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Abstract

The essay presents several key outcomes of the fifth wave of the pan-European survey EUROSTUDENT, which was implemented in 29 European higher education area (EHEA) countries from 2012–2014. The article starts with a brief description of the survey, followed by a chapter revealing certain background trends in the historical and social dynamics of higher education participation in Europe. The next part outlines several key features of student populations in Europe, such as their familial background, the socio-economic, educational and migration identities of students' parents, and describes the timing of the transition to higher education and other socio-demographic features of student strata that include age and students with children. All the analyses were done using the geographical framework that subdivides the whole population of the survey into four major clusters: Northern, Western and Southern ones as well as a cluster of NIS countries. The concluding section discusses possible practical implications of the empirically observed trends and values describing the EHEA student population, namely, the steady transition to

the mass model of higher education that follows the original concept of Martin Trow, the diversification of the student population in the social structure in Europe and the considerable regional variation in the student body in different parts of the European Higher Education Area. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)