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International Students in Germany 2016

Results of the Survey of International Students as Part of the 21st Social Survey of
Deutsches Studentenwerk, conducted by the German Centre for Higher Education
Research and Science Studies (DZHW)

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Summary

The 21st Social Survey collects data on the economic and social situation of students enrolled at German higher education (HE) institutions in the summer semester of 2016, except students attending colleges of public administration and those enrolled at HE institutions offering only distance learning degree courses or at a Bundeswehr university (university of the federal armed forces). The present report presents key findings of the survey of international students – that is, students who are not German nationals and who obtained their higher education entrance qualification outside of Germany. The results of the survey of German students and German educational nationals (Bildungsinländer) studying in Germany¹ were published in July 2017.² Some of the results in that report cannot be compared directly with the results for international students presented here, as the questionnaire for international students was abbreviated in some topic areas, for instance as regards students' financial situation and employment while studying. The following subsections will include a note whenever the results of the two reports are incompatible. Generally, it is important to keep in mind that the main report of the 21st Social Survey (native Germans and German educational nationals) does not consider doctoral students.

A total of 4,204 international students from 248 HE institutions participated in the survey. For a sample that includes 35,005 international students enrolled at these institutions, this represents a gross response rate of 12.0 %. After extensive and comprehensive plausibility checks, 3,586 datasets qualified for inclusion in the present analysis of international students in Germany. This represents a net response rate of 10.2 %. The most important findings from the survey are summarised below.

¹ The group of native German students and German educational nationals (Bildungsinländer) studying in Germany also includes students with a migration background who obtained their higher education entrance qualification in the German education system or who hold German citizenship (see glossary at www.sozialerhebung.de).

² Middendorff, E., Apolinarski, B., Becker, K., Bornkessel, P., Brandt, T., Heißenberg, S., & Poskowsky, J. (2017). Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Lage der Studierenden in Deutschland 2016. 21. Sozialerhebung des Deutschen Studentenwerks – durchgeführt vom Deutschen Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF).

Weighting was used to correct discrepancies between the obtained sample of the Social Survey and the parent population according to the official statistics for the variables gender, type of HE institution (university, university of applied sciences), field of study (see glossary at www.sozialerhebung.de), and age. As regards these structural characteristics of international students in Germany, the findings presented hereafter are meaningful and robust. No weighting was performed in the Social Survey with respect to type of degree and students' region of origin. This means that the figures reported in some sections regarding the type of degree pursued by international students and their region of origin are inconsistent with the corresponding figures in the official statistics (cf. e.g. Statistisches Bundesamt, Fachserie 11, Reihe 4.1). For the same reason, the perspective of students from East Asia, as well as that of exchange and bachelor's degree students, is underrepresented in the results presented here.

When reporting on the Social Survey, numerous terms and constructs are used in a specific way or were specifically developed for this purpose (e.g. family educational background, region of origin). Terms, definitions, specifications, and methods that are specific to the Social Survey or otherwise not self-explanatory have been collected in a glossary. Due to space limitations, however, the extensive glossary is only available on the project website (www.sozialerhebung.de, in German).

Access to higher education in Germany

Nearly half of all international students surveyed for this study come from European countries (47 %, Figure 2.1). Students from EU member states account for 32 % of the international student population (not illustrated). The proportion of international students from Asia is 33 %, followed by students from the Americas (11 %) and Africa (9 %).³

³ These figures are inconsistent with the official statistics because the Social Survey is based on a sample survey, whereas the official statistics include all students. In the official statistics, the geographic distribution of international students is as follows: Europe: 42%, Asia: 39%, Americas: 9%, Africa: 10%, Australia/Oceania: <1%, EU: 29%. Source: Statistisches Bundesamt Fachserie 11, Reihe 4.1. Wintersemester of 2015/2016.

Two-thirds of international students come from a country with higher per capita income (high income: 36 %, upper middle income: 35 %), whereas the remaining third of international students originate from countries with lower per capita incomes (lower middle income: 27 %, low income: 2 %). The breakdown of students by per capita income is used to refer to the economic strength of each country of origin, but it does not allow for direct conclusions regarding the economic situation of students' individual families.

63 % of all international students already had a HE degree upon arrival in Germany (Figure 2.4). Another 8 % had already studied abroad before starting a course of study in Germany, but without obtaining a degree; 28 % arrived in Germany with only a higher education entrance qualification. Around 1 % of international students reported coming to Germany with a different type of previous education that could not be aligned with the other qualification levels.

Those international students who reported their intention to acquire a degree in Germany (hereafter: degree-seeking students) were asked how their previous qualifications were recognised in terms of admission to a German HE institution. Two-thirds of all degree-seeking students coming to Germany had their international degrees recognised (bachelor's: 48 %; Diplom/Magister/master's: 17 %, Figure 2.5). Another 8 % were able to receive credit for some of their previous degree work (e.g. in the form of credit points). 10 % of all international students were admitted to their course of study based on the higher education entrance qualification they earned in their home country. 3 % of students had to pass an aptitude test to obtain recognition of their higher education entrance qualification, and 14 % were admitted to their course of study following an assessment test. Most of those who came to Germany already in possession of a HE degree had their degree recognised in Germany (90 %).

More than two-thirds of international students said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the recognition of their previous education (70 %, Figure 2.7). One in seven, however, was '(very) dissatisfied' with the recognition process (14 %). Compared with the findings from the 2012 summer semester, the share of dissatisfied students remained the same, whereas the share of satisfied students increased by 5 percentage points.

Nearly one-fifth (18 %) of international students did not learn any German at all before commencing their studies in Germany. This figure increased by 10 percentage points compared to 2012 (8 %). During their studies, nearly 60 % of international students improve their German language skills by taking language courses.

Characteristics of degree courses pursued

Compared to German students and German educational nationals, international students are more often enrolled in STEM subjects (engineering: 28 % vs. 21 %, mathematics/natural sciences: 22 % vs. 20 %) and less often found in degree courses in social sciences/social services/psychology/education (8 % vs. 15 %) or economics, business administration, and law (17 % vs. 20 %, Figure 3.4). It is primarily students from low-income countries who more often study engineering (42 %) and mathematics or natural sciences (26 %, Figure 3.5).

When looking at the distribution of target degrees by per capita incomes in the countries of origin, one notable result is that a disproportionately large share of students from low-income countries comes to Germany to pursue a master's degree (54 %, Figure 3.3). Students from high-income countries, by contrast, are primarily interested in a bachelor's degree or an exchange programme (35 % and 12 %, respectively). Roughly one in ten students from countries both in the low and lower middle-income bracket and in the high-income bracket (10 % each) is enrolled in a doctoral degree course. The highest proportion of students pursuing a doctorate in Germany comes from countries in the upper middle-income bracket (15 %).

As regards the language of instruction, more than every second international student in Germany has access to at least some coursework taught in English (English only: 38 %, German and English: 17 %). Master's degree and doctoral students are especially likely to be offered (some) courses in English in their degree programmes (71 % and 72 %, respectively). The same is true of only one-third of bachelor's degree students (33 %). Of international exchange students, 63 % reported the opportunity to take courses in English.

International students spend a total of 45.8 hours per week on study and paid work, which means their workload exceeds that of German students and German

educational nationals by about four-and-a-half hours (cf. Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 60).

22 % of international students are scholarship students. Among exchange students, two-thirds receive a scholarship (68 %, Figure 3.15).

Socio-demographic characteristics

In 2016, female students represented 48 % of the total population of international students (Figure 4.1). Compared to earlier surveys, the proportion of female students decreased slightly (2012: 51 %), as evidenced in the official statistics as well. With respect to region of origin (Figure 4.1), the highest proportion of female students is found among Eastern European and East Asian students (65 % and 56 %, respectively). The proportion of women is lowest among international students from Africa (28 %) and Other Asia (excluding East Asia, 27 %). Among students from the other regions, the gender ratio is almost equal.

The average age of international students enrolled in Germany in the 2016 summer semester was 26.3 years (Figure 4.2), meaning there were hardly any changes in that figure compared to the 20th Social Survey in the summer semester of 2012 (26.4 years).

Compared to German students and German educational nationals, international students are married much more often (14 % vs. 6 %, Figure 4.3). The proportion of international students with children is 7 % and hence only marginally higher than the corresponding proportion of Germans and German educational nationals, which is 6 %.

Two-thirds (65 %) of the international students enrolled at German HE institutions in the 2016 summer semester had a least one parent with a HE degree (Figure 4.5). For two-fifths of international students (43 %), both parents had obtained an academic degree. Somewhat more than one in six (18 %) international students come from households in which the highest level of education obtained is a higher education entrance qualification. 8 % come from households in which the highest level of education is an intermediary qualification (minimum 10th grade). Another 7 % of international students have parents who attended primary/secondary school for fewer than ten years.

Financing living expenses

The economic situation of international students is heavily influenced by their marital status and the type of degree pursued. Three-fourths of students are unmarried and pursue a bachelor's, master's, or traditional degree (73 %, Figure 5.1). Thus their economic situation as so-called 'single, degree-seeking students' is rather similar. Their average income was € 776 per month (Figure 5.4). The average income of single doctoral students was much higher (€ 1,200). Single exchange students had an average of € 847 per month at their disposal in the 2016 summer semester, whereas married students (in bachelor's, master's, and traditional degree courses) had an average income of € 894.

One notable aspect concerning the group of single, degree-seeking students is the high proportion of those who receive financial support from their parents (63 %, Figure 5.2). That level of parental support is three times as high as that received by married or doctoral students (20 % and 21 %, respectively, Figure 5.6). Likewise, a comparatively high proportion of single exchange students, who on average are much younger, is financially supported by their parents (63 %). Around two-thirds of them are scholarship students (68 %), and about one-third uses personal savings (34 %). Compared to the other student groups, single exchange students less often finance their studies through personal earnings (28 %), and if they do, their income from that work is relatively low (€ 339).

Two-fifths of the average monthly incomes of single international degree-seeking students come from their parents (41 %, Figure 5.4). Approximately one-tenth of the total budget of these students is obtained from scholarships (10 %), savings (9 %), and various other sources (partners, relatives/friends, loans, BAföG, etc., 10 %). Compared to 2012, the only notable change in the breakdown by sources of income is an increase in the importance of savings (+4 percentage points).

Employment

In the summer semester of 2016, nearly half of all international students pursued an activity alongside their studies for which they were paid (49 %, Figure 5.8). This means the employment rate has remained nearly unchanged compared to 2012, but it is still well below the employment rates found in the years 2009 (62 %) and 2006 (59 %). In comparison, German students and German educational nationals were proportionally

more often employed in the summer semester of 2016 (68 %, Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 60).

In the 2016 summer semester, half of all international students (51 %) reported having a residence permit allowing them to work no more than 120 days (or 240 half days) per year.

About one-third of international students not allowed to work for more than 120/240 (half) days believe this policy is 'not' or 'not at all sufficient' to meet their needs (34 %). Two-fifths (41 %), by contrast, think the number of possible workdays is '(absolutely) sufficient'. In the summer semester of 2012, when international students were allowed to work for no more than 90 days (or 180 half days), the proportion of students who considered this 'not (at all) sufficient' was 45 %, whereas 27 % thought the number of possible workdays was '(absolutely) sufficient'.

By far the most important reason for international students to work while studying is because it is absolutely necessary to cover their living expenses (Figure 5.13). For three-fourths of them (75 %), this statement is '(fully) applicable'.

Housing types and housing situation

Most international students (35 %) live in a dormitory or hall of residence (Figure 5.15). Just short of one-third of international students lives either in a shared apartment or in an apartment of their own (30 % each). One in five international students (18 %) live together with their partner and/or their child(ren), whereas 12 % live alone in an apartment. Only relatively few international students live with their parents or other relatives (1 %) or as lodgers in private homes (4 %).

In the summer semester of 2016, the average monthly rent paid by those who did not live with their parents or relatives was € 338, which represents a substantial increase from 2012 (€ 294). Half of all international students do not spend more than € 300 per month on rent; one in ten pay at least € 543. The highest average monthly rents are paid by students who share an apartment with their spouse or partner (€ 473). Residence halls continue to be the most affordable housing type, with rents averaging € 275.

In their assessment of the situation on the housing market, about three-fifths (62 %) of international stu-

dents agreed with the statement that it is very difficult for students to find a suitable room or apartment in their university town. In 2012, the proportion of students who mentioned difficulties in that regard was much lower (47 %). Nearly half of all students (49 %) said it was next to impossible to find a room or apartment at a reasonable price (2012: 41 %). Moreover, 45 % of international students reported being turned down many times when applying for a room or apartment (2012: 35 %), and more than one-third (37 %) had the impression that they did not get a room or apartment because they were foreigners (2012: 35 %). Compared to 2012, this means that proportionally more students experienced difficulties when looking for housing.

Canteen and cafeteria use

On average, four in five international students (79 %) eat at a student canteen 4.8 times per week. Compared to German students and German educational nationals, the proportion of canteen and cafeteria users is slightly higher for all meals among international students. The share of international students eating lunch in the canteen is 7 percentage points higher than that among Germans and German educational nationals.

When asked about their reasons for never, or only rarely, using the canteen, a majority of international students (fully) agreed with the statement that they would rather do their own cooking (non-users: 67 %, semi-regular users: 58 %). The second most frequently mentioned reason was that the food served in the canteen did not match their eating habits (non-users: 34 %, semi-regular users: 28 %) and that the food was too expensive (non-users: 34 %, semi-regular users: 26 %). The latter reason is emphasised in particular by international students from low-income countries of origin (45 %).

Decision for Germany as a study destination

When asked which countries would have been their first and second choices if they were free to choose any place in the world to study, 57 % of international students indicated that Germany was their first choice (Figure 6.1). The main competing first-choice countries were the US (18 %) and the UK (9 %).

Compared to 2012, Germany has become more popular as a study abroad destination especially among students from low-income countries. When differentiating by income situation in the country of origin, Ger-

many was more frequently the first- or second-choice destination for international students from low- and lower middle-income countries (2016: 84 %, 2012: 79 %). Likewise, more than three-fourths of students from countries with upper middle per capita income (2016: 77 %, 2012: 79 %), as well as 72 % of students from high-income countries, said that Germany was their first or second preference (2012: 71 %).

What is notable, as in 2012, is the high proportion of engineering students for whom Germany is the preferred study abroad destination (63 %). By contrast, students in medicine and health sciences, as well as in social sciences/social services/psychology/education, less frequently mentioned Germany as their first-choice place to study in 2016 (50 % and 51 %, respectively).

The most commonly cited reason to study in Germany was the quality of life there (62 %, Figure 6.7). This reason particularly informed the decision of students from lower-income countries (low + lower middle income: 72 % vs. high income: 49 %).

The three reasons to study in Germany that were most frequently rated '(fully) applicable' by international students were their expectations of improving their career opportunities (82 %, Figure 6.5), the quality of higher education (75 %), and the possibility of acquiring an internationally accepted degree in Germany (72 %).

When asked – based on their own experience with the living and studying conditions in Germany – whether they would recommend studying in Germany to their friends and acquaintances in their home country, more than half of students would 'absolutely' recommend it (54 %, Figure 6.14). As in 2012, a full 84 % of international students would recommend Germany (positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'no, definitely not' to 5 = 'yes, absolutely').

Information on studying in Germany

The 2016 survey is the first to show that most international students first became aware of Germany through their own Internet Research (50 %, Figure 6.3). The second most frequent source of information about Germany was family, friends, or acquaintances (46 %). This is especially true of students enrolled in a state examination or bachelor's degree course (57 % and 51 %, respectively).

Difficulties and support services

International students were asked to rate the difficulties they encountered so far in various areas of student life and daily life, and to specify the degree of difficulty in each case (Figure 6.8). The highest proportion of international students reported difficulties in finding a room or an apartment: Nearly half of all students (47 %) experienced (major) difficulties in this regard. Compared to 2012, that figure increased once more, pointing to a precarious development on the (student) housing market. The second most frequently experienced difficulty reported by international students was financing their studies (38 %). That proportion remained stable compared with preceding surveys.

One in three students had (major) difficulties communicating in German (34 %) and meeting Germans outside of school (31 %). Whereas the proportion of students with language problems has risen over the years (2012: 32 %, 2009: 28 %, 2006: 27 %), the 2016 survey saw a decline in the proportion of those having problems meeting the local population (2012: 37 %, 2009: 33 %, 2006: 34 %). This goes hand in hand with the observation that the proportion of students who experienced (major) difficulties meeting German students has also declined significantly from 2012 (2016: 28 %, 2012: 41 %). Likewise, fewer students reported (major) difficulties in figuring out the German academic system (2016: 25 %, 2012: 41 %).

Compared to 2012, a decline was also observed in the proportion of those who experienced (major) difficulties meeting academic requirements (2016: 18 %, 2012: 31 %), consulting members of the teaching staff (2016: 13 %, 2012: 28 %), applying for a visa or residence permit (2016: 19 %, 2012: 27 %), acquiring a work permit (2016: 16 %, 2012: 21 %), obtaining recognition of previous academic achievements (2016: 15 %, 2012: 22 %), and getting accepted by a HE institution (2016: 11 %, 2012: 16 %). The 2016 survey was the first to ask about possible difficulties acquiring health insurance: 11 % of international students said they encountered (major) difficulties in that respect.

As regards support services, international students – as in preceding social surveys – continued to regard academic counselling services as the most important student service (Figure 6.11), with nearly three-fourths of them (74 %) rating academic counselling programmes as (very) important. For each of the following, at least

seven in ten students rated these services as (very) important: German language courses (73 %), introduction to scientific learning/study techniques (72 %), information on financing studies (71 %), help with finding a place to live (71 %), tutorials (71 %), and assistance dealing with the German administration (70 %).

As in 2012, the most frequently used services included welcome events (66 %), German language courses (52 %), and tutorials (52 %). Compared to the 2012 summer semester, the usage numbers increased especially for welcome events (+5 percentage points) and introductions to scientific learning/study techniques (+8 percentage points). A decrease can be observed in the extent to which students made use of academic counselling services (-5 percentage points).

For each of the following, a minimum of nearly two-thirds of those who used the service said they were (very) satisfied: cultural and recreational activities (74 %), tutorials (71 %), German language courses (69 %), introductions to scientific learning/study techniques (69 %), assistance dealing with the German administration (68 %), welcome events (68 %), academic preparatory courses (65 %), and counselling on health insurance (65 %). Lower levels of satisfaction were found for information on financing studies (48 %), psychological counselling (55 %), and help with finding a place to live (56 %). Compared to 2012, satisfaction with most student services remained nearly unchanged. A significant increase in satisfaction levels can be observed with regard to counselling services on health insurance (+7 percentage points). The strongest decrease, by contrast, occurred with regard to students' satisfaction with getting help with finding a place to live (-8 percentage points).

Introduction

Created in 1951, the Social Survey by the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) is a survey-based system for monitoring the social and economic situation of students enrolled in higher education (HE) institutions in Germany. The parent population consists of all students enrolled at German HE institutions in the summer semester of the survey year, with the exception of students attending colleges of public administration and those enrolled at HE institutions offering only distance learning degree courses or at a Bundeswehr university (university of the federal armed forces). Every three to four years, based on a random sample, a representative sample of students is surveyed by means of a questionnaire. What makes these surveys unique, aside from the timeliness of their data and the quantity of results, is the long time series. The current 21st Social Survey collects data on the situation of students in the 2016 summer semester.

Since 1981, the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW) – and its institutional precursors, the HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH and the HIS Institute for Research on Higher Education – have been responsible for conducting the survey, analysing the data, and presenting the results. Since its creation, funding for the Social Survey has been provided by the federal government; since 1967, it has been financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science (BMBW) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), respectively.

The present report presents key results from the survey of international students, defined as students who are not German citizens and who earned their higher education entrance qualification outside of Germany. The questionnaire also included an item to collect information on whether students arrived in Germany as refugees. Due to the very limited number of cases, however, no analysis of this group of students is possible.

The results of the survey of native German students and German educational nationals (Bildungsinländer)¹ were released in June 2017.² Some of the results in that report cannot be compared directly with the results for international students presented here, as the questionnaire for international students was abbreviated in some topic areas, for instance with regard to students' financial situation and employment while studying. The following subsections will include a note whenever the results of the two reports are incompatible. Generally, it is important to keep in mind that the main report of the 21st Social Survey (German students and German educational nationals) does not include information on doctoral students.

When reporting on the Social Survey, numerous terms are used in a specific way or were specifically developed for this purpose (e.g. family educational background, region of origin). Terms and constructs that are specific to the Social Survey or otherwise not self-explanatory have been collected in a glossary. Due to space limitations, however, the extensive glossary is only available on the project website (www.sozialerhebung.de, in German).

¹ The group of native German students and German educational nationals (Bildungsinländer) studying in Germany also includes students with a migration background who obtained their higher education entrance qualification in the German education system or who hold German citizenship (see glossary at www.sozialerhebung.de).

² Middendorff, E., ApolinarSKI, B., Becker, K., Bornkessel, P., Brandt, T., Heißenberg, S., & Poskowsky, J. (2017). Die wirtschaftliche und soziale Lage der Studierenden in Deutschland 2016. 21. Sozialerhebung des Deutschen Studentenwerks – durchgeführt vom Deutschen Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF).

1 General Information on the Survey

1.1 Survey Instrument

Ever since the 17th Social Survey (1997), international students have been surveyed using a special set of questions tailored to this particular group of students.

The topics addressed in the survey of international students are similar to those contained in the questionnaire of German students and German educational nationals, but the survey additionally includes specific questions relating to the situation of international students in Germany. Specifically, international students are questioned on the following topics:

- Characteristics of their course of study in Germany
- Previous education and higher education access
- Details on the time spent in Germany
- Student employment
- Time commitment for studies and work
- Financial situation in the 2016 summer semester
- Details on their eating habits
- Details on their living situation
- Motivation for choosing Germany as their study abroad destination
- Using support services
- Assessment of the time spent in Germany
- Personal details
- Highest level of education obtained by their parents

Each page of the questionnaire used in the online survey was available to respondents in a German or English version.

The questionnaire, the glossary, the method reports, and other project-related documents and publications are available for viewing or download on the website of the survey series (www.sozialerhebung.de). Anonymised datasets on the survey of German students and German educational nationals, as well as on the survey of international students, will be made accessible for scientific secondary analysis in the DZHW research data centre in autumn 2018 (for detailed information, see https://fdz.dzhw.eu/index_html).

1.2 Conducting the Survey

In mid-April 2015, all 371 HE institutions in the parent population existing in Germany at that point were asked by DZHW, DSW, and the German Rectors' Conference to participate in the 21st Social Survey. In the months that followed, 248 HE institutions confirmed their participation (67 %). In 2016, the participating institutions enrolled just under 93 % of all students in the Social Survey's parent population, as defined above.

For the 21st Social Survey, every sixth student – that is, 16.7 % of all students in the parent population – was admitted to the sample. For the first time since the 15th Social Survey (1997), the same sampling rate was used for German students, German educational nationals, and international students. For the 16th to 20th Social Surveys (2000–2012), a higher sampling rate was implemented for international students than for German students and German educational nationals. Given the relatively low response rates of international students, this was intended to help reach the required sample size for any detailed analysis.

The HE institutions randomly selected the email addresses of the students to be surveyed from their internal address pools and started inviting students to participate in the online survey during the week from 23 May to 27 May 2016. The email invitations contained a personalised, password-protected hyperlink to the online survey. After the first few questions, respondents were differentiated into German students, German educational nationals, and international students who mostly come to Germany only after completing secondary education at home, based on their answers to questions regarding the country in which they obtained their higher education entrance qualification and on their country of citizenship. After that, they were channelled into a different survey track. Students were reminded of the opportunity to participate in the survey up to three times: two, four, and six weeks after the initial email invitation, respectively. The field phase was concluded on 31 August 2016.

1.3 Response Rate and Sample

A total of 4,204 international students from 248 HE institutions participated in the survey. For a sample that includes 35,005 international students enrolled at these institutions, this represents a gross response rate of 12.0 %. After extensive and comprehensive plausibility checks, 3,586 datasets qualified for inclusion in the present analysis of international students in Germany. This represents a net response rate of 10.2 %.

Comparing selected characteristics of the obtained sample that are also included in the official statistics with the corresponding distributions in the parent population reveals a number of discrepancies (Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2).

Concerning the characteristics gender, field of study, type of institution, and age group (Figure 1.1), international students studying at traditional universities are overrepresented in the obtained sample, whereas those studying at universities of applied sciences are underrepresented accordingly (by 7.5 percentage points each). Moreover, the survey saw a slightly lower participation of women. Compared to official statistics, young students under 22 years and students older than 30 years are underrepresented in the sample. In the present report, the discrepancies between the obtained sample and the parent population, as shown in Figure 1.1, were corrected by weighting individual characteristics. With regard to these structural characteristics of international students in Germany, the findings presented hereafter are meaningful and robust.

Figure 1.1 International students by selected characteristics – obtained sample versus official statistics
International students, in %

Selected characteristics used for weighting	Official statistics ¹	Obtained sample	Difference
Gender			
Male	51,6	55,0	3,4
Female	48,4	43,7	-4,7
No allocation ²	not covered	1,3	
Field of study			
Languages and cultural studies	12,9	10,6	-2,3
Sports	0,4	0,2	-0,2
Law, bus. & econ. and social sciences	25,5	24,5	
Mathematics/natural sciences	10,4	12,8	2,4
Medicine/health sciences	5,6	4,9	-0,7
Agriculture, forestry and nutritional sciences, veterinary medicine	2,3	3,0	0,7
Engineering	36,6	40,7	4,1
Art	5,6	3,4	-1,2
Type of institution			
University or similar	74,5	82,0	7,5
University of applied sciences	25,5	18,0	-7,5
Age group, in years			
Up to 19	4,0	2,2	-1,8
20-22	22,0	18,3	-3,7
23-25	27,4	31,8	4,4
26-30	29,0	33,3	4,3
31 and older	17,6	14,4	-3,2

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ Source: Federal Statistical Office, 2015/2016 wintersemester, not including students enrolled at universities of the German armed forces, colleges of public administration, or schools for distance learning (reporting population of the Social Survey); DZHW calculations

² In the question about gender, the Social Survey gives respondents the option to answer 'I prefer not to/cannot define myself as belonging to either sex'.

A comparison with the official statistics also shows that international exchange students and bachelor's degree students are underrepresented in the obtained sample compared to their share in the parent population (Figure 1.2). Both groups are underrepresented by 5.0 percentage points in the obtained sample, whereas international master's degree students are overrepresented by 7.5 percentage points. Likewise, students from East Asia are underrepresented in the obtained sample (by 7.5 percentage points), whereas the share of students from Western and Eastern Europe (2.6 and 1.4 percentage points, respectively) and the Americas (2.5 percentage points) is slightly higher than in the parent population. In the Social Survey, data are not weighted by type of degree and country of origin. This means that the figures reported in some sections regarding the type of degree pursued by international students and their region of origin are inconsistent with the corresponding figures in the official statistics (Figure 1.2).¹ It is not unusual to observe discrepancies between the official statistics and empirical samples. In many cases, they are directly related to differences in the degree to which specific groups of students can be reached and motivated or in their general willingness to participate in surveys. Unless these differences are corrected by means of weighting procedures, it is important to be aware of them when interpreting findings. Given the above discrepancies, it is primarily the perspective of international exchange students and international bachelor's degree students, as well as that of students from East Asia, that is underrepresented in the results reported here.

Figure 1.2 International students by selected characteristics – obtained sample versus official statistics
International students, in %

Selected characteristics	Official statistics ¹	Obtained sample	Difference
Degree Pursued			
Bachelor's	35,9	31,3	-4,6
Master's	34,3	41,8	7,5
Diplom/Magister	6,7	7,7	1,0
State examination/other	1,7	1,3	-0,4
Doctorate (PhD)	10,1	11,8	1,7
Exchange students	11,4	6,2	-5,2
Region of origin			
Europe	42,4	46,9	4,5
Western Europe	18,8	21,4	2,6
Eastern Europe	23,6	25,5	1,9
The Americas	8,6	11,1	2,5
Africa	10,0	8,6	-1,4
Asia	38,6	32,6	-6,0
Other Asia	22,3	23,7	1,4
East Asia	16,4	8,9	-7,5
Australia/Oceania	0,3	0,8	0,5

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ Source: Federal Statistical Office, student statistics 2015/2016 winter semester; DZHW calculations

¹ The parent population of the Social Survey is slightly different from the underlying HE institutions of the official statistics, because the Social Survey has traditionally excluded universities of the German armed forces, schools of distance learning, and colleges of public administration from data collection. With regard to the distribution by type of degree pursued and region of origin, however, only minimal discrepancies emerge between all students and those students belonging to the parent population (Source: Federal Statistical Office, student statistics for the 2015–16 winter semester, DZHW calculations).

2 Access to Higher Education in Germany

2.1 Regions of Origin

With respect to their region of origin, nearly half of all international students surveyed for this study come from a European country (47 %, Figure 2.1).¹ As mentioned in the introduction and in the footnote to Figure 2.1, the distribution of international students by country of origin is slightly different from the corresponding distribution in the official statistics. Students from EU member states account for 32 % (not illustrated) of all international students in Germany. The share of international students from Asia is 33 %. The Asia region is split into 'East Asia' and 'Other Asia'. A total of 9 % of international students come from East Asia, the majority of them from China (7 %). 24 % of the international students surveyed came from another Asian country, with India sending the highest share (7 %). 11 % of international students come from the Americas and another 9 % from Africa. Students from Australia/Oceania only account for 1 % of the international student population in Germany. Due to the limited num-

Figure 2.1 Regions of origin
International students, in %

Region of origin	2009	2012	2016 ¹
Europe	51	49	47
Eastern Europe	38	31	26
Western Europe	13	18	21
Asia	31	31	33
East Asia	15	14	9
Other Asia	16	17	24
The Americas	9	11	11
Africa	9	9	9
Australia/Oceania	<1	<1	1

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ These figures are inconsistent with the official statistics because the Social Survey is based on a sample survey, whereas the official statistics include all students. In the official statistics, the geographic distribution of international students is as follows: Europe: 42%, Asia: 39%, Americas: 9%, Africa: 10%, Australia/Oceania: <1%, EU: 29%. Source: Statistisches Bundesamt Fachserie 11, Reihe 4.1. Wintersemester 2015/2016.

ber of respondents, this region could not be included in more differentiated analyses.

In addition to region of origin, international students are differentiated by per capita income in their country of origin (Figure 2.2). This allows for a correlation to be made with the economic strength of the country in question without drawing any direct conclusions about the economic situation of an international student's family. The classification of the per capita income in the countries of origin is made using the World Bank list of economies.²

Figure 2.2 Students by per capita income in the country of origin
International students, in %

Per capita income in the country of origin ¹	2009	2012	2016
low income	5	3	2
lower middle income	36	22	27
upper middle income	34	43	35
high income	24	32	36

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ Gross national income (GNI) per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method. Source: World Bank list of economies (July 2009, July 2012, July 2016).

According to that data, more than two-thirds of international students come from a country in the high-income or upper-middle-income bracket (36 % and 35 %, respectively). For the remaining third of international students, by contrast, the per capita income tends to be rather low (lower middle income: 27 %, low income: 2 %). When comparing these figures to earlier surveys, it is important to note that both the makeup of the international student body by country of origin and the classification of countries of origin with regard to per capita incomes may change over time, and indeed has changed in some cases. The latter fact has a significant impact on the composition of students from countries of origin sending a high number of students to Ger-

² See the list of countries by region of origin and per capita income in the appendix. For an overview of World Bank classifications, see <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledge-base/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>. The calculations performed for this report for 2016 are based on the July 2016 data, see <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/CLASS.XLS> (last retrieved on 10/09/2017).

¹ Countries of origin are assigned to regions of origin based on the DFG system of world regions and countries (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, 2011).

many. China, for example, was still classified as a lower middle-income country in 2009, whereas in the 2012 survey, it was considered an upper middle-income country.

Figure 2.3 Students by per capita income in the country of origin and region of origin
International students, in %

Region of origin	Per capita income in the country of origin				total
	low income	lower middle income	upper middle income	high income	
Western Europe	0	0	0	21	21
Eastern Europe	0	3	14	8	26
East Asia	0	0	7	2	9
Other Asia	1	17	6	1	24
The Americas	0	1	8	3	11
Africa	1	7	<1	0	9
Australia/Oceania	0	0	0	1	1
total	2	27	35	36	100

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

There is strong overlap between per capita incomes and the region of origin (Figure 2.3). Thus, the vast majority of international students from Europe and East Asia originate from countries with a high or upper-middle per capita income. The opposite is true of students from Africa and Other Asia, where countries of origin are marked by relatively low average per capita incomes.

2.2 Recognition of Previous Education

Previous education upon arrival in Germany

63 % of all international students already had a HE degree upon arrival in Germany (Figure 2.4). In the previous Social Survey (2012), that share was 46 %.³ Another 8 % of all international students had already studied abroad before starting a course of study in Germany, but without obtaining a degree (2012: 21 %). 28 % arrived in Germany with only a higher education entrance qualification (2012: 32 %). Around 1 % of international students reported coming to Germany with a different type of previous education that could not be aligned with the other qualification levels. Due to the limited number of cases, the latter group is not considered in the following analyses, which have been broken down by type of previous education.

As in earlier social surveys, typical differences in previous education were noted between students from the various regions of origin (Figure 2.4). A relatively high number of students from East Asia and Other Asia had already completed a degree programme upon arrival in Germany (85 % and 80 %, respectively). The same applies to students from European countries outside of

³ The increase in the proportion of students arriving in Germany with a first HE degree reflects the Bologna process to the extent that mobile international students pursuing a degree abroad have increasingly enrolled in master's degree courses since 2012, which usually requires an undergraduate (bachelor's) degree. According to official statistics, the number of international students pursuing a master's degree in Germany grew from 56,058 in the 2012–13 winter semester to 94,770 in the 2016–17 winter semester. That is a 69% growth. Over the same period, the percentage of students pursuing a master's degree increased from 31.3% to 39.8% among mobile degree-seeking students (Source: Federal Statistical Office, main reports, analysis of ICE database).

Figure 2.4 Type of previous education by selected regions of origin
International students, in %

Type of previous education	total	Region of origin					
		EU member states	Rest of Europe	The Americas	Africa	East Asia	Other Asia
Higher education entrance qualification	28	56	18	18	28	7	14
Higher education, without degree	8	6	12	9	13	8	6
Higher education, with degree	63	37	70	72	59	85	80
Other previous qualification	1	1	1	1	<1	0	<1

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

the European Union (70 %). By contrast, students from EU member states come more frequently to Germany with only the higher education entrance qualification they had earned outside of Germany (56 %).

Recognition of previous education

Those international students who reported their intention to acquire an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in Germany (hereafter: degree-seeking students) were asked how their previous qualifications were recognised in terms of admission to a German HE institution. The types of previous education they indicated (cf. Figure 2.5, numbers in parentheses) diverge from the aforementioned distribution of previous education for Germany's total international student population insofar as international degree-seeking students are more likely to already hold a degree from an international college or university than students coming to Germany on a non-degree basis (exchange students).

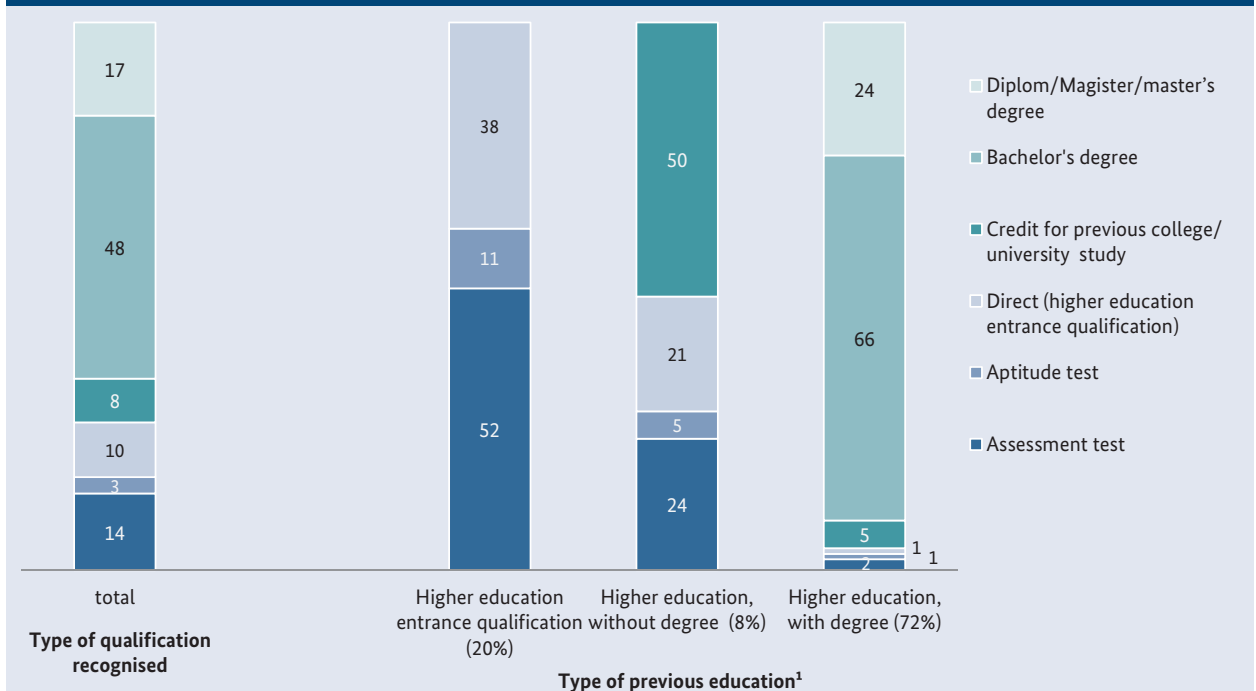
Two-thirds of all degree-seeking students had their international degrees recognised (bachelor's: 48 %; Diplom/Magister/master's: 17 %, Figure 2.5). Another 8 % were able to receive credit for some of their previous degree work (in the form of credit points, for example).

10 % of all international students were admitted to their course of study based on the higher education entrance qualification they earned in their home country. 3 % of students had to pass an aptitude test to obtain recognition of their higher education entrance qualification, and 14 % were admitted to their course of study following an assessment test.

In addition to the above findings for international degree-seeking students overall, Figure 2.5 provides a more detailed overview of the types of recognition in relation to students' previous education upon their arrival in Germany.

The most important question for applicants coming to Germany with only a secondary school diploma obtained in another country is whether their international entrance qualification can be immediately recognised as a higher education entrance qualification in Germany, or whether they need to take an aptitude test and/or an assessment test (e. g. in connection with a preparatory course at a Studienkolleg). Only about two-fifths (38 %) of the international students who came to Germany with no prior college/university experience managed to have their secondary school

Figure 2.5 Type of qualification recognised, by type of previous education
International degree-seeking students, in %



¹ In parentheses: Proportion of the respective type of previous education among degree-seeking students.

diploma recognised directly as a higher education entrance qualification without the necessity of taking any of the aforementioned tests (Figure 2.5). A little more than half (52 %) had to take an assessment test; another 11 % were required to take an aptitude test.

Half of all international students who had already started (but not finished) college or university before starting a course of study in Germany successfully obtained recognition for their previous work. Another 21 % of those who came to Germany to earn a degree had their previous education recognised directly as a higher education entrance qualification. 29 % were required to take an aptitude test or an assessment test (5 % and 24 %, respectively).

Most of those who came to Germany already in possession of a HE degree had their degrees recognised in Germany as well (90 %): Two-thirds of students (66 %) obtained recognition of a bachelor's degree, and another quarter (24 %) of a Diplom, Magister, or master's degree. Another 5 % received credit for some of their previous degree work; 1 % only obtained recognition of their higher education entrance qualification. The remaining 3 % of international degree-seeking students had to take an aptitude or assessment test. Overall, this means that the vast majority of international undergraduate and postgraduate degrees were recognised in Germany, with only 9 % of international students failing to earn formal recognition of their degrees.⁴

More detailed analyses (not illustrated) suggest a link between international students' region of origin and the recognition of their previous education. For example, students from Asia, Africa, and the Americas who had obtained a higher education entrance qualification in their home countries upon their arrival in Germany were somewhat more likely to have to take an assessment test than students from European countries. Sharp differences emerge when it comes to whether students originate in countries that have signed the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. Among international students coming from one of these countries, the proportion of students who

arrived in Germany with a higher education entrance qualification and still had to take an assessment test was 39 %. For students from countries for which the Lisbon Convention does not apply, that proportion was 72 %.

Previous education, recognition, and type of degree

The degrees that degree-seeking international students are able to initially pursue depend to a significant extent on their previous education and recognition of their qualifications.⁵ As regards the consecutive stages of bachelor's and master's studies, the following connections emerge, as can be expected, with respect to students' previous education (Figure 2.6).

Of those international students pursuing a bachelor's degree, 58 % came to Germany with only a higher education entrance qualification; 19 % had attended college or university without having obtained a degree. The remaining 24 % already had a degree.

Like those working towards a bachelor's degree, most international students pursuing a state examination degree in Germany did not have a HE degree when they arrived (higher education entrance qualification: 67 %, some degree work: 7 %).

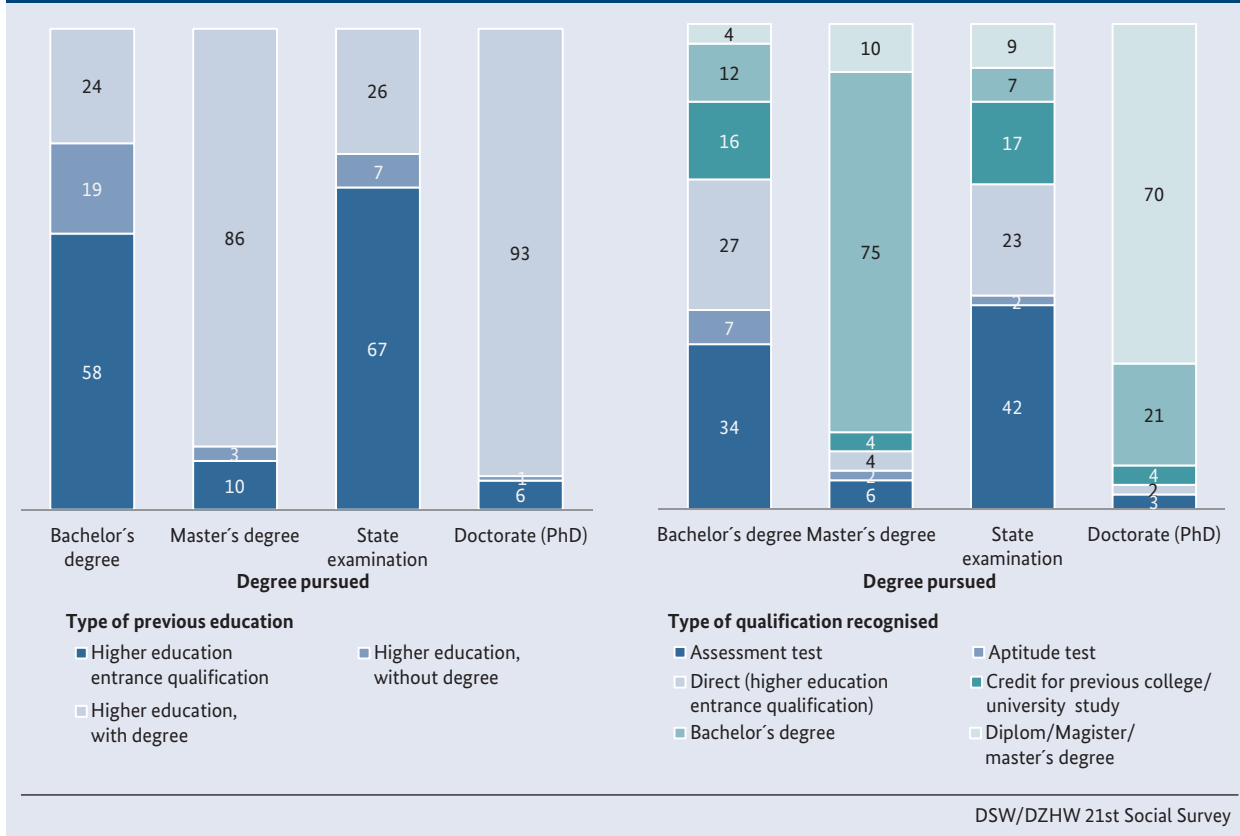
By contrast, the vast majority of international students pursuing a master's degree (86 %) already had a degree when they began their studies in Germany. Another 3 % had done some college/university-level work, whereas the remaining 10 % only had a higher education entrance qualification.

When considering the recognition of previous educational credentials or credits, it is important to keep in mind that the information on previous education provided by students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree refers to the time when they first arrived in Germany. It is possible, therefore, that they went on and earned an undergraduate degree in Germany after their arrival.

⁴ In 2012, the share of international degree-seeking students who failed to obtain recognition of their degrees was 25%. Due to modifications in the way this kind of data was collected compared to the 20th Social Survey, the 2012 figures cannot be compared to the current 2016 figures.

⁵ The degree that international students pursued upon their arrival in Germany is not necessarily the same degree they were pursuing at the time of the survey. Some international students obtained their qualification for admission to a postgraduate course (master's or doctorate) in Germany.

Figure 2.6 Type of previous education upon admission to study in Germany and type of qualification by degree currently pursued
International degree-seeking students, in %



Of those international students pursuing a doctorate in Germany, more than 90 % had a HE degree upon their arrival in Germany.

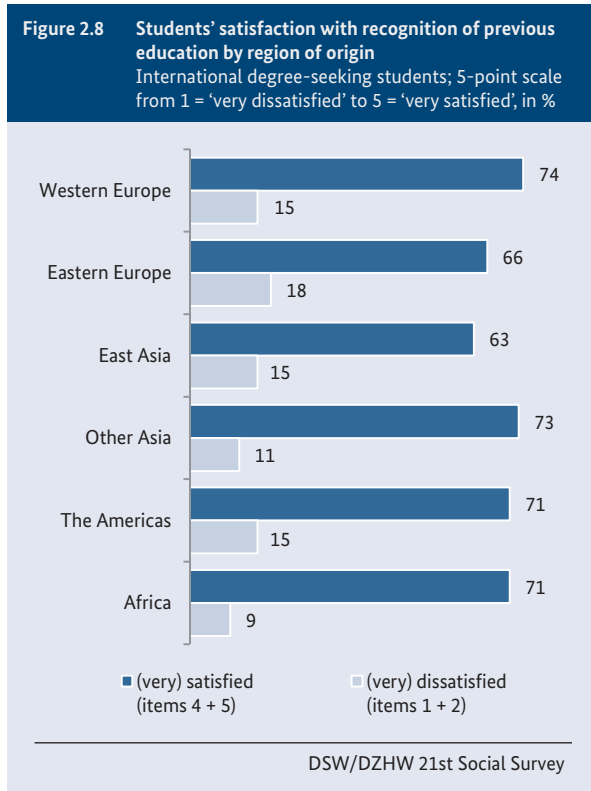
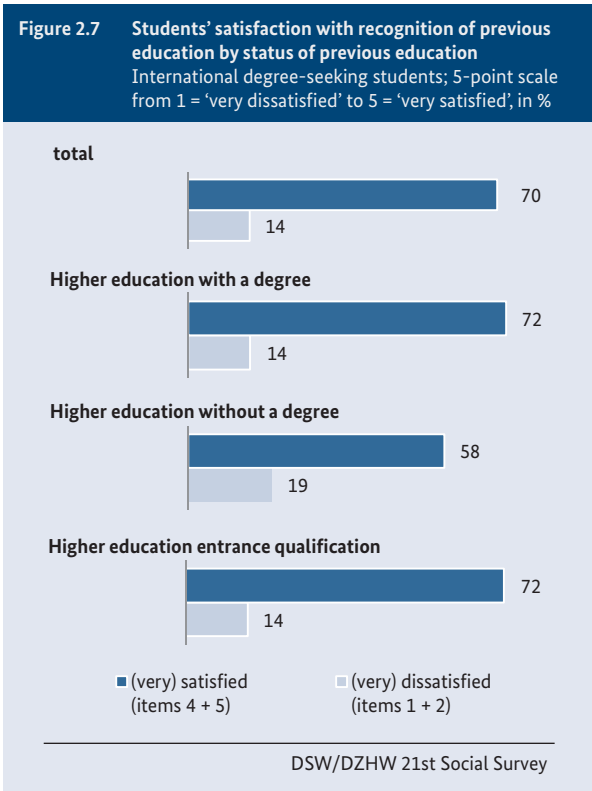
Given their similar levels of previous education and equivalent entrance requirements, largely consistent patterns emerge for international students enrolled in bachelor's degree and state examination courses as regards the recognition of their previous education: More than two-fifths had to take an aptitude or assessment test (bachelor's: 41 %, state examination: 44 %). For 27 % of bachelor's degree students and 23 % of students seeking to obtain a state examination, their previous education was recognised as directly equivalent to a higher education entrance qualification. Another 16 % (bachelor's) and 17 % (state examination) obtained partial recognition of their previous college/university-level work. Furthermore, 16 % each of international students pursuing a bachelor's or state examination degree obtained recognition of an existing undergraduate degree.

Among master's degree students and doctoral students, roughly nine in ten students were in possession of a international HE degree that was recognised in Germany (master's: 85 %, doctorate: 91 %).

Satisfaction with recognition of previous education

More than two-thirds of all international students said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the recognition of their previous education (70 %, Figure 2.7). One in seven, however, was '(very) dissatisfied' with the recognition process (14 %). Compared with the findings from the 2012 summer semester, the share of dissatisfied students remained the same, but the share of satisfied students increased by 5 percentage points.

The level of satisfaction of international students with the recognition of their previous education is affected to a large degree by the extent to which such recognition corresponds with their level of education obtained outside of Germany. This applies in particular to international students who came to Germany already in possession of a degree. Overall, 72 % of all students



who had already obtained a HE degree were 'very satisfied' with the recognition of their credentials (Figure 2.7). Only about one in seven was 'very dissatisfied' (14%). A closer look at international students with a HE degree (not illustrated) reveals that of those whose international degree was recognised as a HE degree in Germany, more than three-fourths (76%) were 'very satisfied', and relatively few (10%) were 'very dissatisfied'. However, if their degree from an institution outside of Germany was not recognised as such (not illustrated), nearly half (45%) of international students were 'very dissatisfied' with the recognition process, whereas only one-third (34%) said they were 'very satisfied'.

Of the international students who came to Germany without a HE degree, those who had not yet attended a HE institution prior to their arrival in Germany were 'very satisfied' with the recognition of their previous education much more often than those who had already attended college or university outside of Germany (72% vs. 58%). It is possible that the latter group had hoped to receive partial credit for their college or university work completed outside of Germany and/or are less willing to accept the necessity of taking an

assessment test or aptitude test than international students without any prior HE experience.

A breakdown by region of origin (Figure 2.8) shows that international students from East Asia and Eastern Europe were comparatively less often 'very satisfied' with the recognition process (63% and 66%, respectively). At the same time, the group of students from Eastern Europe also features a disproportionately high share of students who are 'very dissatisfied' with the recognition of their previous education (18%). The Social Survey data do not point to any potential explanations for these assessments of student satisfaction.

2.3 Knowledge of German

Acquisition of German language skills prior to commencing studies

Mastering a country's local language is a key factor for achieving academic success and for managing daily life outside of school. Eight in ten international students (82%, Figure 2.9) had already started learning German prior to commencing their studies in Germany. The majority of international students (58%) learned German in their home country of origin. One in ten international students (11%) started learning German

only in Germany prior to starting their course of studies; another 11 % learned the German language both in their country of origin and in Germany.

Figure 2.9 Place at which German language proficiency was acquired prior to admission to higher education in Germany by type of degree pursued International students, in %

Place at which German language proficiency was acquired	total	International degree-seeking students, degree pursued			
		BA's	MA's	State examination	Doctorate
In the country of origin	58	65	55	52	46
In Germany	11	13	10	21	12
In the country of origin and in Germany	11	13	10	16	8
In another country	2	2	2	4	2
Did not learn any German before commencing studies	18	7	23	8	31

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

Nearly one-fifth (18 %) of all international students did not learn any German at all before commencing their studies in Germany. This figure has risen by 10 percentage points compared to 2012 (8 %). A breakdown of students by type of degree pursued, however, reveals significant differences: Whereas the percentage of students without any knowledge of German is about 8 % among students enrolled in undergraduate courses (bachelor's, state examination), it is much higher among students pursuing a master's (23 %) or doctoral (31 %) degree. This reflects the fact that degree courses offered in the English language are especially widespread at the master's and doctoral level (see Section 3.5).

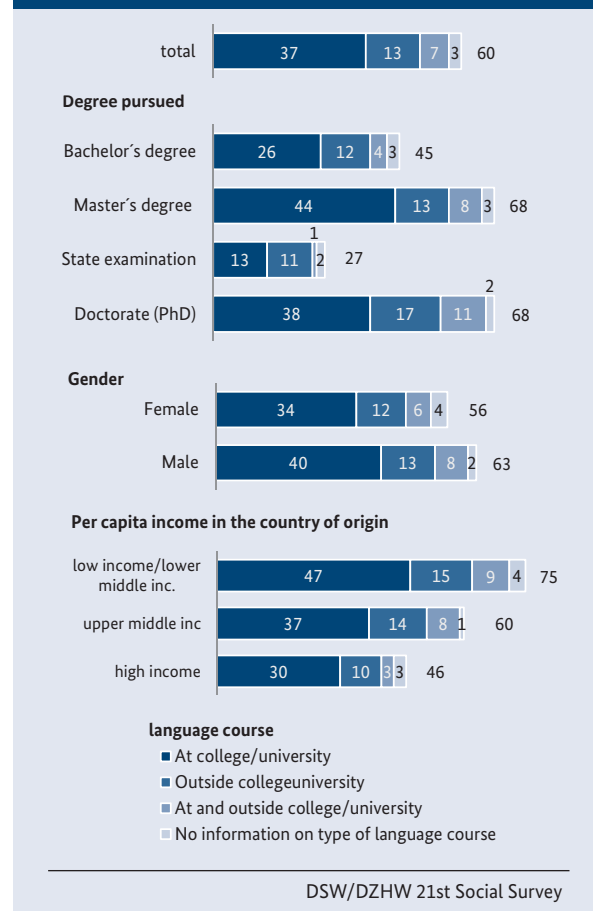
The proportion of male international students who begin their studies in Germany without any knowledge of German is higher than that of female international students (22 % vs. 15 %, not illustrated). More detailed analyses of the degree-seeking students show that the main reason for this discrepancy is that male students are slightly more likely than female students to come to Germany to earn a master's degree or doctorate (see Section 3.1), meaning they are more likely to be

enrolled in degree courses taught in English. Among bachelor's students, the proportion of those who commenced their studies in Germany without any knowledge of German is similar for male and female students (men: 8 %, women: 6 %). Among master's students, by contrast, the proportion of students who began their studies without any knowledge of German is significantly higher among male students (26 %) than among female students (19 %). The gap is even larger among international students seeking to obtain a doctorate in Germany (men: 36 %, women: 26 %).

Language courses taken while studying in Germany

Nearly 60 % of international students improve their German language skills by taking language courses while studying in Germany (Figure 2.10). A breakdown of international degree-seeking students by type of degree shows that it is especially those enrolled in master's and doctoral degree courses who take such

Figure 2.10 Participation in language courses while studying in Germany International students, in %



language courses (68 % each). Among international students enrolled in undergraduate courses, by contrast, the shares of those taking language courses alongside their studies are much smaller (bachelor's: 45 %, state examination: 27 %). Taking account of the aforementioned differences regarding prior knowledge of German in relation to the type of degree pursued, it is possible to conclude that master's and doctoral students tend to acquire, or improve, their German language skills only after arriving in Germany. This conclusion is also supported by the results of more detailed analyses (not illustrated), which indicate that more than three-fourths (77 %) of all international students who came to Germany without any knowledge of German take language courses alongside their university studies.

On a regional comparison, the proportion of students from Western Europe that attended language courses to improve their German was lowest (38 %, not illustrated), whereas that of students from Africa and Asia (excluding East Asia) was highest (75 % and 74 %, respectively). In addition, the per capita income in the country of origin made a difference as to whether German courses were attended or not (Figure 2.10): Of the students coming from countries with a low per capita income⁶, about three-fourths (75 %) took a German language course, compared to less than half (46 %) of those coming from countries with a high per capita income.

In addition to illustrating the overall proportions of international students who took language courses while studying in Germany, Figure 2.10 also provides an overview of where these groups of students attended their language courses.

Of those international students who chose not to improve their German language skills by taking a language course, about two-thirds (67 %, not illustrated) stated the main reason was that it was not necessary. Nearly one-third (30 %) said they did not have time to take a language course. A comparatively small proportion of students who did not take a language course said they did not do so because courses were too expensive (12 %) and/or because suitable courses were not available (11 %).

Language exams

62 % of the international students enrolled at German HE institutions in the 2016 summer semester took a language exam for German as a foreign language. In the 2012 summer semester, the percentage of international students having taken such an exam was 69 %.

The proportion of male international students taking a language exam was lower than that of female international students (60 % vs. 64 %). This is related to the fact that male international students are enrolled proportionately more often in master's and doctoral degree courses than are female international students. For example, major differences emerge by type of degree pursued as regards the proportion of students taking a language exam: Whereas approximately three-fourths of the students seeking to obtain a bachelor's or state examination degree demonstrated their German language skills by taking a language exam (73 % and 74 %, respectively), the corresponding proportions among master's degree and doctoral students are much smaller (58 % and 39 %, respectively). Again, this must be interpreted against the background that master's degree and doctoral students can choose from a much wider range of international courses taught in English, which do not require proficiency in German for admission (see Section 3.5).

Language proficiency

International students were asked to rate their proficiency in German and English on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = 'basic knowledge' to 5 = 'very good knowledge'. Overall, nearly three-fifths (57 %) of international students reported having '(very) good' German language skills; one in seven said they only had 'basic knowledge' of the language. By contrast, more than four-fifths said their knowledge of English was '(very) good'; only 2 % reported having only a 'basic knowledge' in English.

⁶ The 'low' and 'lower middle' income brackets were combined.

3 Characteristics of Degree Courses Pursued

3.1 Degree Pursued

As part of the 21st Social Survey, international degree-seeking students in Germany were asked about the kind of degree they intend to earn. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of these international students by type of degree course. Furthermore, the figure shows the percentage of exchange students, who only spend part of their studies in Germany and earn their degree from their home institution. In the summer semester of 2016, and for the first time, the highest proportion of international students (42 %) was enrolled in a master's degree course. This, however, is not reflected in the official statistics (see Figure 1.2). As explained in the footnote to Figure 3.1, the distribution of international students reported here differs from with the official statistics. The second-highest proportion of international students was pursuing a bachelor's degree (31 %). Overall, bachelor's and master's degrees account for 73 % of all degrees pursued by international students. In 2012, that percentage was 62 %. By contrast, traditional degrees – the Diplom and Magister degree in particular – only play a marginal role. The share

Figure 3.1 Students by type of degree pursued
International students, in %

Degree pursued ¹	2009	2012	2016
Bachelor's	25	37	31
Master's	17	25	42
Diplom (university of applied sciences)	5	1	1
Diplom (university)	17	7	1
Magister	8	3	2
State examination	8	8	5
Doctorate (PhD)	13	13	12
Exchange students	7	7	6
total	100	100	100

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¹ These figures are inconsistent with the official statistics because the Social Survey is based on a sample survey, whereas the official statistics include all students. In the official statistics, the distribution of international students by type of degree pursued is as follows: Bachelor's: 36%, Master's: 34%, Doctorate (PhD): 10%, Exchange students: 11%. Source: Wissenschaft Weltoffen 2017 based on data by Federal Statistical Office, Wintersemester 2015/2016

of international students enrolled in doctoral degree courses (12 %) has been relatively stable over the years. Measured by type of degree, doctoral students thus make up the third-largest group among international students.

6 % of all international students surveyed are exchange students not pursuing a degree in Germany.

Broken down by gender, minor differences emerge as regards the type of degree pursued (Figure 3.2): A higher proportion of male students than female students is enrolled in courses leading to a doctoral (14 % vs. 10 %) or master's degree (44 % vs. 39 %), whereas a slightly lower proportion of male students is enrolled in bachelor's (30 % vs. 33 %) and state examination (3 % vs. 7 %) courses. In the traditional Diplom/Magister degree courses, by contrast, hardly any gender differences can be observed (3 % vs. 4 %); the same is true among exchange students (6 % vs. 7 %).

Figure 3.2 Degree pursued by gender
International students, in %

Degree pursued ¹	Female	Male	total
Bachelor's	33	30	31
Master's	39	44	42
Diplom/Magister	4	3	4
State examination	7	3	5
Doctorate (PhD)	10	14	12
Exchange students	7	6	6
total	100	100	100

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ These figures are inconsistent with the official statistics because the Social Survey is based on a sample survey, whereas the official statistics include all students. In the official statistics, the distribution of international students by type of degree pursued is as follows: Bachelor's: 36%, Master's: 34%, Doctorate (PhD): 10%, Exchange students: 11%. Source: Wissenschaft Weltoffen 2017 based on data by Federal Statistical Office, Wintersemester 2015/2016

When looking at the distribution by per capita income in the countries of origin, one notable result is that a disproportionately large share of international students from low-income countries come to Germany to obtain a master's degree (54 %, Figure 3.3). Students

Figure 3.3 Degree pursued by per capita income in country of origin
International students, in %

Degree pursued	Per capita income in country of origin					
	2012			2016		
	low+lower middle income	upper middle income	high income	low+lower middle income	upper middle income	high income
Bachelor's	42	35	36	27	31	35
Master's	27	29	20	54	42	32
Diplom/Magister	8	11	12	4	4	3
State examination	8	6	10	3	4	7
Doctorate (PhD)	14	13	10	10	15	10
Exchange students	1	5	13	2	4	12
total	100	100	100	100	100	100

DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

from high-income countries, by contrast, are primarily interested in a bachelor's degree or an exchange programme (35 % and 12 %, respectively). Roughly one in ten students from countries both in the low- and lower middle-income bracket and in the high-income bracket (10 % each) is enrolled in a doctoral degree course. The highest proportion of students pursuing a doctorate in Germany comes from countries in the upper-middle income bracket (15 %).

Compared to 2012, one notable trend is that the general increase in master's degree courses is especially pronounced among international students from low-income countries (low + lower middle income: +27 percentage points vs. upper middle income: +13 percentage points and high income: +12 percentage points). Over the same period, the proportion of bachelor's degree students among students from low-income countries dropped by 15 percentage points (upper middle income: -4 percentage points, high income: -1 percentage point).

Whereas the proportion of students from high-income countries enrolled in state examination courses is twice as high as that among students from low- and lower middle-income countries (7 % vs. 3 %), the proportion of international students enrolled in traditional Dip-

lom or Magister courses is very small across all countries of origin, regardless of per capita income.¹

3.2 Subject Area Structure

In the summer semester of 2016, most international students were enrolled in a course in engineering (28 %, Figure 3.4). About one-fifth of international students reported to be enrolled (mainly) in the subject group of mathematics/natural sciences or languages and cultural studies (22 % and 20 %, respectively). This means that compared to 2012, it is primarily the so-called STEM subjects² that have become more popular among international students (engineering and mathematics/natural sciences: +3 percentage points each), whereas courses in languages and cultural studies experienced a notable drop in international student enrolment compared to 2012 (-4 percentage points).

Compared to German students and German educational nationals, international students were more often enrolled in STEM subjects (engineering: 28 % vs. 21 %, mathematics/natural sciences: 22 % vs. 20 %)

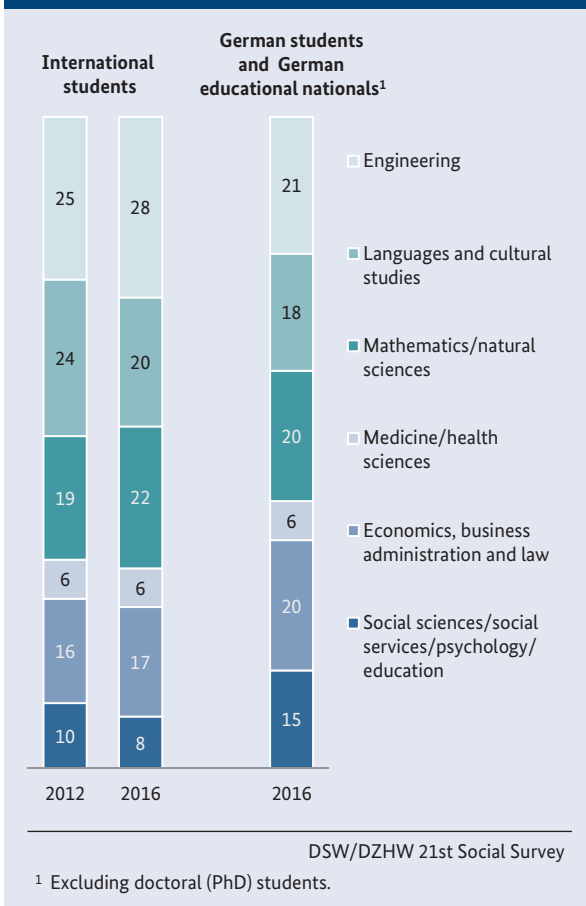
¹ It is safe to assume that the proportion of international students enrolled in traditional (primarily Magister) degree courses is slightly overestimated in the Social Survey, because the possibility that respondents—owing to the language barrier—confused the words 'Magister' and 'Master' cannot be ruled out. For the same reason, and because of the small number of cases for Magister/Diplom degree courses, the discontinued traditional degrees are no longer listed separately in subsequent sections. The state examination degree is an exception to this policy.

² STEM is an acronym for the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The German equivalent is MINT.

and less likely to choose a subject in social sciences/ social services/psychology/education (8 % vs. 15 %) or economics, business administration, and law (17 % vs.

20 %). The proportion of students enrolled in medicine/health sciences was 6 % among both international and domestic students and did not change compared to 2012.

Figure 3.4 Students by subject area groups 2012 vs. 2016 in %



Subject choices among international students vary considerably in some cases if broken down by gender and per capita income in the country of origin (Figure 3.5). When looking at subject choices by per capita income in students' home countries, one notable finding is that languages and cultural studies courses are most popular among students from high-income countries (32 %), forming the most frequently studied subject group among that population. Moreover, there are twice as many students from high-income countries enrolled in medicine/health sciences (9 % vs. 4 %) and social sciences/social services/psychology/education (10 % vs. 5 %) compared to students from countries in the low- and lower middle-income brackets. Students from low-income countries primarily choose courses in engineering (42 %) and mathematics/natural sciences (26 %).

Gender-specific subject choices are similar among both international students and German students and German educational nationals: Male students predominantly choose subjects in engineering (39 %) and mathematics/natural sciences (25 %), whereas languages and cultural studies are the most popular choices among female students (28 %). Unlike with their domestic counterparts, the second-most popular subject group among female international students is

Figure 3.5 Subject area groups by per capita income in country of origin and by gender International students, in %

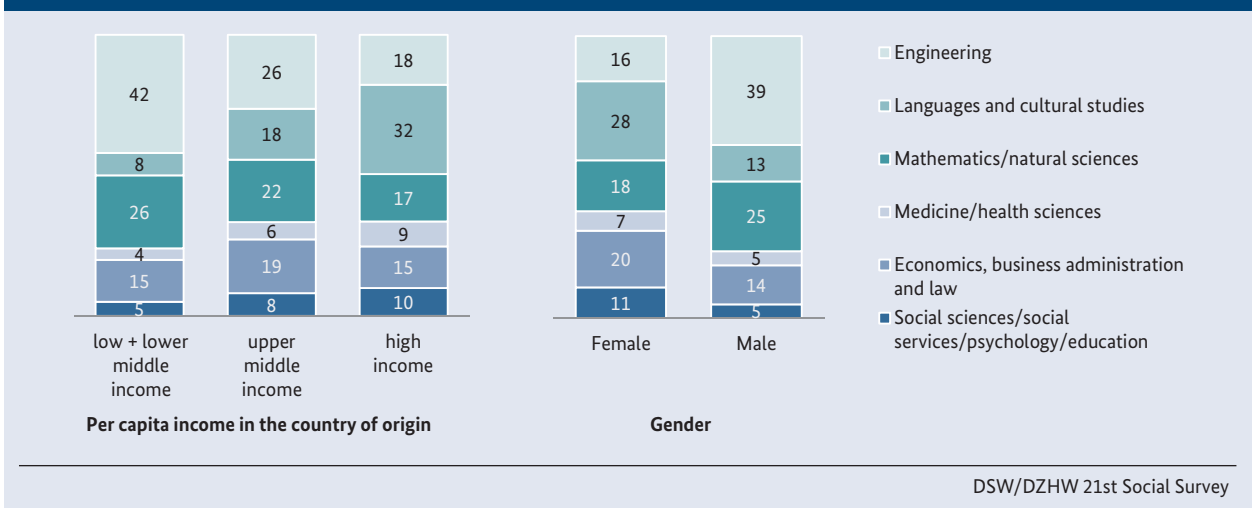
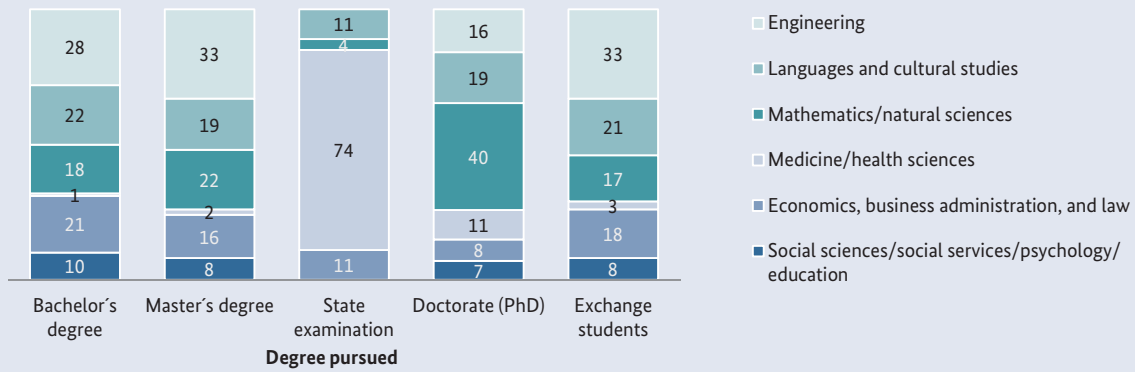


Figure 3.6 Subject area groups by type of degree pursued
International students, in %



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economics, business administration, and law (20 % vs. German students/German educational nationals: 19 %, Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 14), whereas only about half as many are enrolled in social sciences/social services/psychology/education (11 % vs. German students/German educational nationals: 21 %). Compared to 2012, one notable finding is the decrease in the proportion of female international students enrolled in languages and cultural studies courses (-5 percentage points, not illustrated) in favour of a slightly higher proportion of enrolments in the STEM subjects (engineering and mathematics/natural sciences: +3 percentage points each).

A breakdown by type of degree shows that master's degree students are more frequently enrolled in engineering courses than bachelor's degree students (33 % vs. 28 %, Figure 3.6) as well as in mathematics/natural sciences (22 % vs. 18 %) but less often found in economics, business administration, and law (16 % vs. 21 %). One particularly striking figure is the highly above-average share of international doctoral students pursuing a doctorate in mathematics/ natural sciences (40 %) – the subject group most frequently chosen by all students across Germany for earning a doctorate (Federal Statistical Office, 2016, pp. 24ff.). Among international exchange students, the distribution across subject area groups is similar to that of bachelor's and master's degree students. As can be expected, the distribution of international students across state examination courses is markedly different from the other degree types, because the state examination degree can only be earned in certain subjects. Most importantly, courses in

medicine and law, but also courses involving teaching certification (now being phased out), have traditionally led to a state examination degree.

Compared to 2012, the distribution of bachelor's and master's degree students across the subject groups has remained more or less the same. The proportion of doctoral students in the subject group of languages and cultural studies, however, has dropped by 6 percentage points compared to the previous survey. The subject group of medicine/health sciences, by contrast, has seen an increase of 6 percentage points in the proportion of doctoral students.³

3.3 Type of institution

In the summer semester of 2016, three-fourths of all international students were enrolled at traditional universities and one-fourth at universities of applied sciences (75 % and 25 %, respectively, Figure 3.7). Thus the trend observed in recent years of more international students opting for enrolment at a university of applied science has continued (2012: 23 %, 2009: 22 %, 2006: 16 %), even though the ratio has not yet reached that among German students and German educational nationals (university: 65 %, university of applied sciences: 35 %, Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 135). Bachelor's degree courses are the only courses completed at universities of applied sciences by a comparatively high share of international students (university: 58 %, uni-

³ Due to an insufficient number of cases in 2012, no corresponding statement can be made about state examinations and exchange students.

versity of applied sciences: 42 %, Figure 3.7). To pursue any of the other degree types, international students predominantly choose universities. This distribution is nearly unchanged from 2012.

Figure 3.7 Type of HE institution by type of degree pursued
International students, in %¹

Degree pursued	Type of HE institution			
	2012		2016	
	University	University of applied sciences	University	University of applied sciences
Bachelor's	58	42	58	42
Master's	79	21	78	22
State examination	-1	0	100	0
Doctorate (PhD)	100	0	99	1
Exchange students	-1	-1	77	23
total	77	23	75	25

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¹ Number of cases not sufficient.

International exchange students are slightly more often found at a traditional university than international degree-seeking students (77 % vs. 74 %, not illustrated).

Type of institution and field of study are closely correlated among international students as well (not illustrated): 38 % of international engineering students are enrolled at a university of applied sciences (university: 62 %), as are 43 % of international students

studying economics, business administration, and law (university: 57 %). By contrast, students in the subject area groups of languages and cultural studies (university: 92 %, university of applied sciences: 8 %) as well as medicine/health sciences (university: 94 %, university of applied sciences: 6 %) are enrolled almost exclusively at universities.

International students from countries of origin with low- and lower-middle per capita incomes are enrolled more frequently at universities of applied sciences than international students from countries with upper-middle or high per capita income (34 % vs. 21 % and 22 %, respectively, Figure 3.8). These numbers are driven in part by the comparatively high percentage of students from low-income countries studying engineering, as engineering courses are frequently offered at universities of applied sciences (see Section 3.2). Compared to 2012, the proportion of students from high-income countries at universities of applied sciences has seen the strongest increase (+8 percentage points).

3.4 Semesters Spent in Germany

In the 2016 summer semester, international degree-seeking students had been enrolled in their field of study for an average of 4.1 semesters.⁴

When asked about the time of their initial enrolment, international students on average reported having first enrolled at a German HE institution 5.3 semesters earlier. Information on possible study interruptions or terms spent abroad or in the country of origin since the time of initial enrolment was not collected in the survey.

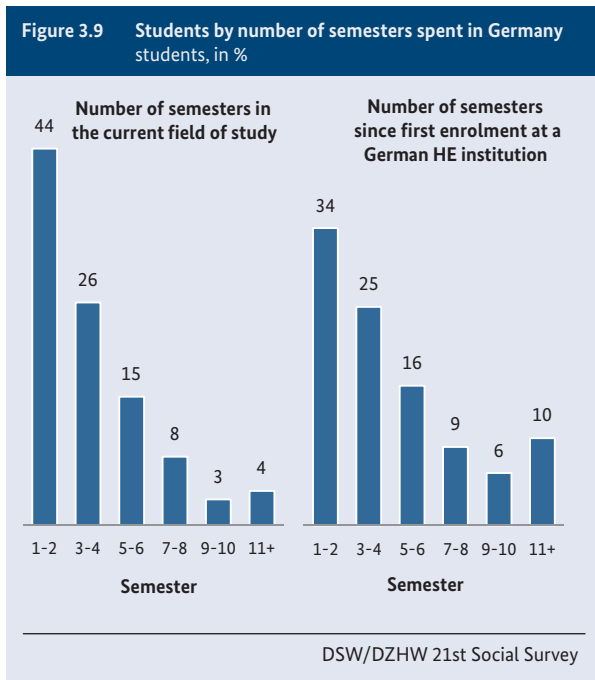
As can be expected, the time spent studying in Germany is influenced by the type of degree pursued: International students pursuing bachelor's degrees have been at a German institution of higher education for

Figure 3.8 Type of HE institution by per capita income in country of origin
International students, in %

Per capita income in country of origin	Type of HE institution			
	2012		2016	
	University	University of applied sciences	University	University of applied sciences
low + lower middle income	68	32	66	34
upper middle income	76	24	79	21
high income	86	14	78	22

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⁴ Comparisons with 2012 regarding this figure are only possible to a limited extent: The 2016 survey was the first to ask respondents about the first semester in their current degree course, which is then used to calculate the total number of semesters. In earlier surveys, respondents were asked directly about the number of semesters spent in their current course. When counting the number of these course-specific semesters, official interruptions such as semesters on leave are not included, as opposed to when counting the total number of semesters since initial enrolment. These two concepts are often confused by respondents. Four years ago, when the number of course-specific semesters was still collected directly, international students said they had been enrolled in their current course for an average of 4.9 semesters.



an average of 4.1 semesters, those pursuing master's degrees for 3.5 semesters, doctoral candidates for 5.2 semesters, and students enrolled in state examination courses for 6.2 semesters.

Figure 3.9 shows the distribution of international degree-seeking students by the time spent studying in their current degree course as well as by the time spent studying in Germany since their initial enrolment. In the 2016 summer semester, one-third of international students first enrolled one or two semesters earlier (34%). When considering only their current degree course, even 44% were in their first or second semester. About one in four students (24%, not illustrated) was already enrolled in Germany before starting their current course. Of these students, whose initial enrolment occurred prior to enrolment in their current course, 39% report having already obtained a university degree in Germany. The bachelor's degree is most frequently mentioned in this regard (64%, master's degree: 31%, other degree: 9%). The remaining 61% may have switched courses without earning a degree, interrupted their studies, or spent time abroad.⁵

⁵ Information on these issues was not collected in the survey.

3.5 Language of Instruction

When asked about the language of instruction in their degree course, 38% of international students report that their course is taught entirely in English. More than one in six students takes courses taught both in English and in German (17%). Overall, more than one in two international students had access to at least some courses taught in English (55%). 43% of international students said their only language of instruction was German. Courses taught in a language other than German or English are an exception: Only 3% of students have the opportunity to take courses in a third language, mostly in the subject area group of languages and cultural studies.

Master's degree and doctoral students are especially likely to be offered (some) courses in English in their degree courses (71% and 72%, respectively). The same is true of only one-third of bachelor's degree students (33%). Of international exchange students, 63% reported having the opportunity to take courses in English.

Broken down by field of study, courses taught in English are found at above-average proportions in mathematics/natural sciences (71%), in economics, business administration, and law (66%), and in engineering (58%). Such courses are comparatively rare in medicine/health sciences (22%), languages and cultural studies (39%), or social sciences/social services/psychology/education (47%).

International students enrolled at traditional universities report roughly the same amount of coursework taught in English as their counterparts enrolled at universities of applied sciences (56% vs. 54%).

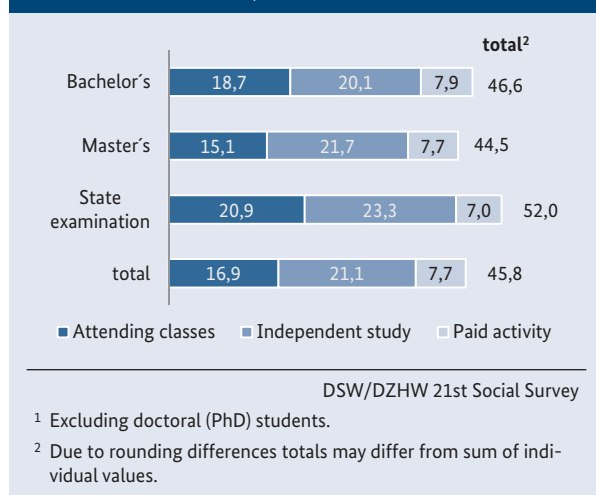
3.6 Time Commitment for Study and Work

As part of the 21st Social Survey, international degree-seeking students were asked about the amount of time they spend on class attendance, self-study, and paid work during a 'typical' semester week.⁶

Students spent an average of 16.9 hours attending classes in a typical week of the 2016 summer semester

⁶ Information on the time commitment of exchange students and doctoral students was not collected.

Figure 3.10 Time commitment for study and work by type of degree pursued
International degree-seeking students¹, arithmetic mean in hours/week



(Figure 3.10). They spent an average of 21.1 hours per week on self-study (pre- and post-course preparations, etc.).

The total study-related time commitment of 38.0 hours in the 2016 summer semester means that international degree-seeking students invested about 0.7 hours more in their studies than they did four years earlier (2012: 37.3 h/week).⁷ Added to this is an average of about 8 hours per week that international students spent working (2016: 7.7 h/week, 2012: 8.2 h/week). Compared with German students and German educational nationals⁸, international students spent approximately one-and-a-half hours more on class attendance and around three-and-a-half hours more on self-study (cf. Middendorff et al., 2017, pp. 167-168). International students spent approximately half an hour less each week on paid work than German students and German educational nationals.⁹ All in all, international students have a 45.8-hour week, making their time commitment

⁷ To make the 2012 figures for the group defined here – international degree-seeking students, excluding doctoral students – comparable to the current data, they were recalculated and hence deviate from the figures in the 20th Social Survey report, which also considered doctoral students and students in partial degree courses.

⁸ The comparison with German students and German educational nationals is limited to those enrolled full-time in on-campus degree courses (92% of all German students) (cf. Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 56).

⁹ Broken down by type of residence permit (see Section 5.2), students with a residence permit allowing them to work only for a maximum of 120 days (or 240 half days) per year reported an average of one hour less per week for work during a typical semester week. They worked an average of 1.7 days during a typical semester week (students not subject to such a policy: 1.9 days).

for study and paid work exceed that of German students and German educational nationals by about four-and-a-half hours (cf. Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 60).

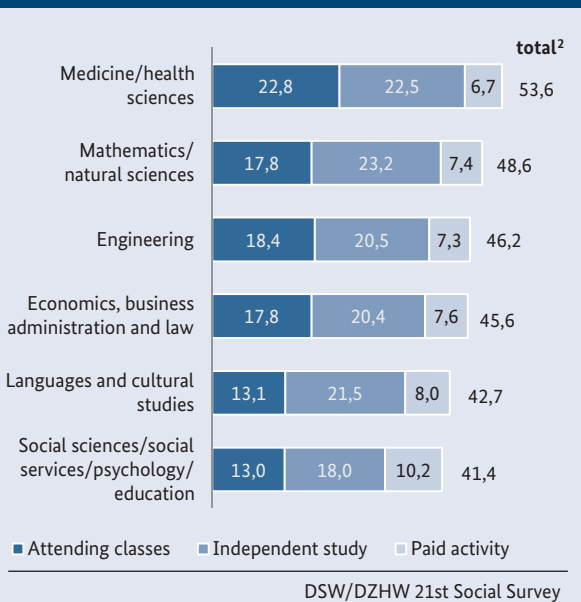
International students at universities of applied sciences invested an average of 4.7 hours more per week in attending classes and some 3.0 hours less per week in self-study than their counterparts at traditional universities (not illustrated).

When broken down by type of degree pursued, bachelor's degree students spent an average of 3.5 hours more attending classes and 1.6 hours less doing self-study than master's degree students (Figure 3.10). There are hardly any differences between the groups regarding the time they spent performing paid work. Students pursuing a state examination degree invested the highest amount of time in their studies compared to students pursuing other degrees. The total study-related workload of these students, of whom three-fourths are enrolled in medicine/health sciences (see Figure 3.6), was 44.2 hours per week, meaning they spent as much time on academics alone as master's degree students spent on study and work combined (44.5 h/week). Yet international students in state examination courses also spent an average of 7 hours per week on paid work while studying, resulting in a total time commitment of 52 hours per week.

Depending on the subject they are studying, there is a great deal of variation in the amount of time that degree-seeking students spend on study and employment during a typical semester week (Figure 3.11). Students in the subject area group of medicine/health sciences invested the most time in their course of study (class attendance 22.8 h/week, self-study: 22.5 h/week). By contrast, the lowest study-related time commitment can be observed among students in the subject area group of social sciences/social service/psychology/education (class attendance: 13.0 h/week, self-study: 18.0 h/week). Compared to 2012, the differences in the total workload between students in different fields of study have thus become smaller.

In 2012, international students in the upper four subject area groups shown in Figure 3.11 spent about the same amount of time on class attendance and on self-study. Four years later, that ratio only remained the same for students enrolled in medicine/health sciences. In all other subject area groups, students now spent

Figure 3.11 Time commitment for study and work by subject area groups
International degree-seeking students¹, arithmetic mean in hours/week²



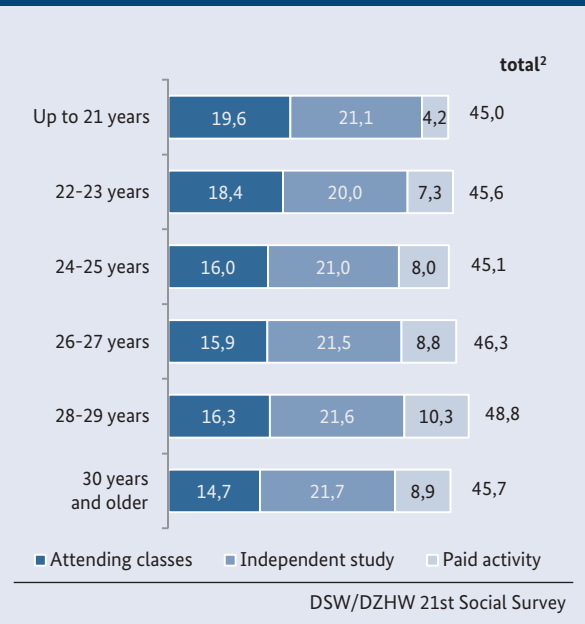
¹ Excluding doctoral (PhD) students.

² Due to rounding differences totals may differ from sum of individual values.

between 2.1 and 8.4 hours more per week on self-study than they spent on attending classes. One notable finding compared to 2012 is the strong increase in the amount of time that students in mathematics/natural sciences devoted to self-study (+4.5 h/week).

Depending on the subject area group, the less time students spend on study-related activities such as attending classes and self-study, the more time they tend to spend on paid work. Yet the total time commitment for both study and work is heavily determined by the time required for study-related activities. As a consequence, students enrolled in medicine/health sciences not only have the highest time commitment for study-related activities but also the highest time commitment overall (53.6 h/week on average), even though they spend the least time on work. At the same time, the highest time commitment to work, found among students in social sciences/social services/psychology/education (10.2 h/week), does not counterbalance their comparatively low time commitment to study, meaning that students in this subject area group have the lowest average total workload (41.4 h/week).

Figure 3.12 Time commitment for study and work by age groups
International degree-seeking students¹, arithmetic mean in hours/week²



¹ Excluding doctoral (PhD) students.

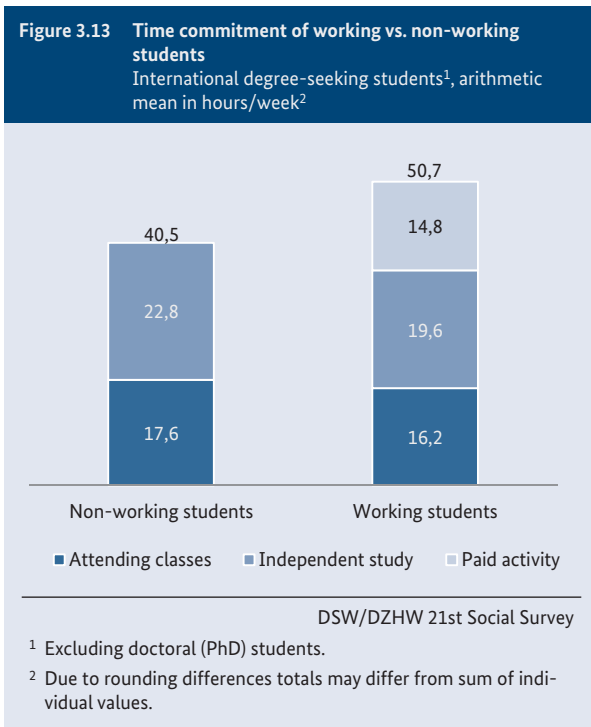
² Due to rounding differences totals may differ from sum of individual values.

As students become older, they tend to spend more hours on work during a typical semester week (Figure 3.12). Although older students tend to invest less time in attending classes, students below the age of 30 experience a progressively growing total workload resulting from the substantial incremental increase in the hours they spend working.

International degree-seeking students with children spend an average of 1.8 hours per week less on attending classes than international degree-seeking students without children (15.2 h/week vs. 17.0 h/week). Likewise, they invest 2.3 hours per week less in self-study (18.9 h/week vs. 21.2 h/week). Their weekly time investment in paid work, by contrast, is about one-and-a-half hours higher (9.2 h/week vs. 7.6 h/week).

Influence of work commitments

International students who work while attending school have a substantially higher total time commitment than students who do not have jobs (Figure 3.13). The time working students spend on study and work adds up to an average of 50.7 hours per week – about 10 hours more than the weekly time commitment of non-working students. This means that students with-



out a job can devote significantly more time towards both class attendance and self-study. Non-working students spend approximately 40.5 hours per week for attending classes and doing self-study during a typical semester week. Working students, by contrast, devote about 35.8 hours per week to their studies.

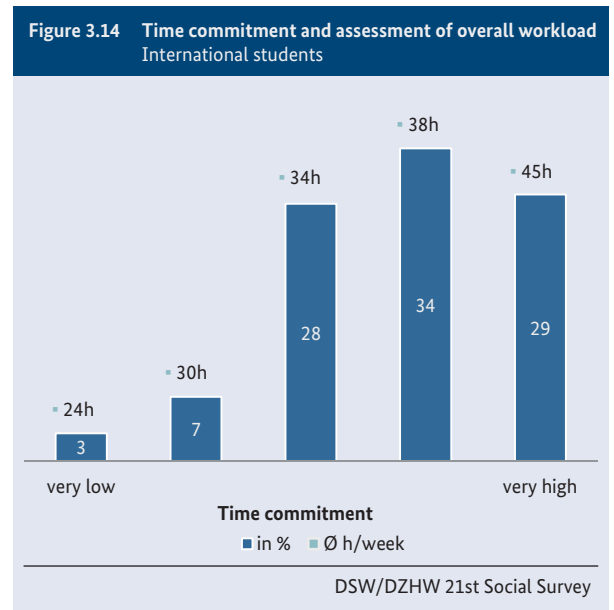
Assessment of time commitment

In addition to providing the exact number of hours per day they spend on study and work, international students were asked to subjectively rank their workload during the lecture period of the 2016 summer semester on a five-point scale ranging from ‘very low’ to ‘very high’ as regards their course of study in general, attending classes, self-study, and paid activities.

One in four students ranked their time commitment with regard to attending classes as well as performing paid work as ‘(very) low’¹⁰ (25 % and 26 %, respectively), whereas two in five students said their time commitment related to these activities was ‘(very) high’¹¹ (40 % each). The amount of time required for self-study was considered to be ‘(very) high’ by a comparatively high proportion of students (62 %).

¹⁰ Positions 1 (‘very low’) and 2 (‘low’) on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = ‘very low’ to 5 = ‘very high’.

¹¹ Positions 4 (‘high’) and 5 (‘very high’) on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = ‘very low’ to 5 = ‘very high’.



Working students with a subjective ‘(very) high’ workload devoted an average of 21 hours per week (time commitment: ‘very high’) or 17 hours per week (time commitment: ‘high’) to their job.

When asked about their overall time commitment regarding their course of study in general (Figure 3.14), more than three-fifths of all international students reported having a ‘(very) high’ time commitment (‘high’ time commitment: 34 %, ‘very high’ time commitment: 29 %). As can be expected, this correlates strongly with the actual number of hours reported: International students who rated their time commitment as ‘high’ or ‘very high’ spent an average of 38 hours (‘high’ time commitment) or 45 hours (‘very high’ time commitment) on their course of study overall. International students who rated their weekly time commitment neither as ‘(very) high’ nor as ‘(very) low’, thus placing themselves at the middle of the scale, invested an average of 34 hours per week in attending classes and self-study (middle response category).

The actual total time invested in study-related activities also correlates with the corresponding ratings within the various subject groups. Of the students enrolled in subjects involving an above-average time commitment to study-related activities, a correspond-

ingly high proportion rated their workload as ‘high’ or ‘very high’ (not illustrated).

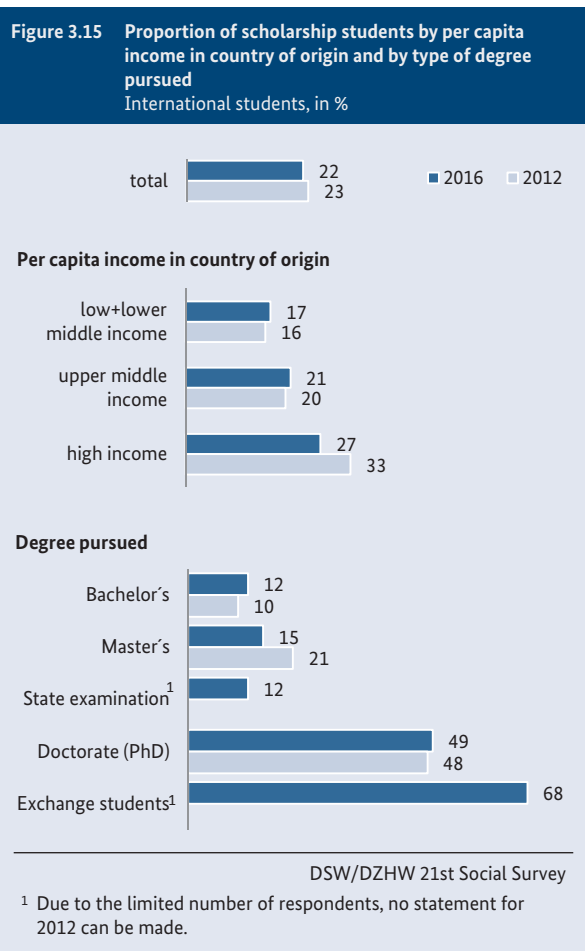
3.7 Scholarship Students and Study Abroad Arrangements of Exchange Students

During a study abroad experience, the question of how to finance and arrange one’s studies is especially important. To promote international mobility, there are both scholarship programmes offering financial support and mobility programmes offering organisational support. Targeted programmes (e.g. bilateral exchange agreements between students’ home university abroad and the German university) are especially helpful in facilitating study abroad for a limited period of time in the form of exchange semesters. The 21st Social Survey asked all international students about scholarships, but the questions regarding study abroad arrangements were only targeted at exchange students.¹²

Scholarship students

As part of the survey section on students’ financial situation, students were also asked whether they could draw on monthly income from a scholarship, and if so in which amount. Students who provided information on their financial situation¹³ and named a scholarship amount were identified as ‘scholarship students’ and asked about the type of scholarship they were receiving.

In 2016, 22 % of all international students financed their studies in Germany with the help of a scholarship that fully or partially covered their costs of living (for more on financing, see Section 5.1). The proportion of scholarship students among the international student population thus remained at a level similar to that of 2012 (Figure 3.15). A breakdown by income levels in students’ country of origin reveals a notable decline of



students from high-income countries (-6 percentage points), whereas the proportion of scholarship students remained nearly unchanged in all other groups (+1 percentage point each).

The vast majority of exchange students take part in an exchange or mobility programme (Figure 3.19). This explains why two-thirds of them receive some sort of scholarship (68 %, Figure 3.15). Likewise, nearly one in two doctoral students hold scholarships (49 %). By contrast, the proportion of scholarship students is relatively low among international students seeking to obtain a bachelor’s or state examination degree (12 % each). Compared to 2012, the proportion of scholarship students among master’s degree students dropped by 6 percentage points.

The proportion of scholarship students varies by field of study (Figure 3.16). An above-average proportion of students enrolled in mathematics/natural science courses receive full or partial scholarships (27 %). The

¹² In 2012, 85% of international students made independent arrangements for their studies in Germany (so-called ‘free movers’). Of these free movers, 99% came to Germany to pursue a degree, which is why the characteristics of free movers were essentially the same as those of all international degree-seeking students. Despite the small number of exchange students in 2012, survey results indicated that this group made especially frequent use of mobility programmes. To minimize the time needed to complete the survey as much as possible for students, questions about mobility programmes in the 21st Social Survey were only addressed to exchange students. The subsection on free movers was dropped because of the small number of cases among exchange students.

¹³ 93% of all international students provided usable information as regards their financial situation.

Figure 3.16 Scholarship students by subject area group
International students, in %

Subject area group	2012	2016
Mathematics/natural sciences	28	27
Social sciences/social services/psychology/education	17	25
Medicine/health sciences	22	22
Engineering	27	22
Languages and cultural studies	25	19
Economics, business administration and law	14	18
total	23	22

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lowest share of scholarship students is found among international students enrolled in economics, business administration, and law (18 %). Compared to 2012, the proportion of scholarship students among the international student population saw considerable changes, depending on the subject area group: It dropped among engineering students and students in languages and cultural studies (-5 and -6 percentage points, respectively), whereas the proportion of scholarship students rose from 2012 among students in social sciences/social services/psychology/education as well as economics, business administration, and law (+8 and +4 percentage points, respectively).

22 % of male students and 21 % of female students are scholarship students (not illustrated). Compared to 2012, only the proportion of male scholarship students saw a slight decrease (2012: male scholarship students: 25 %, female scholarship students: 21 %).

The proportion of international scholarship students is higher at traditional universities (25 %) than at universities of applied sciences (13 %), which is partially attributable to the degrees obtainable at these two types of institutions.¹⁴ On the other hand, the proportion of university-based international bachelor's degree students receiving a scholarship is more than twice as high as that of bachelor's degree students enrolled at universities of applied sciences (15 % vs. 6 %).

¹⁴ Whereas universities of applied sciences enrol 55% of international students in bachelor's degree courses (universities: 25%), in which the proportion of scholarship students tends to be comparatively low, one in six international students enrolled at a university pursue a doctoral degree (16%). Almost one in two doctoral students receive a scholarship (see Figure 3.15).

Figure 3.17 Type of scholarship
International students with a scholarship, in %

Type of scholarship	2012	2016
	single responses ¹	multiple responses
German scholarship	43	43
Scholarship from the country of origin	29	39
European scholarship	20	23
Other scholarship	5	5
Scholarship from an international organization	2	2

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¹ The 2016 survey was the first to provide respondents with the option of naming different types of scholarships simultaneously (multiple responses).

The majority of recipients (43 %) receive German scholarships (Figure 3.17). Just short of two in five scholarship students were granted scholarships from their country of origin (39 %). The third most frequently mentioned source of funding are European scholarships (23 %). These figures cannot be compared directly to those of 2012 because the 2016 survey was the first to provide respondents with the option of naming different types of scholarships simultaneously (multiple responses). About one in ten scholarship students said they were funded by more than one scholarship (11 %).

Amount of funding provided

Scholarship students receive an average of € 686 per month from their funding agencies (Figure 3.18). Thus in 2016, the average scholarship amount was below the 2012 level (€ 719). International students from upper middle-income countries had the highest scholarships on average (€ 858), whereas the amounts were lowest for students from high-income countries (€ 478). In 2012, it was students from low-income countries of origin who received the highest scholarships; in 2016, that is no longer the case (2016: € 824, 2012: € 895).

A breakdown by type of degree reveals that below-average scholarship amounts are found predominantly among bachelor's degree students (€ 408) and exchange students (€ 484). The average scholarships received by master's degree students are those most comparable with the maximum BAföG (federal financial aid)

Figure 3.18 Type of scholarship by selected characteristics
International students, arithmetic mean in €/month

characteristic	2012	2016
Per capita income in country of origin		
low + lower middle income	895	824
upper middle income	836	858
high income	551	478
Degree pursued		
Bachelor's	487	408
Master's	668	642
State examination	– ¹	– ¹
Doctorate (PhD)	1.239	1.139
Exchange students	420	484
Type of scholarship		
Scholarship from the country of origin	856	721
German scholarship	783	775
European scholarship	389	446
Scholarship from an international organization	– ¹	– ¹
Other scholarship	– ¹	652
total	719	686

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¹ Due to the limited number of respondents, no statement can be made.

amount¹⁵ in Germany (€ 642). The highest scholarships by far are awarded to doctoral students (€ 1,139). Compared to 2012, scholarship amounts for exchange students increased by 15 % on average, whereas bachelor's degree students and doctoral students received smaller average scholarships in 2016 than they did four years earlier (bachelor's: -16 %, doctoral students: -8 %).

When looking at fields of study, one notable fact is that international students in mathematics/natural sciences, regardless of the degree they are pursuing, receive by far the highest scholarships compared to their counterparts in all other subject area groups (€ 912 vs. € 606, not illustrated).

The highest scholarships are held by students funded by a German scholarship (€ 775) or a scholarship from their country of origin (€ 721). European scholarships, which are held predominantly by exchange students (see Figure 3.18), are the only ones that on average

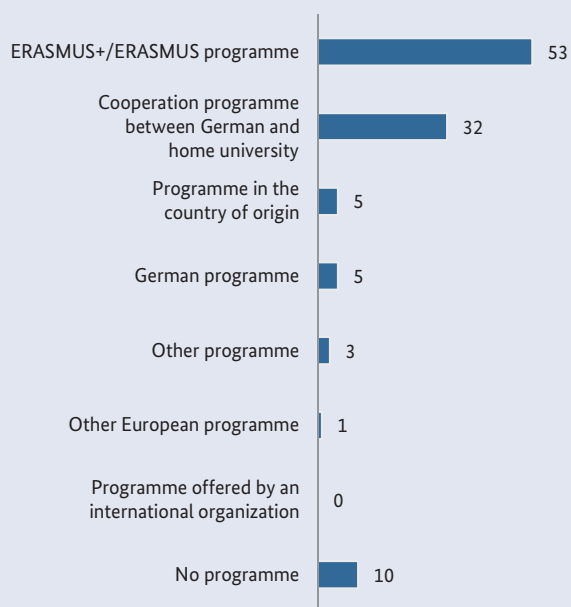
fall clearly below the amounts in the other categories (€ 446).

Study abroad arrangements of exchange students

As part of the 21st Social Survey, exchange students, who make up 6 % of the international student population in Germany (see Figure 3.1), were asked whether they participated in a mobility, partnership, cooperation, or exchange programme. Nine in ten exchange students came to Germany as part of such a programme (90 %). Only every tenth exchange student made independent arrangements to realise their stay in Germany (10 %, Figure 3.19).

More than half of all exchange students are participants in an ERASMUS+ or ERASMUS programme (53 %). When answering this question, which allowed multiple answers, almost one in three exchange students reported participating in a cooperative arrangement between their home university and their German university (32 %). Other programmes were mentioned much less frequently.

Figure 3.19 Type of mobility, partnership, cooperation, or exchange programme
Exchange students in Germany, in %, multiple responses possible



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¹⁵ During the reporting period, the maximum monthly BAföG amount was €670.

4 Socio-demographic Characteristics

4.1 Gender

In 2016, female students represented 48 % of the total population of international students (Figure 4.1).¹ Compared to earlier surveys, the proportion of female students decreased slightly (2012: 51 %), as can be seen in the official statistics as well.

With respect to region of origin (Figure 4.1), the highest proportion of female students is found among Eastern European and East Asian students (65 % and 56 %, respectively). The proportion of women is lowest among international students from Africa (28 %) and Other Asia (excluding East Asia, 27 %). Among students from the other regions, the gender ratio is almost equal.

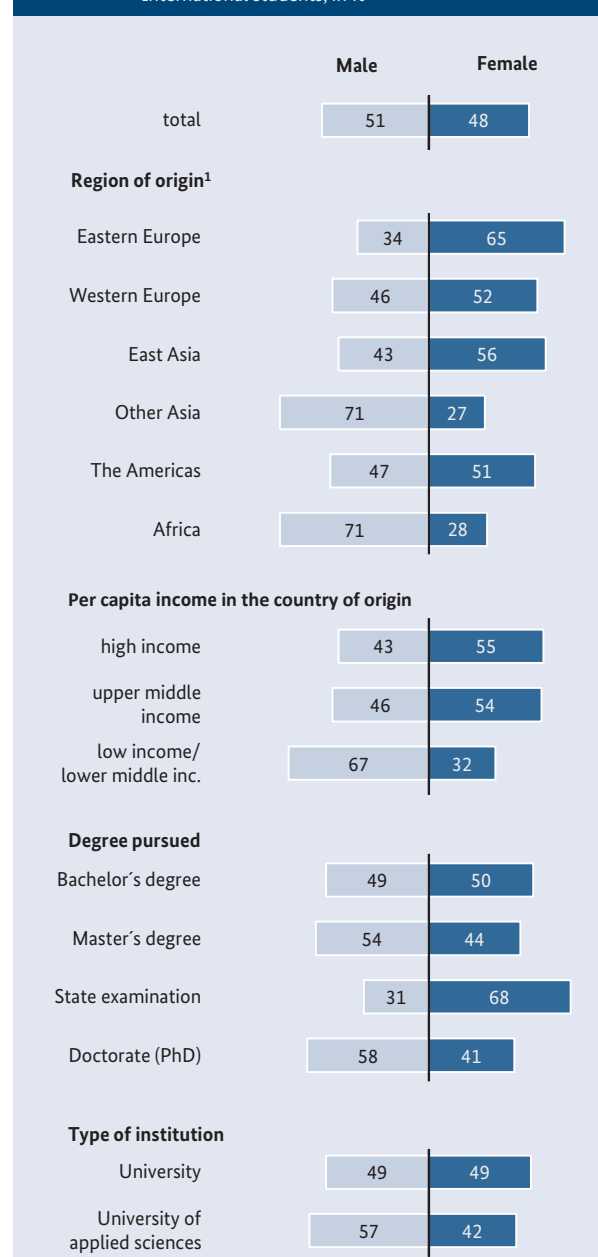
The proportion of women from countries with a low per capita income is relatively low (32 %, Figure 4.1). This is partly due to the fact that African countries and countries from Other Asia, as shown above, are over-represented in the group of countries with low per capita incomes and marked by a low proportion of women. Among international students from countries with upper-middle or high per capita incomes, by contrast, the proportion of female students is somewhat higher than that of male students (54 % and 55 %, respectively).

A breakdown by type of degree pursued reveals the following picture (Figure 4.1): Whereas the gender ratio in bachelor's degree courses is more or less equal, male students are slightly overrepresented in master's and doctoral degree courses (54 % and 58 %, respectively). In degree courses leading to a state examination, by contrast, more than two-thirds of international students are female (68 %).

Similar to the situation with German students and German educational nationals, fewer female international students than male international students are enrolled at universities of applied sciences (42 % vs. 57 %), due above all to the courses offered and gender-specific subject preferences (see Section 3.2). At traditional uni-

versities, by contrast, we find a balanced representation of male and female international students.

Figure 4.1 Gender distribution by selected characteristics
International students, in %



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¹ Due to the limited number of respondents, no statement can be made about Australia/ Oceania.

¹ Gender is among the characteristics used to weight the surveyed sample of international students—that is, the proportions of men and women in the total international student population are consistent with the official statistics.

4.2 Age

International students enrolled in Germany in the 2016 summer semester had an average age of 26.3 years (Figure 4.2), meaning that figure is nearly unchanged from the 20th Social Survey in the summer semester of 2012 (26.4 years). There was a slight increase in the proportion of students aged up to 23 years (2016: 33 %, 2012: 31 %).

Figure 4.2 Students' age by type of degree pursued
International students, in %

Age	total	Degree pursued			
		Bachelor's	Master's	State examination	Doctorate (PhD)
Up to 21 years	16	37	2	27	1
22-23 years	17	23	15	20	3
24-25 years	20	12	30	18	5
26-27 years	15	9	20	12	19
28-29 years	10	5	12	7	21
30 years and older	21	13	21	15	52
Ø Age in years	26,3	24,1	27,0	25,1	30,9

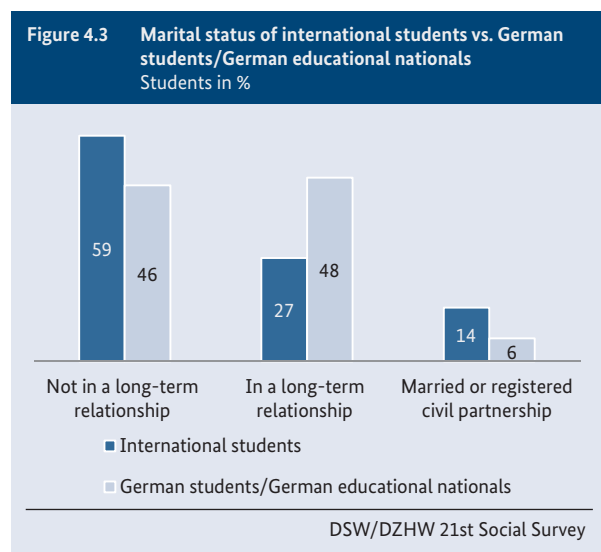
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There are significant age differences between international students pursuing the various types of degrees (Figure 4.2). As can be expected, international students pursuing bachelor's degrees represent the youngest group at an average of 24.1 years of age, whereas the average age among master's degree students is 27.0 years. Students seeking to obtain a state examination have an average age of 25.1 years. Doctoral students represent the oldest group at an average of 30.9 years of age.

As regards region of origin, international students from Western Europe are on average the youngest (25.3 years, not illustrated). Half of all Western European international students (49 %) are 23 years of age or younger. The average age of students from Eastern Europe is 25.7 years; that of students from East Asia and Other Asia is 26.7 years and 26.5 years, respectively. The oldest students on average are those from the Americas (27.1 years; 30 years and older: 27 %) and those from Africa (27.8 years; 30 years and older: 34 %).

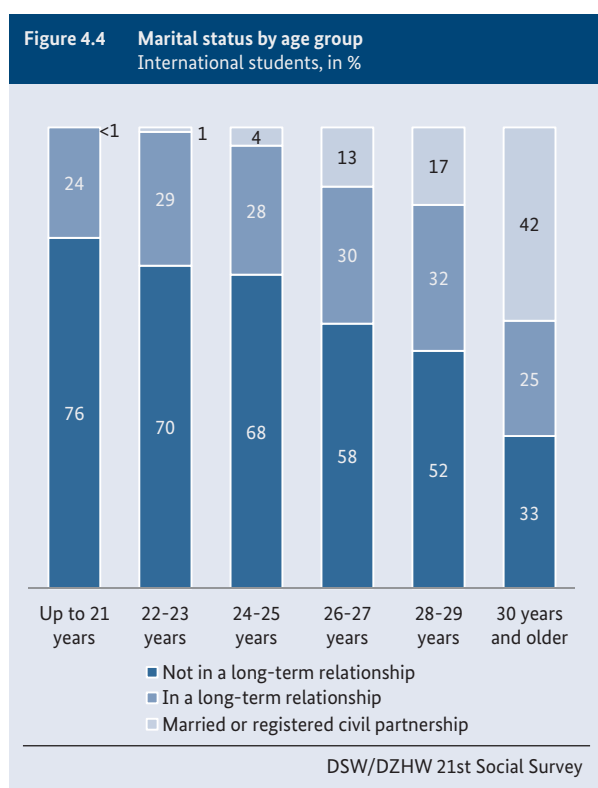
4.3 Marital Status, Relationships

More than half of all international students (54 %) are not in a long-term relationship (Figure 4.3). About one in four do have a long-term partner (27 %), and one in seven are either married or in a registered same-sex partnership (14 %). This means that international students are married much more frequently than German students or German educational nationals and less frequently in a long-term relationship without marrying.



Like German students and German educational nationals, male international students are much more frequently not in a long-term relationship than are female international students (66 % vs. 51 %). Moreover, male students are less frequently in a long-term relationship without marrying than are female students (21 % vs. 34 %).

Clear connections emerge between international students' age and their marital status (Figure 4.4): The proportion of those in a long-term relationship increases significantly with rising age. Whereas three-fourths of all students below the age of 21 are not in a long-term relationship (76 %), that proportion is only one-third among students older than 30 years (33 %). Two-fifths of all international students at that age are already married (42 %).



4.4 Students with Children

The proportion of international students with children in Germany is 7 % and hence only marginally higher than the corresponding share of German students and German educational nationals, which is 6 %. Regarding the frequency of parenthood among international students, no differences can be observed between men and women (men: 7 %, women: 8 %). Again, these figures are similar to those of Germans and German educational nationals (men: 5 %, women: 6 %).

In 2012, the proportion of international students with children was 11 % (men: 11 %, women: 10 %).²

61 % of international students with children have at least one child, another 28 % have two children, and the remaining 12 % have three or more children.³ The children's age varies depending on the students' age: The average age of the youngest child is 5.6 years; 17 % of

² In the 20th Social Survey, only a limited number of cases was available for international students with children; for that reason, no comparison between 2012 and 2016 is provided here.

³ Of German students and German educational nationals, 55% have one child, another 32% have two children, and 12% have three or more children (cf. Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 25).

students with children said their youngest child is one year old or younger. Almost 74 % of international students with children live together with their child(ren) in Germany.

As the sample contains only a rather limited number of international students with children, it is only possible to state a tendency regarding the characteristics of this group. More than four-fifths (82 %) of international students with children are 30 years old or older. Likewise, around four-fifths of students with children are married. Accordingly, the majority of parents are found among international doctoral students: Nearly one in five students in this group has at least one child (19 %). By contrast, the proportion of parents is much lower among international students pursuing a bachelor's (5 %), master's (6 %), or state examination (8 %) degree.

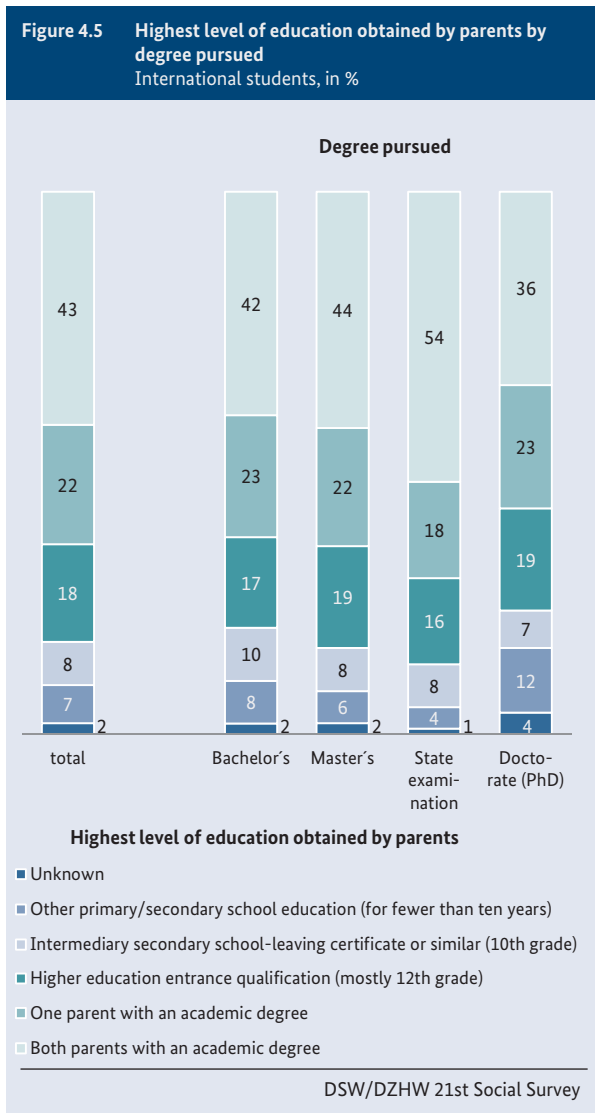
As regards the proportion of students with children among international students from the various regions of origin, differences can be observed that likewise correlate with their age and partnership status. The proportion of parents is relatively small among students from Western Europe (5 %), the Americas (5 %), and East Asia (4 %), whereas students from Other Asia (8 %), Eastern Europe (9 %), and especially from Africa (15 %) more frequently have one or more children.

4.5 Family Educational Background

Two-thirds (65 %) of the international students enrolled at German HE institutions in the 2016 summer semester had a least one parent with a college or university degree (Figure 4.5). In two-fifths of students' families of origin (43 %), both parents had obtained an academic degree.

Somewhat more than one in six (18 %) international students come from households in which the highest level of education obtained is a higher education entrance qualification. 8 % come from households in which the highest level of education is an intermediary qualification (minimum 10th grade). Another 7 % of international students have parents who attended primary/secondary school for fewer than ten years. A few students do not know what type of degree their parents hold (2 %).

Concerning the type of degree pursued in Germany, no significant differences as regards international



mobility for doctoral students from non-academic families.

Compared with universities of applied sciences, the proportion of international students at traditional universities whose parents have obtained a HE degree is higher (67 % vs. 62 %, not illustrated).

Students from the Americas (76 %), Eastern Europe (73 %), and Asia (68 %, excluding East Asia) relatively often come from families where at least one parent has an academic degree (not illustrated). This figure is the lowest among students from Western Europe (53 %) and East Asia (52 %). The group of international students whose parents attended primary/secondary school for fewer than eight years includes students from Africa in particular (8 %).

A breakdown by gender reveals minor differences: 67 % of female international students and 63 % of male international students come from families with an academic background.

students' family educational background can be found among bachelor's and master's degree students. For international students pursuing a state examination degree, it is relatively common to have parents with an academic background (72 %). International doctoral students, by contrast, are much less frequently found to have parents with HE degrees (59 %). As more detailed analyses show, this special characteristic tends to result from the fact that doctoral students in mathematics/natural sciences (according to the classification in the official statistics) in particular are somewhat less likely to come from academic households (51 %) and that the largest subgroup among international doctoral students (32 %) is enrolled in just these subjects. Thus, these subjects seem to be opportunities for upward

5 Living Situation in Germany

5.1 Financing Living Expenses

This section examines the monthly income of international students in Germany. To retrieve that information, students were asked about the amounts of money available to them each month from various sources of funding. Unlike German students and German educational nationals, international students were not asked to provide additional information on expenditure items covered directly for them by third parties such as their parents (e.g. transfer of the monthly rent directly to the landlord's bank account). For that reason, and because of the differences in the composition of the reference group, the incomes of international students in the present report cannot be compared with those of German students and German educational nationals presented in the main report of the Social Survey.

The economic situation of international students, like that of German students and German educational nationals, is heavily influenced by whether or not they are married, for example, and hence whether they have a partner to help finance their education, or by the type of degree they are pursuing. For the following analysis, therefore, subgroups of students were formed who face similar general economic conditions and costs of living (Figure 5.1). The present section will give a detailed

account of the income situation of those subgroups for which a sufficient number of cases is available.

International students in the subgroup of 'single, degree-seeking students' are students who are unmarried and pursue a bachelor's, master's, state examination, Diplom, or Magister degree. Almost three-fourths of all international students have a budget that falls under these similar marginal conditions (73 %).

A separate analysis is performed for the subgroup of doctoral students, who frequently already have a part-time job or scholarships to cover their expenses. A third subgroup consists of students who only come to Germany for a part of their studies – so-called 'exchange students'. To make these two subgroups comparable with the (main) subgroup of single, degree-seeking students, the analysis includes only those doctoral and exchange students who are unmarried. Of the entire international student population in Germany, 7 % are single doctoral students, and 6 % are single exchange students (Figure 5.1).

As living together with a spouse significantly changes a student's financial situation, a fourth subgroup consisting of married students is included in the analysis. To make this group comparable to the first (main)

Figure 5.1 Subgroups of students among international students¹ by type of degree pursued and marital status
In %

Degree pursued	Marital status	
	single/not married	married
Bachelor's, master's traditional degree	single, degree-seeking students: 73 %	married, degree-seeking students: 8 %
Doctorate (PhD)	single, degree-seeking doctoral students: 7 %	married, degree-seeking doctoral students: 4 %
Exchange students	single exchange students : 6 %	married exchange students: <1 %

Groups examined
 Number of respondents too limited for a precise analysis

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¹ International students living with their parents are excluded from the analysis (1 %).

subgroup as well, it only includes married students enrolled in bachelor’s, master’s, and traditional degree courses (8 %).

The following subsections present, for each of the aforementioned four subgroups, the sources of funding available to international students to cover their costs of living during their studies in Germany as well as the amounts of money available from each source. This is followed by a discussion of the average total income for each subgroup and how each of the various funding sources contributes to that income. All incomes listed are average monthly amounts.

Amount and breakdown of monthly income of single, degree-seeking students

The focus of the following analysis is on single international students enrolled in bachelor’s, master’s, or traditional degree courses (see Figure 5.1).

One notable aspect concerning this group is the high proportion of single, degree-seeking students who receive financial support from their parents (63 %, Figure 5.2). That level of parental support is three times as high as that received by married or doctoral international students (20 % and 21 %, respectively, Figure 5.6). This difference results from the fact that married and doctoral students, mostly because of their higher age, are

more financially independent of their parents and that married students in particular tend to be supported by their partners rather than by their parents.

The proportion of single, degree-seeking students who have personal earnings to help cover their expenses decreased again by 6 percentage points compared to 2012 (2012: 56 %, 2009: 62 %). The amount of earnings used for that purpose, by contrast, grew by € 45. Owing to the exclusion of doctoral students and exchange students, the proportion of scholarship students in this group is only 15 %. The various types of scholarships and the average scholarship amounts are discussed in detail in Section 3.7.

Aside from these four most important sources of funding, other sources are utilised to cover living expenses – albeit by relatively small proportions of students (Figure 5.2).

The extent to which the various sources of funding are utilised also varies by the income levels in students’ country of origin (Figure 5.3). The higher the income per capita in the country of origin, the more often the students are supported by their parents. The average level of parental support varies between € 458 (high income, not illustrated) and € 566 (upper-middle income, not illustrated).

Figure 5.2 Utilisation and amount of income by source of funding
Single, international degree-seeking students, multiple responses possible, arithmetic mean in €, pertaining to those students who receive income from the source in question

Source of funding	2012		2016	
	in %	Amount in €	in %	Amount in €
Parents	62	485	63	509
Personal earnings	56	405	50	450
Scholarship	15	602	15	545
Savings	16	227	22	324
Partner/spouse	4	- ¹	4	303
Relatives, acquaintance	8	196	8	179
Bank loans	8	456	7	424
BAföG	3	- ¹	3	442
Other sources	3	- ¹	3	469

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¹ Number of cases not sufficient.

Figure 5.3 Sources of funding by per capita income in country of origin
Single, international degree-seeking students, multiple responses possible, in %

Source of funding	Per capita income in country of origin		
	low+lower middle income	upper middle income	high income
Parents	53	66	69
Personal earnings	51	46	54
Scholarship	11	14	18
Savings	17	19	29
Partner/spouse	3	5	4
Relatives, acquaintance	5	7	12
Bank loans	10	4	6
BAföG	1	2	6
Other sources	1	1	6

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Figure 5.4 Amount and breakdown of monthly income
Single, degree-seeking students



In each of the per capita income groups, about one in two students earn money themselves to cover their living expenses (low + lower middle income: 51 %, upper middle income: 46 %, high income: 54 %). The income generated from employment ranges from € 442 for students from high-income countries to € 461 for students from low-income countries.

Compared to students from the other groups, international students from countries of origin with high incomes more frequently report having access to (additional) income from scholarships, savings, relatives and friends, BAföG, and other sources. Students from low- and lower middle-income countries, by contrast, take out bank loans more often than students from other countries of origin (low + lower middle income: 10 %, upper middle income: 4 %, high income: 6 %).

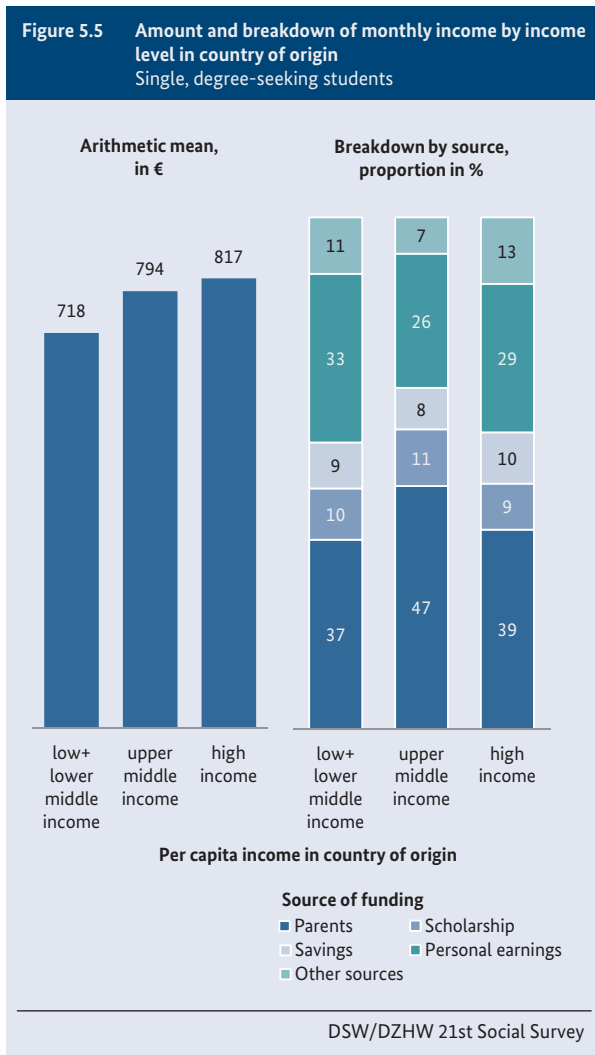
In 2016, the average total income of single, degree-seeking international students was € 776 per month (2012: € 749, Figure 5.4).

The following section presents a discussion of financing structure, that is, the average breakdown of the monthly incomes of single, degree-seeking students

(see Figure 5.1). To this end, the relationship is examined between the four primary sources of income ('parents', 'personal earnings', 'scholarships', and 'savings'¹) as well as the 'other sources' of funding. For single international students enrolled in bachelor's, master's, or traditional degree courses, two-fifths (41 %, Figure 5.4) of their total income comes from their parents. Scholarships (10 %) and savings (9 %), and various other sources (partners, relatives/friends, loans, BAföG, etc., 10 %) each account for one-tenth of the total budget of this reference group. Compared to 2012, the only notable change in the breakdown by sources of income is the increase in the importance of savings (+4 percentage points).

The financial situation of single, degree-seeking international students is strongly correlated with the income situation in their country of origin (Figure 5.5): Students from countries with high per capita incomes

¹ Savings are listed as a separate category in the breakdown of students' income for the first time in the 21st Social Survey, because they account for about one-tenth of the total income of international students in 2016 and hence represent a proportion equivalent to that of scholarships. As savings were subsumed under 'other sources' in the 20th Social Survey, the 2012 values were recalculated for this section.



have approximately € 100 per month more at their disposal than students from countries with low per capita incomes. The average amounts have become closer to each other compared to 2012, owing to a 6 % increase in the incomes of students from low -and lower middle-income countries and a 5 % decrease in the incomes of students from high-income countries.

The 2012 report still saw substantial variation in the financing structures of international students depending on the economic situation in their countries of origin. In 2016, the breakdown of total incomes was very similar for students from low- and lower-income countries and for students from high-income countries (Figure 5.5). The income proportion generated by personal earnings continues to be highest among students from low-income countries of origin.

In 2016, the group of international students from upper middle-income countries was in a special position: Half of their total income was provided by their parents, whereas personal earnings and other sources of income played a less important role compared to the other groups. This is partly caused by the countries of origin of the students in this group. The financing structure of students from upper middle-income countries is strongly shaped by the relatively large group of Chinese students. One key characteristic of Chinese students in particular is the exceptional level of financial support they receive from their parents: 77 % of their income comes from this source alone (not illustrated). This explains why the proportion of parental support is highest in the group of students from upper middle-income countries (47 %) and why the proportion of the other sources is correspondingly lower.

Amount and breakdown of monthly income of doctoral students, exchange students, and married students

The following section takes a closer look at the other groups of students defined in Figure 5.1, whose financing structure for covering living expenses – as explained earlier – is very different (Figure 5.6). One in five single doctoral students as well as one in five married degree-seeking students receive financial support from their parents (21 % and 20 %, respectively). The main source of income for roughly every second student in both of these two groups, however, is personal earnings (doctoral students: 48 %, married students: 52 %). Especially notable in this regard are the high average personal earnings of single students pursuing a doctorate in Germany (€ 1,019). Similarly high amounts are available to students in this group who receive a scholarship, which is true of 44 % of them.

Of the single exchange students, by contrast, who are much younger on average, a high proportion receives financial support from their parents (63 %). Around two-thirds of them are scholarship students (68 %), and a good third utilizes savings accumulated prior to commencing their studies (34 %). Compared to other groups, single exchange students much less frequently draw on personal earnings to finance their studies (28 %), and the amounts they earn are much lower (€ 339).

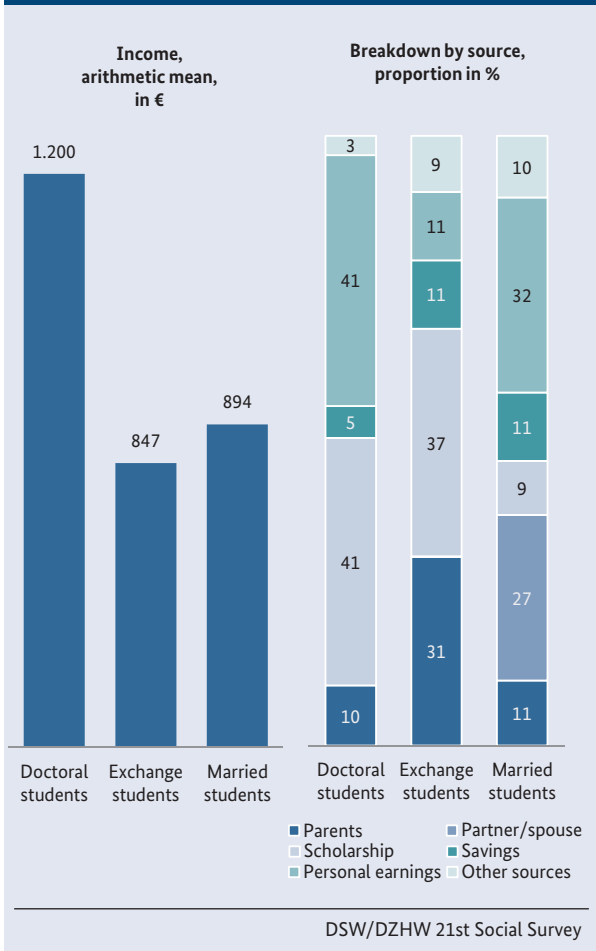
Figure 5.6 Sources of funding – utilisation and amount of income from each source
 Single, degree-seeking doctoral students, single exchange students and married, degree-seeking students, multiple answers possible, arithmetic mean in €, pertaining to those students who receive income from the source in question

Sources of funding	Doctoral students		Exchange students		Married students	
	%	arithmetic mean	%	arithmetic mean	%	arithmetic mean
Parents	21	550	63	414	20	468
Personal earnings	48	1.019	28	339	52	550
Scholarship	44	1.113	68	464	11	- ¹
Savings	14	448	34	281	22	456
Partner/spouse	0	0	0	0	44	551
Other (relatives, acquaintances, loans, BAföG and other sources)	9	- ¹	18	- ¹	17	539

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¹ Number of cases not sufficient.

Figure 5.7 Amount and breakdown of monthly income by student groups
 Single, degree-seeking doctoral students, single exchange students and married, degree-seeking students



44 % of married international degree-seeking students receive financial support from their spouses or partners at an average amount of € 551.

The variation in the extent to which international students utilise the various sources of funding depending on the type of degree pursued and their marital status, as well as the strong variation in average amounts, are mirrored both in the average total incomes of the student subgroups considered here and in how they break down into the various sources (Figure 5.7).

The highest average incomes at € 1,200 were achieved by single students pursuing a doctoral degree (2012: € 1,191). Single exchange students had an average of € 847 per month at their disposal in the 2016 summer semester (2012: € 732).

Married students pursuing a degree had an average monthly income of € 894 in 2016 (Figure 5.7). This represents a 10 % increase from 2012 (€ 812), which means the income of this group was 15 % higher than that of the unmarried comparison group (single, degree-seeking students: € 776, Figure 5.4).

Personal earnings make up one-third (32 %) of the incomes of married degree-seeking students as well. The second-most important source of funding of this group, after personal earnings, is financial support provided by their spouses or partners (27 %).

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5.2 Employment while Studying

This section deals with the employment rate among international students, the regularity of their employment, the types of job they perform, the compatibility of work and study, and their reasons for (not) seeking gainful employment. The time allocated to employment while studying, as well as the significance of the income from personal earnings for covering living expenses, are discussed in Section 3.6 and Section 5.1.

Employment rate²

In the summer semester of 2016, nearly half of all international students pursued an activity alongside their studies for which they were paid (49 %, Figure 5.8). This means the employment rate remained nearly unchanged compared to 2012 (48 %, not illustrated), but it was still well below the employment rates found in the years 2009 (62 %) and 2006 (59 %). In comparison, German students and German educational nationals were proportionally more often employed in the summer semester of 2016 (68 %, Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 60).

A breakdown by socio-demographic characteristics (Figure 5.8) reveals minor differences with regard to the proportions of male and female international students who work (47 % vs. 51 %, respectively). The proportion of working international students increases with age and is highest among students aged between 28 and 29 years: Employment rates in this group are almost twice as high as those among students aged up to 21 years (60 % vs. 34 %). International students aged 30 and older are employed somewhat less frequently than those aged 28-29 (53 %).

The employment rate of students enrolled at universities of applied sciences (53 %) is slightly higher than that of students at universities (48 %). Whether or

not students work during the semester is also linked to their level of study and the type of degree they are pursuing. Among international degree-seeking students, the employment rates of bachelor's degree students (52 %), master's degree students (52 %), and students seeking to obtain a state examination (53 %) are very similar. By contrast, only 43 % of doctoral students work. These differences can be explained to some extent by the varying proportions of scholarship students in each of the degree courses: Among doctoral students, the proportion of scholarship students is much higher (49 %) than in the other degree courses (bachelor's: 12 %, master's: 15 %, state examination: 12 %, see Section 3.7).

Figure 5.8 Employment rate in the current semester
International students, in %

	2016
Total	49
Degree Pursued - degree-seeking students	
Bachelor's	52
Master's	52
State examination	53
Doctorate (PhD)	43
Type of institution	
University	48
University of applied sciences	53
Gender	
Female	51
Male	47
Age, in years	
<=21	34
22-23	42
24-25	52
26-27	56
28-29	60
>=30	53
Region of origin	
Western Europe	52
Eastern Europe	57
East Asia	23
Other Asia	46
The Americas	47
Africa	54

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² In preceding social surveys, the proportion of students who work while studying was reported both for the lecture period and for the period in which no classes are held ('semester break'). In the 21st Social Survey, information was collected regarding the proportion of students who worked during 'the current 2016 summer semester'. This modified question is informed by the observation that the division between the lecture period and the non-lecture period, which used to be quite distinct in the past, is hardly noticeable anymore in the reality of today's students. Another aspect to keep in mind when interpreting the employment rates in earlier surveys is that a comparatively high number of international students did not answer the questions on employment in the past (in the 20th Social Survey, for example, the proportion of students who did not answer the question on employment during the lecture period was 6%). In the current survey of the 2016 summer semester, less than 1% of respondents did not answer the question.

Among exchange students, the employment rate is much lower (22 %, not illustrated).

A comparison of students by region of origin (Figure 5.8) shows that, as in preceding social surveys, students from East Asia have the lowest employment rate: One-fourth of all East Asian students work while studying (23 %), compared to more than half of all students from Eastern Europe (57 %), Western Europe (52 %), and Africa (54 %). The employment rate of students from Other Asia and the Americas is 46 % and 47 %, respectively.

A breakdown by income levels in students' country of origin (not illustrated) does not reveal any clear tendencies with regard to employment rates. Of students from countries with low and lower-middle per capita incomes, as well as those from countries with high per capita incomes, a little more than half work while studying in Germany (52 % and 51 %, respectively). The corresponding proportion among students from countries with upper-middle incomes is slightly lower at 46 %.

Furthermore, international student employment is strongly influenced by whether or not they receive financial assistance via scholarships. Scholarship students work significantly less often during the lecture period than non-scholarship students (28 % vs. 56 %, not illustrated).

Figure 5.9 Regularity of employment
Working international students, in %

Employment	
at least 5 days a week	19
3-4 days a week	33
1-2 days a week	39
1-3 days a month	7
less than 1 day a month	2

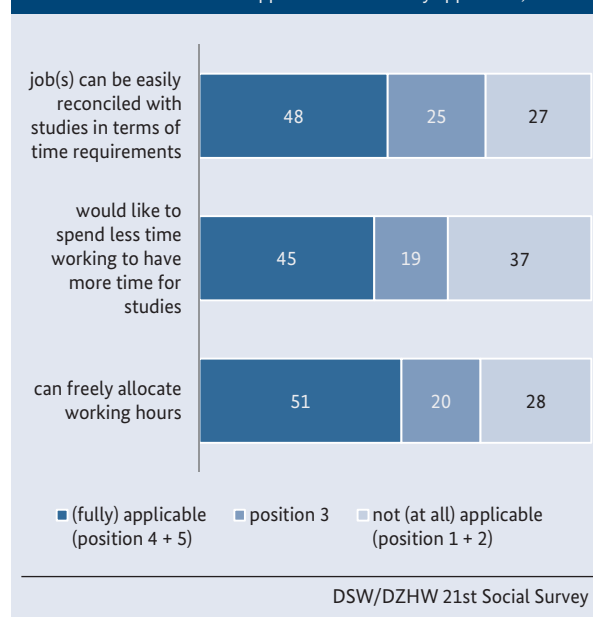
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Nearly one-fifth of working international students reported working on at least five days per week (19 %, Figure 5.9). Another third worked on at least three days

per week, and about two-fifths worked on one or two days per week (39 %).³

With respect to the compatibility of work and study, the following picture emerges for working international students (Figure 5.10): Whereas nearly half of them (48 %) stated that their job(s) can be easily reconciled with their studies in terms of time requirements (positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable'), that statement does not apply to about one-fourth (27 %) of these students (positions 1 and 2). Accordingly, 45 % of working international students stated they would like to spend less time working to have more time for their studies. Around half of working international students (51 %) said they could freely allocate their working hours, whereas 28 % said this was not the case.

Figure 5.10 Compatibility of study and employment
Working international students; five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



Residence permit

In the 2016 summer semester, half of all international students (51 %) reported having a residence permit

³ Owing to differences in the way data were collected, the results on the employment of international students cannot be directly compared with the results for German students and German educational nationals (see Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 62). The questionnaire for international students, unlike the one for Germans and German educational nationals, did not ask for detailed information on different kinds of study formats and different types of employment/jobs.

allowing them to work no more than 120 days (or 240 half days) per year. Another 29 % said that no such policy applied to them, and one-fifth (20 %) said they could not answer that question.

Students from Africa and Asia are especially often subject to employment restrictions in their residence permit (Africa: 78 %, East Asia: 70 %, Other Asia: 76 %). Considered by the economic situation in their country of origin, three-fourths of students from countries with low per capita incomes (76 %) and three-fifths of those from countries with upper middle incomes (62 %) hold such a residence permit. Students from countries with high per capita incomes are much less often subject to this policy (17 %). This is mainly because the majority of these students are from EU member countries and hence encounter no employment restrictions.

About one-third of international students not allowed to work for more than 120/240 (half) days believe this policy is ‘not’ or ‘not at all sufficient’ to meet their needs (34 %). Two-fifths (41 %), by contrast, think the number of possible workdays is ‘(absolutely) sufficient’. In the summer semester of 2012, when international students were allowed to work for no more than 90 days (or 180 half days), the proportion of students who considered this ‘not (at all) sufficient’ was 45 %, whereas 27 % thought the number of possible workdays was ‘(absolutely) sufficient’.

Students’ subjective assessment of the appropriateness of this policy with respect to their personal needs is clearly correlated with their motivation to seek employment. The more international students agree with the statement that gainful employment is necessary to cover their living expenses, the more they also tend to agree with the statement that restricting employment to 120 days is ‘not (at all) sufficient.’

Types of employment

The vast majority of international students working in the summer semester of 2016 had a single job (84 %). One in seven students reported two different jobs (14 %), another 3 % had three jobs, and in a few cases, four or five different jobs were reported.⁴

⁴ Owing to the option of giving multiple answers, the possibility cannot be ruled out that students – contrary to the intention behind this question – assigned one job to multiple answer choices. As a consequence, the proportion of working students holding multiple jobs may be overestimated.

The most frequently mentioned job was working in a temporary position (40 %, Figure 5.11); 6 % worked as tutors. About one-third (35 %) of working students worked as a student assistant or research assistant. Another 17 % had a job that required an academic degree (9 %) or a professional qualification (8 %). 11 % completed a paid internship; another 11 % pursued other work without giving further specifications.

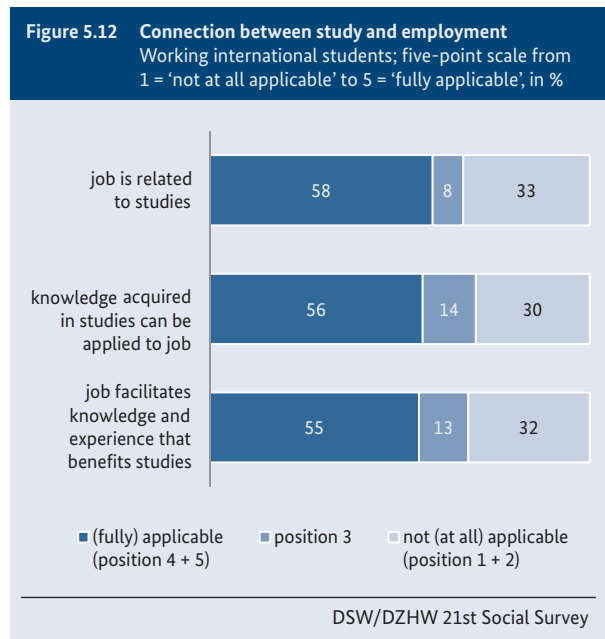
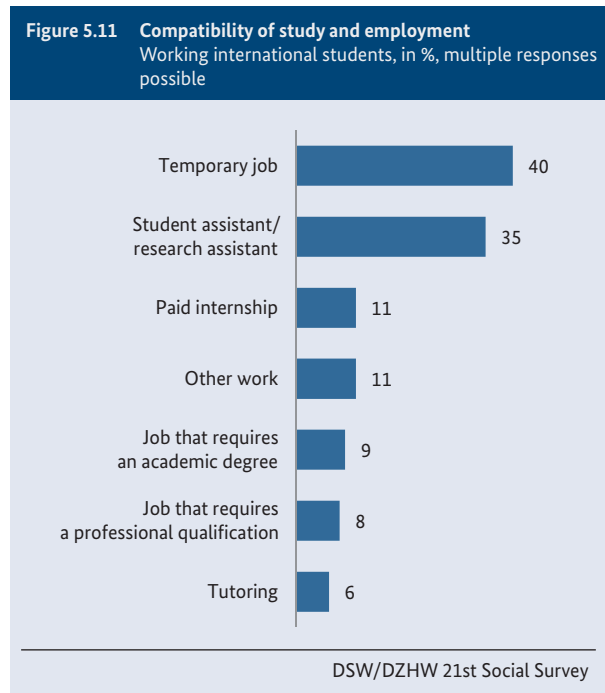
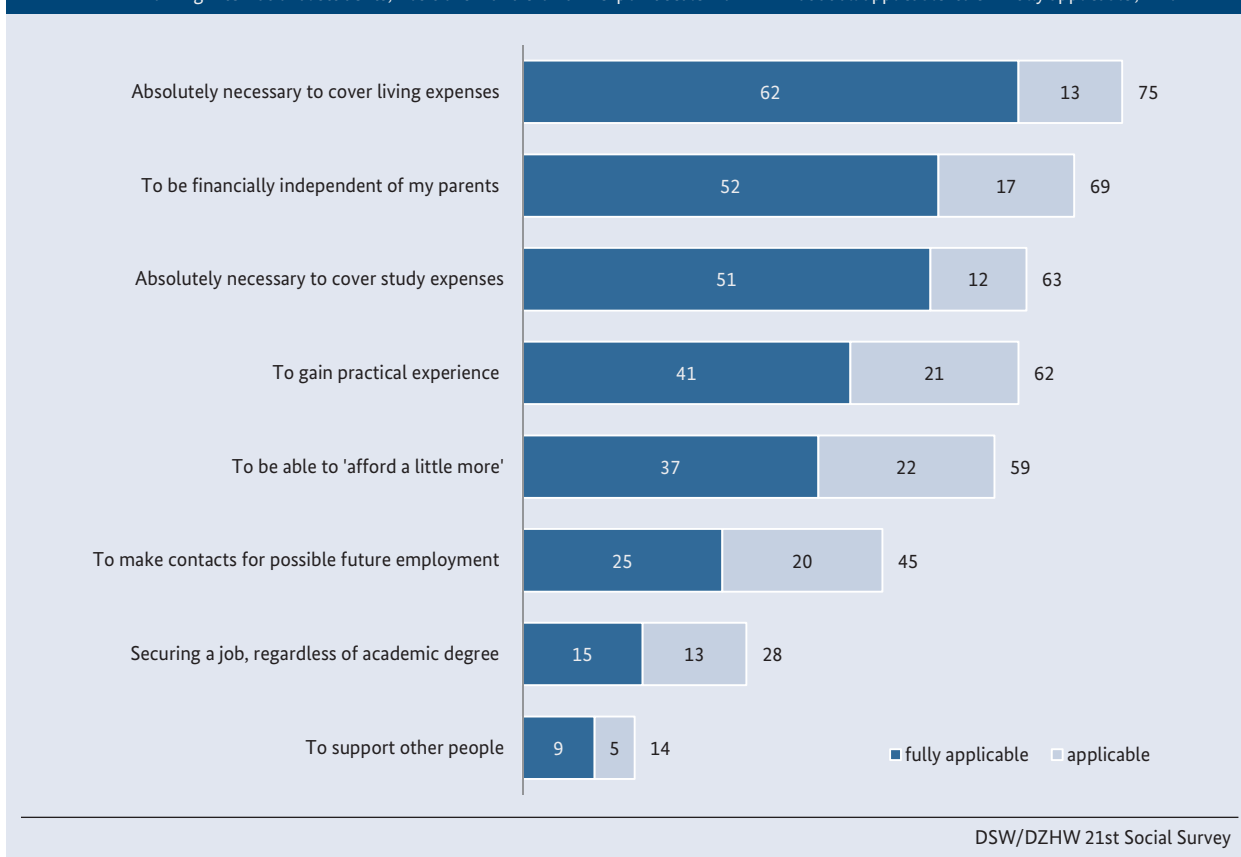


Figure 5.13 Reasons for employment
Working international students; Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



The 21st Social Survey was the first to ask international students directly about the connection between their work and their studies (Figure 5.12). More than half of international students (58 %) agreed with the statement that their job was related to what they were studying (58 %) or that they could apply knowledge acquired in their studies to their job (56 %). About the same proportion (55 %) said their job gave them knowledge and experience that benefits them in their studies.

Reasons for and against gainful employment

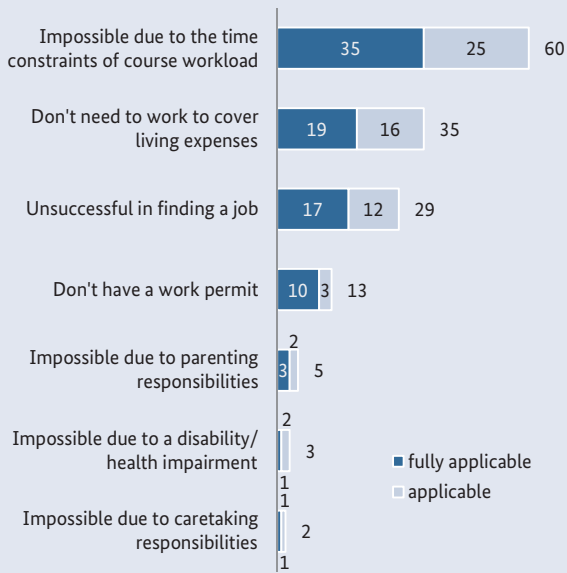
By far the most important reason for international students to work while studying is because it is absolutely necessary to cover their living expenses (Figure 5.13). For three-fourths of them (75 %), this statement is '(fully) applicable'. By comparison, 59 % of Germans and German educational nationals said they depended on personal earnings to cover their living expenses (Middendorff et al., 2017, p. 159).

The second-most important reason for working, mentioned by 69 % of students, is to be financially independent of their parents (Germans/German educational nationals: 62 %). Another material motivation, namely that working is absolutely necessary to cover study expenses, is mentioned by 63 %.⁵ Slightly more than half of working students (59 %) work while studying in order 'to be able to afford a little more' (Germans/German educational nationals: 72 %).

Compared to native German students and German educational nationals, motivations that refer to improving future employment prospects play a significantly larger role among international students: The motivation to gain practical experience that might be beneficial in their later career is mentioned by 62 % of working international students (Germans/German educational nationals: 53 %). Less than half of working international students said they wanted to use their

⁵ German students and German educational nationals were not asked about this motivation.

Figure 5.14 Reasons for non-employment in the current semester
Non-working international students; Positions 4 and 5
on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to
5 = 'fully applicable'; in %



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job to make contacts for possible future employment (45 %, Germans/German educational nationals: 36 %), and nearly one-third (28 %) said they worked in order to later have a job, regardless of their academic degree (Germans/German educational nationals: 21 %).

About one in seven international students (14 %) said they were working because they need to support other people (partners, children, other relatives).

Those international students who did not work were also asked about their reasons for not doing so. 60 % of them said that having a job was impossible due to the time constraints of their course workload (Figure 5.14). A good third (35 %) said they did not need to work to cover their living expenses. A notable share of 29 % were unsuccessful in finding a job, and 13 % mentioned lacking a work permit as the main reason for not seeking gainful employment. Other reasons given in the survey for not working, including parenting responsibilities, health impairments or caretaking responsibilities, were only relevant to a small number of students.

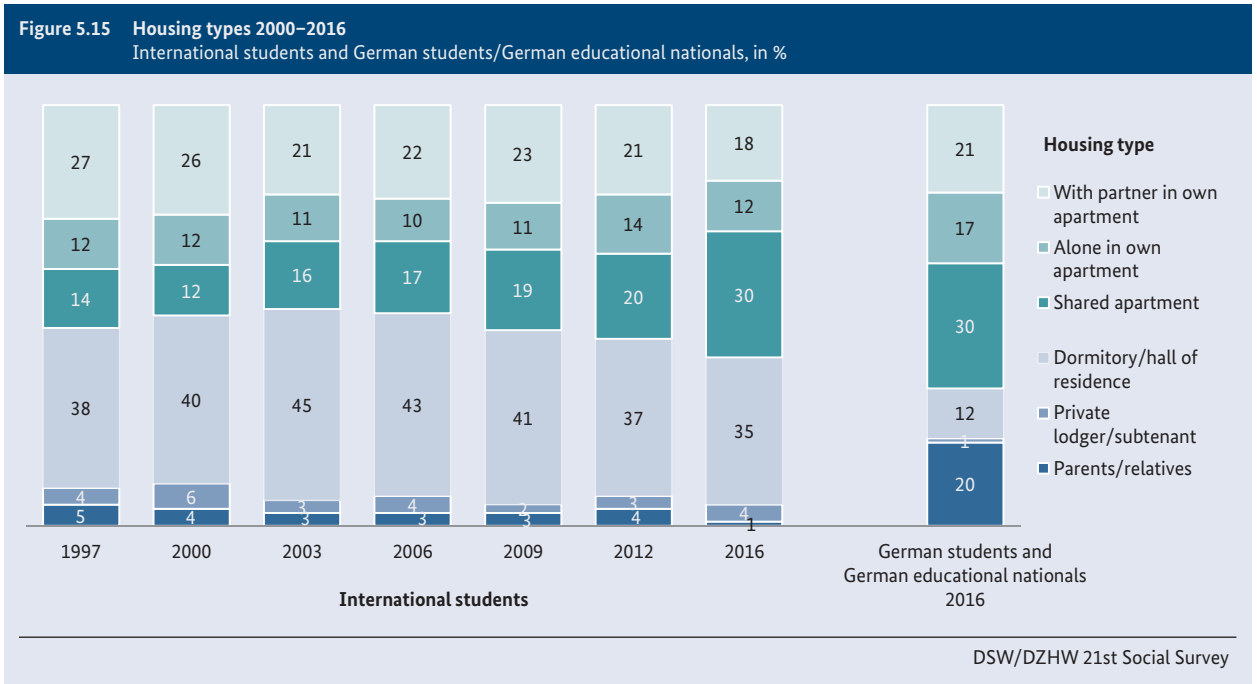
5.3 Housing Types and Housing Situation

As in previous surveys, most international students (35 %) continue to live in a dormitory or hall of residence (Figure 5.15). A major share of these international students lives in a single room on a floor shared with others (16 %, not illustrated), whereas 7 % each have a single room in a residential unit or a single apartment; another 4 % live in double, triple, or quad rooms.

The proportion of international students living in halls of residence has dropped significantly since 1997 in the time period covered here after reaching a peak in 2003. A key reason for this trend is that student numbers in Germany have risen much more rapidly in recent years than the number of residence hall rooms available. As a result, fewer residence hall rooms are available per 100 students now than in 2012, for example (cf. Deutsches Studentenwerk, 2016, pp. 21ff.). As a consequence, students opt for other housing types. Compared to previous surveys, one particularly notable trend is the strong increase in the proportion of students who live in a shared apartment (2012: 20 %, 2016: 30 %).

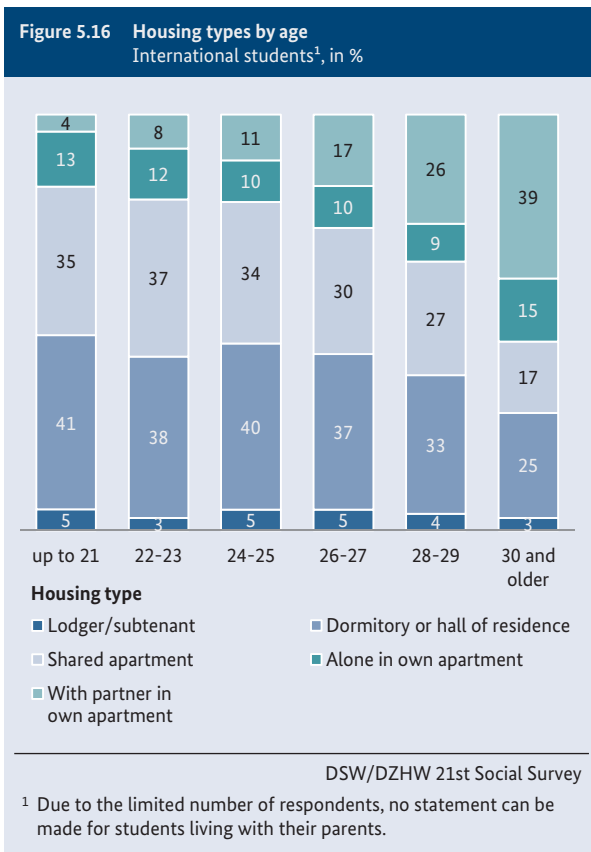
Just short of one-third of international students lives either in a shared apartment or in an apartment of their own (30 % each). One in five international students (18 %) live together with their partner and/or their child(ren), whereas 12 % live alone in an apartment. As can be expected, only relatively few international students live with their parents or other relatives (1 %) or as lodgers in private homes (4 %). Due to the small number of cases, those living with their parents are not included in the more detailed analysis of housing types that follows.

When compared to Germans and German educational nationals, the following differences emerge: The share of international students living in residence halls is three times as high as the corresponding share of Germans and German educational nationals (35 % vs. 12 %). Likewise, international students more often live as lodgers in private homes (4 % vs. 1 %). And for obvious reasons, they much more rarely live with their parents or other relatives (1 % vs. 20 %). Whereas the proportion of those who share an apartment with others is the same (30 % each), international students less often live in an apartment of their own than Germans or German educational nationals (30 % vs. 38 %).



As is the case with Germans and German educational nationals, the type of housing chosen by international students strongly correlates with their age (Figure 5.16). Residence halls are used much more frequently

by younger international students than by students in higher age groups (up to 21 years: 41 %, 30 years and older: 25 %). In accordance with their marital status (see Section 4.3), older international students much more frequently live with their spouse or partner (up to age 21: 4 %, age 30 or older: 39 %). Furthermore, younger international students more frequently live in a shared apartment than older students.



The comparison of students by type of degree pursued mirrors the differences in housing types by age and marital status outlined above: 45 % of doctoral students (not illustrated) live in a apartment of their own: 29 % with a spouse or partner and 16 % alone. For international students pursuing other degrees, this arrangement is found much less frequently: Of the international students seeking to obtain a bachelor’s degree, 28 % live in a apartment of their own (with spouse/partner: 16 %, alone: 12 %); for international master’s degree students, that proportion is 28 % as well (with spouse/partner: 17 %, alone: 11 %). Of the students pursuing a state examination degree, 36 % live in a apartment of their own (with spouse/partner: 20 %, alone: 16 %).

A breakdown by region of origin (not illustrated) shows that students from Africa (47 %) and Asia (East Asia: 36 %, Other Asia: 46 %) live in residence halls relatively often. The corresponding proportion among students from Eastern Europe is 35 %, whereas students from

Figure 5.17 Monthly expenses for rent and utilities by housing type
International students, arithmetic mean in €

Housing type	2009	2012	2016		
	Total	Total	Total	Male	Female
Lodger/subtenant	263	267	384	378	390
Dormitory or hall of residence	217	229	275	277	274
Shared apartment	258	278	319	316	325
Alone in own apartment	343	362	379	375	383
With partner in own apartment	463	397	473	502	459
Total	297	294	338	332	346

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Western Europe are much more rarely found to live in residence halls (21 %). Of international students coming from the Americas, 29 % live in a residence hall.

Monthly rent

The following section takes a detailed look at what international students spend on rent for each of the different housing types (Figure 5.17). In the summer semester of 2016, the average monthly rent paid by those who did not live with their parents or relatives was € 338. This represents a 15 % increase from 2012 (€ 294). Half of all international students do not spend more than € 300 per month on rent; one in ten pay at least € 543.⁶

The highest average monthly rents are paid by students who share a apartment with their spouse or partner (€ 473). Residence halls continue to be the most affordable housing type with rents averaging € 275.

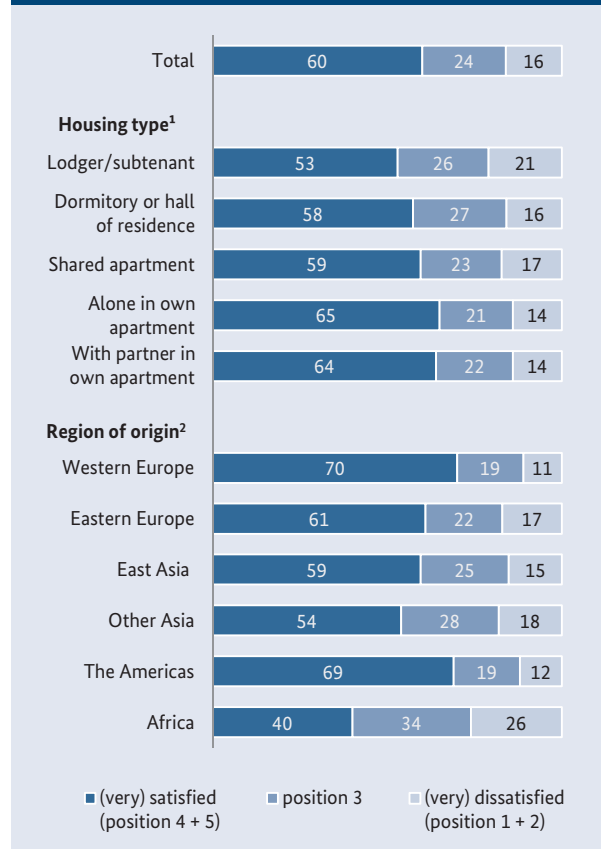
Women who live as lodgers, in a shared apartment, or alone in a apartment of their own tend have higher

⁶ Owing to differences in data collection and differences in the composition of reference groups, the expenses for rent presented in this section cannot be directly compared with the corresponding expenses of German students and German educational nationals reported in Middendorff et al. (2017, p. 48). In the report on Germans and German educational nationals, the analysis only includes those students who live alone/provide only for themselves and are comparable as regards their study situation (the so-called 'focus type', see glossary at www.sozialerhebung.de). For a comparison of international students and those belonging to the 'focus type', the data only allow for an approximate analysis. The average monthly rent of international students sharing the characteristics of the 'focus group' and providing only for themselves is € 301 and thus below the average monthly rent paid by Germans and German educational nationals characterised as 'focus group' (€ 323).

average costs for rent and utilities than do men (not illustrated). The costs of living in a residence hall are roughly the same for men and women (€ 274 and € 277, respectively). Of the international students who share a apartment with their spouse or partner, male students have higher costs than female students (€ 502 vs. € 459).

For the subgroup of single, degree-seeking students (not illustrated), clear connections can be observed between their level of income and the average amounts of money they spend on rent. Students with an income of up to € 600 per month spend an average of € 272 per month on rent, whereas students with a monthly income between € 600 and € 700 report spending an average of € 288 per month on rent. Average costs for

Figure 5.18 Satisfaction with current housing situation by selected characteristics
International students; five-point scale from 1 = 'very dissatisfied' to 5 = 'very satisfied', in %



¹ Due to the limited number of respondents, no data has been included for students living with their parents.
² Due to the limited number of respondents, no data has been included for Australia/Oceania.

rent rise sharply with increasing income: Students with incomes in the € 700 to € 910 range pay € 329 on rent; students with incomes above € 910 pay around € 370.

Satisfaction with living arrangement

Nearly three-fifths of international students were generally (very) satisfied with their living situation in the 2016 summer semester (Figure 5.18; very satisfied: 26 %, satisfied: 34 %). By contrast, 16 % were (very) dissatisfied (very dissatisfied: 5 %, dissatisfied: 12 %).

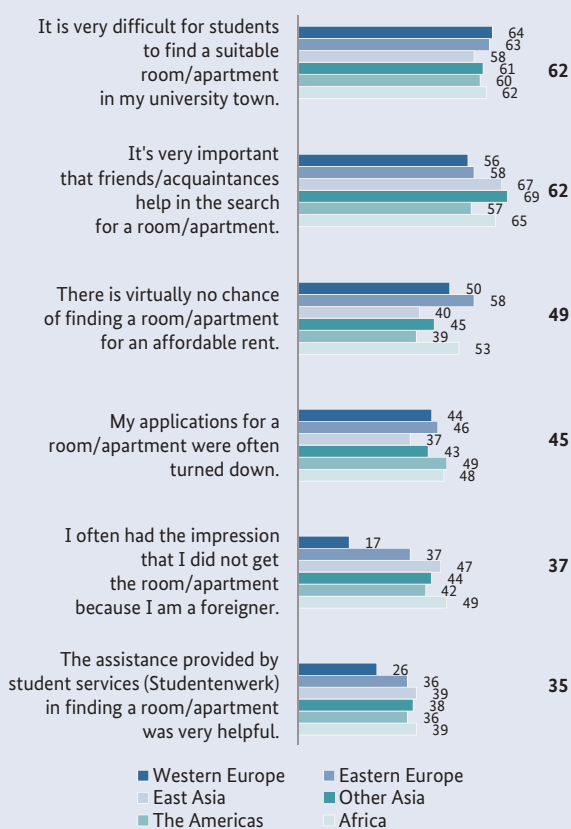
Satisfaction with their living situation varied with the type of housing. The highest proportion of international students who were (very) satisfied was found among those living in a apartment of their own, alone or with their spouse or partner (65 % and 64 %, respectively). By contrast, satisfaction with their living situation was lowest among international students living as lodgers in a private home (53 %). The corresponding shares of (very) satisfied students living in a shared apartment or in a residence hall are slightly below the total average of all international students (59 % and 58 %, respectively). Compared to 2012, satisfaction with their living situation increased notably among those living in a apartment of their own (+12 percentage points) and in a hall of residence (+6 percentage points). Furthermore, the proportion of those stating they were (very) dissatisfied with living in a residence hall was lower than it was in 2012 (-7 percentage points).

As regards region of origin, it can be observed that the proportion of students who were (very) satisfied with their current living situation was highest among students from Western Europe and the Americas (70 % and 69 %, respectively). Satisfaction levels were much lower, by contrast, among students from Eastern Europe (61 %) and students from Asia (East Asia: 59 %, Other Asia: 54 %). Students from Africa were least satisfied (40 %).

Commute between home and HE institution

International students need an average of approximately 28 minutes to get from their room or apartment to their HE institution. For half of all students, the commute takes up to 20 minutes; for one-fourth, no more than 15 minutes. A breakdown by type of housing shows that students living in a residence hall have the shortest commute to school, requiring an average of about 24 minutes.

Figure 5.19 Experiences looking for housing by region of origin¹
International students; Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



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¹ Figures for all international students (in bold) include students from Australia/Oceania.

Experiences looking for housing

International students were asked to evaluate various statements with respect to how strongly they correlated with their experiences in looking for rooms or apartments. The survey included the following aspects (Figure 5.19): unsuccessful applications for a room or apartment, perceived discrimination as a foreigner, relevance of personal networks when looking for a room or apartment, availability of suitable housing in the university town, affordable rents, and assistance provided by student services (Studentenwerk) in finding a room or apartment.

As regards the relevance of intermediaries, half of all international students said they agreed or fully agreed with the statement that it is very important that friends and acquaintances help in the search for a room or

apartment (62 %). One-third (35 %) said the assistance of student services (Studentenwerk) with finding a apartment or residence hall accommodation was very helpful. Regarding this item, it is important to note that, compared to the other statements, a relatively high number of international students did not or could not respond to this question. There may be several reasons for this: First, it is safe to assume that not all international students took advantage of their local Studentenwerk's housing placement services. Second, it is possible that students could not always distinguish clearly between placement services offered by the HE institution and those offered by the Studentenwerk. Third, it is important to take into account the possibility that the Studentenwerk's placement efforts were unsuccessful because demand exceeded the available supply in their housing pool.

In their assessment of the situation on the housing market, about three-fifths (62 %) of international students agreed with the statement that it is very difficult for students to find a suitable room or apartment in their university town. In 2012, the proportion of students who mentioned difficulties in that regard was much lower (47 %). Just short of half of all students (49 %) said it was next to impossible to find a room or apartment at a reasonable price (2012: 41 %). Moreover, 45 % of international students reported being turned down many times when applying for a room or apartment (2012: 35 %), and more than one-third (37 %) had the impression that they did not get a room or apartment because they were foreigners (2012: 35 %). Compared to 2012, this means that proportionally more students experienced difficulties when looking for housing.

Regardless of where they were from, international students' assessments of the difficulties in finding a suitable room or apartment in their university town were quite similar across the board. Students' other subjective experiences when looking for housing, however, are notably correlated with their region of origin. The assessment of finding a room or apartment at an affordable rent, for example, varied considerably depending on the region of origin. The highest proportion of students who found it difficult to find housing at a reasonable price emerged among students from Eastern Europe (58 %), whereas agreement with this experience was lowest among students from the Americas (39 %).

Students from Africa (65 %) and Asia (East Asia: 67 %, Other Asia: 69 %) emphasised the importance of friends and acquaintances helping with the search much more often than students from Europe (Western Europe: 56 %, Eastern Europe: 58 %) or the Americas (57 %). Furthermore, the proportion of those who said their applications for a room or apartment were very often turned down was lowest among international students from Asia (East Asia: 37 %, Other Asia: 43 %).

Housing placement services offered by Studentenwerk were considered least helpful by students from Western Europe, which suggests that these students, compared to those from other regions of origin, more strongly resort to other channels of finding a place to live.

The proportion of students who had the impression that they did not get a room or apartment because they were foreigners was lowest among students from Western Europe (17 %). Among students from other regions of origin, a much higher proportion said they

Figure 5.20 Type of meal eaten in the canteen/cafeteria, compared by gender
International students, in %

Type of meal	2012			2016		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Breakfast	12	13	11	16	18	14
Snack before noon	21	19	23	27	25	29
Lunch	73	77	69	75	77	73
Snack in the afternoon	27	23	30	31	30	32
Dinner	7	9	6	11	13	9

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felt discriminated against because of their foreign background.

5.4 Canteen and Cafeteria Visits

Most canteens, dining halls, restaurants, and cafeterias in the German higher education sector (hereafter referred to as ‘canteens’) are run by the local student service organisations (Studentenwerk). They mainly offer food and drinks for students at subsidised prices.

On average, four in five international students (79 %) eat at a canteen 4.8 times per week. Compared to 2012, the percentage of canteen users remained nearly the same (2012: 80 %), but the number of meals eaten increased (2012: 4.3 visits per week).

Lunch is the meal most frequently eaten in canteens, with three-fourths of international students having lunch at the canteen at least once per week (75 %, Figure 5.20). Just short of one-third (31 %) take advantage of the canteen to purchase an afternoon snack. More than every fourth student (27 %) visits the canteen for a morning snack. Only a small proportion (11 %) eats dinner in the canteen, in part because dinner is not always offered. All meals offered in canteens were used by higher proportions of international students than they were in 2012 (increase by 2 to 6 percentage points).

There are differences between men and women as regards the types of meals they eat in the canteen: A higher proportion of men eat lunch (77 % vs. 73 %), whereas women more often visit the canteen for snacks, particularly in the morning (29 % vs. 25 %).

Figure 5.21 Weekly frequency of eating lunch in the canteen/cafeteria
International students, in %

Frequency	2003	2006	2009	2012	2016
None	22	27	23	27	25
Once	16	15	15	16	17
Twice	17	17	18	17	16
Three times	19	16	18	16	16
Four times	11	11	10	11	10
Five or more times	15	14	16	14	15

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Compared to German students and German educational nationals, the proportion of canteen and cafeteria users is slightly higher for all meals among international students. The share of international students eating lunch in the canteen is 7 percentage points higher than that among Germans and German educational nationals.

Lunch at the canteen

The proportion of international students who never eat lunch in the canteen decreased by 2 percentage

Figure 5.22 Type of canteen use (lunch) by selected characteristics
International students, in %

	Regular users	Semi-regular users	Non-users
Gender			
Male	47	30	23
Female	38	36	26
Per capita income in the country of origin			
low + lower middle income	40	31	29
upper middle income	48	32	20
high income	40	35	25
Degree Pursued			
Bachelor's	41	36	23
Master's	43	31	25
State examination	45	32	23
Doctorate (PhD)	48	26	26
Exchange students	38	39	23
Age, in years			
Up to 21	45	37	18
22-23	42	35	23
24-25	45	34	21
26-27	47	29	24
28-29	45	29	26
30 and older	35	32	33
Housing type			
Dormitory or hall of residence	46	32	23
Shared apartment	43	34	23
Alone in own apartment	46	32	22
With partner in own apartment	34	35	31
Total	43	33	25

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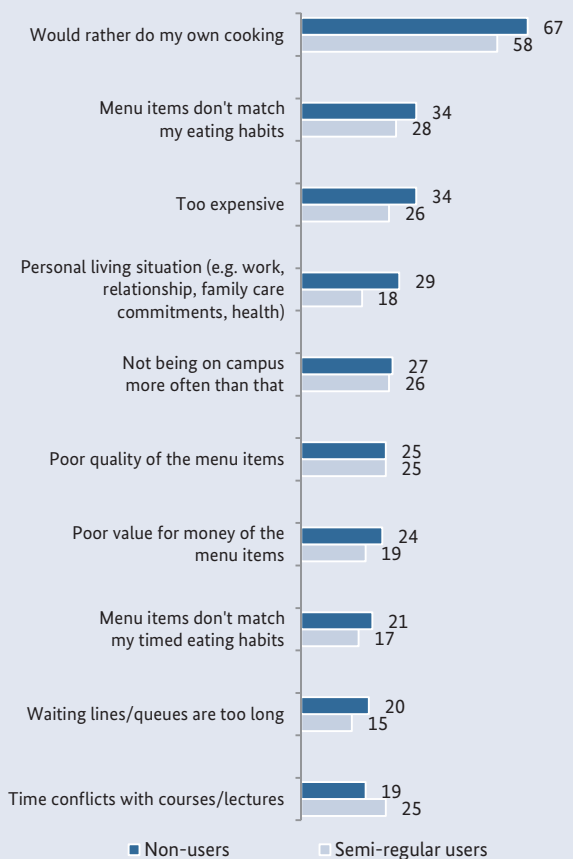
points compared to 2012 (25 %, Figure 5.21). Students who eat lunch in the canteen once or twice per week are referred to as semi-regular users, and students who eat lunch there three times per week or more are referred to as regulars. In accordance with this definition, 33 % of international students are semi-regular users (2012: 32 %), and 43 % are regulars (2012: 41 %). Compared with German students and German educational nationals, it is notable that a higher proportion of international students visit the canteen for lunch five times per week or more (15 % vs. 9 %), meaning the proportion of regulars is also higher (43 % vs. 32 %). Furthermore, the proportion of those who never eat lunch in the canteen (non-users) is lower among international students than among Germans and German educational nationals (25 % vs. 32 %).

Considerably more men are canteen regulars than women (47 % vs. 38 %), whereas women are more often semi-regular users (36 % vs. 30 %, Figure 5.22). Among women, the proportion of non-users declined by 5 percentage points compared with 2012.

A breakdown of canteen use by age reveals that the proportion of canteen regulars among international students aged 30 and older is comparatively low (35 %). Correspondingly, a high proportion of them never eats lunch in the canteen (33 %). Older students more often live with their spouse or partner – a type of living arrangement that does not involve frequent canteen visits.

The proportion of non-users is higher among students from countries with low and lower middle per capita incomes (29 %) than it is among students from high-income (25 %) and upper middle-income countries (20 %).

Figure 5.23 Reasons for not eating in the canteen more often
International students, position 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', the ten most frequently mentioned reasons, in %



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Reasons for not using the canteen

Students who seldom or never eat lunch in the canteen were asked about their reasons for not doing so, or for not doing so more often (Figure 5.23). Compared to the 2012 Social Survey, the question for this item was slightly reworded and the answer categories expanded, which allows only for limited comparisons with the results of the previous survey. The following section presents the ten most frequently mentioned reasons, broken down by semi-regular users and non-users.

In both groups, the most frequently mentioned (fully) applicable reason for not eating lunch at the canteen (more often) was that students would rather do their own cooking (non-users: 67 %, semi-regular users: 58 %).

One-third of non-users and more than one-fourth of semi-regular users said the food served in the canteen did not match their eating habits (34 % and 28 %, respectively) and that the food was too expensive (34 % and 26 %, respectively). The latter reason is emphasised in particular by international students from low-income countries of origin (45 %, not illustrated).

Non-users in particular often mention their personal living situation (e.g. work, relationship, family care commitments, health) as a reason for not eating in the canteen (29 %).

Furthermore, about one-fourth in each group reported not being on campus more often than that (non-users: 27 %, semi-regular users: 26 %) and finding the menu items to be of poor quality (25 % each).

More semi-regular users than non-users mention time conflicts with their courses and lectures as a reason for not eating in the canteen more often (25 % vs. 19 %).

If non-users and semi-regular users are taken together, the proportion of students from low-income countries of origin who said that eating in the canteen was too expensive was more than twice as high as that of students from high-income countries who mentioned the same reason (45 % vs. 19 %, not illustrated).

Whether or not canteen food provides a good value for money is assessed differently depending on students' personal budgets. Students who mentioned poor value as a reason for not eating in the canteen had about € 200 per month less at their disposal than students for whom this was not a relevant reason.

Being a semi-regular user or non-user because menu items do not match their eating habits is a reason that tends to be more frequently mentioned by Asian students than by European students (39 % vs. 26 %).

6 Germany as a Study Destination

The following section discusses how international students experience and view Germany as a place to study, the difficulties they are facing here, and what assistance can be offered to make their time in Germany go more smoothly.

6.1 Preferred Place to Study

When asked which countries would have been their first and second choices if they were free to choose any place in the world to study, 57 % of international students indicated that Germany was their first choice (Figure 6.1). The main competing first-choice countries were the US (18 %) and the UK (9 %).

Figure 6.1 Preferred place to study
International students, in %

Preferred place to study (1st choice)	2012	2016	Per capita income in the country of origin		
	total	total	low+ lower middle income	upper middle income	high income
Germany	61	57	64	57	51
USA	17	18	17	20	17
United Kingdom	10	9	6	10	11
Australia	2	3	3	3	2
France	3	2	1	1	2
Russia	- ¹	<1	0	1	0
Japan	1	1	1	1	2
Canada	- ¹	4	6	3	4
Other country	6	6	2	4	11

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¹ Country was not explicitly listed in questionnaire in 2012.

Compared to 2012, the proportion of those mentioning Germany as their first choice declined by 4 percentage points (2012: 61 %); second-choice mentions, however, increased by the same degree (2016: 20 %, 2012: 16 %, Figure 6.2). For around 23 % of international students studying here, Germany was neither their first nor their second choice (2012: 23 %). Those students had English-speaking countries at the top of their list, with the

US in first place (38 %, not illustrated), followed by the UK (22 %) and Australia (6 %).

Male students somewhat more frequently named Germany as their first choice than did female students (59 % vs. 55 %, Figure 6.2). Equal proportions of men and women mention Germany as their second choice (20 %).

When differentiating by income situation in the country of origin, Germany was more frequently the first- or second-choice study abroad destination for international students from low- and lower middle-income countries (2016: 84 %, 2012: 79 %). Likewise, more than three-fourths of students from countries with upper middle per capita incomes (2016: 77 %, 2012: 79 %), as well as 72 % of students from high-income countries, said that Germany was their first or second preference (2012: 71 %). Compared to 2012, Germany has become more popular as a study abroad destination primarily among students from low-income countries.

What is notable, as in 2012, is the high proportion of engineering students for whom Germany is the preferred place to study abroad (63 %). By contrast, students in medicine/health sciences, as well as in social sciences/social services/psychology/education, less frequently mentioned Germany as their first-choice place to study in 2016 (50 % and 51 %, respectively).

With respect to the type of degree pursued, Germany was named as their first or second choice especially by master's degree students (80 %, not illustrated). Among exchange students, more than one-third said Germany had been neither their first nor their second choice in terms of location (34 %, not illustrated).

Figure 6.2 Germany as preferred place to study by selected characteristics
International students, in %

Characteristic	2012			2016		
	First choice	Second choice	Neither first nor second choice	First choice	Second choice	Neither first nor second choice
Gender						
Female	62	12	26	55	20	25
Male	59	20	20	59	20	21
Per capita income in the country of origin						
low + lower middle income	59	20	21	64	20	16
upper middle income	63	16	21	57	20	23
high income	57	14	28	51	21	28
Region of origin						
Western Europe	55	17	28	50	20	30
Eastern Europe	62	15	23	54	22	25
The Americas	-1	-1	-1	66	17	17
Africa	-1	-1	-1	61	20	20
East Asia	70	13	17	56	21	22
Other Asia	56	20	24	62	19	19
Subject area group						
Engineering	66	17	17	63	19	18
Social sciences/social services/ psychology/ education	63	11	27	51	18	31
Languages and cultural studies	61	15	24	56	19	25
Medicine/health sciences	58	11	30	50	23	27
Economics, business administration and law	56	19	25	54	22	24
Mathematics/natural sciences	55	20	25	56	22	22
Total	61	16	23	57	20	23

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¹ Number of cases not sufficient.

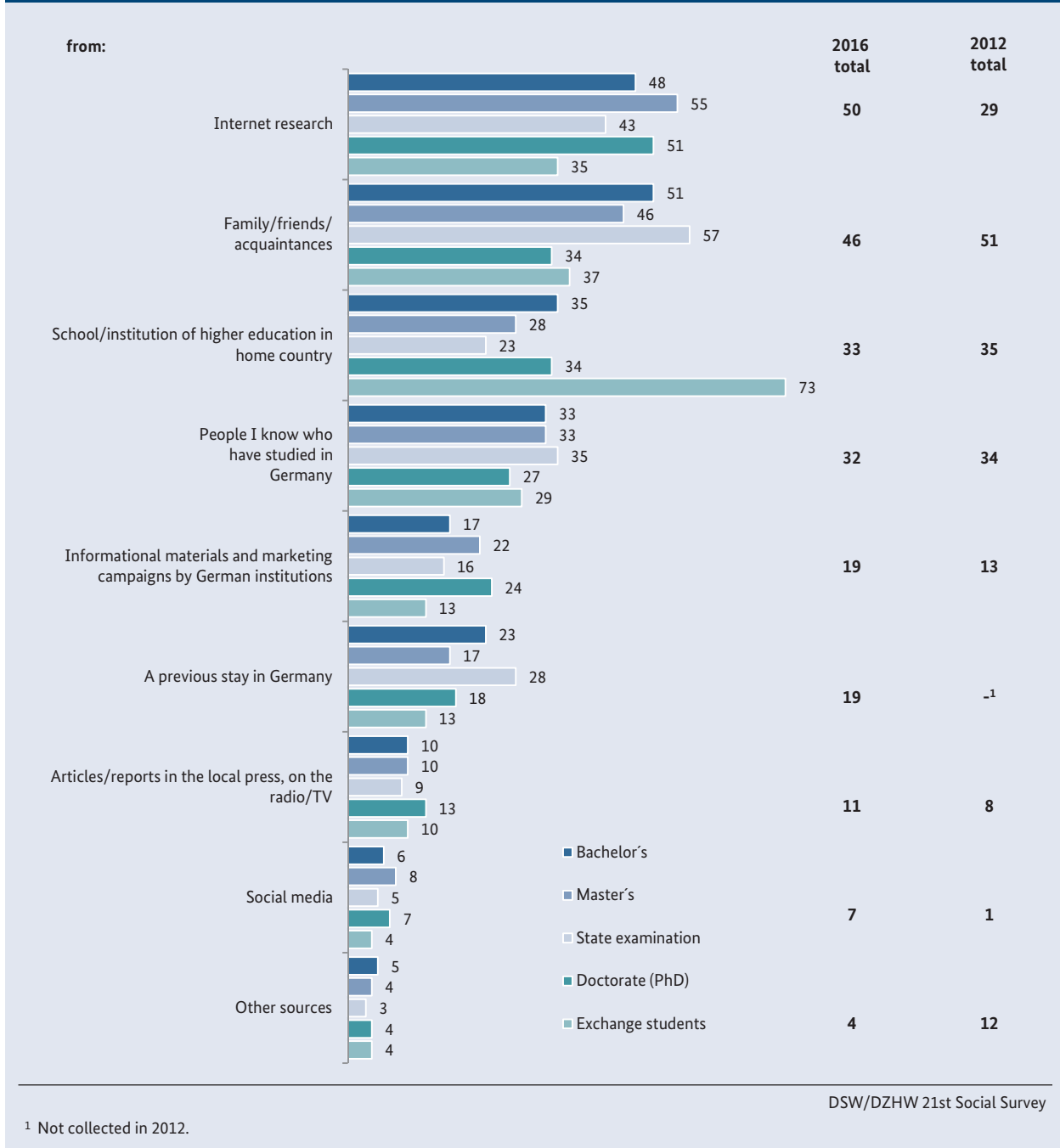
6.2 Information on Studying in Germany

This section addresses the question of how international students became aware of Germany as a potential study destination and what sources of information they used to find out about study opportunities in Germany. For the first time, their responses to the corresponding questions in the 2016 survey show that the majority of international students became aware of Germany as a result of their own Internet Research (50 %, Figure 6.3). The second most frequently mentioned source of information was family, friends, or acquaintances

(46 %). This is especially true of students enrolled in state examination or bachelor's degree courses (57 % and 51 %, respectively).

Exchange students, by contrast, learned about Germany primarily through their secondary school or HE institution at home (73 %). Overall, one-third (33 %) of all international students became aware of Germany as a result of information provided by their home schools or HE institutions. Nearly as many international students (32 %) were directed towards study opportunities in Germany by persons who studied in Germany themselves. One in five students (19 % each) said they had

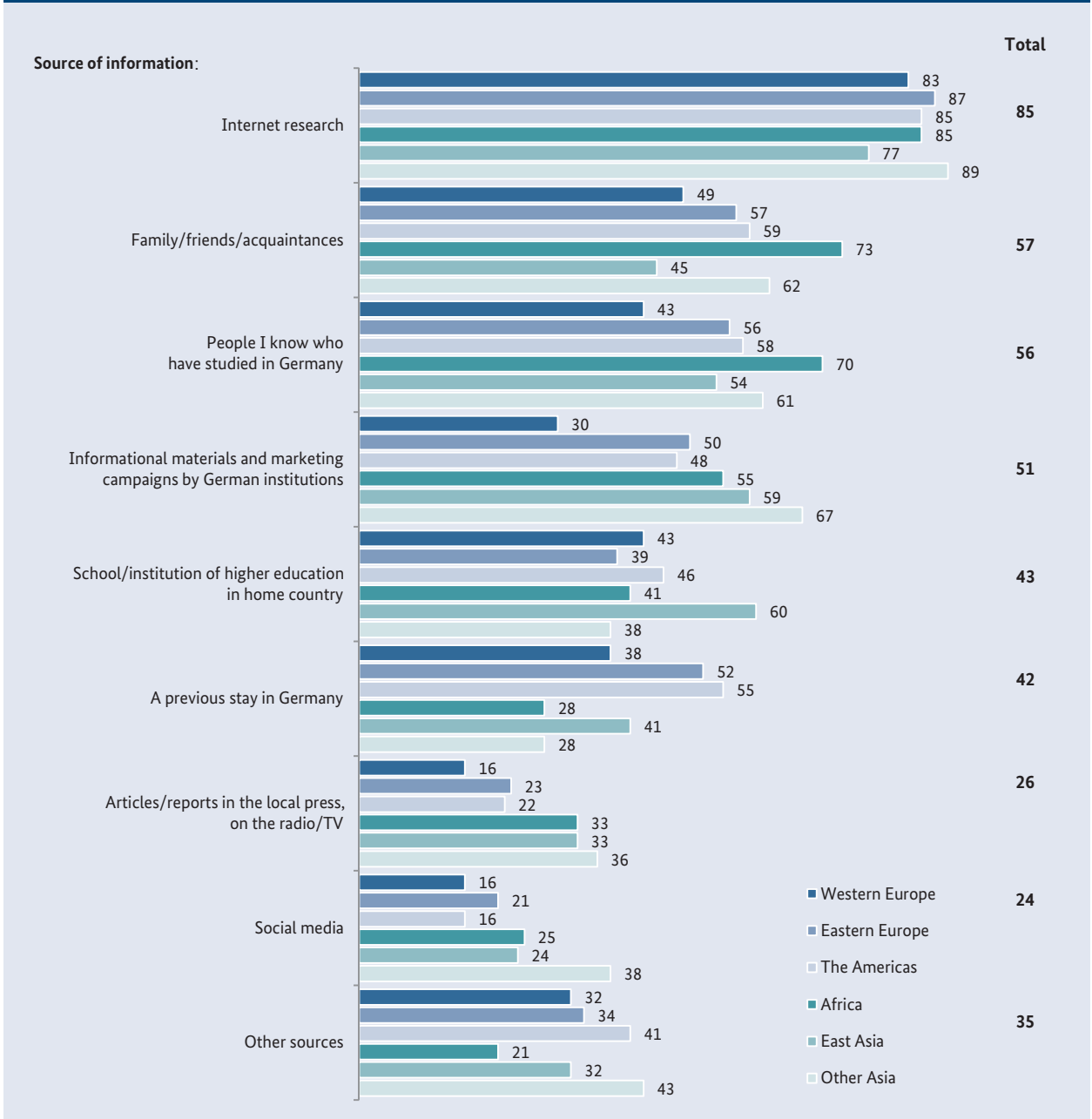
Figure 6.3 Initial source of information about Germany as a place to study
International students, in %, multiple responses possible



the idea of studying in Germany after spending time here (e.g. as an au pair) or as a result of marketing campaigns by German institutions (institutions of higher education, DAAD, etc.). Having previously spent time in Germany – a response item available for the first time in the 2016 survey – was mentioned especially often by students enrolled in state examination and bachelor’s

degree courses (28 % and 23 %, respectively), whereas informational material and marketing campaigns were especially successful in raising awareness of Germany among master’s degree and doctoral students (24 % and 22 %, respectively). Social media (Facebook, Twitter, XING, etc.) played a significantly larger role in 2016

Figure 6.4 Importance of sources of information on study opportunities in Germany by region of origin
International students¹, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'totally unimportant' to 5 = 'very important', in %



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¹ Figures for all international students (in bold) include students from Australia/Oceania.

than in 2012, making 7 % of students first consider Germany as a possible study destination (2012: 1 %).

The share of female students who first became aware of Germany as a place to study by spending time here prior to their studies is twice as high as the corresponding share of male students (26 % vs. 13 %, not illustrated). For male students, other sources such as Internet

Research (male students: 56 %, female students: 44 %), friends, family, and acquaintances (male students: 48 %, female students: 43 %), as well as persons who studied in Germany (male students: 35 %, female students: 30 %) played a bigger role than they did for female students.

Depending on per capita income in the country of origin, international students become aware of Germany in different ways (not illustrated): Students from low-income countries considered Germany primarily because of recommendations by family, friends, and acquaintances (low + lower middle income: 51 %, upper middle income and high income: 43 % each) as well as by persons who studied in Germany themselves (low + lower middle income: 40 %, upper middle income: 32 %, high income: 26 %). Students from lower-income countries of origin also discovered their interest in Germany more often through informational material and marketing campaigns (low + lower middle income: 26 %, upper middle income: 21 %, high income: 12 %) and through Internet Research (low + lower middle income: 56 %, upper middle income: 47 %, high income: 49 %) than did students from other income regions.

Students were asked to rank the different sources in terms of their importance for collecting information about study opportunities in Germany. On a five-point scale from 'not important at all' to 'very important', the vast majority of students (85 %, Figure 6.4) said their own Internet Research was '(very) important' (response categories 4 and 5). Furthermore, more than half of students listed family, friends, and acquaintances (57 %) and persons who studied in Germany (56 %), as well as informational material and marketing campaigns (51 %) as '(very) important' sources of information. For two-fifths of international students, information provided by their school or HE institution at home (43 %) and a previous visit to Germany (42 %) were particularly important. The latter is especially true of students from the Americas (55 %) and Eastern Europe (52 %).

In their usage and assessment of the various sources of information, Asian students differ remarkably from students from other regions (Figure 6.4). East Asian students particularly often mention their school or HE institution at home as '(very) important' (60 %). These institutions are also where a relatively high proportion of Asians first learned about Germany as a place to study (East Asia: 48 %, total: 33 %, not illustrated). By contrast, East Asian students less frequently mention family, friends, and acquaintances (East Asia: 45 %) or Internet Research (East Asia: 77 %) as '(very) important' sources of information. Information material and marketing campaigns were ranked as '(very) important' sources of information by two-thirds of students from Other Asia (67 %).

For African students, it was primarily family, friends, and acquaintances (73 %) and persons who studied in Germany (70 %) that served as '(very) important' sources of information about study opportunities in Germany.

6.3 Reasons for Studying in Germany

The decision to study in Germany can be based on reasons that have more to do with Germany as a country or on reasons that have more to do with the higher education opportunities offered there. International students were asked to rate a selection of possible study-related and country-related reasons for studying in Germany on a five-point scale, indicating the extent to which each of these reasons applied to them, with 1 = 'not at all applicable' and 5 = 'fully applicable'.

Overall, their ratings reveal that international students tend to be more guided by study-related reasons than by reasons relating to Germany as a country. In the following, the reasons that were rated 4 ('applicable') and 5 ('fully applicable') are summarised as '(fully) applicable'.

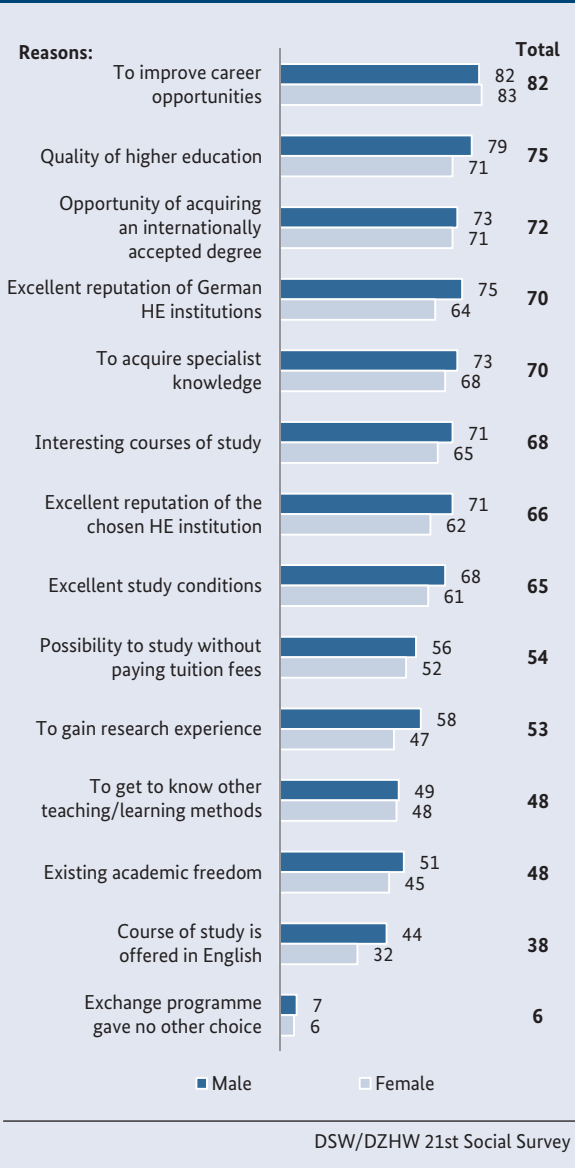
Study-related reasons

The most frequently indicated study-related reason for deciding to study in Germany was students' expectations of improving their career opportunities (82 %). There were no differences between men and women in this respect (Figure 6.5). Within the subject area groups, an above-average proportion of students in engineering (88 %, not illustrated), mathematics/natural sciences, as well as economics, business administration, and law (86 % each, not illustrated) had this expectation.

Three-fourths (75 %) of international students said it was '(fully) applicable' that they decided to study in German because of the quality of higher education. This reason was more often decisive for male students than for female students (79 % vs. 71 %). For four in five engineering students, this reason was '(fully) applicable' (82 %, not illustrated).

The opportunity of acquiring an internationally accepted degree in Germany was relevant for the decision of 72 % of international students. For master's degree and doctoral students, this aspect was important for an above-average proportion of students (78 % and 76 %, respectively, not illustrated).

Figure 6.5 Study-related reasons for studying in Germany by gender
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



The excellent reputation of German HE institutions was a criterion for 70 % of international students. Male students cited this reason more often than female students (75 % vs. 64 %). That aspect also had an above-average influence on the decisions of doctoral students (76 %, not illustrated) and STEM students (engineering: 78 %, mathematics/natural sciences: 76 %, not illustrated).

70 % of students want to study in Germany in order to acquire specialised knowledge in their field. This

Figure 6.6 Study-related reasons for studying in Germany by income levels in country of origin
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



reason is especially applicable among master's degree and doctoral students (75 % and 81 %, respectively, not illustrated), as well as among students in engineering and mathematics/natural sciences (75 % and 77 %, respectively, not illustrated).

Other study-related reasons mentioned by a majority of students include the interesting courses of study (68 %), the excellent reputation of the chosen HE institution (66 %), excellent study conditions (65 %), the possibility to study without paying tuition fees (54 %),

and the opportunity to gain research experience (53 %). The latter is the most frequently mentioned reason among doctoral students (87 %, not illustrated).

All study-related reasons for studying in Germany are strongly correlated with students' income situation in their country of origin (Figure 6.6). Students from countries with lower per capita incomes specified an average of 9.7 of the 14 study-related reasons as applicable (not illustrated). By contrast, students from higher-income countries only specified an average of 6.5 reasons (upper middle income: 8.5). That is why the proportion of students from lower-income countries is highest for every study-related reason. The only exception to this is the reason that the exchange programme provided no other choice, which was mentioned by 6 % and 7 % of students, respectively.

Country-related reasons

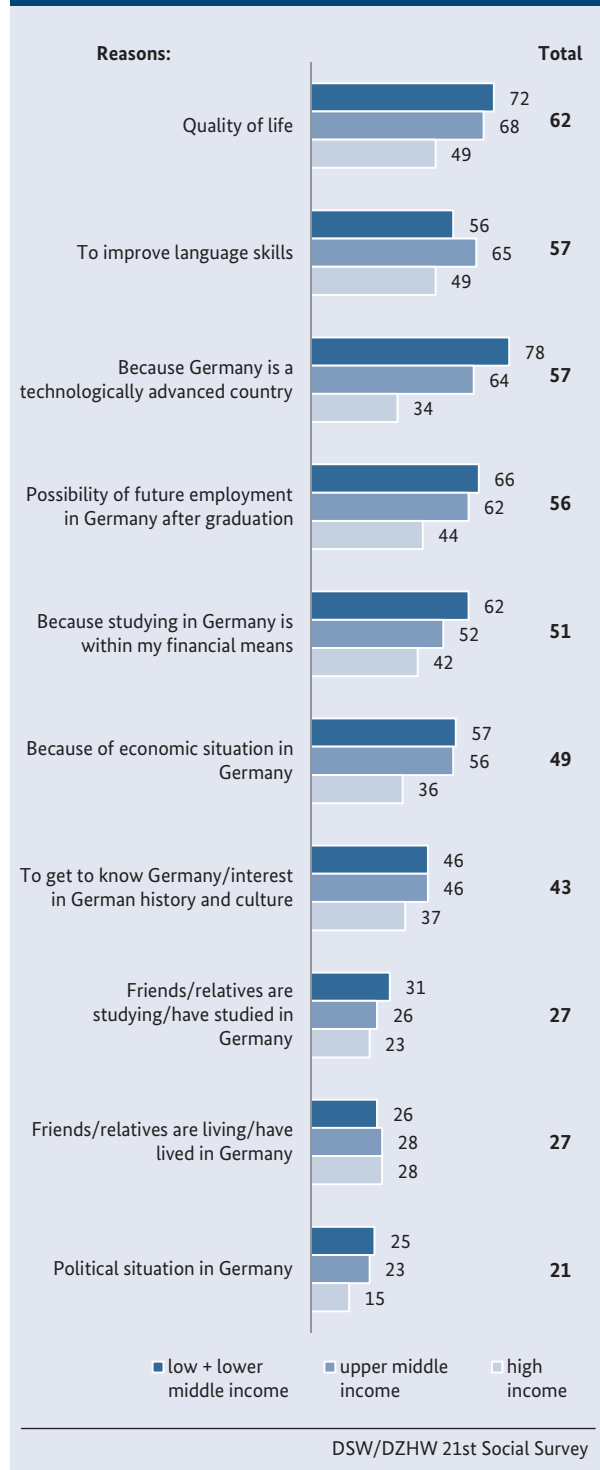
The most commonly cited reason to study in Germany was the quality of life there (62 %, Figure 6.7). The 2016 survey was the first to include this reason, which particularly informed the decision of students from lower-income countries (low + lower middle income: 72 % vs. high income: 49 %).

For 57 % of students, their decision to study in Germany was motivated among other things by the desire to improve their German language skills. Female students mentioned this reason more often than male students (61 % vs. 53 %, not illustrated). For seven in ten exchange students, this reason was of major importance (72 %, not illustrated).

Another 57 % found the reason that 'Germany is a technologically advanced country' to be '(fully) applicable'. The proportion of male students agreeing with this statement was much higher than that of female students (67 % vs. 47 %, not illustrated), which also has to do with their representation in engineering courses, where men outnumber women by more than two to one (see Figure 3.5). As can be expected, engineering students were the primary subject group citing Germany's advanced technology as a reason for choosing to study there (81 %, not illustrated). Moreover, this reason is of much greater importance to students from low-income countries than it is for students from high-income countries (low + lower middle income: 78 % vs. high income: 34 %).

The prospect of future employment in Germany after graduation played a role for more than half of inter-

Figure 6.7 Country-related reasons for studying in Germany by per capita income in country of origin
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'not at all applicable' to 5 = 'fully applicable', in %



national students (56 %), as did the fact that studying in Germany was within students' financial means (51 %). Both reasons were specified most frequently by students from low-income countries (66 % and 62 %, respectively). The reason that studying in Germany corresponds to one's own financial means is rated particularly often as being '(fully) applicable' by students from Other Asia (65 %, not illustrated) and by master's degree students (57 %, not illustrated).

The desire to get to know Germany and an interest in German history and culture is a reason specified in above-average proportions by exchange students and by students in the subject area group of languages and cultural studies (51 % each, not illustrated). Students from the Americas in particular are driven by this motivation (62 %, not illustrated).

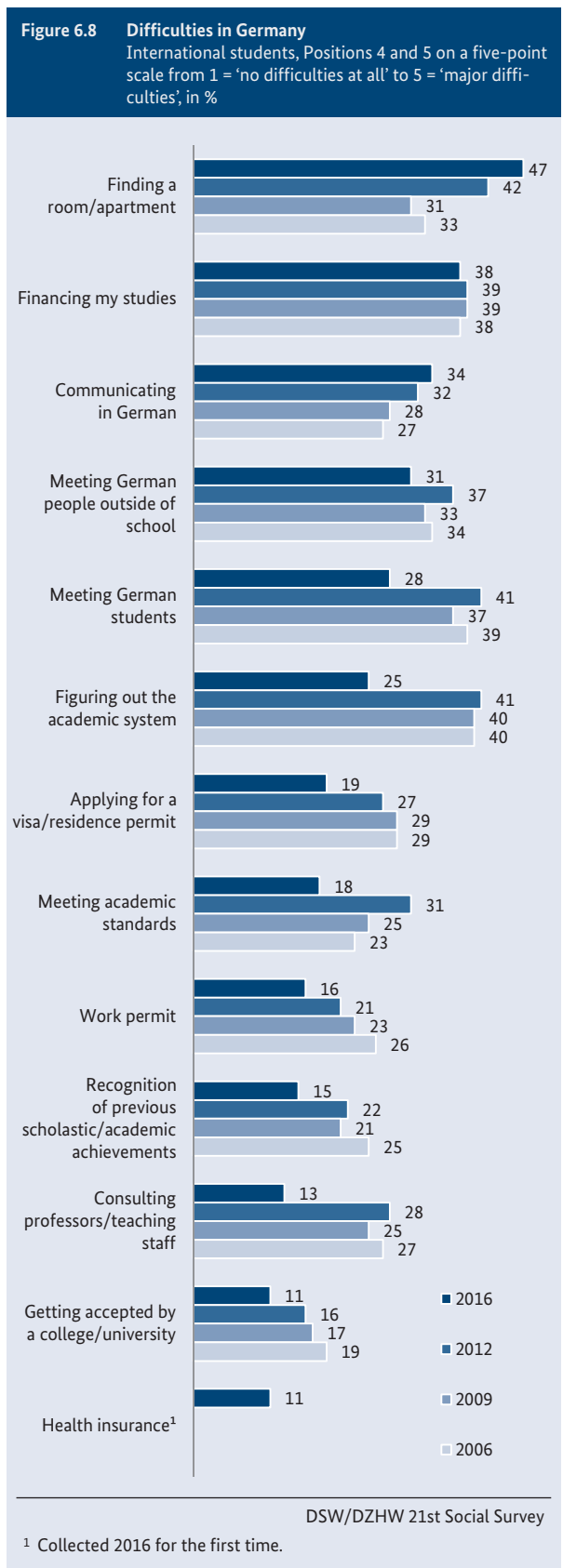
The economic situation in Germany, mentioned by 49 % of students as a reason for studying there, is more important to students from low-income countries than for students from high-income countries (57 % vs. 36 %).

6.4 Difficulties in Student Life and Daily Life

International students were asked to rate the difficulties they encountered so far in various areas of student life and daily life on a five-point scale and to specify the degree of difficulty in each case (Figure 6.8).

The highest proportion of international students reported difficulties in finding a room or a apartment: Nearly half of all students (47 %) experienced (major) difficulties in this regard. Compared to 2012, that figure increased once more, pointing to a precarious development on the (student) housing market, especially for these groups of students. The second most frequently experienced difficulty reported by international students was financing their studies (38 %). That proportion remained stable compared with preceding surveys.

One in three students had (major) difficulties communicating in German (34 %) and meeting Germans outside of school (31 %). Whereas the proportion of students with language problems has risen over the years (2012: 32 %, 2009: 28 %, 2006: 27 %), the 2016 survey saw a decline in the proportion of those having problems meeting the local population (2012: 37 %, 2009: 33 %,



2006: 34 %). This goes hand in hand with the observation that the proportion of students who experienced (major) difficulties meeting German students has also declined significantly from 2012 (2016: 28 %, 2012: 41 %). Likewise, fewer students reported (major) difficulties in figuring out the German academic system (2016: 25 %, 2012: 41 %).

Compared to 2012, a decline was also observed in the proportion of those who experienced (major) difficulties meeting academic requirements (2016: 18 %, 2012: 31 %), consulting members of the teaching staff (2016: 13 %, 2012: 28 %), applying for a visa or residence permit (2016: 19 %, 2012: 27 %), acquiring a work permit (2016: 16 %, 2012: 21 %), obtaining recognition of previous academic achievements (2016: 15 %, 2012: 22 %), and getting accepted by a HE institution (2016: 11 %, 2012: 16 %). The 2016 survey was the first to include possible difficulties acquiring health insurance: 11 % of international students said they encountered (major) difficulties in that respect.

When considering the results from the opposite perspective, that is, when looking at students who did not report any difficulties in the areas covered in the survey (not illustrated), one notable finding for the 2016 summer semester is that nearly three-fourths did not encounter any difficulties (at all) acquiring health insurance (74 %) and getting accepted by a HE institution (73 %). Furthermore, about two-thirds of students reported not experiencing any difficulties (at all) obtaining recognition of their previous academic achievements (68 %), consulting members of the teaching staff (68 %), applying for a visa or residence permit (66 %), and acquiring a work permit (63 %). Regarding academic requirements, 55 % said they did not have any problems (at all) meeting them. Finding a room or apartment, by contrast, and financing their studies, was more difficult, with only 36 % of students saying they did not encounter any problems (at all) in each case.

The degree to which international students encountered difficulties in each of the various areas varies by their region of origin (Figure 6.9).

Students from Asia (East Asia and Other Asia) frequently reported (major) difficulties in many areas: Aside from finding a place to live (50 % said they had (major) difficulties), the key areas in which East Asian students experienced problems were communicating in German

(55 %), meeting Germans outside of school (36 %), meeting German students (30 %), and acquiring a work permit (30 %). Furthermore, the proportion of East Asian students who had (major) difficulties meeting academic requirements was higher than that of international students from other regions of origin (23 %).

The problems most frequently encountered by students from Other Asia include finding a room or apartment (56 %), communicating in German (51 %), financing their studies (45 %), meeting Germans outside of school (43 %), and meeting German students (34 %).

Among students from Africa, a relatively high proportion reported (major) difficulties finding a place to live (53 %), financing their studies (51 %), meeting German students (40 %), communicating in German (38 %), and meeting Germans outside of school (37 %). What is notable in comparison to students from other regions of origin is the high proportion of African students who said they encountered (major) difficulties applying for a visa or residence permit (31 %).

Compared to all international students, students from the Americas reported above-average levels of (major) difficulties communicating in German (39 %), meeting Germans outside of school (39 %), meeting German students (32 %), figuring out the academic system (32 %), applying for a visa or residence permit (25 %), and acquiring a work permit (22 %).

Students from Eastern Europe encountered problems primarily with financing their studies (47 %); just as many had (major) difficulties finding a room or apartment (45 %).

Western European students experienced fewer problems as regards nearly all of the various areas. Their primary concern was finding a place to live, with 39 % reporting (major) difficulties looking for a room or apartment.

Specific problematic areas can be observed when looking at students' responses by the type of degree they were pursuing (Figure 6.10).

Whereas the difficulties in finding a room or apartment are the most frequently mentioned concern across all groups of students and hence emerge as the key challenge to be addressed (bachelor's: 45 %, master's 49 %, and

Figure 6.9 Difficulties in Germany by region of origin
 International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'no difficulties at all' to 5 = 'major difficulties', in %

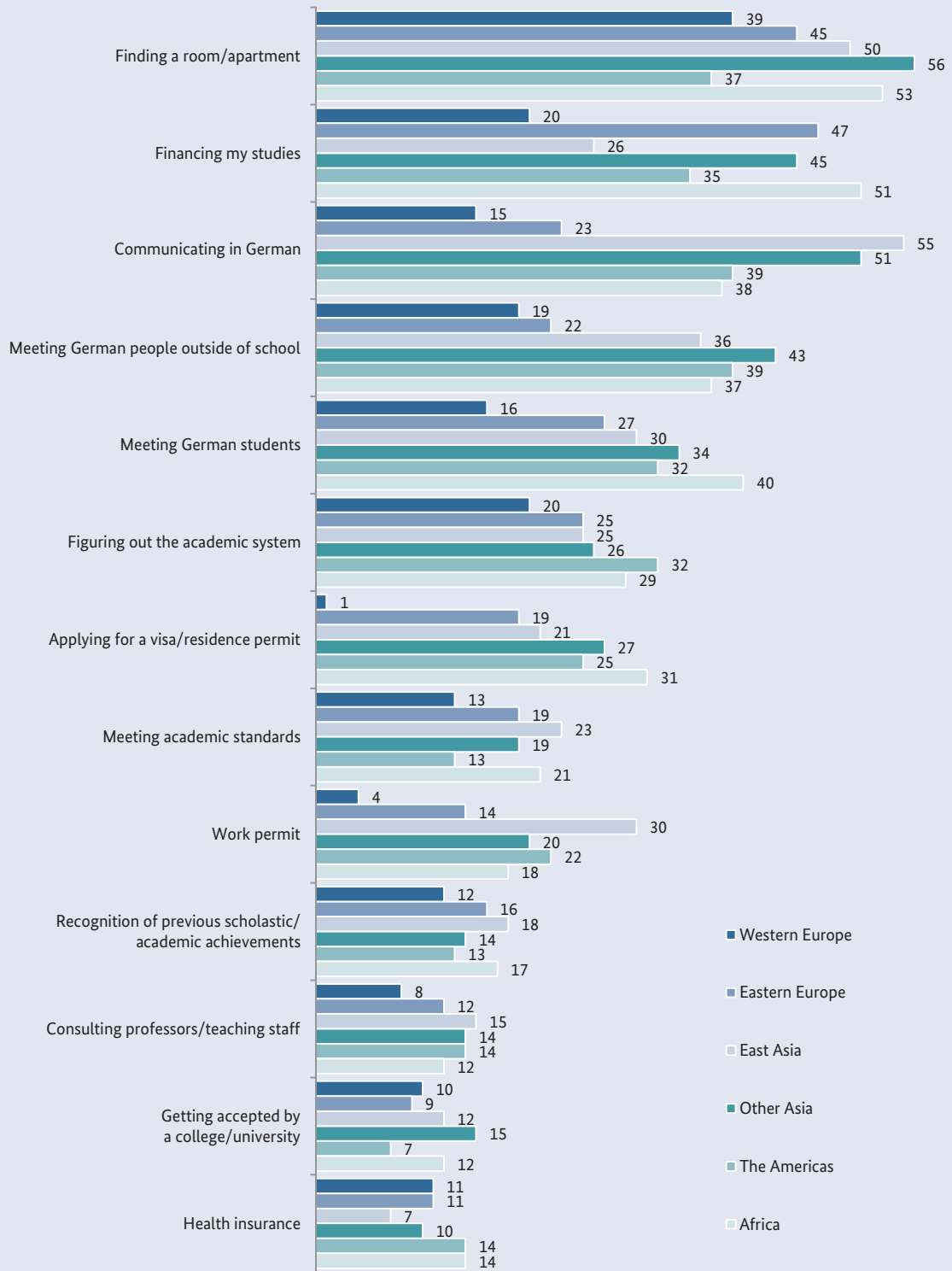
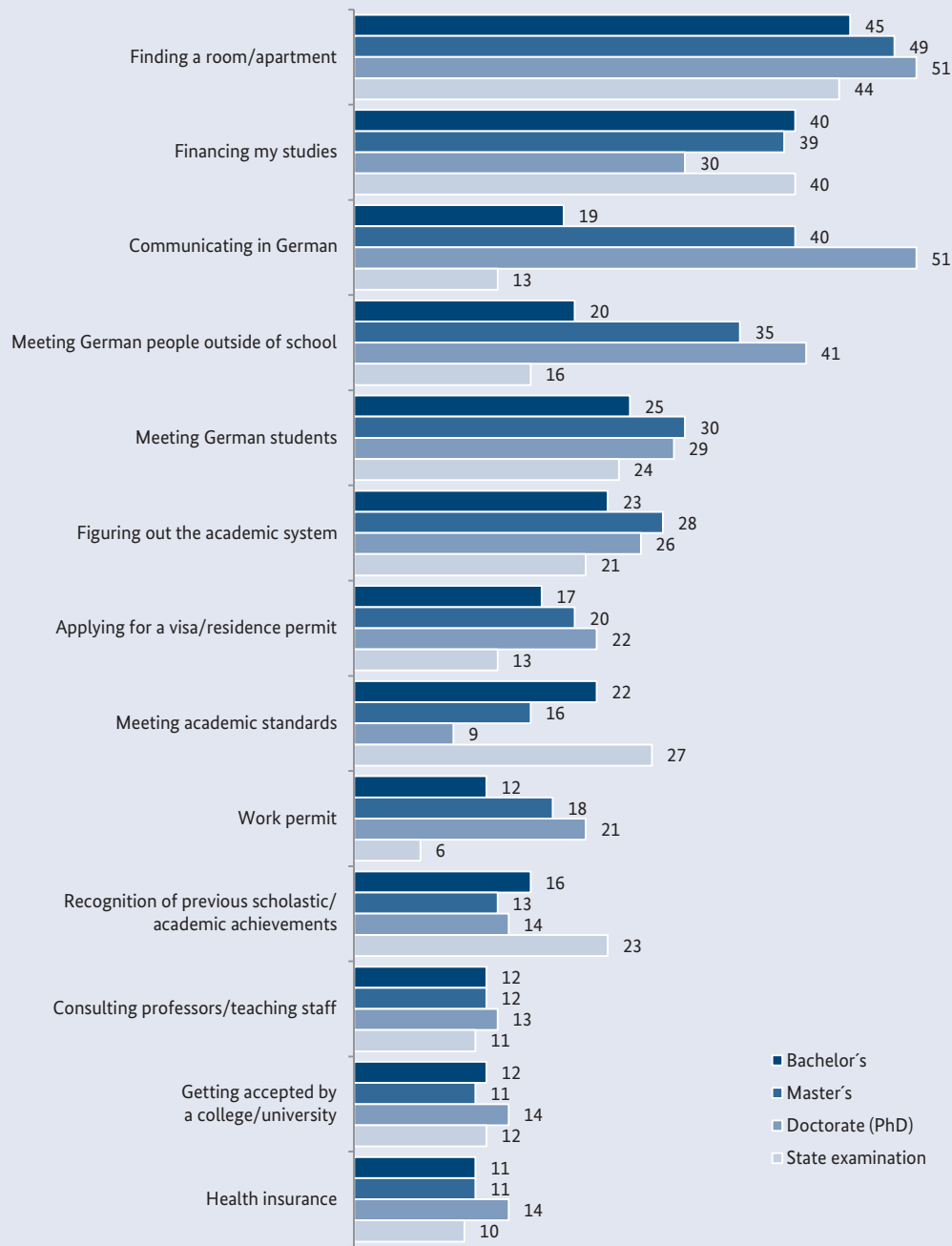


Figure 6.10 Difficulties in Germany by type of degree pursued
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'no difficulties at all' to 5 = 'major difficulties', in %



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doctoral: 51 %, state examination: 44 %), the ranking of the other areas varies by type of degree or level of study.

Among bachelor's degree students, the most frequently mentioned areas involving (major) difficulties were fi-

ancing their studies (40 %), meeting German students (25 %), and figuring out Germany's academic system (23 %).

Master's degree students most frequently reported (major) problems with communicating in German

(40 %), financing their studies (39 %), meeting Germans outside of school (35 %), meeting German students (30 %), and figuring out the academic system (28 %).

Of those seeking to obtain a state examination, a high proportion likewise experienced most problems financing their studies (40 %). Compared to the other groups, they relatively often reported (major) difficulties meeting academic requirements (27 %) and gaining recognition of their previous academic achievements (23 %).

Among doctoral students, (major) difficulties were encountered especially with regard to communicating in German (51 %) and meeting Germans outside of school (41 %).

6.5 Student Services and Assistance

Given the special academic and living situation of students studying abroad, along with the difficulties they face as described above, it can be assumed that they will need special assistance. International students were therefore additionally asked how important specific student services are to them, which services they use, and how satisfied they were with the services they took advantage of.

Importance of student services

To identify the potential need for assistance, international students were given a list of 16 support services, which they were asked to rank in importance using a five-point scale from 'totally unimportant' to 'very important'.

As in the two preceding social surveys, international students continued to regard academic counselling services as the most important student service, with nearly three-fourths of them (74 %) rating academic counselling programmes as (very) important (Figure 6.11). For each of the following, at least seven in ten students rated these services as (very) important: German language courses (73 %), introductions to scientific learning/study techniques (72 %), information on financing studies (71 %), help with finding a place to live (71 %), tutorials (71 %), and assistance dealing with the German administration (70 %). Moreover, the majority of the remaining services were also considered very important by at least three-fifths of international students.

Compared to 2012, the need for assistance slightly increased in three areas: supply of German language courses (+3 percentage points), help with finding a place to live (+3 percentage points), and introduction to scientific learning/study techniques (+2 percentage points). By contrast, areas rated (very) important less frequently than in the previous survey included counselling on health insurance (-8 percentage points), opportunities to meet German students (-6 percentage points), academic counselling and information on financing studies (-4 percentage points each), and tutorials (-3 percentage points).

Use of student services

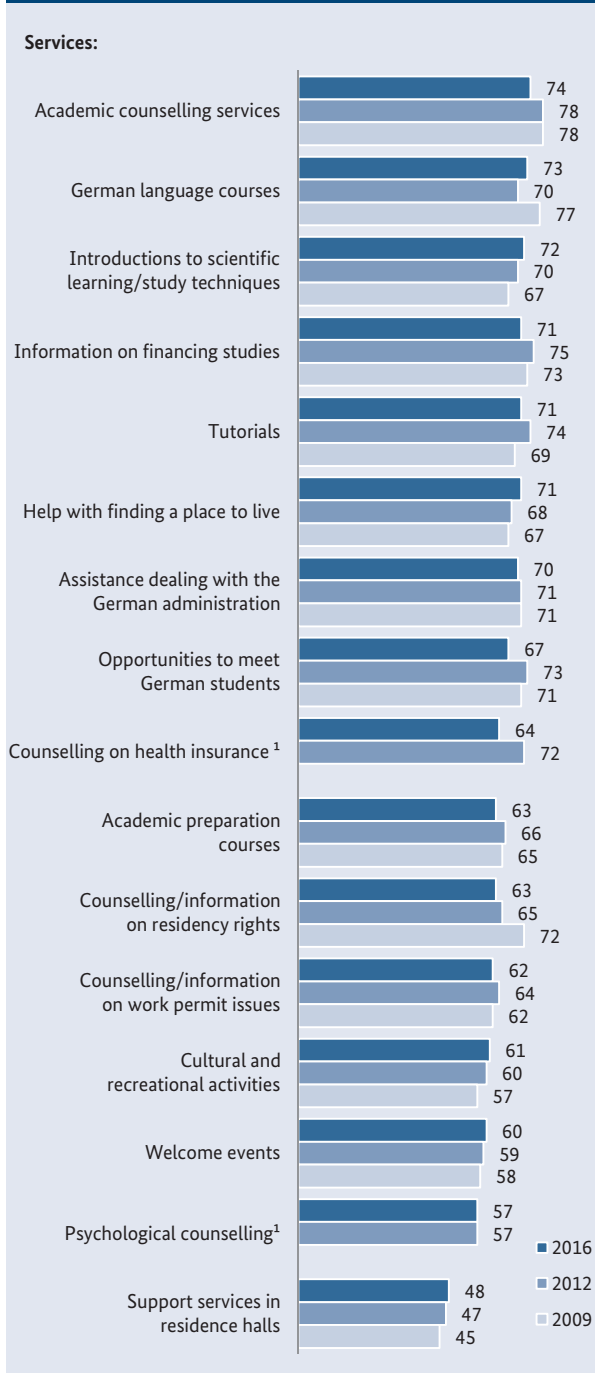
Not all international students who view the availability of certain student services as (very) important actually used those services. Possible reasons for this could be that the services in question were not offered at their HE institution, that students were not aware of them or found them to be unattractive, that they were not prepared to have to actively seek support, or that they did not use the support services because of personal reasons or time constraints. Figure 6.12 provides an overview of how each support service was used by students.

As in 2012, the most frequently used services include welcome events (66 %), German language courses (52 %), and tutorials (52 %).

German language courses were used by about two-thirds of international master's degree students (63 %, not illustrated) and doctoral students (67 %) – that is, precisely those groups especially likely to arrive in Germany without previous knowledge of German (see Section 2.3). By contrast, only two-fifths of bachelor's degree students (39 %) and one-fourth of students seeking to obtain a state examination (26 %) took German language courses.

Compared to the 2012 summer semester, the usage numbers increased especially for welcome events (+5 percentage points) and introductions to scientific learning/study techniques (+8 percentage points). A decrease can be observed in the extent to which students made use of academic counselling services (-5 percentage points).

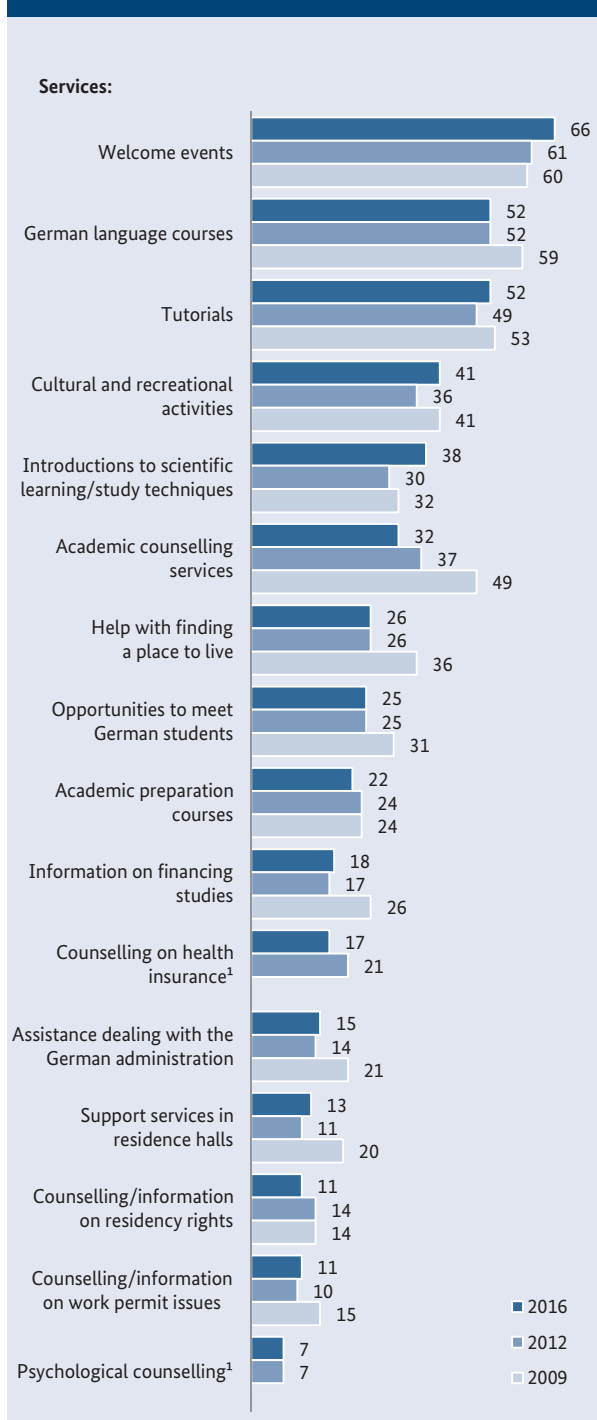
Figure 6.11 Importance of student services
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'totally unimportant' to 5 = 'very important', in %



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¹ Not collected in 2009.

Figure 6.12 Use of student services
International students, multiple responses possible, in %



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¹ Not collected in 2009.

Rating of student services

Students who did take advantage of support services were asked to rate these services (Figure 6.13). For each of the following, a minimum of nearly two-thirds of those who used the service said they were (very) satisfied: cultural and recreational activities (74 %), tutorials (71 %), German language courses (69 %), introductions to scientific learning/study techniques (69 %), assistance dealing with the German administration (68 %), welcome events (68 %), academic preparatory courses (65 %), and counselling on health insurance (65 %). The lowest levels of satisfaction were found for information on financing studies (48 %), psychological counselling (55 %), and help with finding a place to live (56 %).

Compared to 2012, satisfaction with most student services remained nearly unchanged. A significant increase in satisfaction levels can be observed with regard to counselling services on health insurance (+7 percentage points). The strongest decrease, by contrast, occurred with regard to students' satisfaction with information on financing studies (-8 percentage points).

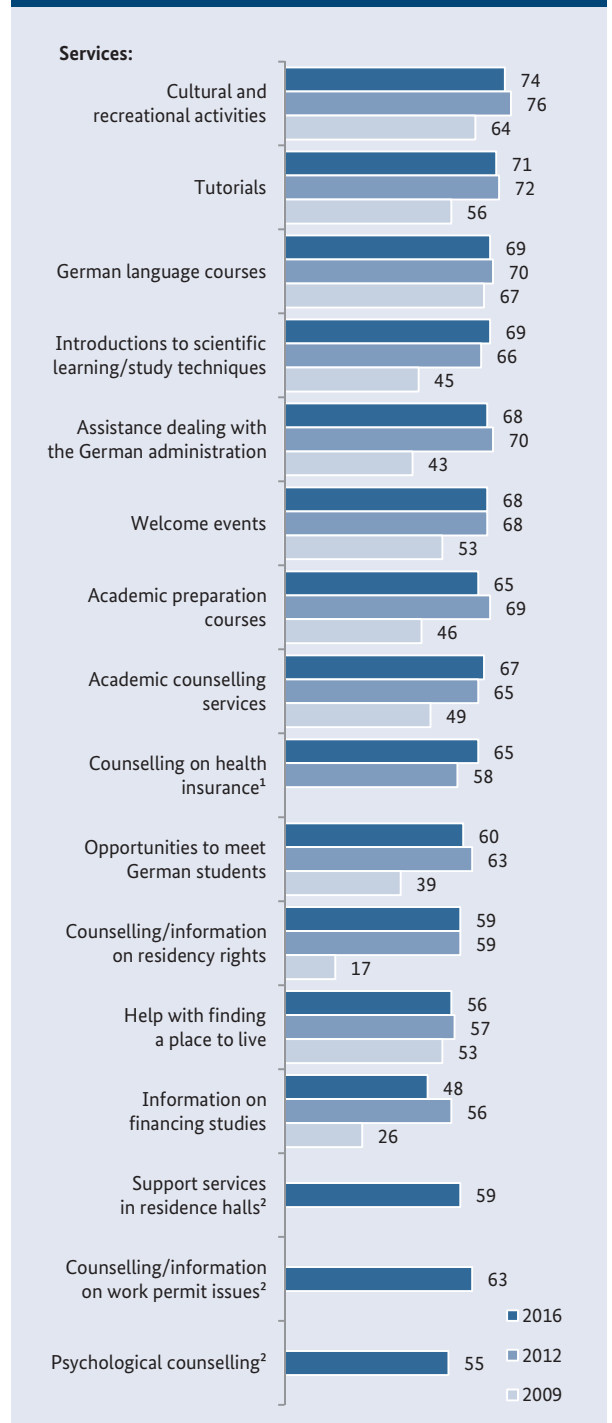
6.6 Recommending Germany as a Study Destination

On a five-point scale from 1 = 'no, definitely not' to 5 = 'yes, absolutely', international students were asked – based on their own experience with the living and studying conditions in Germany – whether they would recommend studying in Germany to their friends and acquaintances in their home country.¹

The result was that more than half of all students would definitely recommend that their friends and acquaintances study in Germany (yes, absolutely: 54 %, Figure 6.14). Taking response positions 4 and 5 together, a full 84 % of international students would recommend Germany, as in 2012. 12 % gave a neutral response. 3 % would rather not recommend that their friends and acquaintances study in Germany (position 2), and 2 %

¹ In contrast to previous years, the proportion of respondents saying they could not say yet whether they would recommend Germany was a moderate 3% and is therefore no longer listed separately. Although the question did not change from 2012, there was a decline both in the proportion of those who did not answer the question at all (-3 percentage points) and in the proportion of those who said they could not say yet (-7 percentage points) – irrespective of the time they first enrolled at a German HE institution. The percentages given in this section refer to those who did answer the question.

Figure 6.13 Satisfaction with student services used
International students who used the service in question, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'totally dissatisfied' to 5 = 'very satisfied', in %

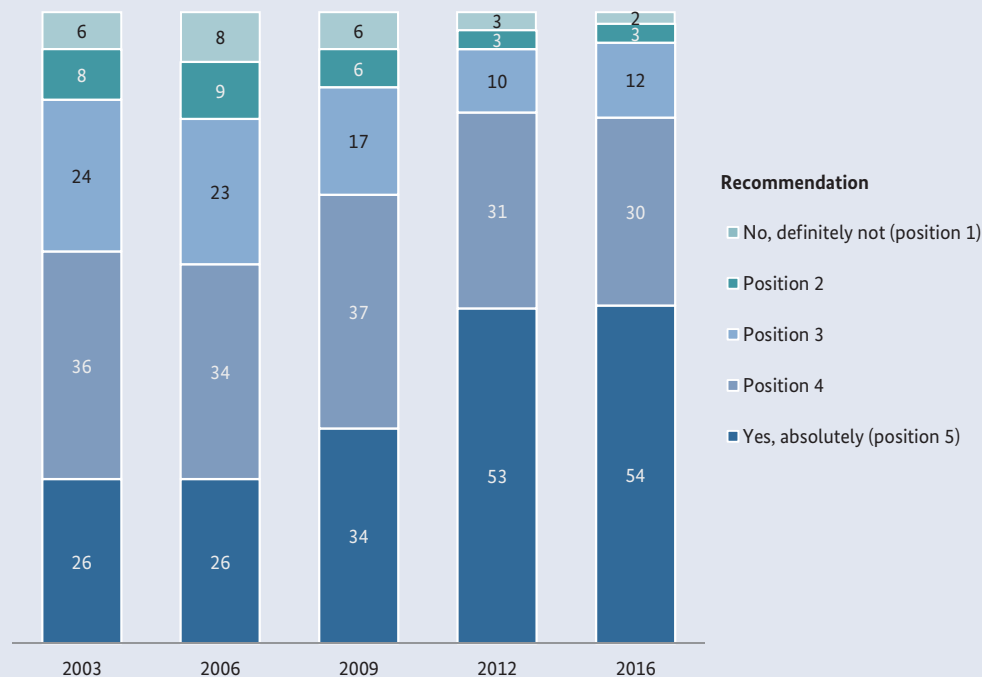


DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

¹ Not collected in 2009.

² Not collected in 2009 and 2012.

Figure 6.14 Recommendation to study in Germany
International students, in %



DSW/DZHW 21st Social Survey

said they would 'definitely not' recommend it (2012: 3 % each).

In contrast to 2012, when male students gave a positive response somewhat more frequently than female students (2012: positions 4 + 5: men 87 % vs. women 82 %, not illustrated), gender differences in students' inclination to recommend Germany have all but disappeared (2016: 83 % vs. 84 %, not illustrated).

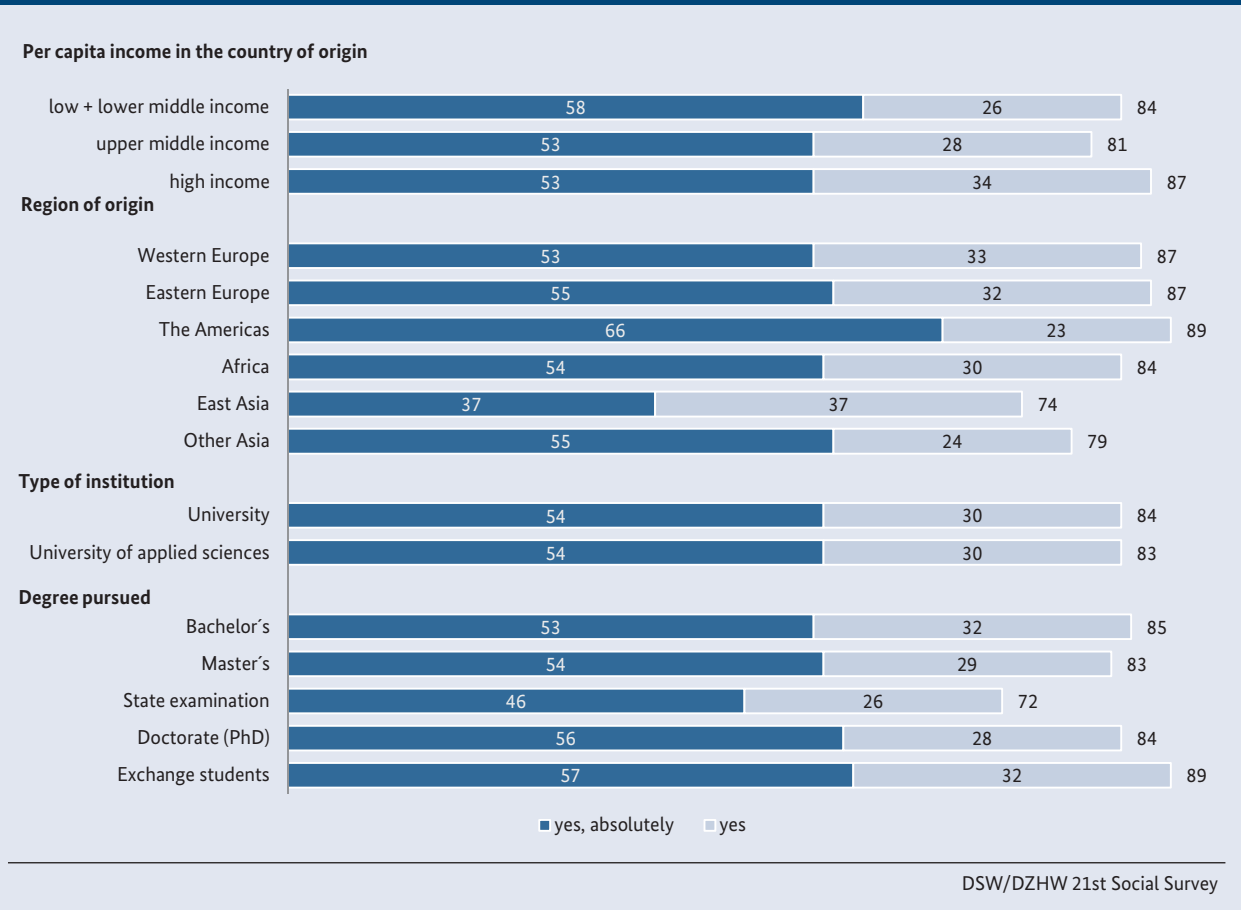
Broken down by per capita income in the country of origin, a vast majority of students from each income group would recommend Germany as a place to study (Figure 6.15). The proportion of students who selected response positions 4 and 5 was somewhat higher among students from high-income countries (87 %) than among students from low and lower-middle income countries (84 %) and upper-middle income countries (81 %). The proportion of those choosing position 5 ('yes, absolutely') is highest among students from lower-income countries (58 % vs. upper middle/high income: 53 % each).

Differentiated by students' region of origin, the assessment of students from the Americas is the most positive: 89 % of them report that they would recommend that their friends and acquaintances study in Germany, with 66 % even saying they would 'absolutely' do so (position 5). Among European students, the overall rating is almost as positive (Western Europe and Eastern Europe: 87 % each). Students from East Asia, by contrast, more often than other students selected the middle response position (18 % vs. total average 12 %, not illustrated) and least often said 'yes, absolutely' (37 %) compared to students from other regions of origin.

Considered by type of degree pursued, exchange students would recommend Germany to an above-average extent (89 %), whereas students seeking to obtain a state examination would do so less often (72 %). No differences can be observed between students at universities and students at universities of applied sciences.

Finally, it should be noted that the inclination to recommend Germany as a place to study is obviously linked to the degree of difficulties that international

Figure 6.15 International students recommending Germany as a place to study by selected characteristics
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'no, definitely not' to 5 = 'yes, absolutely', in %



students experienced during their time in Germany (see Section 6.4). Students who would recommend Germany without reservations (position 5) reported having encountered difficulties in an average of 2.5 of the 14 possible areas, whereas students who would 'definitely not' recommend Germany (position 1) more than twice as often report having experienced (major) difficulties in terms of attending school and living in Germany (difficulties in an average of 5.5 areas).

6.7 Global Rating of Life in Germany

The 2016 survey was the first to ask students to rate three statements regarding their life in Germany on a five-point scale from 'totally disagree' to 'totally agree' (Figure 6.16). 73 % (totally) agree with the statement 'I am satisfied with my life in Germany' ('agree': 37 %, 'totally agree': 36 %). Differentiated by region of origin, agreement was highest among students from Western Europe (82 %) and the Americas (79 %), whereas

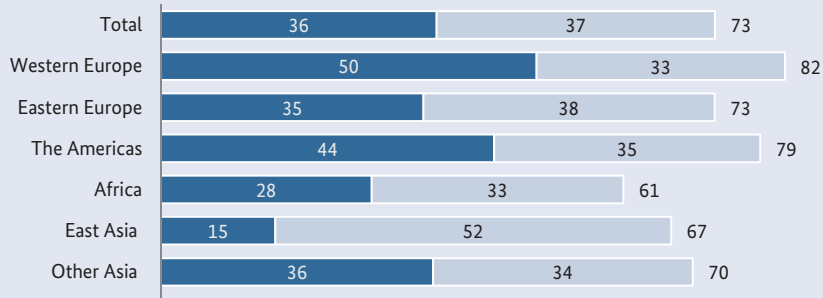
students from Africa less often said they were satisfied (61 %).

Overall, two-thirds of all international students agreed with the statement 'I feel welcome in Germany' ('agree': 32 %, 'totally agree': 34 %). A breakdown by region of origin, however, reveals major differences in the level of agreement with this statement. Whereas the proportion of those who felt welcome was highest by far among Western European students (81 %), students from East Asia (48 %), Africa (58 %), and Other Asia (62 %) less frequently stated they felt welcome.

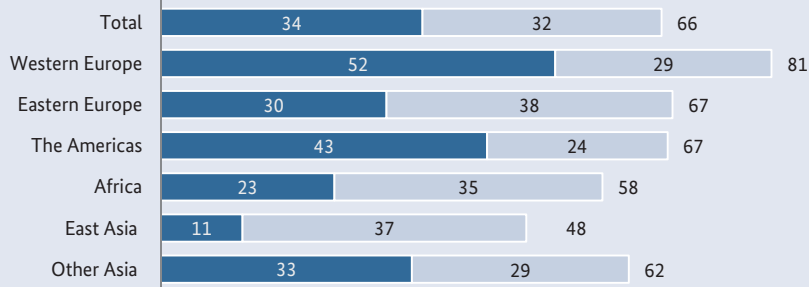
The statement 'I feel safe in Germany' was found to be applicable by 81 % of students ('agree': 31 %, 'totally agree': 50 %). Again, one notable finding are the answers given by East Asians, among whom the proportion of students who feel safe is particularly low (56 %).

Figure 6.16 Rating of life in Germany by region of origin
International students, Positions 4 and 5 on a five-point scale from 1 = 'totally disagree' to 5 = 'totally agree', in %

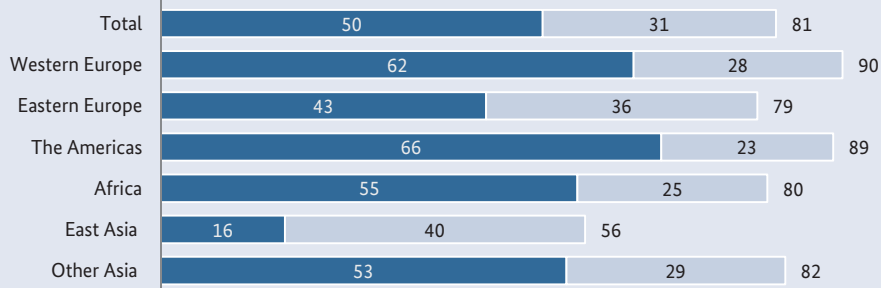
I am satisfied with my life in Germany.



I feel welcome in Germany.



I feel safe in Germany.



■ totally agree □ agree

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Appendix: Countries of Origin

Africa

Country of origin	Income Level
Algeria	Upper middle income
Angola	Upper middle income
Benin	Low income
Botswana	Upper middle income
Burkina Faso	Low income
Burundi	Low income
Cameroon	Lower middle income
Cape Verde	Lower middle income
Central African Republic	Low income
Chad	Low income
Comoros	Low income
Congo, Dem. Rep.	Low income
Congo, Rep.	Lower middle income
Côte d'Ivoire	Lower middle income
Djibouti	Lower middle income
Egypt, Arab Rep.	Lower middle income
Equatorial Guinea	Upper middle income
Eritrea	Low income
Ethiopia	Low income
Gabon	Upper middle income
Gambia, The	Low income
Ghana	Lower middle income
Guinea	Low income
Guinea-Bissau	Low income
Kenya	Lower middle income
Lesotho	Lower middle income
Liberia	Low income
Libya	Upper middle income
Madagascar	Low income
Malawi	Low income
Mali	Low income
Mauritania	Lower middle income
Mauritius	Upper middle income
Morocco	Lower middle income
Mozambique	Low income
Namibia	Upper middle income
Niger	Low income
Nigeria	Lower middle income
Rwanda	Low income
São Tomé and Príncipe	Lower middle income
Senegal	Low income
Seychelles	High income
Sierra Leone	Low income
Somalia	Low income

Country of origin

South Africa	Upper middle income
South Sudan	low income
Sudan	Lower middle income
Swaziland	Lower middle income
Tanzania	Low income
Togo	Low income
Tunisia	Lower middle income
Uganda	Low income
Zambia	Lower middle income
Zimbabwe	Low income

Income Level

The Americas

Country of origin	Income Level
Antigua and Barbuda	High income
Argentina	Upper middle income
Bahamas, The	High income
Barbados	High income
Belize	Upper middle income
Bolivia	Lower middle income
Brazil	Upper middle income
Canada	High income
Chile	High income
Colombia	Upper middle income
Costa Rica	Upper middle income
Cuba	Upper middle income
Dominica	Upper middle income
Dominican Republic	Upper middle income
Ecuador	Upper middle income
El Salvador	Lower middle income
Grenada	Upper middle income
Guatemala	Lower middle income
Guyana	Upper middle income
Haiti	Low income
Honduras	Lower middle income
Jamaica	Upper middle income
Mexico	Upper middle income
Nicaragua	Lower middle income
Panama	Upper middle income
Paraguay	Upper middle income
Peru	Upper middle income
St. Kitts and Nevis	High income
St. Lucia	Upper middle income
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Upper middle income
Suriname	Upper middle income
Trinidad and Tobago	High income

Country of origin	Income Level
United States	High income
Uruguay	High income
Venezuela, RB	Upper middle income

Australia and Pacific

Country of origin	Income Level
Australia	High income
Fiji	Upper middle income
Kiribati	Lower middle income
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	Lower middle income
New Zealand	High income
Northern Mariana Islands	High income
Palau	Upper middle income
Papua New Guinea	Lower middle income
Samoa	Lower middle income
Solomon Islands	Lower middle income
Tonga	Lower middle income
Tuvalu	Upper middle income
Vanuatu	Lower middle income

East Asia

Country of origin	Income Level
China	Upper middle income
Japan	High income
Korea, Dem. Rep.	Low income
Korea, Rep.	High income

Eastern Europe

Country of origin	Income Level
Albania	Upper middle income
Belarus	Upper middle income
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Upper middle income
Bulgaria	Upper middle income
Croatia	High income
Cyprus	High income
Czech Republic	High income
Estonia	High income
Greece	High income
Hungary	High income
Kosovo	Lower middle income
Latvia	High income
Lithuania	High income
Macedonia, FYR	Upper middle income
Moldova	Lower middle income
Montenegro	Upper middle income
Poland	High income
Romania	Upper middle income

Country of origin	Income Level
Russian Federation	Upper middle income
Serbia	Upper middle income
Slovak Republic	High income
Slovenia	High income
Turkey	Upper middle income
Ukraine	Lower middle income

Other Asia

Country of origin	Income Level
Afghanistan	Low income
Armenia	Lower middle income
Azerbaijan	Upper middle income
Bahrain	High income
Bangladesh	Lower middle income
Bhutan	Lower middle income
Brunei Darussalam	High income
Cambodia	Lower middle income
Georgia	Upper middle income
India	Lower middle income
Indonesia	Lower middle income
Iran, Islamic Rep.	Upper middle income
Iraq	Upper middle income
Israel	High income
Jordan	Upper middle income
Kazakhstan	Upper middle income
Kuwait	High income
Kyrgyz Republic	Lower middle income
Lao PDR	Lower middle income
Lebanon	Upper middle income
Malaysia	Upper middle income
Maldives	Upper middle income
Mongolia	Lower middle income
Myanmar	Lower middle income
Nepal	Low income
Oman	High income
Pakistan	Lower middle income
Philippines	Lower middle income
Qatar	High income
Saudi Arabia	High income
Singapore	High income
Sri Lanka	Lower middle income
Syrian Arab Republic	Lower middle income
Tajikistan	Lower middle income
Thailand	Upper middle income

Country of origin	Income Level
Turkmenistan	Upper middle income
United Arab Emirates	High income
Uzbekistan	Lower middle income
Vietnam	Lower middle income
West Bank and Gaza	Lower middle income
Yemen, Rep.	Lower middle income

Western Europe

Country of origin	Income Level
Andorra	High income
Austria	High income
Belgium	High income
Denmark	High income
Finland	High income
France	High income
Germany	High income
Iceland	High income
Ireland	High income
Italy	High income
Liechtenstein	High income
Luxembourg	High income
Malta	High income
Monaco	High income
Netherlands	High income
Norway	High income
Portugal	High income
San Marino	High income
Spain	High income
Sweden	High income
Switzerland	High income
United Kingdom	High income

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The report 'International Students in Germany 2016: Results from the Survey of International Students as Part of the 21st Social Survey of Deutsches Studentenwerk, conducted by the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies' is available at www.sozialerhebung.de. All responsibility for the content of the report rests with the DZHW.

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