

**SOCIAL DIMENSION
OF STUDYING IN BOSNIA
AND HERZEGOVINA**

EUROSTUDENT V

Report for Republika Srpska

SOCIAL DIMENSION OF STUDYING IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

EUROSTUDENT V REPORT FOR REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

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Social Dimension of Studying in Bosnia and Herzegovina

EUROSTUDENT V Report for Republika Srpska

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EUROSTUDENT V
Report for Republika Srpska

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Abbreviations

CEEPUS	Central European Exchange Program for University Studies
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EU	European Union
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
KM	Convertible Mark
SO RS	Statistical Office of Republika Srpska
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HE	Higher Education

NOTE

The expressions in this text are used in their grammatical masculine form and include both the natural male and female gender of the persons referred to.

The word parent is used to mean biological parent(s), caregiver(s) and anyone who was or is taking primary care of the students.

Foreword

The correlation between education, particularly higher education, economic growth and social development has been confirmed through a considerable volume of research, while the need to develop human capital and prepare citizens for occupations requiring higher qualifications is undisputed. Therefore, it is no surprising that an increasing number of countries are approaching reforms in the field of education systematically and strategically. Although the higher education reforms held an important position in these processes, but for years, in European countries, they have been primarily aimed at issues directly or indirectly related to economic growth and development (e.g. the creation of the European Higher Education Area, student and workforce mobility, etc.) which prevailed over issues regarding the social dimension of higher education.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), with its entities, is no exception in the process of adjustment and harmonization of education to the context of a modern 21st century society.

The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the entity constitutions (of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H) and Republika Srpska) do not refer specifically to higher education, nor specifically mention higher education institutions and their status. Instead, higher education is regulated by several laws at the national, entity and cantonal level.

The process of reform in the field of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina has started by the signing of the *Bologna Declaration* in 2003. Bosnia and Herzegovina launched the reforms that were, like in other countries, the consequence of a wider wave of reform in the field of higher education, aiming to harmonize the higher education system with European trends in higher education, based on the principles of the *Bologna Declaration* and the *Lisbon Convention*. Since 2004 Bosnia and Herzegovina is a signatory to the Convention of the Council of Europe/UNESCO on recognizing qualifications in higher education in the European region (Lisbon Convention, 1997). The reform of a higher education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina has, during its initial phase, included the restructuring of the higher education system by introducing a three-cycle model of study, the modernization of study programmes, the development of quality assurance models, increasing student and higher education staff mobility, promoting European cooperation, recognizing study periods spent abroad, and the development of qualification frameworks (Branković & Branković, 2013). The reforms and the need for reform have later spread to other higher education areas such as support to students, higher inclusion of underrepresented student groups and changes to the system of financing higher education.

The Law on University (Official Gazette of Republika Srpska" no. 12/93, 14/94, 99/04 and 92/05) and the Law on Non-University HEIs ("Official Gazette of Republika Srpska" no. 13/94) were in force in Republika Srpska, during the period of 1993 to 2006. Thereafter, the Law on Higher Education ("Official

Gazette of Republika Srpska” no. 85/06 and 30/07) adopted in 2006, takes into account the Bologna Declaration, has established the principles for providing higher education in accordance with European standards (the principles of non-discrimination, right to university autonomy, integrated university, student and other academic staff mobility, founding and functioning of official institutions responsible for implementing laws, etc.) The integration of public universities has been completed in 2008 as well as the process of establishing management bodies in universities and joint administrative-technical functions particularly the function of planning university budgets and financial operations.

By the adoption of the new Law on Higher Education in 2010 (“Official Gazette of Republika Srpska” no. 73/10, 104/11, 84/12 and 108/13), fully harmonized with the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2007 as the highest legal regulation on higher education in the country, the reform of higher education has continued in accordance with the Bologna principles. The law has established the Agency for the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions of Republika Srpska (founded in 2011) and the Council for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance. The basic role of the Agency is to organize and implement the process of external evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programmes, i.e. providing independence and international recognition for the accreditation process. The Council has been formed as an advisory body to improve the quality of higher education. It operates as an independent academic body, its jurisdiction including the providing of advice and opinions to the all participants in the higher education system regarding the work policies and development of higher education in Republika Srpska. In addition to the above laws, the issue of student standard and student organization is additionally regulated by way of the following: Law on Student Standard (“Official Gazette of Republika Srpska”, no. 34/08) which put out of force the previous Law on Pupil and Student Standard (“Official Gazette of Republika Srpska”, no. 18/94); Law on Education and Scholarships for Young Talent (“Official Gazette of Republika Srpska”, no. 73/10); Law on the Union of Students of Republika Srpska (“Official Gazette of Republika Srpska”, no. 71/09).

In the other entity, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, higher education is regulated by cantonal laws. The Department of Education of Brčko District undertakes professional, administrative and other activities in the field of education.

Several strategic documents related to higher education have been also adopted at the level of Republika Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina as a result of the education reforms. The most important are: the Strategy for the Development of Education in Republika Srpska for the period 2010 to 2014, Strategic Directions of Development of Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina with Implementation Plans for 2008–2015 (Official gazette of B&H, no. 14/08), Recommendations for the Implementation of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2007), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2007), National Action Plan for Recognition of Qualifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2006),

Implementation of Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2007), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2007). Additionally, the Agency for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance and the Centre for Information and Recognition of Documents in the Field of Higher Education have been founded at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Having in mind the above situation, characterized by a dispersed system of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the established strategic and legislative framework and also numerous future reform processes envisaged by strategic documents, it is clear that the importance of research providing valid data comparable with higher education systems from other European countries is great. One such survey is the EUROSTUDENT survey implemented across the wider European area with the goal to analyse the socio-economic status of students and provide comparable, detailed and reliable data on the social dimension of higher education in Europe. The data collected through this survey primarily refer to social and economic indicators of the status of students and their living conditions. EUROSTUDENT also examines temporary international mobility. The basis for this research is a view that knowing the characteristics of students and their lives is a key for assessing the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of a higher education system. The relevance and usefulness of this survey is also reflected in the fact that the four cycles of the EUROSTUDENT survey have been implemented thus far, with the number of participating countries increasing with each subsequent survey cycle.

Thus in 2012 Bosnia and Herzegovina has joined the fifth cycle of the EUROSTUDENT survey for the first time through the TEMPUS project *“Towards sustainable and equitable financing of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia – FINHED”*, thereby becoming one of the 30 European countries implementing this survey. This cycle of the survey lasted from 2012 to 2015, with the field research implemented during the summer semester of 2013/14.

The EUROSTUDENT survey data has collected data for Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. both its entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. The separate report has been produced for each entity. This report presents an analysis of data collected for **Republika Srpska**. The value of this report is reflected at three levels – firstly, it provides data regarding the accessibility and equity of higher education in Republika Srpska as well as an opportunity for a comparative review (regarding the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the given higher education system); secondly, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus Republika Srpska, like most countries in the region, is in the period of education reform, where adequate data represent support for adjusting higher education policy to the needs of students, and thirdly, it has produced analyses regarding the social dimension of higher education based on a targeted methodology providing for insight into various aspects of the social dimension of higher education in Republika Srpska. Hence, this survey represents the first comprehensive and targeted survey of the student population in the entity. In other words, the EUROSTUDENT questionnaire

served as a tool to collect and make available data to be used for adopting policies that will stimulate equity both for European, as well as higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

Regarding the structure of the report, it consists of eight chapters. The first (introductory) chapter gives an overview of the context and the second contains methodological explanations for the survey. The remaining six chapters contain systematized data and its analysis regarding the social and economic status and origin of the students, access to higher education, along with the correlation of previous education with the attended studies, the characteristics and various dimensions of the transition towards higher education, the progress of studies, satisfaction with the studies, plans after studies, student living conditions, employment and international mobility.

The assessment of prospects in the domestic and international labour market, as well as students' plans for continued studies were analysed in detail as particularly important for gaining insight into the socio-economic status of students.

Moreover, wherever possible, the data obtained for Republika Srpska have been compared with the data obtained for other countries participating in the fifth cycle of the EUROSTUDENT survey, making sure to present data from countries with similarities with Republika Srpska (at the level of the economy, the educational system, historical heritage, etc.), as well as Western European countries that in many aspects differ from Republika Srpska but in certain ways provide good practice examples that could serve as a guide for elaborating the adjustment of the higher education system to the needs of students.

Finally, we hope that the findings presented in this report will be informative and significant for decision and policy makers at the national level, as well as for the representatives of the research community, civil society organizations working in education, representatives of higher education institutions, the students themselves and all other stakeholders interested in this topic.

1. Background

The constitution defines Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent state composed of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H) and Republika Srpska (RS). Brčko District (BD) was founded as a separate administrative unit under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Federation of B&H comprised ten cantons. There are 14 executive governments at the state level in the country, two at the entity level, ten cantonal and one at the level of Brčko District. The president of Brčko District government is the mayor. In addition to the Ministry of Civil Affairs of B&H, having a coordination and information role, there are also two entity ministries of education (Federal Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska), 10 cantonal ministries of education and the Section for Education in the Government of Brčko District. The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the mandatory approval of competent ministries, coordinates activities in the field of education and international cooperation in the field of higher education. In the Federation of B&H, the main function of the Federal Ministry of Education and Science is to coordinate activities among the ten cantonal ministries of education, while in Republika Srpska the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska is fully authorised to develop and implement higher education policy in this entity.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of RS is responsible for: coordination and development of higher education in the Republic; creation of enrolment policy in accordance with the goals for the development of higher education and the needs of the labour market; the licensing procedure for higher education institutions in the Republic; keeping the Registry of Higher Education Institutions and Registry of Teachers and Associates and other data of importance for the development of the higher education system; regulating the form and content of public documents issued by higher education institutions; keeping a registry on the recognition of foreign diplomas; proposals to the Government on the number of students for enrolment to the first year of studies for all cycles; proposals to the Government on the amount of tuition at the proposal of public higher education institutions; promotion of the integration of teaching and research work and stimulation of research programmes in HEIs; promotion of student and faculty mobility and providing for student and teaching staff mobility within the Republic, B&H, the European Higher Education Area and worldwide; promotion and provision of cooperation between higher education institutions in the Republic, B&H and higher education institutions in the region and worldwide; promotion and legalising equal access to higher education, professional development and training, lifelong learning and all other aspects of higher education in the Republic; fostering and stimulating stronger links between the higher education, industry, economy and society.

Having in mind the presented situation, it is clearly difficult to speak about one higher education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Likewise, the constitutive

complexity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is reflected on the responsibilities regarding higher education.

However, all this does not mean that there is not a certain degree of cooperation between these “systems”. As stated, higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted in 2007 and amended in 2009. According to this law, higher education is education acquired after secondary school, leading to an internationally acknowledged higher education level. Access to higher education is available to all those having completed a four-year secondary school. A higher education institution determines the criteria and method for the classification and selection of candidates for enrolment, considering: a) success attained during previous education, b) type of previous education, c) results achieved at the entrance exam, d) results achieved at the preferences and abilities test, and e) other results of importance for candidate enrolment. Higher education can be achieved by full time, part time and distance learning or by the combination of these three methods of study, as regulated envisaged by the higher education institution statute.

More specifically, the enrolment quotas to higher education institutions are approved by the relevant ministries, at the proposal of the higher education institution. Therefore, students can be budget-financed (those for whom tuition fees are fully or partly covered from the budget) and self-financing students (financing their own studies). The financing status is based on the academic attainment, meaning that the students are ranked down to a certain approved quota for budget-financed students, while the remaining students fulfilling the required conditions can enrol as self-financing students. The Ministry of Education and Culture of RS provides scholarships only to the budget-financed students who have achieved high results in the entrance exams regardless of the student’s socio-economic status. Self-financing students are not entitled to the above benefits. At the entity level there are no student loans projected for any of the student categories.

Higher education institutions are divided into universities and non-university HEIs¹. Higher education is organized in three cycles – the first degree are bachelor studies (at least 180, and/or 240 ECTS points), the second cycle leads to the academic title of magister or equivalent (60 or 120 ECTS points)² and the third cycle leads to the title of doctor of sciences with 180 ECTS points.

As stated above, Republika Srpska adopted the Law on Higher Education in 2006. This law, has granted the status of legal person only to the university, thus cancelling the practice in which the faculties have the status of legal persons (Branković and Branković, 2013). The new Law on Higher Education in Republika Srpska adopted in 2010 (and amended several times during the subsequent years), has introduced the idea of an integrated university which led to the integration of the University in Banja Luka as well. . This is just one of the novelties brought to Republika Srpska by the wave of reform stimulated by

1 ISCED level 5 – short cycle (vocational) tertiary degree.

2 Throughout this report, students of the second cycle of studies will be referred to as students of master studies, in order to provide comparability with other countries.

the Bologna process. The changes have become visible particularly in two cases: a great increase in the number of students and an increase in the number of private higher education institutions. In other words, several private universities have been founded since 2004, currently educating around one third of the student body. This is a considerable success since they have existed only for a decade. However, there are some other trends, e.g. a constant decrease in the number of students of doctoral studies and a number of PhDs, meaning that a number of academic staff has not increased at the same rate as the number of students and number of study programmes.

Regarding the management of higher education in Republika Srpska, management structures and bodies mainly consist of representatives of the academic community. Representatives of the economy and business sector do not participate in decision making. This is very important information relevant for the system of financing higher education in Republika Srpska. Public financing of higher education institutions in this entity is still determined based by input parameters such as the number of employees and number of students. This model of financing means that higher education institutions do not have a legal obligation to justify their use of funds, which may negatively impact the quality of education. In other words, since higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is mostly financed from the entity's public funds, the cantonal budget, the budget of Brčko District and the municipal budget, depending on the jurisdiction (the Ministry of Education and Culture of RS is responsible for financing higher education institutions in this entity), this means that this type of financing model stimulates dependence on state support. There are no systemic mechanisms stimulating higher education institutions to find more efficient ways to spend public funds. The allocated funds mostly cover higher education institutions operational costs.

Considering the above, it may be concluded that the system of student support in Republika Srpska is still inadequate. However, Republika Srpska has made higher education reform a strategically important issue. Another fact in favour of this statement is that Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the project "Towards the Sustainable and Equitable Financing of Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro". This report is produced under this project with the goal to contribute to the improvement of the higher education financing system by (a) the collection and analysis of basic and key evidence on financing at the systemic and institutional level and equity in higher education; (b) introducing and implementing the EUROSTUDENT survey; (c) strengthening local expertise in developing policies on financing and equity in higher education; (d) developing a systemic framework for efficient, effective and equitable systems of higher education; (e) designing a model for financing universities based on a smart diversification of income sources; and (d) founding a regional resource centre aimed at the sustainability of results and their dissemination across the region.

We may also conclude that the above strategic directions and measures listed in the strategic documents, such as the Strategy for the Development of Education in Republika Srpska for the period 2010 to 2014, represent a good baseline

for creating and implementing individual support measures for students. However, it is important to determine the true needs of the student population, examine the degree of clarity and applicability of the operationalization of these commitments to the student body, detect possible significant obstacles preventing students in realizing their rights to receive quality education under equal conditions, and, based on the data obtained, identify the pillars that decision makers should rest upon in the process of creating adequate support measures for students. The following chapters address these issues.

2. Research Methodology

Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thereby also Republika Srpska, have started preparations for the implementation of the fifth cycle of the EUROSTUDENT survey on the social dimension of higher education in Europe in 2012, immediately upon joining it. The survey was implemented during the summer semester of the 2013/14 school year.

The survey instrument was a paper-based questionnaire. The interviewers were specifically for the survey purposes trained representatives of the Union of Students of Republika Srpska.

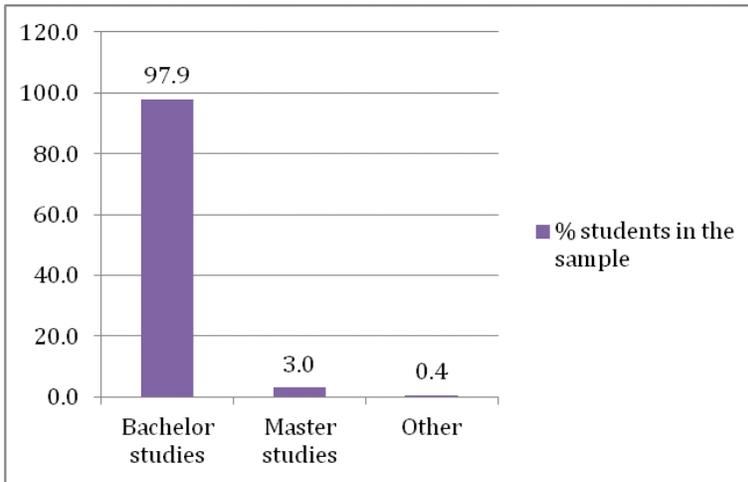
The representative sample of students was formed according to data available from the Statistical Office of Republika Srpska (SORS). The sample represents a combination of a stratified sample and a quota sample. In order to obtain a sample with a structure best matching the structure of students registered in the official data of the Statistical Office of Republika Srpska, the sample was weighted by the variables: gender, status, degree of study and area of education.

Following a detailed control of the completed questionnaires, done in accordance with the EUROSTUDENT survey, a part of the questionnaires was excluded from further data analysis due to an insufficient number of responses to the mandatory questions. Thus, the final analysis has included 1375 students, representatives of 33 higher education institutions and organizational units of some of the higher education institutions from 8 different cities in Republika Srpska.

According to data by the Statistical Office of Republika Srpska for 2012, the total number of students in Republika Srpska was 46547, indicating that our sample represents 2.95% of the total population. Additionally, it is important to note that the specific characteristic of the data for Republika Srpska is that *the sample contains only students enrolled in faculties, i.e. the sample does not include students of non-university HEIs, students under the status of self-financed student, or students studying at private faculties who pay for their education completely from their own pocket. Accordingly, the students in the sample have been divided into budget and co-financing students, i.e. those whose costs of studying are completely covered by the budget and those whose costs of studies are partially covered by the budget.*

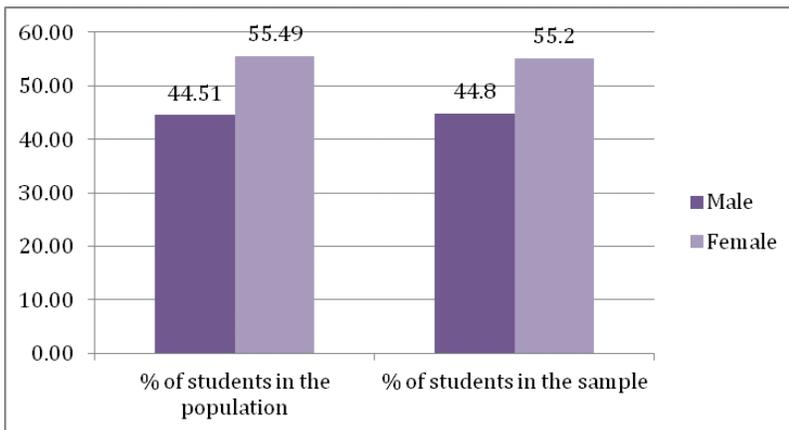
Figure 1 presents the distribution of Republika Srpska students in the sample based on the level of enrolled studies, showing that the students of bachelor studies are dominant in the sample, while the share of master students is very small. The “other” category includes students still attending studies according to the pre-Bologna system, students of integrated academic studies, students of vocational studies and doctoral students.

Figure 1: Distribution of students within the student population and sample by level of studies



The structure of the student population regarding gender, by SORS data and in the sample, is shown in Figure 2. Within the student population of Republika Srpska, according to data for the school year 2011/2012, there were 55.49% female and 44.51% male students. Within the sample for the 2013/2014 school year the ratio of students by gender was balanced, and nearly identical to the distribution of genders in the overall student population.

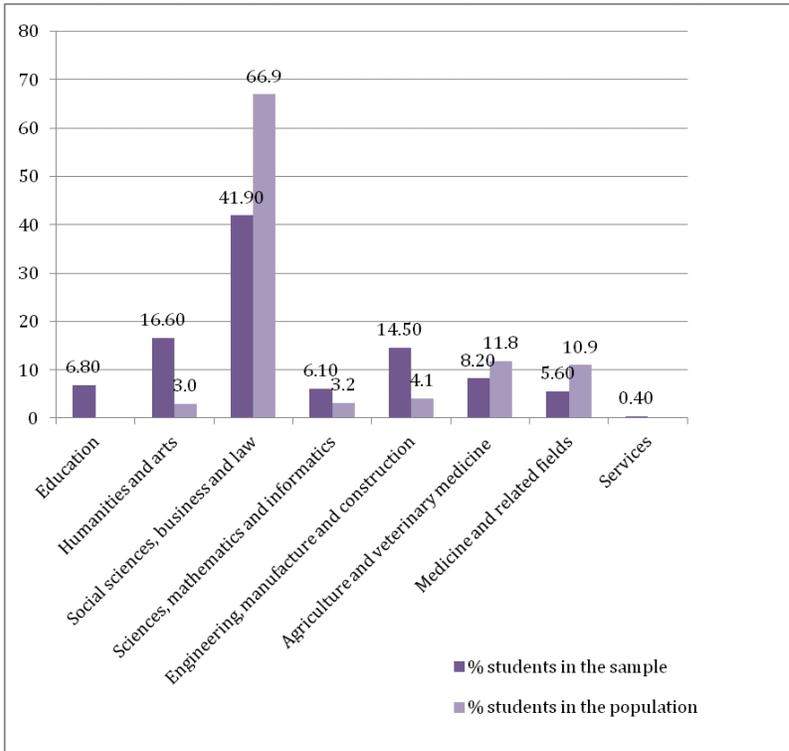
Figure 2: Distribution of student population and sample by gender



Regarding the fields of education, where data was available, the distribution of students in the sample was compared to the overall student population. It may be concluded that the highest number of students in both cases choose the field of social sciences, business and law. The fields of humanities and arts, as well as areas in the fields of engineering, manufacture and construction also

appear to be attractive fields for students in the sample. Within the overall student population the lowest number of students attends studies in the fields of humanities and arts, while the least represented in the sample are students from the field of services (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Distribution of students within the student population and sample by field of study



The survey instrument for students in Republika Srpska was developed based on a generic English language questionnaire, received from the EUROSTUDENT consortium, adjusted to the characteristics of the student population and the conditions of studies in Republika Srpska. For example, a question was added regarding whether the student is financed from the budget or co-finances his/her studies, which is not an option in other countries, but represents a key division in case of the student population in Republika Srpska. The team adjusting the questionnaire made every effort to keep the changes to the generic version to a minimum, in order to retain the possibility of comparing different national higher education systems.

3. Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of Students

As stated above, the EUROSTUDENT survey has been implemented for the last several decades in a large number of European countries, for the purpose of collecting data on the socio-economic status of students.

The data on the socio-economic status of students is particularly important because if we accept the perspective that socio-economic status represents a composite measure of the educational attainment of parents, parental occupation, the level of prestige of their occupation, the material status and cultural resources at the disposal of the family (Baucal, 2012), or if we define it more broadly as a status within a social hierarchy impacting the availability of financial funds, power and prestige (Sirin, 2005), it becomes clear that an individual's socio-economic status will influence both his/her current, as well as future life, and certainly education as well. This means that if the link between education and the economic, political and cultural system of society is analysed through the prism of class relations in society (power in schools and influence of high-income parents), it is clear that education is linked to the economic system in two ways. Firstly, access and full utilization of the possibilities offered by education largely depend on the economic resources an individual possesses. Secondly, schools and faculties represent the main means of selection and stratification of the workforce, because the distribution of economic goods is a key for the quality of education, and educational institutions are a key for our "life choices". Therefore, inequality in education cannot be observed independently of economic inequality (Lynch & Baker, 2005). This, at the same time, means that if the educational system is organized in a way that everyone has equal access, and thereafter, quality education, it ceases to be a channel for the reproduction of social inequality (Čekić Marković and Jokić, 2015).

Since this data should provide the basis for creating and improving existing policies in the field of education, as well as the "image" of Republika Srpska in this area regarding selected European countries that have participated in this survey, the general data providing insight into the student population in Republika Srpska, as well as general data on the socio-economic status of students have been analysed separately in this chapter. A significant amount of this data will also be the basis for the analysis presented in subsequent chapters.

A part of the data was analysed in a comparative perspective to create a clearer view of the situation in Republika Srpska compared to the selected countries in which the adequate data was available. The results for Republika Srpska were compared to the results of certain other European countries. Therefore, besides from the countries of the region, the most frequently used results were from Croatia, Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The choice of Austria has been made due to the fact that Austria is one of the first countries in Europe to introduce and implement support measures for students on a systemic level. Croatia has been chosen because it is characterized by the same historical heritage as Republika Srpska (the heritage of former Yugoslavia), but in the

processes of establishing systemic support measures for students, *inter alia*, it has passed the road of harmonization with the educational systems of European Union countries, having become a member state in mid-2013. The Czech Republic and Slovakia have been chosen because they have been members of the European Union for over a decade.

Therefore, it was significant to view their educational systems current status, the subsystem of higher education and its complementary measures of student support, and to see whether the traces of a centralized education system (as is the case with Republika Srpska) are still a challenge, or these countries are today more similar to “old members” of the European Union.

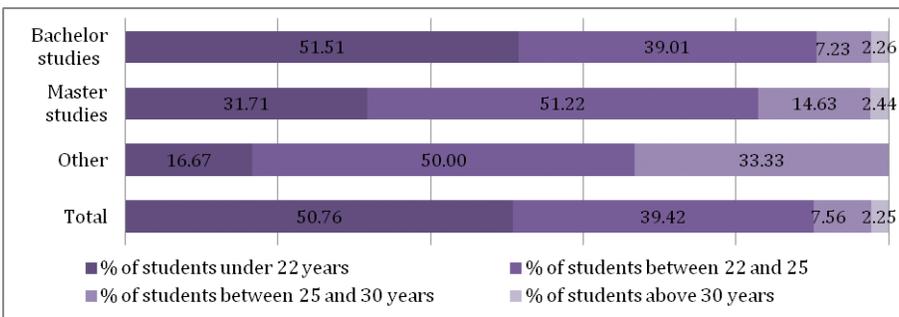
3.1. Age Structure and Origin of Students

Regarding the age of students, a student in Republika Srpska is on average 22.19 years old (the median is 20 years). Within the student population, there is the smallest percentage of the oldest students, those above 30 years of age (2.25%), indicating a relatively adequate pace of study. This data is in accordance with the findings of the CONGRAD study, indicating that, after the Bologna reform, the duration of studies has been significantly reduced, which has been one of the goals of the systemic changes to higher education (Lažetić et al, 2014).

However, part of the students over thirty years of age are still in bachelor studies (2.26% in the overall sample), therefore a future survey should examine if these students are unable to complete bachelor studies within the envisaged timeframe, if they have returned to the educational system after several years of a break, or if they have completed another faculty and then deciding to acquire a bachelor studies diploma at another higher education institution/programme.

Comparison of the age structure between students of master and bachelor studies, based on data obtained through this survey, shows a trend of a relatively successful mobility to master studies based on student age.

Figure 4: Age of students in Republika Srpska by level of study (in %)



Most of the higher education institutions students in Republika Srpska were born in the same country as their parents. The percentage of students whose parents were not born in the student’s country of study, but the student was

(second generation of migrants) is slightly higher than the first generation of migrants, where the students themselves were not born in the country of study.

In order to direct the planned measures better towards the target groups, the next cycle of the EUROSTUDENT survey needs to separate students considered as migrants (although this does not impact their social status, because they have moved to Republika Srpska in waves of labour or other migrations during the existence of former Yugoslavia) from students whose families are refugees or internally displaced from the territory of former Yugoslavia, since this can significantly affect their socio-economic status.

3.2. Basic socio-economic characteristics of students in Republika Srpska

The basic socio-economic characteristics of students in Republika Srpska are presented in the following table (Table 1) based on indicators such as educational attainment of parents, type of parental occupation, family situation of the student, etc.

Table 1: Basic socio-economic characteristics of students in Republika Srpska³ (in %)

Question	Results for Republika Srpska
Students whose fathers did not attain tertiary education	71.73
Students whose mothers did not attain tertiary education	77.79
Students whose fathers are manual workers	40.95
Students whose mothers are manual workers	16.01
Students with children	3.85
Female students in bachelor studies	54.36
Female students in master studies	82.93
Students whose parents are workers without tertiary education compared to the total number of manual workers	90.76
Students in bachelor studies whose parents did not attain tertiary education	65.73
Students in master studies whose parents did not attain tertiary education	52.63
Students assessing their parents to be in the lower half of the scale regarding their social status	46.43
Students whose parents have a low social status and no tertiary education compared to other students	35.72
Students in bachelor studies with a lower social status	46.83
Students in master studies with a lower social status	38.46

3 For all situations referencing parents, the meaning is either of the two parents.

Table 2 shows the distribution of students by level of study according to the highest level of education attained by their parents. The focus is on the characteristics of parents, i.e. the indicators that might point towards groups with unequal status regarding access to higher education.

Most of the parents of students in Republika Srpska in the sample have completed secondary school, followed by students whose parents have completed HEIs. It is also notable that with the increase of the level of studies the student is currently attending the level of educational attainment of parents also increases. Thus there is a smaller number of students in master studies whose parents have completed only secondary school, while the number of students whose parents have completed higher education, master and doctoral studies is larger.

Table 2: Ratio of the level of studies of the students and the highest educational attainment of the students' parents (%)

What study programme do you currently attend?	Highest level of educational attainment of parents?					
	Primary school	Secondary school	Higher education	Master studies	Doctoral studies	Total
Bachelor studies	1.97	63.68	29.95	2.88	1.52	100.00
Master studies	0.00	51.28	38.46	7.69	2.56	100.00
Other	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total in the sample	1.91	63.05	30.50	3.01	1.54	100.00

Additionally, the data indicates a trend of increase for the current level of studies with the increase in the educational attainment of parents, both within the group of students whose parents are engaged in non-manual occupations, as well as within the group of students whose parents are engaged in manual occupations.

Due to a better insight into the situation in Republika Srpska compared to other countries, in regards to the students' parents education, for example in Austria where, according to EUROSTUDENT V survey data, for students in bachelor studies, the percentage of parents with primary education is 5.2%, with secondary education 61.6% and with tertiary education 33.2%. In Croatia, these indicators are 2.4%, 50.6% and 47%. In Slovakia, the percentage of students' parents with primary education is 0.5%, with secondary 59.5% and with higher education 40%.

Based on this survey data (shown in Table 3), it may be concluded that students whose parents hold simpler jobs (i.e. in crafts, agricultural and machinery-related occupations) are less represented in higher education in Republika Srpska. In other words, regarding the occupational structure of the parents of students, looking at the employed parents in low-qualification occupations and accordingly with lower personal income, we can conclude that students with less educated and poorer parents have lower chances to access the higher

education system. The situation is similar in other Eastern-European countries covered by the EUROSTUDENT survey.

Table 3: Distribution of the parents of students by type of current or last occupation (in %)

Occupation	Current or last occupation of father	Current or last occupation of mother	At least one parent
Manager, senior official or law officer	10.90	3.50	12.42
Expert or artist	6.40	7.00	9.32
Engineer, associate professional or technician	10.90	7.60	11.97
Clerk or administration worker	9.30	19.40	17.01
Service or sales worker	12.10	22.80	20.32
Skilled agricultural, forestry, fishery or similar worker	7.10	3.80	6.03
Craft or related trades worker	19.10	5.80	10.37
Plant/machine operator, assembler, driver	12.00	1.40	4.81
Simple occupations	2.70	5.00	2.43
Defence forces	2.40	0.00	0.32
I do not know	4.00	4.90	2.91
Was not active in the labour market	3.10	18.80	2.08
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

The percentage of students in the total sample whose parents are engaged in manual occupations is 25.0%. The percentage of the surveyed students' fathers engaged in manual occupations in Republika Srpska is 40.9%, while for mothers it is 16%. In Croatia, these percentages are 30.1% and 15.3%, in Austria 19.6% and 18.8%, in Slovakia 37.5% and 15.5%. Likewise, we see that a greater percentage of mothers than fathers is inactive in the labour market.

Table 4 shows the distribution of students' parents according to the occupation and level of education for non-manual and manual occupations (agricultural, forestry, fishery or similar worker, craft or related worker, plant and machine operator, assembler or driver and simple occupations – e.g. cleaner, agricultural worker on another person's property, waste disposal worker). We see that the master studies have been attained by the largest number of those parents who are experts in a certain profession or artists, while parents with higher education are represented in various occupations. The data also shows that the largest number of parents with completed secondary schools have manual occupations. It should be additionally noted that the percentage of manual workers without tertiary education among the total number of manual workers

is 90.76% (Table 1). In Croatia this percentage is 87.2%, in Slovakia 96.9%, while data for Austria is not available.

Table 4: Ratio of educational attainment of student's parents and parent's current/last occupation (%)⁴

Parental occupation	Highest level of educational attainment of parents?					
	Primary school	Secondary school	HE	Master studies	Doctoral studies	Total
Manager, senior official or law officer	0.00	34.57	52.47	9.88	3.09	100.00
Expert or artist	1.60	11.20	67.20	11.20	8.80	100.00
Engineer, associate professional or technician	0.00	44.03	51.57	3.77	0.63	100.00
Clerk or administration worker	0.00	62.39	36.28	0.88	0.44	100.00
Service or sales worker	0.37	87.50	11.40	0.00	0.74	100.00
Simple occupations ⁴	211.11	71.60	17.28	0.00	0.00	100.00
Craft or related trades worker	2.17	94.20	3.62	0.00	0.00	100.00
Plant and machine operator, assembler or driver	0.00	92.19	7.81	0.00	0.00	100.00
Simple occupations	12.50	71.88	15.63	0.00	0.00	100.00
Defence forces	0.00	60.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
I do not know	3.13	65.63	28.13	0.00	3.13	100.00
Without activity in the labour market	11.11	74.07	11.11	0.00	3.70	100.00
Percentage of manual workers with a certain level of education among the total number of manual workers	5.08	85.71	9.21	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total	1.74	62.96	30.76	2.87	1.66	100.00

Figure 5 complements the previous analysis regarding the level of educational attainment of parents by students' gender. The indicator by gender is uniform, except regarding the parents with doctorates (n=21), where we have far more male than female students.

⁴ E.g. fish farmer, subsistence farmer, market-oriented farmer, hunter, etc.

Figure 5: Highest educational attainment of students' parents by gender of students (in %)

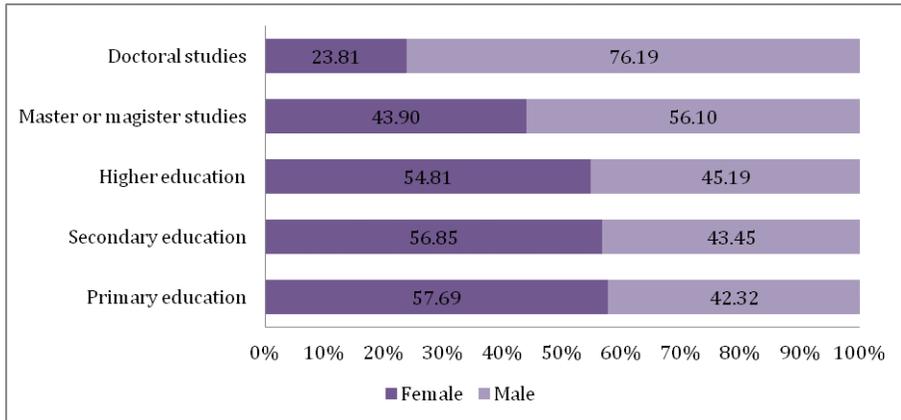


Table 5 represents an overview of the perception of students regarding the social status of their parents. The purpose of these results is to try to assess the socio-economic status of students in a more comprehensive way, not just through the educational and occupation structure of the parents. A simple comparison of the proportion of students at the ends of the scale provides information on their perception of their own social status, representing a very wide conceptual framework for self-evaluation. Based on the data obtained, we may conclude that 46.45% of the students assess that their parents belong to the lower half of the scale regarding social status (mark 5 and below). In Croatia this percentage is 35.9%, in Austria 21.5% and in Slovakia 33.7%. Additionally, comparing the same proportions by gender, we see that somewhat smaller percentage of female students assess the social status of their parents as poorer (44.93%) compared to male students (48.29%).

Table 5: Students' perceptions of the social status of their parents by gender of students (in %)

Level of social status	Female	Male	Total
10 High social status	3.24	3.08	3.17
9	3.66	3.08	3.40
8	14.23	11.47	12.98
7	18.87	18.84	18.86
6	15.07	15.24	15.15
5	30.28	28.94	29.68
4	6.90	9.59	8.11
3	5.35	6.16	5.72
2	1.13	1.20	1.16
1 Low social status	1.27	2.40	1.78

Table 6 shows the perception of social status depending on the level of educational attainment of parents. This links the subjective assessment of the social status with one of the relatively reliable indicators for the very same status.

Table 6: Students' perceptions of social status by educational attainment of students' parents (in %)

Level of social status	Primary school	Secondary school	HE	Master	Doctorate
Higher social status (mark 10 to 7)	23.07	30.59	51.27	72.23	65.00
Average social status (mark 6 and 5)	61.54	49.38	37.24	25.00	25.00
Lower social status (mark 4 to 1)	15.39	20.03	11.48	2.78	10.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The data shows that the perception of the social status of students is correlated with the level of educational attainment of their parents. Considerably less students whose parents have completed primary school perceive themselves as someone with a high social status (10–7: 23.07%) compared to students whose one of the parents has higher education or a doctorate (10–7: 65%). Likewise, there is a noticeable trend of increase in the level being accompanied by an increase in the percentage of students assessing their social status as higher.

The following table (Table 7) presents a combination of student perceptions of the social status of the family and the three levels of study.

The results indicate that the percentage of students in bachelor studies with a higher social status (mark 10–7) is 37.86%, while with lower social status (mark 4–1) is 16.67%. Within the category of master students, these percentages are 48.72% and 20.51%, indicating larger differences between students regarding the perception of social status. On the other hand, among the group of other students, not any student has assessed his/her social status as lower, while the majority of students (85.72%) see their status as higher.

Table 7: Students' perceptions of the social status of parents by level of students' studies (in %)

Level of social status	Bachelor studies	Master studies	Other
Higher social status (mark 10 to 7)	37.86	48.72	85.72
Average social status (mark 6 and 5)	45.47	30.77	14.29
Lower social status (mark 4 to 1)	16.67	20.51	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Regarding other countries from the EUROSTAT V survey, in Croatia there are 24.6% students in bachelor studies with a self-assessed higher social status

and 75.4% with lower and average social status, while in master studies these percentages are 29.5% and 70.5%. In Austria, there are 15.7% students in bachelor studies with higher social status, 84.3% with lower status, while the percentages in master studies are 62.3% and 37.7%, representing a very significant change in the perception of socio-economic status between the two levels of study. In Slovakia, 35.5% of bachelor students perceive their socio-economic status as high, while in master studies this is the case for 34.6% of students.

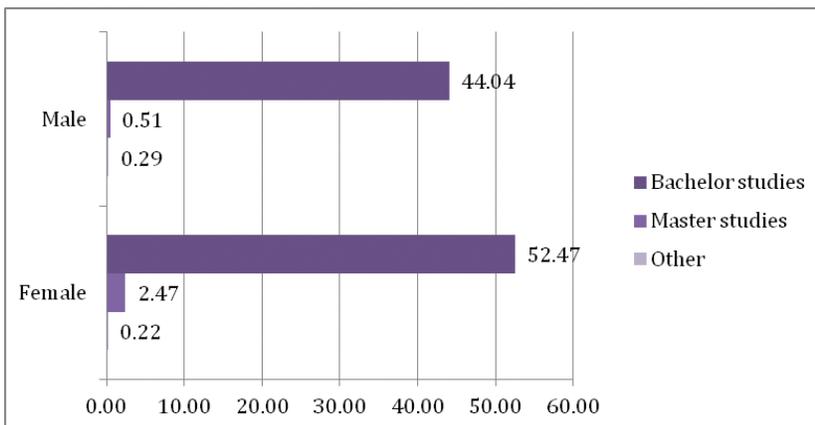
At the European level the proportion of male and female students is not the same, neither from the aspect of study programmes, nor from the aspect of other important characteristics, as shown by the fourth and fifth wave of the EUROSTUDENT survey.⁵ The gender profile of the student population is changing over time and the share of female students is increasing.

The percentage of students by gender in Republika Srpska, is also unequally distributed in the various levels of study.

Figure 6 shows that the share of female students is larger at both bachelor and master studies. The difference between male and female students is even larger at the level of master than bachelor studies.

Regarding the results of the EUROSTUDENT V survey in other countries used for the comparative analysis, the percentage of female students increases with the higher levels of study, except in Austria. In Croatia, the share of female students in bachelor studies is 55.5%, in master studies 57.2%, in Austria the share of female students in bachelor studies is 53% and in master studies 47.2%, while in Slovakia the percentage in bachelor studies is 58.1% and 60% in master studies.

Figure 6: Distribution of students by gender and level of studies



Within the sample, the highest percentage belongs to students whose parents have completed at least secondary schools (77.8% of mothers and 71.7% of fathers; at least one parent 62.6%) followed by HEIs (20.5% of mothers and

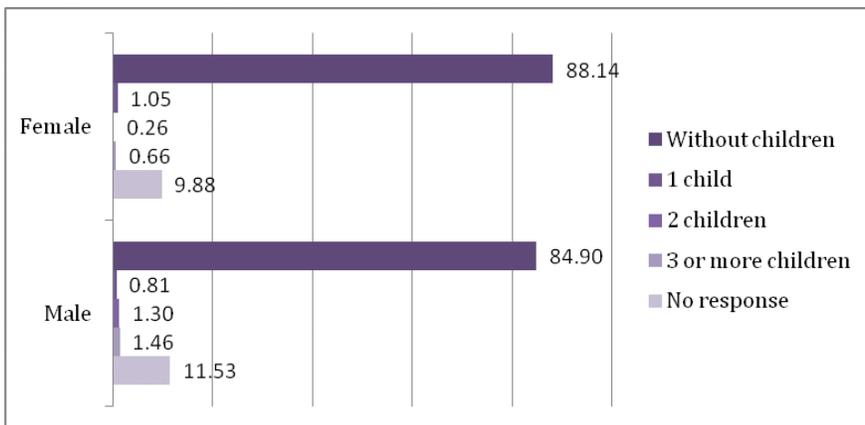
⁵ <http://www.eurostudent.eu/results/reports>

26.4% of fathers; at least one parent 30.5%). Around 3% of the parents have a master diploma, while 1.5% of the parents have a doctorate. Additionally, regarding the distribution of parents by whether they have tertiary education or not, the results show that around 65% of parents have not completed faculties, while around 35% of parents have tertiary education.

The perception of social status, as well as the perception of the workload during studies, and thus also satisfaction with studies, can be influenced by whether and how many children students have. In certain situations students have to distribute their resources, i.e. their time and money, between themselves and their children. This produces additional burden for students, leaving them in a subordinate situation compared to students without children.

Figure 7 shows the sample structure regarding whether students of different genders are parents and how many children they have. The total number of students with children is 3.9%. Regarding other countries, in Croatia the percentage is 3.3%, in Austria 8.9% and in Slovakia 7.1%. In Republika Srpska, students who are also parents are in a significantly more disadvantaged situation than student-parents in most of the countries covered by the EUROSTUDENT survey, since Bosnia and Herzegovina is among those countries without organized childcare programmes within HEI and student dormitories. Students also cannot follow lectures and undertake other obligations in a way adjusted to their situation.

Figure 7: Distribution of students with children by gender and number of children



Comparing students by number of children based on their satisfaction with the workload during studies (Table 8), it may be concluded that student-parents are far more satisfied than other students. Particularly interesting is that the most satisfied students are within the group of parents with three and more children. This finding should certainly be taken with reserve for two reasons: first, the number of parents with 3 and more children in the sample was small ($n=14$), thus the percentage of 60% satisfied relates to 6 students. Second, studying based on Bologna principles involves equal workload for all students, thus it is

difficult to imagine that those sharing their time between family, parental and study obligations are the most satisfied compared to students who are fully dedicated to their studies.

Table 8: Distribution of students by degree of satisfaction with obligations during studies by parental status, i.e. number of children (in %)

Satisfaction with obligations	No children	1 child	2 children	3 children
Satisfied	7.43	10.00	16.67	60.00
Moderately satisfied	16.83	0.00	16.67	0.00
Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	45.68	80.00	58.33	10.00
Moderately unsatisfied	17.70	10.00	8.33	20.00
Unsatisfied	12.35	0.00	0.00	10.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Regarding the students who are parents and considering the financial difficulties they experience (Table 9), compared to other students, there is a difference regarding parents with two and three children.

Table 9: Distribution of students by financial difficulties they experience compared to parental status, i.e. number of children (in %)

Level of difficulties	No children	1 child	2 children	3 or more children
I have very serious financial difficulties	9.31	8.33	16.67	22.22
I have serious financial difficulties	19.26	16.67	25.00	0.00
I have moderate financial difficulties	42.03	58.33	58.33	66.67
I don't have financial difficulties	19.91	8.33	0.00	11.11
I don't have any financial difficulties	9.49	8.33	0.00	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

3.3. Students with Impairments

The following chapters focus on the issues of students with impairments and aspects of their student life. Data in the following table shows that the percentage of students with impairments within the overall sample population is 6.6%. Among them, the most numerous are students with sensory difficulties (3.4%). At the second place, with 1%, are the students with chronic diseases.

Table 10: Distribution of students by type of health problem compared to the total number of students (in %)

Type of health problem	Percentage of total number of students
Chronic disease	1.00
Mental health problems	0.60
Sensory difficulties	3.40
Learning difficulties	0.90
Mobility difficulties	0.20
Other health problems	0.80
Total number of students with some type of impairment, chronic health problems or functional limitations	6.60

According to the results of the EUROSTUDENT V survey, regarding having some type of impairment, chronic health problems or functional limitations, in Croatia 14.1% of students report such problems, in Austria 14.5%, while in Slovakia this is the case with 22.1% of students. However, direct comparisons of the number of students regarding the type of their health problem between different countries is impossible, because different countries have different traditions in defining and categorizing health problems that qualifies for the additional support by the state.

Table 11 shows the distribution of students according to a type of impairment, health problem or functional limitation, i.e. the percentage of students with certain impairment among the total number of students with impairments. There is significant percentage of students with chronic diseases and sensory impairments.

Table 11: Distribution of students by type of impairment, chronic health problem or functional limitation compared to the total number of students with disabilities (in %)

Type of impairment, chronic health problem or functional limitation	Compared to the total number of students with impairments
Chronic disease	14.29
Mental health problems	9.52
Mobility difficulties	3.57
Sensory impairment (e.g. vision or hearing problems)	50.00
Learning problem (e.g. ADHD, dyslexia)	11.90
Other chronic health problems	10.71
Total	100.00

Table 12 provides insight into the perceptions of student with some form of impairment regarding the size of obstacles they face during studies. The largest number of students with impairments, on average, sees their impairment as a small or no obstacle to studying. This data should be interpreted with reserve, since there are certain differences in the perception of obstacles to studying by different types of impairment. Likewise, it is possible that a somewhat different picture would have been obtained if students were to assess the extent to which their faculty (institution) enables unfettered studying and not the impairment as such.

Regarding students in other countries, the percentage of students perceiving their impairment as a large obstacle for studies is around 30% for most countries (Spain, Finland, France, etc.). In Croatia the percentage is at 45.6%, in Slovakia 35%.

Table 12: Student perception of the level of obstacle for studies caused by the impairment

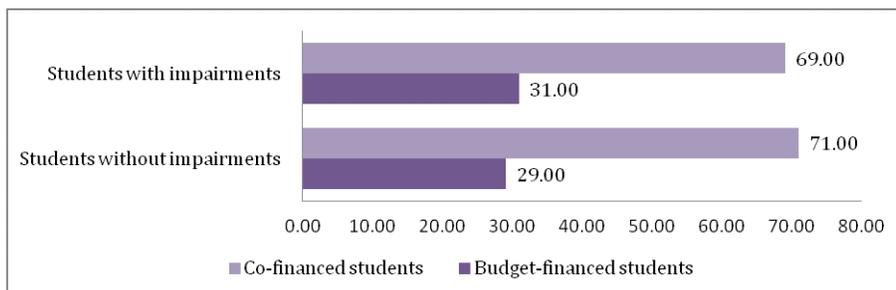
Level of obstacle	Number of students	Percentage
Small or no obstacle	67	80.19
Medium obstacle	13	15.18
Large obstacle	4	4.63

A similar result is also obtained regarding the assessment of the extent to which students perceive their type of impairment, chronic health problem or functional limitations as an obstacle, where we also see that most of the students again choose the response “small or no” obstacle.

Table 13: Type of health problem of students compared to a level of obstacle the problem presents for them (in %)

Type of health problem	Large obstacle	Medium obstacle	Small or no obstacle	Total
Chronic disease	10	30	60	100
Mental health problems	25	0	75	100
Mobility impairments	0	33.33	66.67	100
Sensory impairments (e.g. vision or hearing problems)	0	12.2	87.8	100
Learning problems (e.g. ADHD, dyslexia)	12.5	37.5	50	100
Other chronic health problems	0	33.33	66.67	100

Considering the distribution of students with some form of impairment by status of study (Figure 8), their percentage per status (budget financing or co-financing) coincides with the share of students without impairments.

Figure 8: Distribution of students with impairments regarding status of studies

The data from the following table may indicate that the status of students with impairments in Republika Srpska is not at a satisfactory level, since no student reports on receiving great institutional support, while a significant number of students state they received no support. However, the largest number of students report that support is not needed/requested, and since these two issues are not separated in the EUROSTUDENT survey, it cannot be concluded whether support is not needed or if these are the students who have not asked for the support for various reasons (lack of information on where they can receive support, awareness of a lack of necessary support, etc.). Considering this result, there is a possibility that students with impairments who attend studies, in fact, have extra-institutional support enabling unfettered studies. Therefore the picture we get seems very positive, although the faculty (educational institution) has not enabled it by its support. If only the students who have extra-institutional support manage to enrol in faculties and continue studies, then the result whereby only 6.6% of the student population are students with impairments is not surprising.

Table 14: Type of health problem of students compared to the institutional support they receive during studies (in %)

Type of health problem	High support	Moderate support	Low support	No support	Support not needed/requested	Total
Total number of students with impairments in relation to the support they receive	0.00	10.00	10.00	30.00	50.00	100.00
Chronic disease	0.00	0.00	25.00	37.50	37.50	100.00
Mental health problems	0.00	0.00	0.00	33.33	66.67	100.00
Mobility difficulties	0.00	0.00	2.70	45.95	51.35	100.00
Sensory impairment	0.00	0.00	14.29	57.14	28.57	100.00
Learning problem (e.g. ADHD, dyslexia)	0.00	0.00	10.00	50.00	40.00	100.00
Other chronic health problems	0.00	1.33	8.00	44.00	46.67	100.00

Regarding the decision to continue studies among students from this group, and comparing students with some form of impairment with students without chronic health problems or limitations, a certain difference is noted between the two groups. In other words, the group of students with health problems plan to continue studies later (within a period longer than one year upon completing their current study programme) in a higher percentage. They also do not plan to continue studies in a higher percentage.

Table 15: Student plans to continue studies after completing the current study programme (in %)

Response	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Yes, within one year after completing the study program I currently attend	21.43	25.63
Yes, but within a period longer than one year after completing the study program I currently attend	17.86	12.44
No, I do not plan to continue my studies	14.29	10.66
I still do not know	46.43	51.27
Total	100.00	100.00

A similar conclusion may be derived from the data in the following table, showing whether the students wish to continue their studies, and at what level they wish to continue. Students with impairments wish to continue studies through other programmes or are still undecided regarding the programme at a higher percentage.

Table 16: Plans to continue studies (in %)

Plan to continue studies	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Bachelor studies	0.00	8.43
Master academic studies	68.75	75.40
Doctoral studies	3.13	4.10
Other programmes	15.63	7.29
I still do not know	12.50	4.78
Total	100.00	100.00

It is worth considering how much students with chronic health problems or limitations are satisfied with the organization of studies and schedule of classes compared to other students (Table 17). Based on the data shown, students with chronic health problems or limitations are noticeably equally satisfied and unsatisfied as their colleagues who do not have such problems. Based on data

from Table 18, we may conclude that students with chronic health problems or limitations are more satisfied with the way administration in higher education institutions treats them.

Table 17: Satisfaction with the organization of studies and schedule of classes (in %)

Satisfaction level	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Satisfied	44.71	45.25
Moderately satisfied	27.06	28.07
Unsatisfied	28.24	26.68
Total	100.00	100.00

Table 18: Satisfaction with treatment of students by administration staff (in %)

Satisfaction level	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Satisfied	57.32	48.31
Moderately satisfied	21.95	26.93
Unsatisfied	20.73	24.76
Total	100.00	100.00

Regarding the treatment of students by teaching staff, no differences are noted between students with chronic health problems or limitations compared to other students (Table 19). The most students are satisfied with their treatment by teaching staff.

Table 19: Satisfaction with treatment of students by teaching staff (in %)

Satisfaction level	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Satisfied	66.67	62.32
Moderately satisfied	22.22	26.76
Unsatisfied	11.11	10.92
Total	100.00	100.00

Considering the results from tables 17–19, indicating a high degree of agreement between students with disabilities and other students, we may assume that all students have equal treatment and that the same quality of education is offered to all students. . The data shown in the following table corroborate this.

Regarding satisfaction with the infrastructure and equipment of higher education institutions, the conclusion is that students are mostly satisfied with them, regardless of whether they have health problems or limitations. It should be noted that students with health problems or limitations are more satisfied, even though it would be expected that the infrastructure and equipment of higher education institutions could be inconvenient for the studies of students with impairments (Table 20).

Table 20: Satisfaction with faculty equipment (library, computers, building, classrooms) (in %)

Satisfaction level	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Satisfied	65.85	55.49
Moderately satisfied	12.20	23.34
Unsatisfied	21.95	21.18
Total	100.00	100.00

Regarding financial difficulties, data from the following table leads to the conclusion that both groups of students, with or without a kind of impairment, experience financial difficulties to a similar extent. However, a somewhat higher percentage of students with chronic health problems or limitations feel severe and moderate financial difficulties compared to other students.

Table 21: Assessment of financial difficulties (in %)

Degree of financial difficulties	With chronic health problems or impairments	Without chronic health problems or impairments
Serious financial difficulties	31.08	28.18
Moderate financial difficulties	44.59	42.27
No financial difficulties	24.32	29.55
Total	100.00	100.00

4. Education Prior to Studies and Transition to Higher Education

When researching the social dimension of higher education, it is important to analyse all relevant information on the prior education of students, to be able to derive conclusions on whether access to higher education or the intensity of studies depend on the prior education of students, and, *inter alia*, whether some areas of study are preferred by students differing by type of the completed secondary education. Likewise, it is important to determine whether there are any systemic differences between students coming from families with different educational and socio-economic status in the context of studies and previous education.

Among the students participating in the EUROSTUDENT V survey in Republika Srpska that have responded to this question, 56.8% (N=772) of students come from vocational secondary schools, while 41.2% (N=552) students come from gymnasiums⁶.

Important information on an educational system is also provided by data on its equity, i.e. to what extent is the educational system able to provide equal conditions for education to all its citizens. Data on system equity, also, speaks about the vertical mobility within a society. The educational attainment of parents and their occupation are taken as indicators of the socio-economic status of students in this survey. Their influence was examined in respect of the various aspects of studies, i.e. delayed enrolment, the intensity of study, student employment during studies.

Data on the educational attainment of parents and their occupation for students from the sample indicate that students whose parents have not attained higher education, and students whose parents are engaged in manual occupations have mainly attended vocational secondary education programmes.

Regarding the educational attainment of parents, we see that students from students from families where at least one parent has higher education tend more to attend gymnasiums, while students from families where neither parent has higher education tend more towards attending vocational schools (Table 22).

Table 22: Previous education of students and educational attainment of students' parents (in %)

Previous education	Without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	With higher education (ISCED 5–8)	Total in the sample
Vocational secondary school	61.84	46.89	56.85
Gymnasium	36.22	50.96	41.16
Foreign diploma	1.94	2.14	1.99
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

6 General track of secondary education.

Students from families where at least one parent is engaged in manual occupations have attended vocational secondary schools to a greater extent (Table 23). In other words, the data on the educational attainment of parents and their occupation indicates that more students with a lower socio-economic status have attended vocational secondary schools.

Table 23: Previous education of students and educational attainment of parents (in %)

Previous education	Non-manual occupations (ISCO ⁷ 1–5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 5–9)
Vocational secondary school	54.30	62.82
Gymnasium	43.66	35.26
Foreign diploma	2.04	1.92

Students in the Republika Srpska sample attend only faculties and not vocational non-university HEIs, but it is interesting to note that the majority of students in the sample come from secondary vocational schools rather than from gymnasiums (Table 24). This finding sets Republika Srpska apart from all other countries in the region, and also from the majority of all other European countries. We strongly recommend focusing on this issue in a future survey. If the results of that study confirm our survey, decision and policy makers should consider undertaking further reform steps in the field of vocational education. Further steps are required because the most financially inefficient system is one where students who have attended vocational school (which are the most expensive) enrol in the academic programmes not related to the field of work for which the students were educated at the secondary school level.

Table 24: Previous education of students (in %)

Previous education	% of students in the sample
Vocational secondary school	56.85
Gymnasium	41.16
Foreign diploma	1.99

Regarding the time dedicated to completing obligations per week by students having completed secondary vocational education and gymnasiums, there are no significant differences between them. However, students who have completed secondary schools abroad dedicate more time to study-related activities (Table 25). Presumably, these students need more time to adjust, considering the change of education environment and “culture.”

7 ISCO is the abbreviation of International Standard Classification of Occupation, and non-manual occupations include managers, experts, technicians, clerks and service and trade workers, while manual occupations include qualified agricultural workers, fisheries and forestry workers, crafts and similar workers, factory workers, machine operators and assemblers, and elementary occupations; see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/>

Table 25: Previous education of students and intensity of studies (in %)

Previous education	Low intensity of studies ⁸	Medium intensity of studies	High intensity of studies
Vocational secondary school	28.20	37.78	34.02
Gymnasium	25.32	39.24	35.44
Foreign diploma	13.64	27.27	59.09

The dominant source of income for all students is a family. However, students who have attended secondary vocational schools finance their life and education from the work they do at a higher percentage (Table 26). The fact that students who have attended vocational secondary schools make greater use of their own income from work as the dominant source of income, along with the previously noted data that more of them have a lower socio-economic status (measured by the educational attainment and occupation of the parents) suggests the fact that their position is such that they have to work to finance their education (student employment during studies will be shown in detail in the sixth chapter of the report).

Table 26: Previous education of students and dominant source of income (in %)

Previous education	Family as the dominant source of income ⁹	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Public source of income as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income ¹⁰
Vocational secondary school	80.71	3.57	2.68	13.04
Gymnasium	86.06	2.21	2.65	9.07
Total	82.23	3.06	2.67	12.03

Comparing the ratio of students having completed vocational secondary schools and those having completed gymnasiums enrolled in higher education institutions of different fields of study, statistically significant differences can be found (Table 27). Thus, for example, students who have completed secondary vocation schools enrol in study programmes in the field of education, social sciences, business and law, agriculture, medicine and related fields at a significantly higher percentage. The data shows that students who have attended gymnasiums enrol in study programmes in the field of engineering, construction and manufacture to a significant extent.

8 Low intensity of studies denotes students dedicating under 20 hours per week for study obligations, medium intensity of studies is for students dedicating between 20 and 40 hours per week for study obligations, while high intensity of studies means that students dedicate over 40 hours per week to complete study obligations.

9 Dominant source of income means the given source provides 50% or more of the total monthly income of the student.

10 Other sources of income include pensions, child support, private sources of financing, but also absence of any of the dominant sources of income from the above categories.

Table 27: Field of studies depending on secondary education (in %)

Previous education	Education	Humanities and arts	Social sciences, law and business	Sciences, mathematics and informatics	Engineering, manufacture, construction	Agriculture and veterinary medicine	Medicine and related fields	Services	Total in the sample
Vocational secondary school	65.59	49.10	60.21	48.81	52.02	60.00	58.67	100.00	56.90
Gymnasium	33.33	47.30	37.85	51.19	47.47	40.00	34.67	0.00	41.18
Foreign diploma	1.08	3.60	1.94	0.00	0.51	0.00	6.67	0.00	1.92

4.1. International Students

International students within this survey are students having completed their previous level of education outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Data on international students is important in order to identify what type of students are attracted by higher education institutions in Republika Srpska to be able to formulate recommendations to strengthen incoming mobility by increasing the attractiveness of higher education institutions for secondary school students from other countries.

Data obtained by this survey shows that among the total number of students, 98% have completed secondary schools in Republika Srpska. Among those having completed secondary schools outside Republika Srpska, and reporting the country in which they have completed secondary school (n=27), the majority are students having completed secondary school in Serbia (70.4%), followed by Montenegro (14.8%) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (7.4%). The number of students coming from other countries is very low (3.7% from France and 3.7% from Turkmenistan). The data indicates that higher education institutions are attractive for students without language barrier. In the context of increasing mobility towards Republika Srpska activities should be primarily aimed at increasing the number, quality and recognisability of study programmes offered in English and other languages.

Regarding the characteristics of international students, a somewhat greater number of them have parents with higher education (Table 28).

Table 28: International students by educational attainment of parents (in %)

Type of student	Educational attainment of parents	
	Without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	With higher education (ISCED 5–8)
Students from Republika Srpska	65.33	34.67
International Students	62.96	37.04

The number of international students additionally varies depending on the field of study programme. The most attractive study programmes for international students are programmes in the field of medicine and related fields, and humanities and arts (Table 29).

Table 29: Ratio of students from Republika Srpska and international students in various fields of study (in %)

Field of studies	Students from Republika Srpska	International Students
Education	98.92	1.08
Humanities and arts	92.34	7.66
Social sciences, law and business	97.36	2.64
Sciences, mathematics and informatics	97.62	2.38
Engineering, manufacture and construction	99.49	0.51
Agriculture and veterinary medicine	100.00	0.00
Medicine and related fields	89.47	10.53
Services	100.00	0.00

It is important to note that international students and students from Republika Srpska do not differ by intensity of study, nor, in a significantly by dominant source of income used to support and finance their education.

4.2. Transition to Higher Education and Interruption of Studies

The Bologna reform of higher education has, as one of its most important aspects, a broadening of access to higher education, i.e. the inclusion of underrepresented groups in higher education. An increase in the number of persons with higher education and the broadening of access to higher education are also the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy (2010), as well as the South-East Europe Strategy 2020 (2013). The development goals regarding the broadening of access to higher education, *inter alia*, have at their core individuals who have not followed a so-called *traditional path to higher education* that is a direct continuation of education at HEIs after completing secondary school.

Therefore the EUROSTUDENT V survey has also examined the transition of students from secondary to higher education. An important dimension of this transition is the issue of whether students have had a delay between different levels of education (secondary school and higher education institutions), as well as pauses between the two levels of study. Furthermore, it has examined to what extent students make significant pauses after enrolling in a higher education institution, and prior to obtaining their first degree, i.e. prior to completing the first level of studies.

At the same time, the policy of broadening access to higher education must take into account individuals returning to higher education institutions after a longer break and incorporate measures to facilitate the return of such individuals. Therefore, the EUROSTUDENT V survey pays special attention to students with

delayed transition to higher education institutions, i.e. with a delay of more than two years between secondary school and higher education.

According to the obtained data, among the 1289 students responding to the question related to delayed transition to higher education institutions, the period between completing secondary school and enrolling in a higher education institution was under a year for 91.4% of them. A break of between one and two years was made by 4.0% of the students, while breaks of over two years between completing secondary school and enrolling in a higher education institution were made by 4.7% of students.

Additionally, this EUROSTUDENT survey has separately analysed data provided by students making a break of over two years between completing secondary school and enrolling in a higher education institution. The data also indicates that, upon enrolling in a higher education institution, 6.7% of students make a break in studies longer than one year. On the other hand, 22.7% of the students make a break longer than one year between the two levels of study, i.e. after obtaining their first diploma and continued studies. Having this in mind, various aspects of delayed completion of studies will be shown below.

4.2.1. Delayed Transition to Higher Education

Results show that there are no significant differences between students from families where the parents do not have higher education and students whose parents have higher education (Table 30).

Table 30: Delayed enrolment in higher education institutions by educational attainment of students' parents (in %)

Type of enrolment	Parents without higher education (ISCED 0-4)	Parents with higher education (ISCED 5-8)
Direct enrolment	95.19	95.50
Delayed enrolment	4.81	4.50

The data showing there are differences in the intensity of study regarding delayed enrolment is interesting. These differences indicate that the progress of studies is not the same for students delaying enrolment and those directly enrolling in a faculty. Thus, nearly double percentage of students directly enrolling in a faculty after secondary school (35.4%) continue studies with a higher intensity than students who have delayed enrolment in a faculty (18.6%). The difference is also present in reverse – students who delay enrolment in a faculty (67.4%) continue their studies with a lower intensity more than twice as frequently as those directly enrolling in a faculty (25.1%).

The highest percentage of those delaying enrolment in higher education institutions are among students of medicine and education, although the percentage is small compared to those directly enrolling in tertiary education programmes (Table 31).

Table 31: Delayed enrolment in higher education institutions by field of studies (in %)

Field of studies	Direct enrolment	Delayed enrolment
Education	93.41	6.59
Humanities and arts	94.88	5.12
Social sciences, law and business	94.15	5.85
Sciences, mathematics and informatics	97.56	2.44
Engineering, manufacture and construction	98.93	1.07
Agriculture and veterinary medicine	98.02	1.98
Medicine and related fields	92.75	7.25
Services	100.00	0.00

Students financing studies from their own sources, such as employment, as well as students with other sources of income, delay enrolment to higher education institutions to a significantly greater extent (Table 32). Students financed from public sources of income (such as student scholarships and loans) mostly have a *traditional educational path*, i.e. they do not delay enrolment to higher education institutions.

Table 32: Delayed enrolment of higher education institutions and dominant source of income (in %)

Type of enrolment	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Public source of income as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income
Direct enrolment	96.64	81.82	96.00	87.20
Delayed enrolment	3.36	18.18	4.00	12.80
All students	100	100	100	100

Students delaying enrolment have mostly had paid occupations lasting over one year and working 20 or more hours per week compared to colleagues enrolling directly in faculties. Among the students who have not worked around 97% have not delayed enrolment in higher education institutions (Table 33).

Table 33: Work experience prior to studies and delayed enrolment in higher education institutions (in %)

Work experience	Direct enrolment	Delayed enrolment
Paid work for over one year and 20 or more working hours per week	46.67	53.33
Paid work for under one year or less than 20 working hours per week	92.86	7.14
No work engagement	97.17	2.83

4.2.2. Interruption of Studies

The efficiency of studying has been the focus of higher education reform for nearly ten years. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, prior to the signing of the Bologna Declaration that officially started the reform processes, the so-called old system of studies was sharply criticized precisely from a perspective of efficiency, i.e. its basic dimension, the duration of studies. According to data from the survey implemented within the CONGRAD Tempus project on graduate students (those having graduated in 2007 and 2012), the introduction of the Bologna system of studies brought about significant progress in increasing the efficiency of studies, i.e. a reduction in the number of years required for students to complete studies (Lažetić et al, 2014). The average duration of studies for graduate students studying according to the old, pre-Bologna programme was 7.28 years, while the average duration of studies for graduate students having completed the new, Bologna system of studies was 4.89 years (Lažetić et al, 2014). However, despite the increased efficiency of studies, it is important to consider all obstacles on the road to efficient studying faced by students today.

Regarding data on students who interrupt their studies for a period of longer than one year, it is clear that students with parents who have higher education and with parents who are engaged in manual occupations interrupt studies to a somewhat higher percentage, although these differences are small (Table 34).

Table 34: Students interrupting education for more than one year by educational attainment and occupation of parents (in %)

Duration of interruption	Parent without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	Parent with higher education (ISCED 5–8)	Total	Parent engaged in non-manual occupations (ISCO 1–5)	Parent engaged in manual occupations (ISCO 5–9)	Total
No interruption longer than one year	73.33	26.67	100.00	80.00	20.00	100.00
Interruption longer than one year	70.37	29.63	100.00	78.13	21.88	100.00

Students attending higher education institutions with study programmes in the field of education, engineering and manufacture, agriculture and services, show a higher rate of interrupting their studies for longer than a year. Students of programmes from the field of medicine and related fields, as well as social sciences, business and law make the smallest number of breaks (Table 35).

Table 35: Students interrupting education for more than one year by field of study (in %)

Field of studies	No interruption longer than one year	Interruption longer than one year
Education	0.00	100.00
Humanities and arts	15.38	84.62
Social sciences, law and business	35.71	64.29
Sciences	14.29	85.71
Engineering, manufacture and construction	0.00	100.00
Agriculture	0.00	100.00
Medicine and related fields	60.00	40.00
Services	0.00	100.00

The data shown in Table 36 indicates that breaks longer than a year are made more frequently by students supported by their own income and students with other sources of income than by students for whom the family is the dominant source of income. This last bit of data is expected, knowing that in Republika Srpska efficient studying is a condition for obtaining scholarships and loans. The additional significance of this finding is that it indicates that working while studying affects the efficiency of studying (Chapter 7 shows in greater detail the sub-sample of students working during studies).

Table 36: Students interrupting education for more than one year per dominant source of income (in %)

Duration of interruption	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income
No interruption longer than one year	66.67	8.33	25.00
Interruption longer than one year	73.17	9.76	17.07

Students reporting a lower intensity of studies have a higher tendency of making breaks in their studies lasting longer than a year (Table 37). It is possible that these students are forced to dedicate more time to earn funds than to studying due to their more unfavourable socio-economic status.

Table 37: Students interrupting education for more than one year by intensity of studies (in %)

Duration of interruption	Low intensity of studies	Medium intensity of studies	High intensity of studies
No interruption longer than one year	11.11	22.22	66.67
Interruption longer than one year	21.05	44.74	34.21

4.2.3. Transition to Master Studies

Comparing enrolment in master studies by secondary education, there are no significant differences between students with completed vocational secondary schools and those with completed – they equally decide to enrol in master studies.. There are also no significant differences in delayed enrolment in master studies regarding the students' educational attainment. There is a difference only in respect of the parental occupation – breaks between bachelor and master studies lasting longer than one year are more frequently made by children of parents engaged in non-manual occupations (Table 38).

Table 38: Breaks between the two levels of studies by parental occupation (in %)

Duration of interruption	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1-5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 5-9)
No interruption longer than one year	77.55	22.45
Interruption longer than one year	81.25	18.75

The break between the two levels of studies has also been analysed regarding the field of study. Students of education, engineering, manufacture and construction, agriculture and services are less prone to make breaks longer than one year between the two levels of studies than students of social science, business and law, and medicine and related fields (Table 39).

Table 39: Students interrupting education between the two levels of study for more than one year by field of study (in %)

Field of studies	No interruption longer than one year	Interruption longer than one year
Education	100.00	0.00
Humanities and arts	83.33	16.67
Social sciences, law and business	64.29	35.71
Sciences	85.71	14.29
Engineering, manufacture and construction	100.00	0.00
Agriculture	100.00	0.00
Medicine and related fields	40.00	60.00
Services	100.00	0.00

Students who have made breaks of up to one year have most frequently assessed the intensity of their own studies as medium. On the other hand, most of those making breaks longer than one year have high intensity of studies, i.e. they dedicate maximum time to study-related activities (Table 40).

Table 40: Students interrupting education between the two levels of study for more than one year by intensity of study (in %)

Duration of interruption	Low intensity of studies	Medium intensity of studies	High intensity of studies
No interruption longer than one year	21.05	44.74	34.21
Interruption longer than one year	11.11	22.22	66.67

Students for whom the main source of income is family make largest number of breaks longer than one year (Table 41). However, among students making such a long interruption between two levels of studies there are more of those financed from other sources of income (not by their own or family).

Table 41: Students interrupting education between the two levels of study for more than one year by dominant source of income (in %)

Duration of interruption	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income
No interruption longer than one year	73.17	9.76	17.07
Interruption longer than one year	66.67	8.33	25.00

4.3. Employment Prior to Studies

The survey paid special attention to the question of whether students have had work experience or paid internships before entering higher education. Work experience is categorised as follows: 1) work or paid internship lasting over one year and amounting to at least 20 working hours per week (long-term work engagement) 2) work or paid internship lasting under one year and amounting to less than 20 working hours per week (short-term work engagement).

Among the total number of students, 4.07% have had a long-term employment before entering a HEI, while 1.36% of the students have had a short-term employment. Most of the students have not had any kind of work experience prior to enrolling in a higher education institution (94.57%). These aspects of studying will be analysed in more detail below.

In the countries covered by the EUROSTUDENT V survey students with work experience before entering higher education are more frequently older, without higher education background, with delayed transition, and dedicate

less time to study obligations (i.e. studying with low intensity) (Hauschildt et al, 2015).

The results of the survey on the Republika Srpska sample show that there are certain differences in work engagement of students by various parents' occupations. Thus, the highest percentage of students with parents having manual occupations had long-term work engagement prior to studies (Table 42).

Table 42: Work experience prior to studies by parental occupation (in %)

Work experience	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1-5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 5-9)
Engagement of over one year with 20 hours or more per week	68.18	31.82
Engagement of under one year or engagement with less than 20 hours per week	84.21	15.79
No work engagement	75.26	24.74

The students dedicating less time to their studies have had work experience prior to faculty. This is in accordance with the above general findings of the EUROSTUDENT V survey (Table 43).

Table 43: Work experience prior to studies by intensity of studying (in %)

Work experience	Low intensity of studies	Medium intensity of studies	High intensity of studies
Long-term work engagement	74.36	23.08	2.56
Short-term work engagement	0.00	69.23	30.77
No work engagement	25.39	37.97	36.64

The highest percentage of students who have had work experience prior to enrolment at a higher education institution comprise students who have dominantly used other sources of income during their studies, while the percentage of those engaged in work is equal for students whose dominant source of financing has been family or own income (Table 44). It is also important to note that not a single student financed from public sources have had any long-term or short-term work engagement prior to enrolment in a faculty. Most of these students (92.3%) also do not have work engagement during studies. Additionally, the results indicate that students who have had work prior to enrolment in a faculty continue their work engagement during studies as well (66.7%), either throughout the semester, or only occasionally. Similarly, most of the students who have not worked prior to enrolling in a faculty (82.0%) have not worked during studies.

Table 44: Work experience of students prior to enrolling in a HEI by dominant source of income (in %)

Work experience	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Public source of income	Other sources of income
Long-term work engagement	28.21	28.21	0.00	43.59
Short-term work engagement	53.85	15.38	0.00	30.77
No work engagement	84.53	2.00	2.79	10.68

5. Progress of Studies, Satisfaction with Studies and Future Plans

This chapter presents the findings of the EUROSTUDENT V survey regarding: (1) progress of studies; (2) satisfaction with studies and (3) plans after studies. The section regarding the progress of studies shows a relation between study programmes, types of higher education institutions and basic characteristics of the student population. The second part gives analyses of satisfaction with the organization of studies and higher education institutions equipment, while the third section addresses students' plans in the context of further study and labour market activities.

5.1. Progress of Studies

In Republika Srpska, budget status during studies, as well as other types of financial support to students by the state (subsidized housing, food, etc.) are available only to students of higher education institutions founded by the Republic (so-called public higher education institutions), meaning that one-third of the surveyed students studying at private higher education institutions do not have access to financial, or any other type of support by the state.

According to the database kept by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, the data for all HEI – public and private – for the academic year of 2014/15 is the same: the percentage of students whose studies are fully financed from the budget is 32.50, the students co-financing a smaller part of their studies expenses, most of which are still also co-financed also from the budget comprise 33.25%, while there are 34.25% students who fully finance their studies (self-financing refers to those students who are self-financed in public HEI and to the all students in private HEI).

In the interpretation of data obtained by the EUROSTUDENT survey in Republika Srpska it is important to have in mind the above data, since data analysis could not differentiate between co-financing students or the students who fully finance their studies from own pocket. In other words, in Table 45 (regarding the distribution of students in the sample) the term co-financing students also includes students who fully finance their own studies, whether they are self-financed students in public HEI or students in private HEI. Thus it may be concluded, relying on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, that if we regard 69.57% of students as 100%, approximately 50% of those students are co-financed students in public HEI, while 50% are self-financed (self-financing students in public HEI and all students in private HEI).

Table 45: Distribution of students by status of study financing (in %)

Type of study financing	
Budget	30.43
Co-financing	69.57

The results of the EUROSTUDENT V survey also indicate the relationship between the educational and economic origin of students, measured by the educational attainment of parents and parental occupation. In Republika Srpska, the percentage of students whose parents have and those whose parents do not have higher education among students who are on the budget and co-financing students is nearly identical. Likewise, the distribution of students on the budget and among co-financing students is approximately the same regarding parental occupation. In other words, when someone enrolls in a faculty, they have nearly the same probability of being on the budget regardless of parental occupation or level of completed education.

Table 46: Studies financing status by educational attainment and occupation of parents (in %)

Status	Educational attainment of parents			Parental occupation		
	Without completed HE (ISCED 0–4)	Completed HE (ISCED 5–8)	Total	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1–5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 6–9)	Total
Budget	65.06	34.94	100.00	72.28	27.72	100.00
Co-financing	64.98	35.02	100.00	76.32	23.68	100.00

Regarding the distribution of students by status, i.e. the source of student income (Table 47), we see that for a vast majority of students, regardless of status, their family is a dominant source of income. Additionally, among co-financing students there are more of those depending on their own income, while among budget students there are more of those primarily financed from public sources of income (scholarships, loans, etc.) These percentages could suggest that a status of co-financing puts a certain number of students into a position where they have to work to finance their studies (23% of co-financed students), which may affect the effectiveness and efficiency of their studies. However, considering that the majority of students who work during studies have also worked prior to enrolment, we may assume that the causal correlation of these properties for some students has also operated in the other direction. Thus there is a possibility that a certain number of co-financing students, precisely due to their previous work engagement (lack of sufficient time and other conditions for preparing the entrance exam) have acquired this status and have remained employed (co-financing) student.

Table 47: Studies financing status by dependence of student on source of financing (in %)

Status	Dependence on source of financing			
	Dependence on family	Dependence on own income	Dependence on public support	Other
Budget-financed students	84.73	1.80	5.39	8.08
Co-financed students	80.61	3.74	1.39	14.27

There is a certain difference between budget and co-financed students regarding the intensity of studies, i.e. the time students spend completing obligations related to their studies (Table 48). Students studying on the budget study with

a somewhat higher intensity than co-financing students, i.e. they dedicate more time to completing obligations related to studies. The probable reason for the co-financed students' lower intensity of study is that some of them work in order to help covering the additional costs of studies. This interpretation is in accordance with the finding whereby a larger percentage of co-financed students worked during the past semester.

Table 48: Studies financing status by intensity of studies (in %)

Status	Intensity of studies		
	Low	Medium	High
Budget-financed students	20.30	40.30	39.39
Co-financed students	30.52	36.57	32.91

Most of the students study in cities with populations over 100,000. Additionally, data obtained by cross-referencing data regarding educational attainment and occupation of parents and place of study indicate that children of parents with higher education and children of parents with occupations from the group of non-manual occupations study in the capital, and/or a city with a population of 100,000 to 300,000, at a higher percentage (Table 49).

Table 49: Place of study by educational attainment and occupation of students' parents (in %)

Population number in place of study	Educational attainment of parents			Parental occupation		
	Without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	Completed higher education (ISCED 5–8)	Total	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1–5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 6–9)	Total
Up to 100,000	66.09	33.91	100.00	72.67	27.33	100.00
Between 100,000 and 300,000	64.48	35.52	100.00	76.37	23.63	100.00
Capital	64.48	35.52	100.00	76.37	23.63	100.00

Among all groups of students (regardless of field of study) there is a larger number of students whose parents do not have higher education, i.e. whose parents are engaged in non-manual occupations (Table 50). However, within education and agriculture as fields of study, there is a larger number of students whose parents do not have higher education while the largest number of students whose parents have higher education are in the fields of services, humanities and arts, as well as social science, business and law. Regarding the structure of students within various fields of study by educational attainment of parents, in the fields of social science, business and law, as well as services, students whose parents are engaged in non-manual occupations are somewhat more numerous. The number of students whose parents have manual occupations is the largest in the field of agriculture. Additionally, there is a significant difference among fields of study regarding the gender of students by fields of studies. Male students are underrepresented in the field of education, while female students are underrepresented in engineering, manufacture and construction, services and agriculture.

Table 50: Field of studies by educational attainment and occupational status of students' parents and student gender (in %)

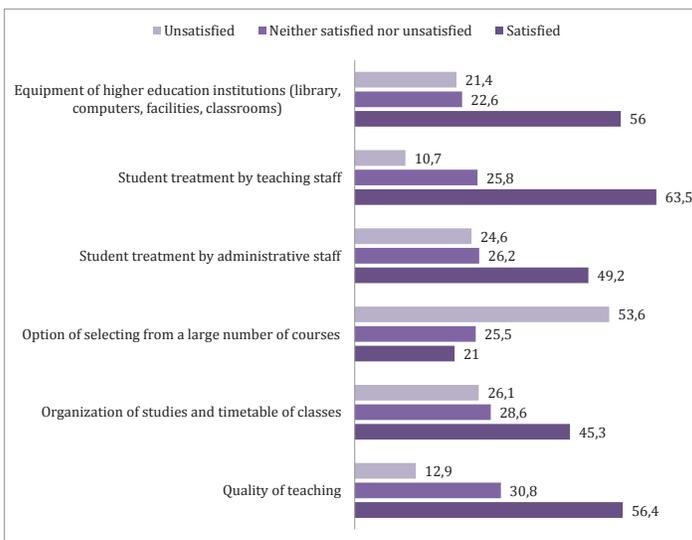
Field of studies	Educational attainment of parents		Parental occupation		Gender	
	Without higher education (ISCED 0-4)	Completed higher education (ISCED 5-8)	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1-5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 6-9)	Female	Male
Education	88.17	11.83	70.24	29.76	82.98	17.02
Humanities and arts	59.21	40.79	73.58	26.42	53.51	46.49
Social sciences, law and business	60.28	39.72	79.58	20.42	62.50	37.50
Sciences, mathematics and informatics	64.63	35.37	75.61	24.39	50.00	50.00
Engineering, manufacture and construction	68.88	31.12	72.73	27.27	36.68	63.32
Agriculture and veterinary medicine	73.21	26.79	64.81	35.19	33.04	66.96
Medicine and related fields	68.83	31.17	72.37	27.63	58.44	41.56
Services	60.00	40.00	80.00	20.00	20.00	80.00
Total	65.05	34.95	75.04	24.96	55.13	44.87

5.2. Satisfaction with Studies

Satisfaction with studies was measured through six dimensions related to the quality and organization of teaching (quality of teaching, organization of studies and timetable of classes, option to select from a large number of courses), student treatment by staff (student treatment by administration staff, student treatment by teaching staff) and equipment of higher education institutions (library, computers, facilities, classrooms). The students assessed each dimension separately on a five-degree scale reduced to a three-degree scale in the analysis, as shown in Figure 9.

In most countries participating in the EUROSTUDENT V survey students are satisfied with their study programmes. Student satisfaction is highest in the domain of quality of teaching and equipment of higher education institutions (Hauschildt et al, 2015). The results from Republika Srpska show a somewhat different picture: students are most satisfied with treatment by teaching staff, quality of teaching and faculty equipment, while they are least satisfied with the options for selecting from among a larger number of courses and the organization of courses (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Satisfaction with studies (in %)



Satisfaction with the conditions of studies varies significantly among different study programmes. The highest degree of satisfaction is among students studying study programmes in the field of services, providing the best ratings for as many as three of the dimensions of the conditions for study: quality of teaching, teaching staff treatment of students, and administration staff treatment of students. Students of engineering, manufacture and construction are the least satisfied by the quality of teaching and faculty equipment, and they are also very unsatisfied with the organization of studies. Students of education, medicine and related fields are the least satisfied with the option for selecting from a large number of courses. Students of education are the least satisfied with treatment by administration staff, while agriculture students are least satisfied by treatment by teaching staff (Table 51).

Table 51: Satisfaction with studies by field of studies (in %)

Aspects of studies and degree of satisfaction		Education	Humanities and arts	Social sciences, law and business	Sciences, mathematics and informatics	Engineering, manufacture and construction	Agriculture and veterinary medicine	Medicine and related fields	Services
Quality of studies	Satisfied	44.08	61.67	54.22	54.88	56.99	55.36	70.12	100.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	47.31	28.19	32.68	26.83	23.83	33.04	24.68	0.00
	Unsatisfied	8.61	10.13	13.11	18.29	19.17	11.61	5.20	0.00
Organization of studies and timetable of classes	Satisfied	30.11	38.84	56.47	33.34	36.85	43.12	38.16	60.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	44.09	36.16	22.48	35.71	25.26	29.36	30.26	40.00
	Unsatisfied	25.81	25.00	21.04	30.95	37.89	27.52	31.57	0.00
Option of selecting from a large number of courses	Satisfied	7.53	26.78	17.88	25.00	29.63	23.85	13.16	0.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	26.88	24.11	23.84	27.38	29.63	26.61	23.68	60.00
	Unsatisfied	65.59	49.11	58.29	47.62	40.74	49.55	63.16	40.00
Treatment of students by administrative staff	Satisfied	25.81	64.89	42.33	45.12	56.39	57.01	53.24	100.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	39.78	21.33	25.91	30.49	29.79	23.36	18.18	0.00
	Unsatisfied	34.40	13.77	31.75	24.39	13.83	19.62	28.58	0.00
Treatment of students by teaching staff	Satisfied	47.83	72.97	60.86	58.75	66.66	60.95	72.00	80.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	43.48	19.82	27.64	30.00	20.43	25.71	18.67	20.00
	Unsatisfied	8.69	7.20	11.50	11.25	12.91	13.33	9.34	0.00
Faculty equipment	Satisfied	36.66	44.65	68.48	40.48	43.98	54.96	72.00	60.00
	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	40.00	23.66	17.30	34.52	22.51	23.42	21.33	40.00
	Unsatisfied	23.34	31.70	14.20	25.00	33.51	21.62	6.67	0.00

5.3. Further Studies and Employment after Studies

As stated above, the reform of the educational system that occurred after Bosnia and Herzegovina became a signatory to the Bologna Declaration has brought not only a change in the system of studies, but also the introduction of three study cycles that differed from the previous cycles. Thus bachelor, master and doctoral studies have been reorganized in accordance with the above reform processes, and after the first generations of “Bologna students” has entered the labour market, the issue of the degree of true recognition for the new diplomas in the labour market became has arisen.

It should be underlined that if there is a high unemployment among youth in a country, this can also influence the decision to prolong studies and thus delay entry into the labour market, what simultaneously increases knowledge and skills that may increase chances for finding the adequate employment.

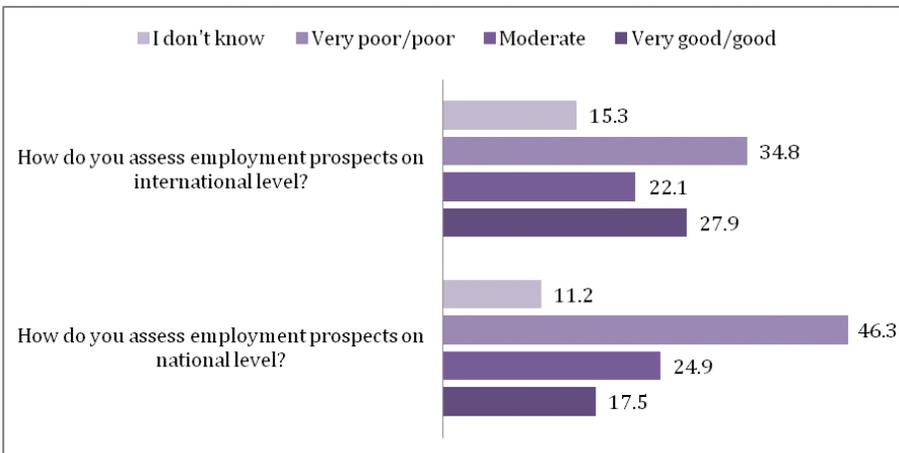
The results of the EUROSTUDENT V survey have shown that just over one tenth of students state that they do not wish to continue studies, while around half of the students from Republika Srpska want to continue their studies within one or several years after completing their current study programme. Interestingly, half of the students still do not know whether they want to continue studies or not.

The desire to continue studies is significantly more prevalent among students with a medium or high intensity of current studies, i.e. those who spend more than 40 hours per week on study-related obligations. Let us recall that a high intensity of studies is shown by a majority of budget students and students financially dependent on public sources of finance, i.e. primarily the most successful students, while the largest number of those not planning to continue education is in the group of students with low intensity of studies. Therefore, students primarily financed from public sources of financing (loans, scholarships) show a desire to continue studies to a somewhat greater extent than their colleagues primarily financed by parents, or those primarily co-financed. Students depending on their own income want to continue further studies at the lowest percentage, while most of the students for whom the family represents the primary source of financing do not know whether they will continue studies or not.

Students were further asked to assess their employment prospects in the country or abroad. The ratings are shown in Figure 10. It should be noted that the question did not define the type of employment, i.e. it referred to any kind of employment that could be found. We may assume that the assessment of employment prospects reflects, on the one hand, the perception of the quality of attained knowledge and potential for its application, but also, on another hand the perception of the situation in the labour market.

Results show that students studying in Republika Srpska assess their employment prospects outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina as significantly better. Among the 25 EUROSTUDENT V countries with data on these dimensions, Bosnia and Herzegovina is among the total of 7 states where students believe that they have better chances for employment outside the borders of their country.¹¹ Somewhat below 30% of students assess their prospects at the international level as good, and only 17.5% of students assess their prospects in the domestic labour market as such. Additionally, the data indicating that a larger number of students find more difficult to assess employment prospects at the international level, than at the national, speaks more in favour of their perception of the labour market in Republika Srpska, and reflects less the assessment of their own qualifications.

Figure 10: Assessment of employment prospects (in %)



Students do not vary significantly in their assessments of employment prospects based on the study programme they have completed, nor the assessments within the same study programmes differ regarding the level of observation: national, and/or international level. The best assessment of opportunities for employment in the country and abroad is given by students of sciences,

¹¹ The other six countries are: Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary and Ireland. However, Hungary and Ireland have significantly more *optimistic students*, i.e. students assessing their chances as high, compared to the other countries in this group, thus a homogeneous group in this context are, in fact, students from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia and Croatia.

while the worst assessment is given by students studying services. Likewise, a somewhat worse assessment of employment prospects both at the national and international level, but better than by other students, is given by students in the field of engineering, manufacture, construction, and medicine and related fields (Table 53).¹²

Table 53: Assessment of employment prospects by field of studies (arithmetic mean of a five-degree scale)

Employment prospect at the national level			Employment prospect at the international level		
1.	Sciences, mathematics and informatics	2.92	1.	Sciences, mathematics and informatics	2.82
2.	Engineering, manufacture and construction	3.26	2.	Medicine and related fields	2.92
3.	Medicine and related fields	3.53	3.	Engineering, manufacture and construction	2.92
4.	Humanities and arts	3.63	4.	Humanities and arts	3.47
5.	Agriculture and veterinary medicine	3.96	5.	Social sciences, law and business	3.92
6.	Social sciences, law and business	4.10	6.	Agriculture and veterinary medicine	3.96
7.	Education	4.19	7.	Education	4.43
8.	Services	4.19	8.	Services	4.46

12 The table shows the arithmetic means of the five-degree scale, where the value 1 is marked as “very good”, while the value 5 is marked with “very bad”. Thus, lower values of arithmetic means signify higher chances for employment, and vice versa. Note that the scale was reversed in the questionnaire completed by students. 1 signified very bad chances, while 5 signified very good chances. The scale was reversed to be comparable with other EUROSTUDENT countries.

6. Conditions of Student Life

The above chapters have presented the socio-economic profile of the student population, elaborated for the conditions for studies and the progress of studies. This chapter, as well as, to a large extent, the following one addressing student employment, focuses on the economic conditions of student life. The chapter attempts to shed light on how and under what conditions do students live in Republika Srpska and offers a comprehensive view of the costs of studies with particular emphasis on the groups with significant financial difficulties.

A specific characteristic of students in Republika Srpska, as well as their colleagues in the region, is a great dependence on parents as their main source of financing. As noted, the dominant source of income in the EUROSTUDENT V survey is income participating with 50% or more in the total student's income. In accordance with the above definition, nearly 82% of the students in Republika Srpska financially depend on parents (Table 54) while merely 3.1% of the students are financially independent.

In the comparative perspective of countries in the region, we may conclude that only in Montenegro a situation is significantly different and closer to the European average. Namely, 20% of the students in Montenegro primarily depend on their own sources of income, while the number of students with diversified sources of income (the category *other*, including as a majority the students without any source of income, and/or students without any source of income over 50%, as well as students whose income is from sources other than family, themselves or public sources) is the largest for students in Republika Srpska.

The primary dependence of students in Republika Srpska on parents is apparently not necessarily an obstacle. In fact, it speaks in favour of the idea that these students do not contribute to their own economic status to a significant extent. Instead, a direct reproduction of parental status happens. At the same time, this finding shows a low percentage of public income (only 2.6%) in the income sources for students in Republika Srpska, indicating an obviously inadequate system of student scholarships and a need to harmonize the student standard system with the needs of students, particularly a need to introduce a student loan system, currently non-existent in Republika Srpska. This finding, certainly, also confirms a need to change a very system of financing higher education.

Table 54: Dominant source of student financing in Republika Srpska, the Federation of B&H, Montenegro and Serbia (in %)

Source of income	Republika Srpska	Federation of B&H	Montenegro	Serbia
Family as the dominant source of income	81.90	89.60	69.80	90.70
Own income from work as the dominant source of income	3.10	3.80	20.00	4.10
Public source of income as the dominant source of income	2.60	1.90	2.70	1.10
Other sources of income	12.30	4.70	7.50	4.10

The next question that arises is to what extent students experience financial difficulties. Taking into consideration the above data where the vast majority of students financially depend on their family, as well as the fact that during the collection of data on the costs of living and studying, a significant percentage of students has been unable to realistically assess their own costs of living and studying, the issue of the subjective assessment of financial difficulties should not be directly correlated with the real financial difficulties/burden faced by the families of students.

Based on their own assessment, around 28% of students have little or no financial difficulties, while nearly the same number of students believe they have severe financial difficulties (Table 55). Somewhat below half of the students assess their financial difficulties as medium. Regarding the distribution of the assessment of financial difficulties by source of income within each group of students, larger financial difficulties report students primarily depending on their own sources, as well as other sources of income. Likewise, based on the data in the table, it may be assumed that public sources of income contribute to a large extent to the financial stability of students, since in this group the percentage of those assessing their financial difficulties as large is the lowest.

Table 55: Assessment of financial difficulties of students by source of student income (in %)

Level of difficulties ¹³	Total	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Public source of income as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income
Severe financial difficulties	28.00	27.81	30.30	23.08	29.60
Moderate financial difficulties	43.72	43.77	48.48	50.00	40.80
Little to none financial difficulties	28.29	28.42	21.21	26.92	29.60
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

13 Students assessed the level of difficulties on a Likert type scale (1 to 5 scale), where 1 signifies no difficulties, while 5 denotes severe financial difficulties. For a clear view of the results, the report shows the assessments condensed to 3 categories. The first category, called "severe financial difficulties", unified assessments of level 5 and 4, while the third category "little to no financial difficulties" unifies assessments of level 2 and 1.

The self-assessment of financial difficulties could be correlated not only with the source of student income, but also with educational attainment of parents, occupation and study programme of the student. Regarding the educational attainment of parents, a difference is noted between students whose parents have not attained higher education and students whose parents have. Students whose parents do not have higher education assess their financial difficulties as severe in a far higher percentage. Likewise, regarding data on the educational attainment of parents, the findings indicate that students whose parents have manual occupations view their financial difficulties as severe in a higher percentage than students whose parents have non-manual occupations (Table 56).

Table 56: Assessment of financial difficulties of students by educational attainment and occupation of students' parents (in %)

Level of difficulties	Educational attainment of students' parents		Parental occupation	
	Without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	With higher education (ISCED 5–8)	Non-manual occupations (ISCO 1–5)	Manual occupations (ISCO 5–9)
Severe financial difficulties	32.50	19.40	25.21	35.29
Moderate financial difficulties	45.20	39.40	41.89	46.71
Little to no financial difficulties	15.57	41.20	32.91	17.99

Severe financial difficulties are mostly reported by students studying study programmes in the field of engineering, manufacture and construction, while the students studying programmes in the field of sciences report the smallest financial difficulties (Table 57).

Table 57: Assessment of financial difficulties of students by field of studies (in %)

Field of studies	Severe financial difficulties	Moderate financial difficulties	Little to no financial difficulties
Education	29.55	54.55	15.91
Humanities and arts	28.64	42.73	28.64
Social sciences, law and business	26.95	40.72	32.33
Sciences, mathematics and informatics	28.05	30.49	41.47
Engineering, manufacture and construction	34.04	44.50	21.47
Agriculture and veterinary science	28.26	39.13	32.61
Medicine and related fields	17.64	58.82	23.53
Services	0.00	100.00	0.00

6.1. Student Accommodation

In the countries of the region most students live with their parents. On average, one fifth lives on their own, and there is no significant difference between female and male students regarding the type of accommodation, while differences appear regarding educational attainment of parents. Namely, children of parents with attained higher education live with their parents more frequently and other people in significantly less instances. At the same time, students who financially primarily depend on public support live with other people more frequently than students financially primarily depending on family.

The results of students responding to the question with who they live during studies show that most students in Republika Srpska live with their parents (46.8%), while a significantly smaller number of students live on their own (12.1%). The lowest percentage of students live with their partner (and children, if any) and those percentages amount to 3.7% and 2.1%. Likewise, a significant share of the students reports on living with other persons (37.2%), including living with roommates in student dormitories or rented accommodation. Regarding students' satisfaction with accommodation, more than 53% of the students are very satisfied with their accommodation (Table 58).

Table 58: Student satisfaction with accommodation (in %)

Satisfaction level	Total
1 Very satisfied	53.83
2	22.83
3	15.38
4	5.27
5 Not satisfied at all	2.69

Regarding students living in dormitories, there is no significant difference between male and female students, but differences appear regarding sources of student financing. Students depending on public support live in student dormitories at a higher percentage, while the percentage of students financially dependent on the family who do not live in student dormitories is higher. However, this data should be taken with reserve, primarily because there are no complete data regarding student accommodation in Republika Srpska and due to the fact that the accommodation in student dormitories is a form of public support which was not sufficiently specified in the questionnaires of the EUROSTUDENT survey (Table 59).

Table 59: Students living in student dormitories by gender, educational attainment of students' parents and source of financing (in %)

Place of residence	Gender		Parent educational attainment			Dependence on source of financing					
	Female	Male	Total	Without higher education (ISCED 0–4)	Completed higher education (ISCED 5–8)	Total	Dependence on family	Dependence on own income	Dependence on public support	Total	Total in the sample
Students living in student dormitories	55.37	44.63	100.00	62.56	37.44	100.00	77.05	1.09	5.46	100.00	15.15
Students not living in student dormitories	54.85	45.15	100.00	65.82	34.18	100.00	83.05	3.44	2.06	100.00	84.85

6.2. Costs of Living and Studying

The costs of living during studies are a frequently neglected dimension in public discourse, which mostly focuses on the costs of studies, usually the amount of tuition. However, the costs of studying, most frequently financed by the parents of students, represent a significant monthly expenditure for the entire family. Under the EUROSTUDENT V survey the costs of living include the following expenditures:

1. Cost of accommodation (rent/mortgage including utilities, heating, water...)
2. Cost of food
3. Cost of transport
4. Cost of communication (telephone(s), internet, etc.)
5. Cost of healthcare protection (health insurance) – only for students paying their own health insurance
6. Cost of childcare
7. Payments of debts (other than mortgages)
8. Cost of leisure activities
9. Other costs of living (clothes, hygiene, cigarettes, pets, insurance – other than health insurance)

The costs of studying under the EUROSTUDENT V survey were calculated at a six-month semester level and include:

1. Tuition, enrolment fee, exam payments, administrative fee payments
2. Contributions for educational institutions and student organizations
3. Teaching materials (books, photocopying, materials, etc.)
4. Other regular costs related to studies (private tutors, additional courses, etc.)

Regarding the average monthly costs covering both studying and living expenses, students not living with their parents on average have higher costs than students living with their parents. The monthly costs covered by the students themselves amount to 508.27 KM for costs of living and studies, while the costs covered by parents are 893.29 KM. A detailed breakdown of costs will be given in the following tables. Since the costs of living and studies covered by students themselves and covered by the parents differ, they will be shown separately. Likewise, costs for students living with parents and those living alone will be shown separately.

In addition to the costs of food, accommodation and other costs (e.g. clothes, hygiene), most of the total amount of costs of students living with parents is for tuition, accommodation, food and other costs of living (Table 60).

Table 60: Average monthly costs, including study costs, for students living with their parents (in KM)¹⁴¹⁵

	Paid by the student from their own income	Percentage of total costs	Paid by parents for the student	Percentage of total costs
Total cost of accommodation	14.06	4.99	159.88	39.31
Food	52.67	18.69	140.60	34.57
Transport	30.12	10.69	47.12	11.58
Communications (telephone(s), internet, etc.)	21.32	7.56	39.75	9.77
Healthcare costs (health insurance)	4.30	1.53	4.87	1.20
Childcare	0.54	0.19	4.51	1.11
Debt payments (other than mortgage)	2.75	0.98	7.99	1.96
Leisure activities	65.46	23.23	51.94	12.77
Other costs of living	78.64	27.90	99.76	24.53
Total costs of living⁸	281.83	40.93	406.74	59.07
Tuition, enrolment fee, exam payments, administrative fees	152.99	67.56	399.58	82.13
Contributions for educational institutions and student organizations	7.20	3.18	7.43	1.53
Teaching materials (books, photocopying, materials, etc.)	45.93	20.28	85.87	17.65
Professional practice, travel	16.43	7.26	27.87	5.73
Total costs related to studies⁹	226.44	31.76	486.55	68.24

Regarding the expenditures of students not living with their parents, the situation is similar as for students living with their parents – besides costs of food and accommodation, they allocate most funds for other costs of living and tuition (Table 61).

14 The total costs of living represent the student assessment of average expenses, not the sum of individual expenses listed in the above segment of the table.

15 The total costs of living represent the student assessment of average expenses, not the sum of individual expenses listed in the above segment of the table. This is also in regards to tables 61, 62 and 63.

Table 61: Average monthly costs, including study costs, for students not living with their parents (in KM)

	Paid by the student from their own income	Percentage of total costs	Paid by parents for the student	Percentage of total costs
Total cost of accommodation	131.74	27.70	175.16	47.84
Food	111.27	23.39	114.44	31.25
Transport	29.86	6.28	32.67	8.92
Communication	28.82	6.06	28.57	7.80
Healthcare costs	9.12	1.92	2.26	0.62
Childcare	35.31	7.42	5.56	1.52
Debt payments (other than mortgage)	7.81	1.64	4.43	1.21
Leisure activities	32.75	6.88	42.18	11.52
Other costs of living	84.94	17.86	74.93	20.46
Total costs of living	475.68	56.50	366.15	43.50
Tuition, enrolment fee, exam payments, administrative fees	668.15	101.26	306.39	90.50
Contributions for educational institutions and student organizations	17.24	2.61	9.82	2.90
Study materials	78.17	11.85	82.05	24.23
Professional practice, travel	17.19	2.61	18.41	5.44
Total costs related to studies	659.84	66.09	338.57	33.91

However, students not living with parents suffer a much greater financial burden and pay more from their own income, while the burden on parents is lower. This can particularly be the case for students living in student dormitories, since students living in dormitories are also entitled to student scholarships, i.e. have access to public funds, thereby having more options to pay for their own costs of living and studying. Likewise, based on data from the following chapter regarding employment, we may assume that students not living with parents are employed more frequently throughout the semester (enabling them to bear their own expenses to a greater percentage). This is supported by the finding that the percentage of their costs for leisure activities is far less than for students living with parents (18.4% compared to 36%), which may be attributed to a lack of free time due to work and study obligations.

The monthly costs of students not living with parents, by dominant source of income, indicate that the highest expenses have those still financed by parents, and the lowest those financed from public sources. Male and female students allocate nearly the same amount for costs of studies, while students whose parents have higher education allocate somewhat more money. The group of oldest students have the highest costs. The reason for this may be that a greater number of them have started families and therefore their costs are higher (Table 62 and Table 63).

Table 62: Average monthly costs of studies for students not living with their parents by dominant source of income (in KM)

	Family as the dominant source of income	Own income from work as the dominant source of income	Public source of income as the dominant source of income	Other sources of income
Costs of accommodation	116.97	54.15	9.00	72.70
Costs of transport	23.56	15.29	9.49	27.76
Tuition	45.23	51.30	2.86	63.08
Total costs of studies	395.13	302.33	100.72	374.97

Table 63: Average monthly costs of studies for students not living with their parents by other characteristics (in KM)

	Male	Female	Without HE – parents	With HE – parents	Up to 21 years of age	Between 22 and 25	Between 25 and 30	Over 30 years of age
Costs of accommodation	87.92	91.95	83.69	99.95	97.60	84.13	78.42	66.73
Costs of transport	19.43	21.32	22.17	17.79	20.18	19.46	23.63	34.64
Tuition	47.69	34.21	37.69	45.11	32.77	42.37	49.42	143.22
Total costs of studies	339.01	316.82	307.46	352.48	322.78	319.12	343.16	498.96

7. Employment

To draw valid conclusions regarding student employment in Republika Srpska and to enable placing the data obtained by the EUROSTUDENT survey in an adequate context, it should be noted that the transition and restructuring of the economy throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina have led to an increasing inadequacy of workforce qualifications, a low rate of formal and high share of informal employment, high unemployment, inactivity of the working age population and an increase in long-term unemployment. Likewise, the labour market in B&H is not flexible, and workforce mobility is very low (Agency for Labour and Employment, 2012). Changeable trends of economic stability and recession, visible in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the last decade, are largely the consequence of movements on the global economic stage, but it may be said that Bosnia and Herzegovina has reached the level of maintaining macroeconomic stabilization, i.e. the stability of nominal economic indicators (stability and convertibility of the local currency, fixed foreign exchange rate and low inflation rate), but real economic indicators are still showing an economic lagging (constantly high unemployment rate, high deficit of the trade and payment balance, sustainability of foreign debt with international aid and transfers from abroad).

Non-qualified workers and workers holding third-degree professional qualifications prevail in the structure of the unemployed population. According to data from the Agency for Statistics in B&H, the number of legally employed persons in B&H in January 2013 was 651,342, with 265,668 being women. Compared to December 2012, the total number of the employed has increased by 0.3%, while the number of employed women has also increased by 0.8%. According to the same source, the rate of registered unemployment for January 2013 was 46.0%, and compared to December 2012 it was higher by 0.1%.

In Republika Srpska the total unemployment rate in 2014 was 39.8% (at the level of all of B&H the unemployment rate that year was 44.6%), while according to data from the Labour Force Survey in RS, the unemployment rate among youth 15–24 years old was 54.3%. If data from statistical services is monitored continuously, this entity also shows obviously constant trend of unemployment increase. However, it should be kept in mind that the analysis of the unemployment rate uses only available and accessible data on registered unemployment at the Institute for Employment, with the problem of true unemployment remaining hidden due to the large number of people employed in the grey economy. Likewise, data indicates that unemployment in Banja Luka, as the administrative centre of Republika Srpska, is far higher than in most other cities in Republika Srpska.

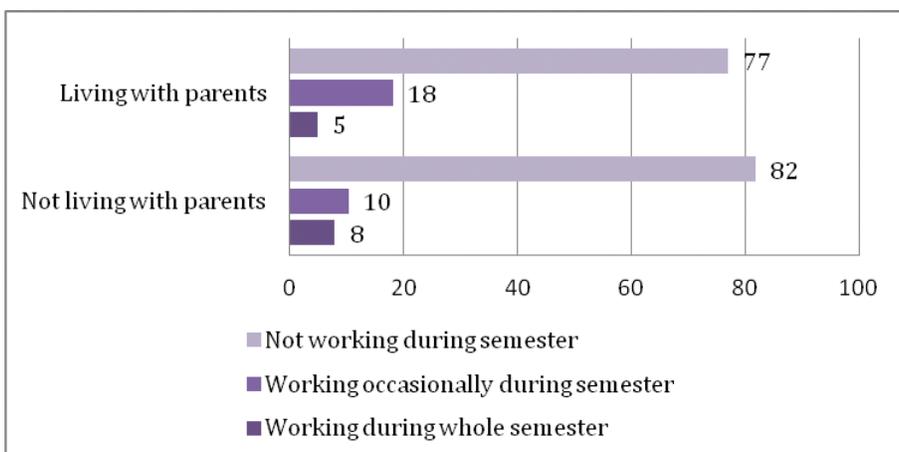
Having in mind the above situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the data available for Republika Srpska, it is important to analyse data regarding the work status/employment of students in Republika Srpska.

The analysis of the data obtained starts from the assumption that all students not living with their parents usually have to cover greater expenses and thus face a greater need to earn money. However, the situation in Republika Srpska is different – the highest percentage of employed students are those living with their parents (23% compared to 18%), although the percentage of students working in Republika Srpska is lower than the percentage in other countries participating in the EUROSTUDENT survey. For example, in Croatia, 37% of the students living with their parents work over 5 hours per week throughout the semester, compared to 35.9% who do not work. In Austria, 37.7% of students living with parents work throughout the semester as well as 48% of those who do not live with parents; in Slovakia, 31.3% of students living with parents work, while 27.3% of students not living with parents work. Among the countries in the region, e.g. in Serbia, an even lower percentage of students than in Republika Srpska work, while the situation in Montenegro is closer to the European average.

The bad functioning of the labour market is probably the main reason why a more significant number of students are unemployed, and the bad economic situation has forced even those students living with parents to look for work. However, regarding a type of employment, there are more students who have worked throughout the semester in the group of those not living with their parents.

Considering the similar status on the labour market for students living with their parents or on their own, the further analysis does not separate the student population by this characteristic, in regards to behaviour on the labour market.

Figure 11: Distribution of students by employment status and whether they live with their parents (in %)



The following segment represents analysis of student behaviour in the labour market compared to the socio-economic status viewed through the level of

educational attainment of parents. In this case, socio-economic status is viewed as the potential of parents to provide financial support to their child, what also influences a student's decision whether to look for employment during studies.

Based on the data presented, the highest percentage of students who work are in the group of students whose parents have completed secondary school or higher education (Table 64). Namely, among the group of students whose parents have mainly completed secondary school, around 20% of students work, like in the group of students whose parents have completed a non-university HEI. Students whose parents have completed only primary school have worked most frequently throughout the semester, while occasional jobs have most frequently had students whose parents have completed master (23.7%) or doctoral studies (23.5%). Since these percentages are not negligible, and if we start from the assumption that the socio-economic status of students rises with the level of educational attainment of their parents, we may assume that this situation has been significantly affected by the overall economic situation in Republika Srpska. Hence, students use employment opportunities regardless of their socio-economic status.

Table 64: Correlation of student employment status and educational attainment of students' parents (in %)

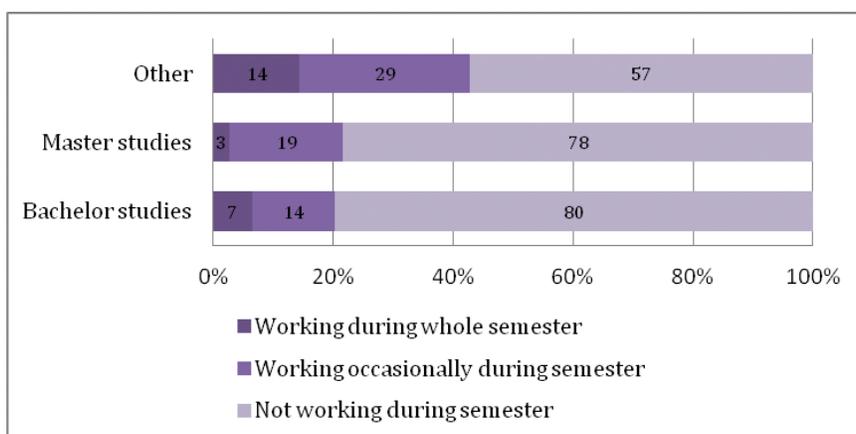
What was the highest level of education your parents have attained?	Yes, I've worked throughout the semester	Yes, I've worked occasionally during this semester	No, I did not work during this semester
Up to primary school	8.33	16.67	75.00
Secondary school	6.69	13.38	79.92
Bachelor studies	6.04	13.91	80.05
Master studies	7.89	23.68	68.42
Doctoral studies	5.88	23.53	70.59
Total	6.55	14.06	79.39

Table 65 shows the employment rate of students by field of study. The goal of collecting this data has been to obtain information on whether students from some categories become employed more often than the others. We can see that, throughout the semester, students in the field of business and law have worked the most, while students of services have mostly had temporary jobs. In a comparative perspective, we see that in Croatia, the employment rate for engineering students is 15.4%, while it is at 7.6% for social sciences-humanities. In Slovakia, 10.5% of engineering students are employed, while this is the case for 8% of social sciences and humanities students. There is no comparative data for Austria within the EUROSTUDENT V survey.

Table 65: Correlation of student employment status and field of studies (in %)

What study programme do you attend?	Yes, I've worked throughout the semester	Yes, I've worked occasionally during this semester	No, I did not work during this semester
Education	2.20	10.99	86.81
Social sciences and humanities	3.17	13.57	83.26
Business and law	10.04	12.99	76.97
Sciences, mathematics and informatics	4.82	15.66	79.52
Engineering	5.38	15.59	79.03
Agriculture and veterinary medicine	7.07	17.17	75.76
Medicine and related fields	1.52	12.12	86.36
Services	0.00	40.00	60.00
Total	6.51	13.90	79.59

Figure 12 presents the same data on student engagement in the labour market, but by level of study. We can see that regarding working throughout the semester, the greatest share belong to students from the group of others (e.g. those studying in accordance with the pre-Bologna system of studies or those in doctoral studies), followed by students of bachelor studies, and finally students of master studies. This finding significantly differs from findings for other countries in the region, where in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro students of master studies work the most, while students of bachelor studies work the least.

Figure 12: Distribution of students by employment status and level of studies (in %)

The following segment, through data presented in Table 66, shows an assessment of how students' perceptions of their workload during the week.

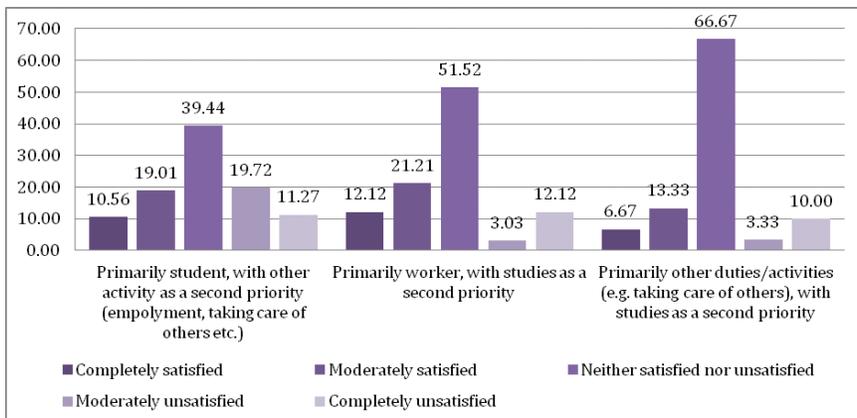
Particular attention is given to the students working during studies. Regarding students' satisfaction with their workload in the studies and at their job (the entire sample is considered), the conclusion is that around 30% of students are moderately or completely unsatisfied by the overall workload.

Table 66: Students' satisfaction with their workload at the workplace and in studies

Satisfaction level	Workload regarding studies		Workload at paid jobs		Total workload	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
-						
Completely satisfied	81	7.71	51	6.78	71	7.52
Moderately satisfied	171	16.36	69	9.24	169	17.88
Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	482	46.05	269	36.00	407	43.12
Moderately unsatisfied	180	17.20	114	15.20	152	16.07
Completely unsatisfied	133	12.68	245	32.78	145	15.41
Total	1047	100.00	747	100.00	944	100.00

Figure 13 presents the distribution of employed students according to their satisfaction with their workload and obligations in studies by whether they primarily study or primarily work. It is noticeable that in all of the groups most of students are neither satisfied nor unsatisfied. However, in the group of those who are primarily students, approximately the same percentage of students are both satisfied and unsatisfied, while in the group of primarily employed the number of those satisfied with studies (moderately or completely) is larger. The group of those engaged in other activities includes the largest number of those who are neither satisfied nor unsatisfied students. The expected result is that as the position of the student shifts from "primarily student" towards "primarily engaged in other activities", the percentage of those neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, i.e. the percentage of ambivalent students, increases.

Figure 13: Distribution of students by workload satisfaction and primary activity during studies (in %)



Regarding workload satisfaction in studies, work and overall by gender, there is an even distribution of the opinions of students of both genders. The largest burden, particularly for female students, is a workplace workload (Table 67).

Table 67: Correlation of gender and workload of students during studies (in %)

	Student gender	Completely satisfied (1)	2	3	4	Completely unsatisfied (5)
Total workload	Female	6.90	19.87	42.05	14.64	16.53
	Male	8.15	15.88	44.21	17.60	14.16
Workload of obligations regarding studies	Female	7.57	15.67	47.54	17.25	11.97
	Male	7.95	17.15	44.35	17.15	13.39
Workload at paid occupation	Female	7.84	7.84	31.65	15.69	36.97
	Male	5.93	10.57	39.95	14.69	28.87

The impact of parental social status (in this case expressed through the students' perception of their parents' social status, rated 1 to 10) can largely influence students' future expectations, after completing studies.

Table 68 shows the assessment of employment prospects abroad after studies, by existing social status. Within the group with a higher social status (rated 10–7), 38.9% of students assess their prospects as good, 24.6% as neither good or bad, 36.5% as bad. Within the group with a lower social status (rated 4–1), the expectations are more pessimistic: 27.7% of students assess their chances as very good or good, 32.2% as neither good or bad, 40.1% as bad.

Table 68: Assessment of employment prospects at the international level upon completing the study programme by assessment of parental social status (in %)

Assessment of social status	Employment prospects			
	Good	Neither good or poor	Poor	Total
Higher social status (grades 10 –7)	38.92	24.63	36.45	100.00
Average social status (grades 6 –5)	30.60	25.00	44.40	100.00
Lower social status (grades 4 –1)	27.68	32.20	40.11	100.00

Comparing students according to their current status in studies and whether they are engaged in paid work during the semester, a difference is noted between co-financed students and students completely financed from the budget. Most of the students in both groups have not done any paid work, but more co-financed students have had work experiences during the semester (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Distribution of students by employment status and study status (in %)

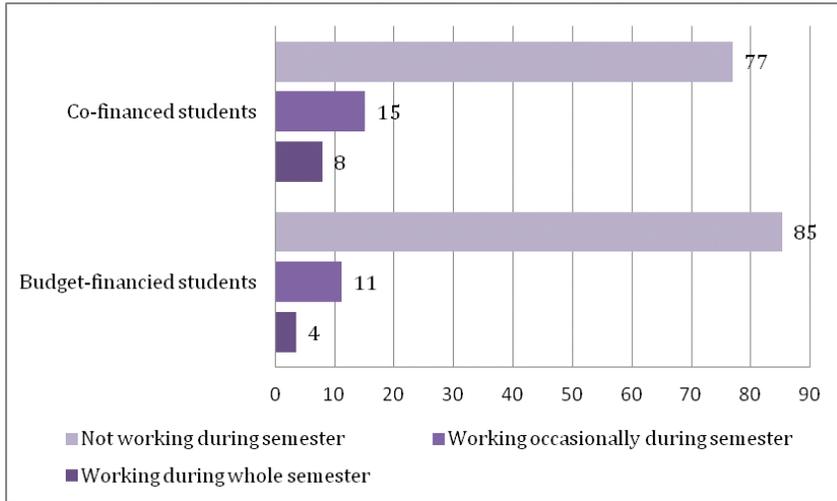
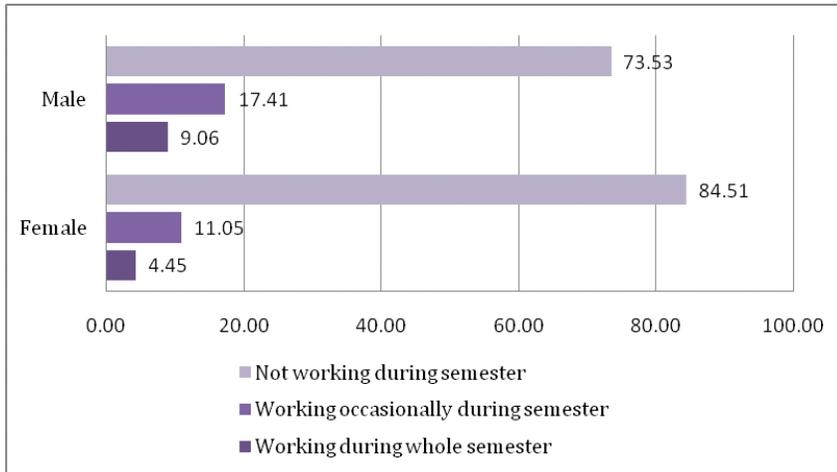


Figure 15 provides a comparative view of students of both genders regarding data obtained through the same question regarding paid employment during studies. The conclusion is that a somewhat higher percentage of male students have found employment during a semester.

Figure 15: Distribution of employment status of students by occupation (in %)



Regarding the structure of students who have worked during a semester, the reasons for finding work have primarily been improving their living standards and gaining experience in the labour market, therefore this data (combined with data indicating a similar structure for budget and co-financed students

regarding paid work during a semester) can indicate that student work, in some ways, represents a privilege in Republika Srpska (Table 69).

Table 69: Distribution of students by reason for getting a job

Degree of agreement	I work to survive		I work to improve my living standard		I work to gain experience in the labour market		I work because I have extra free time	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Completely	31	16.74	94	46.21	44	25.30	17	10.26
Partly	20	10.68	44	21.65	46	26.41	18	10.98
Undecided	37	20.00	46	22.73	59	33.70	39	23.50
Partly no	16	8.55	7	3.65	12	7.10	30	18.09
Not at all	81	44.04	12	5.77	13	7.40	62	37.17
Total	183	100.00	202	100.00	174	100.00	166	100.00

A clearer view of how employed students see themselves is provided by the data in the following table. Among the group of employed students, the largest number are those considering themselves primarily students, while nearly 17% has given priority to work (Table 70).

Table 70: Statements best describing the current situation of a student

Response	Percentage	Number
I am primarily a student along with other activities	69.89	160
I am primarily employed, and additionally I study	16.97	39
I am primarily engaged in other activities in addition to studying	13.14	30
Total	100.00	230

Table 71 shows that the correlation of employment with the study programme of students who work happens in around 20% of cases. However, the percentage of 10.6% of students claiming that their work is neither related nor unrelated to their studies, and around 70% of students claiming that the work they do is little or not at all related to their studies causes concern. This all means that only one fifth of the students work at a job where they may gain relevant experience related to their study programme.

Table 71: Correlation between students' work and their study programme

Response	Number of students	Percentage
Highly related	30	12.38
Moderately related	23	9.38
Neither related or unrelated	25	10.56
Very slightly related	18	7.61
Not related at all	145	60.07
Total	241	100.00

Figure 16 shows the correlation of student employment with the study programme they attend, by level of study. It is worrying that a vast majority of students of bachelor and master studies state that the work they do is not at all related to the study programme they attend. A higher percentage of students of master studies reports correlation.

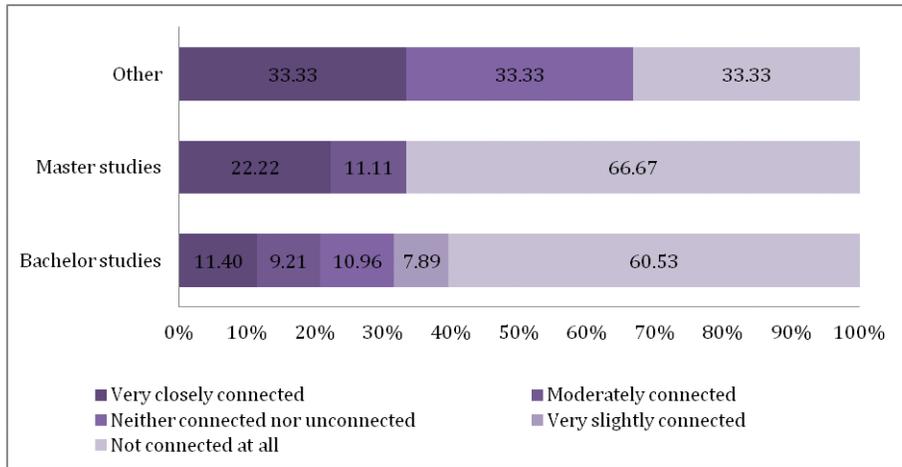
Figure 16: Distribution of students by level of study and correlation of employment with the type of studies (in %)

Table 72 shows how much have students worked during studies, by the assessed social status of their families. It is interesting to note that the highest percentage of the employed are precisely students who consider their social status as higher (43.9%: ratings 10 to 7). Among the category of those having worked occasionally, the most numerous are students with an average social status (around 50%). The percentage of the unemployed among each of the groups of students is very high, regardless of the perception of social status, with the percentage in the total sample being 79.6%. This gives rise to the question of whether employment during studies is a privilege, particularly considering that it is barely linked with studies, as shown in the chart above.

Table 72: Correlation of social and working status of students (in %)

Level of social status	Yes, I have worked throughout the semester	Yes, I have worked occasionally during this semester	No, I have not worked during this semester
Higher social status (grades 10 –7)	43.90	34.94	37.84
Average social status (grades 6 –5)	39.02	51.20	44.82
Lower social status (grades 4 –1)	17.07	13.86	17.34
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total in the sample	6.51	13.91	79.58

Table 73 shows how many working hours per week on average the employed students spend at work, viewed according to their own perception of the social status of their families. Notably this number of working hours is lower than the usual 40-hour working week, except for students who believe that their socio-economic status is extremely low (level 1). Likewise, there are no larger differences in the duration of the working week regarding perception of social status.

Table 73: Correlation of the social status of students and the number of work hours per week

Level of social status	Average number of hours
10 High social status	31.73
9	23.63
8	20.95
7	24.87
6	19.67
5	19.54
4	23.96
3	25.38
2	19.33
1 Low social status	45.50
General average	22.26

8. International Mobility

Promoting international student mobility in the European Higher Education Area is considered to be one of the key goals of the Bologna process. International student mobility is important for several reasons. On the one hand, it improves the quality of study programmes, contributes to excellence in research and increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions. Its character nurtures respect for diversity and encourages linguistic pluralism. On another hand, international student mobility is equally important for the personal development of students. It increases the prospects for obtaining better quality education and prospects for employment. Due to everything above, one of the goals of the European educational policy is to increase mobility in all countries and for all groups of students. The Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué (2009) states that at least 20% of graduate students should experience studying abroad by 2020.

The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for the coordination of international cooperation in the field of higher education at the national level, including the promotion of links between Bosnia and Herzegovina and foreign higher education institutions and the promotion of the mobility of students and staff in the field of higher education. Public universities and some private universities participate in international projects aiming to support processes of modernizing higher education, such as Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+. At the institutional level, international cooperation is supported by offices for international cooperation, providing students with information on international study programmes, student exchange programmes, international events, etc. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a member of the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies (CEEPUS) since 2007. The primary activity of the CEEPUS programme is the creation of university networks developing and implementing joint programmes that should, ideally, lead to common diplomas. CEEPUS provides mobility grants to students and faculty within this framework. The main goal of this programme is the development of academic cooperation in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, as well as a contribution to the development of Europe and the European Higher Education Area. The regional academic mobility is used as a strategic tool for the implementation of the objectives stated under the Bologna Declaration (European Commission, 2010).

Having this in mind, it is of key importance to determine the highest possible number of factors influencing student mobility. Existing studies on international mobility indicate that there is an existence of a significant link between student mobility and educational structure. The level of study, field of education, type of higher education institution, are just some of the elements of the educational structure noted as significant predictors of mobility rates. In addition to differences in mobility by educational structure, a lot of attention is given to social factors, such as educational attainment of parents, socio-economic status of students, etc.

To increase the mobility rate, besides determining the factors impacting the implementation of student mobility, it is also very important to examine the expectations, desires, motivation, potential reasons, as well as potential obstacles for studying abroad.

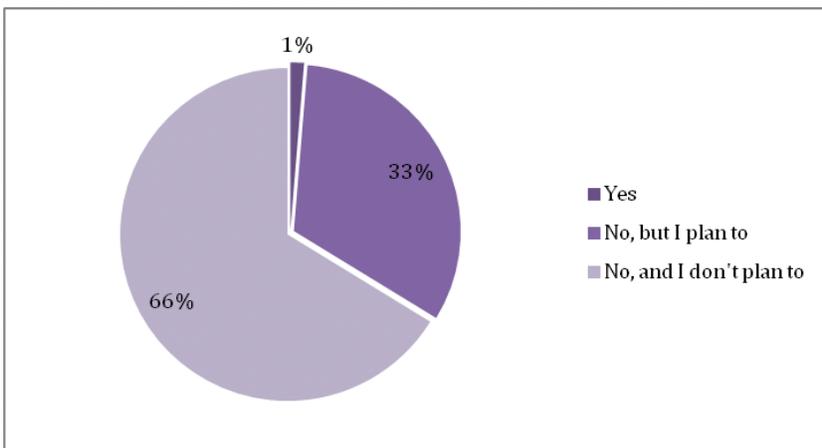
The goal of this chapter is to present the basic results of the EUROSTUDENT V survey on the mobility of students from Republika Srpska and examine the key factors affecting student attitudes on the possibility of studying abroad.

Additionally, this EUROSTUDENT V survey is particularly important because it represents a unique source of data collected on international student mobility, thus enabling a detailed review of data on temporary student mobility and plans for future student mobility during studies. Therefore, the analysis presented below refers only to temporary study stays outside Republika Srpska, i.e. the analysis excludes the students having completed their entire study programme abroad.

The term temporary mobility in the EUROSTUDENT framework involves two options of study stays abroad: implementation of part of the studies abroad and implementation of activities abroad related to the studies. Activities related to the studies include research work, study visits, foreign language courses, summer or winter schools, practical education or employment.

According to data from the EUROSTUDENT V survey, only 1% of students from Republika Srpska survey sample have experienced temporary studies abroad (Figure 17). The 1% rate of mobility places Republika Srpska among the countries with the lowest rate of student mobility in Europe. The average rate of mobility in Europe, according to data available from the EUROSTUDENT V survey, is around 10%. In addition to Republika Srpska, an extremely low percentage of students with a mobility experience of 2% is also in Serbia, Croatia, Ukraine and Slovakia, while the highest result was recorded among Scandinavian countries, with 18% of Norwegian students having experience with studying abroad.

Figure 17: Distribution of mobility rate among total student population (in %)



However, regarding planned study stays abroad, according to the EUROSTUDENT V survey, Republika Srpska has a high percentage of students intending to spend part of their studies abroad. The situation is similar in the region – in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. In most other countries, the percentage of planned stays abroad is almost twice as high as the realized study stays. However, in Republika Srpska the most numerous are the students not planning to study abroad and the number is significantly higher compared to the countries in the region.

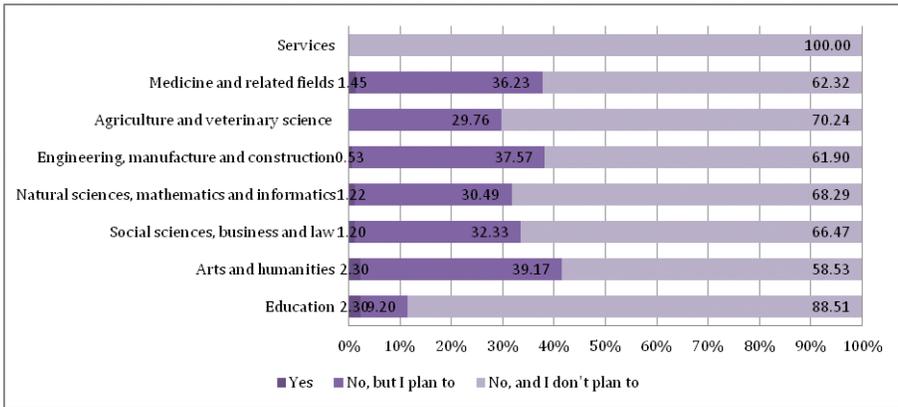
8.1. International mobility by student characteristics

The following table shows the mobility rates of students by method of financing education. Regarding cross-borders mobility of students by status in studies, there is no difference between budget and co-financed students regarding the rate of achieved mobility, planned mobility, or the number of students not planning their studies abroad.

Table 74: Student mobility by student status (in %)

Did you ever study abroad?	Budget	Co-financing
Yes	1.55	1.18
No, but I plan to	36.01	30.81
No, and I don't plan to	62.44	68.01
Total	100.00	100.00

According to the previous EUROSTUDENT surveys, a clearer view of the international mobility of students can be gained by correlating mobility rates with fields of education. One potential reason may lie in the fact that higher education institutions from different fields of education have different international orientation and cooperation with international institutions. One of the results noted in most countries with data available for the field of education indicates considerable mobility in the fields of humanities and arts, particularly compared with students from the fields of engineering, manufacture and construction. One explanation of this phenomenon may lie in the fact that students of arts and foreign languages spend part of their studies abroad more frequently to improve their language proficiency and learn about other cultures. Regarding data obtained on students from Republika Srpska, the rates of realized mobility confirm the above finding. However, study stays abroad are planned most frequently by students in the field of social sciences – humanities, engineering and medicine. Among the surveyed students, the least mobile are students from the field of services – within the implemented sample no student from this field of education have had experience with studying abroad, nor plans to.

Figure 18: Student mobility by field of studies

In order to note other factors influencing student mobility in Republika Srpska, the following figure presents the mobility of students by factors regarding the level of studies and student age. The results show that the realized mobility rate for students of master studies is larger than for students of bachelor studies. Regarding planned stays abroad, the situation is similar – students of master studies at a somewhat higher percentage plan study stays, while the percentage of students of bachelor studies who do not plan study stays at all is somewhat higher. Comparing the tendency of students to study abroad by age category, mobility is the lowest among students over 30 years of age, while the highest percentage of students having achieved international mobility is in 25 to 29 years age group.. The youngest students plan study stays abroad at the highest percentage.

Table 75: Mobility of students regarding student age and level of study (in %)

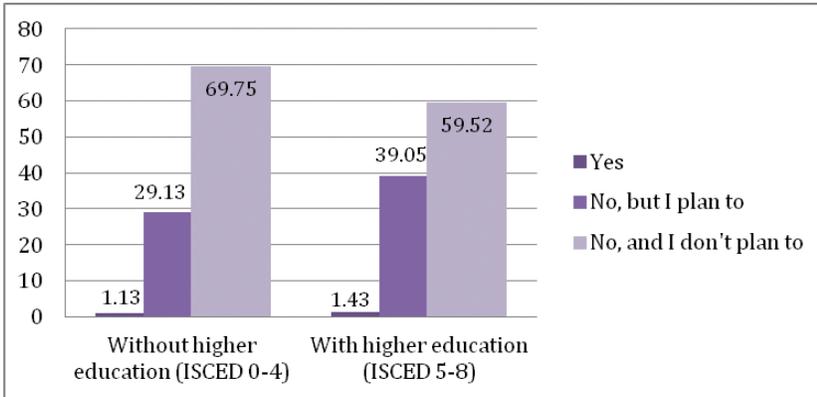
Did you ever study abroad?	Up to 21 years of age	Between 22 and 24	Between 25 and 29	Over 30 years of age	Bachelor studies	Master studies
Yes	1.13	1.24	3.03	0.00	1.10	5.13
No, but I plan to	35.75	30.58	28.28	3.85	32.41	35.90
No, and I don't plan to	63.12	68.18	68.69	96.15	66.50	58.97
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

As stated in the introduction, available literature on international mobility indicates that one of the key factors for student mobility is precisely the social origin of students, i.e. the educational attainment of their parents. In other words, access to international mobility is socially selective. Data from the EUROSTUDENT V survey make this fact particularly visible. In most countries, students with higher social origin, i.e. students whose parents are highly

educated, are more inclined towards studying abroad and plan stays abroad more frequently.

Figure 19 shows student mobility in Republika Srpska by educational attainment of parents. Based on the available data, the rates for both realized, as well as planned mobility of students with highly educated parents (ISCED 5–8) are larger than those of students whose parents are not highly educated (ISCED 0–4). This finding is in accordance with previous research.

Figure 19: Student mobility by level of educational attainment of parents



8.2. Student Mobility Programmes

Another advantage of the EUROSTUDENT V survey is the capacity for providing an overview of the organization and financing of study stays, and to respond to the question how well students are prepared for their stay abroad.

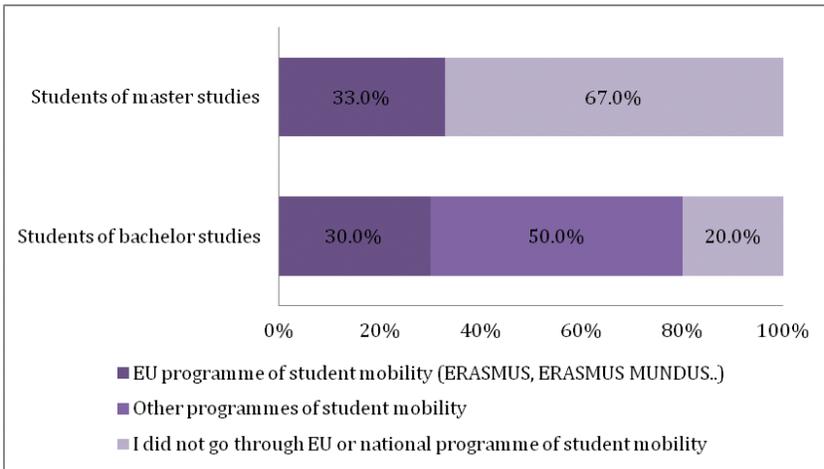
According to data from the EUROSTUDENT V survey, students mostly choose mobility programmes implemented by the European Union. The most popular mobility programme appears to be ERASMUS MUNDUS, with over 50% of the mobile students on average choosing it.

The situation in Republika Srpska differs considerably from the above data. However, the conclusions drawn should be taken with reserve, since the number of students responding to questions in this field is very small, N=14.

Comparing the number of students whose mobility is officially supported through EU or national programmes and the number of students spending part of their studies abroad at their own initiative, among all students who have studied abroad 28.57% of them have not used organized programmes, 28.57% of the students have stayed abroad as part of EU programmes such as ERASMUS MUNDUS, etc. while 42.86% have used other mobility programmes.

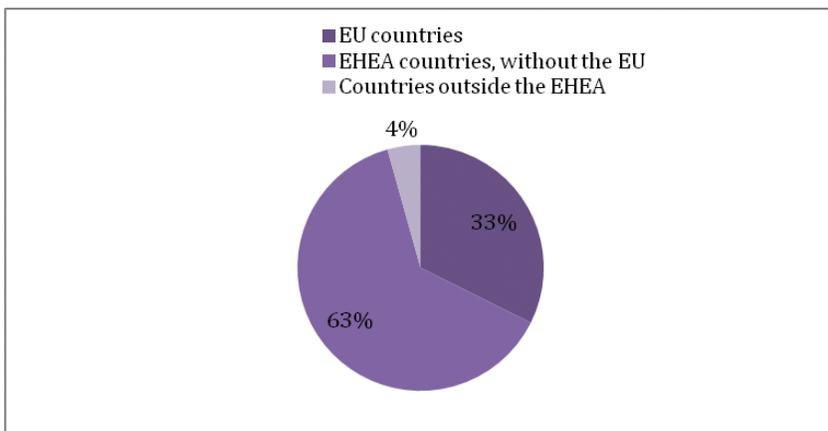
Among the surveyed master students, 33.3% have chosen EU programmes, while none of the students have used benefits of other organized programmes but students in bachelor studies choose other student mobility programmes more frequently (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Distribution of student mobility by type of mobility programme



Regarding the most frequent mobility destinations during studies abroad, the students mostly choose EHEA countries. More specifically, EHEA countries without European Union countries have hosted around 60% of realized mobility. Students have had study stays in the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Russia, Austria, and the average duration of stay was 16.5 months.

Figure 21: Distribution of foreign countries where students have studied



Regarding countries where students plan to go, the following countries are the most desirable: Austria (32.5%); Germany (17.3%); Serbia (7.5%); Italy and Russia (5.5%); Switzerland, United Kingdom, Canada (3-4%); USA, Norway, China, Slovenia, UAE, Czech Republic, France, Sweden, Brazil, Japan, Kazakhstan (1-3%); Hungary, B&H, Qatar, Panama, Australia, Denmark (under 1%).

With a purpose to evaluate the flexibility and the openness of national systems by different study programmes, students were also asked about the recognition of results obtained abroad by their home higher education institutions. ECTS points have been fully recognized for one third of the “mobile” students, with students of engineering, manufacture and construction reporting on fully recognized certificates obtained abroad (Table 76).

Table 76: Recognition of certificates (ECTS, diplomas) obtained while studying abroad by the home higher education institution (in %)

Response	Total number of students	Humanities and arts	Engineering, manufacture and construction
Yes, everything was recognized	38.89	50.00	100.00
Yes, but partly	11.11	0.00	0.00
No, nothing was recognized	22.22	0.00	0.00
I (still) do not know	11.11	16.67	0.00
I have not obtained a certificate during studies abroad	16.67	33.33	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

8.3. Obstacles for Studying Abroad

At the beginning of the chapter we have presented the goal of European educational policy regarding an increase in mobility across all countries and all groups of students. According to all previous studies, the financial and institutional support are the most frequent aspects that influence the realization of plans on inclusion in academic mobility study programmes. Likewise, according to all previous research, the smallest number of the students lacks the motivation.

In most European countries, according to the latest EUROSTUDENT V survey, the expected additional financial costs represent the most critical obstacle dissuading students from the idea of completing part of their studies abroad. On average, 63% of the students across all countries identified financial obstacles as the largest. Scandinavian countries are the only ones where the largest obstacles are separation from family, children and friends and validation of results obtained abroad by the home institution.

Having everything above in mind, along with an extremely low rate of realized mobility among students from Republika Srpska, it is essential to examine what students see as the obstacles for students to studying abroad.

The analysis of obstacles for students in Republika Srpska is shown below, for all three categories of students: students with realized stays abroad, students showing interesting in studying abroad and students who do not plan to study abroad.

The results show that the largest obstacles for studying abroad for students who have had the experience of mobility have been a limited number of available positions at the desired institutions and additional financial costs. On the other

hand, the smallest obstacles for studying abroad have been a lack of language proficiency and separation from partner, children, and friends.

The data is similar for students who still have not realized study stays abroad, but plan to. The largest obstacles for them are additional financial expenses, problems with obtaining documentation and a lack of information on studying abroad. On the other hand, the smallest obstacles are loss of paid employment and a lack of motivation.

One interesting result is that the same aspects deter students from continuing studies abroad. In other words, those students not planning studies abroad see that their largest obstacles are additional financial costs, the problems of acquiring documentation and a lack of information on studies. The smallest obstacles reported are the loss of paid work, low benefits for studies in the country, and lack of motivation.

Table 77: Level and type of obstacle for studying abroad depending on whether students have had study stays or (do not) plan them (in %)¹⁶

Types of obstacles	Students who realized study stays abroad	Students who have not realized study stays abroad, but plan to	Students who have not realized study stays abroad, and do not plan to
Language proficiency	4.16	3.71	3.18
Lack of information on studying abroad	3.74	3.31	3.00
Separation from partner, children, friends	3.93	3.47	3.03
Additional financial expenses	3.23	2.54	2.23
Loss of paid employment	3.63	4.31	3.83
Lack of motivation	3.47	4.25	3.55
Low benefit for studies in country	3.67	3.90	3.57
Difficult to relate studies abroad to contents of my study programme in country	3.45	3.38	3.08
Problem of validating results gained abroad upon return	3.68	3.45	3.23
Problems in obtaining documentation	3.48	3.15	2.90
Low grades in studies	3.66	3.81	3.43
Limited number of available places in desired institution or desired study programme abroad	3.14	3.35	3.18

16 The values in the table cells represent the arithmetic means of the responses the students gave when assessing the degree of obstacle on a five-degree Likert type scale (1 - great obstacle, 5 - no obstacle)

8.4. Short-Term Mobility

Besides to the questions regarding completed regular study courses abroad, the students have also replied to questions on experiences abroad regarding study-related activities, such as foreign language courses, summer schools, internships, etc.

A detailed overview is given in Table 78 showing data for students of bachelor and master studies. The best represented type of short-term mobility (among the activities offered) among students of bachelor studies in Republika Srpska is a language course, followed by internship/employment. Based on the data shown, we may conclude that students of master studies have had the most experience with summer/winter schools.

Table 78: Type of short-term mobility by level of students' studies (in %)

Type of short-term mobility	Bachelor studies	Master studies	Total
Research work/study visit	72.73	27.27	100.00
Internship/employment	75.00	25.00	100.00
Summer/winter school	66.67	33.33	100.00
Language course	80.00	20.00	100.00
Other	96.58	2.98	100.00

8.5. Foreign Language Proficiency

To complete the review of the results regarding mobility, we present the results regarding foreign language proficiency. Within the analysis of obstacles, not any group of students has identified lack of foreign language proficiency as an important obstacle for studying abroad. The percentage of students considering themselves to speak well two foreign languages varies drastically by countries participating in the survey. Republika Srpska, with under half the respondents believing they have good knowledge of two foreign languages, is among the group of countries with the highest percentage of students speaking at least 2 foreign languages. Regarding concrete foreign languages, most students speak English, followed by Spanish and Russian. Regarding the language of instruction in HEI in Republika Srpska, 93.8% of students surveyed attend lectures in Serbian, while only 3.3% of them attend lectures implemented in English.

Summary

Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of Students

A student in Republika Srpska is on average 22.19 years old. The lowest percentage of the student population comprises the students over 30 years of age, indicating a relatively adequate pace of study.

Most of the students in higher education institutions were born in the same country as their parents. The percentage of students whose parents were not born in the student's country of study but the student was is slightly higher than the percentage of students who were not born in the country of study.

Most of the parents of students in the sample have completed secondary school, followed by students whose parents have completed HEIs. The level of educational attainment of parents increases with the increase of the level of studies.

As many as 46.43% of students assess their parents to be (very) low on the social status scale and the perception of the social status of students in Republika Srpska is closely linked with the level of educational attainment of students' parents.

The share of female students is higher both in bachelor and in master studies, although the difference is smaller at the master studies level.

The total number of students with children is 3.9%, and compared to other students, student parents with two and three children experience largest financial difficulties. .

In Republika Srpska 46.8% of students live with their parents, while 12.1% live alone. The lowest percentage of students live with their partner (and children, if any), while as many as 37.2% of students live with other persons.

The percentage of students with disabilities in the total sample population is 6.6%, and among them the most numerous are students with sensory difficulties.

The distribution of students with some form of impairment according to status of studies coincides with the share of students without impairments.

The largest number of students with impairments on average see their impairment as a small or no obstacle to studying.

The group of students with impairments do not plan to continue studies.

Students with impairments are equally satisfied and unsatisfied as their colleagues without impairments. Such a high level of agreement among students suggests that all students have equal treatment and that the same quality of education is offered to all students.

Education Prior to Studies

Among the total number of students in the sample 56.8% come from vocational secondary schools, while 41.2% of students come from gymnasiums.

Students of parents without higher education, and students whose parents are engaged in manual occupations mostly attended vocational secondary education programmes.

There are no significant differences between students having completed secondary vocational schools and those having complete gymnasiums regarding the time they dedicate to study obligations. However, students having completed secondary schools abroad dedicate more time to study-related activities.

The family is the dominant source of income for all students.

Students who have completed secondary vocational schools enrol in study programmes in the field of education, social sciences, business and law, agriculture, medicine and related fields at a significantly higher percentage.

Among the total number of students, 98% have completed secondary schools in Republika Srpska.

Regarding the characteristics of international students, somewhat more of these students have parents who have attained higher education. The most attractive study programmes for these students are in the field of medicine and related fields, and humanities and arts.

Regarding delayed enrolment to a higher education institution, 91.4% of students have had a delay shorter than a year from the moment they have completed secondary school and enrolled in a higher education institution. A break between one and two years has been made by 4.0% of the students, while breaks of over two years between completing secondary school and enrolling at a higher education institution has been made by 4.7% of students.

Upon enrolment in a higher education institution, 6.7% of students make breaks in studying longer than one year. On the other hand, 22.7% of the students make a break longer than one year between the two levels of study.

Nearly double percentage of students directly enrolls in the faculty after secondary school. They continue studies with a greater intensity than students who have delayed enrolment to faculty.

The highest percentage of those delaying enrolment to higher education institutions is among students of medicine and education.

Students financing studies from their own sources, such as employment, as well as students with other sources of income, delay enrolment to higher education institutions to a significantly greater extent, while students financed from public sources of income mostly have a *traditional educational path*, i.e. they do not delay enrolment to higher education institutions.

Students delaying enrolment have mostly had paid jobs over one year and have worked 20 or more hours per week compared to their colleagues enrolling directly in faculties.

Studies are interrupted to a greater extent by students coming from families where parents have higher education.

Students attending higher education institutions with study programmes in the field of humanities and arts, education, as well as medicine and related fields, show a greater rate of interrupting their studies for longer than a year. Students of programmes from the field of services, followed by engineering, manufacture and construction, as well as agriculture make the least breaks.

Students supporting themselves from their own income and students having other sources of income make a break longer than one year more frequently, while students relying on public sources of income interrupt their studies considerably less frequently.

Students dedicating less time to their study obligations have a higher tendency of making breaks in their studies lasting longer than a year.

Comparing enrolment in master studies by secondary education of students, there are no significant differences between those having completed secondary vocational schools and those having completed gymnasiums, but a difference is noticeable by parental occupation – a break between bachelor and master studies longer than one year is more frequently made by children of parents engaged in manual occupations.

Students of education, engineering, manufacture and construction, agriculture and services are less prone to make breaks between the two levels of studies longer than one year than students of social science, business and law, and medicine and related fields.

Students who have made breaks of up to one year have most frequently assessed the intensity of their own studies as medium. On the other hand, most of those making breaks longer than one year study with high intensity.

Students with the family as the main source of income make the most breaks longer than one year.

Among the total number of students, 4.07% had long-term employment prior to entering a HEI, while 1.36% of the students had short-term employment. Most of the students did not have any type of work experience prior to enrolling in a higher education institution.

Greater work experience prior to faculty have had students who currently study with a lower intensity.

The largest percentage of students with work experience prior to enrolment at a higher education institution are students who, during their studies, have dominantly used other sources of income, while the percentage of those who have worked is equal for students whose dominant source of financing is family or own income. No student financed from public sources have had any long-term or short-term work engagement prior to enrolment in a faculty.

Progress of Studies, Satisfaction with Studies and Future Plans

Both, within the group of budget students and among co-financed students the percentage of students whose parents have and those whose parents do

not have higher education is nearly identical. Likewise, the distribution of budget students and co-financed students regarding parental occupation is approximately the same.

The family is the dominant source of income for a vast majority of all students, but among co-financed students there are more of those who depend on their own income.

Regarding intensity of study, students studying on the budget study with a somewhat higher intensity than co-financed students.

Within education and agriculture as fields of study, students whose parents do not have higher education are more numerous, while students whose parents have higher education are most numerous in the fields of services, humanities and arts, as well as social sciences, business and law.

In the fields of social sciences, business and law, as well as services, students whose parents have non-manual occupations are somewhat more numerous. Students whose parents have manual occupations are most numerous in the field of agriculture.

Male students are underrepresented in the field of education, while female students are underrepresented in engineering sciences, manufacture and construction, the field of services and agriculture.

Students are most satisfied with treatment by teaching staff, quality of teaching and faculty equipment. They are least satisfied with the options for selecting from among a large number of courses and the organization of courses.

Overall, the students studying study programmes in the field of services are the most satisfied.

Students studying in Republika Srpska assess their employment prospects outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina as significantly better.

The best assessment of opportunities for employment in the country and abroad give students of sciences.

Conditions of Student Life

Most students in Republika Srpska live with their parents (46.8%), while a significantly smaller number of students live on their own (12.1%).

Based on their own assessment, around 28% of students have little or no financial difficulties, while nearly the same number of students believe they have severe financial difficulties. The results show that public sources of income contribute to the financial stability of students to a great extent.

Students whose parents do not have higher education assess their financial difficulties as severe at a far higher percentage. This is also the case for students whose parents are engaged in manual occupations.

Severe financial difficulties are mostly reported by students studying study programmes in the field of engineering, manufacture and construction, while

the least financial difficulties report students studying programmes in the field of sciences.

Children of parents with attained higher education live with their parents more frequently. They live with other people in a significantly less instances. Students who financially primarily depend on public support live with other persons more frequently than students financially primarily depending on family.

Students depending on public support live in student dormitories to a greater extent.

Regarding the average monthly costs including both studies and life, students covering the costs during studies from their own income, on average, have greater costs compared to the budget students.

In addition to the costs of food, accommodation and other costs (e.g. clothes, hygiene), most of the total amount of costs of all students is for tuition, accommodation, food and other costs of living.

Employment

In Republika Srpska, students living with parents are employed more. However, students having worked throughout the semester are more numerous in the group of those not living with their parents.

Throughout the semester, students in the field of business and law, engineering and law work the most, while students of services mostly hold temporary jobs.

Around 30% of students are moderately or completely unsatisfied by their overall workload (workload at work and in studies).

Regarding the assessment of the employment prospect abroad after studies, within a group of students with a higher social status 38.9% of students assess their chances as good, 24.6% as neither good nor bad, and 30.78% as bad. Within a group with a lower social status the expectations are more pessimistic: 27.7% of students assess their chances as very good or good, 32.2% as neither good nor bad, 40.1% as bad.

Most of the students have not done any paid work during the semester, but more co-financed students have had work experiences during the semester. A somewhat larger percentage of male students has been employment during the semester.

The students' reasons for work during studies are primarily improving the living standard and acquiring experience in the labour market. A correlation of employment with the study programme of students who work exists in around 20% of cases.

The highest percentage of the employed are students considering their social status as higher, but the percentage of the unemployed in the overall sample is 79.6%.

International Mobility

Only 1% of students surveyed in Republika Srpska have had experience with temporary studies abroad, but 33% of students plan student mobility.

There is uniformity between budget and co-financing students in respect of the rate of achieved mobility, planned mobility, or the number of students not planning studies abroad.

The rates of achieved mobility are highest for students in the fields of education, humanities and arts, who, along with students of engineering, manufacture and construction, plan study stays abroad the most. The least mobile are students in the field of services.

The achieved mobility rate for students of master studies is somewhat higher than for students of bachelor studies. Master students plan study stays at a somewhat higher percentage, while students of bachelor studies do not plan study stays at all at a somewhat higher percentage.

The rates for realized, as well as planned mobility of students with highly educated parents are higher than for students whose parents do not have higher education.

Among all the students who have stayed abroad for studies, the number of students who have not used an organized programme and the number of students who have stayed abroad under organized EU mobility programmes is the same. However, most students have used other organized mobility programmes.

Students from Republika Srpska most frequently choose studying in EHEA countries.

ECTS points have been fully recognized for one third of the “mobile” students. The students of engineering, manufacture and construction report on fully recognized certificates obtained abroad.

The largest obstacles for studying abroad for students who have had mobility experience have been the limited number of positions at the desired institutions and the additional financial expenses. The smallest obstacles for leaving for a study stay are language proficiency and separation from partner, children and friends.

For students who have not realized study stays abroad yet, but plan to, the largest obstacles are additional financial expenses, problems in obtaining documentation and lack of information on studying abroad. The smallest obstacles are loss of paid employment and lack of motivation. Exactly the same factors deter students who do not plan studies abroad.

The most frequent among the types of short-term mobility among students in bachelor studies in Republika Srpska are language courses, followed by internship/employment. The students of master studies have had the most experience with summer/winter schools.

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