

Mapping of the Educational Field of Higher Education in Cyprus for the Academic Year 2020-2021

The Department of Higher Education (DHE) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth (MOECSY) has proceeded with the Mapping of the educational field for Higher Education in Cyprus for the academic year 2020-2021. A total of ten (10) Universities (three (3) Public and seven (7) Private) and 50 Institutions of Tertiary Education (5 (five) Public and 45 (forty-five) Private) were operating during the academic year 2020-2021. The collection of data has been done through standardized Excel files which were completed by all Higher Education Institutions (HEI) of Cyprus. In the framework of the mapping of academic year 2020-2021, the data collected were related to: a) students (personal variables) like sex, country of origin, and disability and b) in relation to their attendance at HEI (educational variables) like the category of the HEI they attend (University or Tertiary Education Institution, Public or Private), the field of study that their programme of study belongs to according to International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2013, the level of study according to the National Qualifications Framework of Cyprus (CyQF), the type of attendance (full time or part time), study mode (face-to-face/in person, distance/online learning or blended/hybrid learning) and the year of studies. The presentation of results of the mapping is based on four thematic areas: a) Demographic characteristics of students attending HEI of Cyprus, b) Variables in relation to the attendance at HEI, c) Access to Higher Education by under-represented students and d) Newcomer students in programmes of study in Higher Education.

It is important to clarify that the findings of this report regarding students from non EU countries are based on data sent by the Private Institutions of Tertiary Education (PITE) to the DHE during the Fall and Spring Semesters of the academic year 2021-2022 (and more specifically in November 2020 and March 2021 respectively) as well as data sent by Public and Private Universities and Public Institutions of Tertiary Education to the DHE once per academic year (more specifically in March 2021). It is very likely that the total number of students from non EU countries in Higher Education Institutions of Cyprus to be different by the end of the academic year. In relation to the number of non EU students in PITE the following additional clarifications need to be made: based on data sent by PITE to DHE through the standardised excel files, the total number of non EU students for the academic year 2020-2021 was 5586. In the previous academic year 2019-2020, based on official documents sent by PITE to DHE the total number of non EU students studying in PITE was 8956. This big decrease of 3370 students in the total number of non EU students studying in PITE in 2020-2021 compared to 2019-2020, is mainly due to drop out students i.e. students who leave higher education without successfully earning a degree and without leaving the country. The PITE send the Civil Registry and Migration Department as well as MOECSY, detailed information regarding drop-out students from non EU countries.

According to the results of the mapping study, the total number of students attending HEI of Cyprus in the academic year 2020-2021 was 54 235, out of which 42 519 (78%) attended Universities and 11 716 (22%) attended Institutions of Tertiary Education (this number does not include students from non EU Countries who drop-out, more details on this issue are provided in the Introduction). In relation to the first thematic area, the demographic characteristics of students attending HEI, 46% were men and 54% were women. The countries where the students came from were divided in three categories: Cyprus, EU countries and non-EU countries. On the basis of collected data for the academic year 2020-2021, 44% were Cyprus citizens, 40% were EU citizens and 16% were non-EU citizens.

In relation to the variables of the second thematic unit regarding the attendance at HEI of Cyprus, the majority of students at the Universities and the Institutions of Tertiary Education attended Private HEI. In relation to the level of study, the majority (49%) attended programmes of study (71% and 92% respectively) at level 6 of CyQF (University degrees). A significant percentage (41%) attended programmes of study at level 7 (postgraduate) of CyQF. More specifically at Universities, the majority of students attended programmes of study at level 6 (49%) and level 7 (48%) while the majority of students at the Institutions of Tertiary Education attended programmes of study at level 6 (48%) and level 5 (35%). As far as the field of study is concerned, the majority of University students attended programmes of study that belong to the fields of Business Administration and Law (28%), Education (24%) and Medical Studies (15%). At the Institutions of Tertiary Education, the majority of students attended programmes of study that belong to the fields of Business Administration and Law (64%), Services (19%), and Engineering (6%). For the variables of type of attendance and study mode, data were collected only by Universities. In relation to the type of attendance, the majority of students attended Universities on a full time basis (76%). The percentage of full-time students at the Universities was 67% of the students, while the equivalent percentage in Private Universities was 80%. In relation to the study mode, the majority of students at Public Universities (76%) attended programmes of study in person, while at the Private Universities the majority of students (52%) attended programmes of study online.

In relation to the third thematic area Access to Higher Education by under-represented students at this present time the data collected were only about students with disabilities at Universities. In the academic year 2020-2021, the students with disabilities at the Universities of Cyprus were 776 (2%). In relation to the demographic variables, a percentage of 53% were men and 47% were women. In relation to the country of origin, the big percentage (68%) of students with disabilities were from Cyprus and a big percentage were from EU countries (30%). In relation to the educational variables, the majority of students with disabilities attended Private Universities (63%) on a full time basis (79%) in programmes of study at level 6 (86%) and in programmes of study in person (88%). In relation to the field of study, the big percentage of students with disabilities was in the fields of study of Business Administration and Law (23%) and Medical Studies (21%) while a lower percentage of students with disabilities was in the fields of study of Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics and Services (3%).

As far as the fourth thematic area of Newcomer students in programmes of study in Higher Education, data were collected regarding only students at Universities. In total, 22 369 students (53%) started their studies in the academic year 2020-2021. In relation with the demographic characteristics, 355 were men and 65% were women, while in relation to the country of origin, the majority (61%) were from EU countries and a big percentage (31%) were from Cyprus. In relation to the variables regarding their attendance, the majority (80%) started their studies at Private Universities and only 20% at the Public Universities. Also, a big percentage of Newcomer students chose programmes of study on a full time basis (77%) and online programmes of study (60%). In relation to the level of studies, the majority of students (65%) started their programmes of study at level 7c, a percentage of 33% started their programmes of study at level 6 and a small percentage of 2% started their programmes of study at level 8. The choices of Newcomer students in relation to the field of study were in the fields of Education (31%), Business Administration and Law (28%) and Medical Studies (11%).