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November 2008

The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society
– new demands on higher education in Europe
(Report 1)

The employment of UK graduates: comparisons with Europe

**Report to HEFCE by Centre for Higher
Education Research and Information, The
Open University**

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Executive summary

This report is one of a series of six reports commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England which draw on a recent European Commission Framework project, 'The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society' (the REFLEX project). The project – undertaken in 11 European countries – was an investigation into the employment experiences of European graduates over the five years since graduation in 2000. By design, the UK sample comprised graduates who had completed a bachelors degree in 2000. In most of the other countries, the samples comprised wholly (or mainly) those with a masters degree. Like graduates across Europe, the vast majority of UK graduates five years after graduation were in full-time employment. Since graduation, they had had an average of 2.6 employers, spent an average of 6.4 months on training or courses and 4.9 months in 'informal' job-related learning. One-third of them had experienced a period of unemployment – on average 6.3 months – since graduation.

While in some respects graduates from UK higher education were similar to their European counterparts, in others they revealed a distinctive profile of characteristics. They were both more likely to feel 'overqualified' for their jobs and less 'well prepared' to undertake them, receiving more employer-supported training and more supervision. Particularly in relation to their first jobs after graduation, UK graduates were more likely to believe that they did not require the possession of a degree and that their undergraduate study programmes had not provided them with a good basis for starting work. However, five years on the percentage believing their highest level of education matched their job requirements was near the European average, and UK and European average salaries were also comparable.

A longstanding feature of UK higher education has been its 'looseness of fit' with the labour market. In the present study, 35% of UK graduates were in jobs which required no particular subject of study. In the European sample as a whole, the equivalent figure was 13%. Arguably, this results in both a lower level of preparedness for graduates' first jobs after graduation and a higher level of flexibility in terms of the range of jobs available to any particular graduate. Other distinctive features – compared with the rest of Europe – include the relatively short time spent in higher education, the lower level of qualifications acquired, the less vocational nature of the subjects studied, and the relative lack of work placements or internships.

Students in other parts of Europe spend more years in higher education and are significantly older when they graduate than those UK graduates who entered higher education straight from school. While for many UK students a period of academic study is followed after graduation by work experience and work-related training, for students elsewhere in Europe these experiences are combined within the traditionally longer first degree. Five years after graduation, UK and other European graduates may have reached roughly the same level of work proficiency, but they have got there by somewhat different routes and higher education's role in the preparation for work has been rather different.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the first of six reports commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) which draw on a recent European Commission (EC) Framework project, 'The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society' (the REFLEX project). The project – undertaken by 11 European countries – was an investigation into the employment experiences of European graduates over the five years following their graduation in 2000. Details of the project are provided in Appendix A to this report.

The project's main features were the application of a large questionnaire to nationally representative samples of the graduating populations in the participating countries and, through this, the exploration of the kinds of work the graduates had obtained, how well prepared they felt for it, its relationship to their higher education (HE) studies, the competencies they felt they possessed and were required of them, the nature of the organisations for which they worked, the changes they had experienced over the five years since they had graduated, and their values and their attitudes to the higher education they had received.

By design, the survey sampled graduates who had completed their studies with either a bachelors or a masters degree (or equivalent), depending on whichever was seen as the main 'exit' qualification with which graduates left higher education in 2000 and entered the labour market in each of the respective European countries. In the UK, the sample comprised graduates with a bachelors degree. In most of the other countries, the sample comprised wholly (or mainly) those with a masters degree.

The project was a successor to a previous EC-funded Framework study, the CHEERS project (Careers and Higher Education: a European Research Study), which explored the experiences of European graduates from the 1995 graduating cohort, this time around four years after their graduation. That study was the subject of a previous report for HEFCE,¹ and two books based on it have recently been published.² Underlying the new study was the question of how far the graduate labour market and higher education's relationship to it have been changing in recent years. An assumption of change is suggested by the new project's title. This invites us to consider the features of a new kind of society – the 'knowledge society' – and the human capital needs of such societies for 'flexible professionals'.

Much has been written about these subjects in recent years and it is new notions of the features of globally competitive knowledge economies and societies that have been underpinning government and other thinking about higher education policy in recent years. The needs of the knowledge society justify the expansion of higher education and its receipt of public finances, and colour the nature of its steering to better meet predominantly economic requirements.

1.2 Context

Some of the background and context to higher education's role in the so-called knowledge society is the subject of the second volume in this series.³ This draws

¹Brennan, J., Johnston, B., Little, B. and Woodley, A. (2001) *The employment of UK graduates: comparisons with Europe and Japan* Bristol: Higher Education Funding Council for England

²Schomburg, H. and Teichler, U. (2006) *Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe* Dordrecht: Springer; Teichler, U. (ed.) (2007) *Careers of University Graduates* Dordrecht: Springer

³Arthur, L., Brennan, J., Hick, R. and Kimura, M. (2008) *The context of higher education and employment: comparisons between different European countries*

attention to some of the variety which exists in Europe concerning the education systems and traditions in different countries and in their national economies. A number of distinctive features in UK higher education's relationship to the labour market emerge in the second report as they do in this first report, which provides an overview of the UK data in comparison both with the European data as a whole and, selectively, with data from other European countries.

In a report of this scope, it is generally only possible to point to the existence of differences rather than to explain them. The latter requires more complex analysis and, probably, additional research using different methods. Nevertheless, some explanations may be suggested by attempting to link the data reported here to some of the contextual matters addressed in the second report in the series. That report reminds us of the different traditions of the Humboldtian, Napoleonic and Anglo-Saxon higher education systems with their respective research, professional/vocational and character/personality emphases. It also reminds us of the shorter duration of the Anglo-Saxon degree, the reputational hierarchy of UK higher education today (with as many consequences arising from 'where' you study as from 'what' you study) and the implications of such differences for both 'getting' a job and 'doing' it.

In that second report, as in this one, we describe what seems to be a greater 'looseness of fit' between higher education and employment in the UK. This produces both greater flexibility – for example, in the range of different jobs open to new graduates – and a lower level of preparedness to undertake these jobs – for example, as evidenced by graduates' perceptions of the usefulness of their degrees and the larger amounts of training provided by UK employers during the first few years of employment.

Other differences concern the ages at which students typically graduate and enter the labour market, the extent to which they have experienced work placements as part of their higher education (much lower in the case of the UK) and the degree and nature of the differentiation of European higher education systems. And there are other, more 'hidden' differences to do with the experiences of being a student (and an academic) in different countries, the curriculum and how it is taught and assessed, and credentials and how employers use them. Some of these matters are touched upon in a 'qualitative' study linked to the main European project, where the views of employers and higher education leaders were obtained in five of the participating countries (including the UK).⁴

A reading of the present and the other reports in this series for HEFCE will point to both commonalities and differences between the UK and other European countries in the ways in which higher education prepares students for the world of work.

1.3 Findings

In broad brush summary, UK graduates have spent less time in higher education, have acquired lower level qualifications, have studied less vocational subjects, have received less work experience through placements or internships, feel less well prepared for their jobs after graduation and receive more employer-supported training in order to perform them. As well as providing more training, UK employers give more attention to the assessment and supervision of their graduate employees. At the same time, there is no evidence of serious levels of unemployment among graduates, and salary levels are comparable to those achieved by graduates in other countries.

⁴ Arthur, L., Brennan, J. and de Weert, E. (2008) *Employer and higher education perspectives on graduates in the knowledge society* (forthcoming)

A higher proportion of UK graduates feel 'overqualified' for their jobs than do their European counterparts despite, in comparison with the latter, having spent less time in higher education and having achieved a lower level qualification. But in general there is no strong evidence that employers' expectations are not being met, although there is some evidence to suggest that these expectations are somewhat different from those of employers elsewhere. A consequence of the 'looseness of fit' referred to above must be that employers are not able to assume an equivalent knowledge base in the new graduate recruits. Accordingly, they provide more training and presumably are more likely to 'overlook' relevant knowledge and competencies that some of their graduates might possess.

1.4 Contents

As already indicated, the aim of this report is to provide an overview of the European data from a UK perspective, attempting to highlight what we share in common with others and how we differ from them. The report is structured as follows:

- The UK graduate profile
- Labour market activity (including job search)
- Characteristics of first job
- Characteristics of current work
- Skills and competencies
- Appropriateness of work to level and type of qualifications
- Additional study, training and work experience
- Work organisation
- Values
- Higher education in retrospect
- Conclusion.

Some of the issues explored here are subject to further analysis and discussion in the other reports in the series: the role of subject differences (in report 3), issues concerning competencies (in report 4), the effects of age differences (in report 5), and graduates' views about their higher education (in report 6).

This report utilises data weighted to be nationally representative in terms of subject of study and institution attended. The overall figure for Europe is based on equal weights from each country. Details of the sample can be found in Appendix B.

2 The UK graduate profile

2.1 Summary

UK graduates in the sample:

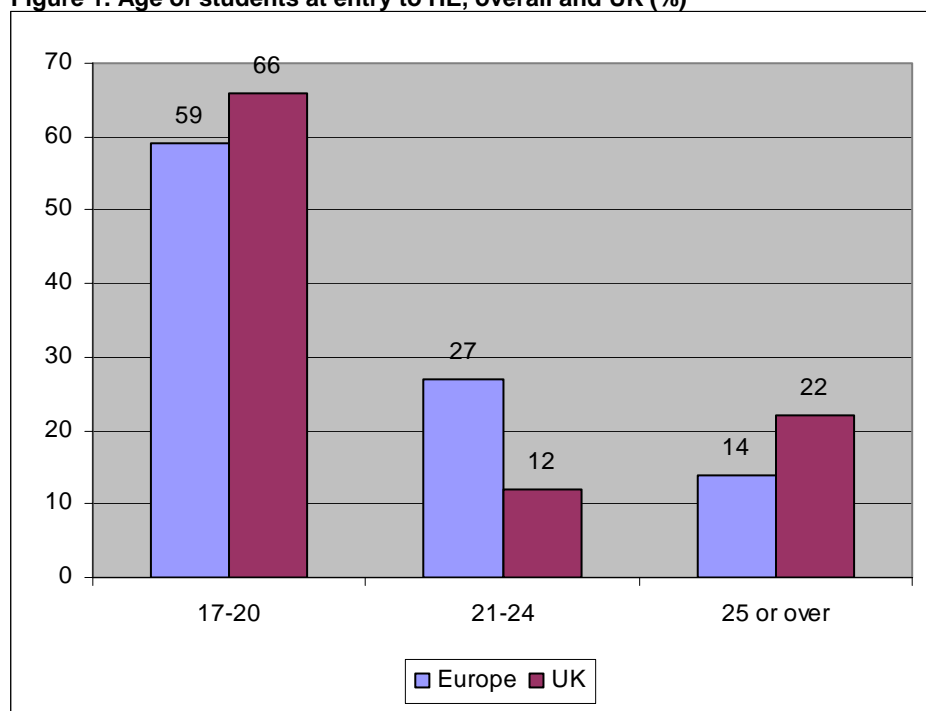
- were both younger and older than the European average
- were almost two-thirds female, similar to the European average
- had shorter periods of study at a younger entry age, resulting in a younger age at graduation
- in common with other European graduates, were most likely to have graduated from the field of social sciences, business and law, were more likely than European graduates to have graduated from humanities and arts and less likely from education and health and welfare
- were most likely to have only a bachelors degree (rather than a masters degree)
- tended to be first generation graduates, like European graduates, as more than half did not have either parent with a higher education background.

2.2 Age of students at entry to higher education

As indicated in Figure 1, UK students tended to be both younger and older than the European average. Two-thirds of UK graduates were between 17 and 20 years old when they started their studies (European average: 59%). Another 22% of UK graduates belonged to the 25 plus (mature) group when entering higher education, compared with 14% of European graduates. Therefore the intermediate age group (21-24) was less than half that of the European average (12% compared with 27%). There were some variations among European countries. Norway had the smallest proportion of young students, with only a third (32%) being in the 17-20 age group. However, 82% of Italian and Spanish graduates were between 17 and 20 when they started university. Norway also had the highest proportion of mature students (25%).

Table C1 in Appendix C provides figures of graduates' age at entry for all countries in the study.

Figure 1. Age of students at entry to HE, overall and UK (%)



2.3 Age of graduates on graduating

The average age of UK graduates at the time of graduation was about 27. There were considerable differences among countries (see Figure 2): the average age at graduation of Austrian and German graduates was about 28, which was four years older than that of the French graduates (the youngest), who had an average age of 24 at the time of graduation.

As clearly shown in Figure 3, the UK average masks considerable differences, with most graduates either considerably younger or older than the European average. Some 72% of UK graduates were between 20 and 24 when graduating, compared with 40% of European graduates. The UK also had a higher proportion of mature graduates: 21% were aged 30 or over at the time of graduation, compared with 16% of European graduates. Germany had the lowest proportion of young (21-24) graduates (11%), with the majority being in the 25-29 age group at the time of graduation (64%). A quarter of German graduates were aged 30 or above. This reflects both Germany's later age of enrolment and the greater length of courses compared to the UK. The majority of graduates in Italy (68%), Austria (60%) and Switzerland (62%) also belonged to the intermediate 25-29 age group.

Table C2 in Appendix C provides figures of graduates' age at graduation by age groups for all countries in the study.

Figure 2. Average age at graduation, overall and country (years)

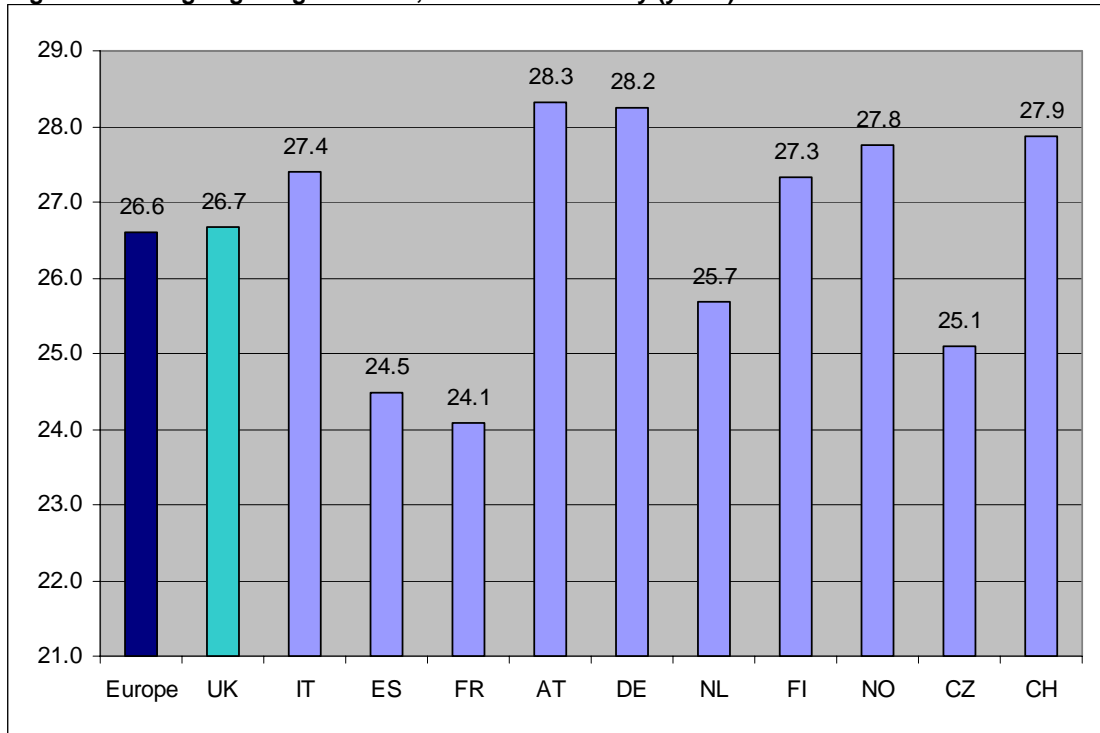
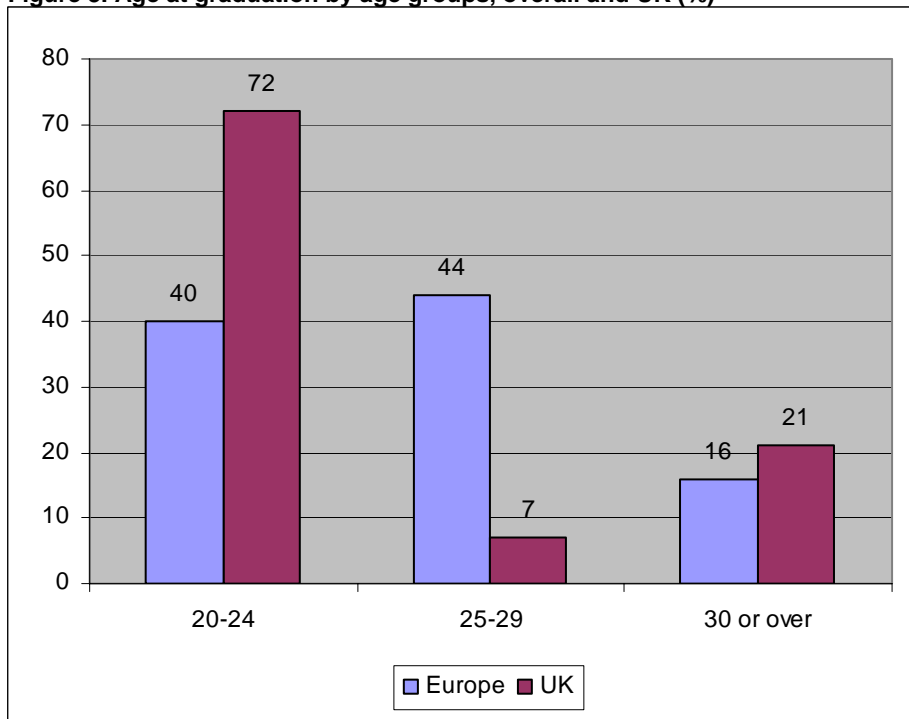


Figure 3. Age at graduation by age groups, overall and UK (%)



2.4 Gender

The gender breakdown of UK graduates was similar to the European average, with female graduates making up 61% of the sample. Germany had an equal balance of

male and female graduates. Only Switzerland comprised more male than female graduates (59% to 41%). Unweighted data are used here.

Table C3 in Appendix C provides figures for the gender balance in all countries in the study.

2.5 Duration of study (years) and hours spent on studying

UK graduates had one of the shortest average study periods (3.4 years), with only the French having an even shorter average duration of study (2.9 years). (The definition of study includes lectures, self-study and internships.) At the other end of the spectrum, Italian and Austrian graduates had the longest study periods, of 7.2 and 7 years respectively, compared with the European average of five years (see Figure 4). Not only did UK graduates have one of the shortest study periods, but, bar Czech students, they also spent least time on studying compared to their European counterparts. They spent an average 30.1 hours a week on studying, compared with French graduates who spent an average 39.4 hours a week, with the European average being 34.6 hours a week (see Figure 5).

Clearly, these differences reflect different qualification structures across Europe, which are currently undergoing modification in the light of the Bologna process. They are, however, important to bear in mind when examining country differences in employability.

Figure 4. Average duration of studies, overall and UK (years)

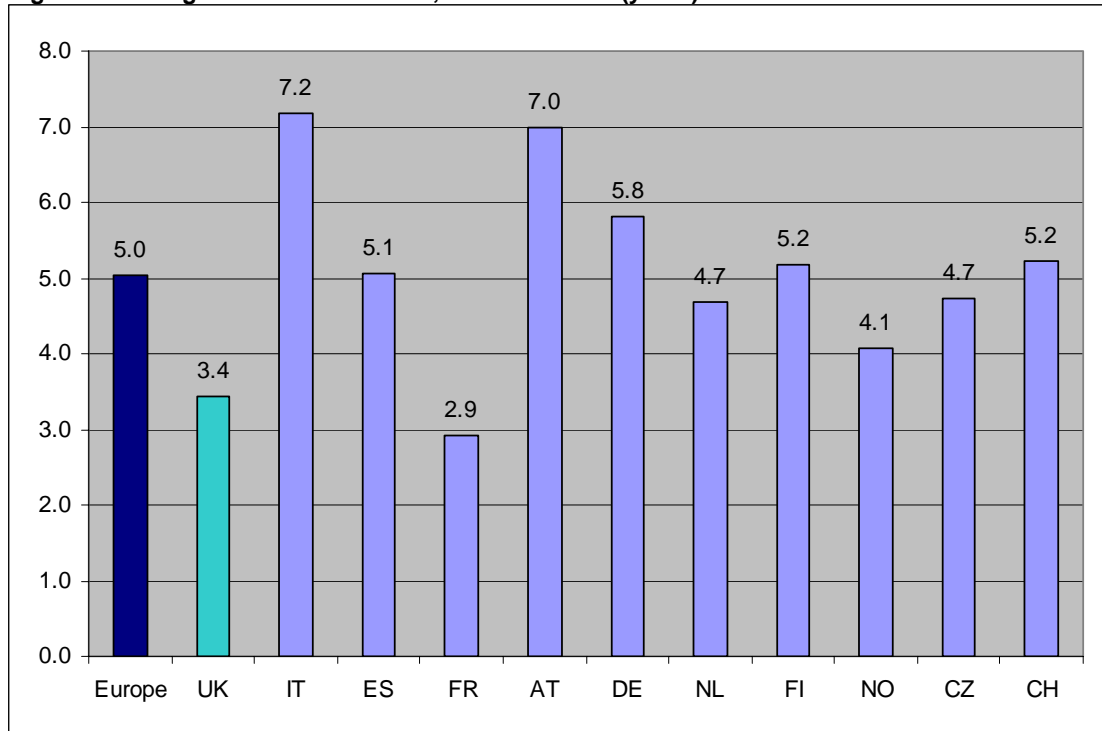
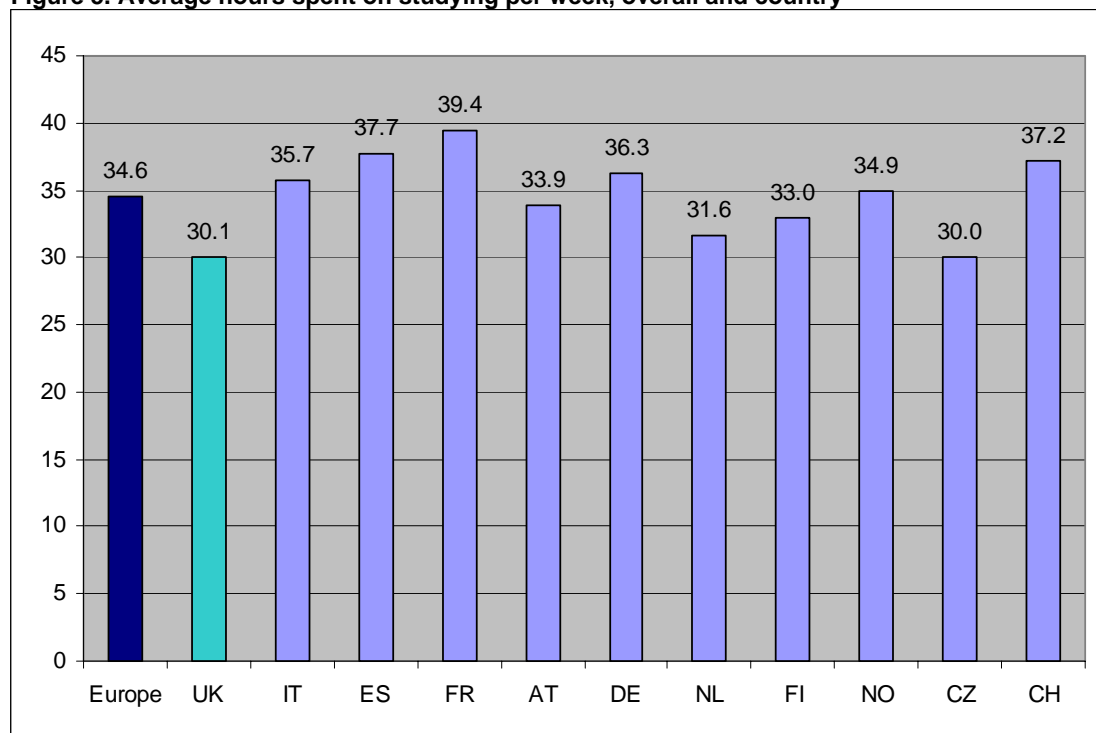


Figure 5. Average hours spent on studying per week, overall and country

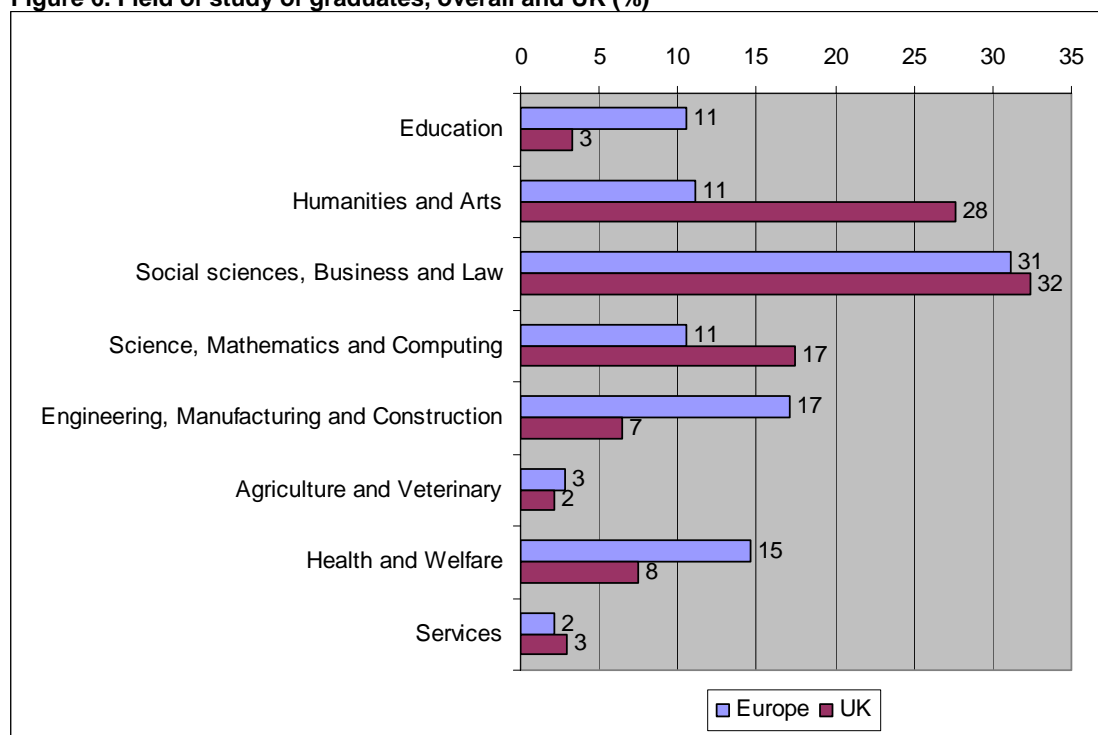


2.6 Field of study

Graduates from the social sciences, including business and law, formed the largest group in Europe and in the UK, at 31% and 32% respectively (see Figure 6). The UK subject distribution also showed a high proportion of humanities and arts graduates, at 28%, compared with only 11% for Europe as a whole. The UK had, along with Italy and Switzerland, the lowest proportion of graduates in education (3% compared with 11%), engineering and construction (7% compared with 17%), and health and welfare (8% compared with 15%). Norway had by far the highest proportion of graduates in education and health and welfare, at 20% and 31% respectively, compared with the European average of only 11% for the former subject group and 15% for the latter. Unweighted data are used here.

Table C4 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' field of study for all countries in the study.

Figure 6. Field of study of graduates, overall and UK (%)

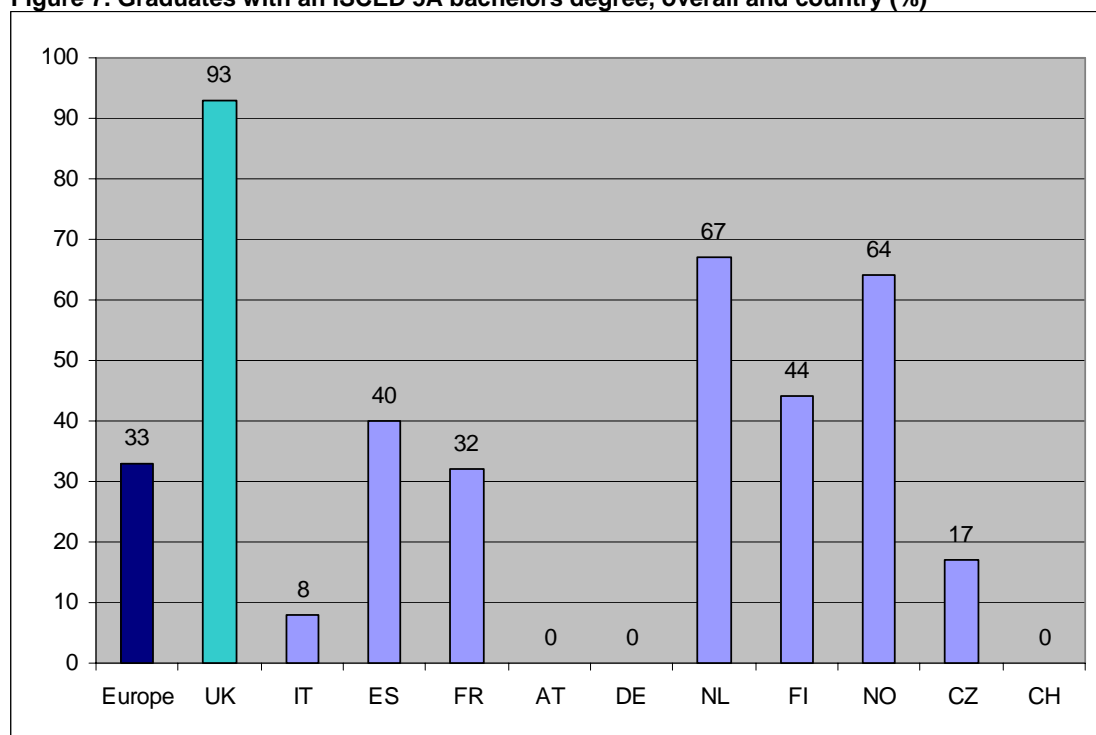


2.7 Type of qualification

By design, the survey sampled graduates who had completed their studies in 2000 with either an International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 5A bachelors or an ISCED 5A masters degree. The vast majority of UK graduates graduated with a bachelors degree (93%), while in countries such as Austria, Germany and Switzerland everyone had completed a masters degree programme. In fact, no other European country in the sample had the same proportion of bachelor graduates as the UK (see Figure 7). This is also likely to change as a result of the Bologna processes, but the figures indicate the very considerable differences in traditions in credentials between the UK and most other European countries. Of course, some of the UK graduates would go on to gain masters qualifications at later stages in their lives.

Table C5 in Appendix C provides figures of graduates' type of qualification for all countries in the study.

Figure 7. Graduates with an ISCED 5A bachelors degree, overall and country (%)

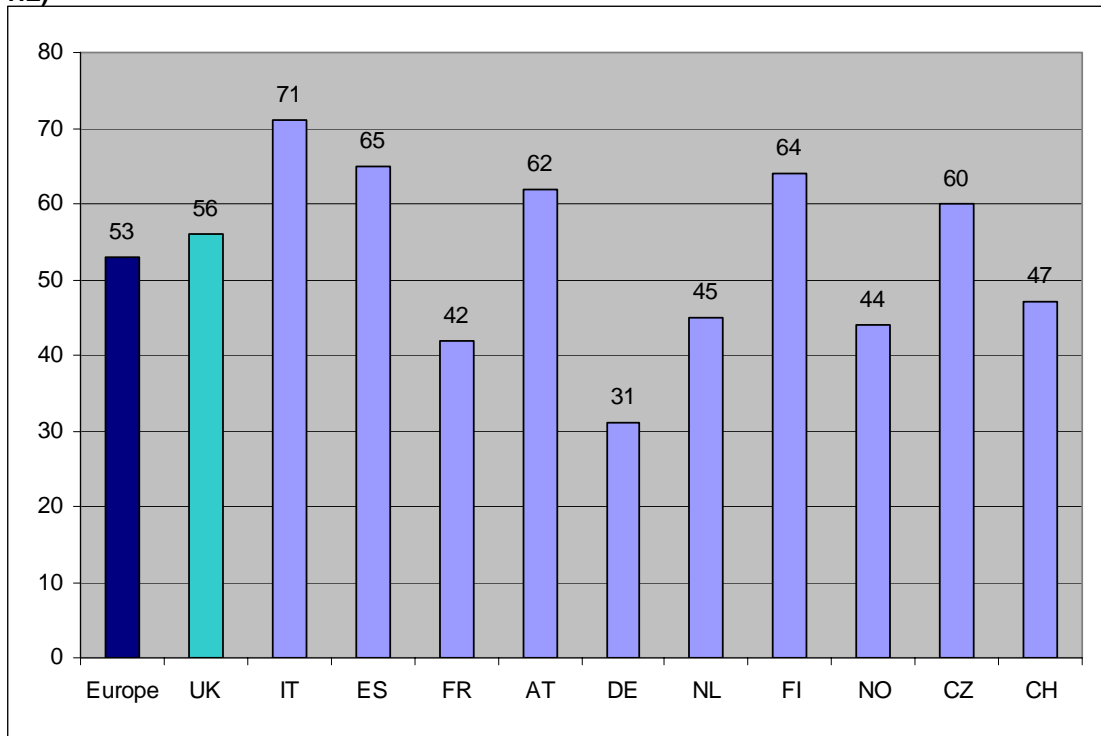


2.8 Parental education

The majority of UK graduates were first generation graduates, as 56% did not have either parent with a higher education background (Figure 8); this figure was close to the proportion of European first generation graduates (53%). Some 22% had one parent with a higher education background, and 18% came from a family where both parents had obtained higher education. Italy had the highest proportion of first generation graduates (71%). Only Germany showed a more equal distribution of first generation graduates, graduates with one parent with a higher education background, and graduates with both parents with a higher education background (31%; 34%; 29%). At the same time, Germany had the highest proportion of graduates coming from a family with a higher education background (29%).

Table C6 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' parental education background for all countries in the study.

Figure 8. Proportion of first generation graduates, overall and country (%; neither parent with HE)



3 Labour market activity

3.1 Summary

UK graduates, five years after graduation:

- like graduates across Europe, were likely to be in paid employment (including self-employment)
- were more likely to be in employment than UK graduates in the earlier CHEERS study of graduates from 1995
- were more likely to be on permanent full-time contracts than graduates from other European countries
- were most likely to have found their first job through newspaper advertisements, whereas European graduates found it through contacting the employer on their own initiative
- were likely to spend an average of 1.6 months before and 2.2 months after graduation looking for their first job, compared with 1.2 months before and 2.7 months after graduation spent by European graduates.

3.2 Current employment situation

There was a high employment rate among European graduates: 95% declared themselves to be employed five years after graduation. The UK figure was 96%. Of graduates who were in paid employment, 5% were self-employed. As indicated in Figure 9, the highest unemployment rates were in Spain (9%), France (8%) and Italy (7%). Of those employed, 22% in Italy stated that they were self-employed, the highest self-employment rate across all European countries. The European average was 9% and the UK average 5% (see Figure 10).

Figure 9. Unemployed graduates five years after graduation, overall and country (%)

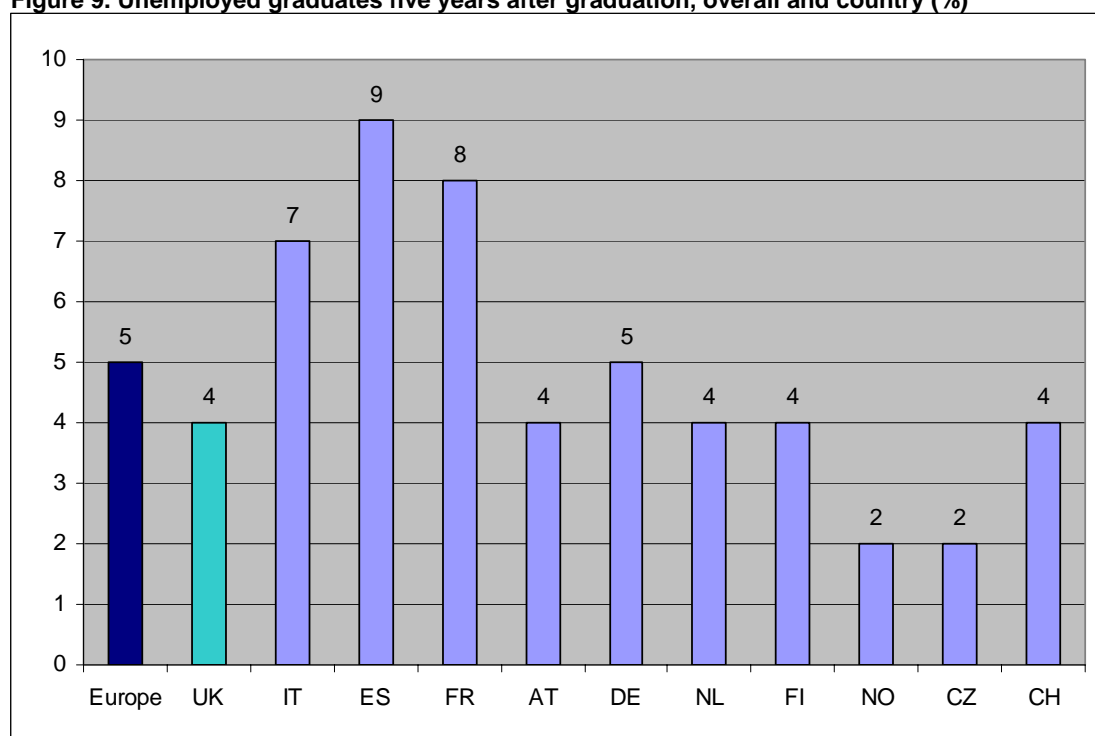
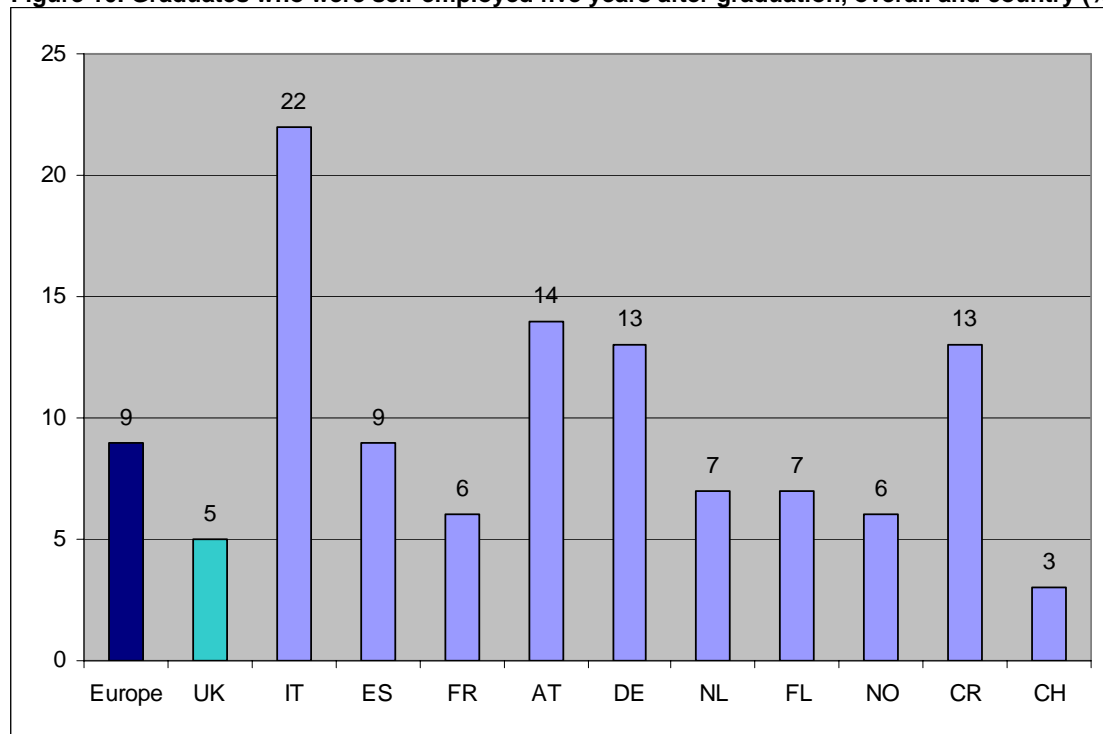


Figure 10. Graduates who were self-employed five years after graduation, overall and country (%)



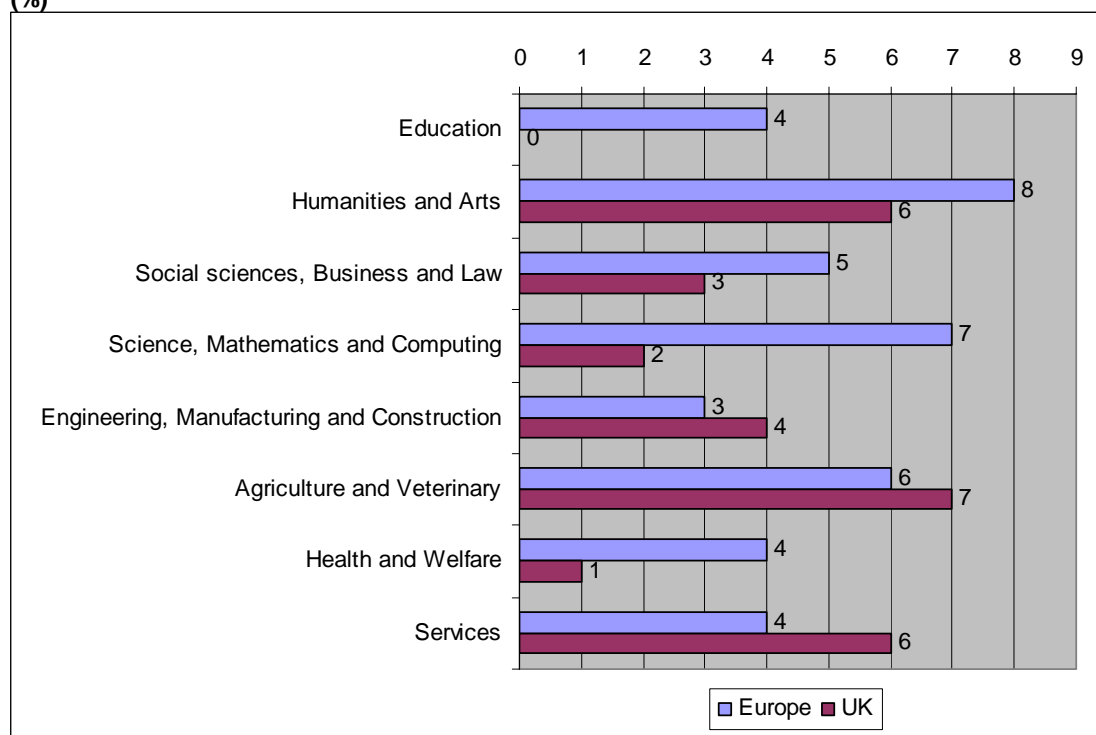
Both charts highlight the stark differences between individual European countries in terms of their unemployed and self-employed graduates.

There was little difference in unemployment rates according to gender for UK graduates (3% female, 5% male). For European graduates there was a slightly higher proportion of unemployed females (6%) than males (4%). However, there were large differences according to gender in Italy and Spain, with 10% and 11% of female Italian and Spanish graduates unemployed, more than double the figures for men.

Table C7 in Appendix C provides the figures for unemployed graduates by gender from all countries in the study.

There were only minor differences in unemployment rates according to subject studied in higher education (see Figure 11). The highest unemployment rate was found among European graduates from a humanities and arts background (8%), followed by science, maths and computing (7%) and agriculture and veterinary (6%). Graduates from engineering, manufacturing and construction had the lowest unemployment rate (3%). UK graduates from an agriculture and veterinary background were most likely to be unemployed (7%), followed by those from humanities and arts, and services. Education graduates were least likely to find themselves unemployed (0%). However, one has to bear in mind that the UK samples for certain subject groups were very small.

Figure 11. Unemployed graduates five years after graduation by field of subject, overall and UK (%)



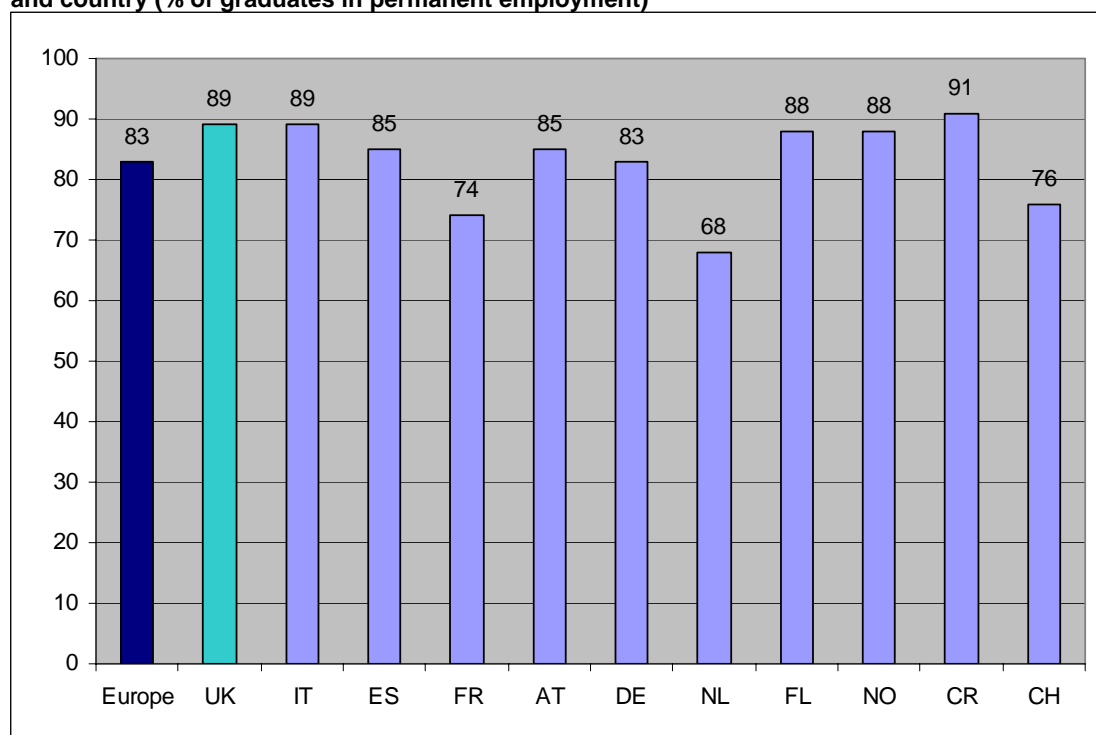
UK graduates tended to be slightly more likely to have obtained unlimited term contracts (83% compared with the European average of 78%). Spain had the highest proportion of graduates with fixed or temporary contracts (35%), followed by Italy (28%), with the European average being 21%.

Table C8 in Appendix C provides the figures for current types of contracts of graduates from all countries in the study.

Of UK graduates who had permanent contracts, 89% were employed on a full-time basis, again slightly above the European average (83%). However, there were some substantial differences among countries: France had only 74% of graduates with permanent full-time contracts, and the figure for the Netherlands was even lower, at 68% (see Figure 12). Part-time work was most common among graduates in the Netherlands (33%) and Switzerland (26%).

Table C9 in Appendix C provides the figures for contract hours in main employment of graduates from all countries in the study.

Figure 12. Graduates with permanent and full-time contracts five years after graduation, overall and country (% of graduates in permanent employment)

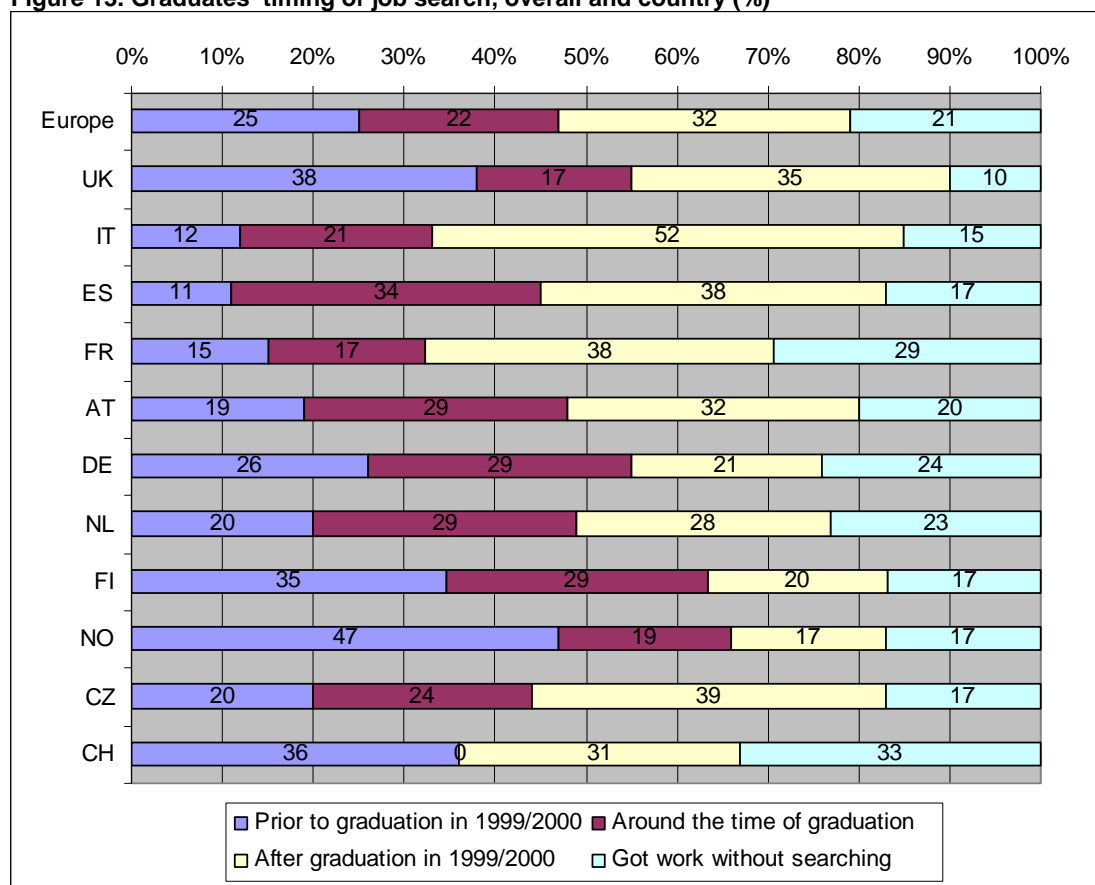


3.3 Timing of initial job search

About 38% of UK graduates had started their job search prior to their graduation in 2000 (see Figure 13). This figure was considerably higher than the European average of 25%. However, this was something that differed a lot in individual countries, with nearly half of Norwegian graduates (47%) looking for a job prior to their graduation, but only about 12% of Spanish and Italian graduates doing so. Surprisingly, about one-fifth of European graduates obtained work 'without looking for it', but only 9% of UK graduates were able to do so. A particularly high proportion of Swiss graduates were able to get employment in this way.

The earlier commencement of job search for many UK graduates probably reflects a number of factors. One could be the more developed careers services in UK universities. But another could be greater perceptions of difficulty in getting a job among UK graduates, this in turn reflecting the higher proportions on non-vocational courses and the looser links between subject studied and first employment in the UK labour market.

Figure 13. Graduates' timing of job search, overall and country (%)



Many UK graduates seemed to find their work the 'old-fashioned' way: about a quarter found work through newspaper advertisements, higher than the European average (15%). This was followed by 'contacted employer on own initiative' (17%), 'through private employment agency' (12%), and 'through family, friends or acquaintance' (11%). Personal contacts were similarly important to both UK and European graduates (see Table 1). 'Contacted employer on own initiative' seemed to be the most successful way of finding a new job in a lot of European countries: graduates from the Czech Republic (34%), Austria (26%), Finland (25%), Switzerland (24%), Germany (23%) and France (21%) listed this method as their top-rated one. The use of private employment agencies was only prominent in the UK (12%) and the Netherlands (13%). Using the internet did not seem to be a very successful way of finding employment, although it has become common to advertise and apply for jobs electronically. In Italy and Spain, graduates were most successful in their job search through the help of personal contacts.

Table C10 in Appendix C provides the figures for job search methods of graduates for all countries in the study.

Table 1. Most successful methods of finding first job after graduation

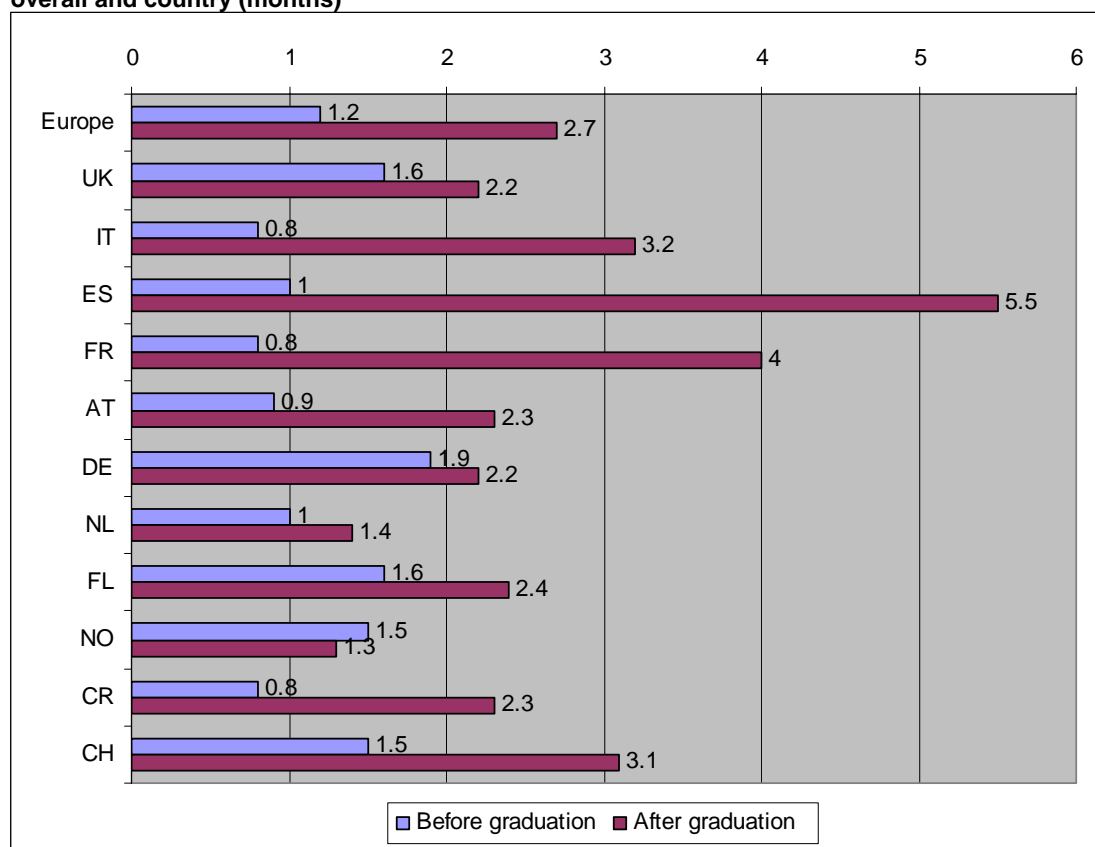
	UK	Europe
1	Through advertisement in newspaper (24%)	Contacted employer on own initiative (22%)
2	Contacted employer on own initiative (17%)	Through advertisement in newspaper (15%)
3	Through private employment agency (12%)	Through family, friends or acquaintances (13%)
4	Through family, friends or acquaintances (11%)	Approached by employer (11%)
5	Through public agency, internet, approach by employer, help of higher education institution and other methods (6%)	Through work placement during higher education (9%)

3.4 Duration of job search

UK graduates on average tended to spend a little more time before (1.6 months) and a little less time after graduation (2.2 months) in their job search (see Figure 14). German graduates spent the longest time looking for a job before graduation (1.8 months) and French and Czech graduates the shortest (0.8 months).

The duration of job search after graduation was 2.7 months across Europe as a whole. The UK figure was just a little less at 2.2 months. Spanish graduates spent the longest time looking for a first job (5.5 months), followed by French graduates (4 months) and Swiss graduates (3.1 months). Graduates in Norway (1.3 months) and the Netherlands (1.4 months) spent the least time looking for a job.

Figure 14. Average duration of job search for first employment: before and after graduation, overall and country (months)



4 Characteristics of first job

4.1 Summary

In their first job, UK graduates:

- like graduates across Europe, were most likely to be employed in the following sectors – real estate, renting and business activities; education, health and social work; manufacturing; public administration and defence
- worked a similar number of hours per week to other European graduates, but were more likely to be in a full-time position
- earned slightly less than other European graduates in their first employment, but considerably less than Swiss, Norwegian and German graduates
- were more likely to earn less if they were female (a feature shared with the rest of Europe), though differentials tended to be lower than elsewhere
- were more likely to have undergone training or courses in their first jobs
- had the longest period of training or courses, with an average of 11.3 months
- were very likely to have left their first job five years after graduation and had an average of 2.6 employers during this period
- were similar to European graduates in terms of unemployment – one-third had experienced unemployment since graduation in 2000, with an average length of 6.3 months
- tended to be similar to European graduates in rating the usefulness of their social network in relation to career-related issues.

4.2 Employment sector

The UK's top five employment sectors for graduates' first jobs reflected Europe's top five (see Table 2). In all, 21% of UK graduates chose the real estate, renting and business activities sector as their first destination after graduation, closely followed by education (18%), health and social work (14%), manufacturing (10%) and public administration and defence (7%).

Table 2. 'Top five' employment sectors for first job

	UK	Europe
1	Real estate, renting and business activities (21%)	Education (21%)
2	Education (18%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (20%)
3	Health and social work (14%)	Health and social work (17%)
4	Manufacturing (10%)	Manufacturing (12%)
5	Public administration and defence (7%)	Public administration and defence (7%)

Table C11 in Appendix C provides country differences in employment sectors.

4.3 Hours worked per week

European average working hours for first job were 36.1 hours (see Figure 15). UK graduates' average working hours per week were slightly higher, at 37.3 hours. Swiss graduates worked the longest, with an average of 41.1 hours a week, while French graduates spent the least time at work, at 33 hours. UK graduates were also more likely than the European average to work full-time (35 hours and more) in their first job: 86.3% compared with 77.9% (see Figure 16). Only Norway had a higher

proportion of full-time working graduates, while French graduates were least likely to work full-time in their first job (71.3%).

Figure 15. Graduates' average working hours per week, overall and country

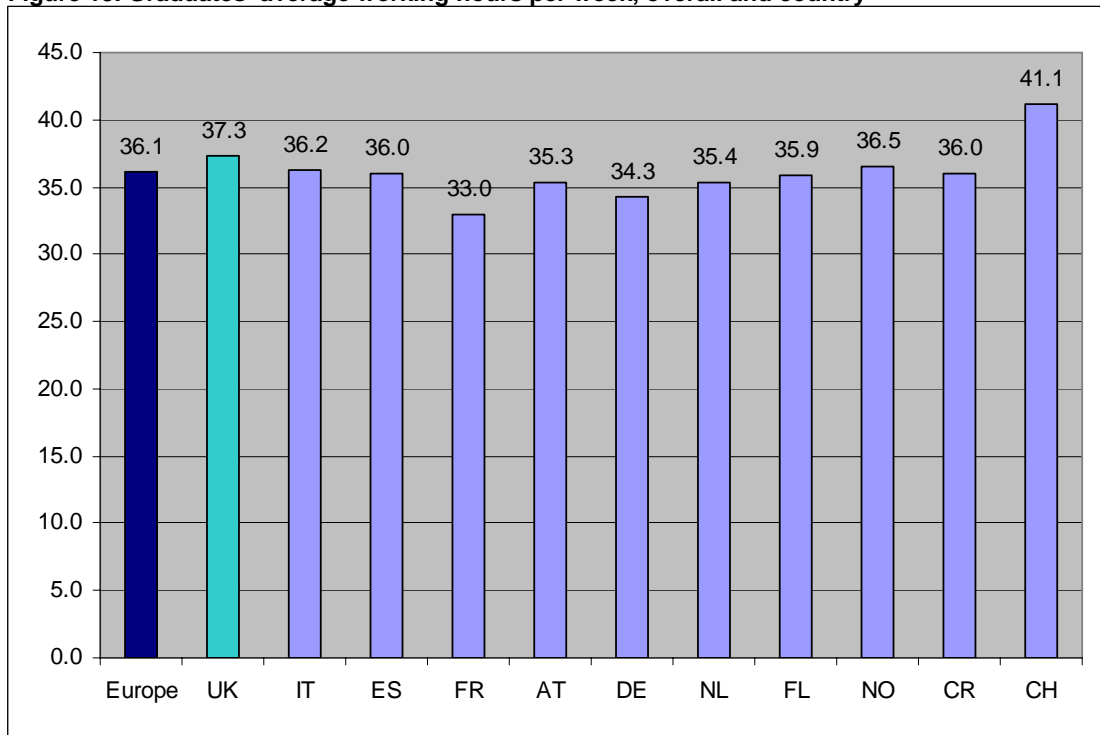
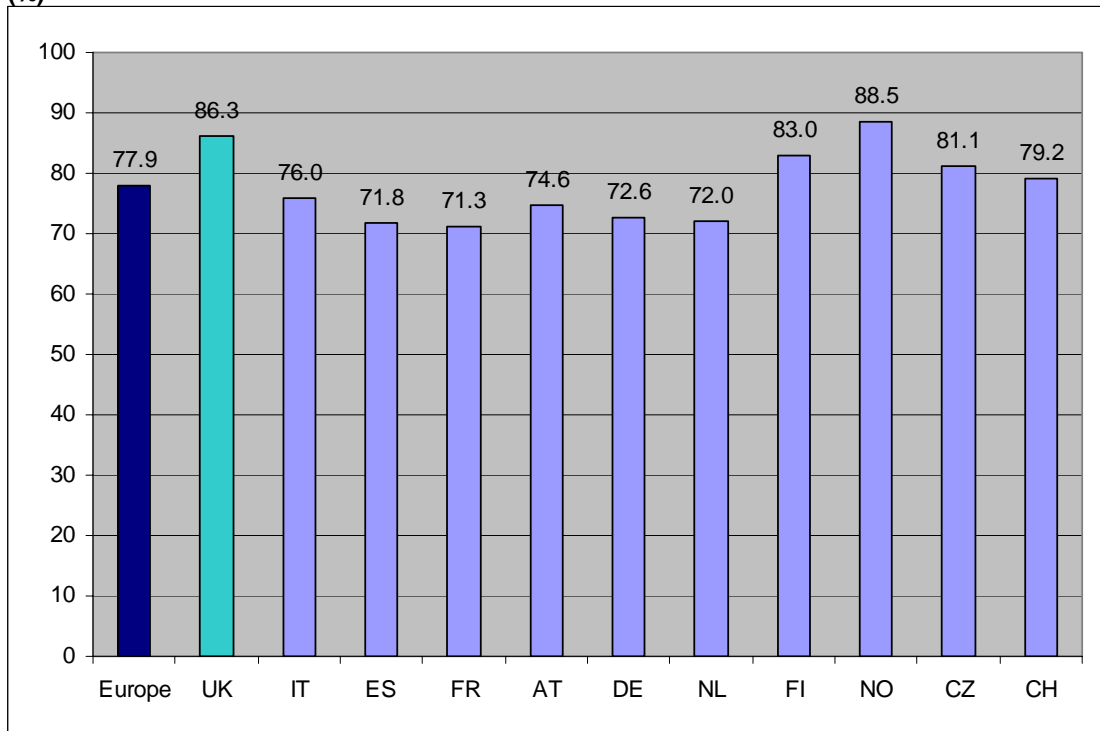


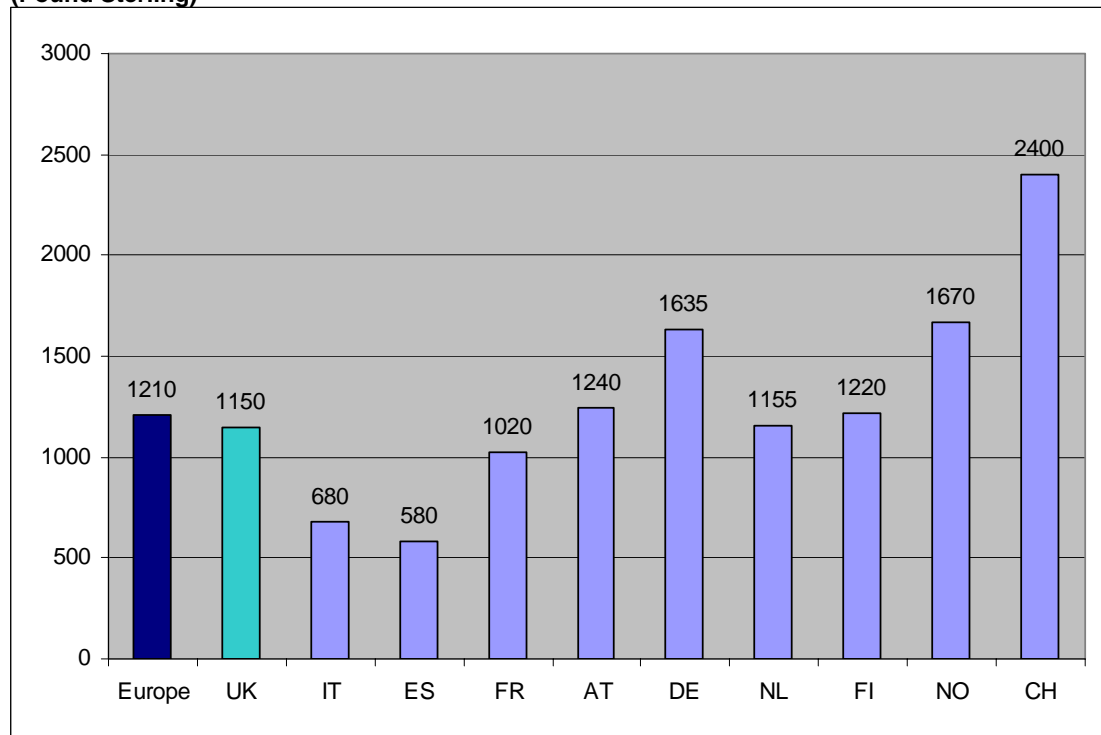
Figure 16. Graduates who worked full-time (35 hours plus) in their first job, overall and country (%)



4.4 Income

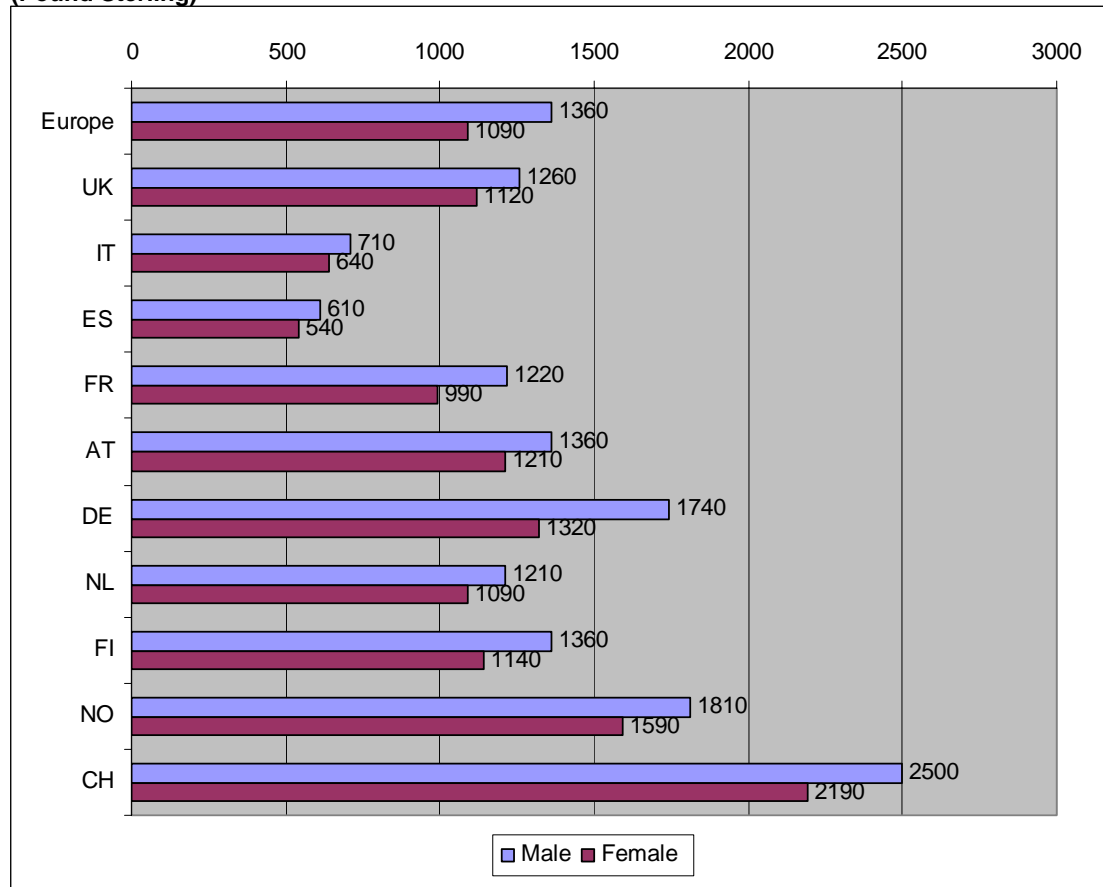
UK graduates working full-time (35 hours plus) earned slightly less than the European median income: £1,150 compared with £1,210 per month (see Figure 17). The highest earners were Swiss graduates, whose median monthly income was £2,400: double that of European graduates. This was followed, with a big gap, by Norwegian (£1,670) and German graduates (£1,635). Graduates from Italy and Spain earned significantly less: £680 and £580 respectively. No data were available for Czech graduates.

Figure 17. Graduates' monthly gross median income in first job, full-time, overall and country (Pound Sterling)



Men earned more than women, although income differentials were less steep in the UK than elsewhere. The European median income per month for male graduates in their first job was £1,360 and for female graduates £1,090 – i.e. female graduates earned about 20% less than their male counterparts (see Figure 18). Female UK graduates earned approximately 9% less a month than their male counterparts, with £1,120 and £1,260 respectively. Men earned more than women in all countries, and the biggest difference in wages between men and women was in Germany, where German female graduates earned 24% less than male graduates. (Data for income were collected in € and converted to £ using an exchange rate of £1=€1.47, and figures were rounded up to the nearest multiple of 5.)

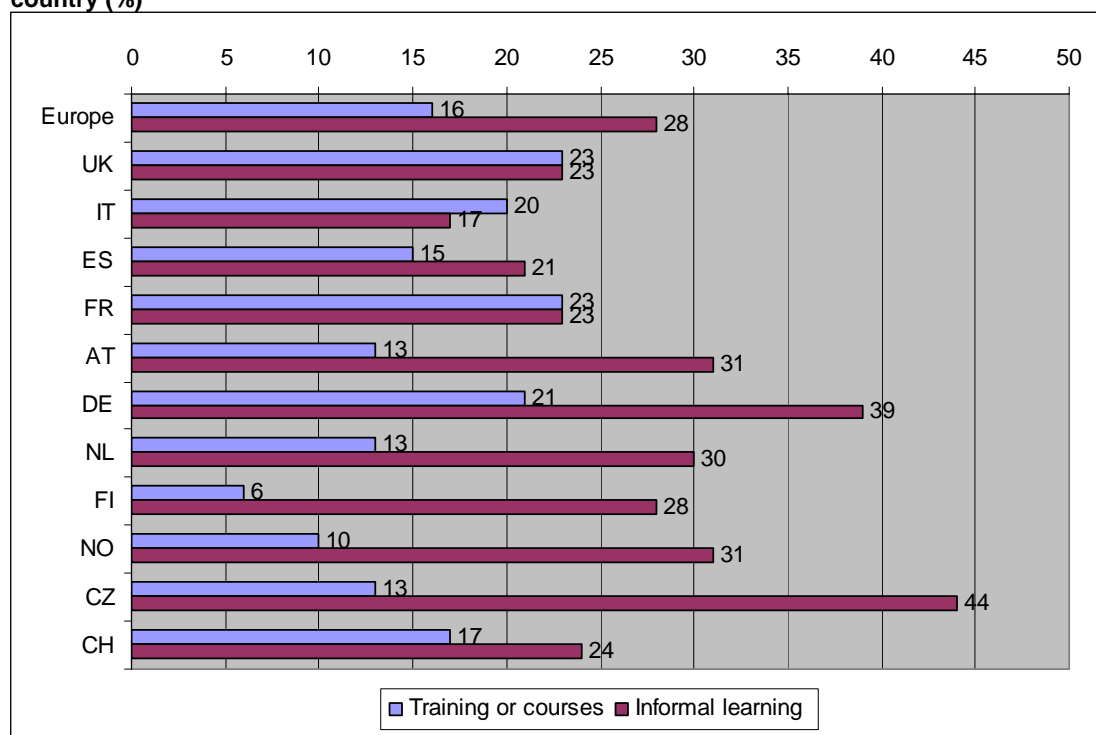
Figure 18. Graduates' monthly gross median income in first job by gender, overall and country (Pound Sterling)



4.5 Training

Almost a quarter of UK graduates experienced an initial training period in their first job through training/courses and informal learning, with the former being above but the latter below the European average (see Figure 19). France and Germany had similar proportions of graduates obtaining training. Finnish graduates were least likely to receive training and courses in their first employment (6%).

Figure 19. Graduates who experienced training and informal learning in their first job, overall and country (%)

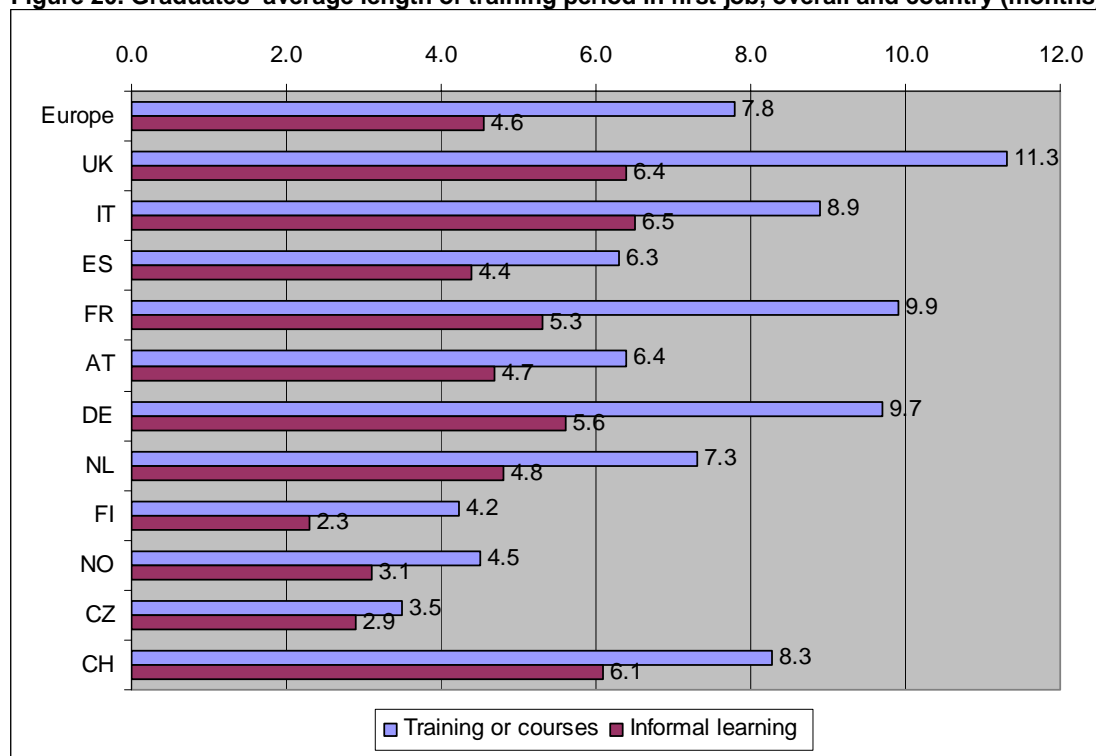


4.6 Length of training period

UK graduates received the longest training period – on average 11.2 months, well above the European average of 7.9 months (see Figure 20). French and German graduates followed, with 9.9 and 9.7 months. Finland, Norway and the Czech Republic had significantly shorter training periods than the European average. Although 44% of Czech Republic graduates experienced informal learning in their first employment, this learning period was on average only 2.9 months long, with Finland (2.3 months) and Norway (3.1 months) having a similar length. Italian graduates had the longest period of informal learning at 6.5 months, closely followed by the UK with 6.4 months, slightly higher than the European average of 6 months.

What this suggests is that the shorter and generally less vocational first degree courses within the UK may require rather more training to be provided by the employer in the first job after graduation.

Figure 20. Graduates' average length of training period in first job, overall and country (months)



4.7 Job mobility

UK graduates, along with Spanish, seemed to be the most mobile in their employment (see Figure 21); 70% of UK graduates (and 72% of Spanish) had left their first employment five years after graduation, which was above the European average of 59%. Could this be the result of the 'mismatch' between the education, skills and knowledge acquired in higher education and the nature and needs of a first job, as mentioned above?

On average, UK graduates had had 2.6 employers during the five-year period since their graduation; this was close to the European average of 2.3 employers (see Figure 22). Spanish graduates had changed their employers most: they had an average 3.1 employers since their graduation, while Czech graduates were most likely to stay with the same employer: they had only had 1.7 employers since 1999/2000.

Figure 21. Graduates who had left their first employment five years after graduation, overall and country (%)

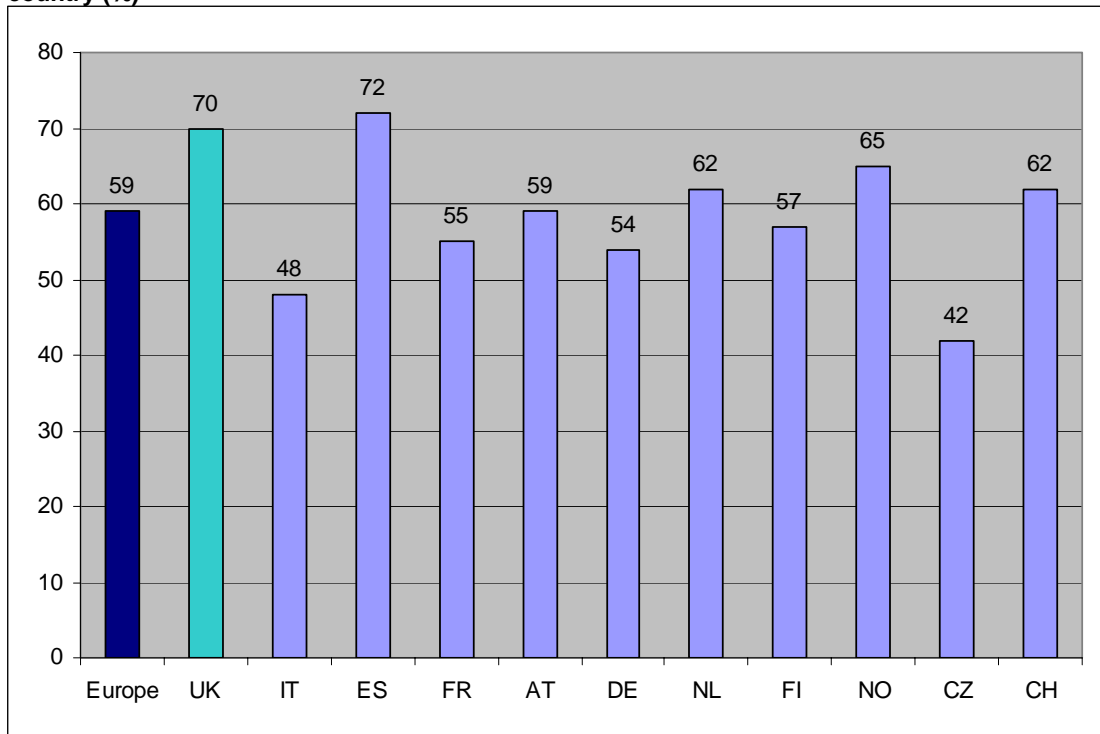
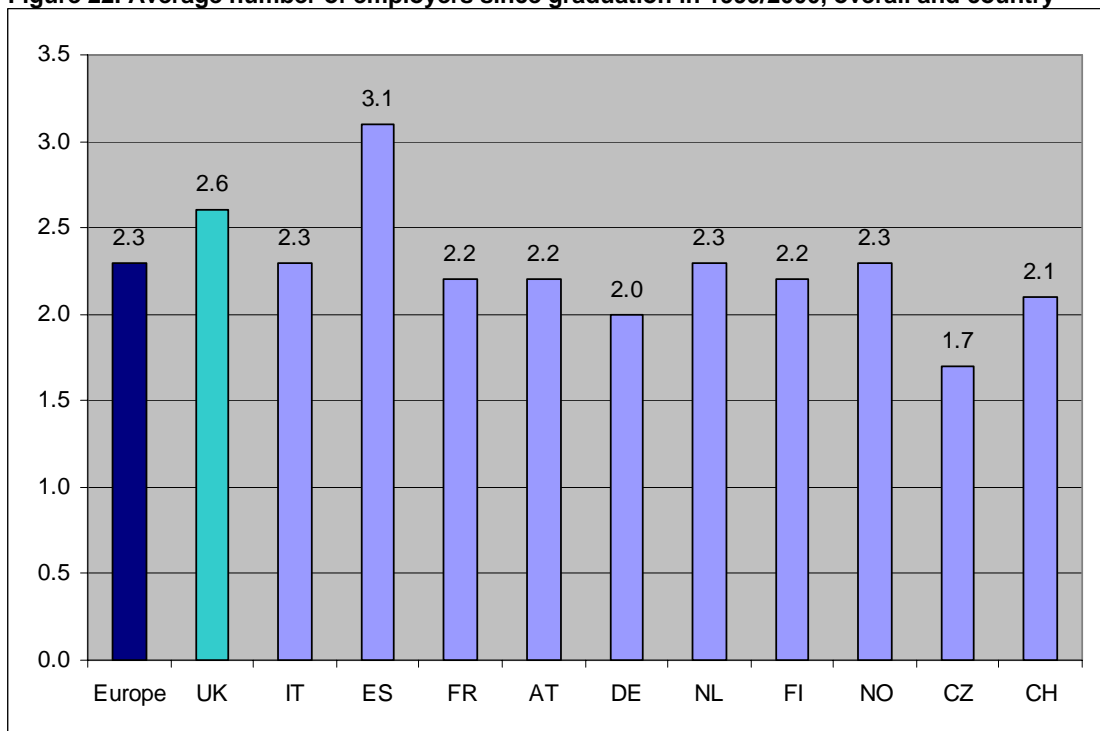


Figure 22. Average number of employers since graduation in 1999/2000, overall and country



4.8 Unemployment

About one-third of UK graduates (34%) had experienced a period or periods of unemployment since their graduation, which was similar to the European average of

36% (see Figure 23). The average length of unemployment for UK graduates was 6.3 months, which was below the European average of 7.9 months (see Figure 24). Norwegian graduates were least likely to have encountered unemployment: only 22% had been unemployed at some point(s), with an average unemployment of 6.2 months. The Netherlands had a similar low incidence of unemployment (26%), with an average shorter period of unemployment (5.6 months). But there were big differences among European countries: 61% of Spanish graduates had experienced unemployment since their graduation, and the average length of unemployment was 10.3 months. The longest average period of unemployment was in Italy (13.7 months).

Figure 23. Graduates who had experienced (periods of) unemployment since graduation, overall and country (%)

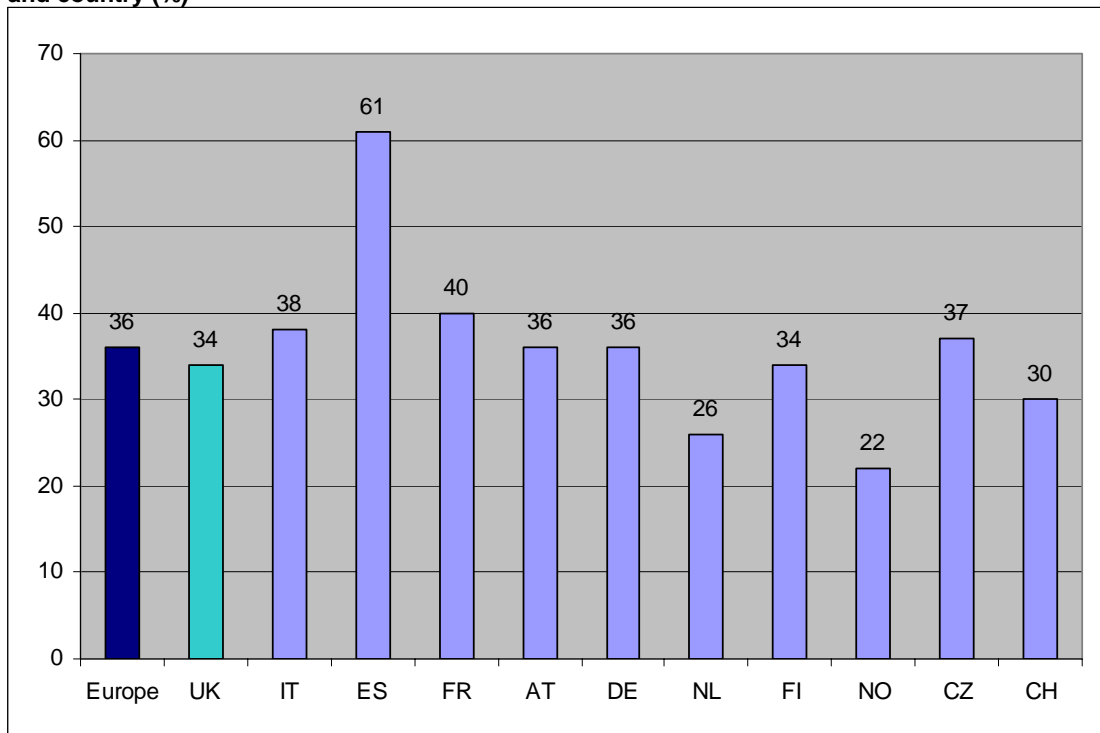
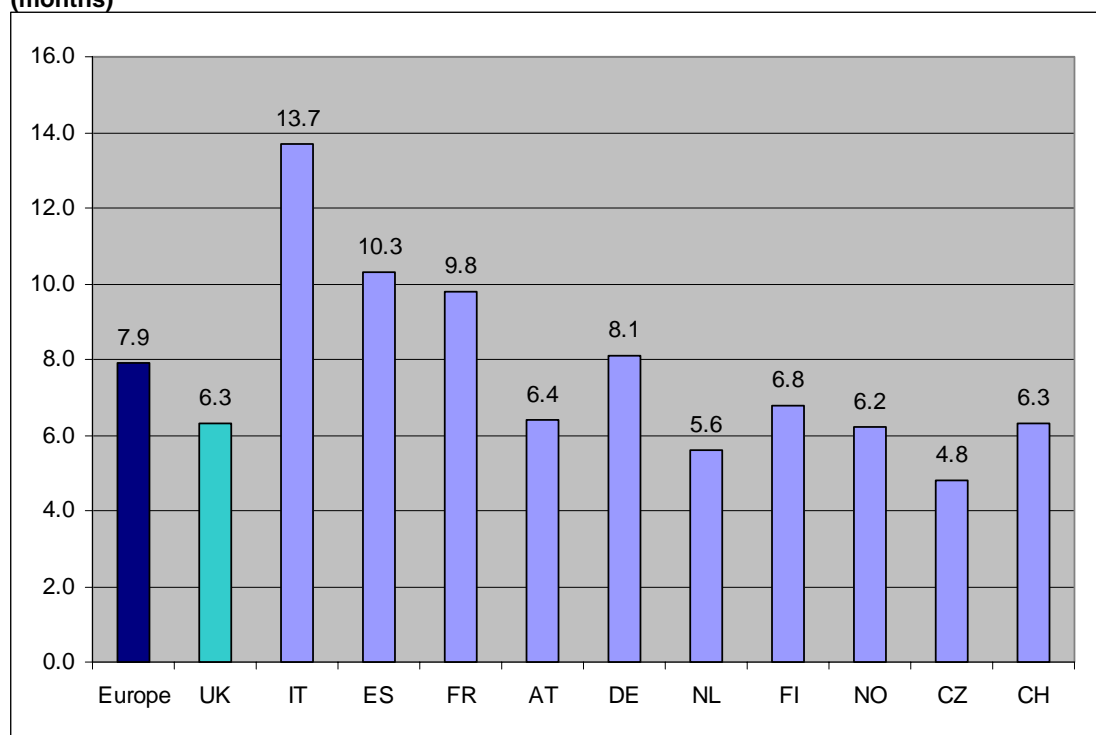


Figure 24. Average length of unemployment experienced since graduation, overall and country (months)



4.9 Social network and obtaining employment

On average, about half of European graduates relied on their social network to obtain information on job opportunities, and 38% used it to obtain work directly. The UK's figures were pretty similar. In contrast, only one-third of French graduates found their social network (very) useful in acquiring information about opportunities, and only 19% in obtaining work directly.

Table C12 in Appendix C provides the figures for graduates from all countries who rated their social network as (very) useful on various aspects of employment.

5 Characteristics of current work

5.1 Summary

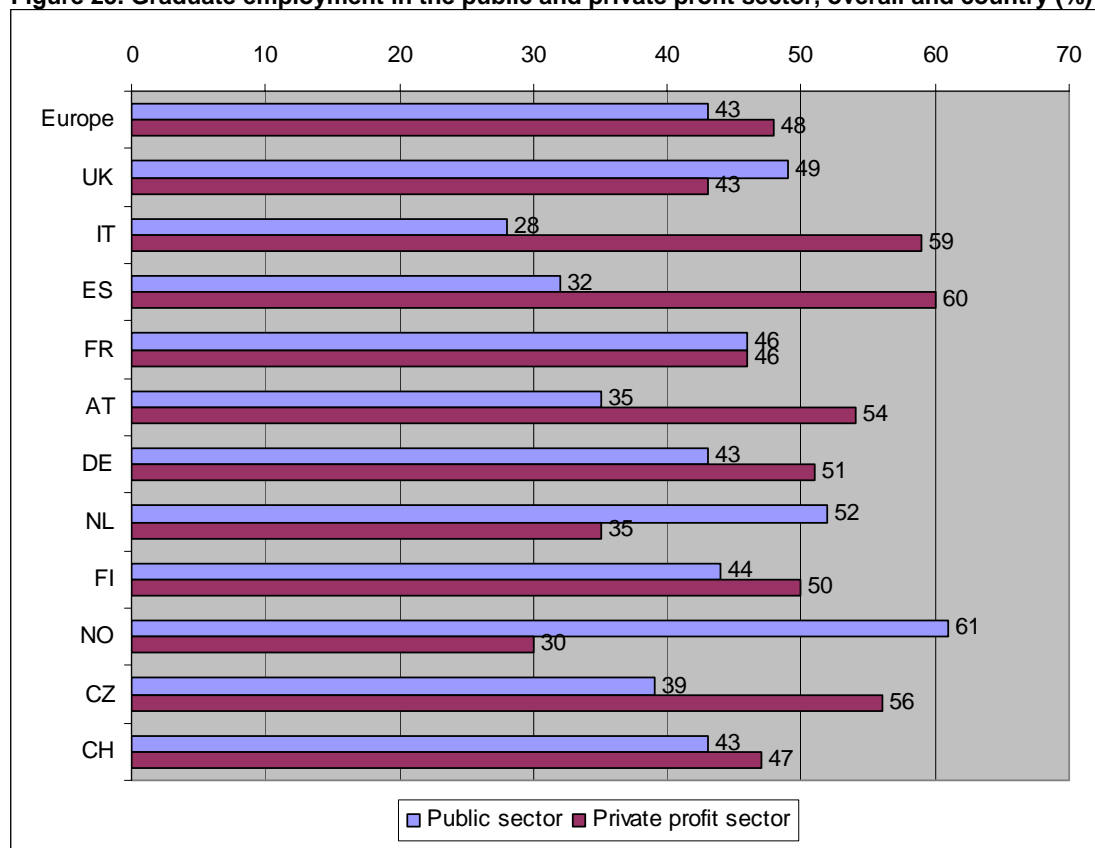
UK graduates:

- were more likely to be employed in the public sector compared with the average of European graduates (something which has changed since the last survey (CHEERS)), although this average disguises considerable differences among individual countries
- tended to have remained in the same top five employment sectors since their first employment
- were more likely than European graduates to work in large organisations – almost half were employed in organisations with 1,000 employees (though again there were some large differences among individual countries)
- earned slightly more than European graduates in their current employment
- had experienced a greater increase in earnings since their first job than their European counterparts
- like Italian, Spanish and French graduates, were more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their current work.

5.2 Type of employer

Figure 25 shows the distribution of graduates between the public and private sectors. Slightly fewer UK graduates were employed in the private sector (43%) than European graduates (48%), but the proportion of those working in the private non-profit sector was very close to the European average. About half of the UK graduates were employed in the public sector (49%), which was slightly more than the overall percentage for Europe (43%). But there were considerable differences among individual countries. France showed a similar division to the UK. The highest proportion of graduates working in the public sector could be found in Norway (61%). Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic had only about one-third of graduates working in the public sector.

Figure 25. Graduate employment in the public and private profit sector, overall and country (%)



5.3 Employment sector of current job

The majority of UK and European graduates were in the same employment sectors for their employment five years after graduation as they had been in for their first employment (see Table 3).

Table 3. 'Top five' employment sectors

	UK	Europe
1	Education (23%)	Education (21%)
2	Real estate, renting and business activities (19%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (19%)
3	Health and social work (16%)	Health and social work (17%)
4	Public administration and defence; compulsory (12%)	Manufacturing (12%)
5	Manufacturing (9%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory (8%)

5.4 Size of employer

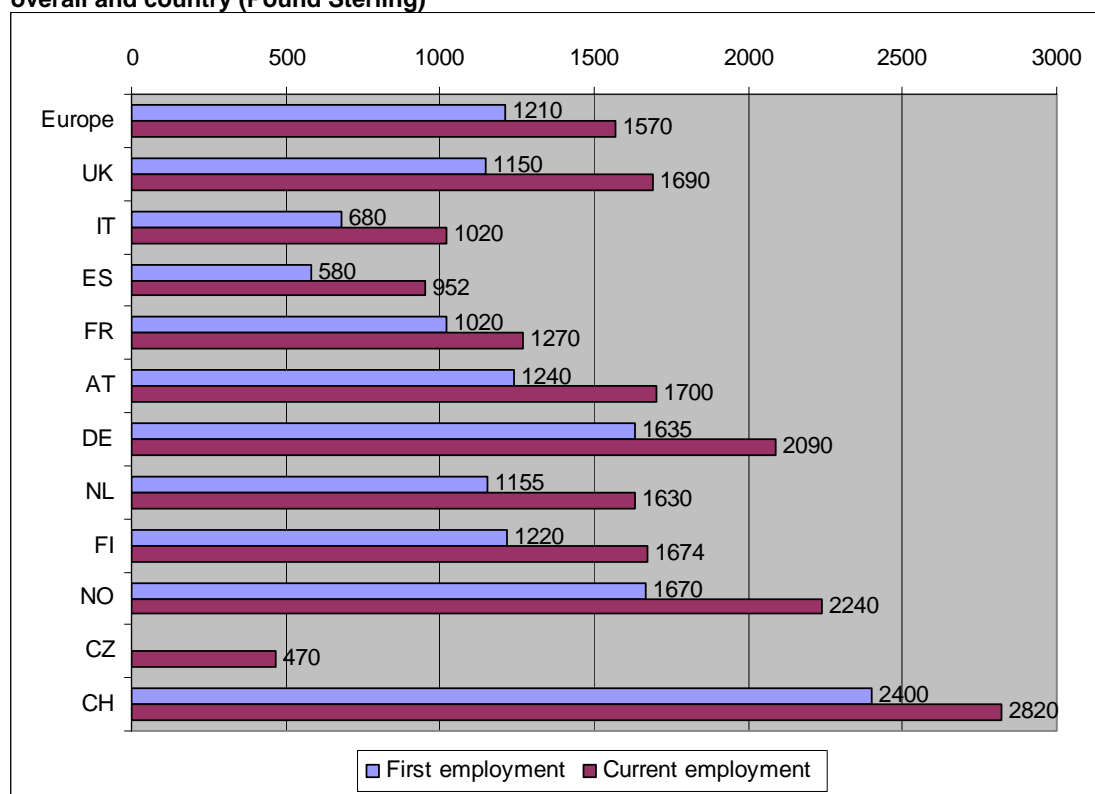
French graduates were most likely to work for a very large organisation employing 1,000 or more people (53%), followed by UK graduates (46%), both well above the European average of 34%. However, the European average was distorted by the fact that no Czech graduates in the sample were working for organisations of this size. Spain, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland and Norway had similar proportions of graduates to the UK working for this size of organisation.

Table C13 in Appendix C provides the figures for graduates from all countries in the study working in organisations according to their size.

5.5 Income

The median gross monthly income from main employment for full-time working European graduates was £1,570, an increase of about £360 a month compared to their first job (see Figure 26). UK graduates' wages had increased by about £540 to £1,690 per month, and they now earned slightly more than the European median, which was not the case for their first employment. Swiss graduates remained the top earners five years after graduation with £2,820, followed by graduates from Norway (£2,240) and Germany (£2,090). Low earners were the Italian (£1,020) and Spanish (£952) graduates, but it was the Czech graduates who earned the least with £470 a month.

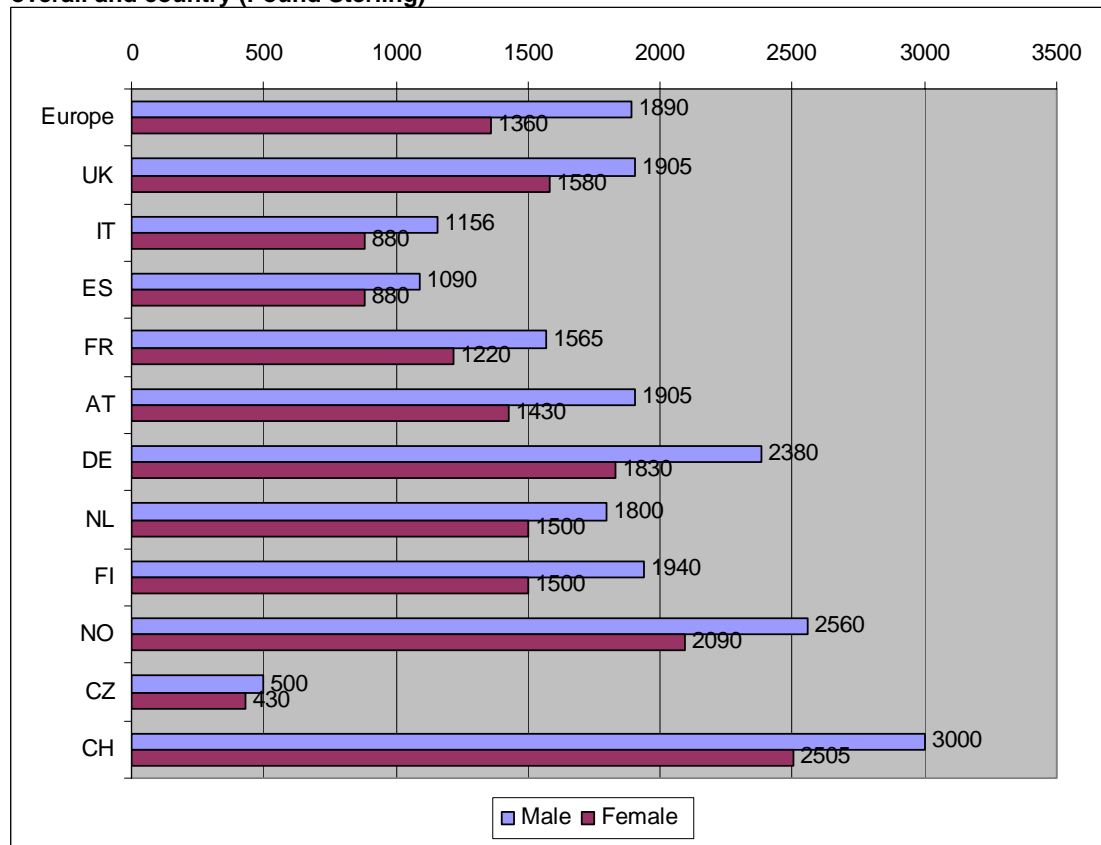
Figure 26. Comparison of graduates' monthly median income of first and current employment, overall and country (Pound Sterling)



Men were still earning more than women (see Figure 27). The difference between the European median for male and female graduates was £530, which means that women's wages were about 24% less than men's, widening the gender gap in income

from first employment to current job. The biggest difference could be found in Austria, where women earned 25% less than men, followed by Italy (24%) and Germany (20%). UK female graduates earned 17% less than their male counterparts. The smallest gap between male and female earnings could be found in the Czech Republic and Switzerland. (Data for income were collected in € and converted to £ using an exchange rate of £1=€1.47, and figures were rounded up to the nearest multiple of 5.)

Figure 27. Comparison of graduates' monthly median income in current employment by gender, overall and country (Pound Sterling)



5.6 Job satisfaction

In terms of job satisfaction, 14% of UK, Italian, Spanish and French graduates stated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their current job. This was more than in any other European country. Graduates from Austria (74%), Norway (73%) and the Czech Republic (72%) were the happiest with their jobs (see Figure 28). Overall, 11% of European graduates were (very) dissatisfied with their current work, while 68% were (very) satisfied.

Figure 28. Graduates who were (very) satisfied with their current job, overall and country (%)

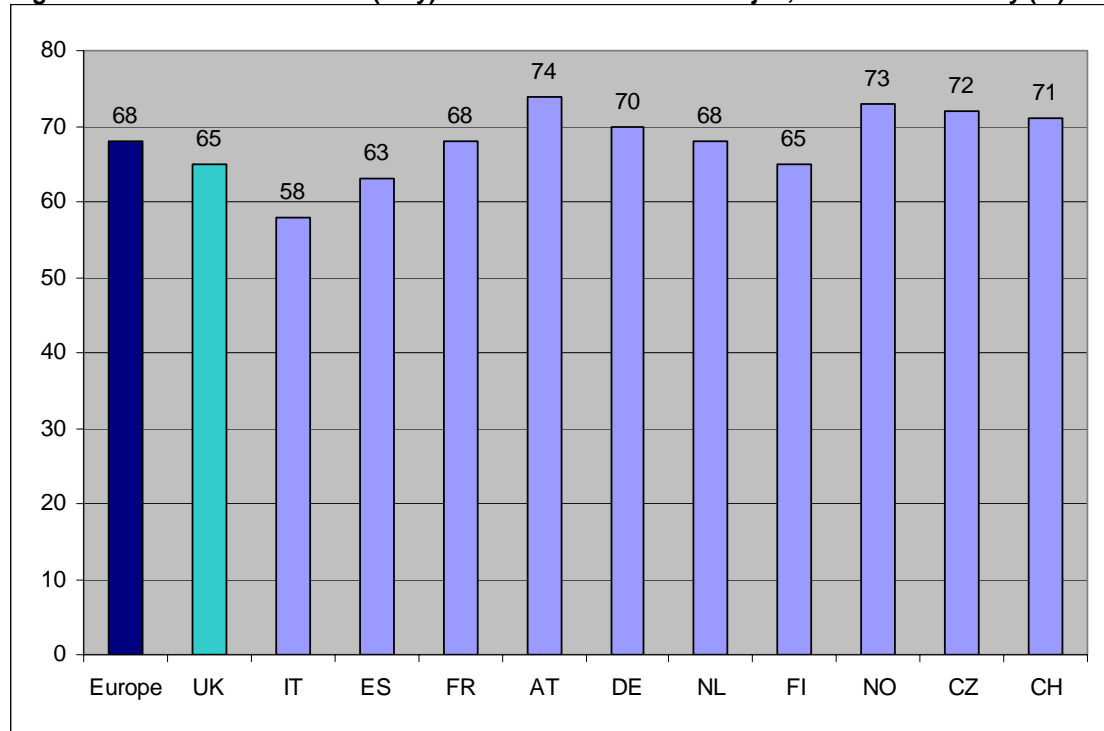


Table C14 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' (non-)satisfaction with their current work.

6 Skills and competencies

6.1 Summary

UK graduates:

- rated their competencies at a (very) high level and similar to European graduates, with the exception of command of foreign languages
- reported similar competencies required at their workplace, again similar to those of European graduates, except for the use of foreign languages.

6.2 Competencies of graduates

Overall, the competencies which UK graduates felt they possessed were similar to those rated highly by European graduates (see Table 4): 'working productively with others', 'ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge', 'ability to coordinate activities' and 'ability to perform well under pressure' were in the top five competencies of the UK graduates and of the European graduates as a whole.

Competencies rated highly by the lowest proportion of UK graduates were: 'knowledge of other fields or disciplines' (45%; European average 50%), 'ability to negotiate effectively' (64%; European average 58%), 'alertness to new opportunities' (64%; European average 58%), 'ability to mobilise the capacities of others' (69%; European average 66%) and 'ability to assert your authority' (61%; European average 58%), 'ability to present products, ideas or reports to an audience' (61%; European average 65%). Although with the exception of the first of these, more graduates felt that they possessed these competencies than did not.

'Ability to write and speak in a foreign language' was the only competency where UK graduates rated it significantly lower than each of the other European countries: only 19% rated their foreign language ability as high or very high, compared with the European average of 51%. There was also a large proportion of graduates in other countries who rated their foreign language ability as (very) high: Austria (68%), Switzerland (66%) and Finland (62%). 'Mastery of own field; analytical thinking; ability to come up with new ideas and solutions' were competencies listed in the top 10 ratings for the UK, but were not featured for European graduates.

Table 4. 'Top 10' competencies possessed to a (very) high level

	UK	Europe
1	Ability to work productively with others (92%)	Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge (88%)
2	Ability to perform well under pressure (89%)	Ability to work productively with others (87%)
3	Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge (86%)	Ability to use computers and internet (86%)
4	Ability to coordinate activities (87%)	Ability to coordinate activities (83%)
5	Ability to use time efficiently (84%)	Ability to perform well under pressure (82%)
6	Ability to make your meaning clear to others (85%)	Ability to make your meaning clear to others (81%)
7	Ability to use computers and internet (88%)	Willingness to question your own and others' ideas (81%)
8	Willingness to question your own and others' ideas (83%)	Ability to come up with new ideas and solutions (80%)
9	Ability to write reports, memos or documents (83%)	Ability to write reports, memos or documents (80%)
10	Mastery of own field; analytical thinking; ability to come up with new ideas and solutions (78%)	Ability to use time efficiently (80%)

Table C15 in Appendix C provides the figures for graduates' competencies in all countries in the study.

Turning to the competencies that were required in their current employment, UK graduates were similar to other European graduates (see Table 5). 'Ability to use time efficiently' was at the top of both lists. 'Ability to perform well under pressure' and 'ability to make your meaning clear to others' were other strongly required competencies in both the UK and Europe as a whole.

Competencies required highly by the lowest proportion of UK graduates were: 'ability to negotiate effectively' (59%; EU 58%), 'alertness to new opportunities' (56%; EU 58%), 'ability to mobilise the capacities of others' (62%; EU 60%), 'ability to assert your authority' (62%; EU 57%), 'ability to come up with new ideas and solutions' (64%; EU 70%), 'willingness to question your own and others' ideas' (63%; EU 64%) and 'ability to present products, ideas or reports' (51%; EU 59%). However, it should be noted that more than half the graduates felt that these competencies were required of them.

The only substantial discrepancy between the UK and the other European countries was again found in foreign language ability: only 9.2% of UK graduates stated that the ability to write and speak in a foreign was required at work, compared with the European average of 39%. There were also significant differences among countries: foreign language proficiency was most emphasised in the Czech Republic (55%), Finland and Austria (both 54%) and Switzerland (51%).

Table 5. 'Top 10' competencies required in current work

	UK	Europe
1	Ability to use time efficiently (88%)	Ability to use time efficiently (82%)
2	Ability to work productively with others (85%)	Ability to perform well under pressure (80%)
3	Ability to perform well under pressure (84%)	Ability to write reports, memos or documents (80%)
4	Ability to make your meaning clear to others (83%)	Mastery of own field or discipline (78%)
5	Ability to coordinate activities (80%)	Ability to make your meaning clear to others (77%)
6	Ability to use computers and internet (74%)	Ability to work productively with others (77%)
7	Mastery of own field (73%)	Ability to coordinate activities (76%)
8	Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge (70%)	Ability to use computers and internet (75%)
9	Ability to write reports, memos or documents (69%)	Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge (74%)
10	Analytical thinking; ability to come up with new ideas and solutions (64%)	Ability to come up with new ideas and solutions (70%)

Table C16 in Appendix C provides the figures for competencies required at graduates' workplace for all countries in the study.

There seemed to be a very good fit between UK graduates' competencies and the ones required in their current work. The top 10 competencies possessed were also listed as those required at work. The match between competencies possessed and required for European graduates was also good: only 'Mastery of own field' was listed as required at work but not mentioned in the 'top 10' list of possessed competencies.

Report no 4 in this series (Competences possessed and required by European Graduates) provides a more detailed discussion of graduates' skills and competencies.

7 Appropriateness of work to level and type of qualifications

7.1 Summary

In the UK:

- graduates were more likely than their European counterparts to say that their first job did not require higher education
- only about half felt that their level of education had been appropriate to their first employment
- but 72% found that their current highest level of education matched their current job requirements
- one-third believed that their first job did not require a particular field of education
- one-third did not feel that they utilised their skills and knowledge in their first job
- 14% felt that their skills and knowledge were not or hardly utilised in their current work
- half stated that their first and current job did not demand more knowledge and skills than they could offer.

7.2 Utilisation of education, knowledge and skills in first employment

UK graduates were the most likely to say that their first job did not require higher education: more than one-third (38%) believed that their job needed someone with an education below tertiary level (see Figure 29). This was much higher than the European average of 18%. Only 55% rated the level of education required in their first job as the same as their own educational level, slightly lower than the European average of 58%. Spain shared a similar pattern to the UK. A match of education level and job requirements was most likely to be found in Germany: 91% of German graduates believed that their first job required the level of education they possessed.

In addition, 35% of UK graduates mentioned that their first job did not require a particular field of study (see Figure 30). This was above the European average of 13% and above the average of each European country. Furthermore, another 10% stated that their first job required a completely different field of study to the one they had completed. UK graduates were also least likely to say that their knowledge and skills were utilised in their first job (see Figure 31): 33% believed that they had hardly used their skills and knowledge or not at all, compared with the European average of 19% (Spain was similar to the UK). Therefore, unsurprisingly, more than half (57%) stated that their first job did not demand more knowledge and skills than they could offer.

Overall, it seems that UK graduates showed a tendency to feel that they were overqualified for their first employment, but at the same time they also seemed to be most flexible and independent from their field of higher education study when obtaining work. These data reflect the 'looseness of fit' between higher education and employment in the UK, which is discussed in report no 2 in this series (The Context of HE and employment: comparisons between different European countries).

Figure 29. Graduates who felt that the level of education required in their first job was below tertiary level, overall and country (%)

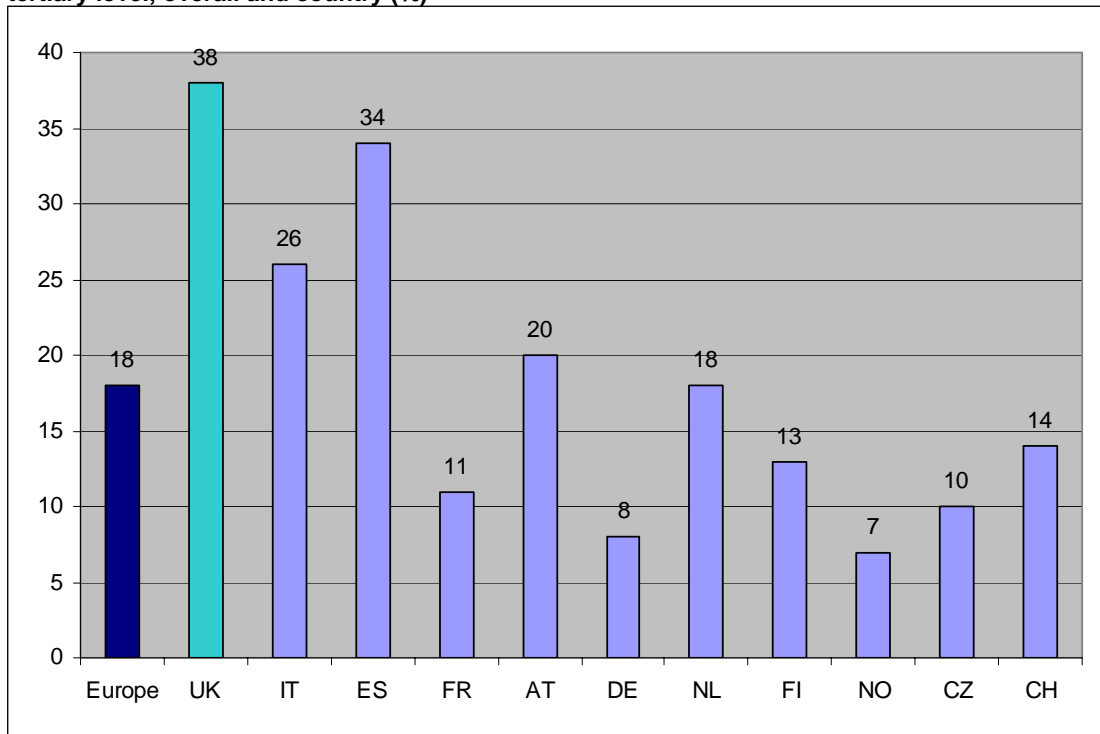


Table C17 in Appendix C provides the figures for the appropriateness of level of education in first job relative to study programme for graduates from all countries in the study.

Figure 30. Graduates who thought that their first job did not require a particular field of study, overall and country (%)

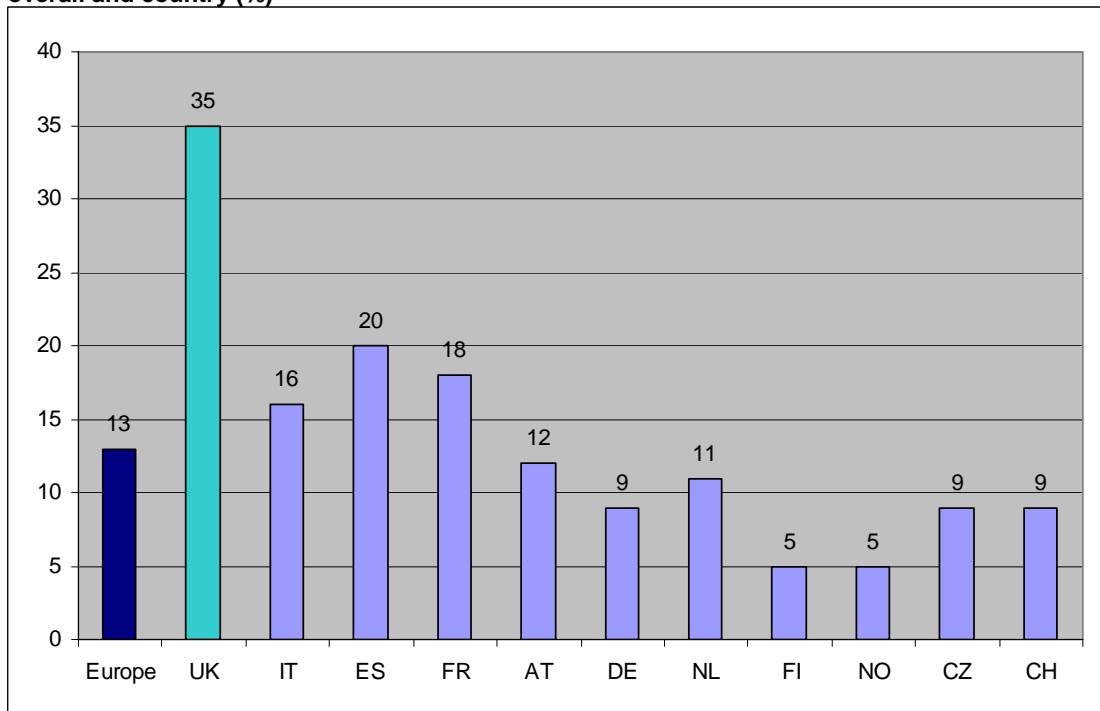


Table C18 in Appendix C provides the figures for the appropriateness of field of study in graduates' first job in all countries in the study.

Figure 31. Graduates who felt that they had not or had hardly utilised their skills and knowledge in their first job, overall and country (%)

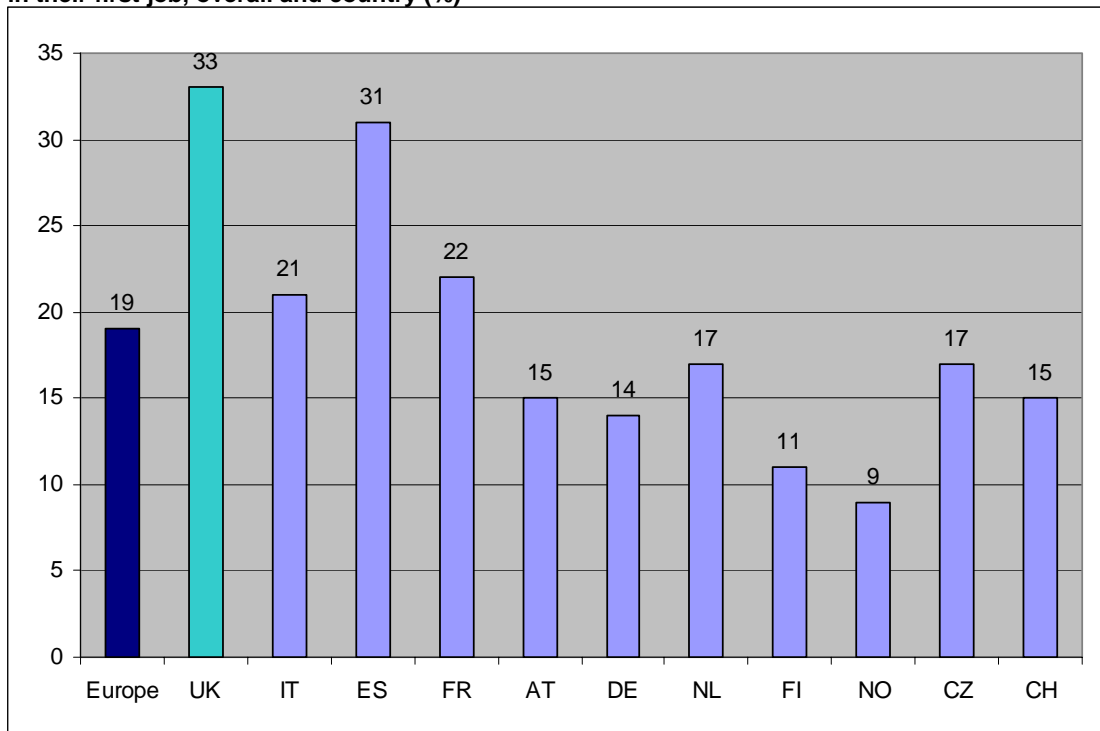
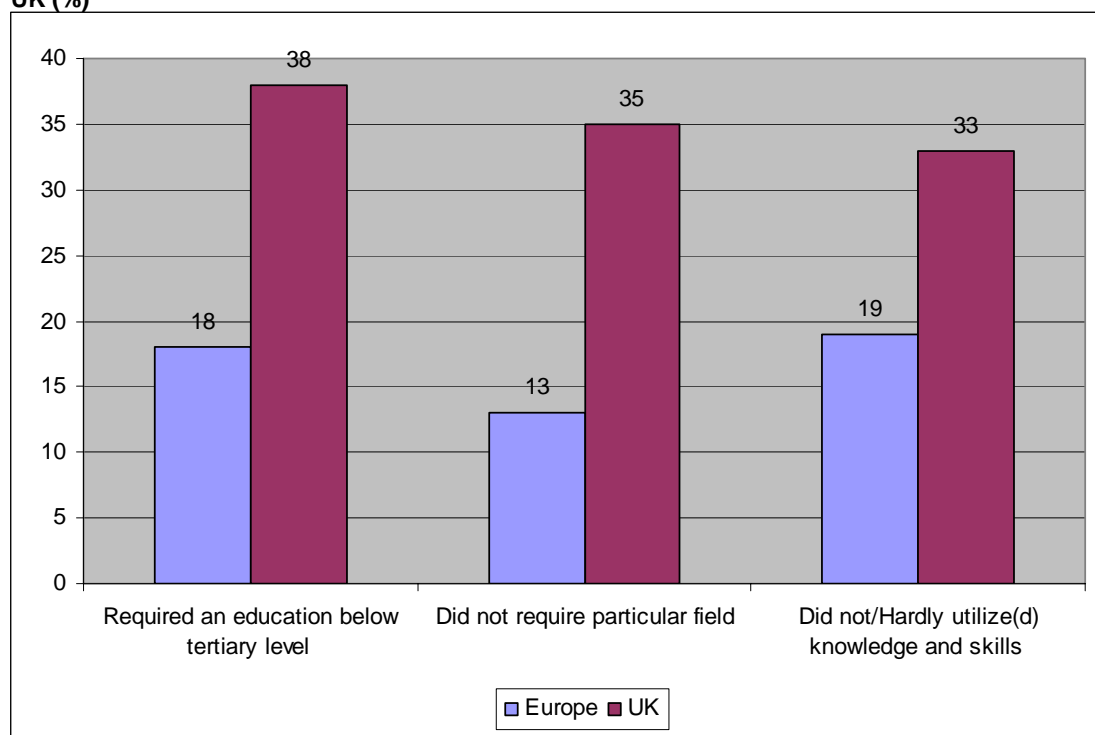


Table C19 in Appendix C provides figures for utilisation and demand for knowledge and skills in graduates' first job in all countries in the study.

Figure 32 demonstrates the stark differences that exist between UK and European graduates in the relationship between higher education and first job after graduation.

Figure 32. The relationship between higher education and first job after graduation, overall and UK (%)



7.3 Utilisation of education, knowledge and skills in current employment

For UK graduates, a rather different picture emerged when we asked about the relationship between higher education and current employment five years after graduation. In this case, 72% of UK graduates felt that their current highest level of education matched their current job requirements, very close to the European average of 73% (see Figure 33). This was an increase of 17% of graduates over the figures in connection with the first job. One-third (33%) of European graduates believed that it would take an average graduate with the relevant educational background three to five years to become an expert in the field in which they were currently working. A slightly higher percentage of UK, Finnish (both 39%) and Dutch graduates (40%) but only 15% of Czech graduates believed the same. More than half (55%) of the UK graduates thought that it would take less than one year to become an expert in their current field, more than any other European country.

Some 14% of UK graduates felt that their skills and knowledge were not or hardly utilised in their current work, higher than the European average of 9%. The proportion of Spanish and French graduates who felt the same was similarly high (14% and 13% respectively). On the other hand, Norway only had 4% of graduates who believed that they hardly used or did not use their skills and knowledge in their current work. The proportion in this category was also low in Finland (6%) and Switzerland (7%). Also, 47% of UK graduates did not believe or hardly believed that their current work demanded more knowledge and skill than they could offer (European average: 45%). This figure was highest in the Czech Republic (56%) and lowest in Norway (33%).

Figure 33. Graduates who felt that their level of education was appropriate for their first and current job, overall and country (%)

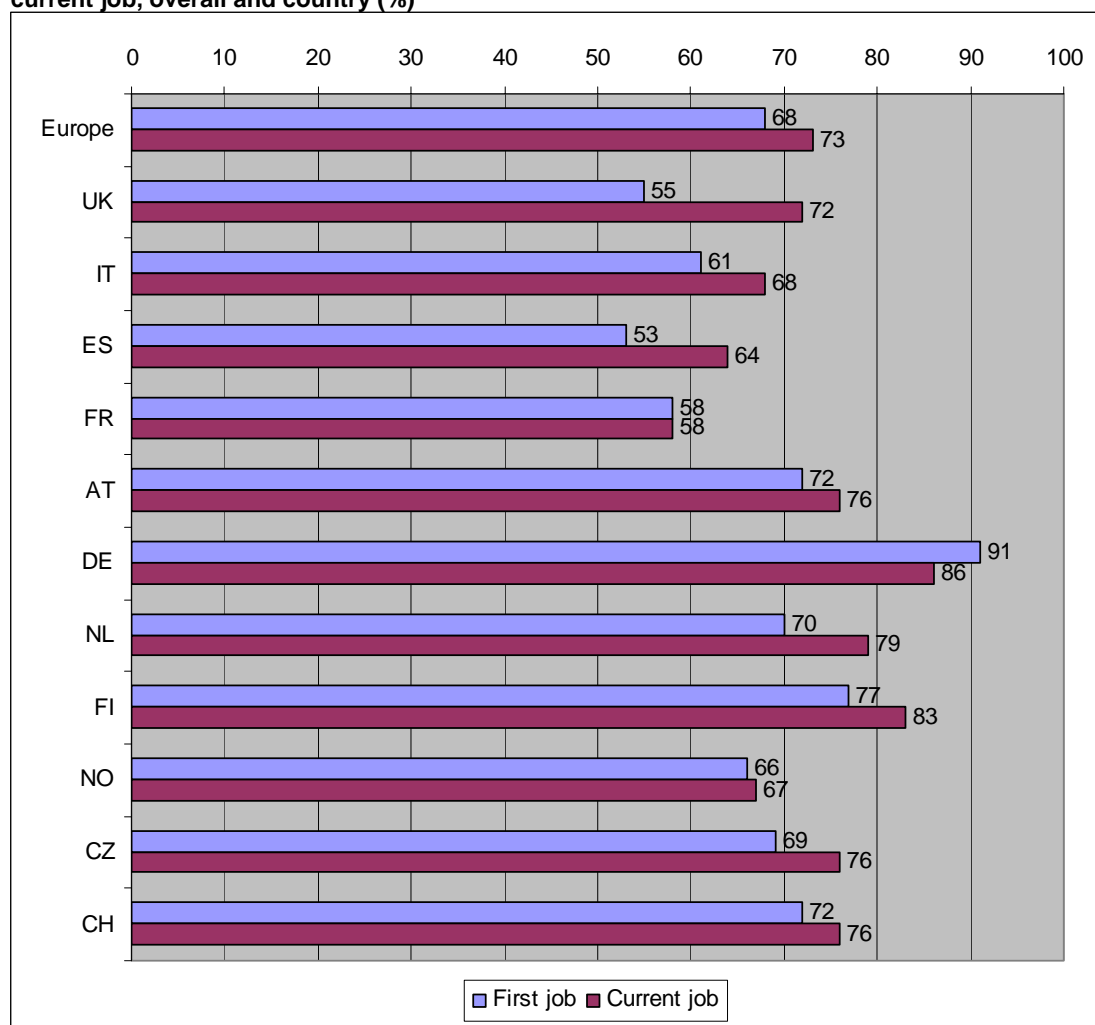


Table C20 in Appendix C provides the figures for the appropriateness of the level of education required in the graduate's current job relative to the current level of education obtained by the graduate, for all countries in the study.

Table C21 in Appendix C provides the figures for the appropriateness of field of study in graduates' current job for all countries in the study.

Table C22 in Appendix C provides the figures for length of time required to become an expert in graduates' field of work for all countries in the study.

Table C23 in Appendix C provides figures for utilisation and demand for knowledge and skills in graduates' current job for all countries of the study.

8 Additional study, training and work experience

8.1 Summary

In the UK:

- less than one-third of graduates had participated in work placements or internships as part of their degree course, much lower than the European average of 55%
- but the average length, for those that did them, was 9.6 months, one of the longest among European countries
- graduates were more likely to have had work experience that was not related to their studies
- graduates were more likely than other European graduates to have enrolled on additional study programmes following graduation
- half of those with additional studies programmes were enrolled in postgraduate certificate and diploma courses
- two-thirds had undertaken work-related training in the past 12 months in their current employment, comparable to other European graduates, though there were some large country differences.

8.2 Work placements/internships during study programme

About 55% of European graduates had taken part in work placements, compared with only 29% of UK graduates (see Figure 34). Only Italy had fewer graduates who had experienced work placements. On the other hand, the majority of graduates from the Netherlands (86%), Germany (80%), Finland (79%) and France (72%) had participated in work placement(s) and internship(s). But the average length of placements was one month to 2.8 months shorter than those of UK graduates (see Figure 35). The latter lasted on average 9.6 months compared with the European average of 8.5 months. This is a similar pattern to that of Italian graduates, who were the least likely to have taken part in work placements, but their placements lasted the longest on average (10 months). Graduates from the Netherlands were both most likely to have participated in work placements and to have had long ones (9.8 months).

Figure 34. Graduates who had participated in work placements/internships, overall and country (%)

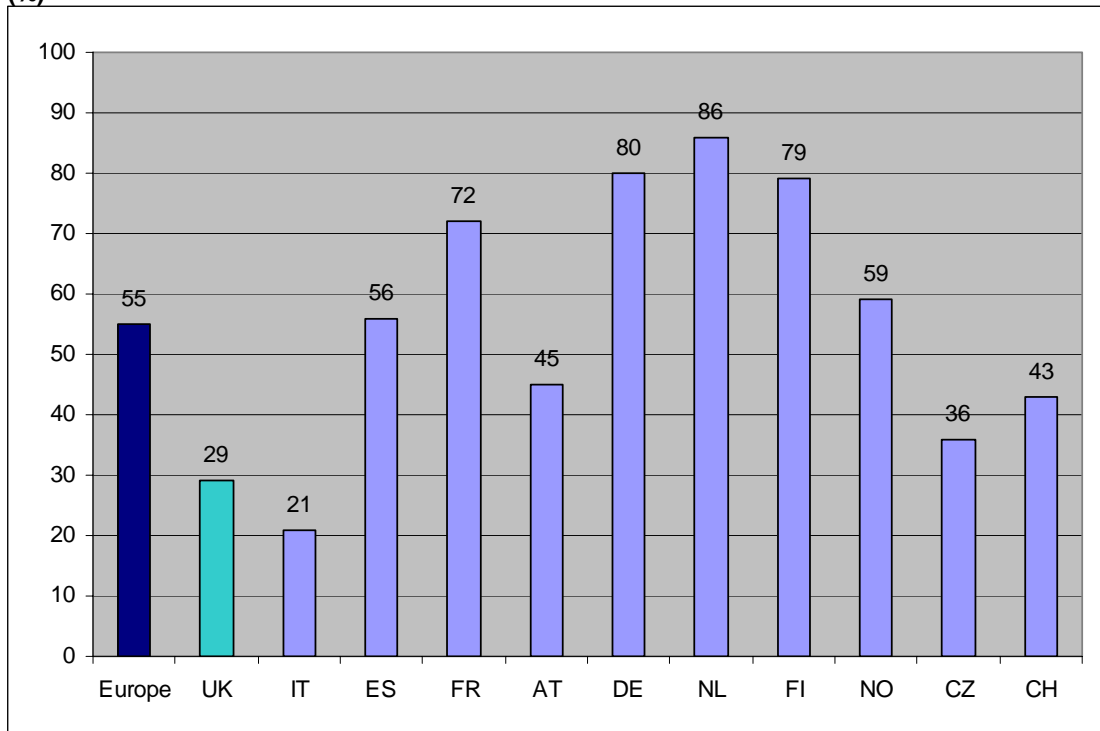
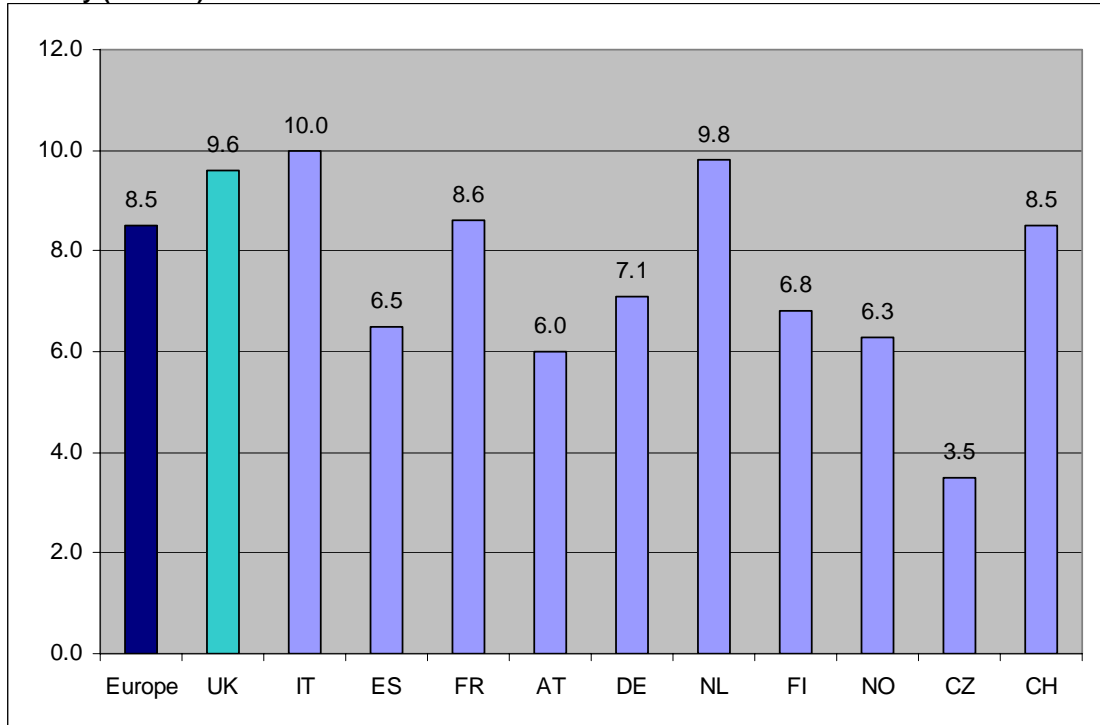


Figure 35. Average length of placements/internships undertaken by graduates, overall and country (months)



8.3 Work experience

Increasingly, higher education students undertake paid work experience alongside their studies. Of UK graduates in the survey, 48% undertook non-study related work

experience **before** their higher education (European average 55%) (see Figure 36). This compares with 19% having had study-related work experience (European average 27%) (see Figure 37). **During** their studies, 45% of UK graduates acquired non-study related work experience (European average 53%), and 21% acquired study-related work experience, which was considerably less than the European average of 49%. The UK had the smallest proportion of graduates with study-related work experience during higher education. But UK graduates had the longest period of non-study related work experience **before** higher education, with 37.5 months (European average 21.7 months). They also had the shortest length of study-related work experience **during** higher education (10 months, to European average of 16.5 months).

In considering the UK data, it is also important to remember the substantial numbers of mature students in the UK. Almost by definition, these students will have had work experience before entering higher education. For school leavers, there may be little difference between UK students and the rest in this respect.

Figure 36. Graduates with non-study related work experience acquired before and during higher education, overall and country (%)

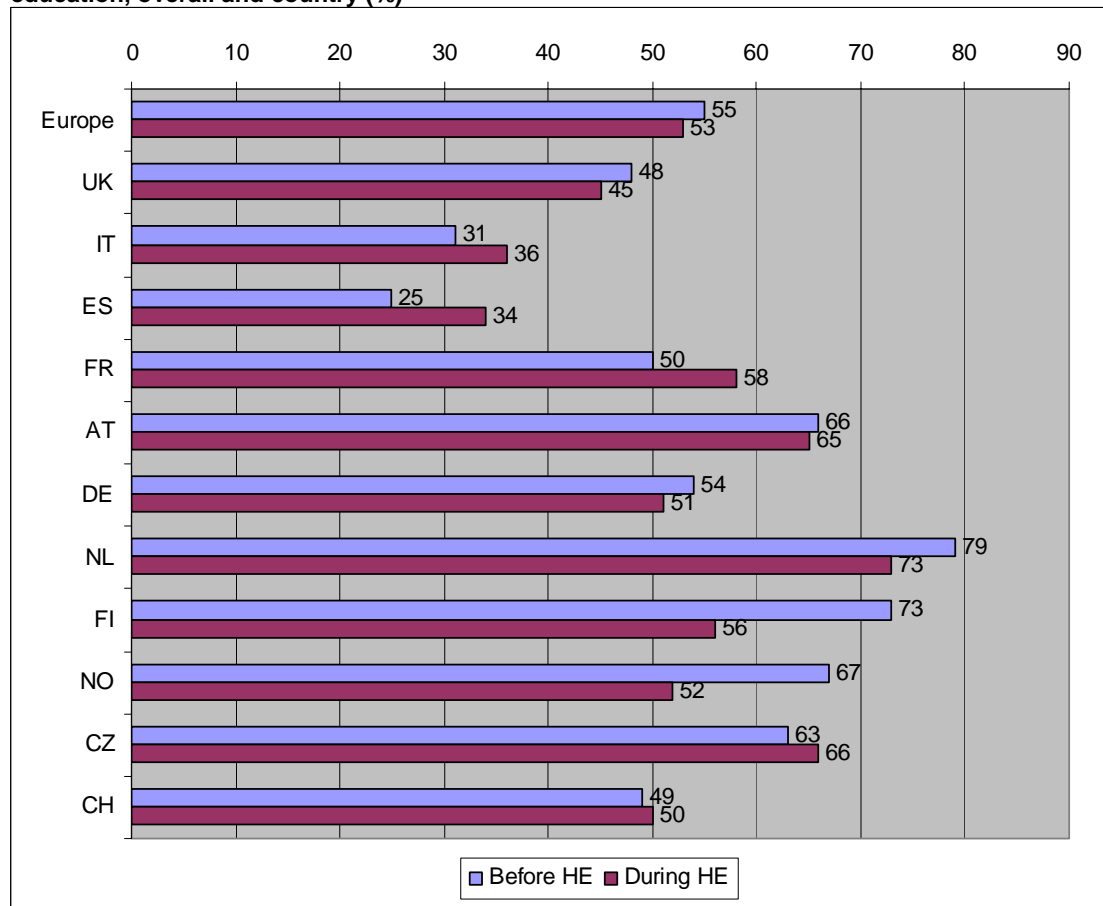


Figure 37. Graduates with study-related work experience before and during HE, overall and country (%)

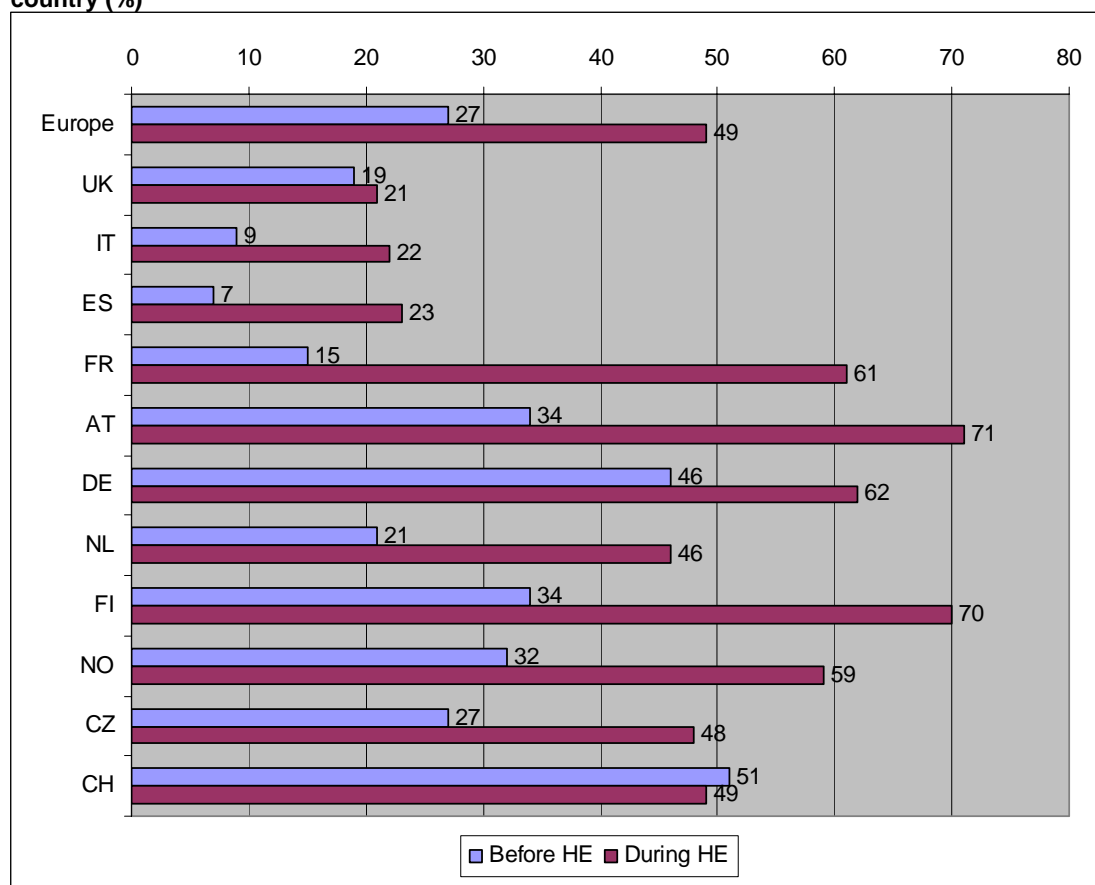


Table C24 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' average length of work experience before and during higher education for all countries in the study.

8.4 Additional studies

In all, 57% of UK graduates stated that they did not enrol in additional studies to the study programme they had completed in 2000 (see Figure 38). Half of the UK graduates who had taken an additional study programme enrolled on professional or diploma programmes of various sorts (European graduates: 25%); 31% enrolled on an ISCED 5A masters programme (European graduates: 39%), 10% on another ISCED 5A bachelors programme (European graduates: 13%) and 7% on an ISCED 5A specialist degree/ISCED 6 (European graduates: 18%) (see Figure 39). Of those UK graduates who had enrolled on a first additional study programme, 76% had completed their course, 17% were still enrolled on it and 7% did not complete it.

Table C25 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' additional study or training programme for all countries in the study.

Figure 38. Graduates with no additional study/training programme, overall and country (%)

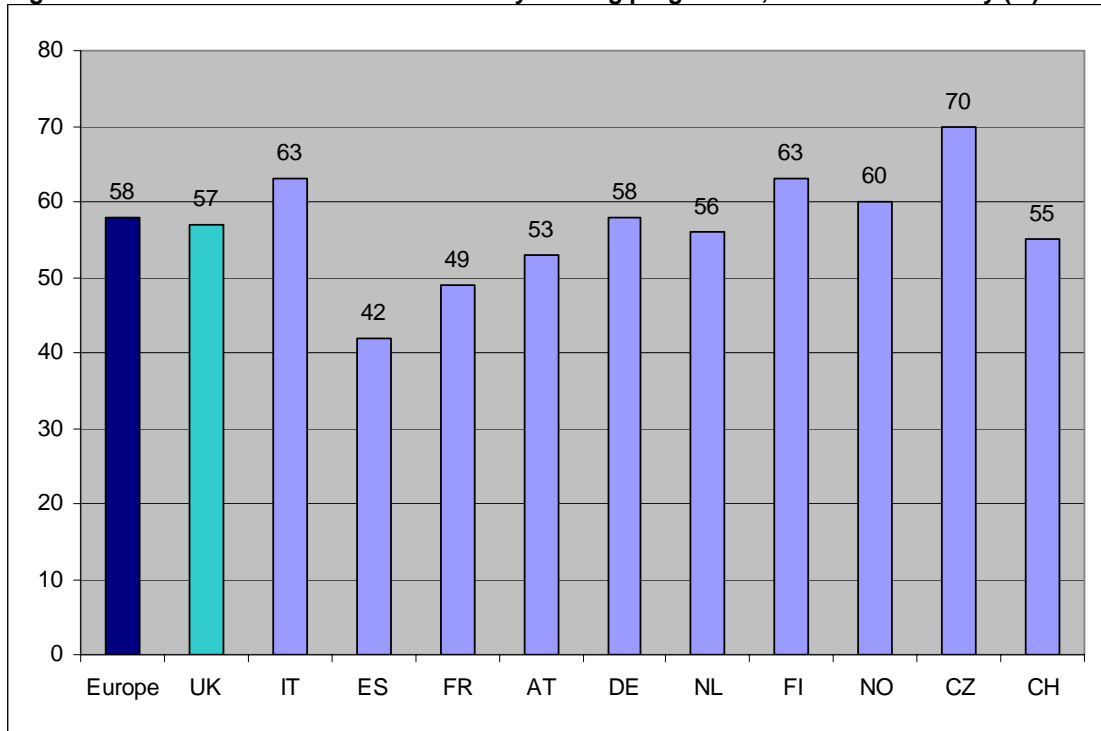
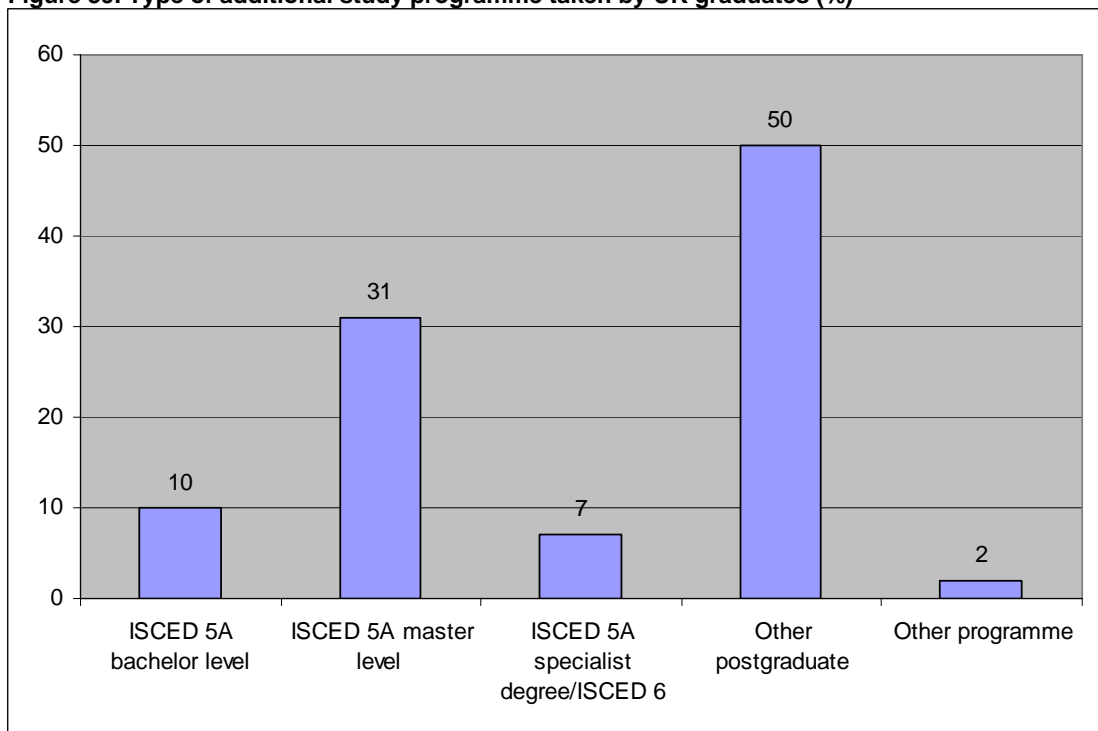


Figure 39. Type of additional study programme taken by UK graduates (%)

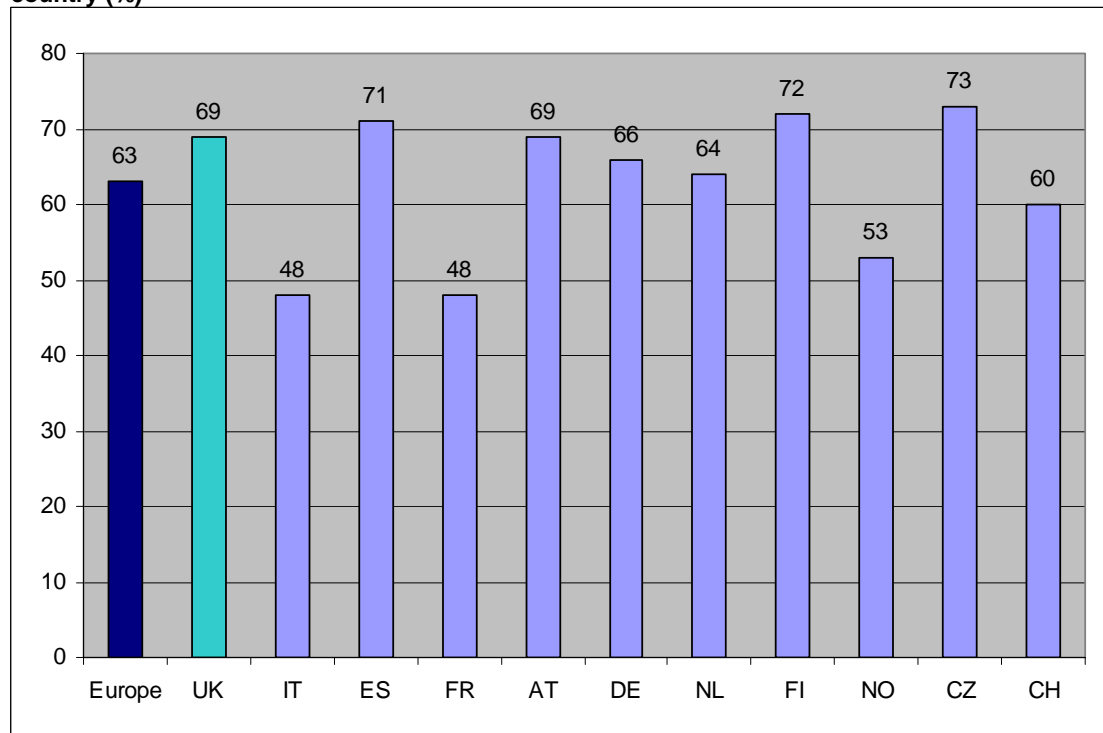


8.5 Work-related training

In the previous 12 months, 69% of UK graduates had undertaken work-related training in their present employment, slightly higher than the European average of 63%

63% (see Figure 40). Italian and French graduates were least likely to participate in work-related training (48%). Similarly, the proportion of Norwegian graduates was also low (53%), but this could be explained by the fact that the majority felt that their study programme had already given them a good basis for doing their job efficiently. The reason mentioned most by UK graduates for doing this recent course was 'to update their knowledge for their present job' (61%), followed by 'to enhance their career' (32%). Other reasons received very little endorsement.

Figure 40. Graduates who had followed work-related training in the past 12 months, overall and country (%)



The longer and more professional work-related focus of much European higher education is further evidenced by the above data. A consequence is that graduates in the UK require more additional education and training (whether from further study within higher education or from employers) after graduation than is typically the case elsewhere in Europe.

Table C26 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' reasons for taking work-related training for all countries in the study.

9 Work organisation

9.1 Summary

UK graduates:

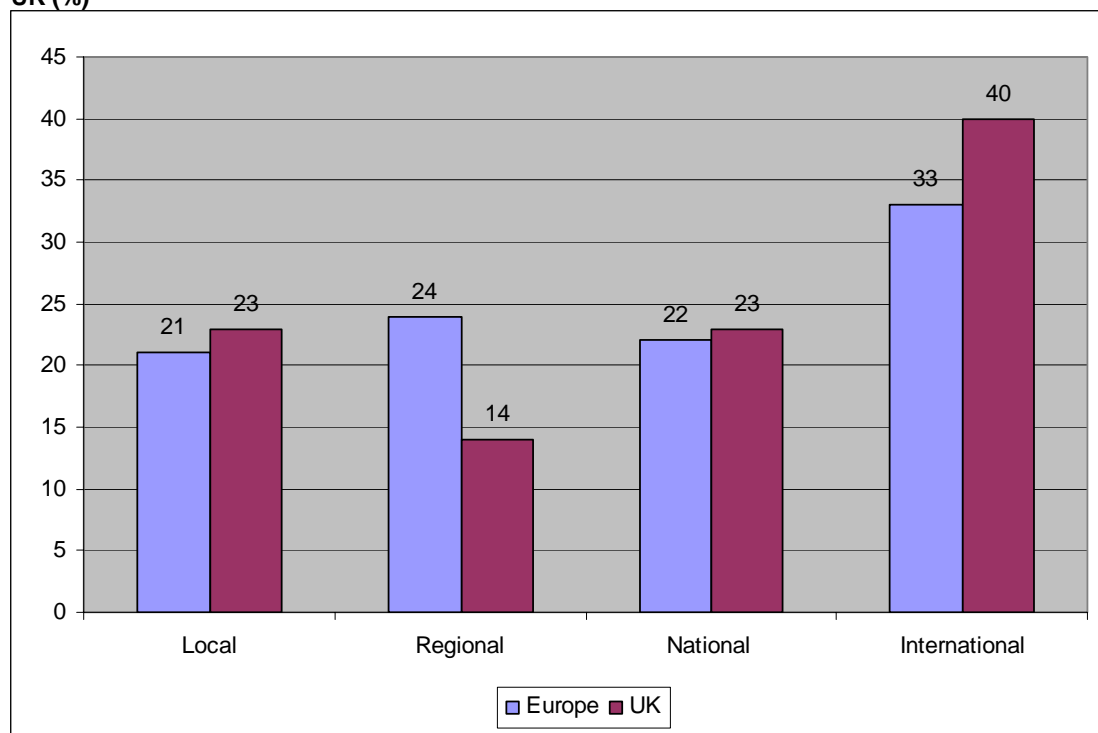
- were likely to be employed in an international organisation, a feature shared by European graduates generally, though to a lesser extent
- were more likely than the average European graduate to encounter changes in their work roles and at their workplace
- worked in organisations they considered innovative, but were less likely than graduates across Europe to regard themselves as contributing to the innovations
- were more likely than graduates in Europe as a whole to be in a supervisory role (and be supervised themselves) in their current employment
- were more likely to take responsibility for their own job than for their organisation.

9.2 Scope of organisation

Five years after graduation, 40% of UK graduates were employed in an ‘international’ organisation – slightly higher than the European average of 33%. Figure 41 indicates that UK graduates were rather less likely to be working for regional organisations than European graduates as a whole, but roughly equivalent proportions were working for local and national employers.

Table C27 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates working in various scopes of organisations in all countries in the study.

Figure 41. Scope of organisation of employed graduates five years after graduation, overall and UK (%)



9.3 Changes in work organisation

UK graduates were more likely than other European graduates to have encountered changes in their workplaces: 53% compared with a European average of 39% had experienced major changes in their own work tasks, and 60% compared with 49% had experienced reorganisation (see Figure 42). In addition, 14% had seen their company merged or taken over (European average also 14%), 15% had experienced large-scale layoffs of personnel (European average 14%), and 9% had seen their organisation relocated to another region (European average 5%). These data would suggest that UK graduates needed to be quite flexible in their attitude towards work in order to cope with changes in their work tasks and the structures of their workplace.

Figure 42. Changes in graduates' work organisation, overall and UK (%)

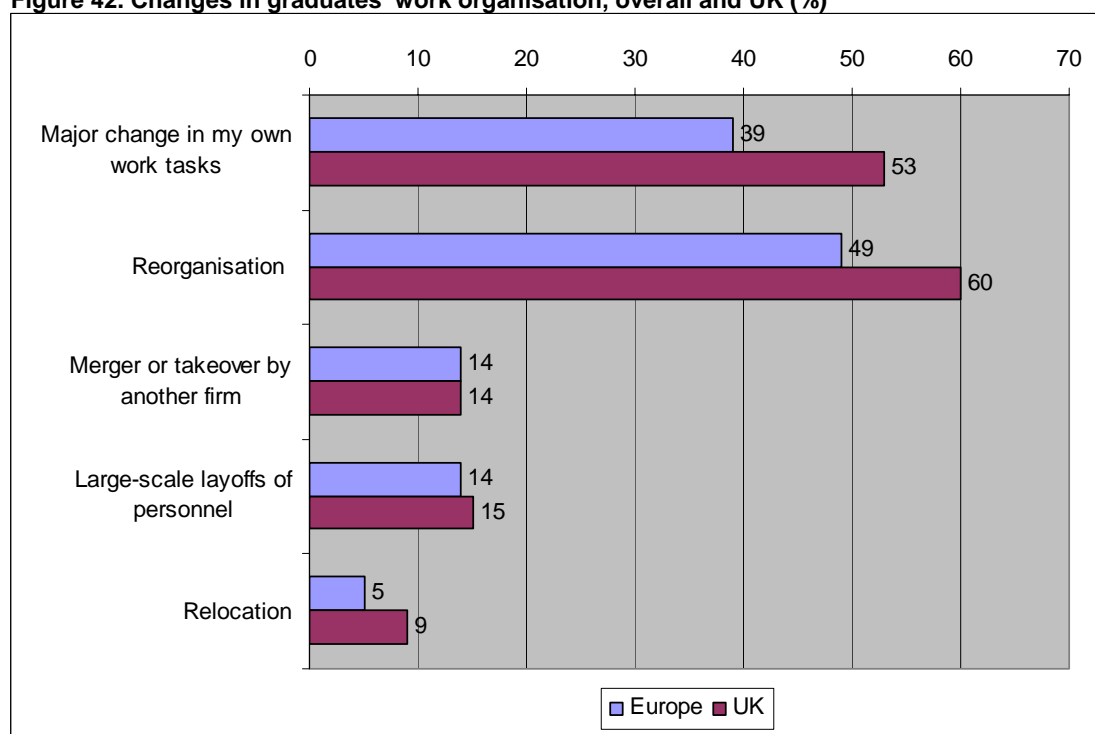


Table C28 in Appendix C provides the figures for changes taken place in graduates' organisation from all countries in the study.

9.4 Innovation

In general, 44% of UK graduates rated their organisation as mainly at the forefront in adopting innovations, new knowledge or new methods (see Figure 43). This was close to the European average, although more than half of Austrian (54%), Finnish (53%) and Swiss (52%) graduates believed the same. However, only one-third (33%) of French graduates thought their organisation was at the forefront in innovation. Furthermore, about half of the UK graduates (55%) considered their organisation/work to be innovative: 49% considered the extent of innovation in respect of technology, tools or instruments as (very) high (European average 40%), 56% said the same with regards to its products or service (European average 47%), and 60% rated their company's extent of innovation related to knowledge or methods as high or very high (European average 51%). But, on average, a slightly lower proportion of UK graduates (47%) considered themselves to be actually playing a role in introducing these innovations: 33% said they played a role in introducing

technology, tools or instruments (European average 35%), 46% in introducing a product or service (European average 47%), and 61% in introducing knowledge or methods, the same as the European average.

Figure 43. Organisation rated by graduates as mainly at the forefront in adopting innovations, new knowledge or new methods, overall and country (%)

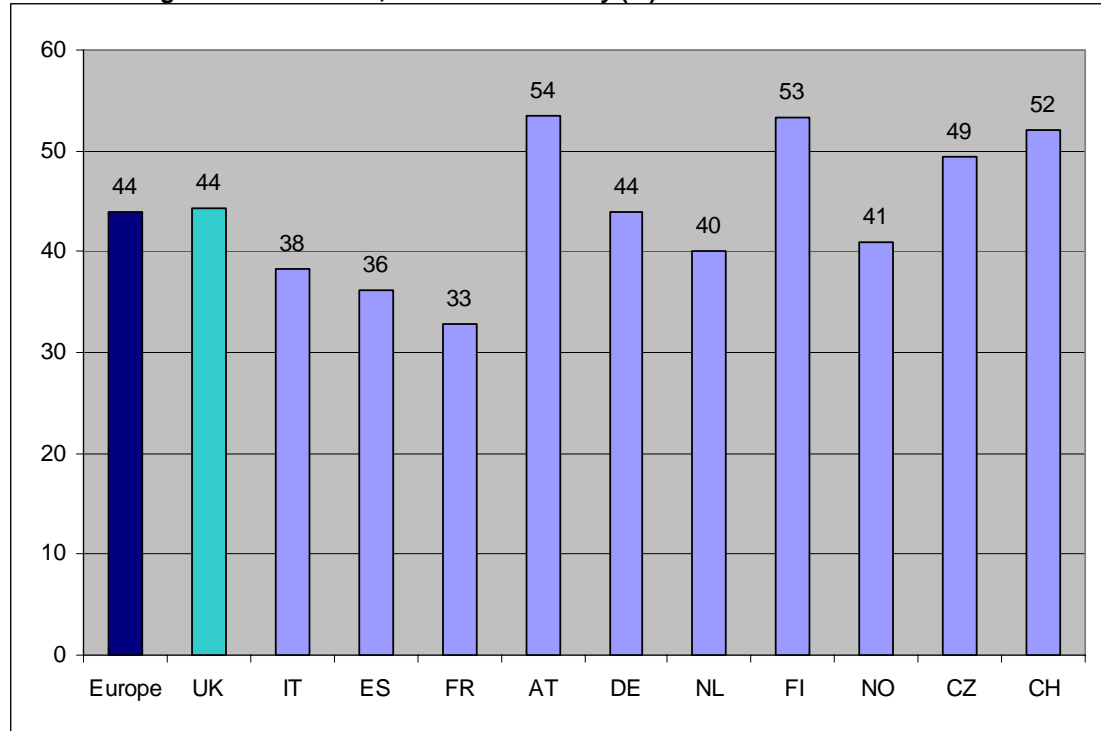


Table C29 in Appendix C provides figures for aspects of innovations at graduates' organisations in all countries in the study.

Table C30 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates in all countries in the study who felt they played a role in introducing innovations.

9.5 Professional role and autonomy

Almost half of the UK graduates stated that they supervised staff, either directly or indirectly, making the UK the country with the most graduates with supervisory tasks (European average 35%), followed by Norway (44%) (see Figure 44). Germany was the country with least graduates in a supervisory position (26%). At the same time, however, 46% of UK graduates stated that their performance was closely monitored by their own supervisors (compared with 37% of European graduates) (see Figure 45).

Figure 44. Graduates in a supervisory position, overall and country (%)

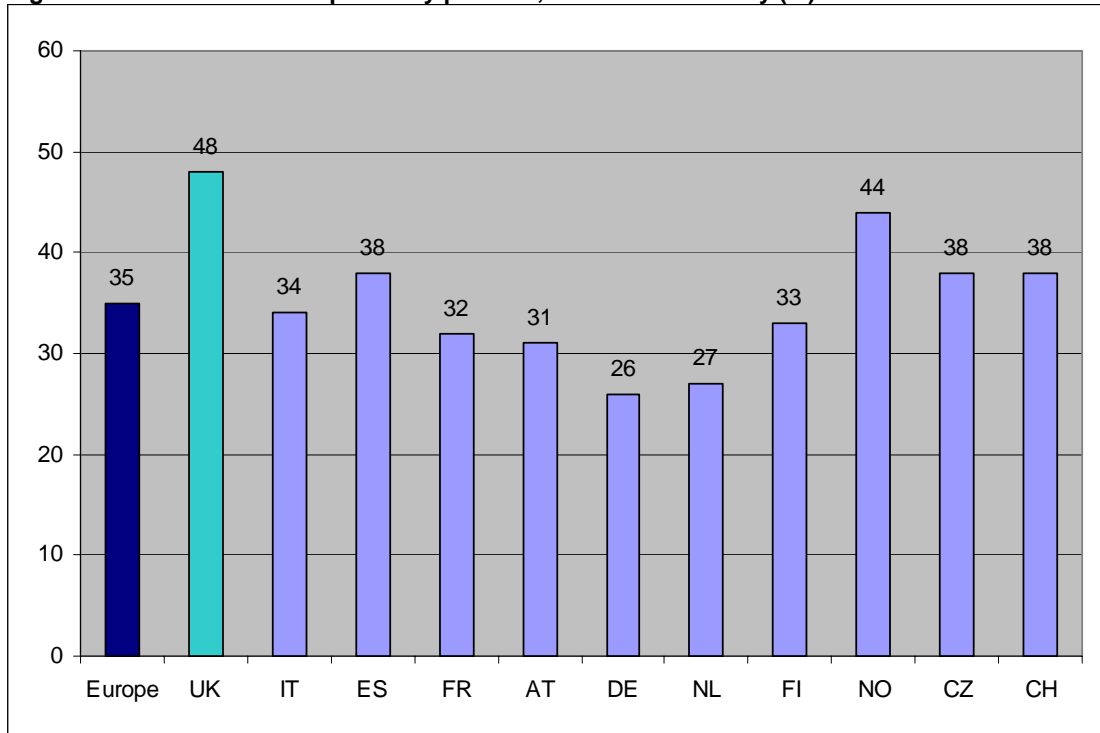
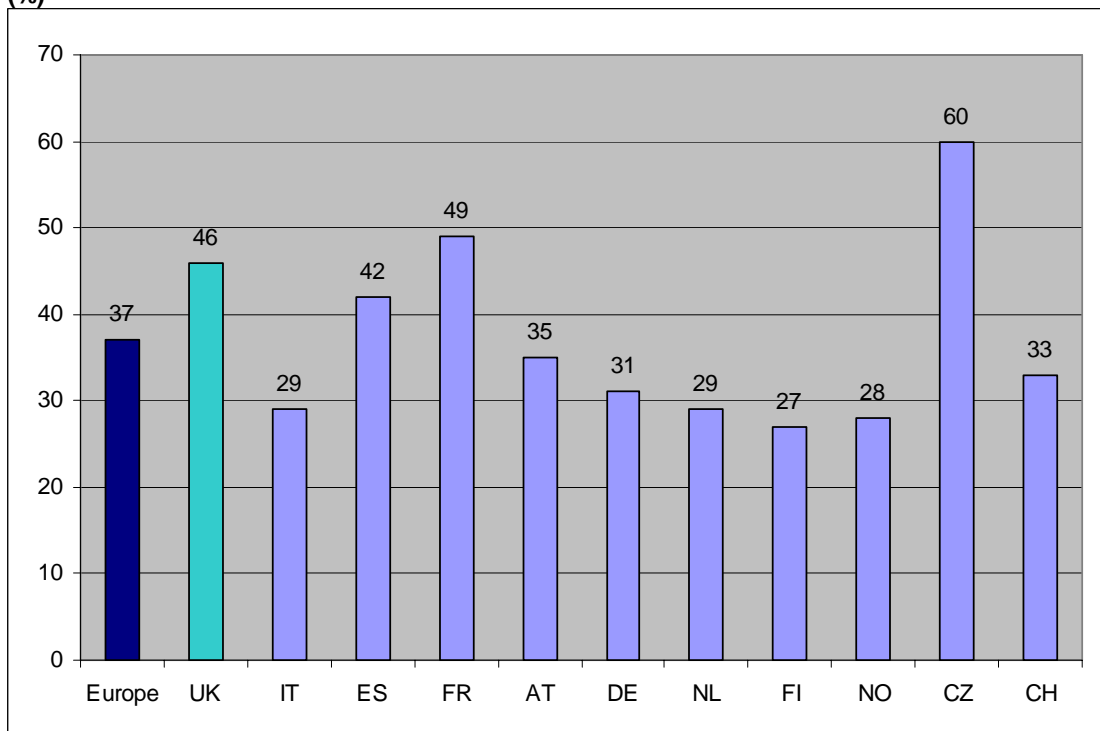


Figure 45. Graduates' performance (very) closely monitored by supervisor, overall and country (%)



UK graduates were much more likely to take responsibility for their own work than for their organisation: only 17% were (very) responsible for setting goals for their organisation to a great or very great extent (European average 25%), and 21% were responsible for deciding work strategies for their organisation (European average 24%). However, 78% set goals for their own work (European average 75%) to a

(very) great extent, and the same proportion decided how to do their own job (European average 82%).

Table C31 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates' responsibilities for their own role and their organisation in all countries in the study.

10 Values

10.1 Summary

UK graduates:

- were similar to other graduates in what they rated as important in a job, with things like the 'opportunity to learn new things' being much more important than 'high earnings' or 'social status'
- attached less importance to a 'good chance to combine work with family tasks'
- were less concerned about 'work autonomy' than were European graduates as a whole
- found that their current work matched their values to a reasonable extent.

10.2 Important job characteristics

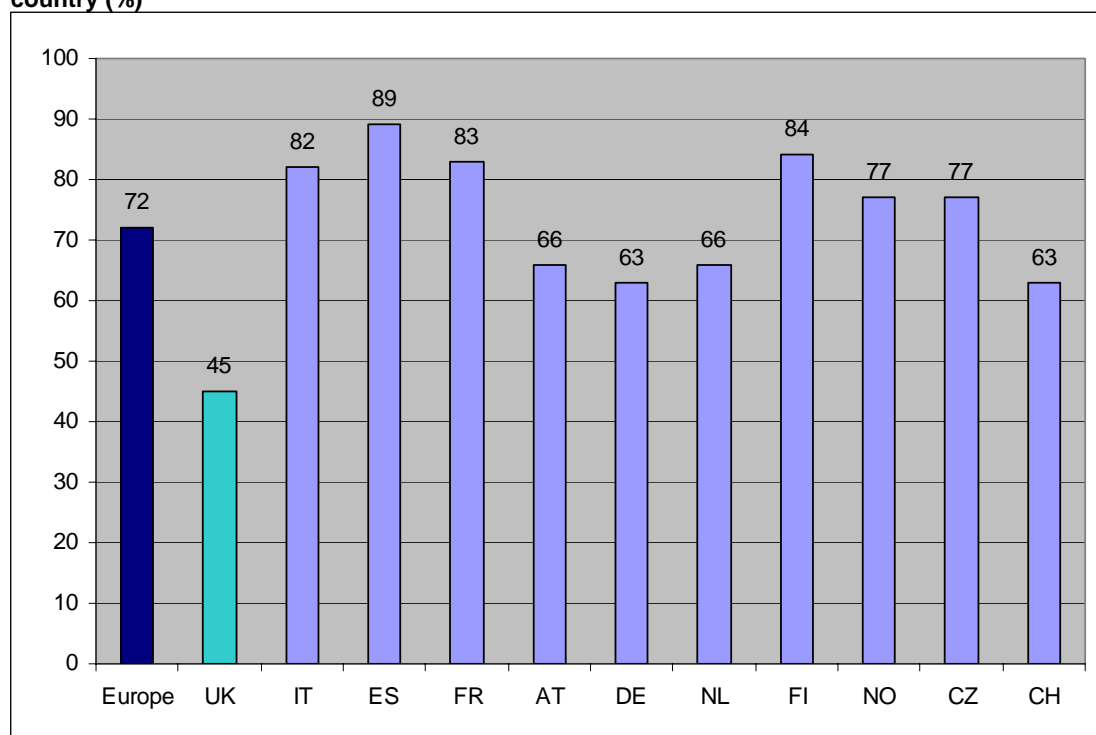
Job characteristics rated as important or very important by UK graduates were similar to the ratings given by European graduates, with the exception of 'good chance to combine work with family tasks' (see Table 6). This feature was (very) important to 72% of European graduates, but only to 45% of UK graduates (see Figure 46). Characteristics such as 'opportunity to learn new things' and 'job security' were featured in the top three among UK and European graduates. 'High earnings' were important to 61% of both UK and European graduates. 'Social status' seemed not very significant, with less than half of the European graduates rating it as (very) important and only one-third of UK graduates doing the same.

Table 6. 'Top 10' important job characteristics to graduates

	UK	Europe
1	Opportunity to learn new things (89%)	Opportunity to learn new things (92%)
2	New challenges (85%)	Work autonomy (85%)
3	Job security (79%)	Job security (80%)
4	Enough time for leisure activities (78%)	New challenges (80%)
5	Good career prospects (78%)	Enough time for leisure activities (76%)
6	Work autonomy (70%)	Good chance to combine work with family tasks (72%)
7	Chance of doing something useful for society (63%)	Good career prospects (66%)
8	High earnings (61%)	Chance of doing something useful for society (63%)
9	Good chance to combine work with family tasks (45%)	High earnings (61%)
10	Social status (34%)	Social status (42%)

Table C32 in Appendix C provides figures for desirable job characteristics for graduates from all the countries in the study.

Figure 46. Good chance to combine work with family tasks as very important, overall and country (%)



It seems that Mediterranean countries (Italy and Spain), France and Finland placed more importance on family than other countries. More than 80% of the graduates from these countries stated that a job that offered a good chance to combine work with family was important or very important. About two-thirds of graduates from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland said the same, but fewer than half of UK graduates placed the same importance on this feature. This might be partly explained by the young age of the average UK graduate, suggesting that the majority would not have a family of their own at this stage.

Table 7. 'Top 10' job characteristics applicable to current work

	UK	Europe
1	Job security (66%)	Work autonomy (76%)
2	Opportunity to learn new things (64%)	Opportunity to learn new things (64%)
3	New challenges (61%)	Job security (62%)
4	Work autonomy (60%)	New challenges (57%)
5	Good career prospects (51%)	Chance of doing something useful for society (49%)
6	Enough time for leisure activities (48%)	Good chance to combine work with family tasks (47%)
7	Chance of doing something useful for society (48%)	Enough time for leisure activities (46%)
8	High earnings (32%)	Social status (38%)
9	Social status (32%)	Good career prospects (35%)
10	Good chance to combine work with family tasks (30%)	High earnings (27%)

When asked about values applicable to their current work (see Table 7), there were broad similarities between the UK and other European countries in how values were rank ordered, with 'job security', 'opportunity to learn new things' and 'new challenges' highly rated in both cases. But the similarity of the rank orders disguises some interesting differences in the absolute proportions endorsing particular values. 'Work autonomy' was rated highly by 76% of European graduates, but by only 60% of

UK graduates. A 'good chance to combine work with family tasks' was less likely to be applicable to graduate jobs in the UK.

It is worth observing that 'high earnings' were not regarded as applicable to current jobs (32% in the UK and 27% in Europe), but the 'chance of doing something useful for society' and 'having enough time for leisure activities' (48% and 46% in the UK and Europe respectively) were more so.

Inevitably, not all graduates found that their current work matched their value orientations. The percentages reported in Table 7 tend to be in the order of 20% lower than in Table 6, representing the difference between the actual and the ideal.

Subjectivity also played an important role in whether graduates rated their job as a good match to their values. For example, Swiss graduates were the highest earners out of all other European graduates, but in comparison to Spanish graduates fewer Swiss graduates than Spanish graduates actually stated that high earnings applied to their jobs. On the other hand, Spanish graduates earned considerably less, but a very high proportion rated that high earnings applied to their jobs. This could be explained in terms of different standards of living, but also different materialistic values as to what was considered high or enough earnings.

Table C33 in Appendix C provides figures for job characteristics applicable to graduates' current employment for all the countries in the study.

11 Higher education in retrospect

11.1 Summary

UK graduates:

- were less likely than graduates from other European countries to think that their study programme provided a good basis for starting work
- like other European graduates, would be likely to have chosen the same programme at the same institution again
- were less likely than graduates in other European countries to describe their study programme as vocationally orientated, but more likely to describe it as academically prestigious.

11.2 Graduates' feelings towards their studies

Compared with their European counterparts, fewer UK graduates felt that their study programme was a good basis for their employment and career (see Figure 47). While 48% of UK graduates felt that their course was a good basis for starting work and further learning on the job, the comparable European figures were 58% for starting work and 59% for further learning. Only 39% rated their studies as a good basis for performing current tasks, compared with the European average of 50%. However, the same proportion of UK and European graduates did say that their study programme was a good basis for their future careers. A slightly higher proportion of UK graduates rated their studies as beneficial for their personal development (72% to 69%). These figures are similar to those reported by the earlier CHEERS study of graduates, suggesting that the productivity pay-off from a degree takes longer to emerge in the UK than it does in Europe as a whole. The shorter duration of study in the UK and the younger age of many graduates need to be borne in mind here.

There were country differences in how graduates felt about their study programme in retrospect: 80% of Norwegian graduates felt that their study programme had been a good basis for starting work, compared to only 48% of UK and Italian graduates; 71% of Finnish and 72% of Norwegian graduates, but only half of UK and German graduates found their studies to have provided a good basis for further learning on the job. While 77% of Austrian, 74% of Norwegian and 73% of German graduates rated their studies as a good basis for their personal development, only 63% of Spanish and 64% of French graduates believed the same. Some 69% of graduates from Norway said that their studies prepared them for performing their current work tasks, but in Spain it was only 42% (UK: 39%). Also, 71% of Norwegian graduates believed that their programme was a good basis for their future career, but only 45% of Italian and 46% of German graduates held the same opinion. There was a significantly lower proportion of those agreeing that their study programme was a good basis for developing entrepreneurial skills: 35% of French and 27% of Spanish graduates, but even fewer UK graduates believed that their studies provided them with entrepreneurial skills (17%; EU average: 18%).

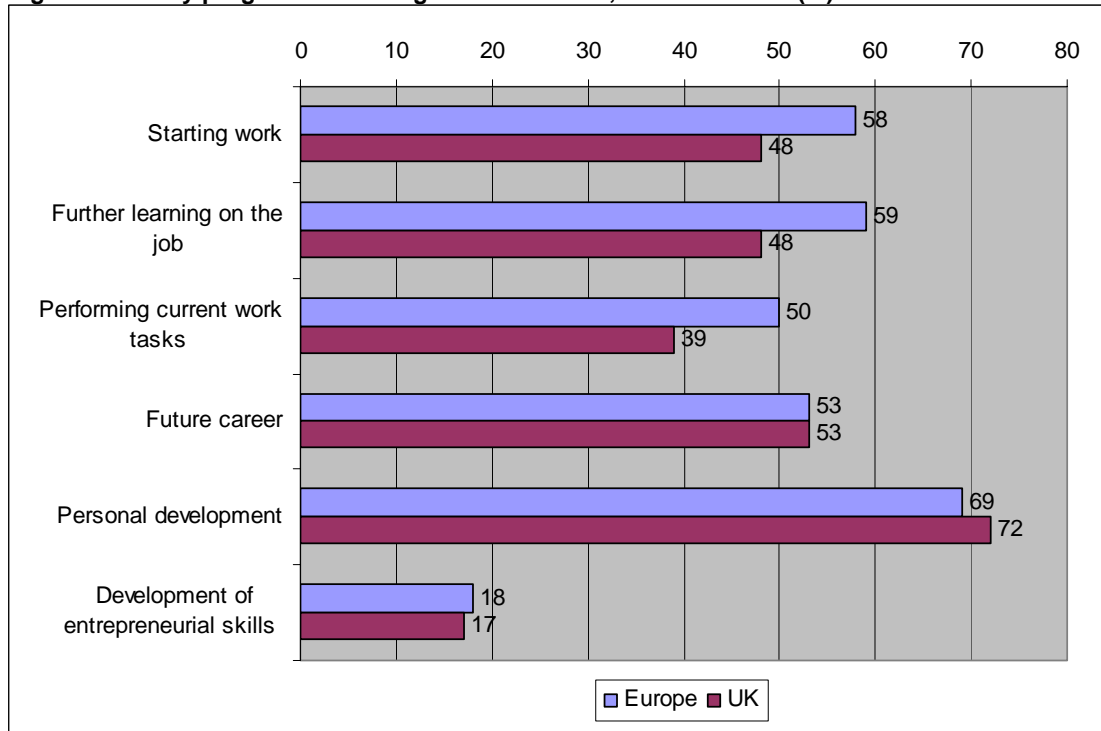
Compared with UK and European graduates, Norwegian graduates seemed to be most likely to rate their studies as valuable for their employment and career overall.

Figures such as these clearly require further analysis and interpretation. A central question is whether they reflect differences in the economies of the respective countries or in their higher education systems. On the former, the UK is generally seen as having developed a strong service sector to its economy, compared with other European countries. On the latter, we have referred already to the generally 'looser fit' between higher education and employment in the UK as well as the

generally shorter courses, lower prevalence of work placements and less vocational orientations of courses.

Table C34 in Appendix C provides figures for graduates from all countries in the study who rated their study programme as a good basis for different aspects of employment.

Figure 47. Study programme was a good basis for... , overall and UK (%)



11.3 Choice of courses and institutions

Similar to the earlier CHEERS study, almost two-thirds of European graduates (and UK graduates) would, in retrospect, have chosen the same study programme at the same institution (see Figure 48). About 12% in Europe and 17% in the UK would have chosen the same institution but not the same programme. About 8% of European graduates would have chosen the same course but at a different institution, similar to the UK's proportion (7%). Only 1% of UK and 2% of European graduates would have chosen not to study at all, compared with 3% of their UK and 4% of their European counterparts in the previous study. This suggests that the majority of graduates were satisfied with their choice of study and institution.

Figure 48. Would you choose the same study programme at the same higher education institution again, overall and UK? (%)

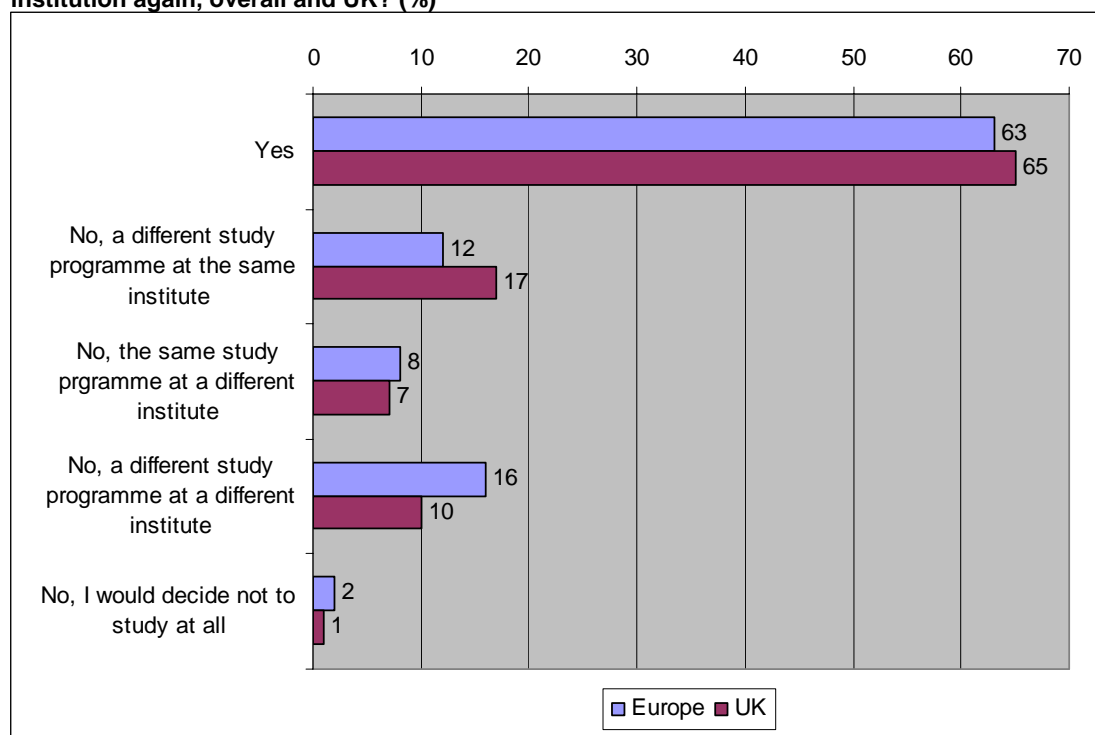
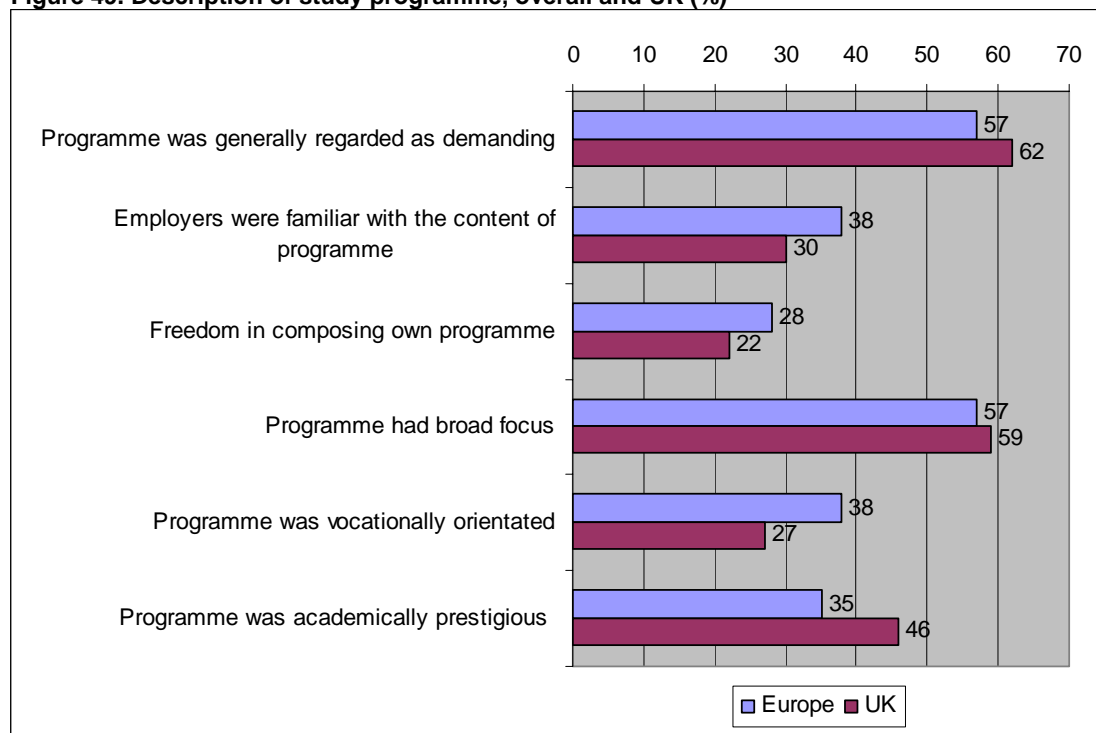


Table C35 in Appendix C provides figures on whether graduates from all countries in the study would choose the same study programme again.

11.4 Description of study programme

UK graduates' descriptions of their study programmes were similar to the European average, the exceptions being the description that their programme was vocationally orientated (27% to 38%) and that their programme was academically prestigious (46% to 35%) (see Figure 49). However, there was much variation among countries: 74% of Italian graduates described their programme as demanding, but only 32% of Dutch graduates said the same (European average: 57%). Some 63% of Norwegian graduates said that employers were familiar with the content of their programme (UK: 30%, EU: 38%). This might help to explain why Norwegian students tended to feel that their study programme was beneficial for their career, as mentioned above. Finnish students tended to have most freedom in composing their own programme (41%) and Czech and French students the least (16% and 17% respectively), with the European average of 28% and a UK figure of 22%.

Figure 49. Description of study programme, overall and UK (%)



However, the European average figures disguise some rather large national differences. Graduates from Norway and Finland were most likely to say that their programme had a vocational orientation (60%), followed by the Czech Republic (53%). A significantly lower proportion of French and Spanish (24%) and Austrian graduates (25%) said the same about their programme. Half of the Italian graduates believed that their study programme was academically prestigious, compared with 19% of French and 21% of Dutch graduates. But hardly any country differences could be found in describing the programme as having a broad focus: about the same proportion of graduates in all countries agreed (European average: 57%).

Table C36 in Appendix C provides figures for the description of study programmes by graduates in all countries in the study.

11.5 Teaching and learning

UK students seem to have more lectures and do more written assignments than students in other European countries (see Figure 50). The data show that a higher proportion of UK than European graduates rated lectures, participation in research projects, learning facts and practical knowledge, project or problem-based learning and written assignments as (very) highly emphasised in their degree course. On the other hand, group assignments, internships and work placements, learning theories and paradigms, teacher as the main source of information and multiple choice exams were more prominent in European students' programmes.

Figure 50. Modes of teaching and learning, overall and UK (%)

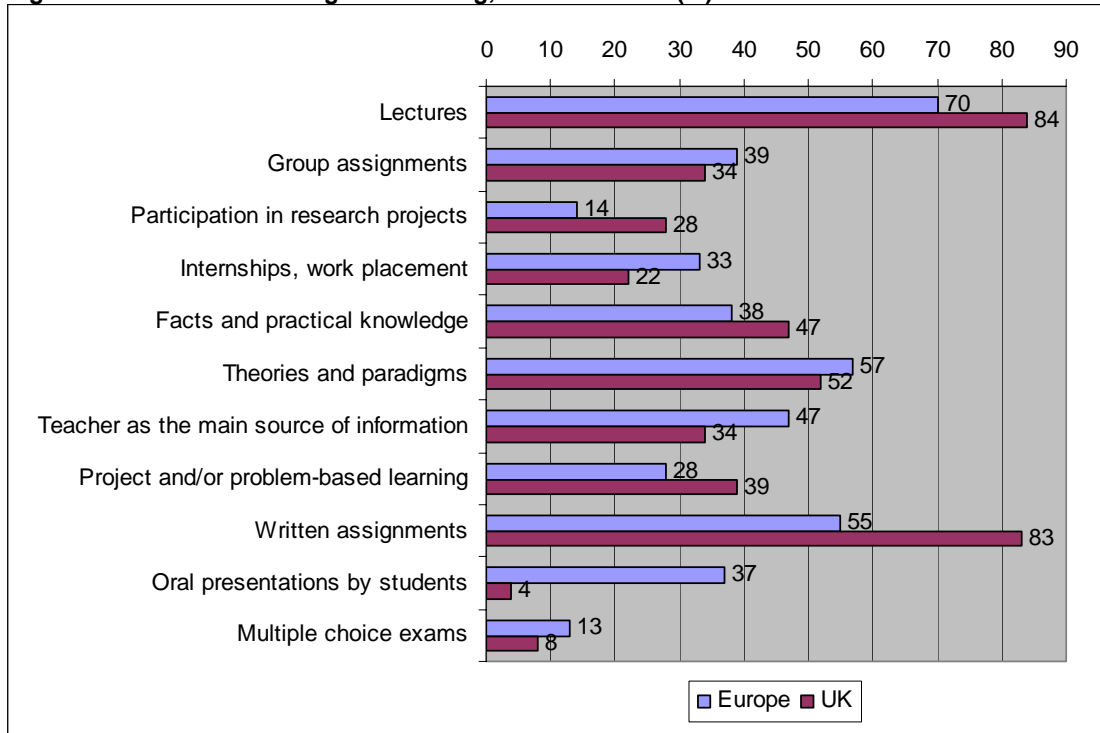


Table C37 in Appendix C provides figures for modes of teaching emphasised in the study programmes of graduates in all countries in the study.

Report no 6 in this series (Graduates' Retrospective views of HE) provides a more detailed discussion of graduates' retrospective views on their higher education.

12 Conclusion

While certain aspects of this report might appear to some readers as somewhat critical of UK higher education's effectiveness in meeting labour market needs, from certain perspectives a more positive conclusion might be reached. For the 'flexible professional in the knowledge society', qualities such as the 'ability to work under pressure' or 'to use time efficiently' might indeed be of greater long-term value than subject-based knowledge and skills. A looser link between one's studies and one's subsequent employment may be increasingly desirable. And the division of labour between higher education institutions and employer organisations in equipping (and re-equipping) the workforce with necessary knowledge and skills may indeed be changing as a result of the changing pace and location of knowledge production.

At the same time, the evidence of some clear differences in approach and tradition between the UK and most of our European partners (and competitors) might give some pause for thought, especially in an era of increasing global and regional harmonisation. While, theoretically, the Bologna process should make European higher education more like higher education in the UK, it is by no means clear that employers and higher education institutions will interpret the Bologna reforms in ways that will wholeheartedly endorse the UK 'model'.

This report contains much new data about the experiences of recent graduates in different European countries. In the main, this has been presented without comment or interpretation. In these final paragraphs, however, we attempt to offer a somewhat larger perspective on what these data may be telling us about the part played by higher education within the UK's version of the 'knowledge society'.

We suggest that, in comparison with other European countries, UK higher education is: a) still more about selection than about socialisation/training, and b) still more about a broad liberal education than about preparation for a particular job. These reflect distinctive traditions within UK higher education as well as distinctive features of UK society. Of course, both may be changing.

12.1 'Getting a job': selection and training functions

Entry to UK universities is more competitive than in most other countries. Secondary school grades are essential determinants of university admission (only Finland gives them greater importance). And entry is competitive because of the very strong reputational hierarchy of institutions. It matters more where you study than what you study. Thus, 'getting into the right place' may be more important in the UK than anything that you subsequently learn while you are there. (For example, in Chapter 11 we noted that UK graduates, in contrast to their European peers, were more likely to describe their courses as 'academically prestigious' and less likely to describe them as 'vocationally relevant'.)

This might be just as well because there is reason to believe that English students learn rather less than their European counterparts. They certainly receive less higher education. Not only are study programmes shorter – a mean of 39 months compared with a European mean of 60 – but they are less intense: UK students study fewer hours per week than students in any of the other countries. While this is not, of course, conclusive evidence that they learn less than their European counterparts, there is some suggestion that they do not 'need' to learn as much because UK employer expectations are different.

A related point concerns the level of qualification gained, with UK graduates 'less qualified' than their continental counterparts. (In a world of 'Bologna' and

harmonisation of qualifications, is this a possible 'time bomb' waiting to explode for the holders of UK credentials?)

The greater likelihood of UK graduates needing an initial training period after having entered a job and the longer duration of such training periods may suggest that, in the UK, higher education does less of the 'training job' than in other countries and that, in consequence, employers shoulder a greater proportion of the responsibility for training.

UK graduates seem to view the role of higher education somewhat differently from their European counterparts, with great emphasis placed on personal development but much less on their studies as a useful foundation when starting out in the world of work. Do they come to this view at and after graduation or are they fully aware of the (non-) implications of higher education on their future career when enrolling? Yet overall, satisfaction seems high with only 1% of UK graduates saying that they would actually decide to not study at all given the choice again. It remains to be seen whether tuition fees and growing student debt produces different attitudes among future generations of graduates.

The general pattern is reinforced by other data. Compared with their European counterparts, UK graduates are rather less likely to have followed vocational courses and a higher proportion of them will have taken courses in the arts and humanities. They are less likely to have undertaken work placements as part of their degree courses.

Looking at the jobs that graduates enter, we find that jobs are more likely to be 'generalist' in the sense that no particular field of study is required – 35% of UK graduates in such jobs compared with 13% in the sample overall. (The next highest proportion was 20% for Spanish graduates.) A similar picture is provided by the finding that while 69% of UK graduates believed that their own or a related field of study was 'most appropriate' to their current work, the comparable figure for other European students was 85%.

It is therefore perhaps not surprising to find that UK graduates, compared with other European graduates, are less likely to value their higher education courses for 'mastery of your own field or discipline' but for more generalist skills such as 'ability to perform well under pressure', or 'ability to use time efficiently'. Nor perhaps is it surprising to find that UK graduates are significantly less likely to regard their higher education courses as giving them a good basis for 'starting work' or, for that matter, for 'performing your current work tasks'.

The general pattern of these findings might appear surprising in view of the enormous amount of attention which has been devoted to improving the 'employability' of graduates in the UK, but it is less so when set within the different traditions and functions of higher education in the UK compared with the rest of Europe. And we know, from many other sources, how important the selection function of higher education is regarded in the UK. Employers frequently recruit graduates on the basis of their A level grades. Institutional reputation rests far more on the selectivity of its entry than on any reliable knowledge about what is learned within its walls. Getting into the right university might be rather more important than what you learn while you are there!

12.2 Doing a job: workplace and other experiences

Looking at some of the other data, we find some interesting insights into the expectations of employers. Thus, whatever the actual levels of knowledge and skills possessed by UK graduates, they seem to be enough to meet the expectations of employers. Indeed, there is quite a bit of evidence to suggest that the graduates felt

that they were overqualified for their current work. UK graduates were more likely than other graduates to believe that they were not utilising their knowledge and skills in their first job, and they were less likely than others to believe that their work demanded 'more knowledge and skills than one could offer'. In other words, the data do not suggest that employers' expectations are not being met but rather the opposite. Indeed, we can note that UK graduates are far more likely to believe that a much lower level of education (below tertiary) would be most appropriate for their first work – 38% of the UK sample compared with 20% overall.

Thus, we find the interesting paradox that, although they are actually 'underqualified' in comparison to their continental counterparts (in terms of qualifications and time spent in higher education), UK graduates are more likely to feel that they are 'overqualified' for the jobs they get.

Some other ways in which UK graduates appear to differ are suggested by these preliminary data:

- Their workplaces appear to be undergoing more reorganisation and their own work tasks undergoing more change than is typical in other countries.
- The scope of the operations of their employers is more likely to be international.
- And they are more likely to feel that their work performance is indeed being closely monitored by their superiors.
- Consequently, they are less likely than graduates in most other countries to believe that they have a lot of autonomy in their work situations.
- UK graduates attach far less importance to achieving a work/life balance than do other graduates – 45% attaching high importance to this compared with 73% for the rest of the sample, the next lowest being Germany and the Czech Republic, both with 63%.
- Of much greater concern to UK graduates are 'good career prospects' – important to 78% compared with 64% for the sample overall.

One of the limitations of the above conclusions – and of this report as a whole – is that it concerns national and European averages. As all higher education systems, and the students who populate them, become increasingly diverse it may become increasingly important to disaggregate. Other reports in this series attempt to do so in respect of certain variables and one of the authors of this present report attempted to do so in a previous study.⁵ But such analysis is complex and inevitably raises questions which will require new research using different methods. Different aspects of higher education's diversity (of student characteristics, of what they study, of the institutions in which they study it) interact with each other and with aspects of social and economic diversity, not just concerning employment but concerning culture, values, aspirations and lifestyles. These are matters that can only be hinted at in these data and reports. But they are important.

⁵ Brennan, J. and Shah, T. (2003) *Access to What? Converting educational opportunity into employment opportunity* London: The Open University

Appendix A: Background to the study

This report is based on the results of a major international study of graduate employment. The study, *The Flexible Professional in the Knowledge Society – new demands on higher education in Europe (REFLEX)*, was funded by the European Commission as part of its 6th Framework programme, Priority 7 ‘Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge Based Society’ (and by several national funds). The study was carried out collaboratively by research groups in 13 European countries (Austria, Belgium-Flanders, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) and Japan. It was coordinated by the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market from Maastricht University in the Netherlands. The UK part of the study was undertaken by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (CHERI) at the Open University.

The study had three strands:

- a country study highlighting the main structural and institutional factors that shape the relationship between higher education and work
- a qualitative study on graduate competencies in the knowledge society
- a survey of higher education graduates five years after graduation.

The results of the survey which are presented in this report cover graduates from 11 of the countries involved in the study, viz Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. The graduates were selected from the 1999/2000 graduating cohort and were contacted by means of a mailed questionnaire (with the option of completing a web-based questionnaire) in the spring of 2005. Overall, 33,832 questionnaires were returned from these 11 countries, including 1,578 from UK graduates. For the UK sample this represented a response rate of 23%. The overall average response rate was 30%, varying from 20% in Spain to 45% in Norway (see Appendix B for details of case numbers for each country). The samples were selected to be representative of the various national higher education populations of students enrolled on ‘first degree’ or equivalent programmes considered to be the main ‘exit’ qualification with which graduates left higher education in 2000 and entered the labour market in that country. In the case of the UK, this was taken to be a bachelors degree, but in very many other countries the 1999/2000 graduating sample comprised wholly (or mainly) those with a masters degree. The UK sample also included a (very) small number of graduates from taught masters programmes who had previously completed a first degree in the same broad subject area, had enrolled on a taught masters programme (at the same institution) without loss of time and graduated from that programme in 1999/2000.

Owing to data protection issues in the UK it is generally not possible to contact graduates directly. Hence, broad population data for graduates in the year 1999/2000 was provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The sample itself was drawn by either HESA or the institutions themselves, and was broadly representative of the first degree graduating population.

Key sampling variables were field of study and type of institution. The UK sample was drawn from 43 higher education institutions covering a range of types of institution and locations. The achieved sample (i.e. those responding to the survey) was also broadly representative of the graduating population, though females were slightly over-represented, as table A shows.

Table A. Comparison of graduating population, initial sample and achieved sample

	Population, %	Initial sample, %	Achieved sample, %
Full-time	90	89	88
Female	55	53	61
Non-white	12	12	8
23 and under	70	69	64
24-27	12	12	14
28 and over	19	19	23

The extensive questionnaire comprised 11 sections as follows:

- A Study programme completed in 1999/2000
- B Other educational and related experiences
- C Transition from study to work
- D First job after graduation
- E Employment history and current situation
- F Current work
- G Work organisation
- H Competencies
- I Evaluation of study programme
- J Values and orientations
- K Socio-biographic data

A copy of the UK questionnaire is available for download from the HEFCE website.

This study followed on from an earlier study, Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe (CHEERS) also funded by the European Commission (see, for example, Brennan et al., 2001; Schomburg and Teichler, 2006; Teichler (ed) 2007).⁶

As in the previous study, the data collected have gone well beyond the topics usually covered by national surveys of this kind. For example, they included questions about the higher education experience and attitudes, values and competencies in relation both to employment and to other areas of life. Extensive and complex data checking and cleaning processes have been time-consuming. However, given that the research teams involved were already highly experienced and most had been involved in the earlier CHEERS study, the project was able to build on previous work. Once again, this large-scale European study of graduate employment used a common cross-national research methodology.

This report is one of six reports commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The full set of reports comprises:

- 1 The employment of UK graduates: comparisons with Europe
- 2 The context of higher education and employment: comparisons between different European countries
- 3 Subject differences in graduate employment across Europe
- 4 Competencies possessed and required by European graduates
- 5 Age differences in graduate employment across Europe
- 6 Graduates' retrospective views of higher education.

⁶ Brennan, J., Johnston, B., Little, B., Shah, T. and Woodley, A. (2001) *The employment of UK graduates: comparisons with Europe and Japan* London: The Open University; Schomburg, H. and Teichler, U. (2006) *Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe* Dordrecht: Springer; Teichler, U. (ed.) (2007) *Careers of University Graduates* Dordrecht: Springer

Appendix B: Case numbers of respondents for each country

United Kingdom	1,578
Italy	3,139
Spain	3,916
France	1,700
Austria	1,821
Germany	1,700
The Netherlands	3,424
Finland	2,676
Norway	2,201
Czech Republic	6,794
Switzerland	4,882
Total (Europe)	33,832

Appendix C: Tables

Country codes used in the tables are as follows:

UK United Kingdom

IT Italy

ES Spain

FR France

AT Austria

DE Germany

NL The Netherlands

FI Finland

NO Norway

CZ Czech Republic

CH Switzerland

The Europe data cover all countries listed above.

Chapter 2

Table C1. Age on entry (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
17-20	59	66	82	82	50	69	39	69	50	32	74	43
21-24	27	12	13	14	42	20	44	20	35	43	18	38
25 or over	14	22	5	4	8	12	18	11	15	25	8	20
Count (n)	20578	1942	1801	1863	1818	1784	1901	1837	1873	1899	1928	1932

Table C2. Age at graduation (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
20-24	40	72	15	63	75	16	11	55	30	28	60	17
25-29	44	7	68	32	18	60	64	35	51	50	33	62
30 or over	16	21	17	5	7	24	25	10	19	22	7	21
Count (n)	20578	1942	1801	1863	1818	1784	1901	1837	1873	1899	1928	1932

Table C3. Gender of graduates (%; unweighted data)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Male	43	39	44	35	33	45	50	38	35	37	42	59
Female	58	61	57	65	67	55	50	62	65	63	58	41
Count (n)	32589	1556	3004	3760	1619	1649	1645	3192	2531	2116	6774	4752

Question K1: Gender

Table C4. Field of study (%; unweighted data)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Education	11	3	3	12	5	13	7	13	7	20	19	3
Humanities and Arts	11	28	14	9	16	14	15	8	13	7	5	12
Social Sciences, Business and Law	31	32	41	33	33	39	25	34	26	19	27	33
Science, Mathematics and Computing	11	17	11	14	23	10	11	7	9	8	5	13
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	17	7	18	15	10	15	24	12	20	11	23	20
Agriculture and Veterinary	3	2	2	4	1	3	3	2	3	2	4	2
Health and Welfare	15	8	11	12	8	4	13	21	19	31	12	16
Services	2	3	1	1	4	2	2	4	3	4	3	0
Count (n)	33,541	1,566	3,110	3,877	1,672	1,821	1,692	3,425	2,676	2,201	6,619	4,882

Question A1: What subject did you study?

Table C5. Type of qualification obtained in 1999/2000 (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
ISCED 5A master level programme	67	7	92	60	69	100	100	33	56	37	83	100
ISCED 5A bachelor level programme	33	93	8	40	32	0	0	67	44	64	17	0

Question A2: What was the type of qualification?

Table C6. Parental education background of graduates (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Neither parents with HE background	53	56	71	65	42	62	31	45	64	44	60	47
One parent with HE background	23	22	13	16	21	17	34	26	15	25	23	35
Both parents with HE background	17	18	9	12	24	10	29	17	12	24	15	15
Not applicable	7	4	7	7	12	11	6	12	8	7	1	3
Count (n)	22,001	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,001	2,000

Question K11: What is the highest level of education attained by your parents and, if applicable, your partner?

Chapter 3

Table C7. Unemployed graduates by gender (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Male	4	5	4	5	9	4	5	4	3	2	2	4
Female	6	3	10	11	8	5	5	4	5	3	3	5
Count (n)	19,306	1,763	1,730	1,800	1,715	1,624	1,818	1,790	1,680	1,827	1,753	1,806

Question E7: Are you currently in paid employment?

Table C8. Current type of contract held by graduates (% of graduates in (self-)employment)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Unlimited term	78	83	70	60	78	80	77	79	74	86	86	80
Fixed-term or temporary	21	16	28	35	21	19	23	20	23	13	13	20
Other	2	2	1	5	1	0	0	1	3	1	2	0
Count (n)	16,855	1,570	1,287	1,525	1,465	1,385	1,527	1,649	1,535	1,681	1,531	1,700

Question F5: What is your current type of contract?

Table C9. Contract hours in main employment (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Part-time	20	13	20	20	26	21	21	33	16	14	13	26
Full-time (35 hours+)	80	87	80	80	74	79	79	67	84	86	87	74
Count (n)	18,644	1,723	1,651	1,690	1,565	1,661	1,761	1,795	1,639	1,810	1,683	1,666

Question F6: What are your average working hours – regular/contract hours in main employment (per week)?

Table C10. How did you find your first job? (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Through advertisement in newspaper	15	24	7	11	6	17	13	13	14	31	10	21
Through public employment agency	4	6	2	8	16	1	3	1	5	3	3	1
Through private employment agency	4	12	3	4	3	1	1	13	2	3	3	5
Through internet	6	6	4	4	7	5	8	5	8	7	9	5
Contacted employer on own initiative	22	17	20	15	21	26	23	14	25	20	34	24
Approached by employer	11	6	11	8	6	13	11	11	13	10	13	15
Through work placement during higher education	9	5	5	7	17	8	9	18	13	7	5	8
Through family, friends or acquaintances	13	11	23	26	11	14	9	11	9	6	15	10
Through help of higher education institution	5	6	9	5	7	6	4	5	4	2	3	6
Set up my own business	2	1	5	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	3	1
Other	7	6	10	9	2	4	17	7	6	8	2	5
Through previous work	1	1	0	1	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total	20,001	1,829	1,711	1,811	1,729	1,848	1,822	1,917	1,873	1,920	1,602	1,939

Question C5: How did you find this work?

Chapter 4

Table C11. 'Top five' employment sectors in first job

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
1	Education (21%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (21%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (31%)	Education (16%)	Education (26%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (27%)	Education (26%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (23%)	Education (23%)	Health and social work (38%)	Education (28%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (25%)
2	Real estate, renting and business activities (20%)	Education (18%)	Manufacturing (14%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (12%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (15%)	Education (22%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (22%)	Health and social work (22%)	Health and social work (18%)	Education (20%)	Health and social work (19%)	Education (18%)
3	Health and social work (17%)	Health and social work (14%)	Education (13%)	Health and social work (10%)	Health and social work (13%)	Manufacturing (13%)	Health and social work (14%)	Education (17%)	Manufacturing (17%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (13%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (13%)	Health and social work (17%)
4	Manufacturing (12%)	Manufacturing (10%)	Health and social work (13%)	Other community, social and personal service (10%)	Manufacturing (12%)	Health and social work (12%)	Manufacturing (12%)	Manufacturing (9%)	Real estate, renting and business activities (15%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (10%)	Manufacturing (13%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (9%)
5	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (7%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (7%)	Financial intermediation (7%)	Manufacturing (9%)	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (7%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (7%)	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (8%)	Transport, storage and communications (5%)	Manufacturing (6%)	Construction (6%)	Manufacturing (9%)

Table C12. Graduates who said that their social network would be (very) useful if they... (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
needed information on job opportunities	52	54	50	41	33	58	50	62	51	54	63	51
needed helping in directly obtaining work	38	37	28	28	19	43	35	44	41	47	49	37
needed help in setting up own business	31	26	36	16	9	35	33	43	34	42	38	28

Question E6: How useful do you consider your social network (friends, relatives, colleagues, former teachers etc.) would be if you..? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not very useful to 5=very useful.) Multiple replies.

Chapter 5

Table C13. Size of organisation of graduates' current work (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
1-9	13	7	26	16	11	16	15	8	9	9	12	13
10-49	18	15	17	18	9	18	16	14	15	16	36	18
50-99	9	9	9	10	6	9	9	7	9	8	12	10
100-249	11	9	10	9	9	9	9	14	12	12	16	11
250-999	15	14	11	12	12	13	12	19	20	16	24	14
1,000 or more	34	46	27	36	53	35	39	39	36	39	0	34
Count (n)	17,751	1,677	1,460	1,601	1,419	1,562	1,375	1,716	1,606	1,688	1,705	1,742

Question G14: How many people work in your organisation?

Table C14. Job satisfaction in current work (%; responses 1 and 2, 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
(Very) dissatisfied	11	14	14	14	14	10	12	12	11	7	7	10
-												
(Very) satisfied	68	65	58	63	68	74	70	68	65	73	72	71
Count (n)	19,153	1,749	1,698	1,715	1,651	1,658	1,772	1,794	1,691	1,838	1,771	1,816

Question F13: How satisfied are you with your current work? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=very dissatisfied to 5=very satisfied.)

Chapter 6

Table C15. Graduates' competencies possessed to a (very) high level (%; responses 5, 6, 7)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Mastery of your own field or discipline	83	78	77	77	75	93	93	84	77	85	88	87
Knowledge of other fields or disciplines	50	45	46	46	43	67	63	52	35	40	57	58
Analytical thinking	78	78	81	69	79	88	86	81	68	63	82	87
Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge	88	86	85	89	83	93	92	88	85	82	92	89
Ability to negotiate effectively	58	64	61	54	38	66	65	50	54	55	69	58
Ability to perform well under pressure	82	89	74	78	70	91	91	84	80	84	74	86
Alertness to new opportunities	68	67	70	59	47	83	80	74	78	67	49	73
Ability to coordinate activities	83	87	78	81	72	92	90	84	81	80	85	84
Ability to use time efficiently	80	84	80	81	76	87	83	77	77	76	82	79
Ability to work productively with others	87	92	84	87	78	94	93	90	85	83	86	88
Ability to mobilise the capacities of others	66	69	69	63	57	77	75	71	59	63	57	66
Ability to make your meaning clear to others	81	85	77	83	75	85	85	83	77	86	80	77
Ability to assert your authority	58	61	60	62	52	59	68	56	46	59	61	54
Ability to use computers and the internet	86	88	84	80	79	91	90	83	87	81	94	89
Ability to come up with new ideas and solutions	80	78	79	79	70	87	88	83	74	76	81	82
Willingness to question your own and others' ideas	81	83	81	77	70	85	86	84	73	77	88	83
Ability to present products, ideas or reports to an audience	65	61	65	61	57	77	76	63	62	59	65	69
Ability to write reports, memos or documents	80	83	80	80	72	87	85	73	77	80	81	82
Ability to write and speak in a foreign language	51	19	49	39	37	68	56	55	62	52	55	66

Question H1: How do you rate your own level of competence? (Rated on a 7 point scale from 1=very low to 7=very high.)

Table C16. Competencies required to a (very) high level at work (%; responses 5, 6, 7)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Mastery of your own field or discipline	78	73	81	71	69	87	86	78	70	77	85	77
Knowledge of other fields or disciplines	44	37	47	42	37	53	51	40	43	36	55	41
Analytical thinking	68	64	73	59	70	75	73	67	63	51	77	72
Ability to rapidly acquire new knowledge	74	70	78	72	67	81	82	68	79	65	86	70
Ability to negotiate effectively	58	59	68	55	43	64	61	51	60	45	73	55
Ability to perform well under pressure	80	84	79	74	69	88	89	77	81	78	81	81
Alertness to new opportunities	58	56	69	49	36	70	68	64	65	59	49	54
Ability to coordinate activities	76	80	74	72	66	84	83	71	75	70	82	73
Ability to use time efficiently	82	88	81	80	80	86	87	81	84	75	82	75
Ability to work productively with others	77	85	80	75	70	83	81	79	77	68	78	74
Ability to mobilise the capacities of others	60	62	67	58	55	64	65	65	62	57	56	54
Ability to make your meaning clear to others	77	83	71	81	81	72	73	78	77	82	77	65
Ability to assert your authority	57	52	63	61	60	56	63	62	47	54	66	48
Ability to use computers and the internet	75	74	78	71	63	85	80	66	80	64	87	76
Ability to come up with new ideas and solutions	69	64	72	71	59	74	75	71	73	61	74	67
Willingness to question your own and others' ideas	64	63	69	58	57	62	65	68	64	59	73	60
Ability to present products, ideas or reports to an audience	59	52	65	57	56	70	67	51	58	50	64	58
Ability to write reports, memos or documents	69	69	75	68	60	75	74	61	64	69	80	70
Ability to write and speak in a foreign language	39	9	47	31	32	54	42	32	55	31	55	51

Question H1: What is the required level of competence in your current work? (Rated on a 7 point scale from 1=very low to 7=very high.) Multiple replies.

Chapter 7

Table C17. Level of education appropriate in first job relative to study programme (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Higher level	6	5	7	4	16	6	1	3	3	13	9	4
Same level	68	55	61	53	58	72	91	70	77	66	69	72
Lower level of tertiary education	8	3	7	8	16	2	0	9	8	14	12	11
Below tertiary education	18	38	26	34	11	20	8	18	13	7	10	14
Count (n)	19,700	1,825	1,705	1,814	1,634	1,822	1,739	1,888	1,861	1,904	1,595	1,913

Question D9: What type of education do you feel was most appropriate for this work?

Table C18. Most appropriate field of study for first job (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Exclusively own field	32	22	33	22	33	34	38	25	36	33	36	40
Own or related field	48	34	46	50	42	48	49	56	54	58	46	47
A completely different field	6	10	5	9	7	5	4	8	6	4	9	5
No particular field	13	35	16	20	18	12	9	11	5	5	9	9
Count (n)	20,006	1,824	1,704	1,810	1,723	1,835	1,887	1,882	1,873	1,924	1,607	1,937

Question D10: What field of study do you feel most appropriate for this work?

Table C19. Utilisation and demand for knowledge and skills in first job (%; responses 1 and 2)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
No/low utilisation of knowledge and skills	19	33	21	31	22	15	14	17	11	9	17	15
Work did not/hardly demanded more knowledge and skills than offered	46	57	50	57	59	41	36	45	35	37	44	52

Question D11: To what extent were your knowledge and skills utilised in this work? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.)

Question D12: To what extent did this work demand more knowledge and skills than you could actually offer? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.)

Table C20. Level of education appropriate in current job relative to current level of education obtained (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Higher level	9	6	11	7	11	8	3	5	5	19	14	3
Same level	73	72	68	64	58	76	86	79	83	67	76	76
Lower level of tertiary education	9	8	9	13	14	5	3	8	7	11	7	12
Below tertiary education	10	15	13	17	17	11	7	7	6	3	3	10
Count (n)	18,741	1,710	1,684	1,710	1,548	1,632	1,611	1,799	1,669	1,822	1,759	1,797

Question F8: What type of education do you feel is most appropriate for this work?

Table C21. Most appropriate field of study for current job (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Exclusively own field	32	27	39	27	35	29	34	24	33	34	33	37
Own or a related field	53	42	46	56	44	56	54	58	57	60	52	52
A completely different field	7	11	6	8	8	6	5	8	6	3	10	5
No particular field	9	20	9	10	13	10	8	9	5	3	5	6

Question F9: What field of study do you feel is most appropriate for this work?

Table C22. Length of time required to become an expert in this kind of work (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Six months or less	12	10	12	15	11	11	10	8	8	6	27	8
Seven to 12 months	15	12	16	15	10	17	16	12	12	11	28	16
One to two years	27	23	30	25	28	27	31	25	30	23	29	29
Three to five years	33	39	31	32	31	33	34	40	39	35	15	34
Six to 10 years	10	12	8	8	12	9	8	13	9	16	0	11
More than 10 years	4	4	3	4	8	2	2	3	2	10	1	3
Count (n)	18,955	1,739	1,642	1,699	1,621	1,634	1,757	1,790	1,689	1,821	1,765	1,798

Question F10: How much time would it take for an average graduate with relevant educational background to become an expert in this kind of work?

Table C23. Utilisation and demand for knowledge and skills in current work (%; responses 1 and 2)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
No/low utilisation of knowledge and skills	9	14	10	14	13	8	9	9	6	4	9	7
Work did not/hardly demanded more knowledge and skills than offered	45	47	45	47	51	44	43	40	36	33	57	51

Question F11: To what extent are your knowledge and skills utilised in your current work? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.)

Question F12: To what extent does your current work demand more knowledge and skills than you can actually offer? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.)

Chapter 8

Table C24. Average length of work experience (months)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Study-related work experience before HE	22.5	18.0	18.3	19.5	13.9	19.7	28.7	26.6	22.1	27.8	13.0	26.5
Study-related work experience during HE	16.5	10.0	21.5	12.8	11.6	55.2	20.5	17.7	14.9	13.9	15.5	17.3
Non-study related work experience before HE	21.7	37.5	19.6	14.4	9.7	21.0	23.2	29.7	18.3	29.7	8.4	24.3
Non-study related work experience during HE	19.3	18.2	24.4	15.9	10.3	21.5	23.4	31.6	15.6	18.6	12.9	18.2

Question B3: Did you acquire any study-related work experience: Before higher education? During higher education? Multiple replies possible.

Question B4: Did you acquire any non-study related work experience: Before higher education? During higher education? Multiple replies possible.

Table C25. Level of additional study or training programme (% of graduates with additional study or training programme)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
ISCED 5A specialist degree/ISCED 6	18	7	35	11	6	45	19	8	21	13	16	27
ISCED 5A master level	39	31	37	55	54	23	50	43	56	20	35	21
ISCED 5A bachelor level	13	10	4	11	10	0	3	45	16	31	11	1
ISCED 5A short/ISCED 5B	4	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Other programme	25	51	24	23	2	31	28	4	6	36	26	51
Count (n)	8,977	839	595	1,145	966	891	789	871	722	764	687	835

Question B7: Please provide information on these (additional) study/training programmes.

Table C26. Most important reasons for taking work-related course/training (% of graduates who undertook work-related course/training in the past 12 months)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
To update my knowledge for my present work	67	61	77	53	64	66	71	59	72	76	78	63
To enhance my career	23	32	18	40	29	21	18	28	21	15	14	22
To prepare myself for working in another field	5	5	2	6	6	7	8	4	2	5	2	7
To prepare myself for self-employment	1	0	1	1	1	3	3	1	0	0	1	2
Other	4	2	2	1	1	3	1	8	5	5	5	6
Count (n)	11,825	1,173	811	1,196	773	1,101	1,100	1,135	1,204	960	1,298	1,074

Question F15: What was the most important reason you had for taking this course?

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Table C27. Scope of organisation (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Local	21	23	28	20	28	9	21	13	17	36	23	10
Regional	24	14	16	28	25	30	28	28	22	21	18	34
National	22	23	27	26	20	21	17	23	23	19	24	24
International	33	40	30	27	28	40	34	37	39	24	35	33
Count (n)	18,766	1,724	1,673	1,700	1,609	1,622	1,731	1,637	1,688	1,821	1,764	1,797

Question 8: What is the scope of operation of your organisation?

Table C28. Changes taken place in organisation (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Major change in my own work tasks	39	53	40	38	26	44	42	49	34	34	34	35
Reorganisation	49	60	47	39	41	52	47	47	51	62	42	51
Merger or takeover by another firm	14	14	13	9	10	12	14	22	18	16	15	11
Large-scale layoffs of personnel	14	15	7	5	5	19	25	17	16	22	14	13
Relocation	5	9	5	3	2	4	6	8	4	3	6	4

Question G9: Which of the following changes have taken place in your organisation since you started working there? Multiple replies.

Table C29. Aspects of innovation (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Product or service	47	56	50	42	33	54	48	53	50	42	47	43
Technology, tools or instruments	40	49	47	43	34	43	33	37	42	33	46	35
Knowledge or methods	51	60	53	46	38	56	48	57	60	51	53	44

Question G10: How would you characterise the extent of innovation in your organisation or your work, with respect to the following aspects? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=very low to 5=very high.) Multiple replies.

Table C30. Graduates who played a role in introducing innovations (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Product or service	47	46	47	39	38	46	43	49	53	52	52	43
Technology, tools or instruments	35	33	41	37	34	32	27	31	43	35	44	33
Knowledge or methods	61	61	59	55	60	57	56	60	67	65	72	55

Question G11: Do you play a role in introducing these innovations in your organisation? Multiple replies possible.

Table C31. Graduates who were responsible for... (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Setting goals for organisation	22	17	26	24	15	29	22	26	26	19	27	16
Setting goals for own work	75	79	62	64	62	85	80	83	81	75	74	75
Deciding work strategies for organisation	24	21	29	28	20	29	25	26	19	18	28	19
Deciding how to do own job	82	78	73	81	76	85	90	89	87	81	84	73

Question G16: To what extent are you responsible for...? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.) Multiple replies.

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Table C32. (Very) important job characteristics (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Work autonomy	85	70	85	85	87	97	94	73	87	84	86	93
Job security	80	79	84	94	72	75	81	74	85	83	82	70
Opportunity to learn new things	92	89	93	94	93	93	87	91	92	92	90	93
High earnings	61	61	78	76	59	61	55	48	64	57	-	52
New challenges	80	85	76	81	66	86	77	88	82	87	69	83
Good career prospects	66	78	77	89	66	59	46	64	56	52	86	55
Enough time for leisure activities	76	79	74	88	71	72	63	80	88	78	72	76
Social status	42	34	47	53	47	47	39	35	35	27	63	38
Chance of doing something useful for society	63	63	73	76	71	62	52	59	50	62	63	62
Good chance to combine work with family tasks	72	45	82	89	83	66	63	66	84	77	77	63

Question J1: Please indicate how important the following job characteristics are to you personally, and to what extent they actually apply to your current work situation. (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=very important.) Multiple replies.

Table C33. (Very) important job characteristics applicable to current work (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Work autonomy	76	60	61	66	75	90	90	65	71	82	85	86
Job security	62	66	57	61	57	58	57	65	61	70	70	59
Opportunity to learn new things	64	64	64	60	59	69	62	63	70	65	68	64
High earnings	27	32	26	37	18	30	29	26	22	24	-	28
New challenges	57	61	51	51	44	64	60	57	63	67	51	59
Good career prospects	35	51	38	45	30	28	20	34	25	30	53	26
Enough time for leisure activities	46	48	42	47	49	46	38	54	52	50	40	44
Social status	38	32	38	37	41	46	41	35	34	33	50	37
Chance of doing something useful for society	49	48	44	45	55	49	46	49	43	62	51	47
Good chance to combine work with family tasks	47	30	46	46	54	45	42	52	56	57	44	41

Question J1: Please indicate (how important the following job characteristics are to you personally, and) to what extent they actually apply to your current work situation. (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.) Multiple replies.

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Table C34. Study programme was a good basis for... (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Starting work	58	48	48	54	50	63	54	59	61	80	61	61
Further learning on the job	59	48	52	53	57	56	49	63	71	72	61	61
Performing current work tasks	50	39	46	42	44	53	44	52	59	69	49	55
Future career	53	53	45	50	48	58	46	54	51	71	53	57
Personal development	69	72	67	63	64	77	73	70	65	74	67	68
Development of entrepreneurial skills	18	17	21	27	35	17	14	14	10	10	11	24

Question 11: To what extent has your study programme been a good basis for...? (Rated on a 5 point scale of 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.) Multiple replies possible.

Table C35. Would you choose the same study programme at the same institute again? (%)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Yes	63	65	65	50	65	67	59	62	59	64	64	70
No, a different study programme at the same institute	12	17	14	20	7	10	10	9	11	9	12	9
No, the same study programme at a different institute	8	7	7	11	5	6	11	9	7	7	6	9
No, a different study programme at a different institute	16	10	11	11	22	15	17	19	23	19	17	10
No, I would decide not to study at all	2	1	3	9	2	3	4	0	0	1	1	2
Count (n)	20,931	1,968	1,880	1,901	1,877	1,813	1,921	1,860	1,883	1,912	1,979	1,937

Question 12: Looking back, if you were free to choose again would you choose the same study programme at the same institution of higher education?

Table C36. Description of study programme (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Programme was generally regarded as demanding	57	62	74	56	52	62	61	32	50	58	53	65
Employers were familiar with the content of programme	38	30	30	40	29	35	32	41	41	63	45	37
Freedom in composing own programme	28	22	31	32	17	34	39	33	41	23	16	25
Programme had broad focus	57	59	54	53	35	65	61	65	63	58	54	58
Programme was vocationally orientated	38	27	30	24	24	25	29	57	59	60	53	34
Programme was academically prestigious	35	46	49	35	19	36	33	21	37	34	31	42

Question A6: To what extent did the following descriptions apply to your study programme? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.) Multiple replies.

Table C37. Modes of teaching (%; responses 4 and 5)

	Europe	UK	IT	ES	FR	AT	DE	NL	FI	NO	CZ	CH
Lectures	70	84	69	36	75	69	75	57	63	84	73	81
Group assignments	39	34	22	34	42	39	35	65	50	45	33	34
Participation in research projects	14	28	18	9	18	9	10	23	13	10	5	13
Internships, work placement	33	22	16	22	34	31	46	59	44	36	19	32
Facts and practical knowledge	38	47	22	31	43	35	36	52	48	42	28	38
Theories and paradigms	57	52	43	67	39	61	51	41	55	53	89	70
Teacher as the main source of information	47	34	64	66	52	53	45	35	35	26	55	53
Project and/or problem-based learning	28	39	22	21	19	28	27	25	32	35	18	30
Written assignments	55	83	40	36	54	66	59	39	67	59	44	53
Oral presentations by students	37	40	55	18	37	47	42	46	30	20	32	38
Multiple choice exams	13	8	11	31	6	9	10	31	2	2	27	11

Question A7: To what extent were the following modes of teaching and learning emphasised in your study programme? (Rated on a 5 point scale from 1=not at all to 5=to a very great extent.) Multiple replies.

