



Federal Ministry  
of Education  
and Research

# Economic and Social Conditions of Student Life in the Federal Republic of Germany in 2006

**18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey of the Deutsches Studentenwerk  
conducted by HIS Hochschul-Informationen-System  
– Selected Results –**

The present report was compiled by HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH on behalf of the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) and with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF). HIS is responsible for the contents.

An online version of this report and the main report of the 18th Social Survey are available at the following websites:  
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<http://www.bmbf.de>  
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## Foreword

With this publication, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) present the results of the 18th Social Survey conducted during the 2006 summer semester. These findings are based on survey results from nearly 17,000 German students, including foreign students with a German education.

The social survey has been conducted in three-year intervals for over 50 years, and reflects the social and economic conditions of students in Germany. In addition to serving as an overview, the continuity of these studies allows for long-term comparisons, thereby providing political decision-makers, higher education institutions, and student services with key information for developing educational policy initiatives and improving the quality of services and counseling in all aspects of student life.

The time series in the chapter on participation in education are one of the most important indicators for developments with regard to equal opportunities in higher education. The results of the 18th Social Survey demonstrate the close link between social origins and access to higher education in Germany. Achieving equal opportunity thus remains a top priority for Germany's educational policies.

The data on study financing provides essential information on the nature of student income and indicates possible steps that could be taken to improve the financial situation of students, and thus paves the way for increasing the proportion of students within a given age group in Germany.

Two special reports are being published in conjunction with the 18th Social Survey. First, there is a special assessment of the key social and educational issue of students with children. The second special report analyzes the social situation of foreign students in Germany and German students studying abroad.

The data collected will in the future help to provide an even better foundation for reports on education in Germany and the EUROSTUDENT international comparative study, which furnishes information required for the continued development of the social dimensions of the European Higher Education Area.

We would like to thank the students who filled out the comprehensive questionnaire, the staff of the institutions of higher learning, and the student services for their support, and the employees of HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH for successfully conducting this survey.

Berlin, June 2007



Dr. Annette Schavan, MP  
German Minister of Education and Research



Prof. Dr. Rolf Dobischat  
President of the Deutsches Studentenwerk



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# 1. Survey Approach

The current report presents selected results from the 18th Social Survey of the Deutsches Studentenwerk, conducted by HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH.<sup>1</sup>

This study was conducted and its results published with funding from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF).

The current report is based on the results of a representative written survey conducted during the 2006 summer semester that focused on German students, including foreign students who had acquired their higher education entrance qualification in Germany, referred to here as foreign students with a German education.

The Social Survey has been conducted for the most part every three years since 1951. Its objective is to provide a questionnaire-based reporting system using statistical methods to deliver a comprehensive overview of the social and economic situation of students in Germany, and of a number of important aspects of stu-

dent life and studies. The Social Survey is based on the assumption that the ability of students to start and successfully complete their studies depends on more than just the conditions of access to institutions of higher education; it is also linked to the social and economic conditions under which they pursue their courses of study.

Based on the findings of the survey, the results are primarily presented in a descriptive manner with the aim of encouraging readers to draw their own conclusions concerning the social and economic situation of students.

During the 2006 summer semester, a random sample of students at all German institutions of higher education was surveyed, with the exception of students at colleges of public administration, schools for distance learning, and the universities of the German armed forces, the Bundeswehr. Questionnaires with utilizable data were submitted by 16,590 students (return rate: 31%) from a total of 258 institutions of higher education. This random sample is representative of the parent population of students at the above-mentioned institutions of higher education.

<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive description of the results of the 18th Social Survey can be found in the main report (only available in German).

## 2. Access to Higher Education

### 2.1 Numbers of Students and First-Year Students

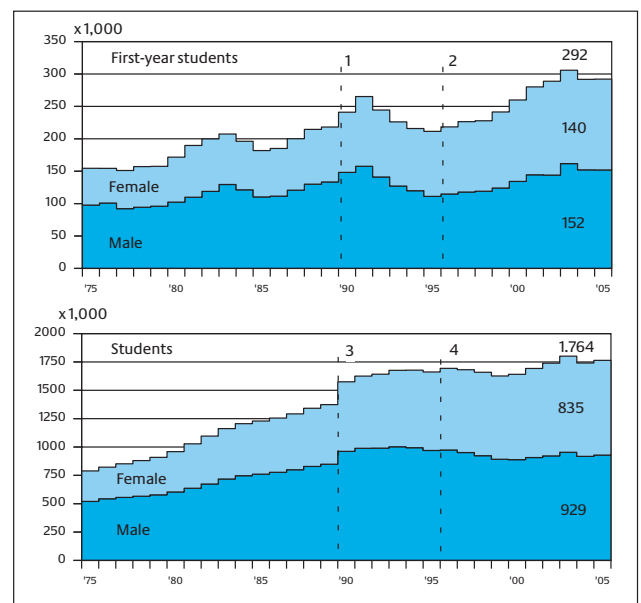
During the 2005/06 winter semester, a total of 1,953,504 students were enrolled at German institutions of higher education (excluding colleges of public administration). According to these figures, the total number of students in Germany (German and foreign) has declined slightly in comparison to the 2003/04 winter semester, although the number of foreign students at German institutions of higher education has increased minimally.

The parent population of the 18th Social Survey consists of German students and students with foreign citizenship who have acquired their higher education entrance qualification in Germany, also called foreign students with a German education. This target group includes 1.76 million students (Figure 2.1).

There were 140,000 more German students enrolled during the 2005/06 winter semester than during the 1999/2000 winter semester, which was the academic period with the smallest overall student population over the past ten years. However, the number of foreign students with a German education enrolled at institutions of higher education fell to nearly 60,000 in the 2005/06 winter semester, which is below the 1999/2000 level.

The size of the overall student population is influenced by the numbers of first-year students and the duration of attendance of students at institutions of higher education. The constantly rising numbers of first-year students from 1998 to 2003 are thus an important contributing factor to the increase in the total number of students.

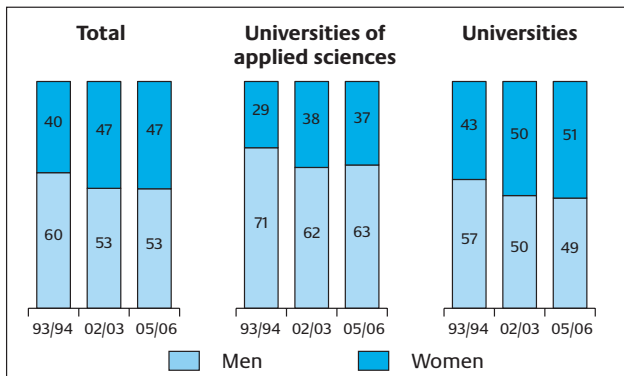
**Figure 2.1** Numbers of students and first-year students according to gender, 1975-2005  
excl. colleges of public administration, in thousands



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey  
<sup>1</sup> From 1991, including eastern Germany  
<sup>2</sup> From 1997, including foreign students with a German education  
<sup>3</sup> From 1990, including eastern Germany  
<sup>4</sup> From 1996, including foreign students with a German education

Source: Federal Statistical Office, Fachserie 11 Reihe 4.1, 2006/HIS-ICE database

**Figure 2.2** Students according to gender and type of institution of higher education in winter semester 1993/94, 2002-2003 and 2005/06<sup>1</sup> in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup>From 2002/03, including foreign students with a German education

Source: Federal Statistical Office, Fachserie 11 Reihe 4.1, 2006/HIS-ICE database

In the year 2005, approximately 292,000 German students and foreign students with a German education were enrolled in their first semester. Whereas half of all first-year students were female during the 2002/03 winter semester, the proportion of women in 2005 had fallen back to 48%. During this year, roughly 140,000 women and 152,000 men started their course of studies (Figure 2.1). There is an ongoing tendency toward an increasing proportion of women among the student population. During 2005, 47% of all students were women. This was slightly higher than the figure for 2003. During the 1993/94 winter semester, the proportion of women was only 40% (Figure 2.2).

## 2.2 Entrance Qualifications and Previous Education

### Types of Entrance Qualifications

As in previous years, the findings of the Social Survey reveal that the vast majority of students in the 2006 summer semester were admitted with a general higher education entrance qualification (83%). One out of every eight students has acquired entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences (12.5%). Only a small minority (3%) was admitted based on a subject-restricted entrance qualification, and 1% by means of other entrance qualifications to higher education (for example, based on professional experience in the field). Compared to 2003, the number of students with entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences has increased significantly (from 9% to 12%).

### Vocational Training Prior to Commencing Studies

The proportion of students who have completed vocational training prior to commencing their studies has dropped by one percentage point since the 2003 survey. One out of every four students has vocational qualifications (25%). This brings the proportion of students who have completed vocational training almost

to the level measured in 1985, when findings revealed a figure of 24% in western Germany.<sup>2</sup>

### Delay in Commencing Studies

As in previous years, students in 2006 commenced their studies on average 16 months after acquiring their higher education entrance qualification. However, the median of 9 months is significantly lower. The median indicates the time period within which half of all students have begun their studies.

A certain number of months in waiting time can be attributed, however, to the time difference between the exact date of leaving school and the earliest possible date for commencing studies. Based on this recognition, since the 17th Social Survey, only those students who have waited at least 4 months have been designated as "late starters". According to this definition, 72% of the students enrolled in the 2006 summer semester can be categorized as "late starters". This is 3% less than in 2003.

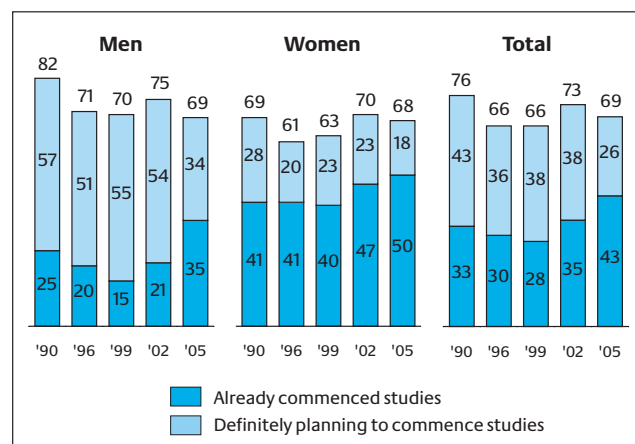
Potential influencing factors governing the time period between receiving higher education entrance qualification and commencing studies include gender, the point in time for completing vocational training, and the targeted type of institution of higher education. A regional comparison shows that first-year students from eastern Germany take only slightly more time before commencing their studies than first-year students from western Germany. In contrast to 2003, the social background of students has no significant influence on the point in time when students commence their studies.

### 2.3 Inclination to Study

Between 1990 and 1999, the gross study rate (the proportion of students who at the time of the survey had begun a course of study or were definitely planning to commence their studies)

<sup>2</sup> In this report, western Germany refers to the ten states (Länder) of the Federal Republic of Germany (plus associated West Berlin), which existed prior to German unification on 3 October 1990, called in previous HIS publications the Old Länder. By the same token, eastern Germany refers to the five reestablished states (Länder) of the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany), commonly known as the New Länder.

**Figure 2.3** Gross study rate six months after leaving upper secondary school individuals with a higher education entrance qualification, in %



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declined steadily (Figure 2.3). After the decline in the gross study rate appeared to have ended in 2002, subsequent findings have shown that this was only a temporary recovery. Following a brief increase in 2002, the gross study rate has continued to fall (Heine et al. 2005, 2006).

In 2005, there was a gross study rate of 69% that approached the fi-

### 3. Participation in Education

For this series of studies which deals with the social and economic situation of students in Germany, it has been deemed appropriate to explore the development of participation in education, its conditions, patterns and structure, and to present these aspects within the framework of this report. The social profile of students at institutions of higher education (see Chapter 4) is primarily the result of decision and selection processes that precede college and university life and take place within the family and in educational institutions, particularly at the transitional junctures between successive educational levels and schools.

A wide range of empirical studies over the past few years have proven that even when individual pupils have equal levels of performance, differing social backgrounds come into play and influence the course of their education. The selective influence of institutionalized education with regard to specific social groups will be illustrated here based on transitional rates between various educational institutions.

Since the 12th Social Survey (1988), reports have been compiled on the education participation rates of specific social groups at various educational levels. These rates are calculated solely based on “external” data, i.e., data that has not been collected through the Social Survey questionnaire but originates from the Federal Statistical Office or other empirical studies conducted by HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem.

Despite considerable developments in educational participation over the years, these time series, many of which are extremely long, give an impression of the largely unchanged connection between social background and educational opportunity. These findings compare the social background of first-year students with the social structure of individuals of the same age within the general population and thereby illustrate the social aspect of today's highly divergent degrees of opportunity to enter an institution of higher education.

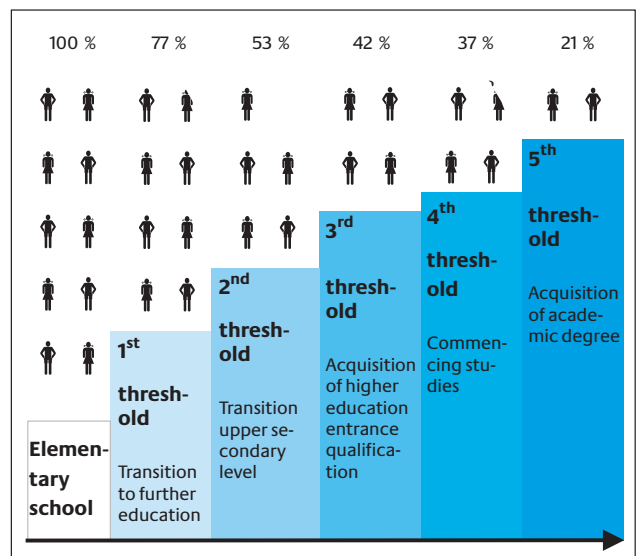
#### 3.1 Participation in Education – Educational Thresholds

In order to obtain an academic degree, students normally first have to successfully navigate the school and higher education system. Based on the structure of the educational system, five major thresholds need to be cleared at the characteristic transitional junctures between educational institutions (Figure 3.1).

The most long-term selective influence still stems from pupils' ability to clear the first educational threshold. Those who manage to reach the third or fourth threshold represent a considerably

group for the late 1990s. One of the reasons for this development is that school leavers with higher education entrance qualifications can still enjoy career opportunities even if they do not pursue studies at academic institutions. Difficulties financing studies could also be a reason why many young people decide not to attend an institution of higher education.

**Figure 3.1 Educational barriers: five thresholds in educational participation, 2004<sup>1</sup>**  
in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Proportion of Germans and foreign students with a German education in the corresponding age groups among the general population

Sources: Federal Statistical Office, Fachserie A Bevölkerung und Kultur, Reihe 10, Bildungswesen, I. Allgemeinbildende Schulen, different years; BMBF, general data 2005/06; Federal Statistical Office: population statistics; Federal Statistical Office: Hochschulstatistische Kennzahlen, Fachserie 11; HIS calculations

“pre-filtered” group, which is by no means purely a reflection of their performance characteristics. Correcting poor educational decisions is often a highly involved process involving a substantial amount of time.

#### 3.2 Calculating Education Participation Rates

It is important to strictly differentiate between education participation rates as calculated here and statistical figures on the social composition of an educational population (for example, students). Education participation rates provide information on the (statistical) chances that a member of a particular (age and/or social) group has of entering a specific educational institution or reaching a specific level of education.

In order to calculate education participation rates, the number of individuals of the same age or social group who have achieved the observed level of education is divided by the number of individuals of a specific age or specific social group within the general population.

The education participation rate for a social group – e.g., children of academics – at a specific level of education can be directly compared with the corresponding rate for children of another group, e.g., children of blue-collar workers. This allows for statements such as the following: “Out of 100 children from blue-collar families, x manage to commence studies at an institution of higher education, in contrast with y out of 100 children whose fathers are civil servants”.

These varying degrees of participation in education are an indication of the distribution of educational opportunities among different social groups. However, statements on opportunity structures are only possible when making comparisons, for instance, “Children of academics have x times as many chances of entering an institution of higher education as children from non-academic families” (odds ratio).<sup>3</sup>

In view of the current debate on the opportunities of children and young people with an immigrant background, this report will for the first time define German students and foreign students with a German education as a single parent population. Consequently, every effort has been made to use official statistics that fall precisely within this definition for the corresponding participation rates. This new approach means that previous time series are replaced by time series that include both groups: German students and foreign students with a German education. It is therefore impossible to compare the current time series with those from previous Social Surveys.

The following education participation rates for specific social groups at the fourth threshold represent an exception to the approach of adding foreigners with a German education to the parent population. These rates still pertain exclusively to German students. This limitation is based solely on data availability; such education participation rates are not included in official statistics and have to be assessed using a complex procedure (for information on this method, please see the main report on the Social Survey).

The following description is limited to the educational participation of specific social groups at two educational thresholds: Threshold 2 (attending upper secondary school) and Threshold 4 (commencing higher education studies).

### 3.3 Transition to Upper Secondary Level

The type of school attended during the 8th grade has a significant impact on the chances of later attending upper secondary school. Over half the young people who were between the ages of 17 and 18 in 2005 reached this educational level. This means that their participation in the 11th-13th grades has risen by six percentage points since the mid-1990s (1996: 48%). Children of all groups

<sup>3</sup> The odds ratio index expresses the chances that children of a particular social group (e.g., civil servants) have of being admitted to an institution of higher education in comparison to children of another social group (e.g., blue-collar workers). Higher education participation rates serve as the basis for these calculations. For example, if we compare the participation rates of the children of civil servants (64%) and blue-collar workers (18%) this leads to the following equation:  $64\% \div 18\% = 3.6$ . An index value of 1 represents an equal and balanced odds ratio. The calculated index value of 3.6 indicates that children of civil servants have a three-and-a-half times greater chance of entering an institution of higher education than children of blue-collar workers.

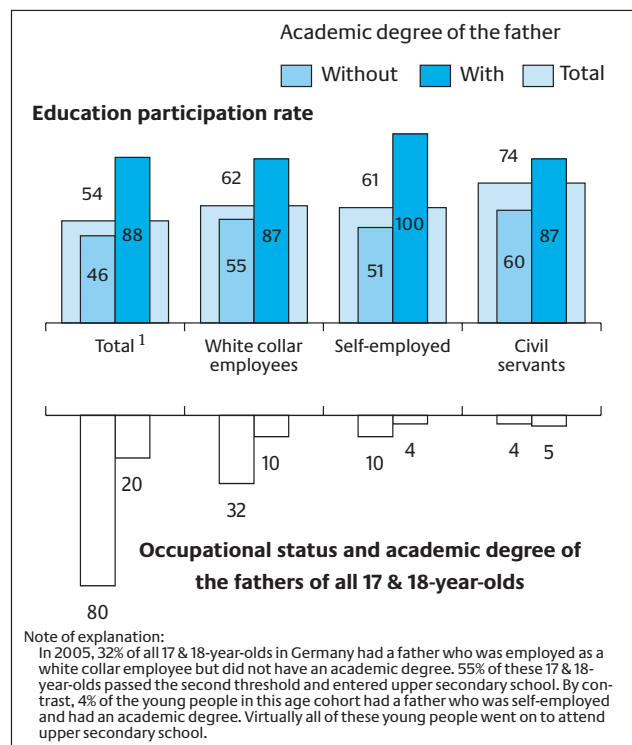
of origin benefited from this development, although to varying degrees.

In the main report of the 18th Social Survey, participation in education has been presented according to the parents' schooling and vocational training. The cumulative effects of one's origins are revealed when the occupational status of the parents is also taken into consideration. For example, within the four categories used to show occupational status, the proportion of those who have an academic degree varies considerably (Figure 3.2, lower section of the diagram). These differences are reflected in the observed participation rates.

Roughly a fifth of the parents (in most cases, the fathers<sup>4</sup>) of the 17 to 18-year-olds in the year 2005 have an academic degree. Civil servants have the highest proportion of degree holders

<sup>4</sup> Official statistics utilize the concept of a “family provider”. For the most part, the person designated by this term is the father. In single-parent-families, the family provider is the single parent who, in many cases, is the mother. Although the family-related reporting by the Federal Statistical Office has long since reacted to the growing multitude of different types of family and living situations and made the transition from the traditional family concept (marriage and parenthood) to a living-situation-based concept (partner and parenthood; see Heidenreich, Nöthen 2002, Nöthen 2005), for methodological reasons (feasibility and clarity), assessments of education participation rates among specific social groups continue to use the concept of a family provider as an indicator of the social status of a student's family of origin and the social status of specific age groups in the population.

**Figure 3.2 Threshold 2: Participation of 17 & 18-year-olds in upper secondary school according to the occupational status of the father – comparison of fathers with and without academic degrees, 2005**  
in %



<sup>1</sup> The “total” education participation rate includes the occupational status of blue collar worker. Due to the limited number of blue collar workers with an academic degree, the corresponding rates could not be shown.

Sources: Federal Statistical Office, special findings from the 2005 microcensus; HIS calculations

(roughly 50%), followed by the self-employed and white-collar employees (over a quarter and roughly a quarter, respectively). As expected, the number of blue-collar workers with academic degrees is so low that it is not reported in the official statistics.

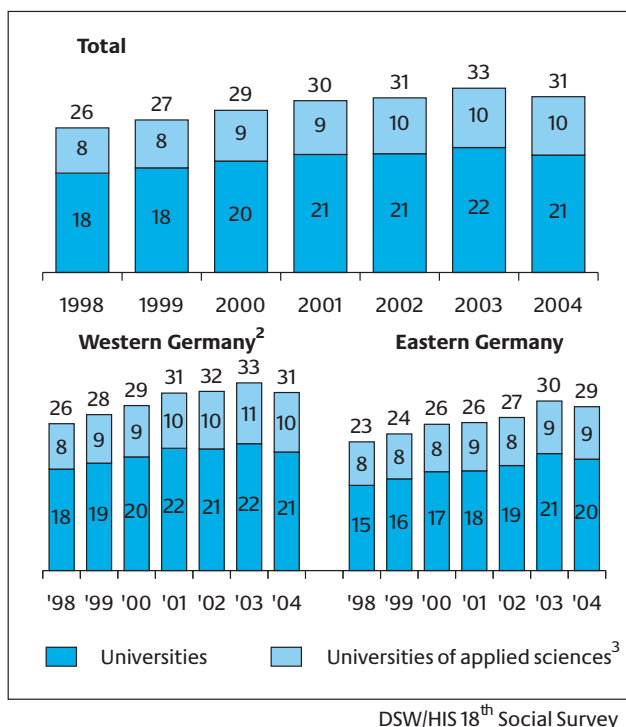
When “academic degree” is included as a characteristic, it overshadows the influence of occupational status on participation rates in upper secondary education. The education participation rates of children of white-collar employees, self-employed and civil servants are roughly equivalent when a comparison is made between those children whose fathers have not acquired an academic degree (ranging from 51% to 60%) and those whose fathers have graduated from a university or similar institution (Figure 3.2). The maximum participation rate is achieved by those children whose fathers are self-employed and have an academic degree (e.g., doctors, lawyers, other freelancers).

### 3.4 Threshold 4: Participation in Institutions of Higher Education

A fourth educational threshold is the commencement of studies. By far not all secondary school leavers with a higher education entrance qualification go on to pursue an academic degree.

The number of individuals with a higher education entrance

**Figure 3.3 Threshold 4: First-year student rates according to the country of acquiring higher education entrance qualification, 1998-2004<sup>1</sup> – comparison according to type of institution of higher education and region**  
in %



<sup>1</sup> Proportion of first-year students (German and foreign with a German education) in the corresponding age group in the general population according to the country of acquiring higher education entrance qualification. Rates are calculated for the individual age groups and then added up.

<sup>2</sup> Including Berlin

<sup>3</sup> Including colleges of public administration

Sources: Federal Statistical Office, Hochschulstatistische Kennzahlen, Fachserie 11; HIS calculations (figures have been rounded off)

qualification who choose to pursue an academic degree or a vocational career is linked to a number of factors (e.g., the number of training positions or places available in higher education, the opportunities in individual professions, and the unemployment rate of jobseekers with an academic degree). Individual preferences and social background (with all its implications, e.g., educational aspirations, value systems, economic and cultural resources, educational cost-benefit considerations) play a key role in these decisions. Detailed analyses of issues connected with this topic can be found in the reports on the surveys of individuals with a higher education entrance qualification that are regularly conducted by HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem.

#### 3.4.1 First-Year Student Rates According to Country of Study and Country of Acquiring Higher Education Entrance Qualification

The first-year student rate according to the country of study<sup>5</sup> in 2006 was 36%. This is lower than the all-time participation record high of 39% in 2003. Looking back over the past eleven years (1995 - 2006), the first-year student rate has risen by nine percentage points. The growing student population at universities has made a greater contribution to this increase than universities of applied sciences with their relatively restrictive admission requirements.

The same pattern – a significant increase in the first-year student rate, primarily fueled by a higher demand for university education – also characterizes the developments in eastern and western Germany. However, the gap in the overall participation rates between eastern and western Germany (current figures were not available at the time when this report was released) remained largely unchanged between 1995 and 2004 (31% vs. 39%).

First-year student rates according to the country of acquiring higher education entrance qualification are per definition lower than the participation rates according to the country of study because they do not include foreign students (i.e., foreign students who acquired their higher education entrance certificate abroad) enrolled at German universities. This first-year student rate, which is the actual yardstick for the performance of the German education system, came to 31% in 2004 (Figure 3.3). This is six percentage points lower than the first-year student rate according to the “country of higher education entrance qualification” of the same year. Hence, approximately one-fifth of the first-year student rate according to the “country of study” can be attributed to foreigners who came to Germany to study.

Western Germany has a slightly higher first-year student rate than eastern Germany. The difference between the first-year stu-

<sup>5</sup> Within the scope of this report, the “country of study” refers to all students enrolled in Germany irrespective of their nationality and/or the country where they gained their higher education entrance qualification, i.e., Germans, foreigners with a German education, as well as foreigners with a foreign education who came to Germany to study. By contrast, the student rate according to the “country of higher education entrance qualification” pertains only to first-year students enrolled at German institutions of higher education who are Germans and/or have acquired their secondary education in Germany (that is German students and foreign students with a German education). Due to the fact that student immigrants have no reference group among the same-age permanently residing general population in Germany, the first-year student rate according to the “country of study” is higher than the rate according to the “country of higher education entrance qualification”.

dent rate according to country of origin compared to the first-year student rate according to the country of study is significantly larger (8 percentage points difference) in western Germany than in eastern Germany (2 percentage points), which is due to the differing proportions of foreign students in both regions.

### Participation and Gender

Since the mid-1990s, men and women have enjoyed virtually equal participation in higher education. An examination of the first-year student rates according to the country of study reveals that there were equal proportions of men and women who began their studies at an institution of higher education in 2004. Aside from this parity on a national level, however, there are minor regional differences between eastern and western Germany. While the participation rate of men is slightly higher than women in western Germany, in eastern Germany women have a higher first-year participation rate than men.

An evaluation according to the country of acquiring higher education entrance qualification reveals more substantial regional differences. In 2004, the first-year student rate among men in western Germany was three percentage points higher than the rate for women. By contrast, for a number of years the opposite has been true of eastern Germany, namely a higher participation rate for women.

Although a larger proportion of women acquire a higher education entrance qualification than their male counterparts (2004: 39% men, 45% women), a lower proportion of these female school leavers use these qualifications to enter institutions of higher education. At universities (excluding universities of applied sciences), however, for the past few years women have made up more than half of all first-year students and of the overall student population (WS 2006/07: 54% and 52%, respectively).

### 3.4.2 Participation of Specific Social Groups

The education participation rate of specific social groups sheds light on the educational opportunities of children from various social backgrounds and how the distribution of these opportunities has changed in recent years.

#### School Leaving Certificate of the Father

As mentioned earlier, there is a close connection between the parents' level of education and their children's attendance of upper secondary school. At this point in a young person's education, decisions have already been made that will have an effect on the transition to an institution of higher education many years later.

One of these factors is the school leaving certificate of the father. In 2005, a total of 71% of young people between the ages of 19 and 25, and whose fathers had a higher education entrance qualification, began to study at an institution of higher education. The majority enrolled at a university (i.e., not at a university of applied sciences). By contrast, the participation rate of children whose father had a lower secondary school leaving certificate was only 19%, or nearly four times as low (Figure 3.4).

Midway between these two groups are the educational opportunities of those individuals whose fathers had acquired an inter-

mediary secondary school leaving certificate or similar qualification (26%). A comparison with the social structure of the general population reveals that the smallest social group, i.e., parents with a higher education entrance qualification, sends by far the largest proportion of children to study at institutions of higher education.

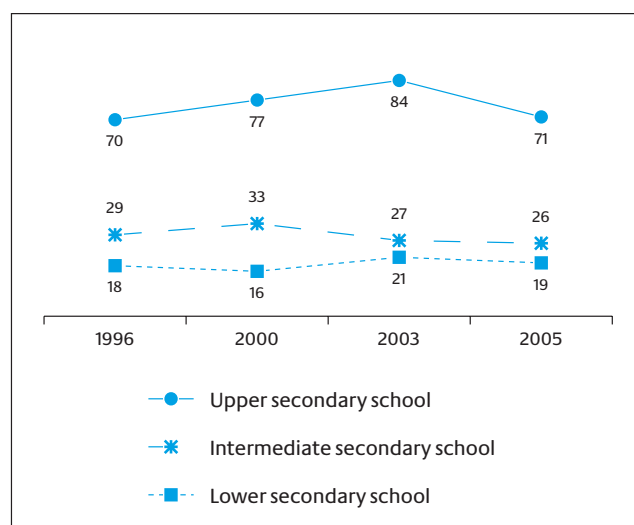
At the other end of the social scale, the opposite is true: the largest group in the population has the smallest proportion of children who clear the threshold to upper education. This is where there is the greatest social gap between the children of those families where the father has already acquired a higher education entrance qualification and children from families where the father has a lower educational status (lower or intermediate secondary school leaving certificate).

Compared to the year 2003, when the 17th Social Survey was conducted, the participation rates of all three groups at institutions of higher education have declined. These findings reflect an increase in the proportion of upper secondary school leavers who decide not to pursue a higher education and a decrease in first-year student rates (both according to country of study and country of acquiring higher education entrance qualification) for the same time period.

### Occupational Status of the Father

Occupational status is a standard demographic variable in the statistics gathered by Germany's Federal Statistical Office. Information on this characteristic is available in a number of extensive time series that focus on four groups – blue collar, white collar, self-employed and civil servants – that are highly heterogeneous, for example, with regard to their educational status. The use of "occupational status" as a characteristic enjoys a long tradition in

**Figure 3.4 Threshold 4: Participation in institutions of higher education according to the father's level of education, 1996-2005 (first-year student rate)<sup>1</sup>**  
in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Only German first-year students

Sources: Federal Statistical Office: population statistics; Federal Statistical Office: statistics on institutions of higher education; Federal Statistical Office: special findings from the 2000 microcensus; HIS: survey of first-year students, 2005/06 winter semester; HIS calculations

educational research, which explains why there are so many long time series on this demographic feature.

The four levels of occupational status listed here ostensibly correspond to highly diverse higher education opportunities. Children of blue collar workers are at the lowest level with an education participation rate of just 17%, followed by the children of white collar employees, where proportionally more than twice as many (40%) attend an institution of higher education. The first-year student rate among children from self-employed families is three times as high as the rate for children of blue collar families (52%). This is even surpassed by children from a civil servant family who have a first-year student rate of nearly two out of three (65%) and a four times greater chance than children of blue collar workers of studying at an institution of higher learning.

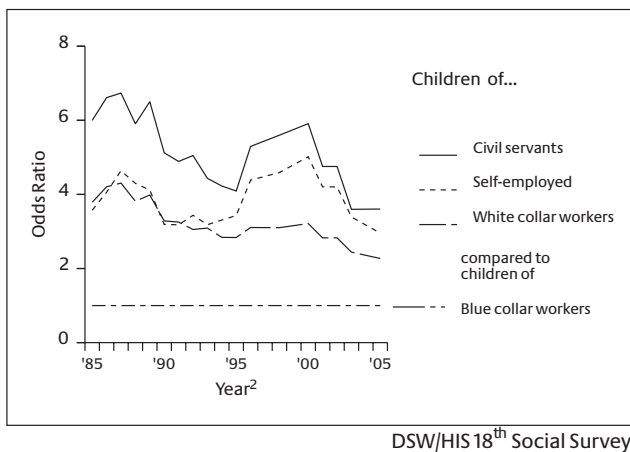
### Tracking Educational Participation According to Occupational Status

It is possible to track the changes in first-year student rates in connection with the occupational status of the father over a period of two decades in western Germany. When it comes to eastern Germany, the time series for educational participation according to occupational status spans only a decade.

Looking back over the past two decades, the education participation rates of children from different social backgrounds have tended to converge, although in a discontinuous manner. Changes in the distribution of opportunities, illustrated using the odds ratio, show a decrease in the gap between the participation rates of children of civil servants, self-employed, white collar employees and blue collar workers since the mid-1980s (Figure 3.5).

For example, in 1985, a child in western Germany whose father was a civil servant was six times more likely to commence studies at an institution of higher education than a child from a blue collar family. By contrast, in 2005, children of civil servants

**Figure 3.5 Odds ratio for participation in institutions of higher education – children of civil servants, self-employed and white collar employees compared with children of blue collar workers, 1985-2005, in western Germany<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Only German first-year students in western Germany  
<sup>2</sup> There are no data for the years 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2004, which is why the values for these years have been interpolated for this diagram.

Sources: Federal Statistical Office: population statistics; Federal Statistical Office: statistics on institutions of higher education; Federal Statistical Office: special findings from a number of different microcensuses; HIS: first-year student surveys from a number of different years; HIS calculations

were 3.6 times more likely to enter higher education than children whose fathers were blue collar workers. Consequently, the gap in opportunities has decreased significantly over the past 20 years. Nevertheless, this equalizing process cannot overshadow the fact that there remain large disparities in education participation rates.

The same trend has been documented in eastern Germany, although the observation period only spans a single decade (Figure 3.6). In 1995, children in this region whose fathers were either self-employed or freelancers were seven times more likely to enter higher education than children of blue collar workers. Within the following ten years, this discrepancy was reduced by half, in other words, in 2005, children of self-employed or freelancers were 3.5 times more likely to attend an institution of higher education than children of blue collar workers.

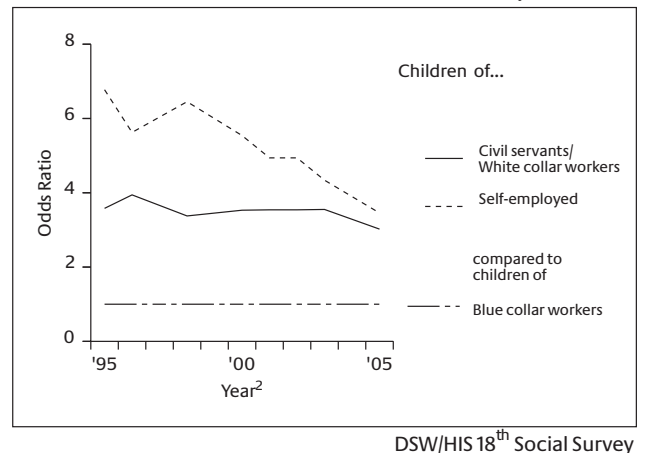
### Occupational Status and Academic Degree of the Father

In order to reveal, at least to a certain degree, the influence of educational components within the heterogeneous categories for occupational status, the following section will focus on whether or not the father has acquired an academic degree.

As has already been shown with regard to educational participation at Threshold 2 (attending upper secondary school), when “academic degree” is included as a characteristic, the occupational status has much less of an influence on children’s participation in upper secondary education. The education participation rate of the children of civil servants without an academic degree is just as high as the rate for children of self-employed parents without a degree (Figure 3.7). The gap between these two groups and the children of white collar workers without an academic degree is now only roughly 10%.

By contrast, the educational participation of children from fa-

**Figure 3.6 Odds ratio for participation in institutions of higher education – children of civil servants, self-employed and white collar employees compared with children of blue collar workers, 1995-2005, in eastern Germany<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Only German first-year students in eastern Germany  
<sup>2</sup> There are no data for the years 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2004, which is why the values for these years have been interpolated for this diagram.

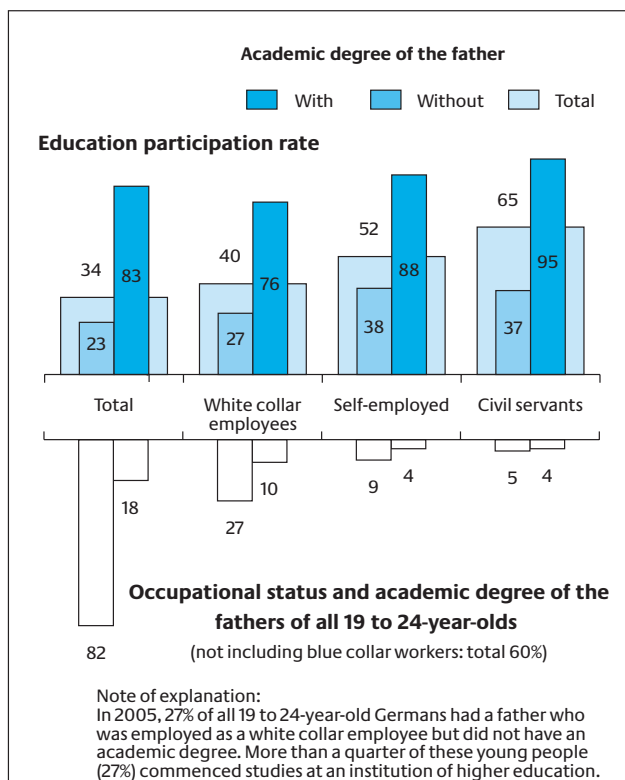
Sources: Federal Statistical Office: population statistics; Federal Statistical Office: statistics on institutions of higher education; Federal Statistical Office: special findings from a number of different microcensuses; HIS: first-year student surveys from a number of different year; HIS calculations

milies with academic degrees is far greater. The question of whether or not a child goes on to pursue higher education is thus above all dependent on the educational status of the parental household – primarily the academic background – while the occupational status is only of secondary importance.

A comparison of the relative proportions of fathers with academic degrees among white collar workers, the self-employed, and civil servants sheds light on the importance of coming from an academic-oriented family. Approximately one-quarter of the fathers in the age-specific group of the general population who are white collar employees have an academic degree (Figure 3.7, lower part of the diagram: occupational status of all fathers). When it comes to the self-employed, more than a third have completed their studies and almost half of the civil servant fathers have a higher education.

In effect, the level of educational opportunity enjoyed by individuals in German society is actually more a reflection of their parent's level of educational than of their parents' occupational status. The remaining disparities, primarily among the three groups with an academic degree, also show that occupational status is by no means totally irrelevant to academic performance. Thus, a comparison of parents with academic degrees reveals that the

**Figure 3.7 Threshold 4: Participation of 19 to 24-year-olds in institutions of higher education according to the fathers' occupational status 2005 – comparison of fathers with and without academic degrees, 2005 (first-year student rates) in %**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> The "total" education participation rate includes the occupational status of blue collar worker. Due to the limited number of blue collar workers with an academic degree, the corresponding rates could not be shown.

Sources: Federal Statistical Office, special findings from the 2005 microcensus; HIS calculations

children of civil servants still come through with the highest rate of participation in education. The subsequent order – first the self-employed, then white collar employees – also remains the same here.

### 3.4.3 Social Selection and Educational Paths

The impact of social selection on children's educational paths on their way toward higher education can be illustrated using a funnel-shaped diagram. In contrast to earlier Social Surveys, this illustration distinguishes between students whose fathers have an academic degree and students whose fathers have no higher education. As a result, Figure 3.8 cannot be compared with the corresponding diagrams of former Social Surveys, which distinguished between "upper" and "low" social backgrounds.

A comparison of the groups at the two extremes – between 100 children of parents with an academic degree on the one hand, and 100 children with fathers who do not have a higher education on the other – shows that the chances for children from non-academic households of attending an upper secondary school are already drastically reduced at the transition to Threshold 2.

Children whose parents have a higher education are nearly twice as likely to attend upper secondary school as children whose fathers do not have an academic degree. Reaching grades 11-13 means automatically for almost all children in this group that they will pursue an academic degree: 94% of the children of parents with a higher education go on to attend an institution of higher education. Children of parents with an academic degree have a first-year student rate of 83% that is three-and-a-half times (odds ratio = 3.6) greater than the rate for children of parents who do not have a higher education (23%). The educational path of children from less educated families becomes even more restricted after upper secondary school, a junction where only one out of two students manages to continue to an institution of higher education (transition rate: 50%).

There are thus a multitude of selection processes along a child's educational path that result in increasingly divergent opportunities for the children of parents who have an academic degree and those whose parents do not have a higher education.

### 3.5 Educational Participation and Social Make-up

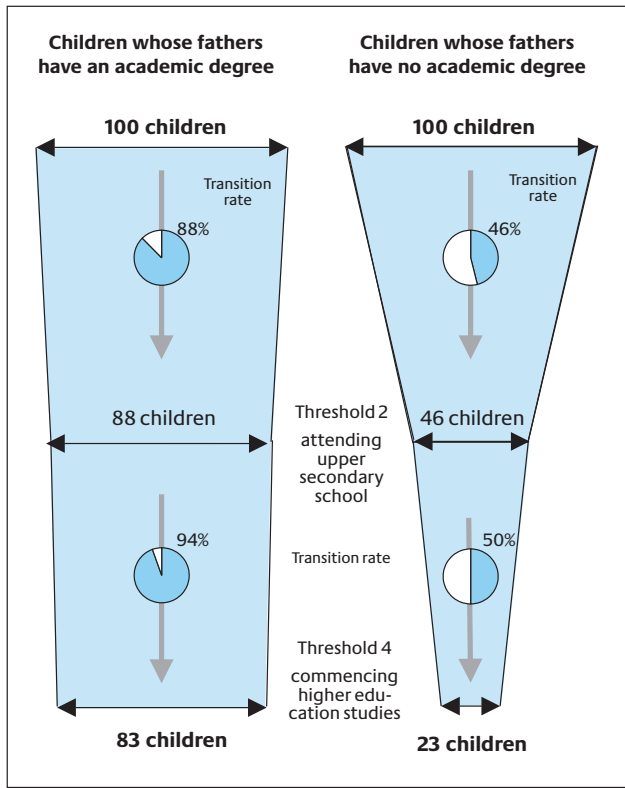
The social makeup of first-year students is primarily the result of the educational participation of specific social groups and the social makeup of the general population.

The number of children from a specific social group who commence their studies depends on more than just their education participation rate; it is also linked to the size of the social group in question. In 2005, for example, there were 349,000 blue collar workers' children between the ages of 19 and 25, in other words, in the main age group used to recruit first-year students for higher education. Only 17% of these children of blue collar workers entered institutions of higher learning. This comes to 59,000 first-year students whose fathers are blue collar workers (Figure 3.9).

The slightly smaller group consisting of the children of white collar employees (a total of 314,000, including 85,000 whose



**Figure 3.8 Educational filter in 2005: Social selection and educational paths according to the father's academic degree in %**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

Sources: Federal Statistical Office, special findings from the 2001 and 2005 microcensus; HIS first-year student survey, 2005; HIS calculations

father has an academic degree) in the same age group has, thanks to its participation rate that is more than twice as high (40% overall, 76% with an academic degree), more than twice as many first-year students (125,000) than the children of blue collar workers. The relatively small group of children of civil servants and the self-employed have significantly higher education participation rates (total: 65% and 52%, respectively; with an academic degree: 95% and 88%, respectively) and send roughly as many students to pursue a higher education (a total of 48,000 and 59,000, respectively) as the exponentially larger group of blue collar workers.

Consequently, the total of 290,000 German first-year students in the 2005/2006 academic year can be broken down as follows: 17% civil servants, 20% self-employed, 43% white collar employees, and 20% blue collar workers.

In comparison to their proportion of the population of the

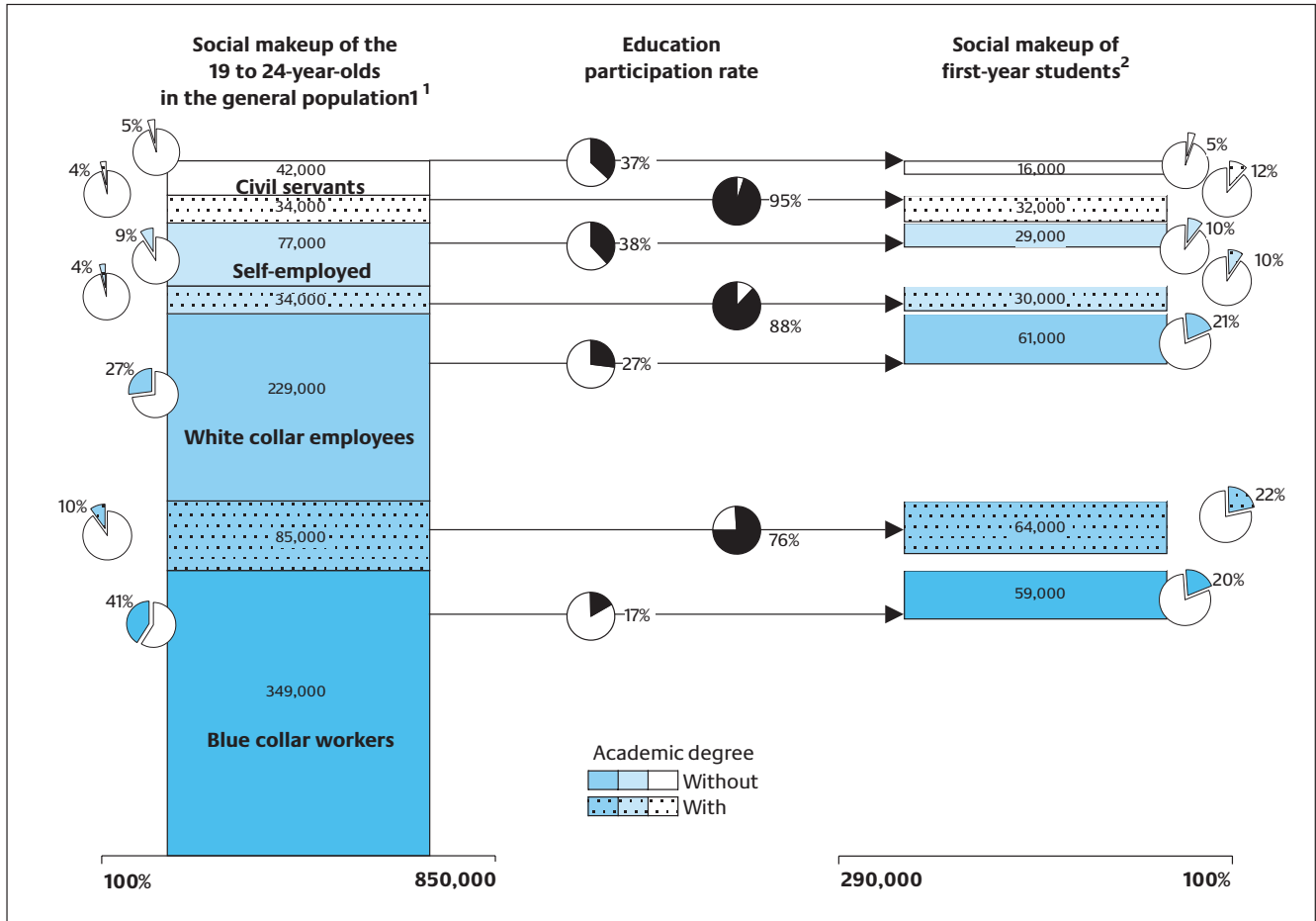
same age, the children of civil servants are overrepresented at institutions of higher education by a factor of 1.8 (9% in the population vs. 17% of first-year students). The children of the self-employed achieve with 20% a proportion that is one-and-a-half times as large as their proportion of the age cohort (13%). Children of white collar workers are also slightly overrepresented by a factor of 1.2 (43% to 37%).

Children of blue collar workers are the only social group that is significantly underrepresented among first-year students in the 2005 academic year. Their participation rate is only half as large as their corresponding proportion among the population of the same age (20% vs. 41%).

Despite changes that have taken place over the past two decades, for example, in the social structure of young people of the same age, in the absolute size of social groups, and in the educational participation of specific social groups (see the long version of the report on the 18th Social Survey), the social structure of first-year students has remained virtually unchanged.

Between 1985 and 2005, the proportions of children of both blue collar workers and white collar employees among first-year students have risen by only one percentage point. Social changes that are taking place outside institutions of higher education have apparently had little impact on the makeup of the student population. Primary and secondary effects of social inequality that precede higher education evidently have a long-term influence. Since the 1980s, the internal structure of the student body has remained largely isolated and has not undergone any major changes.

**Figure 3.9 Educational participation and social groups according to the academic degree of the father, 2005**  
*only Germans, in absolute terms and in %*



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Synthetic mean of the numbers of 19-24-year olds in Germany (values rounded)

<sup>2</sup> German first-year students in the 2005/06 academic year at universities, universities of applied sciences, and colleges of public administration (in round figures)

Sources: Federal Statistical Office: population statistics; Federal Statistical Office: statistics on institutions of higher education; Federal Statistical Office: special findings from the 2000 microcensus; HIS first-year student survey, 2005/06 winter semester

## 4. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Students

Data on the demographic and social makeup of the student population, and the development of its social profile over time, have furnished important information that paves the way for a better understanding of numerous findings on courses of study and the living situations of students. In addition, this data provides insights into how social changes – such as educational policy initiatives or changes in educational (selective) behavior over a number of generations – affect the social structure of the student body. In this chapter, data derived from official statistics (gender) will be examined and results from the Social Survey will be presented (age, marital status, socio-structural characteristics of origin).

Age and gender are two of the most important demographic characteristics that influence students' studying and living situa-

tions. Both ascriptive characteristics are closely linked to the social status of students with regard to their marital/partnership status and parenthood, as will be demonstrated based on current findings.

### 4.1 Age Structure

Students at German institutions of higher education are on average 24.9 years old. First-year students have an average age of 24.3 years. As expected, students in this group who are pursuing a bachelor's degree are the youngest (average 23.0 years) and those who are in a degree program at a university of applied sciences are the oldest (average 25.3 years). In post-graduate studies, the average age is 31.2 years. In comparison to the 17th Social Survey,

the average age of students pursuing their first degree has remained virtually unchanged (2003 summer semester: 24.4 years). Therefore, it can be concluded that the trend toward a younger student body observed since 1997 has discontinued.

Female students are on average younger than male students – in both first-degree programs and in post-graduate programs. The age diagram (Figure 4.1) illustrates that the lower average age of women is due to the fact that they commence their studies earlier than men (see “Delay in Commencing Studies,” in Chapter 2.2). The age difference between men and women is 0.7 years in first-degree programs, but increases to an entire year when students reach post-graduate studies.

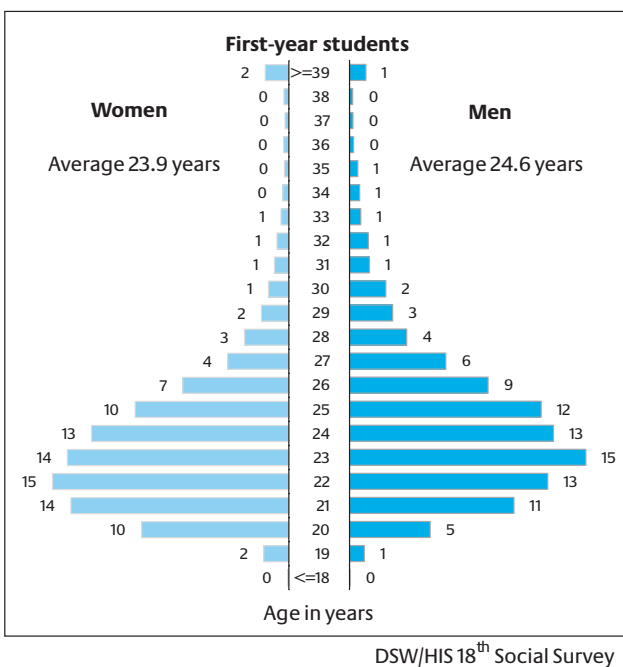
### 4.2 Marital Status

For a number of years, there has been relatively little change in the nature of the student population with regard to marital or partnership status. Slightly more than half (52%) are single and in a committed relationship. Approximately two-fifths are not in a committed relationship (43%). Over the years, the proportion of students who are married has remained low (5%).

Significantly more women are in a committed relationship than men. Only 37% of female students are not in a committed relationship (men: 49%). Although foreign students with a German education are more often married than German students, they are also more often not in a committed relationship, which is also a reflection of the close link between partnership and marital status.

Not surprisingly, marital status is also connected to students' age. As students get older, there is a smaller proportion of the student population that is not a committed relationship.

**Figure 4.1 Students' age structure**  
*Germans and foreign students with a German education, in % according to age groups, mean in years*



### 4.3 Students with Children

Students with children constitute one of the main issues of the 18th Social Survey. The questionnaire included an extra section that more closely examined their living situation. A special report will be issued on these findings. As a result, the main report on the Social Survey only contains a brief statistical overview.

In the 2006 summer semester, 7% of all students were parents (Figure 4.2). In 2003, this proportion was 6%. This minor increase in the proportion of parents in the student body can be attributed to the fact that more female students with children are currently enrolled than three years ago (2006: 8% compared to 7% in 2003). The proportion of fathers at institutions of higher education has remained constant at 6%.

Only 5% of students pursuing their first degree have (at least) one child. This contrasts with post-graduate students, where roughly one in five students has a child – and, once again, more women are parents than men (Figure 4.2).

The varying proportions of students with children are primarily linked to the age of the students. Less than 1% of the youngest students have a child. When students reach their mid-20s, this proportion increases, and female students are more likely to begin founding a family. At the age of 28-29 years, 10% of male students and nearly 18% of female students are already parents.

**Figure 4.2 Students with children**  
*in %*

Categories	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total</b>	7	6	8
First degree	5	5	6
Post-graduate degree	20	17	22
<b>Age in years</b>			
Up to 21	1	0	1
22-23	2	2	2
24-25	3	2	4
26-27	6	4	8
28-29	13	10	18
30 and older	35	28	45

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

### 4.4 Social Origins of Students

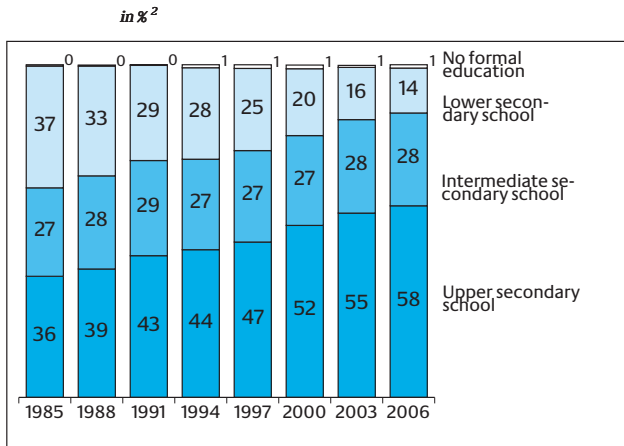
In addition to characteristics such as students' age, gender and marital status, the social profile of students also includes the nature of their family backgrounds. This is assessed in the Social Survey based on information regarding the general education, vocational training, and employment of their parents.

#### Schooling and Vocational Training of Parents

The parents' level of education and vocational training forms the basis for determining the educational origin of students. The highest level of education in the parents' household is used as the defining element for this characteristic.

More than half (58%, Figure 4.3) of the parents of students in the 2006 summer semester have a higher education entrance

**Figure 4.3 Highest level of education of the parents, 1985-2006<sup>1</sup>**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 1991, including eastern Germany; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

qualification. Compared to 2003, this proportion has risen again (three percentage points). Since the percentage of parents with an intermediary secondary school leaving certificate has remained constant, this development has led to a further decrease in the proportion of students from families with a lower secondary school leaving certificate. Consequently, as has been observed over the past few years, the trend has continued toward a higher level of (school) education among students' families of origin.

There are two explanations for this development. On the one hand, social selection processes influence children as they proceed along their educational path toward higher education (see Chapter 3) and, on the other hand, this trend reflects the rising level of education among the general population.

At universities, there is a social structure that differs from that of universities of applied sciences, as witnessed, for example, by the level of schooling among the parents of students. Universities of applied sciences, or rather the courses of study offered by these institutions, are used primarily by the more non-academic educated segments of society as a means of climbing the educational ladder. This is reflected by the fact that less than half of the students at universities of applied sciences have parents with a higher education entrance qualification (47%), but one-third (34%) have parents with an intermediary secondary school leaving certificate and nearly a fifth (19%) of the parents have only completed lower secondary school. This contrasts markedly with the situation at universities, where 62% of the students come from a family with a higher education entrance qualification.

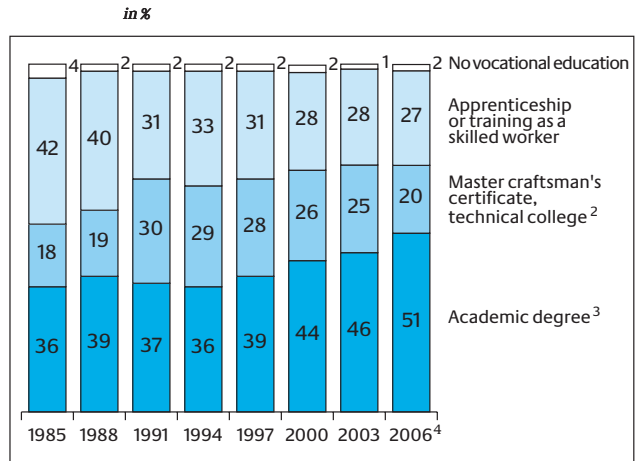
**Vocational Education of the Parents**

In the 2006 summer semester, half the students came from households in which at least one parent had an academic degree (Figure 4.4) and a quarter of all students came from households in which both parents had a university-level education. The parents in over a quarter of the households have completed an apprenticeship or training as a skilled worker (27%). In one out of every five households, a master craftsman's certificate or a degree from a technical college or a university of applied sciences is the highest

vocational qualification (20%).

As has already been demonstrated, the educational backgrounds of students at universities differ from those at universities of applied sciences in terms of the vocational qualifications of parents. The parents of students at universities tend to have a higher level of qualification than the parents of students at universities of applied sciences.

**Figure 4.4 Highest vocational qualification of the parents, 1985-2006<sup>1</sup>**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 1991, including eastern Germany; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

<sup>2</sup> In the years 1991-2003, this included schools of engineering and business colleges

<sup>3</sup> 1985-1988 this included schools of engineering and business colleges

<sup>4</sup> From 2006, including foreign students with a German education

**Occupational Status of the Parents**

As mentioned earlier, the occupational status of the parents is determined according to the following four legal definitions employed by the German social security system: blue collar worker, white collar employee, civil servant and self-employed. Within these categories, additional distinctions are made in accordance with qualifications and/or income. If the parents are not (or no longer) working, then the students were asked to provide their last occupation.

For many years, the results concerning the occupational status of the parents have remained virtually unchanged. The majority of the parents of students work (or used to work) as white collar employees, with mothers (62%) outnumbering fathers (42%). However, most mothers have intermediate-level jobs, i.e., a relatively large proportion have subordinate positions. By contrast, men relatively often hold high-level jobs or have managerial positions.

A fifth of all fathers are blue collar workers as are a fifth of all self-employed or freelancers. Proportionally more fathers are civil servants than mothers (18% vs. 12%). There are roughly equal numbers of mothers who work as blue collar workers, self-employed / freelance, and civil servants (between 11% and 12%).

**Social Group of Origin**

The term "social group of origin" has been used for years as a notion to help convey the findings of the Social Survey. The subcate-

gories under this term – “low”, “middle”, “high” and “upper” – are calculated based on three characteristics of the parental household: highest general level of education, highest vocational qualification, and vocational status of the parents. As with the individual variables cited with regard to education, “social group of origin” is used to describe vertical inequalities between students. This term abstracts from horizontal disparities (e.g., lifestyles, physical appearance, values, and educational aspirations) that have no bearing on the design of this study.

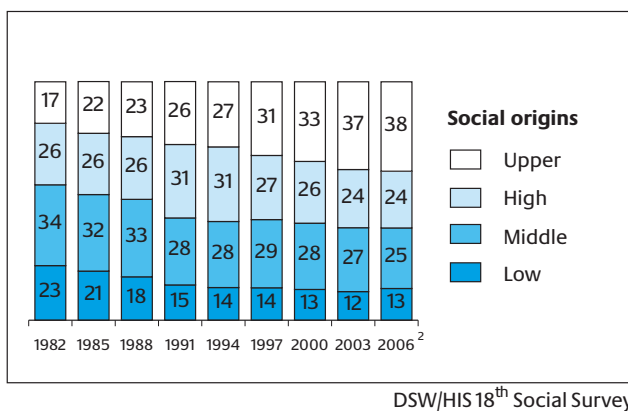
Combining closely associated characteristics to create the concept of “social groups of origin” makes it possible to conduct a relatively exhaustive evaluation of the importance of students' family backgrounds. A wide range of findings on the issues dealt with by the Social Survey – for example, study financing (Chapter 6), time budget (Chapter 9), student employment (Chapter 10) and attitude toward studies – clearly show that the characteristic “social origin”, as it is used here, continues to remain a key distinguishing variable.

**Long-Term Developments**

The majority of students in the 2006 summer semester come from the “upper” group of origin (38%, Figure 4.5). Roughly a quarter belong to the “high” and to the “middle” groups of origin (24% and 25%, respectively). In recent years, this distribution has changed only minimally.

These changes can be partially attributed to the fact that foreign students with a German education have been included in the random sampling, as revealed by a comparison of the groups of origin with German students. There are three times as many families of foreigners with a German education that come from the “low” group as among German students' families (42% vs. 12%), and this has led to a slight increase in the proportion of this group of origin in the overall profile of the student body. Correspondingly smaller proportions of foreigners with a German education belong to the remaining three groups of origin. An increase in the proportion of the “upper” group of origin can be primarily attributed to corresponding developments among the general student population.

**Figure 4.5 Changes in the social makeup of the student body according to social groups of origin, 1982-2006<sup>1</sup> in %**



<sup>1</sup> From 1991, including eastern Germany

<sup>2</sup> From 2006, including foreign students with a German education

Changes in the student social structure are partially the result of developments in the participation rates of individual social groups in higher education (see Chapter 3). In addition, this trend can be partially explained by the growing pool of individuals in the general population who have a higher education, as described above.

Over the past two and a half decades, changes in the social makeup of the student body have consistently followed one trend: the proportion from the “upper” group of origin has continuously risen, while the proportion of students (primarily) from the lower two groups of origin has declined.

**Social Origins and Study Characteristics**

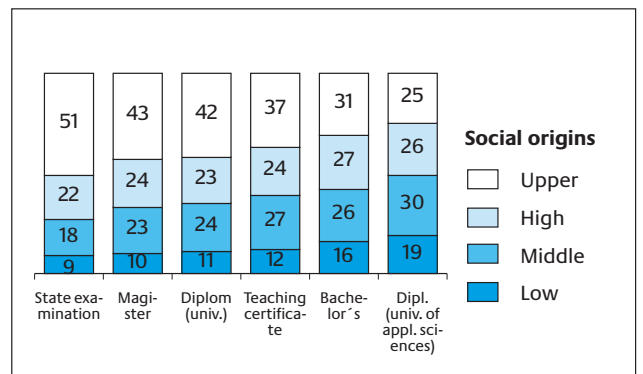
For years, there have been clear differences in the social profiles of students attending the various individual types of institutions of higher education in Germany. Universities of applied sciences can be characterized as more socially open because they have relatively large numbers of students from non-academic educated backgrounds. Only a quarter of the students at universities of applied sciences come from the “upper” group of origin and, as a result, these schools have above-average numbers of the two lowest groups.

Evidently, there are significantly higher social barriers to entering universities, where 42% of students come from the “upper” group of origin and only one-tenth come from the lowest social group.

Students' social backgrounds also play a key role in their selection of a course of study. Courses of study that conclude with a state examination (not including the teaching profession) have the highest proportion of students from the “upper” group of origin and the lowest percentage of students from the lowest two groups (51% vs. 9%, Figure 4.6).

The social makeup in courses of study that lead to a bachelor's degree differs from the average profile found in traditional German first-degree programs. Bachelor's programs have fewer students from the “upper” group of origin, yet higher proportions of students from the “high” and “low” groups of origin. These discrepancies can be attributed to the current situation with regard to the new reforms, which have been predominantly imple-

**Figure 4.6 Social makeup of the student body according to the type of degree –selected degrees first-year students, in %, according to type of degree**



mented at universities of applied sciences, and above all in engineering programs where students from non-academic educated social strata are most commonly found.

The social makeup in master's programs – which for the most part still include very few students in Germany – corresponds to a large degree to the average profile for the student social structure and shows no indication of socially selective admission criteria.

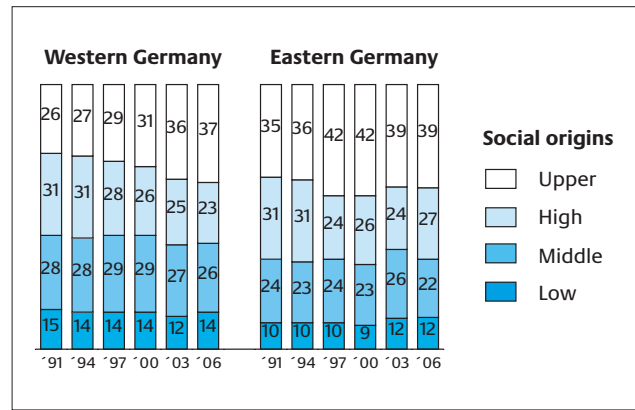
There are also differences among the various groups of origin when it comes to their preferences with regard to a major (main subject area). At universities as well as universities of applied sciences, students from the “low” group of origin tend to enroll in subject areas such as social sciences, social services, education, psychology, and engineering rather than in areas such as medicine, languages and humanities.

Majors preferred by academic-educated social strata include medicine, physics, astronomy, music and media-related and artistic degree programs. This contrasts with non-academic educated social groups who are more likely to enroll in economic, social science, social services, engineering, and educational science degree programs.

**Social Origins and Regional Developments**

A larger proportion of students in eastern Germany come from higher social strata than in western Germany (Figure 4.7). This difference has been observed time and again. In 2003, for the first time, a decrease in the proportion from the “upper” social group

**Figure 4.7 Students in western and eastern Germany according to social origins<sup>1</sup>**  
in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 2000, all of Berlin was counted as part of the western Germany; up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

was observed, and this observation was repeated in 2006.

Looking back over the past decade, the social makeup has “drifted lower” in eastern Germany and “edged higher” in western Germany, resulting in a slight convergence in the social profiles of the two regions.

## 5. Characteristics of the Degree Program

### 5.1 Subject Area Structure and Degree Pursued

#### Changes in the Subject Area Structure

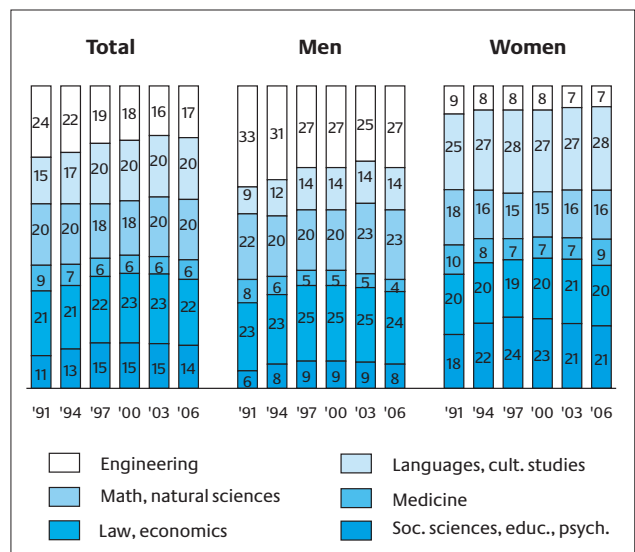
The subject area structure in first-degree programs has not changed significantly since 2003. There was a minor increase in the proportion of students in engineering sciences, rising to more than 17% in 2006. However, this proportion is seven percentage points lower than it was in 1991 (Figure 5.1).

There has been a decline, albeit only a slight one, in the proportion of students in the humanities and social sciences, as well as in law and business administration and economics programs. Thanks to increases over the past few years, the proportion of students in these subject areas has once again risen to the level measured in the mid-1990s. The proportion of students in other subject areas has remained constant since 2003 (Figure 5.1).

Including foreign students with a German education here for the first time in the sample group of the Social Survey has had no influence on the overall distribution of students according to subject area groups. There exist, however, differences among the groups. For instance, a higher proportion of foreigners with a German education enroll in engineering and economics programs while a smaller proportion can be found in social sciences, languages and cultural studies programs.

From a long-term perspective, we can observe three main

**Figure 5.1 Subject areas of first-degree students<sup>1</sup>**  
in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 2006, including foreign students with a German education; from 2006, the area of medicine includes health sciences

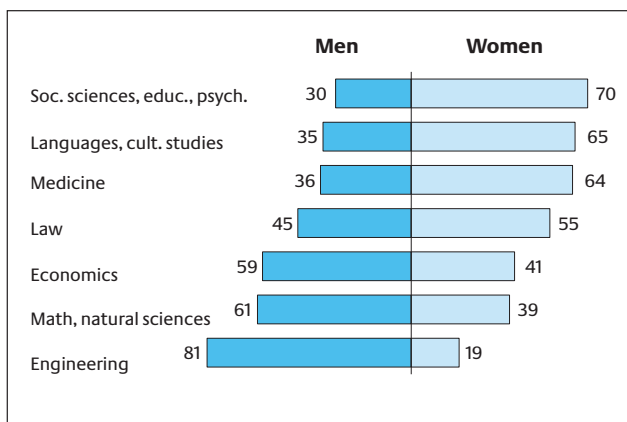
trends with regard to subject area structure.

First, despite a decrease over the past few years in the proportion of students who study law, economics, and social sciences, over the past 25 years there has been a substantial increase in these subject areas. Second, in contrast to this increase, the proportion of students in engineering has continuously declined during this period and has only stabilized over the past three years at a relatively low level.

Third, there is an ongoing alternating increase and decrease in the number of first-year students studying to enter the teaching profession. During the 1998 and 2003 academic years, as in the late 1980s, this figure rose sharply, only to fall continuously again in the years that followed.

In the 2006 summer semester, there remained differences between men and women with regard to their choice of major (Figure 5.2). These preferences have become increasingly pronounced since the 2002 academic year. The largest differences are in the areas of engineering and social sciences, specifically in social services, education and psychology. Although in these last subject areas female students are clearly overrepresented with 70%, the vast majority of engineering students are still male.

**Figure 5.2** Students according to subject area  
first-degree students, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

## Degrees Pursued

As expected, the study structure introduced following the Bologna Accords has had an impact on the degrees pursued by students. Although a German university Diplom was still the most frequently named degree pursued, due to the ongoing transition toward internationally recognized degrees, the proportion of students pursuing a bachelor's is rapidly increasing. By now, 11% of all students can be placed in this category; in 2003, this figure was just 4%.

The increasing orientation toward bachelor's degrees has gone hand in hand with a decline in the numbers of students pursuing a "traditional" degree. For example, the number of Diplom degrees pursued at universities of applied sciences, Diplom degrees at universities (23% and 30%, respectively) and Magister degrees (9%) pursued has declined slightly since 2003. Roughly more than ten percent of the students in both 2003 and 2006 planned to

conclude their studies by taking a state examination to enter the teaching profession or to finish their studies with another state examination.

## 5.2 Course of Study

### Changing majors

For the purposes of this study, students are recognized as having changed majors when the degree originally pursued or the subject area or both have been changed. The proportion of those students who have changed their majors among the general student population has remained constant over the years at 20%.

When it comes to changing majors, there still remain significant differences between students at the various types of institutions of higher education. Approximately 22% of all university students, but only 16% of students at a university of applied sciences have already changed majors.

Nearly two-fifths of the students who have changed their majors have opted for a major within the same general subject area (39%). Depending on the subject area, this percentage ranges from 20% in medical school to 55% in languages and cultural studies.

### Leave of Absence

Fewer students pursuing their first degree took a leave of absence from their studies in the 2006 summer semester than in 2003 (nearly 13% vs. 15%). If this comparison is restricted to just German students, i.e., those students who constituted the sole reference group of the Social Survey until 2003, then the difference is three percentage points, and thus even more significant. There is often a connection between changing majors and taking a leave of absence. Compared with first-degree students who have not changed their majors, those students who have changed their majors have a three times higher leave of absence rate.

### Length and Reasons for Taking a Leave of Absence

Four out of ten students have taken a leave of absence of at least one semester. An additional one out of four students took a two-semester break and nearly ten percent have taken a leave of absence for three semesters. Ninety percent of all leaves of absence last no longer than six semesters.

As in 2003, the main reason given by students for taking a leave of absence is doubts about whether it makes sense to pursue their degree. A quarter of all students who took a leave of absence gave this as their reason. This is particularly often the case among students of languages and cultural studies and in the subject areas of social sciences, social services, education and psychology.

Other reasons given for taking a leave of absence include the desire to gain experience outside academia and taking on gainful employment (each 23%).

### Transfers

The proportion of students who transfer to another institution of higher education during their studies has remained constant in recent years. In 2006, just under 15% of the student population had transferred to another school. Transferring to another institution can have a positive impact on students' experience and qualifications.

Nevertheless, the data collected during the 18th Social Survey show that changing majors, within the context of a leave of absence or a transfer to another institution, usually leads to enrolment in a new subject area. This increases the risk that subject-area related skills and knowledge that have been acquired during studies will not be adequately transferred.

**Reasons for Transferring**

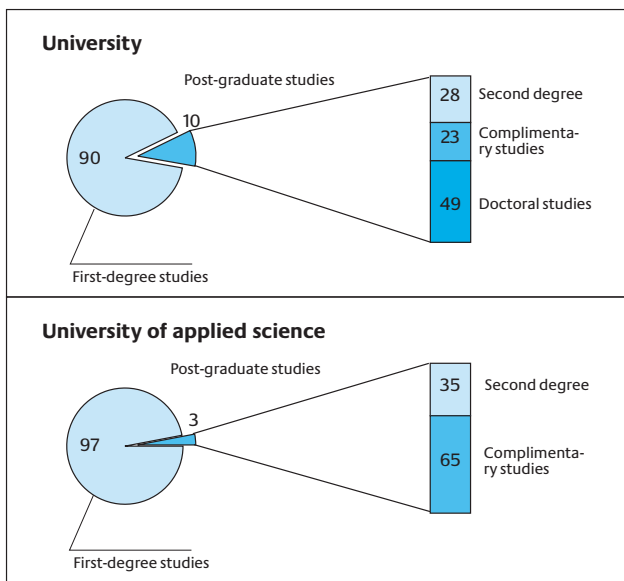
Students have different motives for transferring to another institution. Frequently given reasons include the courses offered (58%), the desire to change majors (54%), and personal reasons (58%).

The motives for transferring can be summed up in three categories. First, study-related or career-related motives can lead to a transfer to another institution of higher education (different study conditions, courses offered, reputation of the institution of higher education). Second, although this reason was only given by a relatively small group of students who transferred, there are financial incentives (living expenses, tuition), and third, private reasons play a role in the decision to attend a different institution of higher education (personal reasons, changing majors, a more attractive city). It should be noted that changing majors only plays a minor role in students' decision to transfer to another institution of higher education.

**Post-Graduate Studies**

Post-graduate studies include second degrees, further studies – i.e., complimentary, supplementary and post-graduate courses of study – and doctoral studies. Approximately one in twelve students is enrolled in post-graduate studies. This is equally true of German students and foreign students with a German education. Consequently, there has been a slight reversal in the trend from the year 2003, when one in ten students was pursuing post-graduate studies.

**Figure 5.3** Students in post-graduate degree programs according to type of institution in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

Students at universities have more opportunities to pursue an additional degree than students at universities of applied sciences. Not surprisingly, a comparison according to the type of institution of higher education reveals that larger proportions are enrolled in post-graduate studies at universities (10% vs. 3%). There are also major differences between the various types of institutions of higher education with regard to the type of post-graduate study pursued (Figure 5.3).

A number of different motives can lead students to commence post-graduate studies. Some students use further studies as a means of attaining additional or higher qualifications. This is particularly true of students pursuing master's and doctoral studies. In these types of studies we find that the vast majority (28% and 43%, respectively) of students pursue studies that build upon previous degrees. Approximately 29% of graduate students complete a second degree as part of their post-graduate studies.

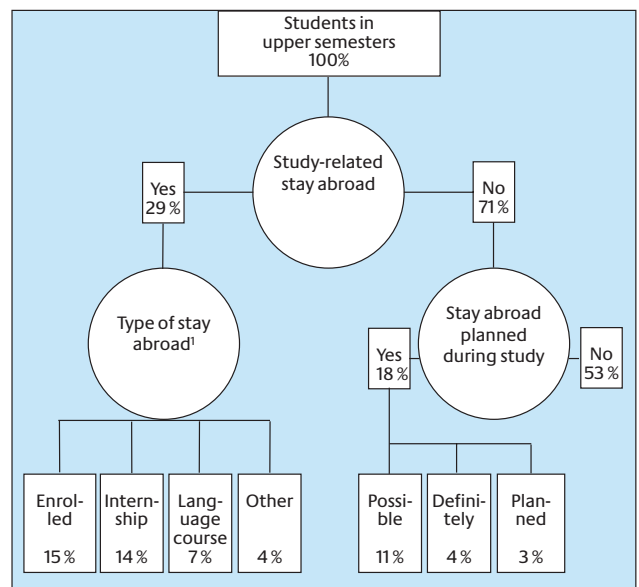
**Study-Related Stays Abroad**

Following a continual rise in study-related stays abroad, as documented in past Social Surveys, the proportion of German students and foreign students with a German education who have completed a study-related stay abroad was 29% in the 2006 summer semester (Figure 5.4), which is roughly equivalent to the level of the previous years (1994: 24%, 1997: 27%, 2000: 29%, 2003: 30%).

These percentages are based on students in upper semesters.<sup>6</sup> In view of the currently gradually decreasing proportion of students who have completed a study-related stay abroad, it remains to be seen if this percentage will continue to fall in the future or if, for example, thanks to the Bologna Process, it will be possible to

<sup>6</sup> Students at universities of applied sciences from the 6th semester, at universities from the 8<sup>th</sup> semester.

**Figure 5.4** Study-related stays abroad students in upper semesters, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Multiple answers possible



introduce new incentives. At the same time, it is important to note that with regard to one key aspect of study-related stays abroad, namely studying at a foreign institution of higher education, the

proportion of students rose continuously from 1991, and stabilized in 2006 at the level of the results of the previous survey.

## 6. Study Financing – Student Income

This chapter describes the financial situation of students who are pursuing their first degree, are single (i.e., not married), and do not live with their parents (this is known as the “normal student” reference group). As a rule, this type of student is the focus of policy issues surrounding government funding and support. In 2006, as in 2003, the “normal student” reference group represented roughly 65% of the student body.

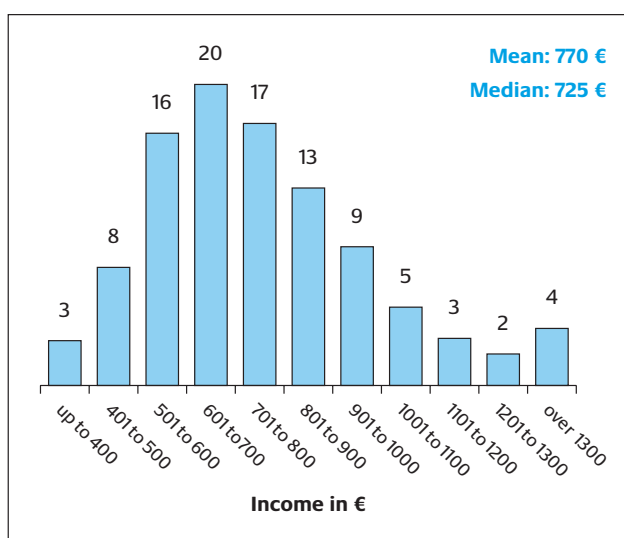
### 6.1 Amount of Monthly Income

In 2006, students had a monthly income of on average €770. The amount of income has remained practically unchanged since 2003 (€767). However, when we take into account the development of the consumer price index, it should be noted that the purchasing power of the average income in 2006 is nearly 5% lower than the income in 2003.

The amount of available income spans an impressively wide range (Figure 6.1). On the extreme ends of the scale, we find 3% of the students with monthly incomes of up to €400 in contrast to 4% of the student population with incomes of over €1,300.

According to BAföG<sup>7</sup> regulations, students who do not live with their parents should not require more than a maximum

**Figure 6.1** Distribution of monthly income in 2006  
reference group “normal student”, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>7</sup> BAföG = Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz. Germany's Federal Education Assistance Act, BAföG, governs funding for education and training.

funding of €585 a month. German case law, however, indicates requirements for such students of €640 a month. Based on these needs, the proportion of inadequately financed students is between 22% and 33%.

### 6.2 Origin of Income – Sources of Financing

In 2006, money to cover students' living expenses again came primarily from the financial support of parents, students' own earnings, and funding through BAföG.

As in the past, the majority of students are provided with financial support by their parents. The proportion of students who receive money from home (90%) has remained virtually unchanged since 2003 (89%). These students are given an average of €448 by their parents. This amount is nominally 3% higher than in 2003 (€435).

The proportion of the student body whose living expenses are entirely covered by money from home is just under 13%. These students receive on average €659 per month in financial support from their parents.

**Figure 6.2** Sources of income in 2006  
reference group “normal student”, in %, mean in €

Sources of income	2003		2006 <sup>1</sup>	
	Stud.	Amount	Stud.	Amount
Parents	89	435	90	448
Personal earnings	63	325	60	308
BAföG	27.5	367	28.9	376
Savings acquired before commencing studies	16	127	17	126
Family / friends	17	82	20	81
Orphan's benefit/pension	4	214	4	221
Partner	3	188	3	161
Grant	2	318	2	328
Educational loan from KfW	0.8	295	1.5	289
Loan from a bank or savings and loan <sup>2</sup>	0.9	253	0.8	411
Loan from a private individual	—	—	0.6	198
Others	3	425	3	353

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Including foreign students with a German education

<sup>2</sup> Including student loans from the KfW

After money from home, the next most important source of funding to cover living expenses is income earned by the students themselves. However, it should be noted that both the proportion of the student population (60%) that earns personal income and the average monthly amount earned (€308) are lower than in 2003 (63% and €325, respectively).

Nearly 5% of the student population depends entirely on personal income to meet living expenses. The average monthly earnings of these students are €867.

Nearly 29% of students in the “normal student” reference group receive BAföG funding (for the BAföG rate among the general student population, see Chapter 8). The proportion of students within this subgroup of students who receive funding has risen by roughly one percentage point since 2003. In addition, the average monthly amount of financial aid given to these students has risen slightly, from €367 to €376. This increase is in accordance with the general trend.

Only 2% of students have no other source of money available aside from their BAföG student financial aid. The average amount of funding that these students receive is €485 a month. However, these students are supported by their parents who directly cover a portion of their living expenses (e.g., paying the rent). If we take into account these expenses, the average monthly income of these students comes to €561.

In addition to the main sources of funding for studies listed here, there are a number of other sources that are used by students (Figure 6.2). Although in individual cases these sources can be extremely important, from a general perspective they only play a minor role.

### 6.3 Breakdown of Monthly Income – Financing Structure

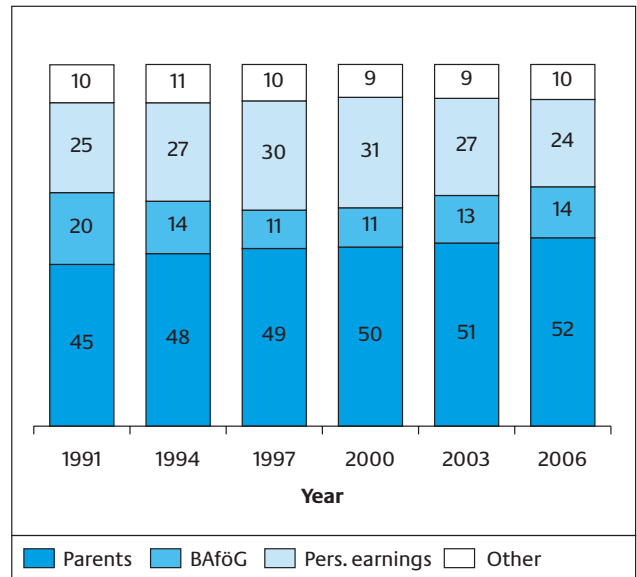
A minority of students meet their living expenses with money from only a single source of financing. Only 21% of students are in this situation. Students have access on average to money from two sources of financing. More than a third meet their living expenses with income from three or more sources. Most students thus finance their studies with money from a wide variety of sources.

This section provides a breakdown of the average monthly income available from a range of financial sources (Figure 6.3). According to the latest findings, in 2006 parents provided by far the largest amount of money that students used to cover their living expenses. Students' personal income was their second most important source of financing. At least 24% of students' total income is earned through employment during their studies. BAföG funding represents on average 14% of student income, while the remaining sources of financing provide 10%.

A comparison with the situation in the year 2003 reveals that parents' monthly contribution to student income has continued to rise (from 51% to 52%) along with the contribution from BAföG funding (from 13% to 14%). Meanwhile, the amount of student income derived from personal earnings has declined once again (from 27% to 24%), as was the case from 2000 to 2003.

Viewed over the long term, the trend is clearly that parents provide an increasing proportion of the income available to stu-

**Figure 6.3 Breakdown of monthly income according to financial source**  
reference group “normal student”, in %<sup>1</sup>



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Until 2003, only German students, from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

dents. From 1991 to 2006, the parents' contribution increased from 45% to 52%. By contrast, the proportion from BAföG declined between 1991 and 1997 (from 20% to 11%), leveled off from 1997 to 2000, and has risen since then. With regard to changes in the proportion of BAföG funding, it is nevertheless important to note that the first Social Survey to include all of unified Germany was conducted in 1991. At that point in time, BAföG funding made up 60% of student income in eastern Germany. In western Germany, however, it constituted 17%, and was thus only slightly higher than in 1988 (16%), yet significantly below the level found in 1982 (25%). An examination of student income in western Germany thus reveals that the decline in the proportion of monthly income from BAföG funding had already begun before 1991.

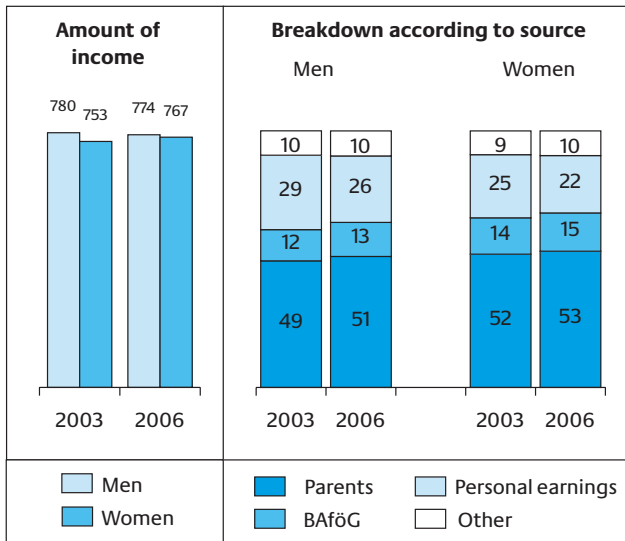
The contribution of personal earnings to students' monthly income rose from 1991 to 2000 (from 25% to 31%) – and started rising among students in western Germany back in 1982 (19%) – and has declined significantly since reaching its peak in 2000. In 2006, it had dropped to 24% and was thus even lower than the level found in 1991.

### 6.4 Income Situation According to Select Criteria

#### Gender

In 2006, there was virtually no difference in the amount of monthly income available to male and female students (€767 vs. €774). A breakdown of the average monthly income according to gender reveals key differences, namely that among women the proportion of income that comes from their parents and BAföG is higher than among men, and the proportion of self-financing through personal earnings is lower among women (Figure 6.4,

**Figure 6.4 Breakdown of monthly income according to gender<sup>1</sup>**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> 2003 only German students, 2006 including foreign students with a German education

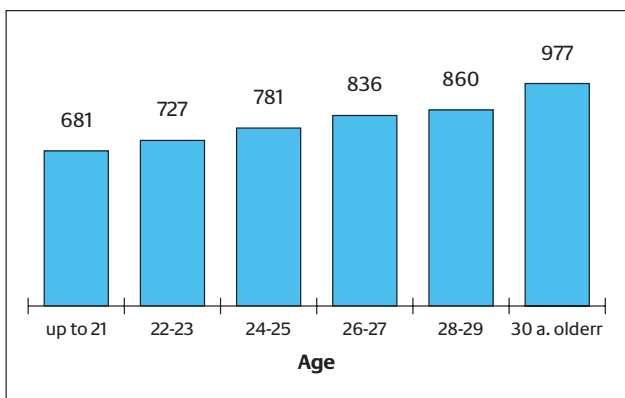
right side of the diagram). A comparison with the results from 2003 shows that the proportional contributions of individual sources of financing to monthly income among men and women have followed similar developments. While the proportion of self-financing has decreased, the proportion of other sources of financing has increased.

**Age**

As students get older, their average monthly income increases – a finding that has been confirmed time and again since 1982. In 2006, monthly income ranged from €681 among the youngest students (up to the age of 21) to €977 among the oldest students (age 30 and over). There is a manifest increase in monthly income from age group to age group (Figure 6.5).

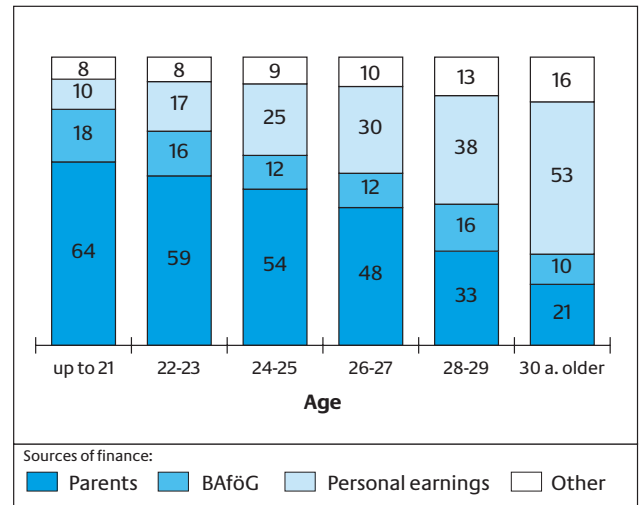
In addition to rising monthly income, as students get older there are changes in the financial contribution from their parents

**Figure 6.5 Monthly income according to age, 2006**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

**Figure 6.6 Breakdown of monthly income according to age, 2006**  
reference group "normal student", in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

and in the proportion of income from personal earnings. For instance, parents' financial contribution is 64% of total income among the youngest students, but this figure drops to 21% among the oldest students (Figure 6.6). At the same time, the reverse is true of the role played by personal income. While among the youngest students the proportion of self-financing is just 10% of monthly income, this figure rises with age to 53%.

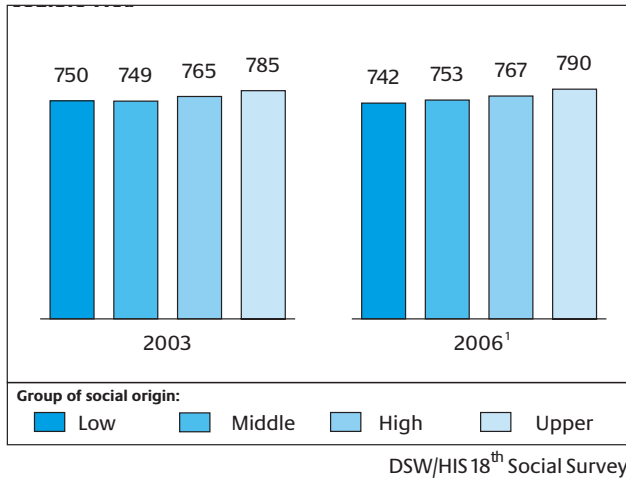
BAföG funding varies from age group to age group with a proportion of monthly income that ranges from 10% to 18%. Not surprisingly, this proportion is highest among younger students who as a rule have no reason to be disqualified for BAföG funding (changing majors, missing certificates of academic achievement, exceeding the maximum possible period of funding). Nonetheless, among older students (28 years and older), BAföG funding still remains a substantial factor in the breakdown of average monthly student income. This can be attributed to the large proportion of older students who receive BAföG financial aid regardless of how much their parents earn.

**Social Origins**

As expected, students in the highest group of social origin have the highest monthly income (Figure 6.7). Students in the "upper" group of origin have incomes that are 5% to 6% higher than the incomes of the two lower groups of origin. By comparison, the income gap between the two higher groups is merely 3%, but this difference in the average monthly income remains statistically significant.

While the differences among students in terms of the amount of monthly income appear relatively modest, a breakdown according to sources of financing reveals major discrepancies. Students from the lowest group of social origin depend on income in roughly equal degrees from the financial support of their parents, from BAföG financial aid, and from personal earnings. Higher on the social ladder – where parental households have more earning power – students are significantly less dependent on BAföG and

**Figure 6.7 Monthly income according to social origin**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €



<sup>1</sup> Including foreign students with a German education

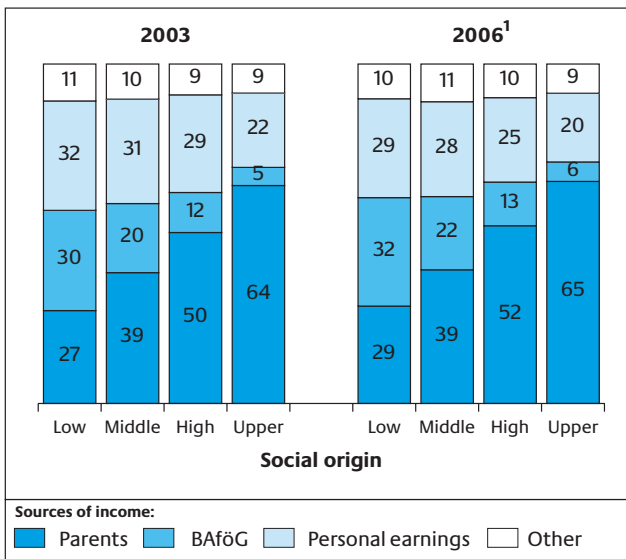
personal income (Figure 6.8).

The breakdown in the average monthly income of the individual groups of origin has evolved in a similar manner virtually across the board since 2003. The proportional contribution of parents to monthly income has increased, with the exception of the middle group of origin. The proportion of funding from BAföG financial aid has increased for the students in all groups of origin. By contrast, there has been a decline among all groups of origin in the proportion of monthly income from personal earnings.

**BAföG Status**

If students are grouped according to whether they are current or former BAföG recipients, were refused BAföG, or have not yet applied for BAföG, then substantial differences emerge with regard to their financing situations.

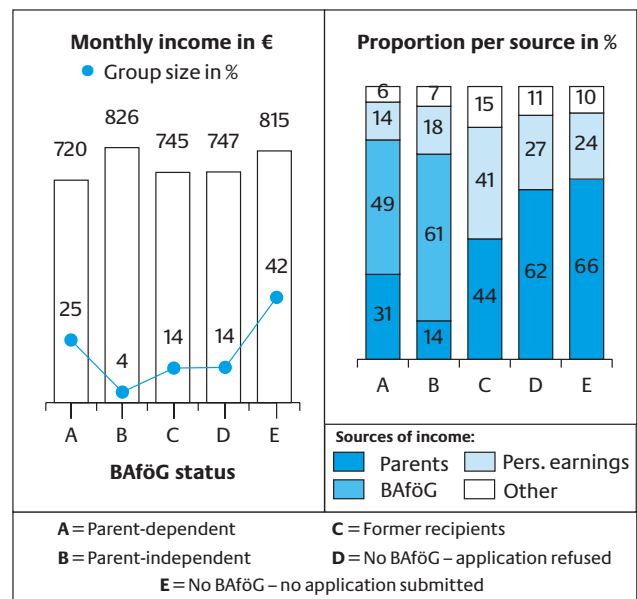
**Figure 6.8 Breakdown of monthly income according to social origin**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €



<sup>1</sup> Including foreign students with a German education

The sum of monthly incomes from various available sources of financing (see Figure 6.10) is the lowest (on average €720) for current BAföG recipients who receive student financial aid according to the subsidiarity principle (funding is calculated according to the parents' income, i.e., it is "parent-dependent") (Figure 6.9, left side of the diagram). This figure is slightly higher (on average €745) for former BAföG recipients, i.e., those who received financial aid at an earlier stage in their studies. A similar level of income was reported by students who expected to receive BAföG funding, and submitted an initial application, but were subsequently turned down. The highest level of monthly income was indicated by students whose financial background made an application for BAföG funding superfluous (€815), and the relatively small group of BAföG recipients whose parents were no longer obliged to pay child support, making them "parent-independent" so they could receive funding regardless of how much money their parents earn (€826).

**Figure 6.9 Breakdown of monthly income according to BAföG status**  
reference group "normal student"



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

The vast majority of monthly income available to current BAföG recipients comes from student financial aid. In comparison with other students, BAföG recipients gain a far smaller proportion of their income from personal earnings (Figure 6.9, right-hand diagram).

Former BAföG recipients have the highest self-financing rate and earn 41% of their income through gainful employment outside their studies. It stands to reason that the vast majority of this group, namely three-quarters, who earn on average €399 a month (Figure 6.10), could not continue their studies without personal income.

When it comes to students who receive parent-dependent BAföG funding, it can be assumed that the parents should be

**Figure 6.10 Sources of income according to BAföG status**  
reference group "normal student"

BAföG status	Sources of income	Student recipients in %		Amount Mean in €	
		2003	2006 <sup>1</sup>	2003	2006 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Parent-dependent funding</b>					
	Parents	89	87	255	258
	BAföG	100	100	345	355
	Personal income	53	50	203	200
	Other	33	35	119	119
<b>Parent-independent funding</b>					
	Parents	58	63	175	185
	BAföG	100	100	512	504
	Personal income	57	61	243	237
	Other	33	33	185	179
<b>Former recipients</b>					
	Parents	80	86	361	384
	Personal income	77	76	448	399
	Other	44	48	243	234
<b>No BAföG – application refused</b>					
	Parents	94	94	469	493
	Personal income	72	67	320	306
	Other	41	42	170	187
<b>No BAföG – no application submitted</b>					
	Parents	94	94	555	575
	Personal income	63	59	345	333
	Other	39	43	198	185

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Including foreign students with a German education

capable of raising the money to pay the difference between the actual amount of BAföG financial aid paid and the maximum funding level (normally €333 for basic expenses and €133 for living expenses). Based on the data collected, it is clear that in 2006 roughly 30% of parent-dependent BAföG recipients (approx. 70,000 students) did not receive the expected amount of financial support from their parents.

Students who receive no BAföG because they have not submitted an application or their first application was turned down, are financially primarily dependent on their parents to meet child support obligations and thus provide them with a suitable allowance. Based on the data collected in the 18th Social Survey, it is possible to conclude that without any personal earnings, a substantial proportion of the students who are entitled to child support from their parents (approx. 190,000) would only have a monthly income of €355. It can thus be assumed that these students use personal earnings from employment outside their studies – on average €319 a month – to enhance their income so they can finance an appropriate lifestyle, even in the absence of adequate allowances from their parents.

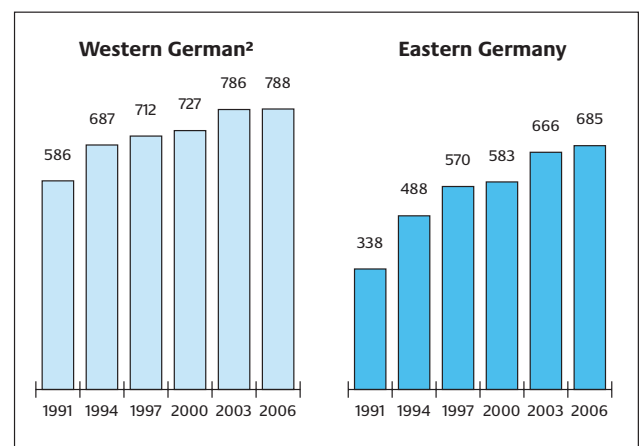
### Western Germany – Eastern Germany

There still remain major differences in the monthly incomes of

students in eastern and western Germany (Figure 6.11). According to the results of the 18th Social Survey, students in western Germany have higher incomes with an average of €788. This is €103 higher than the average income of students in eastern Germany. However, the gap in income narrowed from 2003 to 2006. While students in eastern Germany were able to slightly increase their monthly income (a nominal rise of nearly 3%), the incomes of students in western Germany remained at the same level as in 2003.

From 1991 – the first year that the Social Survey included both eastern and western Germany – until 2006, the disparity in income has decreased from one observation year to the next, leading to an ongoing convergence in monthly incomes between eastern and western Germany.

**Figure 6.11 Trends in monthly income in western and eastern Germany**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

<sup>2</sup> From 2000, all of Berlin was counted as part of the western Germany

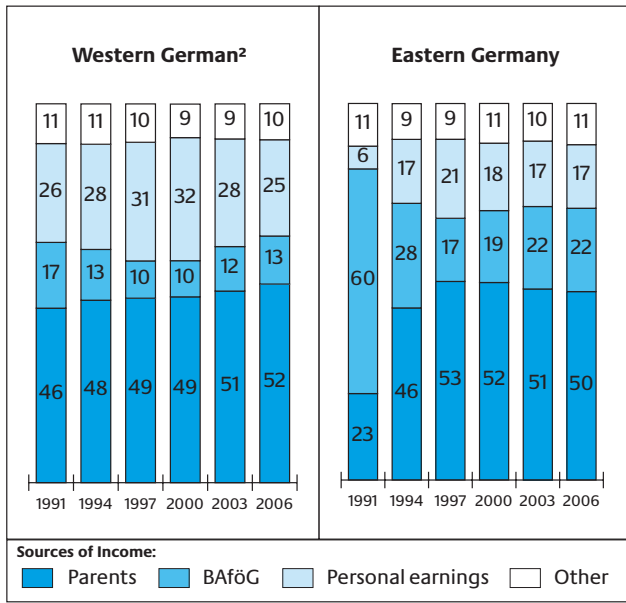
There has also been a clear convergence in the financing structures in eastern and western Germany (Figure 6.12). Today, hardly any difference can be found in the proportion of monthly income provided by parents (50% vs. 52%). Nevertheless, there remain significant differences with regard to BAföG and personal income. Among students in western Germany, personal earnings play a larger role than BAföG; these students earn a quarter of their income themselves and 13% of their income comes from BAföG. In eastern Germany, we find the opposite situation; 22% of income comes from student financial aid and 17% from personal earnings.

### 6.5 Assessment of the Financial Situation

Approximately 60% of students in the 2006 summer semester report that the financing for their studies has been secured. Compared with the results from 2003, this proportion has declined by five percent.

Higher on the social ladder, a larger proportion of students can be found who say that the financing for their studies is adequate – ranging from the "low" group of origin with 39% to the

**Figure 6.12 Breakdown of monthly income in western and eastern Germany**  
reference group "normal student", in %

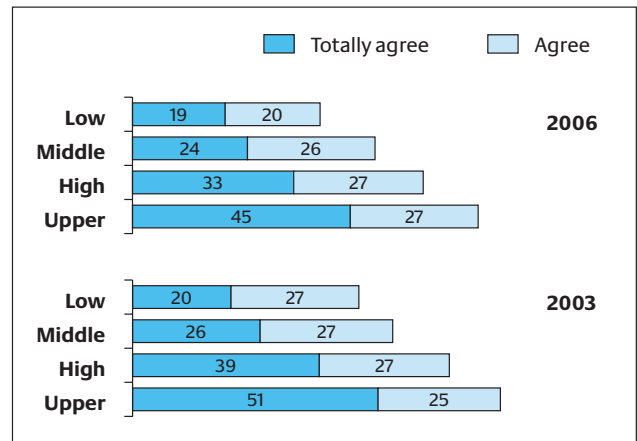


DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education  
<sup>2</sup> From 2000, all of Berlin was counted as part of the western Germany

“upper” group of origin with 72%. There are also corresponding percentages of students who doubt their ability to finance their studies – from the “low” social group of origin with 61% to the “upper” group of origin with a rather considerable rate of 28%. These figures clearly indicate that from 2003 to 2006 there was a decline in the proportion of students from all groups of origin – albeit to varying degrees – who reported that they had sufficient financing for their studies (Figure 6.13).

**Figure 6.13 Assessment of financial situation according to social origin – rating the statement: "The financing for my studies is secure".**  
reference group "normal student", in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

## 7. Cost of Living – Selected Items of Expenditure

The Social Survey contains data on the most common living expenses. This report focuses exclusively on regularly occurring expenses and does not intend to make a complete evaluation of all sporadic expenses incurred by students. Such a complete assessment would exceed the methodological scope of this survey and, as such, back during the 17th Social Survey it was decided to eliminate this aspect from the assessment.

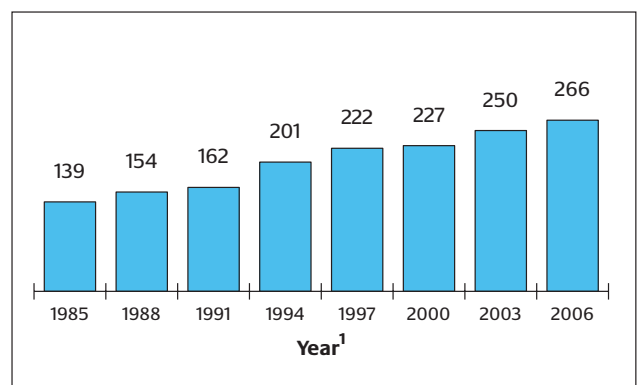
The following section serves as a supplement to the chapter on income and provides a description of the expenses incurred by students pursuing a first degree who are single and do not live at home (“normal student” reference group).

### 7.1 Rent and Additional Charges

Expenses for rent and additional charges are the biggest items on students' budgets. Students spend on average 34% of their monthly income on housing. In 2006, the average amount spent on rent and additional charges was €266, or roughly 6% more than in 2003 (Figure 7.1). In real terms, i.e., taking into account the consumer price index for residential rents, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, the amount spent on housing is nearly 1% lower than in 2003.

The amount of money spent on housing is very closely linked

**Figure 7.1 Trends in monthly expenses for rent and additional charges**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €



<sup>1</sup> From 1991, including eastern Germany

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

to the type of student housing (see Chapter 11). For students who no longer live at home, living in a student hall of residence (dormitory) is the least expensive type of housing. Students spend on average €201 a month in rent at halls of residence – 11% more than in 2003 (Figure 7.2). Renting a room as a lodger in a private house-

**Figure 7.2 Monthly expenses for rent and additional charges according to type of student housing**  
reference group "normal student"

Type of housing	Amount in €, mean		Difference 2006 vs. 2003
	2003	2006	
Hall of residence <sup>1</sup>	181	201	11.0
Lodger	212	234	10.4
Sharing a flat with others	232	246	6.1
Sharing a flat with partner	267	292	9.6
Living alone	300	316	5.3

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Includes halls of residence run by all organizations. According to the Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW), rent (including heat and utilities) for a room run by student services in Germany was on average €182 in 2006.

hold or sharing a flat (apartment) with other people are also relatively inexpensive options. Average monthly rents for lodgers are €234 (10% more than in 2003) and €246 for sharing a flat with other people (6% more than in 2003.) Housing becomes significantly more expensive when students rent their own flat. Those who share a flat with their partner pay an average monthly rent of €292 (10% more than in 2003). If only one person is living in the flat, then the average rent is €316, which is the highest monthly expense for housing including additional charges (5% more than in 2003).

### Regional Differences

Rents vary dramatically from region to region. Students who attend institutions of higher education in cities with a population of over 500,000 have on average significantly higher expenses for rent and additional charges than students who are enrolled in institutions of higher education in smaller cities (€305 vs. €252). A comparison of the individual types of housing also reveals that rents are higher in large cities:

Monthly rent-related expenditures in 2006 for different types of housing according to the size of the town or city where the institution of higher education is located, in euros

Type of housing	pop. less than 500,000	pop. over 500,000
Hall of residence	196	224
Lodger	222	279
Sharing flat with others	235	278
Sharing flat with partner	275	328
Living alone	304	344

Students in eastern Germany spend on average €221 a month for rent and additional charges, which is €54 less than the average in western Germany. Average monthly rent-related expenditures in eastern Germany rose by 11% between 2003 and 2006, whereas the increase during the same period in western Germany was 6%.

A comparison according to the type of student housing reveals that the expenditures for rent and additional charges for all types of housing were significantly higher in western Germany than in eastern Germany.

Monthly rent-related expenditures in 2006 in western and eastern Germany, in euros

Type of housing	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
Hall of residence	205	185
Lodger	237	218
Sharing flat with others	256	200
Sharing flat with partner	300	252
Living alone	323	268

### 7.2 Expenditure Differences between Eastern and Western Germany

Housing is not the only area where students in eastern Germany spend less money than students in western Germany. With the exception of cars and public transport, expenditures in eastern Germany are lower for all other types of expenses as well (Figure 7.3). This should come as no surprise since students in eastern Germany have an average available monthly income that is €103 lower than in western Germany (see Chapter 6.4).

The sum of all monthly expenditures for selected types of living expenses is significantly lower for students in eastern Germany (€608) than for students in western Germany (€718). The national average is €699.

**Figure 7.3 Selected types of living expenses in western and eastern Germany**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €

Expenditures	Western Germany	Eastern Germany	Total
Rent and additional charges	275	221	266
Food	151	130	147
Clothing	52	44	50
Textbooks and supplies	36	30	35
Car, public transport	81	85	82
Health insurance, medicine	55	47	54
Communication (telephone, Internet, etc.)	44	38	43
Leisure, culture, sport	65	49	62

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> The figures shown here represent the average amounts reported by those respondents who provided information on the individual expenditures in question. These questions were answered by 62% to 99% of all respondents.

### 7.3 Connection between Income and Expenditure

It only stands to reason that there is a connection between the amount of available income and the limits that this imposes on expenditure. This can be clearly seen when student expenditures rates are examined (Figure 7.4).

This figure shows that students with the lowest income (quartile 1) have the smallest average expenditures per living expense.

**Figure 7.4 Connection between expenditure and income, in quartiles**  
reference group "normal student", mean in €

Expenditures	Income			
	Quartile 1	Quartile 2	Quartile 3	Quartile 4
Rent and additional charges	214	245	272	335
Food	111	137	154	190
Clothing	35	44	52	70
Textbooks and supplies	26	32	35	47
Car, public transport	54	64	79	125
Health insurance, medicine	38	42	54	72
Communication (telephone, Internet, etc.)	31	38	44	58
Leisure, culture, sport	40	52	66	88

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> The figures shown here represent the average amounts reported by those respondents who provided information on the individual expenditures in question. These questions were answered by 62% to 99% of all respondents.

Students with progressively larger amounts of income spend more money on each type of living expense. Students with the highest income (quartile 4) have expenditures for the individual types of expenses that are 50% to 130% larger than the expenditures of the quartile with the lowest income. Evidently, as with other groups in society, the amount of available income has a significant influence on students' options to shape their lifestyle.

## 8. BAföG – Student Financial Aid

At the time of the survey during the 2006 summer semester, the legally binding BAföG regulations were in accordance with the 21st BAföG amendment of 2 December 2004. The key values for assessing the level of funding (earnings limit for parental income and allowance for students) have not changed with respect to the previous Social Survey in the year 2003.

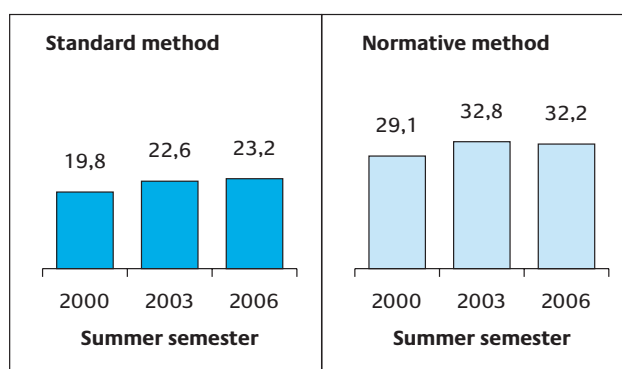
### 8.1 Scope of Student Financial Aid – BAföG Rate

Since the introduction of BAföG funding, the BAföG rate has been accepted as an important yardstick for assessing the scope and development of funding. This rate expresses the proportion of students who receive student financial aid.

At first, the BAföG rate was calculated by comparing the number of recipients with the entire student body (standard method). Since 1985, an additional rate has been calculated that compares the number of students who receive BAföG with the subset of students who, according to BAföG regulations, would be eligible for BAföG funding due to a substantial need for financial assistance (normative method).<sup>8</sup>

The BAföG rate calculated according to the standard method rose slightly from 2003 to 2006 (Figure 8.1, left-hand side of the diagram). Assuming that the number of students during the compa-

**Figure 8.1 BAföG rate of the entire student body (standard method) and BAföG rate of students eligible for funding (normative method)<sup>1</sup>**  
in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

risation period has remained constant or risen, an increase in the BAföG rate means that there has been an increase in the number of recipients. While the number of students rose by nearly 2% from 2003 to 2006, the number of BAföG recipients – as indicated in Figure 8.3 – rose by nearly 5%.

By contrast, the proportion of potentially eligible students who receive funding (normative method) has declined slightly (Figure 8.1, right-hand side of the diagram). This apparent contradic-

<sup>8</sup> This method basically eliminates those students who have exceeded the allowable time limit for financial aid, are pursuing a second degree that disqualifies them for BAföG funding, have failed to produce a prerequisite certificate of academic achievement, or are ineligible for financial aid according to BAföG regulations.



tion, – a drop in the funding rate accompanied by an increase in the total number of recipients – can be explained by the fact that the number of students who were eligible for BAFÖG funding increased from 2003 to 2006 faster than the number of students who actually applied and were granted funding. It thus stands to reason that among the potentially eligible recipients from the year 2006 there may be a smaller percentage who come from lower-income families.

**Social Origins**

A comparison of students according to their social origins reveals that a smaller proportion of the potentially eligible students among the two lower groups of social origin received funding in 2006 than in 2003, while the proportion of students who received funding among the upper groups of origin remained virtually constant (Figure 8.2).

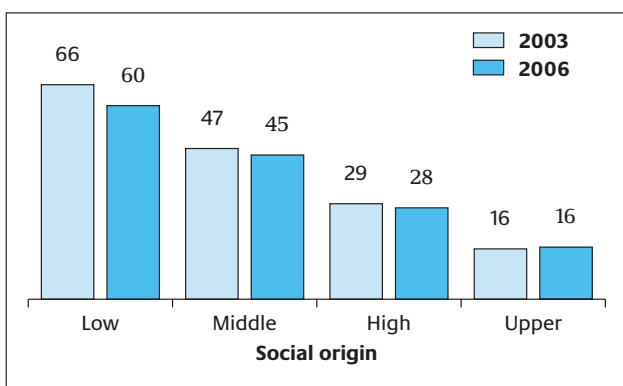
The relatively pronounced drop in the BAFÖG rate among students from the “low” group of social origin is not connected to a drop in the number of recipients. In effect, the number of recipients with this social background rose from 2003 to 2006 by 11%. The lower BAFÖG rate in 2006 can be explained by the fact that the number of potentially eligible students from this group of origin increased significantly during the same period by 23%. There are two possible explanations for this situation, i.e., where the number of recipients has not risen as rapidly as the number of eligible students. First, there is the possibility that in 2006 a larger proportion of non-recipients came from families where, according to BAFÖG regulations, the parents' financial situation has excluded their children from funding. Second, it is conceivable that a larger proportion than in 2003 has consciously, or out of ignorance, not applied for funding despite the students' eligibility.

By the same token, among the students from the “middle” and “high” groups of origin, the proportion of eligible students has risen faster (4% and 6%, respectively) than the number of recipients (0% and 1%, respectively). It is only among the “upper” group of origin that the number of recipients has risen faster from 2003 to 2006 than the number of eligible students (5% vs. 2%).

The majority (40%) of recipients in the 2006 summer semester

**Figure 8.2 BAFÖG rate according to social origin<sup>1</sup>, normative method**

recipients within each social group, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 2006, including foreign students with a German education

come from families where the parents' highest vocational qualification is an apprenticeship or training as a skilled worker. The proportion of recipients from families where at least one parent has an academic degree is not significantly smaller (35%). Another 21% of recipients have parents whose highest vocational qualification is a master craftsman's certificate or a technical college degree. Among the remaining 4% of the recipients, the parents had either no vocational qualification or the students surveyed had no knowledge of such a qualification.

**Gender**

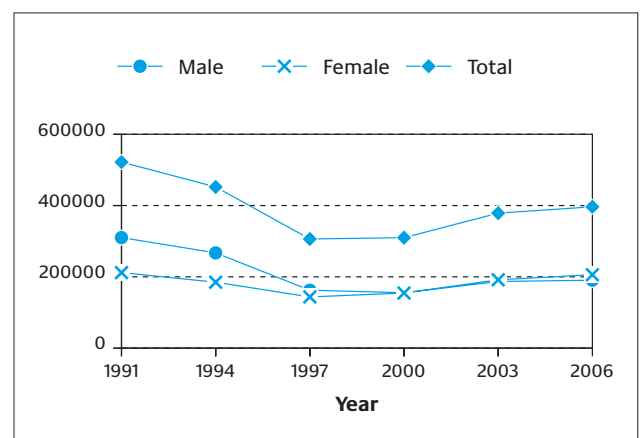
A comparison according to gender reveals that a larger proportion of women than men received BAFÖG student financial aid in 2006. Calculated according to the standard method, 25% of the women and 22% of the men receive funding. An examination of potentially eligible students showed that 34% of the women and 30% of the men receive funding.

There were more female recipients than male recipients in 2006 – a difference that was even more pronounced than in 2003. A comparison according to social origins also shows that women made up at least half, and often more than half of the number of recipients in 2006 (see the diagram below). This is all the more remarkable when we consider that men constitute the majority of all students within each individual group of social origin.

Proportion of women among BAFÖG recipients and in all social groups of origin in 2006 (in %)

Group of origin	Recipients	Total
Low	52	48
Middle	52	48
High	50	47
Upper	54	49

**Figure 8.3 BAFÖG recipients according to gender<sup>1</sup>**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

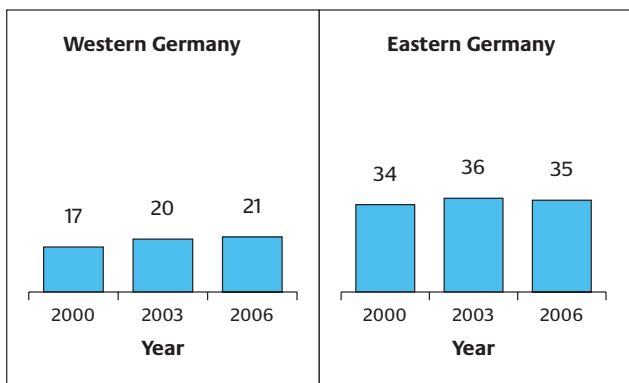
<sup>1</sup> Basis for calculation: BAFÖG rate according to the standard method and the number of students enrolled in the winter semester for each year

## Western Germany – Eastern Germany

As in previous years, a significantly higher proportion of students in eastern Germany receive BAföG funding than in western Germany. Calculated according to the standard method, 35% of all students in eastern Germany and 21% of all students in western Germany receive student financial aid. Compared to 2003, the proportion of recipients in eastern Germany has dropped by one percentage point, while in western Germany it has risen by one percentage point (Figure 8.4). It should be noted, however, that the number of recipients in both regions increased from 2003 to 2006, in eastern Germany by nearly 4% and in western Germany by roughly 5%.

An examination of the potentially eligible students reveals that in 2006 in eastern Germany nearly half (47%) of the eligible individuals received BAföG funding. In western Germany, there was a significantly lower proportion (29%) of eligible students who received funding. The normative rate in 2006 was 2% lower in eastern Germany and 1% lower in western Germany than in the year 2003.

**Figure 8.4 BAföG rate in western and eastern Germany<sup>1</sup>, standard method**  
BAföG recipients, in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

## Type of Institution of Higher Education

As expected – given the widely divergent social makeups of the student populations at universities and universities of applied sciences (see Chapter 4) – a higher proportion of students at universities of applied sciences receive BAföG student financial aid than students at universities. Calculated according to the standard method, 28% of all students at universities of applied sciences and 21% of all students at universities receive funding. A comparison of the total number of potentially eligible students reveals a BAföG rate of 36% at universities of applied sciences and 31% at universities.

## 8.2 Amount of Funding Received

There were no major differences between 2003 and 2006 in terms of the amount of funding that BAföG recipients received. From 2003 to 2006, a minor increase was observed in the amounts of funding for students who live with their parents and for students who live away from home. Similar increases can be observed

when we differentiate recipients according to gender, social origin, type of institution of higher education, and region.

Although male and female recipients in 2006 received on average the same monthly amount of funding (€361) and the average amount of funding for recipients in eastern Germany and western Germany was at a comparable level (€363 and €361, respectively), there are discrepancies in the average amount of funding depending on students' social origins. Thus, to a certain degree, differences can also be found between BAföG students at universities and recipients at universities of applied sciences.

**Figure 8.5 Amount of funding received according to select characteristics<sup>1</sup>**  
BAföG recipients, mean in €

Characteristics	Amount of funding		
	2000	2003	2006
<b>1. Housing</b>			
- in parental household	218	271	283
- outside parental househ.	325	369	378
<b>2. Gender</b>			
- Male	303	348	361
- Female	309	356	361
<b>3. Social origin</b>			
- Low	338	383	390
- Middle	307	361	369
- High	294	342	354
- Upper	265	307	326
<b>4. Institution of higher education</b>			
- University	306	347	353
- Uni. of applied science	307	362	382
<b>5. Region</b>			
- Western Germany	315	355	363
- Eastern Germany	285	343	361
<b>Total</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>363</b>

DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

## 8.3 Parent-Dependent & Parent-Independent Funding

Students in need of financial assistance who are able to claim child support from their parents are eligible to receive BAföG funding that is based on their parent's verifiable amount of income in accordance with the subsidiarity principle (funding is "parent-dependent"). By contrast, students who are in need of financial assistance and cannot claim child support from their parents are eligible to receive financial aid with no verification of their parents' income situation (parent-independent funding).

In 2006 – as in 2003 – 86% of BAföG recipients received parent-dependent financial aid and 14% received parent-independent funding. The primary difference between these two groups is that a far greater proportion of students who receive parent-independent state support have already completed vocational training (78% vs. 24%). Since there is a higher proportion of students with

previous vocational training at universities of applied sciences than at universities, this also explains why the proportion of recipients with parent-independent BAFÖG funding at universities of applied sciences is more than twice as high as at universities (23% vs. 10%).

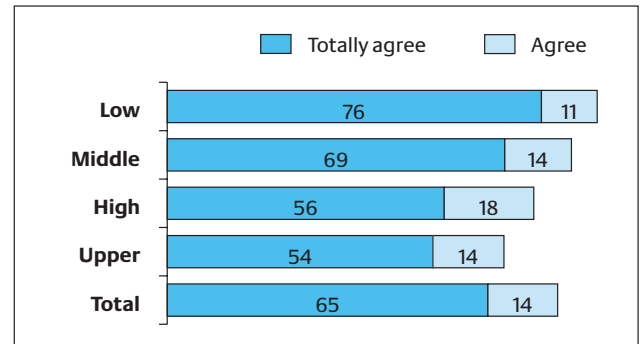
In 2006 – as in 2003 – the average monthly amount of BAFÖG funding that parent-independent recipients received was €490. By contrast, parent-dependent recipients received on average €342 in monthly student financial aid (2003: €331).

### 8.4 Subjective View of Student Financial Aid

In 2006, nearly four out of five recipients of student financial aid (79%; 2003: 69%) agreed with the statement: “Without BAFÖG funding, I could not pursue my studies.” A comparison of respondents according to social origin reveals substantial differences in the proportion of recipients who agree with this statement (Figure 8.6).

Nearly half of the BAFÖG recipients (48%) report that they have secured sufficient financing for their living expenses during

**Figure 8.6 Agreement with the statement: “Without BAFÖG funding, I could not pursue my studies” – according to social origin recipients within each social group, in %**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

their studies (2003: 52%). By contrast, 66% of non-recipients feel that their finances will cover living expenses while studying (2003: 70%).

## 9. Time Budget

The analysis of the student time budget in the Social Survey focuses exclusively on the time that students spend during the semester (not including holidays) attending classes (i.e., lectures, seminars, internships and other forms of instruction supervised by university staff) studying (or “independent study”, as it is referred to here, i.e., pursuing all forms of independent study-related activities) and working to finance their studies.

The time budget is calculated using a chart in which respondents record the full (rounded) hours spent each day of the week attending classes, studying and working. In this case, the reference period was the week that preceded the week in which the respondents filled out the questionnaire. The analysis of the results included all students who had provided plausible times for at least one activity. It thus stands to reason that the following reported mean values also contain – unless otherwise indicated – information on those students who currently spend no time on a specific activity, for example, because they were not employed or were no longer attending classes in the final phase of their studies.

### 9.1 Time Spent on Studies

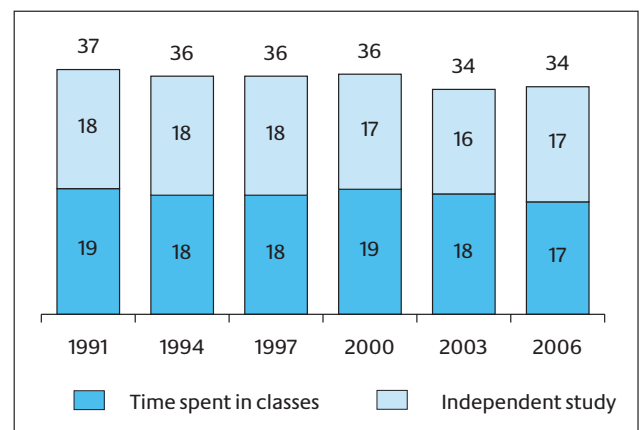
The “time spent on course of studies” includes time spent in classes in a broader sense, i.e., lectures, seminars, supervised laboratory work, compulsory internships, etc. and independent study time connected with the course of studies, for example, doing preparation and follow-up work for courses, preparing written assignments, borrowing and reading specialized literature, and meeting with teaching staff during office hours.

### Time Required According to Type of Degree Pursued

The time required is closely connected to the type of degree pursued. As expected, first-degree students invest a comparatively large amount of time in their studies. They spend roughly 34 hours a week attending classes and on independent studying. Both forms of studying are nearly equally important in terms of their proportion of the time budget, and each require roughly 17 hours per week (Figure 9.1).

Compared with the findings of the last Social Survey, the

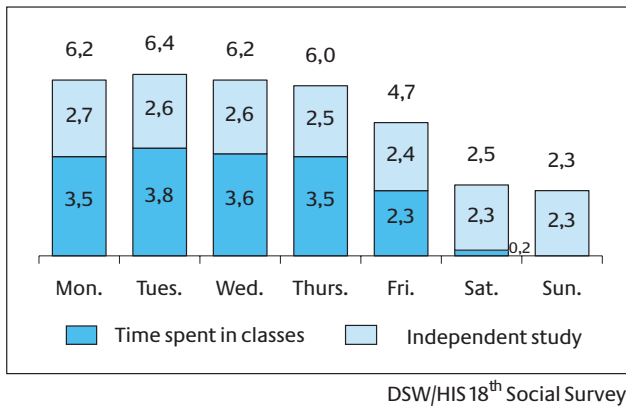
**Figure 9.1 Time spent on studies 1991-2006 first-degree students<sup>1</sup>, mean in hours/week**



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

**Figure 9.2 Time spent on studies during the week**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



amount of study-related time has remained virtually unchanged. Although the total amount of time spent by first-year students on their studies in 2006 has not varied, students spend approximately one hour a week more on independent studying and one hour a week less attending courses than in 2003.

It should be noted, however, that the nearly equal importance of supervised and unsupervised forms of studying, as has been documented by the data of the Social Surveys over the years, only consists of an overall relation that does not take into account individual study phases.

Over the course of the week, there are variations in the time requirements of courses and independent studying. With the exception of Fridays, during the “working week” more time is spent attending courses than on independent studying (Figure 9.2). Of the more than six hours that first-year students dedicate to their studies on average every day, roughly one hour more is spent attending courses than on independent study. The time spent on independent studies over the weekend, when practically no courses are held, is on average less than during the weekdays. Evidently, students follow suit with the majority of employees in the working world and reserve their weekends for leisure activities.

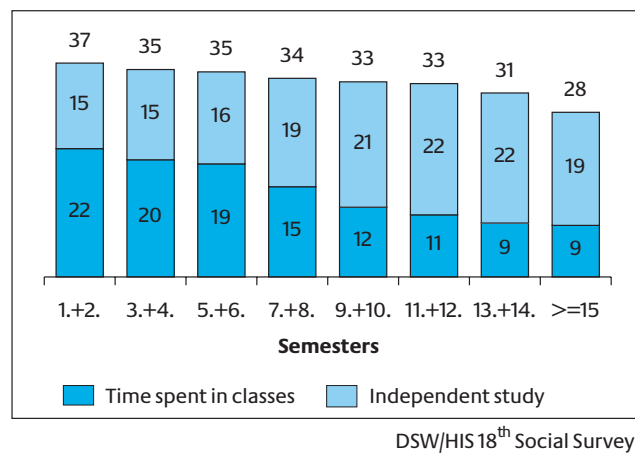
**Time Required Throughout the Course of Study**

At the beginning of a student's course of study, the average amount of time spent on studies is at its highest (nearly 37 hours a week). Courses make up the lion's share of this time budget with six out of ten hours (Figure 9.3). As student's advance through their course of studies, the total amount of time spent on their studies constantly declines, due exclusively to a reduction in the amount of time spent attending classes. At the same time, progressively more time is devoted to independent study. By the end of the course of study, independent study occupies more than two-thirds of the total amount of study-related hours.

**Time Required According to Degree Pursued**

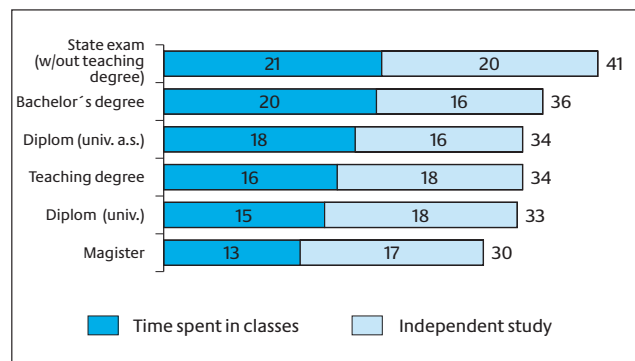
A comparison of different courses of study reveals fairly large differences in the time required for studies. This can be primarily attributed to differences in the amount of time required for classes and is due to a lesser degree to differences in the time requirements for independent study.

**Figure 9.3 Time spent on studies during the course of study**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



The implementation of the study structure reform is expected to lead to more time-intensive higher education, particularly when it comes to bachelor's degrees, as already reflected to a certain degree by the data collected here. Disregarding the courses of study that currently do not lead to a bachelor's degree or will not make the transition to a bachelor's degree in the foreseeable future (state examinations that do not grant qualifications in the teaching profession), the time-related requirements placed on students pursuing a bachelor's degree in the first two years of study are slightly above average. This can be principally attributed to greater requirements for independent study and not to an above-average amount of time spent attending classes (Figure 9.4).

**Figure 9.4 Time required according to degree pursued**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



**Time Required According to Type of Institution of Higher Education**

In terms of overall time commitments, there are no differences between students at universities and universities of applied sciences. During the 2006 summer semester, both groups dedicated an average of 34 hours a week to their studies – the same amount of time as three years earlier. Nevertheless, in addition to these overall figures, there was a further reduction at both types of institutions of higher education in the amount of time spent attending

classes and an associated increase in the time budget for independently organized study activities. However, first-year students at universities of applied sciences spend on average more time in supervised types of study in contrast with universities where most study-related time is now spent on independent study.

**Time Required According to Subject Area Groups**

There is a close connection between the subject studied and the amount of time required for studies. Differences between the different subject areas are in some cases considerable and could be characterized as traditional. Students in the subject area group of “medicine” (which includes majors such as human medicine, dental medicine, veterinary medicine and most recently health sciences) have the greatest time commitments associated with their studies (Figure 9.5).

In addition, students in the subject areas of electronics/electrical engineering, earth sciences/physics, art/art theory, and mechanical engineering also have above-average overall time requirements for their studies. In the areas of psychology, language/cultural studies, education, and social sciences/social services, the weekly amount of time required is below average. These differences are predominantly due to the nature of approaches used from subject area to subject area, and can be observed throughout all phases of study, as confirmed by a comparison according to the number of semesters completed.

**9.2 Time Spent Working**

Over the past few years, time spent on gainful employment has become an important aspect of the time budget of a continually rising proportion of students (see Chapter 10). The time con-

straints of working a job have to be reconciled with the demands of students' studies, which can have a considerable influence on how activities are scheduled throughout the week and during the semester.

The time invested in a job while studying can vary depending on a number of characteristics, some of which are connected with the course of study.

**Time Required for Work According to Course of Study**

With each passing semester, students spend progressively more time working. Among students pursuing their first degree, and particularly at the beginning of their studies, only a relatively minor proportion have a job. During the 2006 summer semester, first-degree students worked an average of 6.8 hours a week.

In comparison to 2003, the amount of time spent working per week has declined by half an hour – and this is true for the entire student body taken as a whole as well as for those students who actually work.

This mean value, which includes all students, whether they work or not, overshadows that fact that those who work have significantly greater work-related time constraints (Figure 9.6).

Only roughly a third of the working students have a weekly time commitment of a maximum of one work day, i.e. up to eight hours. Two-thirds have greater weekly time constraints, with 30% of students pursuing a first degree working more than 16 hours a week. In effect, they can thus be classified as part-time employees. Work-related time commitments include every day of the week.

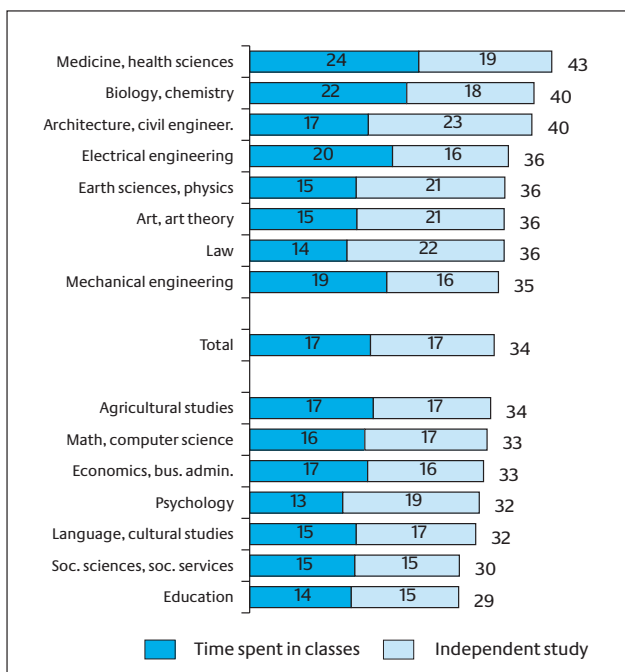
The data of the Social Survey does yet allow for conclusions to be drawn with regard to possible changes in the student time budget in the new courses of study (bachelor's and master's degree programs). The proportions of working students in bachelor's degree programs tend to fall in the mid-range for all days of the week. Daily time commitments for work fluctuate rather widely from course of study to course of study, and for students who are pursuing a bachelor's degree, these daily time requirements also fall into the mid-range.

**Time Required for Work According to Type of Institution of Higher Education**

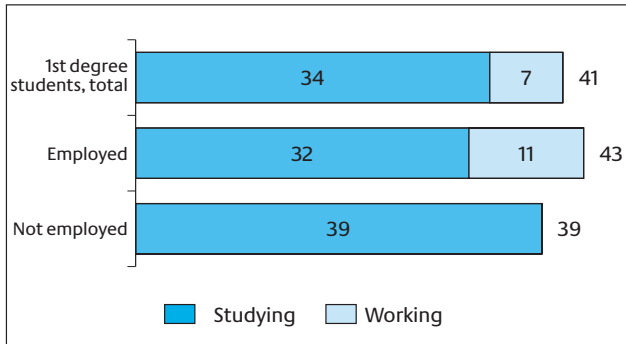
Students at universities of applied sciences work on average eight hours a week. This is significantly more than at universities, where students spend an average of 6.3 hours a week at work.

The greater job commitments of students attending universities of applied sciences are due to a wide range of factors. A greater proportion of these students have previous work experience, more of them have completed vocational training, a prerequisite preparatory internship, or similar qualifications. It thus stands to reason that they are on average older than students at universities and (have to be) less financially dependent on their parents. In addition, a relatively large proportion have already founded a family.

**Figure 9.5 Time required according to subject area**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



**Figure 9.6 Total time spent on studies and work**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

**Time Required for Work throughout the Course of Study**

Not only does the proportion of students who work continue to rise with each passing semester, but also the amount of time dedicated to gainful employment. While students in their first academic year work on average roughly four hours a week, this time commitment rises to approximately eight hours by the end of the normal period of study, and is thus twice as large.

Right from the beginning of their studies, students at universities spend less time working than students at universities of applied sciences. The time commitment for students at universities of applied sciences in their first semester is fairly high (approximately five hours a week) and findings show that throughout the course of study this time commitment also increases faster than for students at universities.

There are a wide range of reasons for this, and many can be found in the typical profile of students attending universities of applied sciences. Numerous characteristics are linked to a higher rate of student self-financing (see Chapter 6).

These characteristics include a later average commencement of studies, proportionally more students who have completed vocational training or have extensive professional experience, a larger proportion from socially disadvantaged families, and a higher proportion of older students who have established a higher degree of independence from their parents and have more often founded their own families.

**9.3 Time Budget for Studies and Gainful Employment**

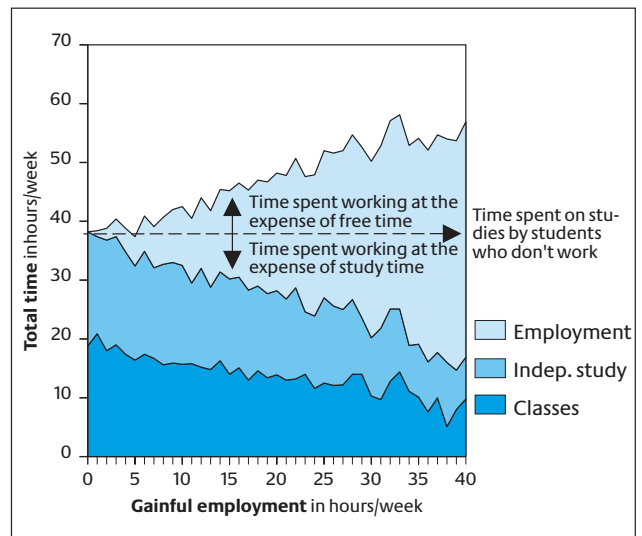
Time requirements for studies and work lead to an average total commitment of over 41 hours a week for students pursuing their first degree. This overall impression fails, however, to convey the relatively large range of different student time budgets. Nearly a quarter (24%) spend a maximum of 30 hours a week on their studies and jobs, more than one in four students (27%) spend between 30 and 40 hours a week, and another quarter (26%) require 40 to 50 hours a week. Nearly one in four students (24%) reports a comparatively large time commitment of more than 50 hours a week.

**Connection between Time Spent Studying and Working**

There is a close connection between the time that students spend on their studies and the amount of time that they work. However, both types of time commitments do not correspond in a strictly one-to-one manner; the number of working hours is not fully reflected in the amount of time spent studying. Assuming that there is a linear connection, regression models show that working time commitments lead to a corresponding 50% reduction in the amount of time spent attending classes and pursuing independent study.

In addition, job-related time commitments impinge upon the remaining student time budget (leisure, time with family). Expressed in numbers, every hour that students spend working reduces both the amount of time that they spend studying and their leisure time by roughly 30 minutes. The benchmark for this calculation is the amount of time that students who are not gainfully employed spend on their studies. The decline in the amount of time spent on studies is accompanied by a nearly matching decrease in both the time attending classes and the time dedicated to independent studying (Figure 9.7). Large total time commitments of 45 hours a week and more are usually associated with above-average amounts of time spent working.

**Figure 9.7 Time required for gainful employment and for studies**  
first-degree students, mean in hours/week



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**Full-Time vs. Part-Time Studies**

Full-time studies are still the norm in Germany. In contrast to other countries, organized part-time studies remain a rarity. Although the number of part-time courses of study has increased over the past few years, currently only about 2.5% of all basic courses of study are offered as part-time studies, primarily at universities of applied sciences.

Nonetheless, the responses of students with regard to their time budget have shown over the years that a fairly substantial number are in effect pursuing part-time studies, in other words,

without any formal or organizational prerequisites at the institutions of higher education (i.e., in the form of appropriate study regulations) they are fulfilling study time requirements that are below certain standards. In recent years, this percentage has gradually increased.

Since 1991, the Social Survey has used a model to illustrate this situation. This is based on four different ideal “study-work types” that take into account students' study and work commitments:

- I Full-time students without/with minimal work commitments
- II Full-time students with substantial work commitments
- III Part-time students without/with minimal work commitments
- IV Part-time students with substantial work commitments.<sup>9</sup>

During the 2006 summer semester, three out of four students pursuing a first degree were full-time students. Two thirds are studying full-time without or with minimal time commitments for gainful employment, and an additional 9% spend considerable amounts of time working. A quarter of all students are part-time students. Among these students there are twice as many individuals who spend comparatively little time working (17%) as those with substantial work commitments (8%, Figure 9.8).

This confirms that the trend observed for a number of years has continued during the 2006 summer semester, indicating once again that a clearly rising proportion of students are in effect pursuing part-time studies. Back in 1991, 87% of the students pursuing a first degree could still be classified as full-time students. Fifteen years later, this proportion has dwindled by 12% and the proportion of those who, in effect, pursue part-time studies has nearly doubled.

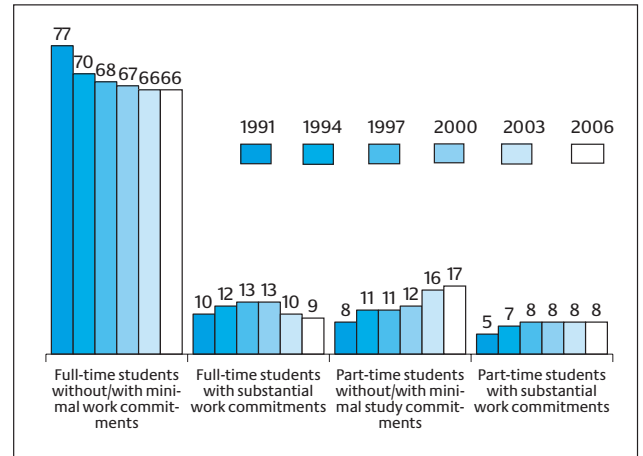
As in previous years, there are still proportionally more such de facto part-time students in western Germany than in eastern Germany (25% vs. 23%), although the gap continues to close. In 2003, the proportion of part-time students in eastern Germany was only 19%. Part-time studies are comparatively common at both types of institutions of higher education (25% each).

For two out of three students, pursuing full-time studies entails a time commitment of approximately 44 hours a week, including 41 hours for studies.

Nearly ten percent of respondents are full-time students who also spend a considerable amount of time working, with an average of a 60-hour week, and thus have by far the highest total time commitment. These students work roughly 23 hours a week and could be classified as part-time employees. This group spends on average only 3 hours a week less on its studies than full-time students without substantial work commitments.

Part-time students with substantial work commitments work on average only four hours a week longer than full-time students with the same level of extra time commitments, yet they devote 23 hours a week less time to their studies. For these students, studies tend to be of secondary importance. With approximately 21 hours a week, unemployed or only minimally employed part-time stu-

**Figure 9.8 Study-work types 1991-2006**  
first-degree students, in %<sup>1</sup>



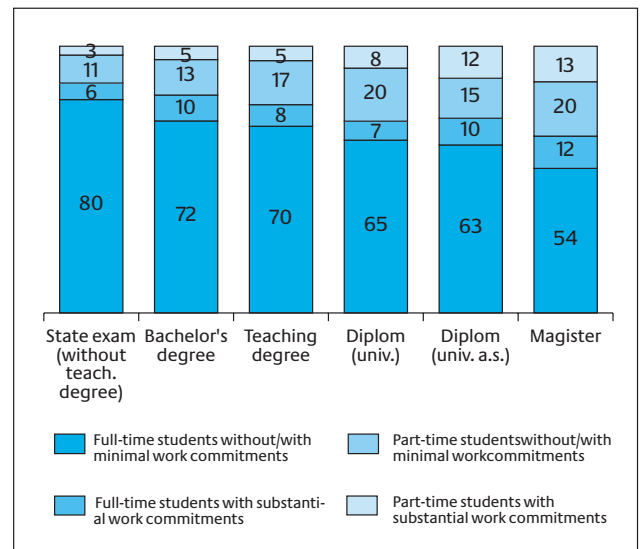
DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

dents have at most half the total time commitments of the other groups.

Depending on the course of study, there are various (official) options and study-related prerequisites for pursuing part-time studies. Only an extremely small proportion of part-time students have courses of study that conclude with a state examination. Eighty-two percent of students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program study on a full-time basis (Figure 9.9). The fact that 18% of these individuals are part-time students can in part be explained by the above-mentioned increase in the number of part-time courses of study, particularly at universities of applied sciences. These institutions have made the most progress in implementing the study structure reforms, which also include introducing part-time courses of study.

**Figure 9.9 Study-work types according to degree pursued**  
first-degree students, in %



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<sup>9</sup> Full-time studies: >= 25 hours spent on studies per week; part-time studies: < 25 hours spent on studies per week; without/minimal work commitments: <= 15 hours/week; substantial work commitments: > 15 hours/week.

## 10. Student Employment

In the previous chapter, it was demonstrated that gainful employment is an integral aspect of daily life for many students. Earning money on the side to finance studies is no longer limited to holidays and semester breaks, but has become an established part of the student time budget during the semester as well.

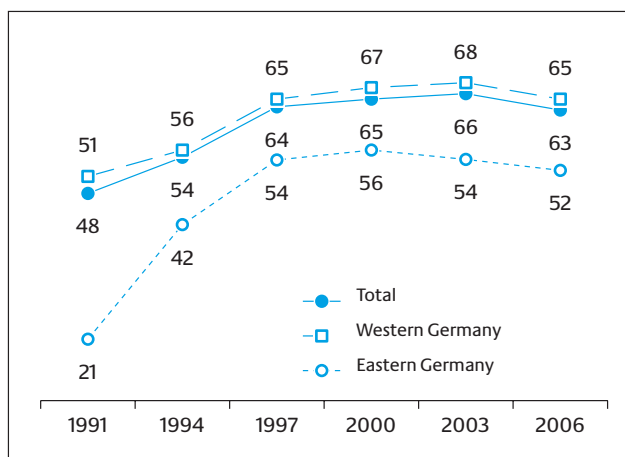
Due to the growing harmonization of employment patterns during the semester, the holidays, and semester breaks, and due to the increasing importance of student employment with regard to academic effectiveness during the semester, the present chapter will focus exclusively on findings concerning gainful employment during the summer semester (not including holidays).

### 10.1 Employment Rate

During the 2006 summer semester, 63% of all students pursuing a first degree had a job in addition to their studies. This employment rate is three percent lower than in 2003, when 66% of students in first-degree programs had a job. For the first time after years marked by a relatively substantial increase, there has been a decline in the proportion of working students (Figure 10.1).

A wide range of factors have contributed to the currently observed drop in the student employment rate. One of these is the introduction of tuition fees for long-term students in an increasing number of German states (Länder). These measures have led to a reduction in the number of long-term students, and it is these students in particular who constitute a group with above-average work commitments. According to the results of the Social Survey, the proportion of long-term students (students pursuing a first degree from the 10th semester onwards at universities of applied sciences and from the 14th semester onwards at universities) was 12% in the year 2000. By 2003, this percentage had dropped to roughly 10% and was 8% in the 2006 summer semester.

**Figure 10.1** Employment rate in western and eastern Germany first-degree students, in %<sup>1</sup>



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> Up until 2003, only German students; from 2006, including foreign students with a German education

In addition, initiatives connected to the study structure reform will affect the employment rate. This is because the number of new courses of study has increased. It is assumed that bachelor's degree programs will entail a larger and stricter set of regulations than Diplom courses of study.

Furthermore, the proportion of students from groups that are higher on the social ladder has increased somewhat (see Chapter 4). In addition, the financial support provided by parents, in particular for younger students, was higher in 2006 than in previously years (see Chapter 6). This reduced the need for students to take on work to help finance their studies.

Employment rates have been calculated based on those respondents who reported that they had worked "occasionally", "often" or "constantly" during the 2006 summer semester. Among students pursuing a first degree, a third worked "constantly", a tenth worked "often", and a fifth "occasionally" took on gainful employment.

One indication of the decline in the employment rate is the amount of hours that students work. Compared with 2003, the amount of time spent working has declined by an average of one hour (first-degree students, from 10 to 9 hours a week; post-graduate students, from 20 to 19 hours a week).

This significant reduction in time spent working has been observed among all students, i.e., whether they work regularly or not.

### 10.2 Factors Influencing Student Employment

#### Regional Aspects

Among first-degree students in the 2006 summer semester, 65% in western Germany, but only 52% in eastern Germany, report that they have jobs to help pay for their studies (Figure 10.1).

In comparison to 2003, students from both regions work proportionally fewer hours. The drop in student employment rates in western Germany is one percentage point higher than in eastern Germany. This has led to an additional decline in the gap between the two regions. The student employment rate in eastern Germany still remains significantly lower (13% less) than in western Germany.

The number of students who take on work while pursuing their studies is also linked to general conditions like the regional labor market and employment opportunities for students. Discrepancies in employment rates from state to state reflect the fact that students, along with other jobseekers, have a comparatively poor chance of finding work in structurally-deprived regions with high levels of unemployment than they do of finding a position in large urban areas with outstanding job opportunities (Figure 10.2).

#### Age

As students get older, an increasing proportion takes on work to help finance their studies. Less than half of all young students up



**Figure 10.2 Employment rate according to location<sup>1</sup>**  
first-degree students, in %

city	rate	city	rate	city	rate
Cologne	78	Wuppertal	67	Braunsch.	57
Hamburg	76	Erl.-Nuremberg	66	Paderborn	57
Mönchengl.	74	Mannheim	66	Regensburg	56
Frankfurt a. M.	73	Berlin	65	Saarbrücken	56
Darmstadt	72	Kiel	65	Würzburg	56
Dortmund	72	Hanover	64	Heidelberg	54
Essen	72	Potsdam	64	Leipzig	54
Bochum	71	Trier	64	Magdeburg	54
Bonn	71	Freiburg	62	Oldenburg	53
Düsseldorf	70	Karlsruhe	62	Dresden	52
Siegen	69	Kassel	62	Göttingen	52
Bremen	68	Aachen	61	Halle	52
Duisburg	68	Constance	61	Augsburg	51
Coblenz	68	Münster	60	Jena	51
Munich	68	Tübingen	60	Rostock	51
Bielefeld	67	Gießen	58	Marburg	47
Mainz	67	Ulm	58	Osnabrück	46

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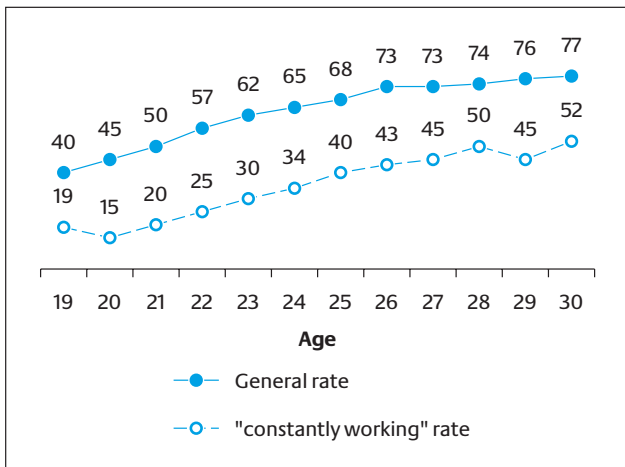
<sup>1</sup> Only locations which were cited by at least 100 respondents

to the age of 20 earn money (40% of the 19-year-olds and 45% of the 20-year-olds, Figure 10.3). At the age of 24 and 25, we find that already two-thirds work, and from their late 20s onwards at least three-quarters of students are employed. Along with this rising employment rate there is a continuously rising proportion of students who report that they are “constantly” working. Among the youngest students pursuing a first degree, roughly one in five is “constantly” working. This proportion reaches 50% when students attain the age of 28.

**Social Origins**

The employment rates for students with different social origins vary less than one might be inclined to assume. The lowest pro-

**Figure 10.3 General and “constantly working” employment rates according to age**  
first-degree students, in %

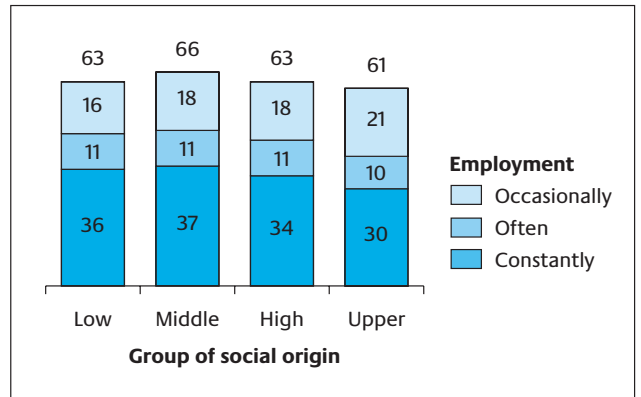


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portion of working students can be found among the “upper” group of origin (61%, Figure 10.4) and the highest was reported by students in the “middle” group of origin, where two-thirds are gainfully employed. The remaining groups of origin (“low” and “high”) have a 63% employment rate, which corresponds to the average among students pursuing a first degree.

The frequency of student employment can also serve as an indication of the necessity of work to finance living expenses. This becomes clear when the employment rates of students from the individual groups of origin are compared with regard to the proportions of students who (have to) “constantly” work. This percentage is highest among students from the “middle” group of origin (37%). It should also be noted that the corresponding percentage of students among the “low” group of origin is larger than the remaining other two groups (36% vs. 34% and 30%).

**Figure 10.4 Employment rate and working frequency according to social origin**  
first-degree students, in %



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**10.3 Motives for Student Employment**

There are a number of reasons why students take on gainful employment. Possible motives include economic incentives (the required contribution to living expenses, greater purchasing power), personal development (independence from parents and financial assistance from relatives), and objectives connected with the upcoming transition to professional life (practical experience, contacts in the occupational field).

If the proportion of those respondents who fully agree with a given motive for employment is taken as the basis for an evaluation, then making a necessary contribution to living expenses is the most commonly cited reason for working. Forty-two percent totally agreed with the statement “I earn money during my studies because it is absolutely necessary in order to meet my living expenses.” This was followed in second place by the motive “greater purchasing power” (39%). Moreover, an analysis that takes into account all positive responses (“agree/totally agree”) actually places “greater purchasing power” as the most common motive. This was indicated by 71% of all employed students (Figure 10.5). However, it should be noted that nearly half of these students also said that they worked because it was absolutely

necessary in order to meet their living expenses.

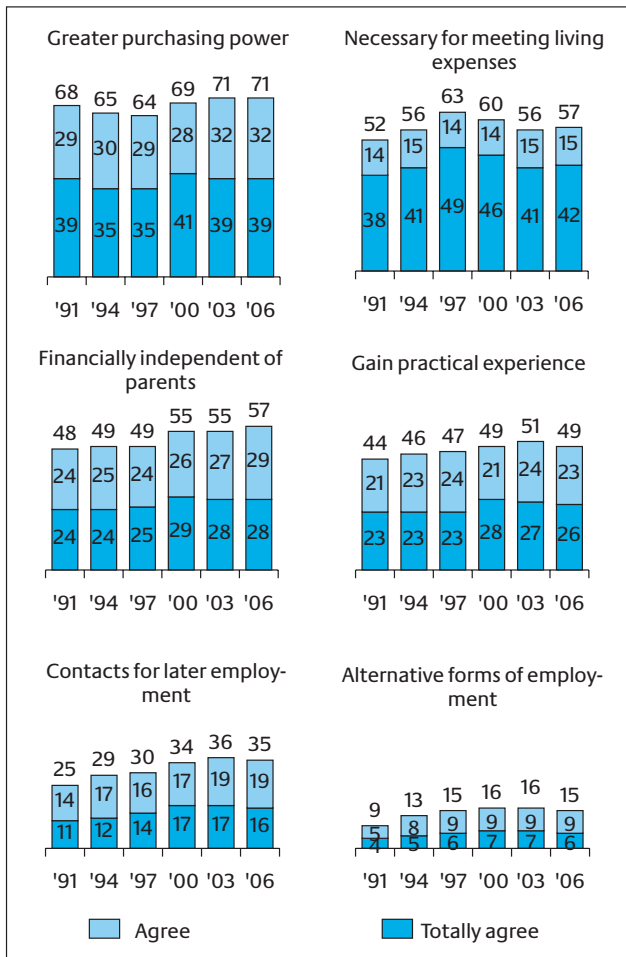
The third most common motive for working is “to be financially independent of my parents” (57% “agree/totally agree”). One out of two students work “to gain practical experience” that will be necessary later in professional life (49% “agree/totally agree”). One out of three students hopes to make contacts through work that may lead to later employment. Roughly one out of six students sees their employment as a stepping stone to pave the way for an alternative form of employment that may be beyond the scope of their academic degree.

Over the past decade, not much has changed in terms of the rankings and ratings of motives for working cited by students in the Social Survey. As previously the case, students have a number of reasons for working, and on average they rate roughly three of the optional responses provided as relevant.

### 10.4 Types of Employment

Students are employed in the widest range of jobs imaginable. They work in menial jobs that require no special prior experience and they perform highly specialized tasks where they draw upon

**Figure 10.5 Motives for employment, 1991-2006**  
rated on a scale of 1 to 5, from “totally disagree” to “totally agree”, first-degree students, in %



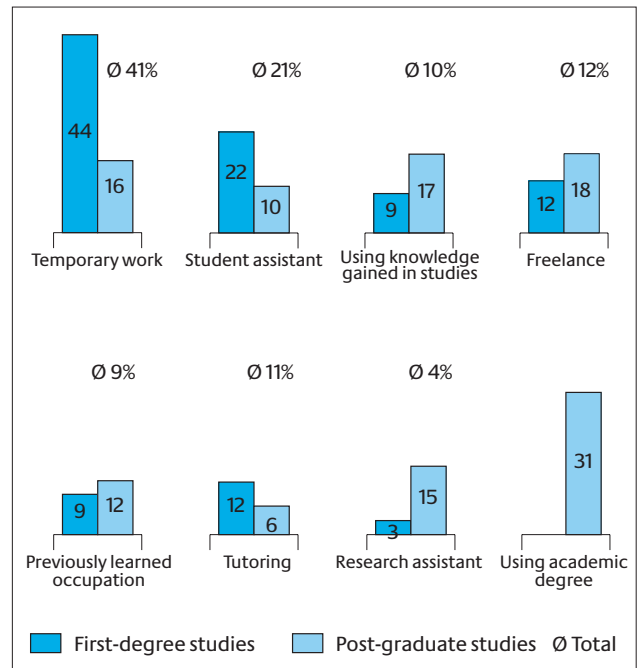
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knowledge acquired during their studies. Despite this extensive range in quality of student employment, the most common jobs are temporary positions waiting tables, driving cabs, working as sales clerks or office help.

It is primarily students pursuing their first degree who do temporary work (44%, Figure 10.6). Only half as many work as student assistants (22%). Nearly one in ten students pursuing their first degree uses knowledge gained during their studies to earn money. In all probability, a great many freelance and tutoring jobs are also study-related.

Students pursuing post-graduate studies work relatively often in study (degree)-related jobs compared to students pursuing their first degree. Nearly a third of post-graduate students have work that requires the qualifications of their academic degree. Roughly a sixth of these students use knowledge gained during their studies at their job or work as research assistants.

**Figure 10.6 Type of employment according to type of degree pursued employed students, in %**



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### Area of Study and Type of Institution of Higher Education

The special characteristics of universities of applied sciences in comparison to universities, e.g., with regard to the subject structure and qualifications for higher education of its students (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 4), are also reflected to a certain extent in student jobs. Students at universities of applied sciences work more often in occupational areas where they have training (16% compared to 6% for students at universities) and they more often use knowledge gained during their education when they take on gainful employment in addition to pursuing their studies.

Comparatively large proportions of students at universities

have temporary work or work as assistants at the university. Due to the courses of study (for the teaching profession) at the university, a larger proportion of university students work as tutors than students at universities of applied sciences. There appears to be a particularly high demand for tutors in the areas of mathematics & natural sciences and languages & cultural studies. A relatively large number of the student tutors who are pursuing a degree in languages & cultural studies work on a freelance basis. Students in medical school and health sciences work proportionally more than all others in occupations (usually medical or care-related) where they have previous qualifications. Only a small proportion of first-degree students have a paid internship.

### 10.5 Earnings from Employment

The average wage that students receive for their work is €9 an hour after taxes. That is €1 less than the findings of the 17th Social Survey. Post-graduate students receive on average €12 an hour, a remuneration which is higher than the hourly wage of students pursuing their first degree. A comparison with the previous study shows that the hourly wages of students in graduate programs

have dropped faster than the average (2003: €15). The lowest average hourly earnings are found among students from eastern Germany (€7).

Students who work independently for their own company evidently earn the highest wages (€18 an hour). In addition, the rule of thumb still applies that the closer the link between work activities and specific qualifications – i.e., an acquired vocation or academic degree – the higher the wages. Over the years, internships have been one of the worst paid forms of employment (€6 an hour), evidently, in part, because earning money is not a priority here.

Most students pursuing their first degree earn an hourly wage of between €6 and €10, with significant differences from region to region. The majority of students in western Germany receive between €9 and €12 an hour, while students in eastern Germany usually earn an hourly wage of between €7 and €10.

## 11. Housing

### 11.1 Types of Accommodation

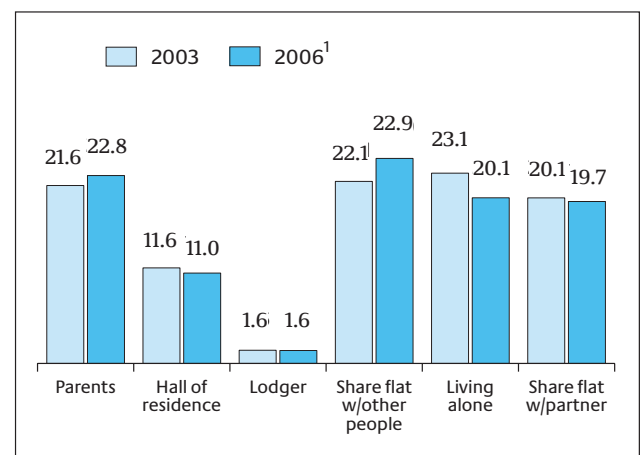
Roughly 40% of all students have rented a flat (apartment) either for living alone or with a partner (Figure 11.1). Nearly a quarter share a flat with other people and a slightly smaller proportion live with their parents (approx. 23%). An additional 11% live in a student hall of residence (dormitory) and less than 2% live as a lodger.

Compared to 2003, the proportion of students who share a flat with other people has increased by nearly one percent. At the same time, the proportion of those who live in a flat alone has declined by roughly the same amount. During the same period, there was a minor increase in the proportion of students who live with their parents.

#### Age

The type of housing that students choose is primarily a question of age – and logically the increasing amount of available income that students enjoy as they get older. While nearly half of the youngest students (up to 21 years) live with their parents or in a student hall of residence, this proportion declines with increasing age up to just 10% among the oldest students (Figure 11.2). Similarly, the proportion of those who live in a flat alone rises with age, from 23% to 76%, and there is a particularly striking increase in the proportion of students who share a flat with a partner (from 7% to 52%). The proportion of students who share a flat with other people varies from age group to age group between 21% and 29%. It is not until students enter the oldest age group (age 30 and over) that this proportion declines significantly to 13%.

Figure 11.1 Students according to type of housing in %



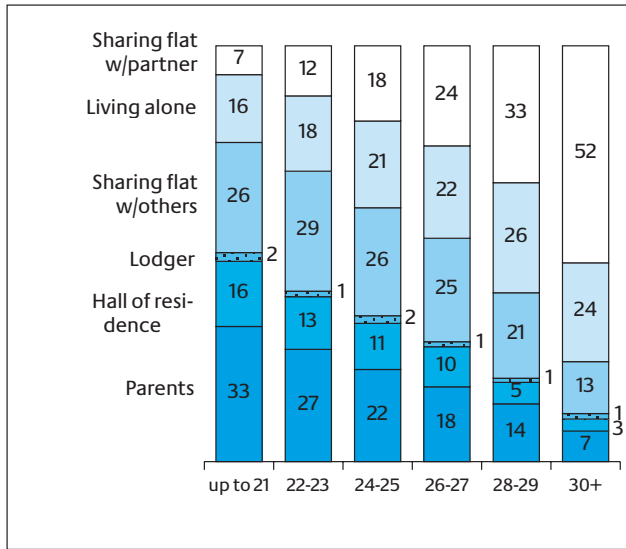
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<sup>1</sup> Including foreign students with a German education

#### Gender

When it comes to gender there are also highly noteworthy differences with regard to housing and accommodation. Female students leave home earlier than male students. While 19% of women live with their parents, 26% of men still live at home. At an early age, a larger proportion of women are in a committed relationship, and this is reflected in their housing situation: 23% of female students but only 17% of male students share a flat with a partner. A larger percentage of women than men also opt to share a flat

**Figure 11.2 Types of housing according to age**  
students in % of each age group



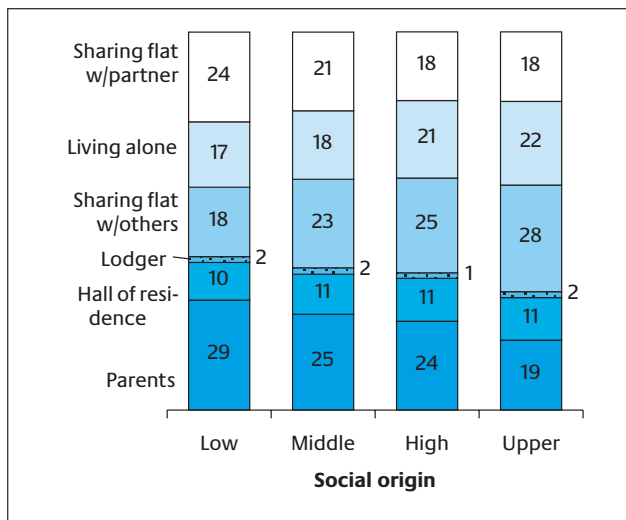
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with other people (26% vs. 24%). However, slightly fewer women than men live in student halls of residence (10% vs. 12%).

**Social Origins**

An analysis of the student population according to social origin reveals differences primarily in terms of the number of students who live with their parents and those who share a flat with other people (Figure 11.3). While 29% of the students in the “low” group of social origin live with their parents, only 19% of the students in the “upper” group of social origin live at home. These differences are also reflected in the proportion of students who share a flat with other people. Only 18% of students from the lower group but 28% of the students from the “upper” group of origin share a

**Figure 11.3 Types of housing according to social origin**  
students in % of each group of origin



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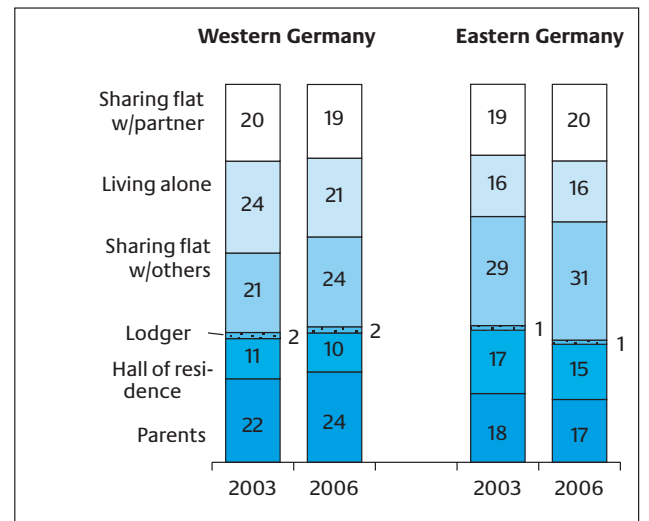
flat with other people. The differences are more minor when it comes to the numbers of students who live in a flat alone. This type of housing has been chosen by 17% of students in the “low” and 22% of the students in the “upper” group of origin. The reverse is true with regard to the numbers of students who rent a flat with a partner. This type of housing is used by students from the “low” group of origin more than those from the “upper” group of origin (24% vs. 18%).

The differences described above result from a wide range of influences. For instance, students from the lower groups of origin opt more often to study at a university of applied sciences, which could entail a higher proportion of students who live at home. On the other hand, students from the lower groups of origin are significantly older than their fellow students from the higher groups or origin, and this means that they more rarely live with their parents and, as an alternative, more often decide to live alone in a flat.

**Western Germany – Eastern Germany**

As in previous years, substantial differences can be observed in the types of housing that students have in western Germany and eastern Germany (Figure 11.4). In 2006, the proportion of students who still live with their parents is significantly lower in eastern Germany than in western Germany (17% vs. 24%). There is also a lower proportion of students who rent a flat alone (16% vs. 21%). On the other hand, there are larger proportions who live in student halls of residence (15% vs. 10%) or share a flat with other people (31% vs. 24%).

**Figure 11.4 Types of housing according region**  
students<sup>1</sup> in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

<sup>1</sup> From 2006, including foreign students with a German education; from 2000, Berlin was classified as part of western Germany

**11.2 Satisfaction with Living Situation**

The majority of students rate their living situation as positive (Figure 11.5). A quarter report that they are “very satisfied” and over a third say that they are “satisfied”. Only roughly a fifth of the stu-

**Figure 11.5 Satisfaction with current living situation**  
rated on a scale of 1 to 5, from "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied" students in % of each type of housing

Housing	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Undecided	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Parents	17	31	27	17	8
Hall of residence	16	37	24	15	8
Lodger	20	33	21	15	11
Sharing flat with others	25	37	18	11	9
Living alone	28	34	19	11	8
Sharing flat with partner	39	31	12	8	10
<b>Total</b>	25	34	20	12	9

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dents explicitly indicate that they are dissatisfied (12% dissatisfied, 9% very dissatisfied).

Students' level of satisfaction is to a high degree linked with their particular type of living situation. For example, those who live with a partner rank among the most satisfied – (very) satisfied: 70%. A large majority of respondents who live in a flat alone or share a flat with other people are also satisfied – (very) satisfied: 62% for each category of living situation.

Over half of the students who live in a student hall of residence or rent a room in a private household as a lodger are satisfied or very satisfied (53% for each category). Students who live at home are the only group where less than half (48%) of its members are satisfied with their living situation.

### 11.3 Preferences

Students' living situations do not always match their preferences. If the preferences of students could be met in all cases, the distribution of the individual types of living situations would look substantially different (Figure 11.6). More than two-fifths of students would prefer a different housing situation. For instance, 30%

would rather share a flat with their partner and roughly a quarter would like to live in a flat alone (25%) or share a flat with other people (26%). Less than one in ten said that they would rather live in a student hall of residence (9%) or with their parents (8%).

It stands to reason that the discrepancy between the actual and the preferred living situation is closely tied to the current housing situation (Figure 11.6). Students who live in a flat with a partner have the lowest dissatisfaction rate: only 5% would rather have a different living situation. We also find a relatively high degree of satisfaction among students who share a flat with other people and students who live alone in a flat (69% and 66%, respectively). Students who live in a student hall of residence have a much lower degree of satisfaction; if given the choice, more than half (56%) would rather have a different living situation. When it comes to students who live at home or rent a room in a private household as a lodger, roughly three-quarters would prefer a different living situation.

**Figure 11.6 Matching the actual and the preferred living situation**  
students in % of each type of housing

Actual living situation	Preferred living situation						Total
	Parents	Hall of residence	Lodger	Sharing flat w/ others	Living alone	Sharing flat w/ partner	
Parents	26	11	1	16	26	20	100
Hall of residence	5	44	1	17	18	15	100
Lodger	4	7	25	18	29	16	100
Sharing flat with others	2	2	0	69	16	11	100
Living alone	4	3	0	7	66	19	100
Sharing flat with partner	1	2	0	1	1	95	100
<b>Total</b>	8	9	1	25	26	30	100

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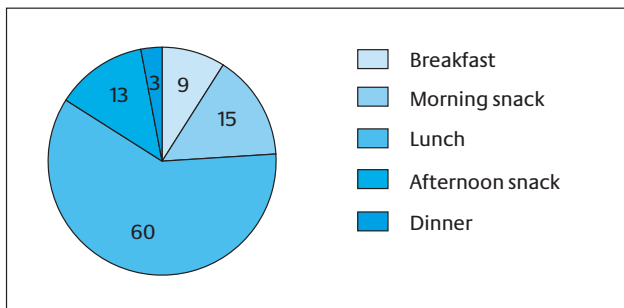
## 12. Food Service Facilities – Student Restaurants and Cafeterias

### 12.1 Use of Services

At sometime in the week, 83% of students visit the student restaurant or cafeteria to eat breakfast, purchase a snack during the morning or the afternoon, or eat lunch or dinner. These students go to the student restaurant or cafeteria on average four times a week to eat one of the aforementioned meals.

A comparison of the different types of meals taken reveals that eating lunch is the most common reason for going to the student restaurant or cafeteria. Lunch represents 60% of all the meals consumed there. Snacks during the morning or the afternoon come in second and third place, with 15% and 13%, respectively. Breakfast represents 9% of all meals taken, and dinner is currently only of minor importance (Figure 12.1).

**Figure 12.1 Meals in the student restaurant/cafeteria in %**



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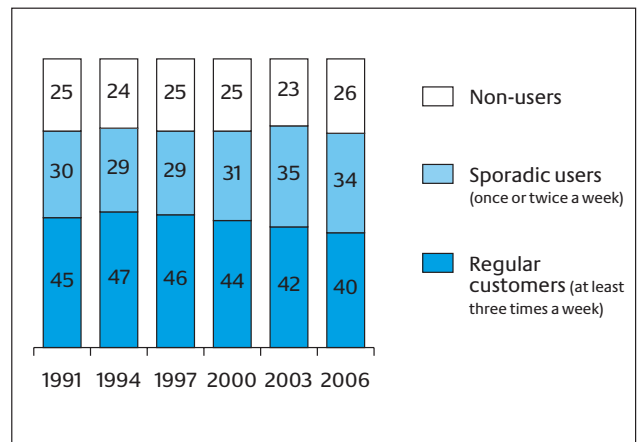
### 12.2 Lunch in the Student Restaurant/Cafeteria

From 1991 to 2006, the proportion of students who eat lunch at the student restaurant or cafeteria remained virtually unchanged at roughly 75%. There have been, however, clear changes in the frequency of visits to the student restaurant throughout the week. The proportion of students who eat lunch at least three times a week in the student restaurant/cafeteria (“regular customers”) was 47% in 1994 and has declined ever since (Figure 12.2). By contrast, the proportion of students who eat lunch once or twice a week in the student restaurant/cafeteria (“sporadic users”) has increased since 1997.

#### Gender

Findings for the year 2006 show that significantly more male than female students are regular customers at the student restaurant/cafeteria (Figure 12.3). While 49% of the men eat lunch there at least three times a week, only 30% of the women take lunch with the same level of frequency. By contrast, a higher proportion of women than men visit the cafeteria sporadically to eat lunch (39% vs. 30%). It should also be noted that the proportion of women who

**Figure 12.2 Frequency of visiting the student restaurant/cafeteria students in %**

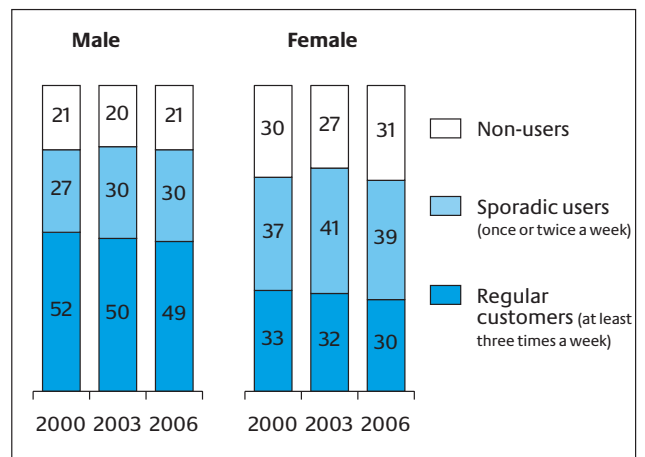


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never eat lunch at the student restaurant/cafeteria is substantially higher than the corresponding proportion of men (31% vs. 21%).

Compared to 2003, there has been only a minor increase (from 20% to 21%) in the proportion of male students who do not eat lunch in the student restaurant/cafeteria. Among women, however, this proportion has increased substantially (from 27% to 31%). Whereas the proportion of regular customers and sporadic users among female students dropped by two percentage points from 2003 to 2006, the proportion of male regular customers only fell by one percentage point during the same period. In comparison to the year 2000, the proportion of male and female regular customers has dropped by three percentage points to 49% and 30%, respectively.

**Figure 12.3 Frequency of visiting the student restaurant/cafeteria according to gender students in %**

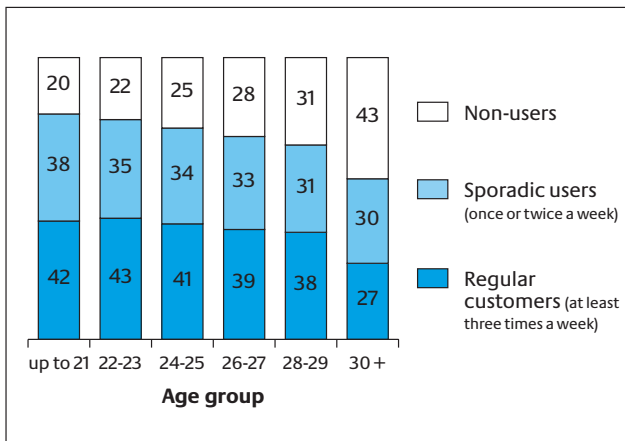


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**Age**

Evidently, the decision to eat an inexpensive lunch in the student restaurant/cafeteria has quite a good deal to do with age. While 80% of the youngest students (up to the age of 21) eat lunch in the student restaurant, this proportion declines with increasing age (Figure 12.4).

**Figure 12.4** Frequency of visiting the student restaurant/cafeteria according to age students in % of each age group



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**Study Area-Related Aspects**

An assessment according to subject area groups reveals that students in engineering sciences are the leading regular customers who eat lunch at the student restaurant/cafeteria (49%). This group is closely followed by students in mathematics & natural sciences and medicine & health sciences (48% and 47%, respectively). Students in economics, business administration & law also have a relatively high proportion of regular customers for lunch at the student restaurant/cafeteria (43%).

Students in languages and cultural studies along with the subject area group of social sciences, social services, psychology and education are comparatively rare customers at the student restaurant/cafeteria (29% and 26%, respectively). An above-average proportion of the students from these subject area groups are sporadic users (40% and 41%, respectively). Among the other subject area groups, the percentage of sporadic users ranges from 29% (engineering sciences) to 33% (economics, business administration & law).

Students who are pursuing a bachelor's degree display the same usage behavior of the student restaurant/cafeteria as students in traditional degree programs. It is safe to assume that the majority of the students in the newly-introduced bachelor's degree programs are younger individuals. In order to exclude the influence of age on the usage behavior of the student restaurant/cafeteria, comparisons were restricted to students up to the age of 23 in the traditional and new courses of study. The findings show that students of the same age who are pursuing a bachelor's degree or any of the other courses of study visit the student restau-

rant/cafeteria to eat lunch with virtually the same frequency (2.7 and 2.8 times a week, respectively).

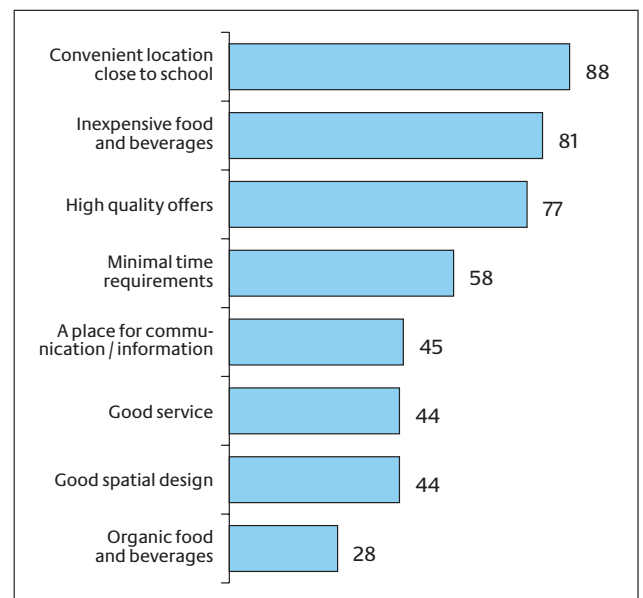
Students at universities eat lunch in the student restaurant/cafeteria slightly more often than students at universities of applied sciences (76% vs. 71%). While there is hardly any difference between the two types of institutions of higher learning in terms of the proportion of regular customers (40% vs. 39%), there is a more substantial difference in the number of sporadic users (36% vs. 32%).

**12.3 Important Aspects from the Students' Perspective**

In response to the question "What aspects of the student restaurant/cafeteria are especially important to you?" students were asked to rate a number of characteristics on a scale of one to five, from "not important at all" to "very important".

According to these responses, a convenient location close to the school is by far the most important aspect of the student restaurant/cafeteria (88%), followed by inexpensive food and beverages (81%) and high quality offers (77%). For significantly more than half of the students (58%) it is also important that eating in the student restaurant/cafeteria require a minimal amount of time. Almost half of the students (45%) feel that it is important for the student restaurants and cafeterias to be a place for communication and exchanging information. The proportions of students who responded that good service at the student restaurants/cafeterias or spatial design were important aspects were in both cases 44%. Finally, 28% feel that it is important for the student restaurants/cafeterias to offer organic food and beverages (Figure 12.5).

**Figure 12.5** Student restaurant/cafeteria – important aspects from the students' perspective students who feel that the aspect is "important" or "very important," in %



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## 13. Health-Related Impairments

### 13.1 Definition of Terms

In 1982, the Social Survey started collecting information on the proportion of students with a disability and the proportion of students with a chronic disease. As of this survey, this distinction will no longer be made, and the survey will combine both individuals with a disability and those with a chronic disease under the category of "health-related impairment".

The Social Survey compares students with and without health-related impairments in order to pinpoint specific issues confronting students.

### 13.2 Students with Health-Related Impairments

The proportion of students with a health-related impairment was 19% during the 2006 summer semester. Compared to the year 2000, when students were last questioned on this topic, this percentage has grown substantially (2000:15%). It should be noted, however, that 56% of these students (2000: 61%) feel that this impairment does not constitute a disadvantage in their studies.

Among the 1.76 million students in the target group of the Social Survey, it is possible to extrapolate that there are a total of nearly 327,000 (2000: 240,000) students with a health-related impairment. A total of 44% of these students, or 143,000 individuals, feel that this impairment constitutes a limiting factor during their studies. Approximately 27,000 suffer from (very) severe limitations.

This chapter focuses on students whose health-related impairment has an impact on their studies. The majority of students with a health-related impairment (56%) do not perceive this as a disadvantage for their studies, while 23% (2000: 18%) report that it presents only a slight disadvantage, and an additional 13% (2000: 13%) see this as a mid-scale disadvantage. Eight percent of the students with a health-related impairment say that this severely limits their studies (Figure 13.1). This corresponds to 1.5% of the total student population.

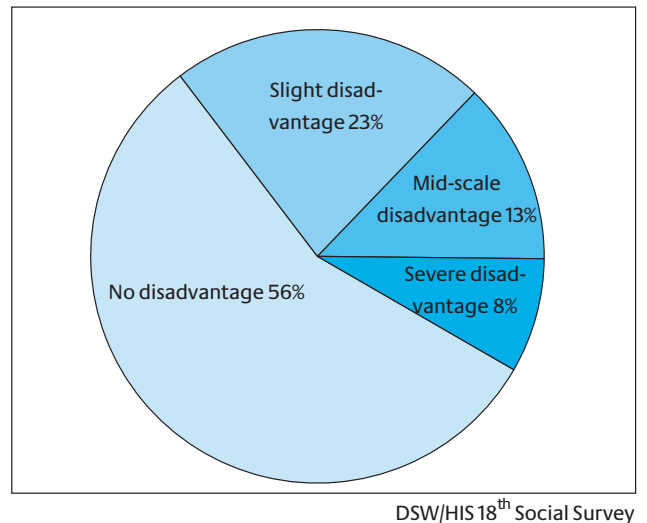
### Forms of Health-Related Impairments

The forms of health-related impairments were surveyed using categories that cover different types of conditions. This made it possible to collect data that reveal the frequency of various forms of health-related impairments among students.

The most frequent health-related impairments are allergies and respiratory conditions. Six out of ten students with health problems report this type of health issue. Students with a health-related impairment report visual impairments (16%), skin conditions (14%), or problems connected with the musculoskeletal system and supporting apparatus (13%). A total of 11% of the students with health-related impairments say that they suffer from mental illness.

There are only minor differences between the proportions of men and women (19% vs. 18%). There are, however, gender differences with regard to various types of health-related impairment.

**Figure 13.1** Degree of health-related impairment<sup>1</sup> students with a health-related impairment



<sup>1</sup> Respondents rated their degree of disadvantage based on a scale of 1 to 5, from "very slight" to "very severe".

### 13.3. Studies and Health-Related Impairments

#### Subject Area

The proportion of students with health-related impairments varies among different subject area groups. Whereas 16% of students in economics, business administration & law report that they have a health-related impairment, this holds true for more than one in five students in the subject area group of social sciences, social services, education & psychology (21%, Figure 13.3). At the same time, this group, along with students in languages and cultural studies, has the highest proportion of students whose health-related impairment represents a disadvantage to their studies (48% and 49%, respectively). What's more, these subject area groups have the highest proportion of students whose health-related impairment poses severe limitations.

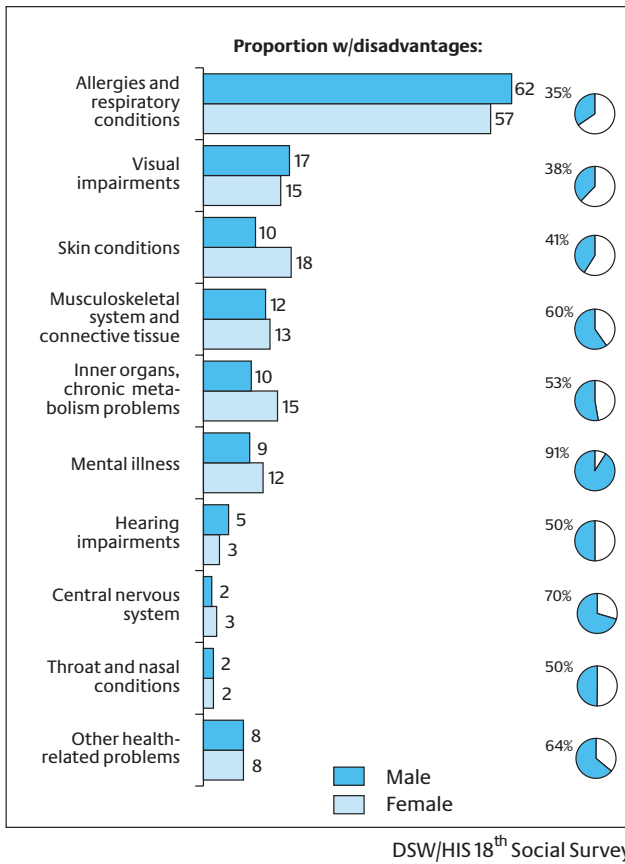
#### Course of Studies

The academic success of students with a health-related impairment is closely linked to their ability to meet organizational, scheduling and material challenges. However, it is not always possible to compensate for a health-related impairment. This explains why in some situations these students have above-average difficulties in completing their studies.

Students with a health-related impairment take their studies just as seriously as other students. Nevertheless, the greater the study-related disadvantages, the larger the proportion of students who say that their studies are only of secondary importance in their lives. At the same time, an above-average proportion of these students report that work commitments, which are usually financially necessary, will prolong their studies.



**Figure 13.2** Types of health-related impairment according to gender and disadvantage to pursuing studies students with a health-related impairment in %

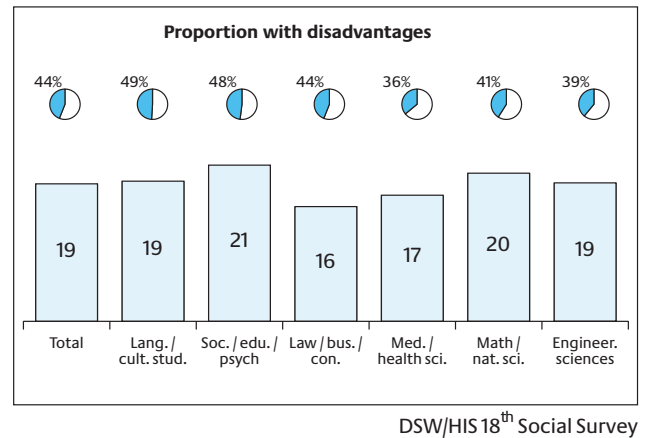


One out of five students with a health-related impairment, including more than half with severe limitations, takes a leave of absence. The leave of absence rate among the general student population is significantly lower (20% vs. 13%). Not surprisingly, nearly half of these students report that the main reason for taking a leave of absence was health-related whereas this is a much less common factor among the remaining students (48% vs. 10%).

**13.4 Financial Situation**

There are large discrepancies in the way students with and without health-related impairments assess their financial situations.

**Figure 13.3** Students with health-related impairments and disadvantages according to subject area groups in %



In addition, the degree of limitation posed by a health-related impairment is an important determining factor in how students assess their ability to finance their studies.

Whereas only one in fifteen students with a health-related impairment, but without a limitation, report that they do not have adequate financing to cover their living expenses during their studies, this is the case for only nearly one in four students with a severe limitation (6.5% vs. 23%). In addition, it goes without saying that students with a health-related impairment and with health-related limitations on their ability to study encounter more difficulties earning money.

Taking into account all income and the reported selected expenditures, there is a clear connection between the amount of income and expenditures and the degree of limitation in pursuing studies. Students with a slight to severe disadvantage have less money available to meet their expenses.

This means that students with a health-related impairment tend to make more negative assessments concerning their financial situation. An above-average proportion of them assume that they have insufficient financing for their studies, that they will have to take on gainful employment to pay their through school, and that this will prolong their studies.

# 14. Counseling and Information Needs

Students require information and counseling to cope with a wide range of demands and situations. In addition to study-related issues and performance expectations, from a developmental and psychological perspective, students pursuing their first degree very often find themselves at a stage in their lives when they have to come to terms with special challenges (e.g., gaining independence from their parents, building up their own social network).

Professional counseling and resource centers provide information and assistance that students need to deal with these challenging situations. Students also seek advice in their personal surroundings, research topics on the Internet, and inform themselves by reading magazines and watching television, etc.

The need for counseling and information has been surveyed from a retrospective standpoint, meaning that the findings here concern the 12 months preceding the point in time when the questionnaire was filled out. Based on a list that covers 18 areas in which there could arise a requirement for information or counseling during studies, respondents were asked about the requirements that they felt they had.

## 14.1 Areas Requiring Counseling and Information

Two-thirds of students pursuing a first degree required counseling and/or information in at least one of the areas on the list during the 12 months that preceded the survey in the 2006 summer semester. The need for counseling among students in post-graduate courses of study was slightly lower at 61%. When students in both types of programs reported that they needed counseling and information during the past year, they named on average three of the 18 areas listed. In addition to a connection between the type of study and the number of students who require counseling, there is a link between study programs and the demand for assistance in individual areas.

The wide range of counseling needs surveyed basically focuses on three areas where problems arise: financial issues, study (performance) issues, and issues that have to do with personal problems and personal surroundings.

The most commonly reported areas where there is a need for counseling are financial questions and issues that are specifically relevant to academic success. One out of four students had questions concerning financing their studies and health insurance (Figure 14.1). The next most important area was questions concerning financing a study-related stay abroad, which was an important issue for one out of five students (21%). More than one in six students had doubts about continuing their studies. This was followed by a number of highly different areas which were accorded roughly equal importance by respondents, including work organization and time management, reconciling the demands of work and studies, depressive mood swings, difficulties working and concentrating, and exam anxiety.

Some counseling areas only concern a small minority of students, which is why they were relatively rarely indicated on the

questionnaire. These issues include counseling and information on studying as a parent and studying with a disability or a chronic disease.

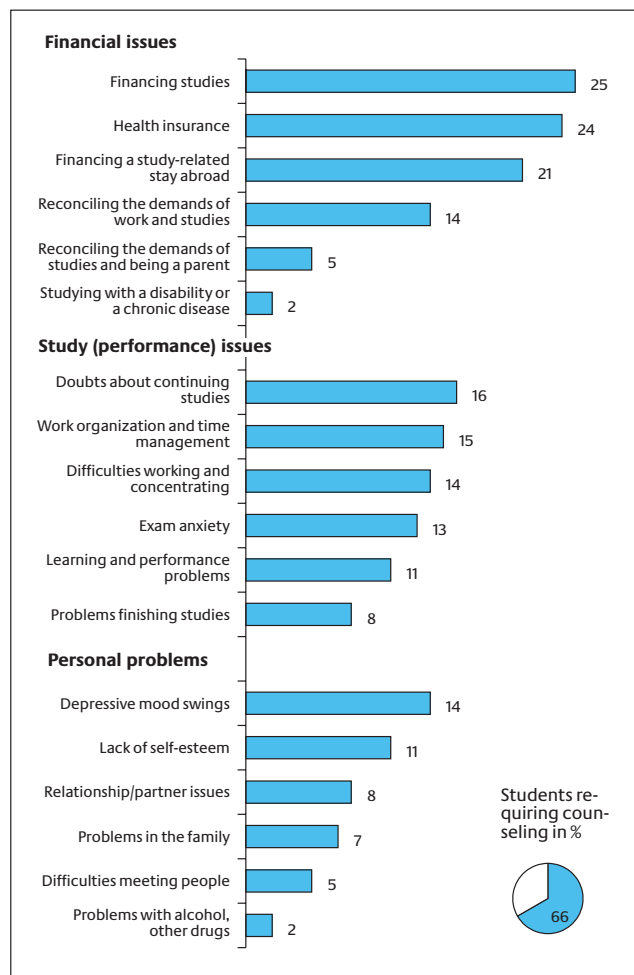
Other topics such as problems with alcohol and other drugs are sensitive areas that only concern a relatively small number of respondents. These issues can hardly be realistically surveyed using standardized methods.

## 14.2 Counseling Needs According to Study Characteristics

### Type of Institution of Higher Education

Students at universities have a greater need for counseling and information than students at universities of applied sciences (68% vs. 63%). For example, they more often ask for information concerning a study-related stay abroad. This has a great deal to do with the different degree programs offered by different types of institutions.

**Figure 14.1** Areas requiring counseling and information first-degree students, in %



Students at universities of applied sciences have a proportionally greater need for counseling and information on health insurance than students at universities. The main reasons for this are that more students at universities of applied sciences come from lower social groups of origin (see Chapter 4), receive less financial support from their parents, and therefore have to pay for a larger proportion of their living expenses themselves (see Chapter 6). This explains their somewhat greater interest in counseling and information on the issue of reconciling the demands of work and studies.

By contrast, students at universities relatively often have doubts about continuing their studies and cite areas that are connected with a variety of mental problems.

### Degree Pursued

Students pursuing a Diplom as their first degree at a university of applied sciences have proportionally the least need for counseling and information (63%) in contrast to students pursuing a Magister (74%). The proportion of students pursuing a bachelor's who are interested in (at least) one of the listed counseling areas is only slightly higher than the average (67% vs. 66%).

Students in Magister and bachelor's degree programs report that they have to cope more often than others with financial issues – and this concerns both financing studies and financing study-related stays abroad. These issues may partly explain why these two groups of students also have greater difficulties finding ways to reconcile the demands of work and studies.

### Subject Area

Students in engineering sciences report proportionally the least need for counseling (60%). Future mathematicians and natural scientists also have relatively few issues concerning the counseling areas listed (62%).

In the subject area group of social sciences, social services, psychology and education and in the subject area group of languages & cultural studies there is a significantly higher need for information (71% and 74%, respectively). This last group seeks counseling more often than the average student on the issue of financing studies and financing a study-related stay abroad. This also matches the finding that many of them relatively often have questions on how to reconcile the demands of work and school.

### Course of Study

The current phase of study also has a deciding influence on the counseling topics that are a top priority for students. Throughout the course of a first-degree program of study, the need for counseling evolves according to a typical pattern. At the beginning of the course of study, the focus is clearly on financial issues. Although study-related financing questions are most urgently needed at the beginning of a course of study (over a third of students pursuing a first degree indicated such a need for information), there is also a relatively high degree of interest in this type of counseling throughout the entire course of study. Financing issues become extremely relevant (again) among students in higher and upper semesters. Along with this renewed interest in accessing information, there is a proportionally higher need for coun-

seling on how to reconcile the demands of work and studies.

Financing for a study-related stay abroad is primarily of interest to students between the third and sixth semesters. Toward the end of their studies, this interest wanes again, either because students have already had a study-related stay abroad or because they now see little chance of realizing such a project. After the eighth semester, health insurance suddenly gains in importance. This is primarily the case when the family health insurance (joint insurance under the parents' policy) no longer applies, in most cases at the age of 25.

Students in lower semesters often have doubts about continuing their studies. These doubts then subside among those students who remain at the institution of higher education and are in higher semesters. Evidently, these doubts return after students have exceeded the standard duration for a course of study. Approximately one-sixth of the students in the 11th to 12th semester and a quarter to a third of those enrolled in their 13th semester or higher have similar and, in some cases, interrelated problems, including work and concentration difficulties, work organization, time management, learning & performance issues, and exam anxiety.

This is often enough accompanied by depressive mood swings. The need for counseling to address this type of issue was indicated by a larger proportion of students in upper semesters.

## 14.3 Counseling Needs According to Socio-Demographic Characteristics

### Age

As expected, age-related changes in the demand for counseling and information in many of the areas listed in the survey have developed in line with the above-outlined trends during the course of study.

Compared to younger respondents, older students are more often interested in issues such as health insurance, study financing and reconciling the demands of work and studies. The topic of study-related stays abroad interests proportionally more students up to the age of 25 than older individuals. Starting in their late 20s, students are increasingly interested in counseling and information on how to reconcile the demands of studies and raising children.

Among older students, particularly those age 30 and above, a number of different study and performance-related problems become relevant issues for counseling. By the same token, with increasing age there is a larger proportion of students who report that they have questions concerning a wide range of psychological problems.

### Gender

Men and women seek counseling in different areas. This has to do with a number of factors, for example, differences in the choice of a major, age differences, the fact that (even among students) family roles and family-related responsibilities are distributed in a gender-specific manner, and disparities in the way individuals perceive themselves and are seen by others.

A larger proportion of women than men cite at least one area

in which they sought counseling over the past 12 months (70% vs. 63%). A larger percentage of women than men ask questions about study financing and financing a study-related stay abroad. This last aspect has to do with the high proportion of women in language and cultural studies programs, where a stay abroad is an important part of the course of study.

There are a number of other areas that are important for successfully pursuing studies where more women seek counseling than men. This includes issues having to do with work organization and exam anxiety. A lower proportion of men than woman indicated that they had required information in the areas of "depressive mood swings", "lack of self-esteem", and "problems in the family".

The issue of how to reconcile the demands of pursuing studies and raising children is also cited by fewer men than women, who more often (have to) restrict the amount of time and energy that they can devote to their studies by taking a leave of absence.

### Social Origins

The extent of the need for counseling and the areas that this includes are closely connected to students' living situations, which are in turn highly influenced by their social origins. This is illustrated by a comparison of the two extremes, namely the "upper" and "low" groups of origin. A larger proportion of the students in the "low" group of origin than in the "upper" group of origin report at least one area in which they sought counseling and informa-

tion over the past year (71% vs. 65%).

The clearest difference can be seen in the proportion of those who asked questions concerning study financing. This percentage was nearly twice as high among students of the "low" group of origin as among students of the "upper" group of origin (35% and 18%, respectively). When it comes to financial queries, students from the "upper" group of origin had more questions concerning study-related stays abroad (23% vs. 19%). By contrast, students from the "low" group of origin had proportionally more questions on areas such as "health insurance", "doubts about continuing their studies", "exam anxiety", and "reconciling the demands of work and study".

### 14.4 Use of Counseling and Information Services

More than half (54%) of the students pursuing a first degree who were interested in information and counseling visited a center run by student services, the university, or sought assistance outside the academic world. If this figure is extrapolated to the overall student population, we find that more than a third (37%) of the students in Germany sought professional advice within a year.

A comparison of the different types of counseling services reveals that the counseling and information centers at institutions of higher education and those outside the academic world are of roughly equal importance. Eighteen percent of the students visited centers run by student services or a university, while 18% sought outside assistance.

## 15. Students with an Immigrant Background

### 15.1 Definition of Terms and Number of Students with an Immigrant Background

Over the past few years, the term immigrant background has emerged in the area of immigrant research. This term includes individual and family-related dimensions of immigration.

The data from the Social Survey allows us to identify three groups of students with an immigrant background:

- Naturalized students – i.e., those who have given up their original nationality in favor of German citizenship
- Students who have another nationality in addition to German citizenship
- Students with foreign citizenship who have acquired their higher education entrance qualification in Germany and are referred to here as foreign students with a German education.<sup>10</sup>

This chapter focuses primarily on findings that point to obvious differences between students with an immigrant background (also referred to here as "immigrants") and the overall student population described in the previous chapters.

In accordance with the aforementioned definition, eight percent of all students enrolled in the 2006 summer semester (with the exception of foreign students, i.e., students who acquired their higher education entrance qualification) have an immigrant background. Eleven percent of these students have dual nationality, and the remaining immigrants are roughly equally distributed among foreign students with a German education and naturalized students (Figure 15.1). This makes for a total of approximately 136,000 students with an immigrant background enrolled at German institutions of higher education, including roughly 58,000 foreign students with a German education, 16,000 with dual nationality and 62,000 who have been naturalized.

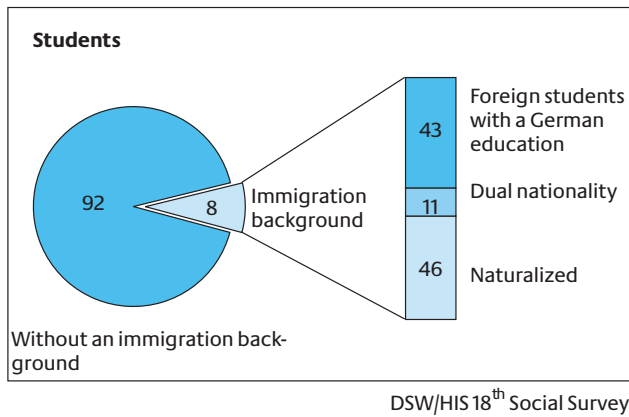
### 15.2 Demographic Characteristics

Students with an immigrant background have roughly the same age structure as the overall student population.

There are, however, distribution differences with regard to gender. Precisely just as many men as women with an immigrant background (50% each) study at German institutions of higher education. This contrasts with the overall proportion of women in the student body, which is 47%. This difference can be primarily attributed to an above-average proportion of foreign female students with a German education (51% vs. 49%). There are more men

<sup>10</sup> The situation of foreign students, i.e., students who do not have a German education and came to Germany to pursue their studies, will be described in the special report entitled "Internationalization of Higher Education"

**Figure 15.1** Students according to immigrant status, 2006  
in %



than women (51% vs. 49%) among students with dual nationality and naturalized students.

One in ten students with an immigrant background has at least one child. This is higher than the proportion of parents in the general student population, which is 7%.

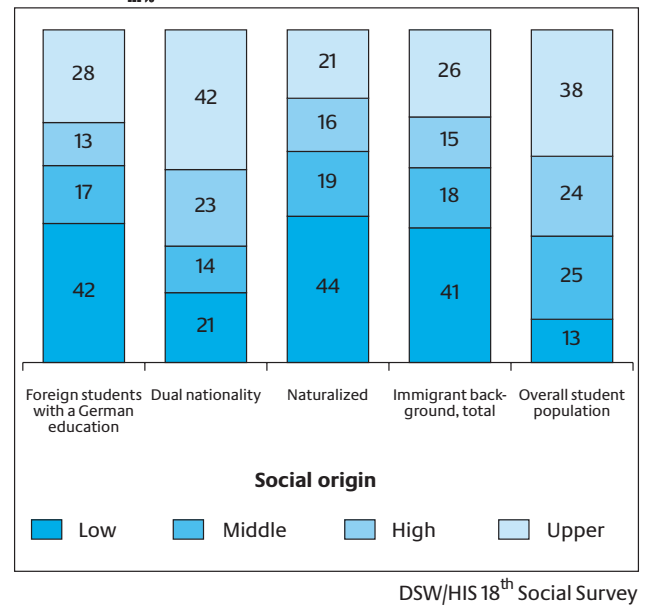
**15.3 Social Origins**

When it comes to social origins, there are substantial differences between immigrants and the overall student body. Forty-one percent of students with an immigrant background but only 13% of all students are from the “low” group of origin. Hence, there are significantly smaller proportions of immigrants from the remaining groups of origin (Figure 15.2).

The most striking differences in the distribution according to social origin can be found in the subgroups of foreign students with a German education and naturalized students. Here we find 42% and 44%, respectively, in the “low” social group of origin (general student population: 13%). While nearly four out of ten students in the overall student body could be classified as belonging to the “upper” group of origin (38%), this only applies to one in five naturalized students (21%) and 28% of the foreign students with a German education.

Students with dual nationality diverge from the norm here, just as they do in terms of their study characteristics (see Section 15.4 below). Their distribution according to group of social origin differs from all other groups and they represent the largest proportion among the “upper” group of origin (42%), larger than the corresponding percentage of students with an immigrant background and the percentage of students from the “upper” group of origin among the general student population (Figure 15.2). It should also be noted that although the proportion of students with dual nationality from the “low” group of origin is lower than among foreign students with a German education and among naturalized students, this percentage is significantly higher than among the general student population (21% vs. 13%).

**Figure: 15.2** Students according to immigrant status and social origin  
in %



**15.4 Educational Background, Choice of Major, Course of Study**

**Qualifications for Higher Education**

Immigrants fulfill different admissions criteria for institutions of higher education than the general student population. For example, three-quarters of immigrants yet 83% of the overall student body have a general higher education entrance qualification (Figure 15.3). There are substantial differences within the subgroups. Nearly nine out of ten students with dual nationality study with a general higher education entrance qualification (89%), which is a higher proportion than among foreign students with a German education (72%) and naturalized students (75%). Nearly one in five students who is either naturalized as a German citizen or is a foreign student with a German education has an entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences (19% and 22%, respectively), but this proportion falls to only 5% among students with dual nationality.

**Study Characteristics**

Students with an immigrant background diverge in terms of their choices of location and their choice of major, both in terms of the individual immigrant subgroups and the general student population.

Nearly all immigrant students are enrolled at institutions of higher education in western Germany. Whereas 97% of all students with an immigrant background study in western Germany (where 85% of all students in Germany are enrolled), only 3% of immigrant students study in eastern Germany (vs. 15% of the total student population).

Foreign students with a German education and naturalized students tend to pursue degrees in engineering and courses of study in the subject areas of economics, business administration &

**Figure 15.3 Students according to type of qualification for higher education in %**

Qualifications for higher education	Immigrants				Total student pop.
	Foreign students with a German education	Dual nationality	Naturalized	Total	
general higher education entrance qualification	72	89	75	75	83
entrance qualification to a univ. of applied sciences	22	5	19	19	13
subject-restricted entrance qualification	4	6	5	5	3
Other qualification	2	-	1	1	1

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law and are underrepresented in languages and cultural studies as well as in the subject area group of social sciences, social services, education and psychology. By contrast, there are only minor differences between students with dual nationality and the general student population.

While 28% of all students are enrolled in a university of applied sciences, this applies to 34% of students with an immigrant background. Nearly four out of ten foreign students with a German education (39%) and one in three naturalized students (34%) study at a university of applied sciences. By contrast, only 19% of students with dual nationality are enrolled at a university of applied sciences.

There are no major differences in the degrees pursued by students with an immigrant background and the academic objectives of students in the overall student body. Immigrants are only underrepresented in courses of study designed to prepare for the teaching professions (6% vs. 12%).

**Study-Related Stay Abroad**

Only a slightly smaller proportion of immigrants have been on a study-related stay abroad (27% vs. 29%).

Nevertheless, there are significant differences among the groups of students with an immigrant background. A larger percentage of students with dual nationality (44%) had gone abroad for their studies than naturalized students and foreign students with a German education (26% and 25%, respectively).

**15.5 Financial Situation**

Students with an immigrant background have average monthly incomes of €786. In view of the fact that the “normal student”<sup>11</sup> reference group has on average €770 at its disposal each month (see Chapter 6), there are no major differences with regard to the financial situation of students with an immigrant background.

A comparison of students with an immigrant background indicates differences among the subgroups; however, these varia-

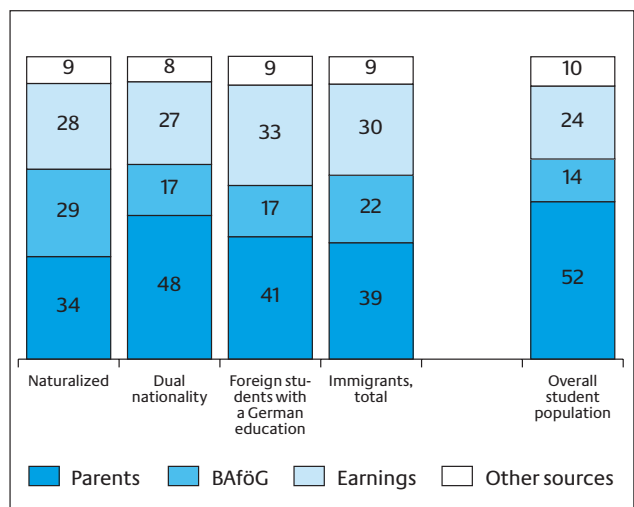
<sup>11</sup> As explained in Chapter 6, the financial situation of the "normal student" reference group has been defined as students who are single, do not live with their parents, and are pursuing their first academic degree.

tions are not statistically relevant. Students with dual nationality have an average monthly income of €805, foreign students with a German education have €801, and naturalized students have €768.

Nonetheless, a breakdown of the monthly incomes of students with an immigrant background reveals substantial variations compared to the average income structure of the general student population. Students with an immigrant background are more dependent on BAföG and personal earnings to compensate for less financial support from their parents (Figure 15.4).

**Figure 15.4 Breakdown of monthly income according to immigration background**

reference group "normal student", proportion of each source of funding in %



DSW/HIS 18<sup>th</sup> Social Survey

**BAföG Rate**

An evaluation of all students with an immigrant background reveals a BAföG rate of 33% (standard method). Since the BAföG rate among the general student population is 23% (see Chapter 8), this means that a significantly larger proportion of immigrants receive BAföG funding. The highest proportion can be found among naturalized students with 42%. BAföG rates among foreign students with a German education (26%) and among students with dual nationality (25%) are much lower.

**15.6 Employment**

During the 2006 semesters (not including breaks and holidays), a large majority of students with an immigrant background were gainfully employed – at least for a short period. The proportion of these working students pursuing a first degree was 67%.

The main reason for working cited by students with an immigrant background is that it is absolutely necessary to cover their living expenses. On a scale of one to five, from “totally disagree” to “totally agree”, 56% of the working students pursuing a first degree report that this reason fully applies to their situation. Only 42% of working Germans and foreign students with a German education pursuing a first degree provide this answer. It should also be noted that a slightly larger proportion of working immi-

grants (42% vs. 39%) indicate full agreement with another reason for employment, namely that the goal of working is to have greater purchasing power.

### 15.7 Living Situation

Compared with the general student population, students with an immigrant background live more often with their parents and less often share a flat with other people (see the diagram below). In addition, a slightly smaller proportion of immigrants live in a flat alone. There are practically no differences in the proportions of students with other living situations.

Students in 2006 according to type of housing (in %)

Type of housing	Immigrants	Gen. student pop.
Parents	33.2	22.8
Hall of residence	10.7	11.0
Lodger	1.8	1.6
Sharing flat w/others	16.8	24.9
Living alone	17.0	20.1
Sharing flat w/partner	20.5	19.7





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