countries
- + Survey of students' life and study conditions
- + Next report 2015
- + www.eurostudent.eu



Average share of students with no plans for going abroad (temporary enrolment)



Plans for mobility?

Average for all
EUROSTUDENT countries

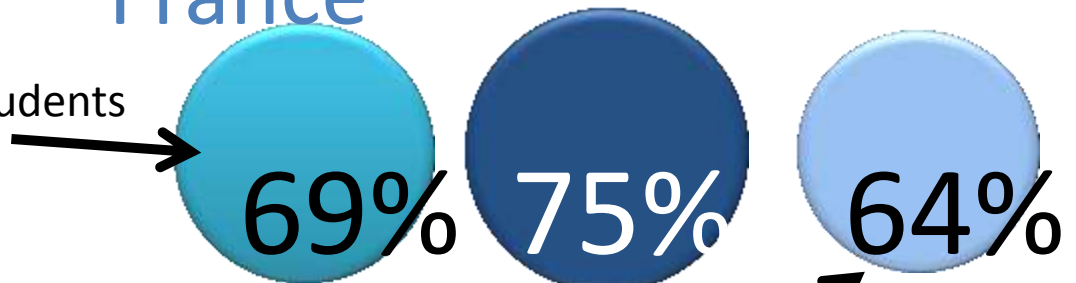


Finland



France

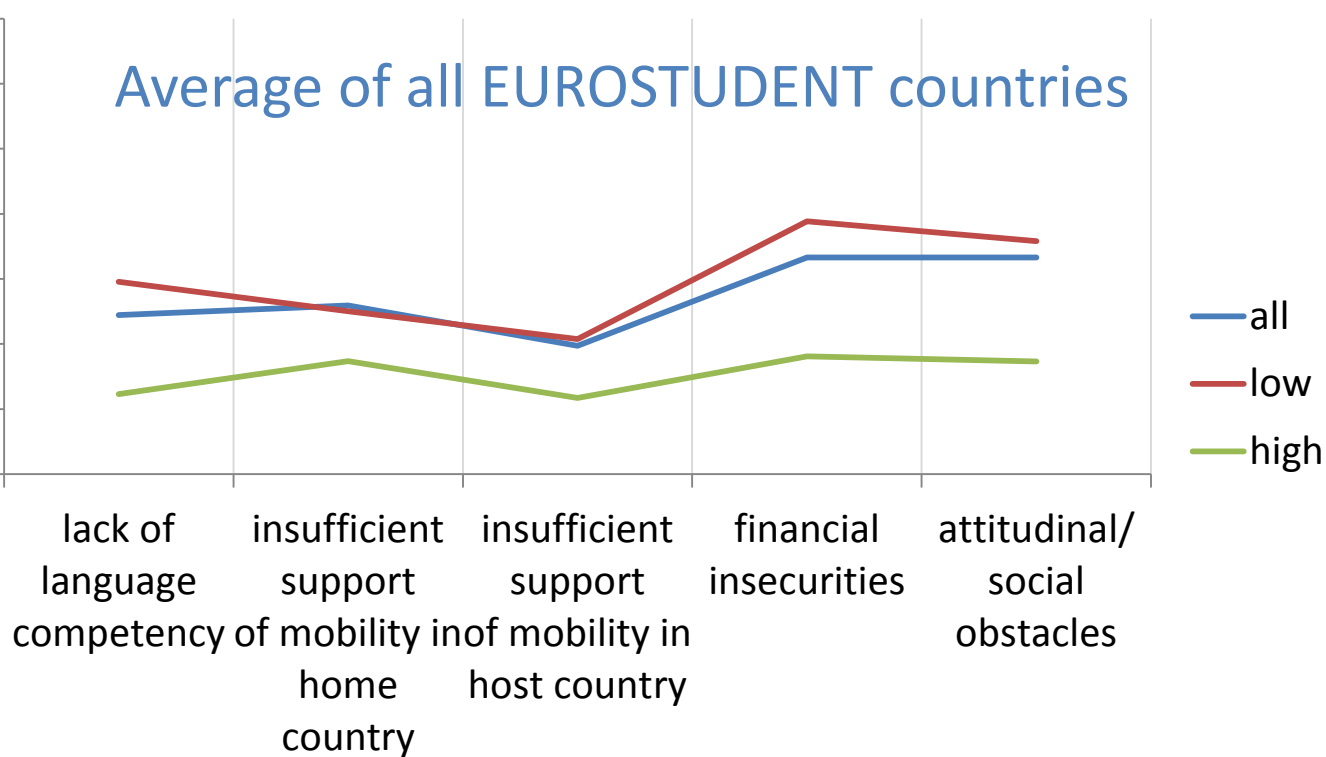
All students



Students from *low*

Students from *high*
social backgrounds

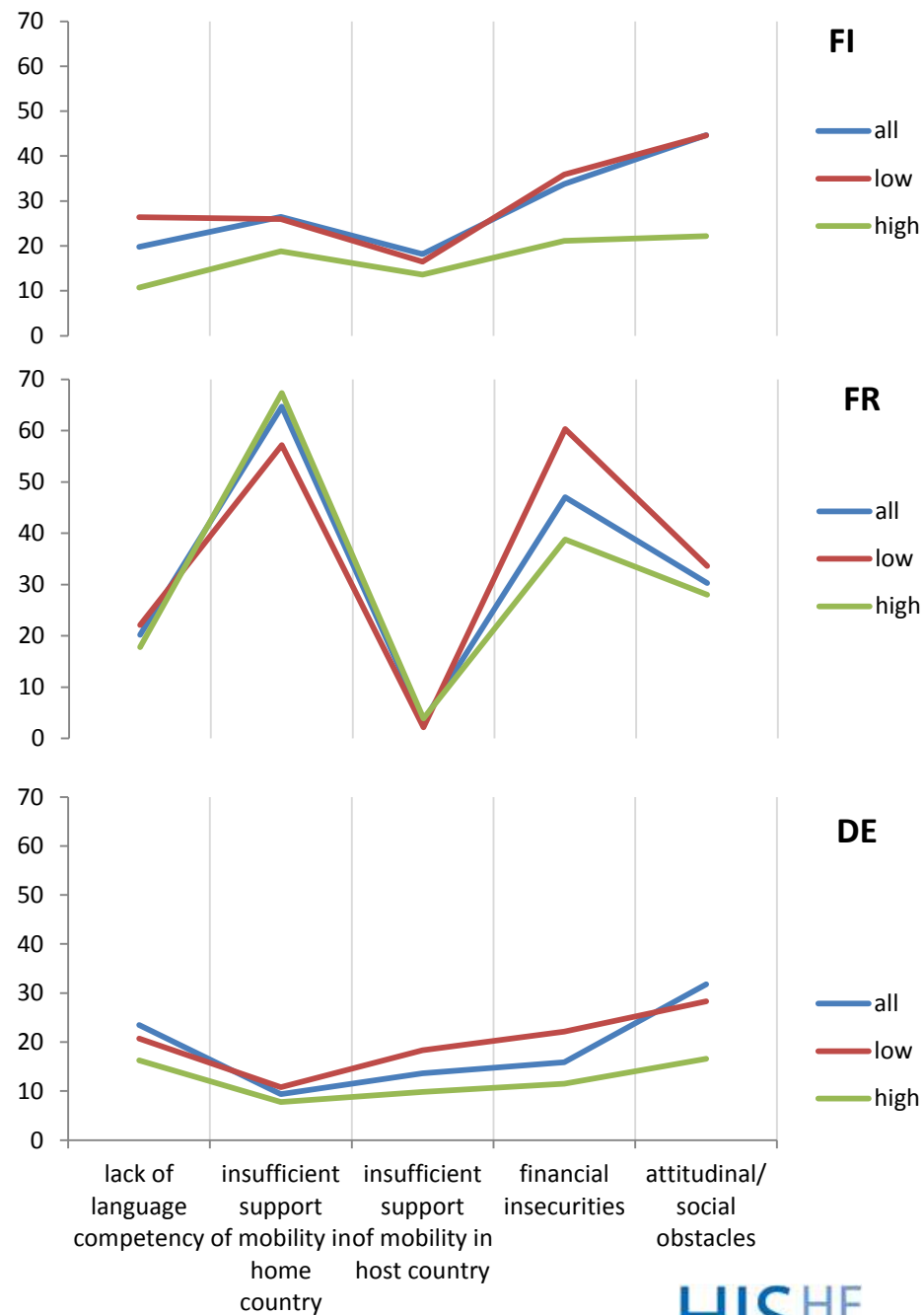
Perceived barriers to mobility



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★★★★★

Perceived barriers to mobility

- + **Differences** between countries (related to different framework conditions?)
- + **Similarities** in tendency that students from high social backgrounds perceive less obstacles, especially in finances



Concluding remarks – challenges

- + The group of '**non-traditional**' students is expected to grow
- + The expectation of **social justice** from public policy
- + The **socio-cultural element** suggested by the sensitivity of low SES students might be reduced somewhat through more targeted information campaigns
- + A critical discussion of mobility behaviour must differentiate between the **framework conditions**, which are disadvantageous for certain types of students and can be changed and those, which are common for certain types of students and would not be easy to change through policy or practice. The most pervasive barriers to mobility highlight these two sides of the coin, i.e. funding and social context and personal dependencies.