

Social Dimension in Higher Education

Robert Napier – President, ESU



Countries vs Students

- Bologna with Student Eyes (BWSE)
 - Situation as perceived by students vs country perception
- Student participation- A declining bologna effect
- The need of implementation of previous commitments
 - Words vs action
- Incentives to enhance social integration of incoming students

Fig. 8.2: Are there any initiatives that aim to enhance social integration of incoming students?

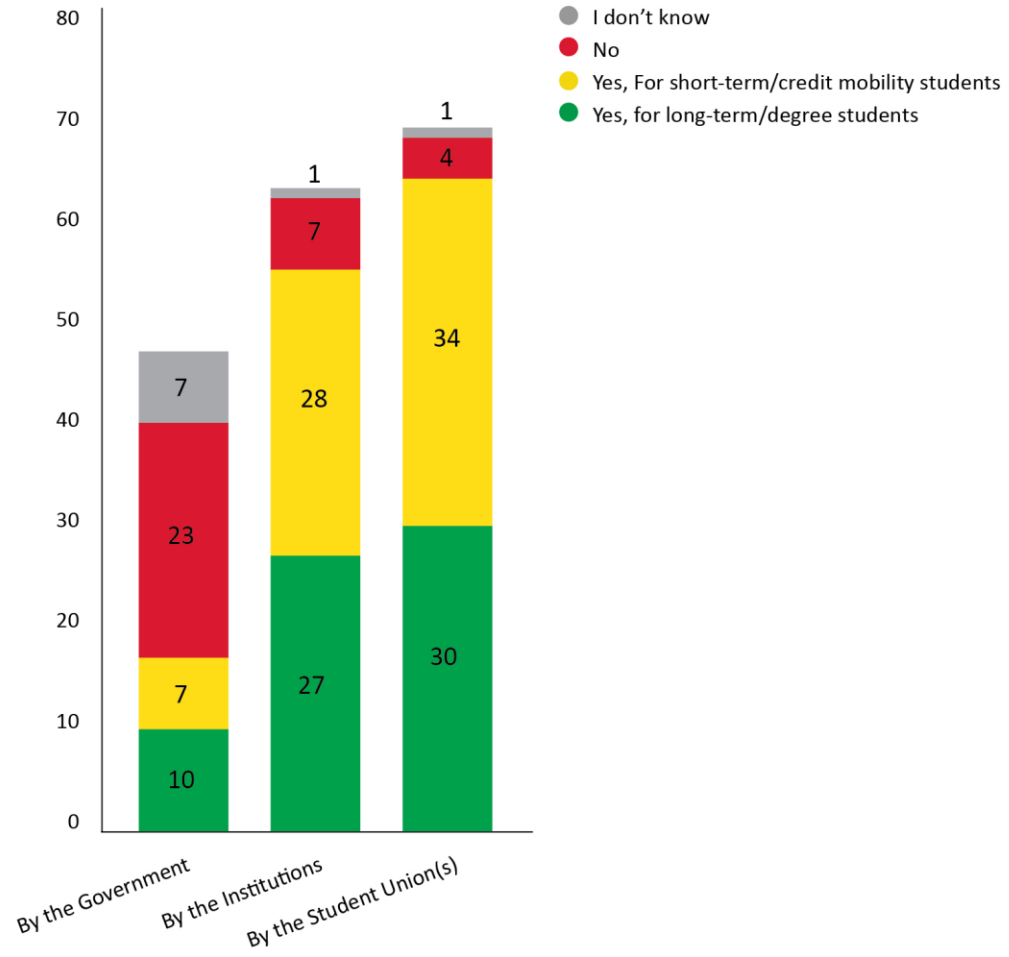
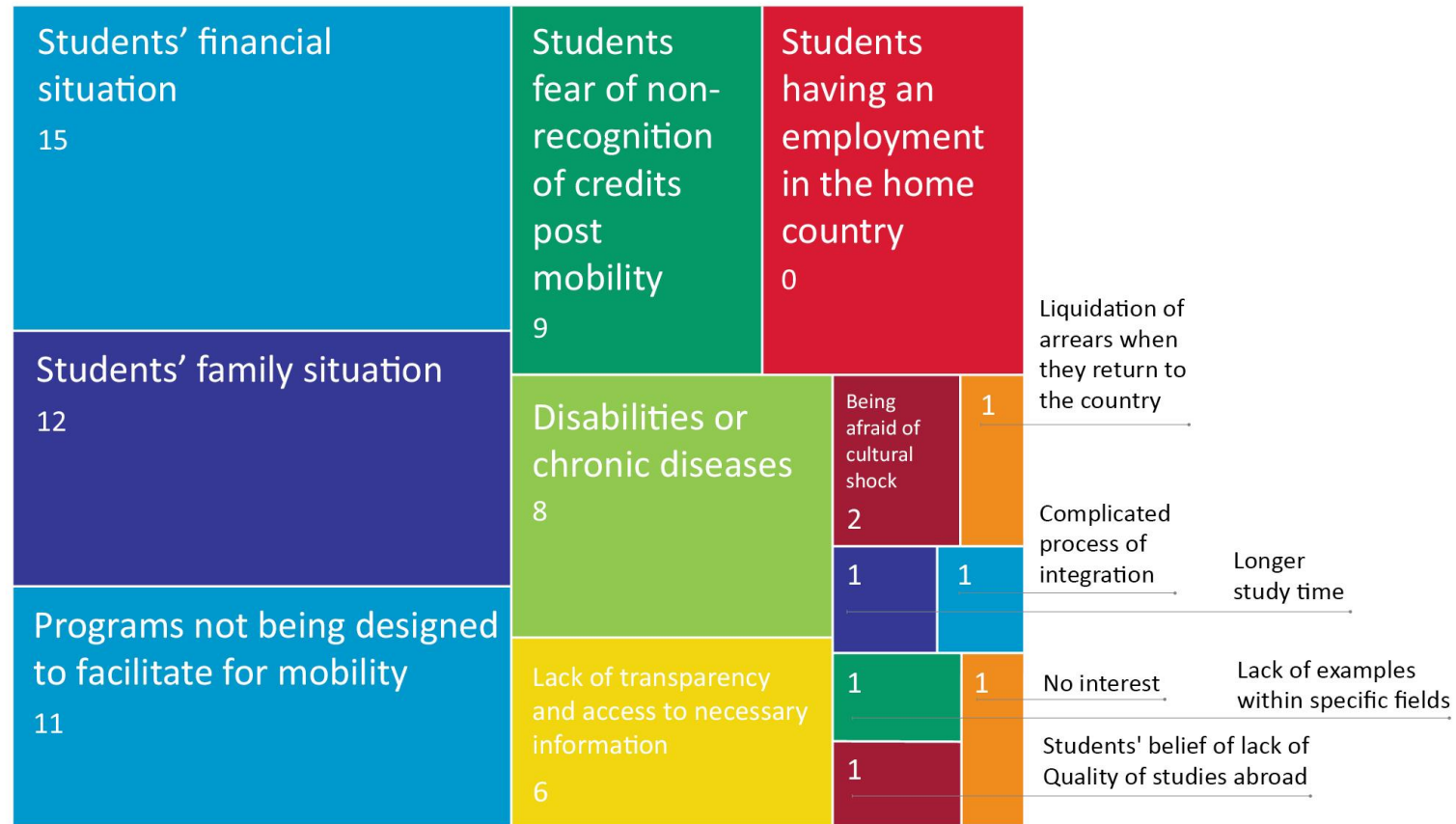


Fig. 8.5: Obstacles preventing outgoing mobility



SD as a Policy Priority

- **2015 vs 2018**
 - 7 countries: nothing has changed (Poland, Iceland, Switzerland, Belgium, Belarus, Hungary, Ukraine)
 - 1 country: it got worse (Denmark)
 - 16 countries: Higher Public awareness
 - 18 countries: existence of discussion on strategies
- **Even the most positive data didn't constitute enough progress from the student perspective**
- **27 countries still lacked national targets and even preliminary discussions towards developing them**

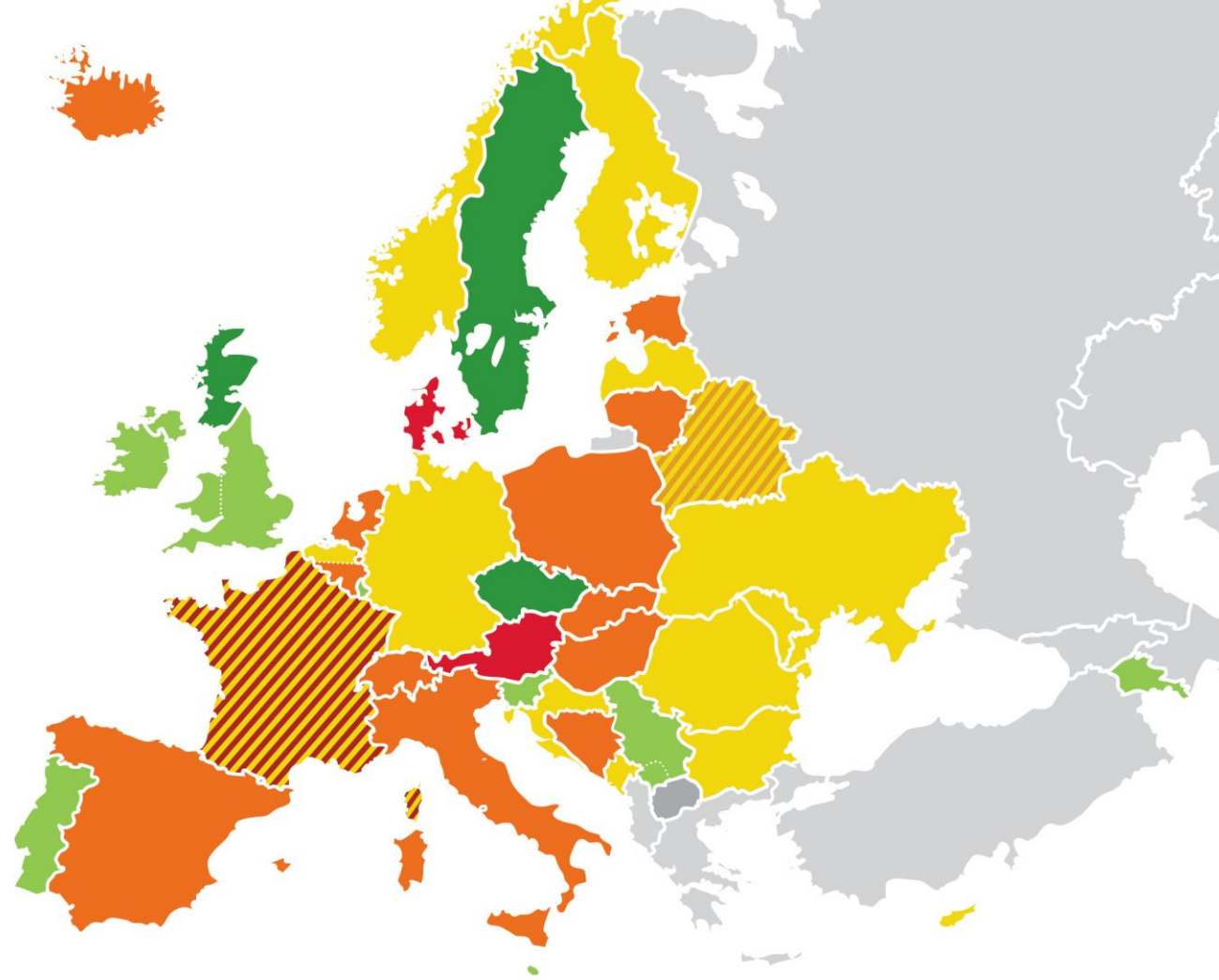


Fig. 5.1: Social Dimension as a policy priority for Governments

- EHEA country with no ESU member
- No information available
- Not a priority
- Low priority
- Somewhat a priority
- High priority
- Essential priority

Student Support Services

- Concrete means through which participation and success of students in HE is, can and should be ensured
- Should vary from monetary allowances provided for maintenance during period of study, to concrete supply of services required (housing, transport, access to materials, study facilities, food, counseling services etc)
- Investing public financing for student support services = great tool for countries
 - Availability of services -> diversifies student body -> eventually eliminates inequalities in society

Student Support Services lacking resources

- Most underfunded:
 - Financial support
 - Housing
 - Mental health/ disability support
- Financial Support in most countries granted if student's financial situation (or in most cases that of their parents) meets certain criteria;
- Italy as the prevailing example, even after using a criteria which was highly criticized- 173601 eligible vs 166160 that took it
 - Regionally based

Student Support Services

- Housing
 - One of the most problematic access needs to students
 - Can be improved in different ways- from building dorms to ensuring access to private sector
 - Forced to stay with parents (EUROSTUDENT 2018 publication)
- Mental health support and disability services
 - More attention needed, especially to eliminate stigma
 - Students with disabilities & those with chronic diseases- often left out of HE systems

Student Retention

- 14 out of 43 have dropout prevention measures at national level; 21 at institutional/faculty level and 16 at program level
- Most popular measure= counselling (22 out of 29 NUSs reporting on this); additional financial support (17), social support groups (16) and flexible learning paths
- 20 out of 41 unions dissatisfied with dropout prevention measures
 - 7 very dissatisfied
 - 4 satisfied
- Lack of data on reasons behind student dropout
- Difficult economic situations-> necessity of finding jobs -> affecting quality of studies -> can result in dropout

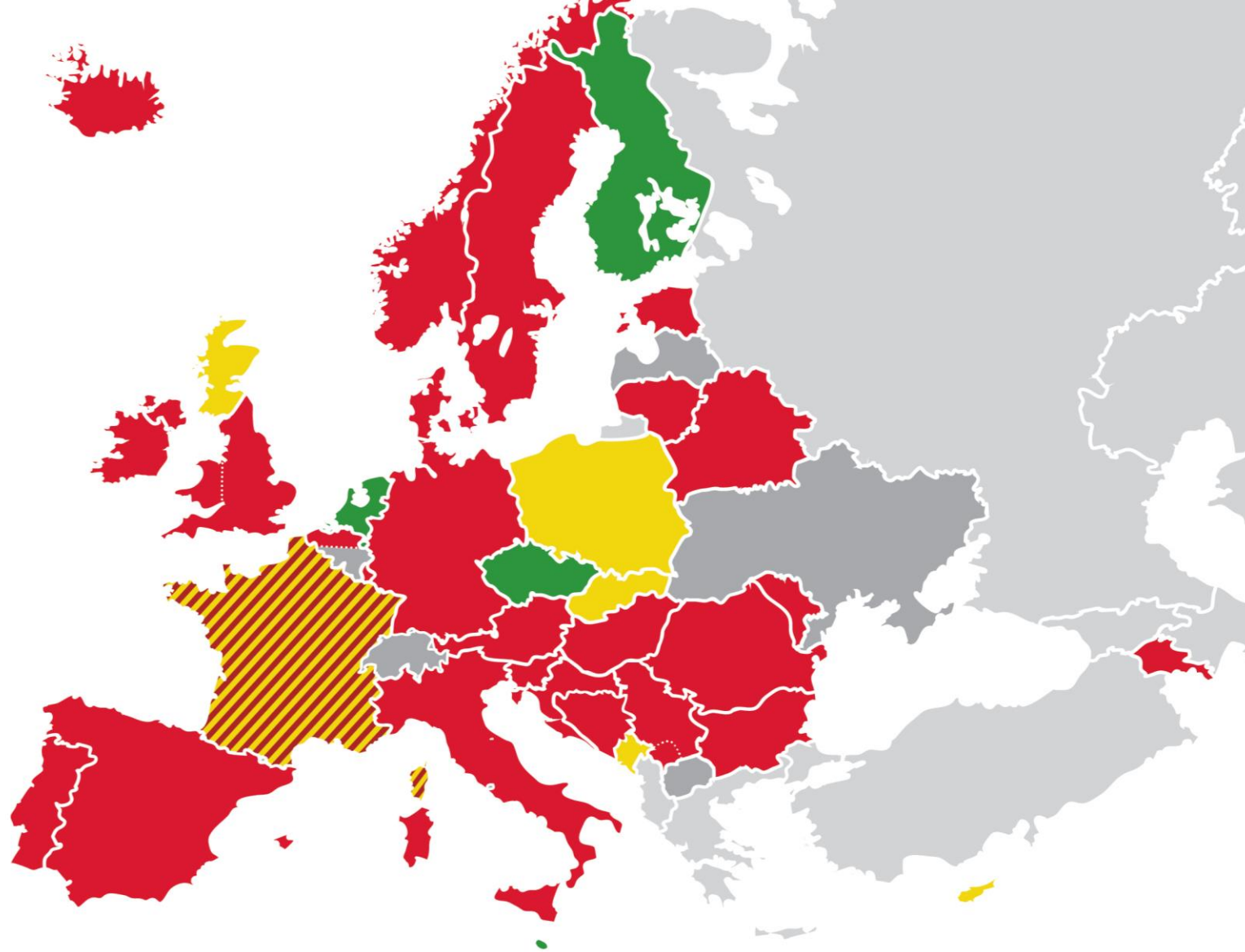


Fig. 5.2: Level of students' satisfaction with dropout prevention measures

- EHEA country with no ESU member
- No information available
- Dissatisfied
- Neither
- Satisfied

Disadvantaged Groups

- 26 out of 43- > students from lower socio-economic background and students with physical disabilities as biggest disadvantaged group in HE
- Other disadvantaged groups
 - students with psychosocial disabilities/ mental health issues
 - students with children
 - Students from different ethnic groups
 - Students with chronic health issues
 - Mature students who started their education after 25
 - Immigrant background and LGBT students (but lack of data on these)
- 29/42 -> no national policy/ plan for defining disadvantaged and underrepresented groups

Questions?



THANK YOU!

FOLLOW US ON



@Europeanstudents



@ESUtw



Subscribe to our Newsletter:
<http://bit.ly/ESUnews>

The European Students' Union

Rue de l'Industrie 10 · 1000 Brussels, Belgium · Tel: +32 2 893 25 45 · www.esu-online.org



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ESU has received financial support from the European Commission through Erasmus+ Programme: KA3, Support for Policy Reform- Civil society cooperation in the field of education and training.