

A typology of admission systems across Europe and their impact on the equity of access, progression and completion in higher education



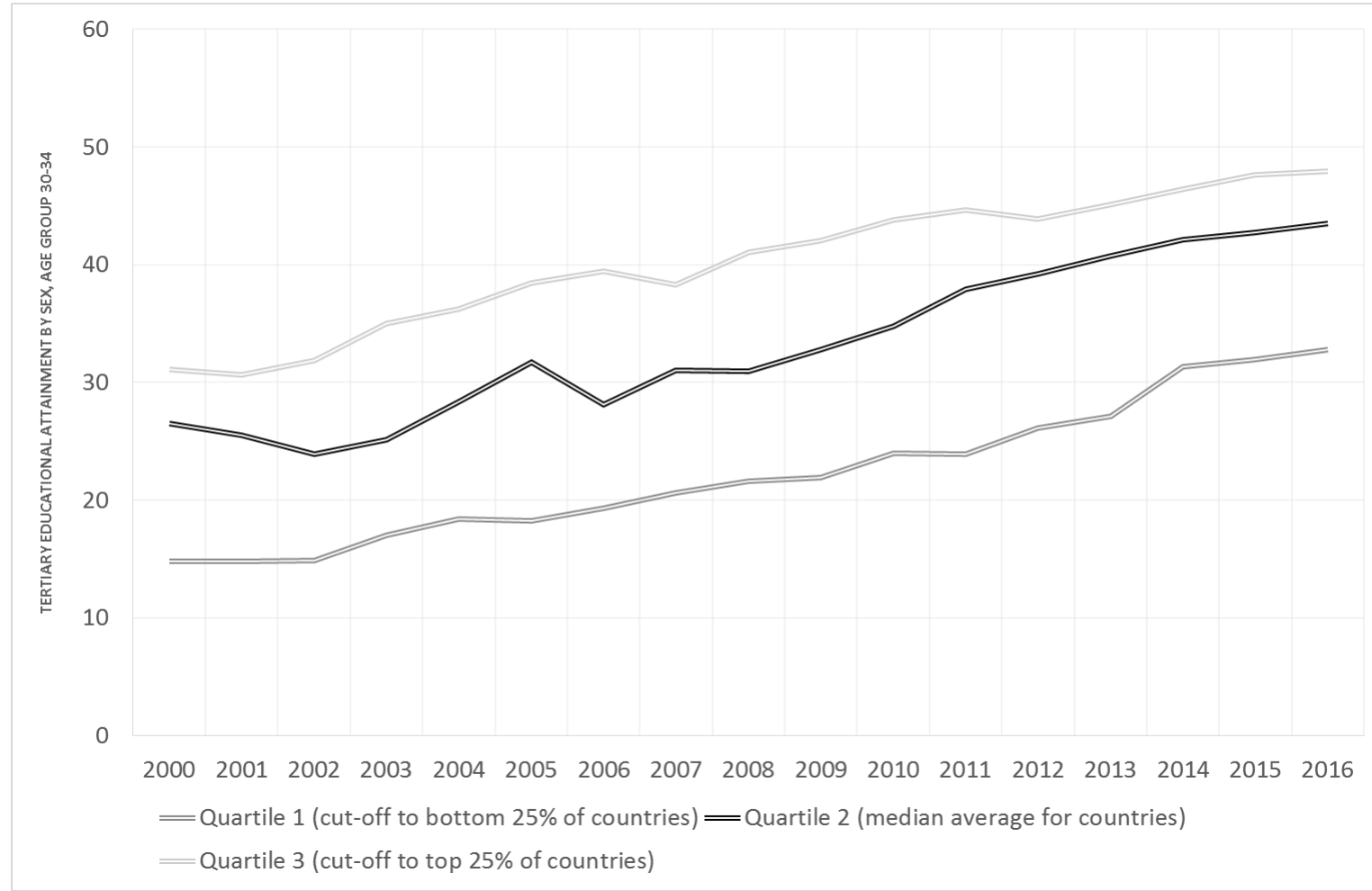
Cezar Mihai Haj
Irina Mihaela Geanta



Dominic Orr

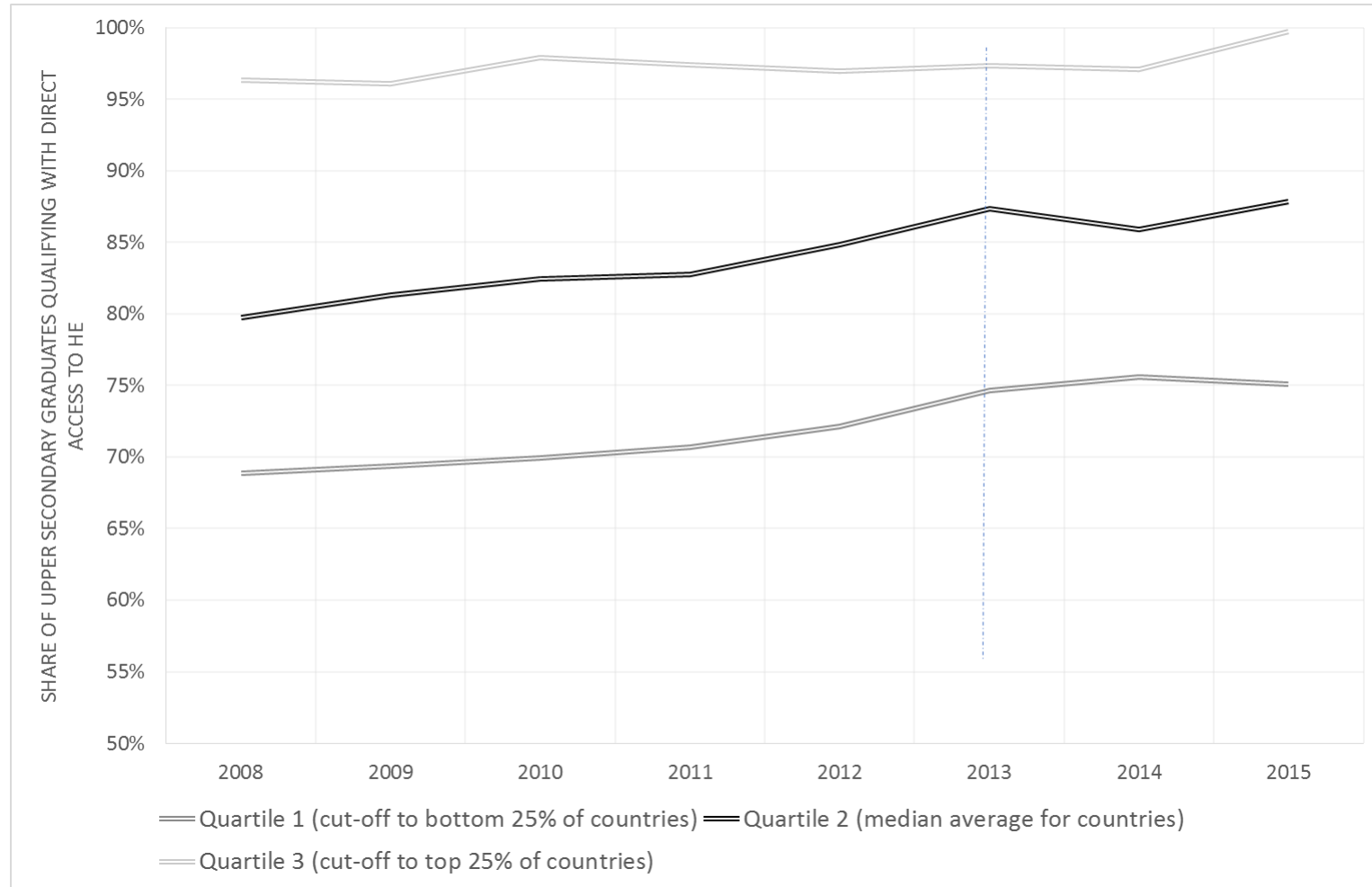
Share of tertiary education attainment in the age group 30-34 years, 2000 - 2016

Trend 1 –
System growth
Increasing
numbers of
graduates



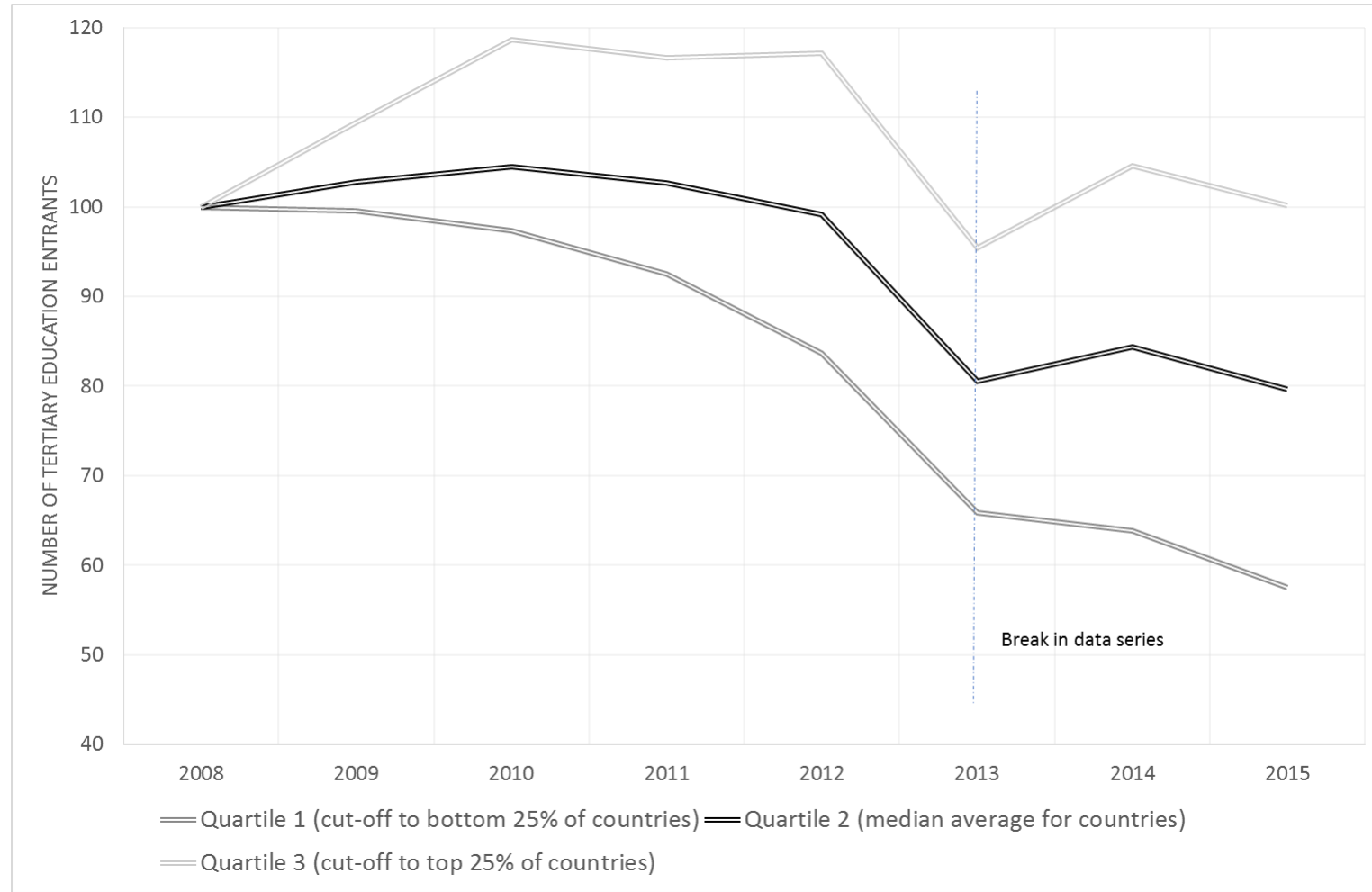
Share of upper-secondary graduates qualifying for entry to higher education, 2008 – 2015

Trend 2 –
System growth
Increasing
share of upper-
secondary
graduates



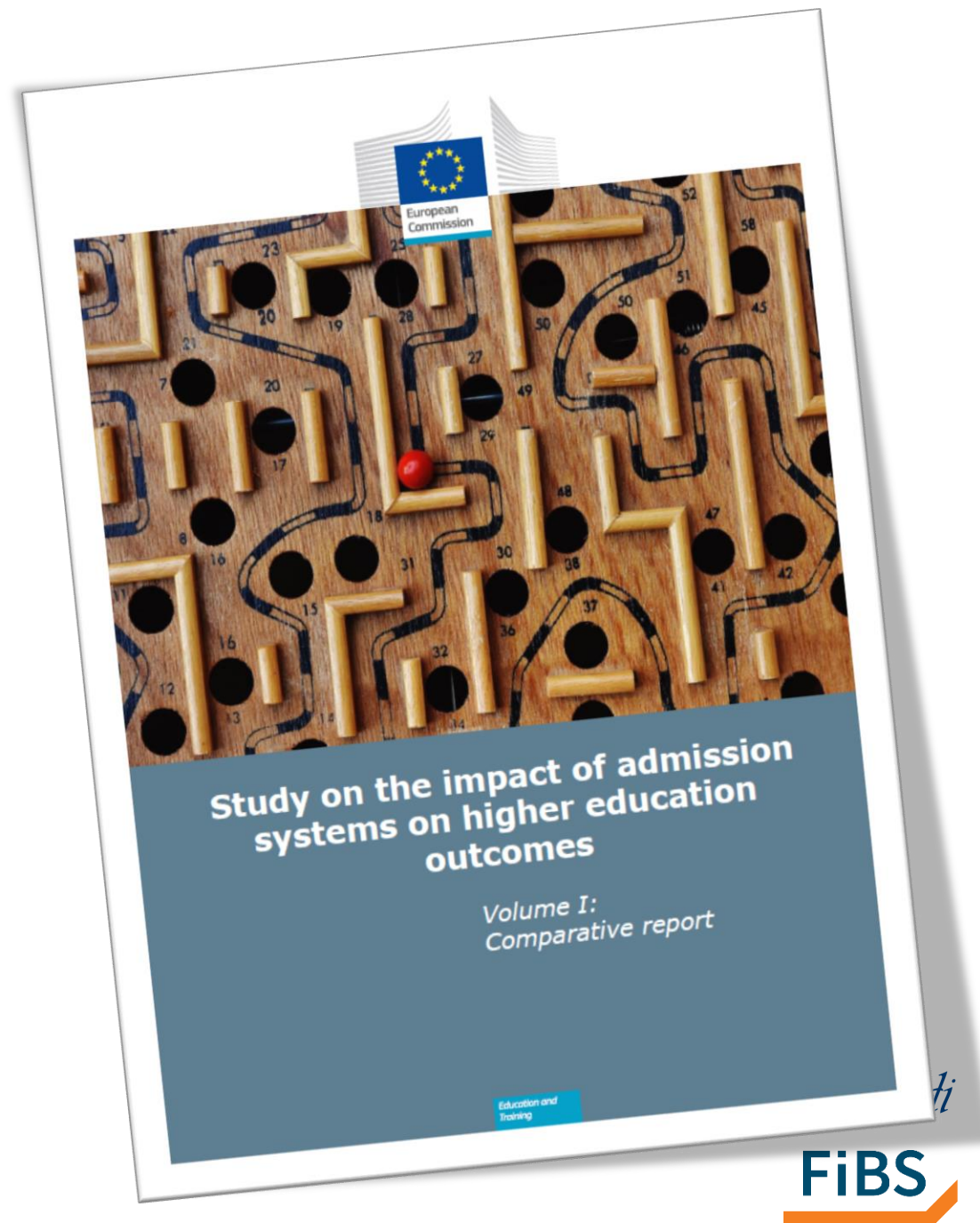
Trend 3 –
System decline
Overall
decrease in
number of
entrants due to
demographics

Number of tertiary education entrants, 2008 – 2015 (Index 100 = 2008)



Central position of admission system
in current landscape of:

- **Consolidation** – reviewing how HEIs have coped with the expansion until now
- **Differentiation** – reviewing if all parts of society have been fairly treated by the admission system and whether changes are necessary



Full team

Consortium members:

- Dominic Orr (Institute for Education and Socio-Economic Research – FiBS, Germany)
- Cezar Haj (Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding – UEFISCDI, Romania)
- Irina Geanta (Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding – UEFISCDI, Romania)
- Alex Usher (Higher Education Strategy Associates – HESA, Canada)
- Graeme Atherton (Higher Education Strategy Associates – HESA / London Higher, UK)

National experts

- Carole Waldvogel (France),
- Johanna Witte (Germany),
- Eglė Ozolinčiūtė (Lithuania),
- Froukje Wartenbergh-Cras (Netherlands),
- Elisabeth Hovdhaugen (Norway)
- Ramon Llopis-Goig (Spain)

Advisory Board

- Jussi Kivistö (Finland)
- Patrick Clancy (Ireland)
- Ligia Deca (Romania)

Methodology - innovative qualitative and quantitative mixed method

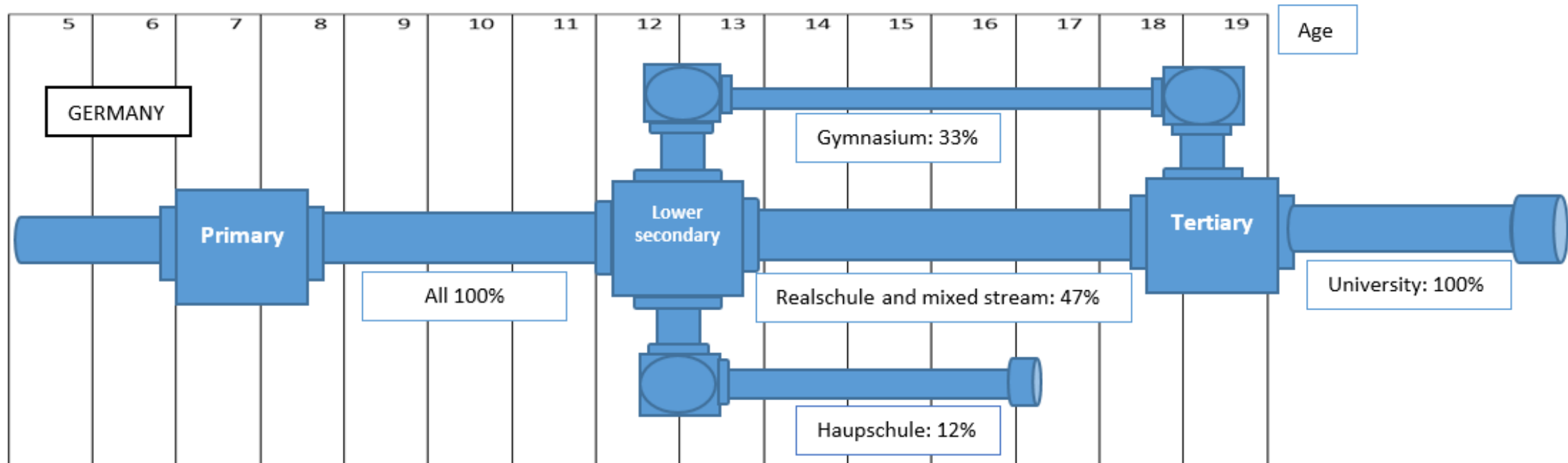
Comparative mapping:

- 36 European countries – the 28 EU countries, the five EU candidate members, as well as the three EEA/EFTA countries
- 24 indicators that followed students from primary education to the labour market, measuring both quantitative and qualitative aspects
- information collected was then validated with national experts in all countries
- a number of characteristics deemed most relevant were selected for further comparative analyses

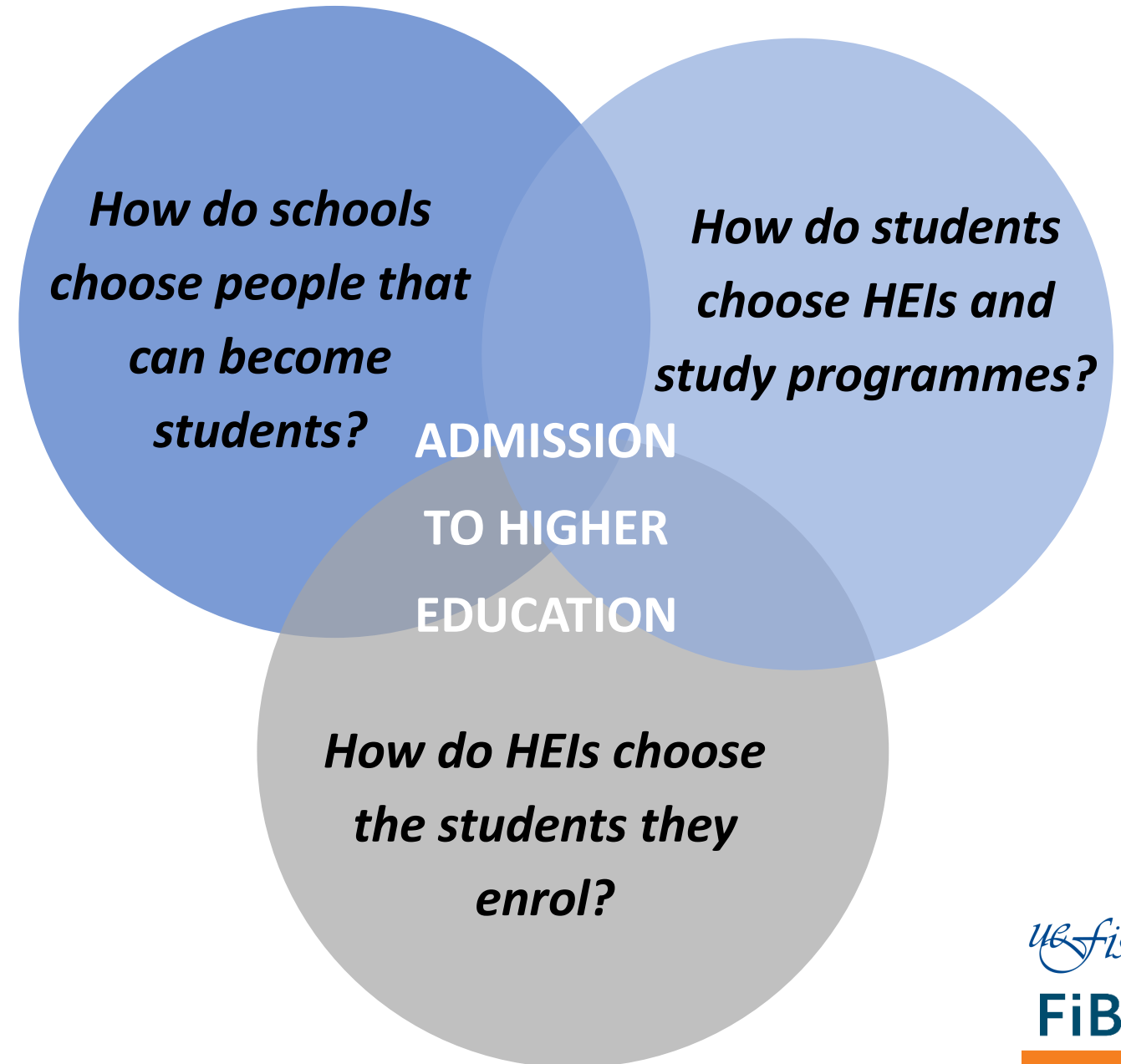
Case study analysis for eight countries (France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain)

- **interviews with the policy-makers and key informants** (representatives from ministries dealing with upper secondary and higher education and from other bodies responsible for the admission process, registrars from a number of public and private universities), and
- **focus groups with students** in the last year of upper secondary and first year of higher education

The admission system as architecture of structures and processes



**The admission system as
an interplay between
'agents' following
different goals**



A typology of admission systems, which brings both perspective on admission systems together

Selection Streaming	<i>(Nearly all) HEIs can select with additional criteria</i>	<i>HEIs cannot select with additional criteria (in normal circumstances)</i>
<i>At least one pathway through the school system does not lead to a qualification enabling higher education entry (to some part of the system)</i>	Type 4: Double selection Croatia, Czech Republic, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, United Kingdom	Type 1: Selection by schools Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia
<i>In general, all pathways may lead to higher education entry (in some part of the system)</i>	Type 2: Selection by HEIs Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Portugal, Lithuania, Latvia	Type 3: Least selection Albania, France, Greece, Ireland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Sweden, Turkey

Recommendations from the case studies and mapping - applied to the typology



Systems where streaming occurs at an early age (especially in Type 1 – selection by schools) appear to embed social inequality into higher education entry



Policy-makers could reshape the selection processes at secondary education level by reducing the consequences of allocating pupils to different upper secondary streams and/or re-designing the exit examinations



Evidence suggests that HEIs already have institutional tools to deploy resources more proactively in order to help such students enter and succeed; yet in most instances, HEIs are not stepping up because they do not see this as their responsibility.



Incentives should be provided for HEIs to become more inclusive (especially in Type 2 – selection by HEIs),

Recommendations from the case studies and mapping - applied to the typology, *cont.*



The tension between the needs of the schooling system and those of HE is a difficult challenge to resolve in the final year of secondary schooling. It is important to ensure that students think about higher education choice much earlier than in the final year of secondary schooling. This is relevant for all admission systems, but particularly important for Type 4 – double selection, as streaming in secondary school and additional selection by HEIs can severely limit the options a student has.



Schools can reduce pressure on students during their final year of secondary school by supporting them to make choices about higher education earlier, together with providing adequate **information, advice and guidance**.



The case studies provided evidence of a gap between the school and the HE system, which is particularly felt by prospective students.



An increased collaboration between schooling and higher education is necessary to overcome the tensions between the needs and purpose of the schooling system and those of HE. Working together, they would help construct better, fairer and more inclusive education systems.

For more information:

Dominic Orr – d.orr@fibs.eu

Cezar Haj – cezar.haj@uefiscdi.ro

<https://publications.europa.eu/s/ehYy>

