



## **PROGRESS REPORT**

**November 2004**

### **EUROSTUDENT 2005**

### **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF STUDENT LIFE**

### **IN EUROPE**

#### **Synopsis of Indicators and National Profiles**

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#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY**

EUROSTUDENT focuses on acquiring and presenting comparative statistics and educational indicators on the social dimension in the European Higher Education Area. The purpose of the project is the implementation of a European monitor-system internationally comparing the social and economic conditions of student life. The indicators are designed to support governments in their efforts to identify social barriers of social and international mobility in higher education systems. Especially with regard to the Bologna Process EUROSTUDENT as central data source for the social dimension is getting of major importance.

The following subject areas of student life are covered by EUROSTUDENT:

- Demographic characteristics
- Access to higher education
- Study performance
- Social make-up of the student body
- Accommodation
- Funding and state assistance
- Living expenses – Student spending
- Student employment and time budget
- Internationalisation

Most of the data cannot be provided by official statistics of the national bureaus of statistics or by EUROSTAT; they must be generated by national sample-surveys.



## 2. FUNDING AND FINANCING

The project runs from 01.04.2003 until 30.06.2005. Main sponsor of the project is the German BMBF. By SOCRATES Accompanying Measures the EU-Commission targeted in this project period additional funds for start-up activities in the new EU-Member States and candidate countries.

## 3. ORGANISATION

Project organisation and execution of EUROSTUDENT require a coordinated division of responsibilities involving **decentralised** and **centralised** activities.

The national surveys are carried out with national means at the decentral level by the participating Member States themselves. The countries are individually responsible for running their own surveys among university students. These surveys constitute the data source of which the different “**National Profiles**” are being generated.

The National Profiles provide the indicators which are used by the central working group at HIS to compile a trans-national “**Synopsis of Indicators**”.

To guarantee validity, representative nature and comparability of the results, the participating partner organisations agreed on common data conventions prior to carrying out their empirical survey. These conventions are defined as minimum standards for the individual national surveys. Three conferences of experts were held to adopt the relevant resolutions. Further guidelines are the EUROSTUDENT questionnaire and the preformatted templates serving as framework for the National Profiles.

## 4. PROJECT SCHEDULE

EUROSTUDENT Project 2005 runs with the active participation of the following EU-Member States:

Austria	Spain
Finland	United Kingdom (E/W)
France	Latvia
Germany	Netherlands
Ireland	Norway
Italy	Switzerland
Portugal	

All these countries have agreed to the given conventions of EUROSTUDENT and are running their own national social surveys. The National Profiles of Germany, Ireland, United Kingdom (E/W), Austria, Portugal and Spain have already been delivered to HIS. With the exception of Switzerland and Norway, which joined the project at a later date, the delivery of the other National Profiles is expected soon.

Regarding Switzerland and Norway it is assumed that data will not reach HIS early enough to be published in the print-publication. However, profiles and indicators of these contributors will be integrated in the internet version, subsequently.

In the current project period intensive efforts were undertaken to extend EUROSTUDENT group especially to new partners in the new Member States and candidate countries. But as

a matter of fact only Latvia could follow the invitation of an active participation in EUROSTUDENT. The main obstacle for an active participation in these countries is the absence of financial support for pilot-survey-activities.

However, there is a great interest in EUROSTUDENT among the new EU-Member States and candidate countries. Therefore the following countries declared their participation as an observer:

Bulgaria	Latvia
Czech Republic	Malta
Cyprus	Romania
Estonia	Slovenia
Hungary	Slovak Republic

As a first step for participation and in order to integrate these countries in EUROSTUDENT activities they produced a description of their national student welfare system. For preparation they were given a guiding scheme according to Eurydice "Key Topics in Education" Volume 1 "Financial Support for Students in Higher Education in Europe".

A special workshop was offered in September 2004 in Berlin in the BMBF for the new co-operation partners with the aim to:

1. advise for technical options and the implementation of national social surveys: Experts of active contributors to EUROSTUDENT 2005 explained the relevance of social surveys as well as methods and technical matters for the execution of national surveys.
2. discuss the country reports about the national student welfare systems: Being aware of the severe imbalances in the social dimension of the enlarged European Higher Education Area the new participants jointly agreed on a compilation of this information in a synopsis and an updating of relevant data according to Eurydice. Central assembling of data will be done by HIS.

## **5. RESULTS AND PROSPECTS**

EUROSTUDENT 2005 output consists of:

- Print version of the synopsis
- Internet version of the National Profiles and the Synopsis, extensible
- Final workshop

The completion of the draft print version of EUROSTUDENT 2005 is envisaged for mid of February 2005. A final workshop with the active participants for data-check and discussion of results is planned for March 2005. The printing of the Synopsis shall be done by end of April. Thus, internet version and print publication will be available by end of April. EUROSTUDENT Project would welcome the use of the results as background information for the stocktaking of the Bologna-process.

Dissemination and circulation of the results shall be done by a central presentation and/or in national seminars in the participating countries (envisaged May/June 2005).

There is a strong demand for a continuation of EUROSTUDENT in future among the active contributors. Those countries just participating in the observer status in the current project period expressed great interest in an active participation in EUROSTUDENT and in the

conduction of national social surveys. However, this would require sufficient funding and a more tightened frame of the joint project organization.

Regarding the funding the necessity of some survey start-up funding in several new Member States and candidate countries appears to be essential. Concerning commitment and liability an integration of EUROSTUDENT in a European institutional framework, which supports the voluntariness of this joint venture, seems to be reasonable; especially with regard to a future participation of more than 20 European countries.

Answers to reliability and financing may also be found in the implementation of a joint online-questioning. A common tool for online data acquisition could help to set a more tightened framework regarding field-phase and survey conduction and might be accompanied by a reduction of costs. A wide range of experience and knowledge regarding this matter can be found within the co-operation partners of EUROSTUDENT. Therefore a technical group of experts will develop an online-based data-concept. This is considered to be an important aspect of the proposal for the next project period of EUROSTUDENT.