



National Commission for
**Further and
Higher Education**
Malta

Studying and working – Hurdle or springboard?

Widening access to higher education for working students in Malta

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- Why focus on working students?
- Challenges to higher education expansion -
The issue of working alongside studies
- Challenges to higher expansion in Malta
- The profile of working students in Malta
- Conclusions and recommendations

Why focus on working students?

- **Higher education** – determines the overall social, economic and personal development as well as wellbeing of the members a society.
(Bergan 2005; Zgaga 2005; Orr 2012)
- Policy makers recognise the crucial role of **the social dimension of education** (London Communiqué 2007; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2014; Raykov, 2015)
- In recent years, **the expansion of higher education** has received **a renewed interest** that is focused on increasing higher education attainment and the new skills agenda (European Commission, 2010; European Commission, 2016).

Why focus on working students?

- Research shows that **access to higher education remains selective** and **prevents many non-traditional students** from enrolling and remaining in education (Hauschildt et al., 2015; Kaiser et al., 2014; Munro, 2011; Orr et al., 2011).
- **The expansion of higher education** in European and other OECD countries is characterized by increased student **participation in the labour force** (Curtis & Williams, 2002; Metcalf, 2003; Orr, Gwosc & Netz, 2011)
- **The existing research studies are inconclusive** regarding the **impact** of students' paid work on their **academic and employment outcomes** (Metcalf, 2003; Auers et al, 2007; Moulin et al., 2013; Tyson, 2012; Christie et al., 2005; Curtis & William, 2002).

What is the relevance for Malta?

- **Dependence** on former colonial status until 1990s through low-paid, low-skilled, export driven manufacturing sector (Vella 1994)
- **Late expansion** of higher education sector resulting in slow increase in attainment levels
- **Strong labour market** with low unemployment rate, including low-skilled labour serving as pull-factor
- Importance of **parallel strategy** of increasing participation overall and fostering re-integration

Higher Education expansion and working alongside studies

- Expansion of higher education characterised by increasing **participation of students** in labour market
(Auers et al. 2007; Lewis et al. 2007; Callender 2008; Hall 2010; Lowe and Gayle 2016; Mercer et al. 2016; Billett et al. 2016; Sanchez-Gelabert et al. 2017)
- **Increased number** of employed students and increased **intensity**, number of hours spent on paid work
(Beerkens et al. 2011; Logan et al. 2016)
- **The impact** of working alongside studies is contested

Higher Education expansion and working alongside studies

- Negative impact on **academic achievement** (Svanum & Bigatti 2006; Auers et al. 2007; Callender 2008; Miller et al. 2008; Torres et al. 2010; Richardson et al. 2014; Logan et al. 2016; Mercer et al. 2016; Burston 2017; Sanchez-Gelabert et al. 2017)
- Negative impact on **education experience** (Lederer et al. 2015; Lowe & Gayle 2016)
- Impact on **stress levels and mental health** (Miller et al. 2008)
- Increasing **time to degree** (Tur-Sinai et al. 2017)
- Increasing likelihood of **drop-out** (Bozick 2007; Torres et al. 2010; Moulin et al. 2013; Hovdhaugen 2015)

Higher Education expansion and working alongside studies

- **Limited impact** on academic achievement

(Wang et al., 2010; Beerkens et al, 2011; Roshchin and Rudakov, 2017)

- **Positive impact** (Kouliavtsev, 2013)

- Importance of work **intensity** and **flexibility** (Body, 2014)

- Importance of students' **organisational skills** (Tuononen, 2016)

- Work contributing to **goal orientation** (Hall, 2010)

- Positive impact on **labour market transition**

(Sanchez-Gelabert et al, 2017)

Aims and Data sources

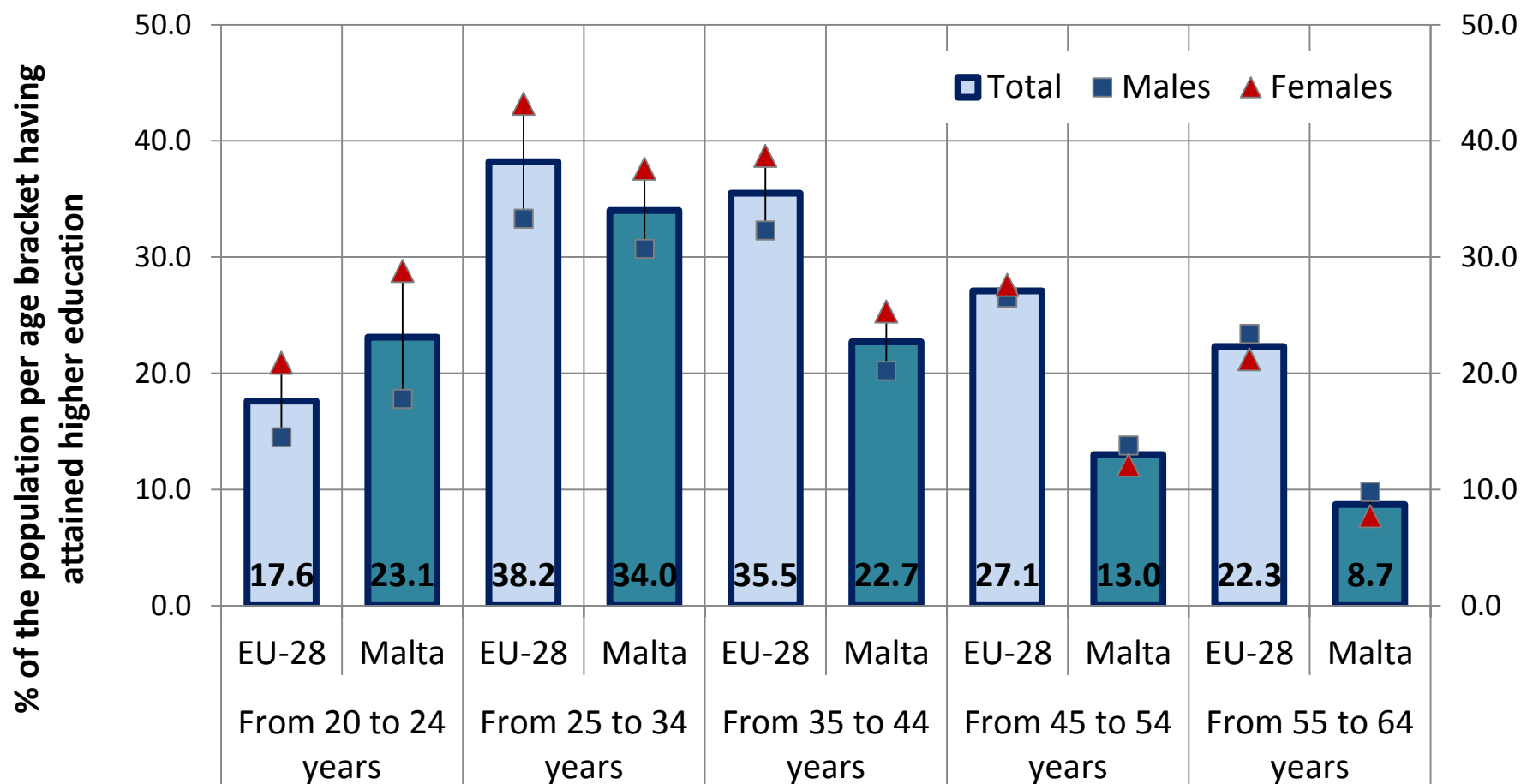
Aims

- The aim of this study is to examine **challenges that non-traditional learners face** in higher education
- The study also aims **to increase awareness** of this complex issue and **to initiate coordinated policy measures** to address some of the challenges identified

Data Sources

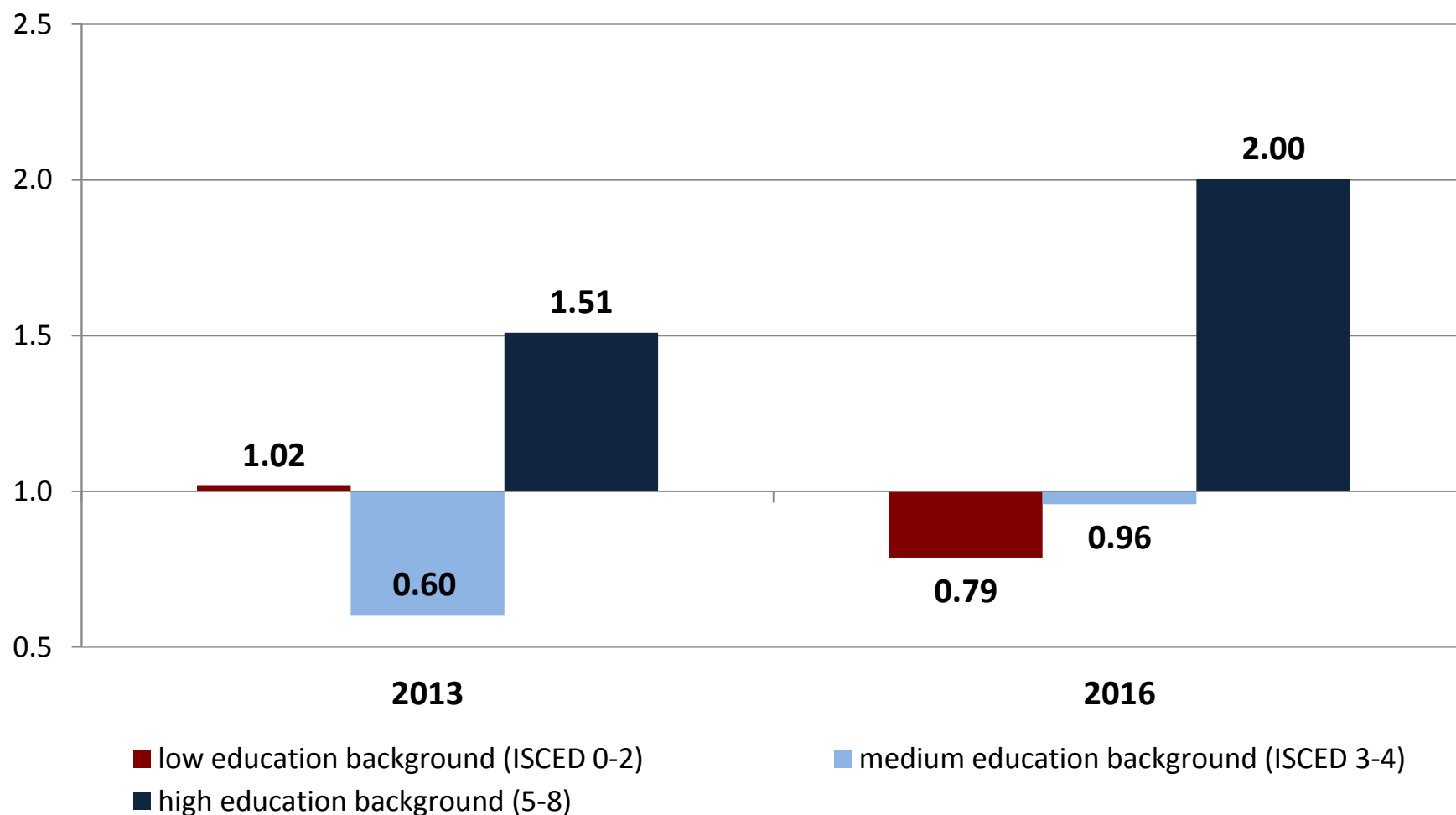
- **The 2016 EUROSTUDENT** online survey conducted in Malta (N=1,423)
 - The Survey collected data about the **experience** and **challenges** learners, including working students, face in higher education
- Secondary analysis of the **EUROSTAT data**

Higher Education attainment rate in Malta and the EU-28 in 2016 by age group



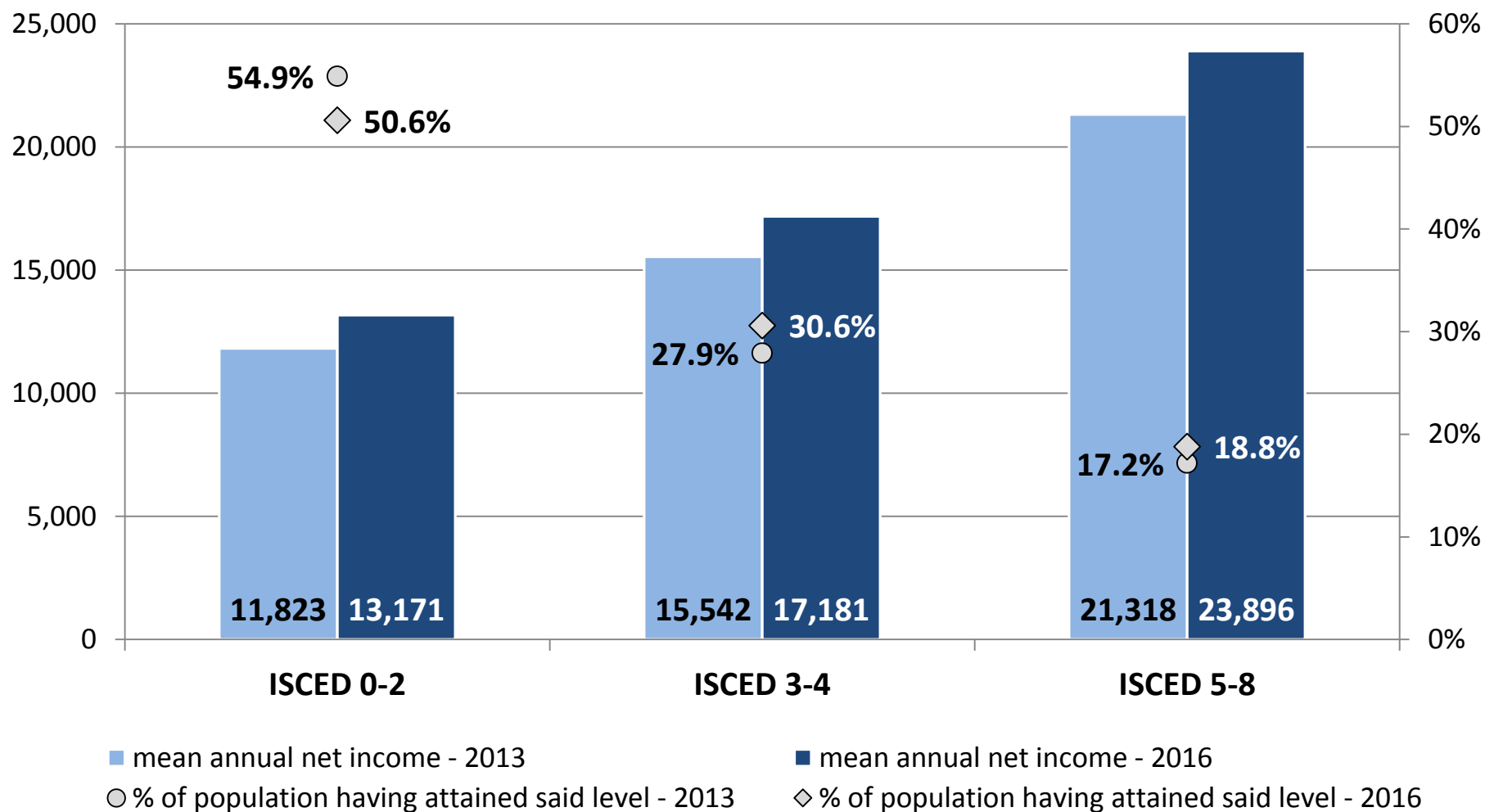
Source: EUROSTAT

Representation of students from high, medium and low educational backgrounds (based on fathers' educational attainment)



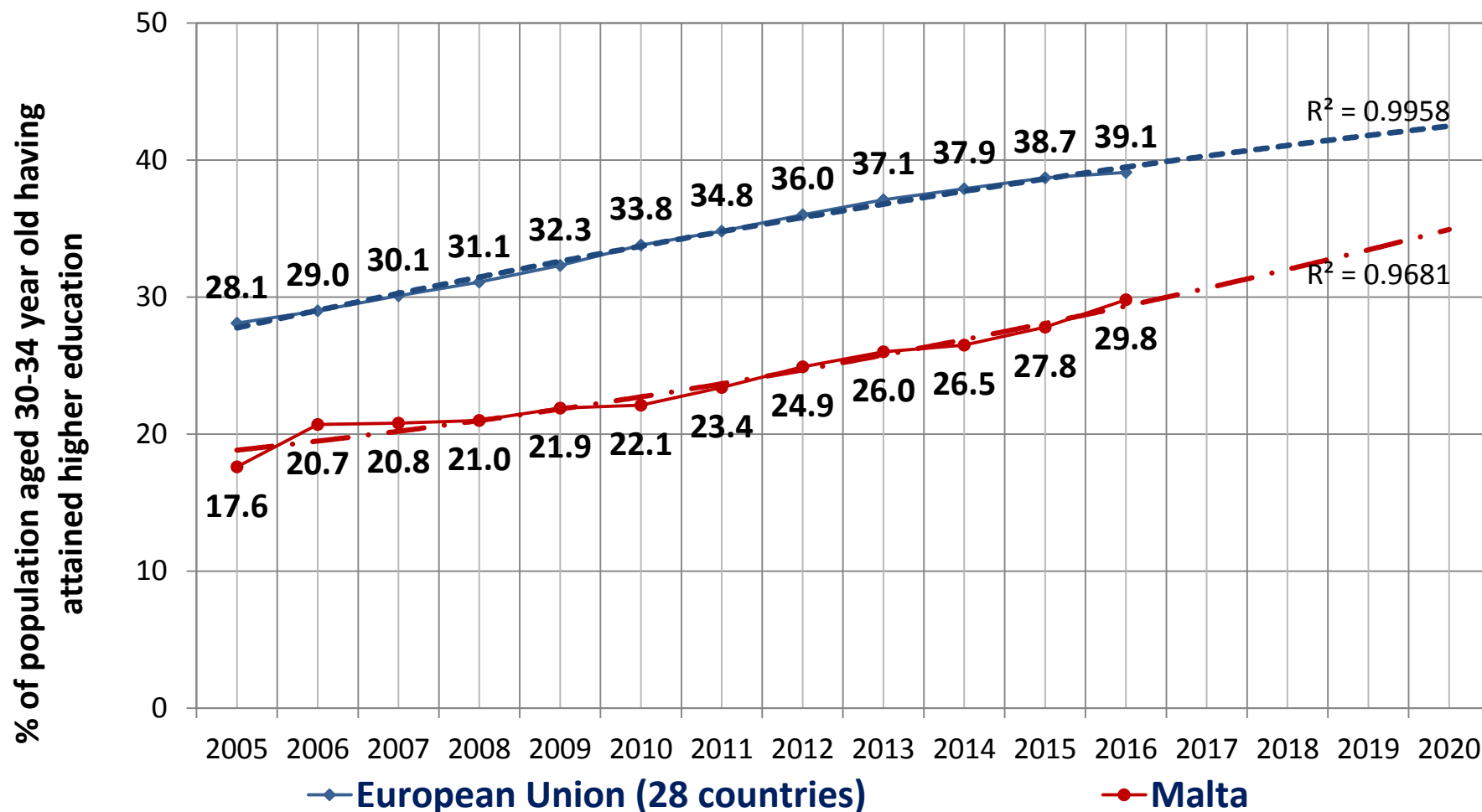
Source: EUROSTUDENT V and EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Attainment rate and mean annual net income by education level attained, Malta in 2013 and 2016



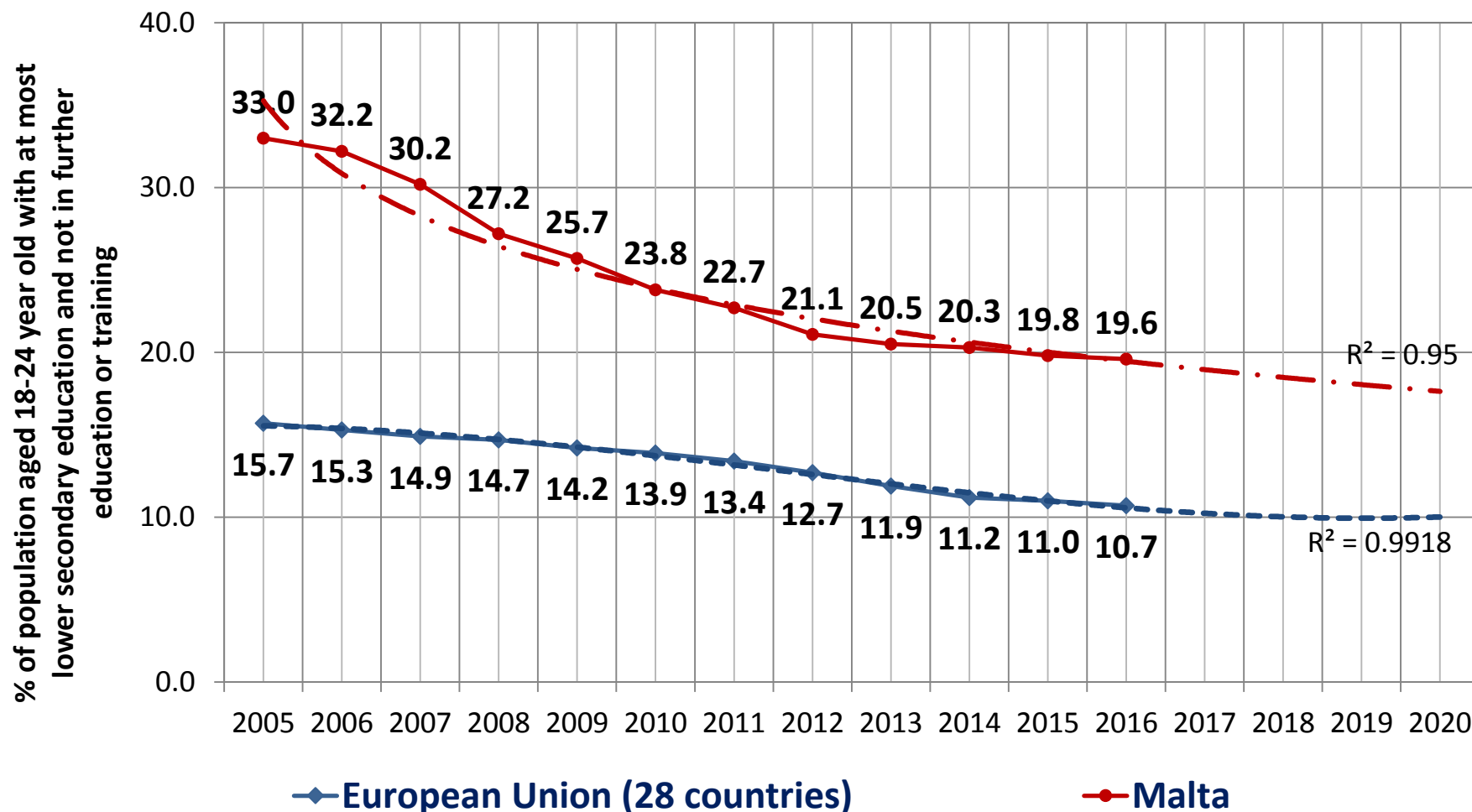
Source: EUROSTAT

Higher education attainment rate among 30-34 year olds in Malta and EU-28



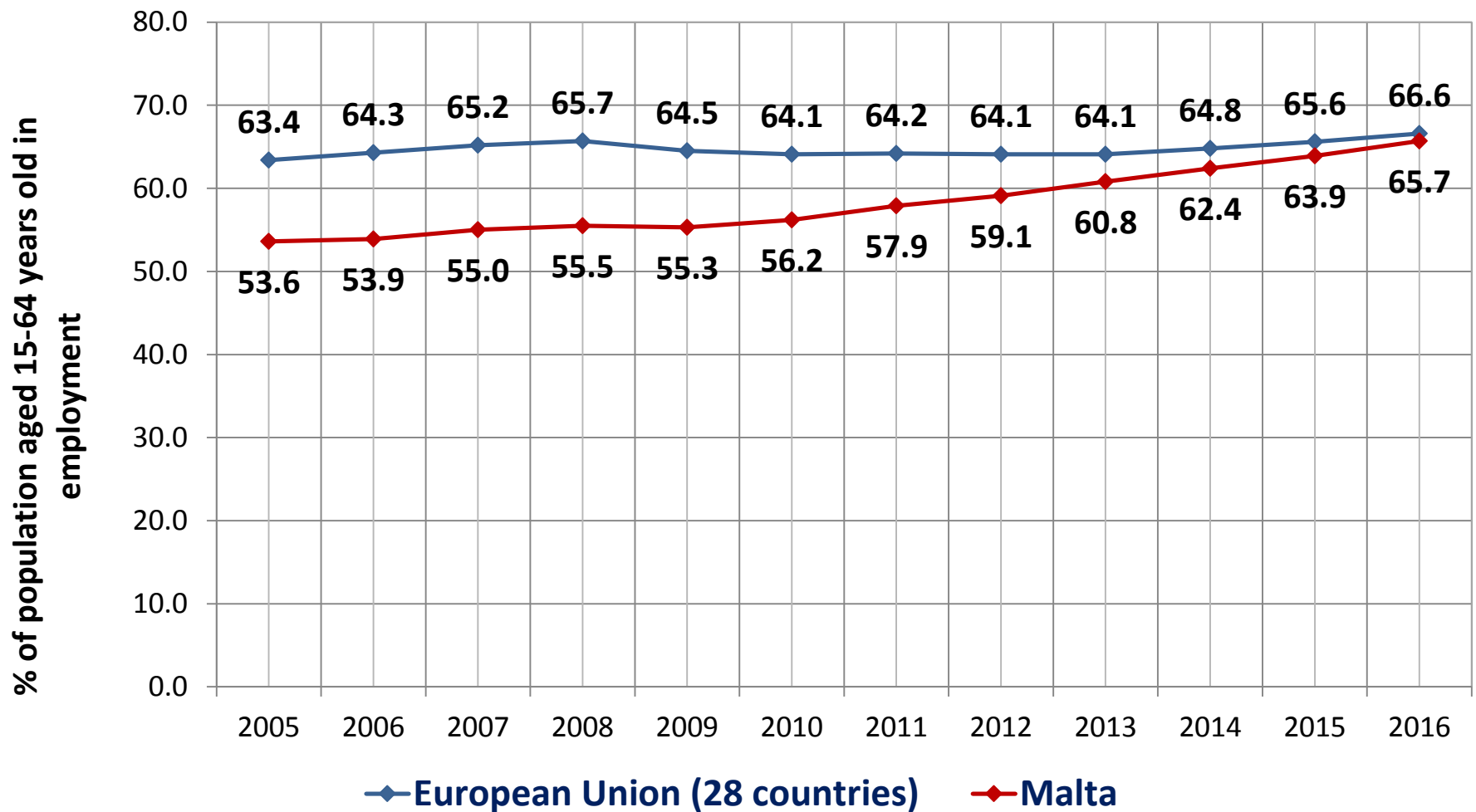
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Early leavers from education and training among 18-24 year olds in Malta and EU-28



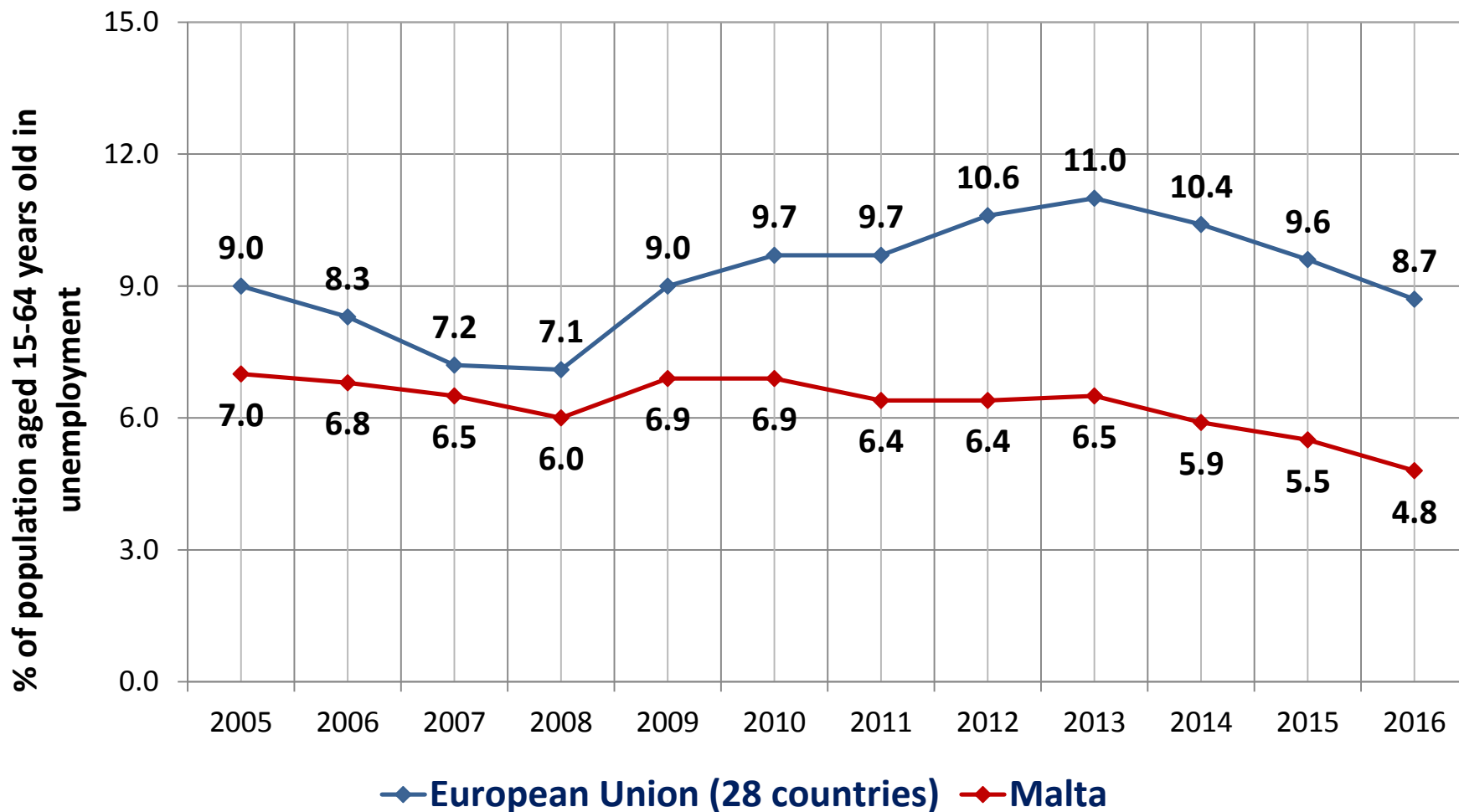
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Employment rate among 15-64 year olds in Malta and the EU 28



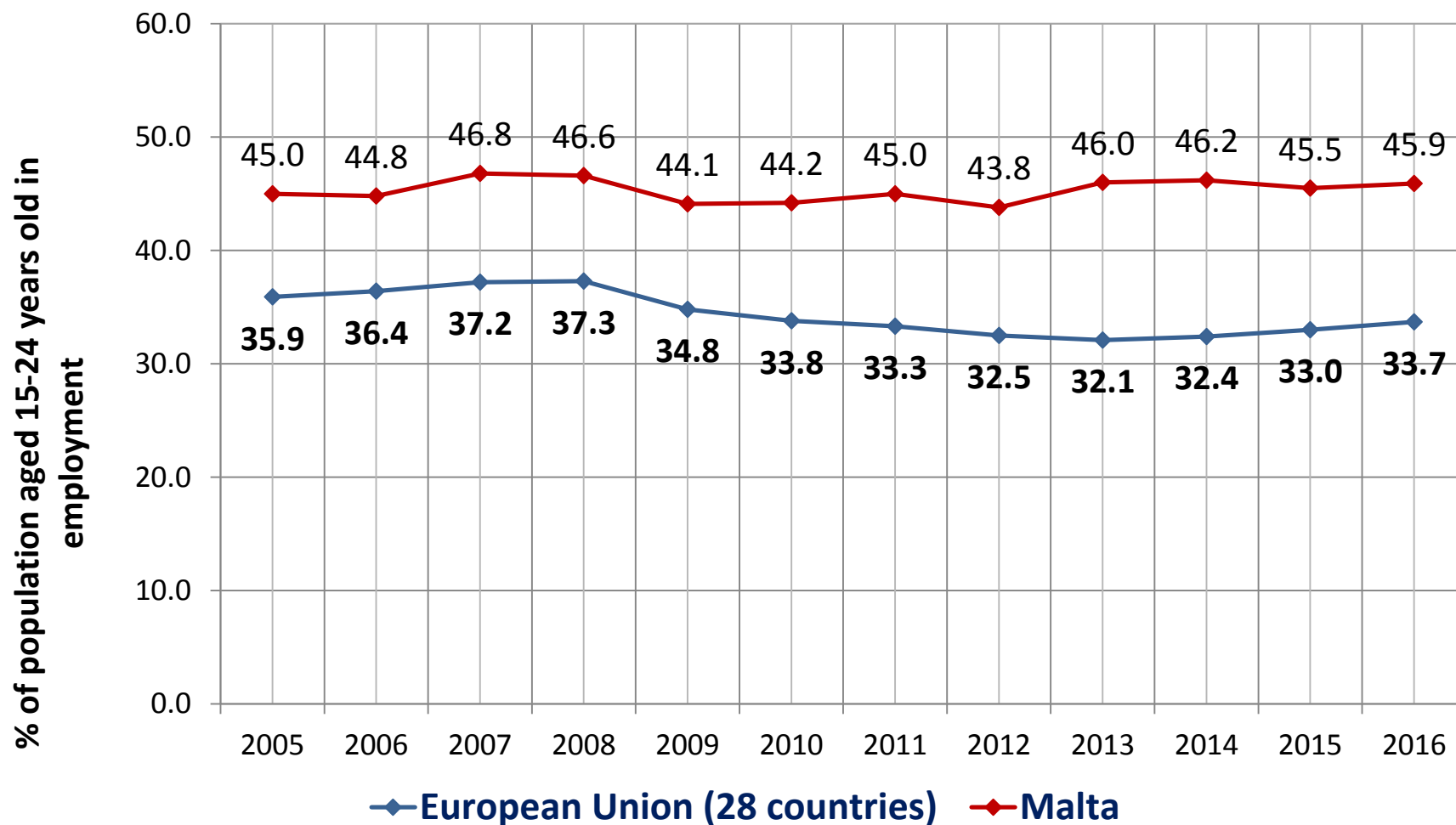
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Unemployment rate among 15-64 year olds in Malta and the EU 28



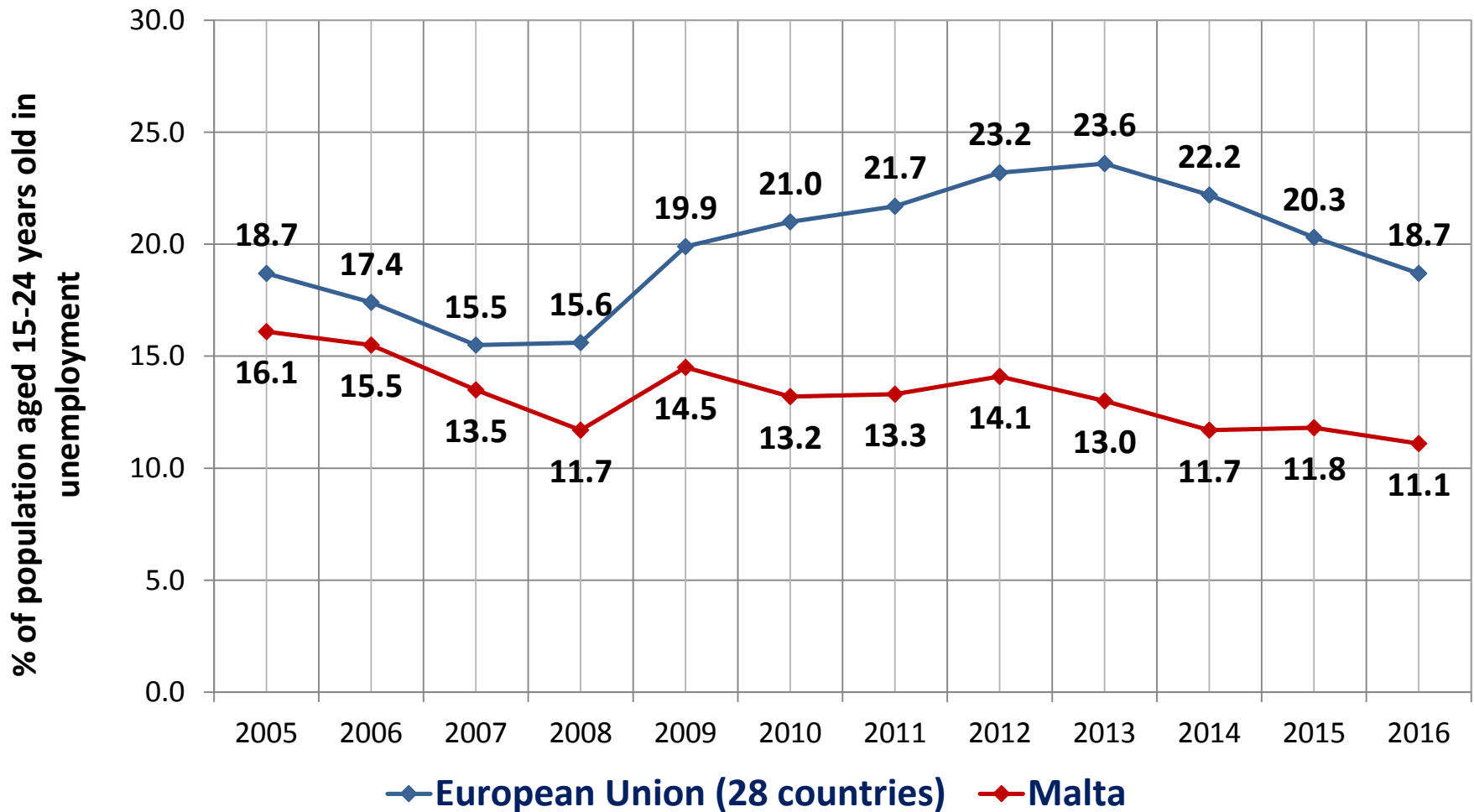
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Employment rate among 15-24 year olds in Malta and the EU 28



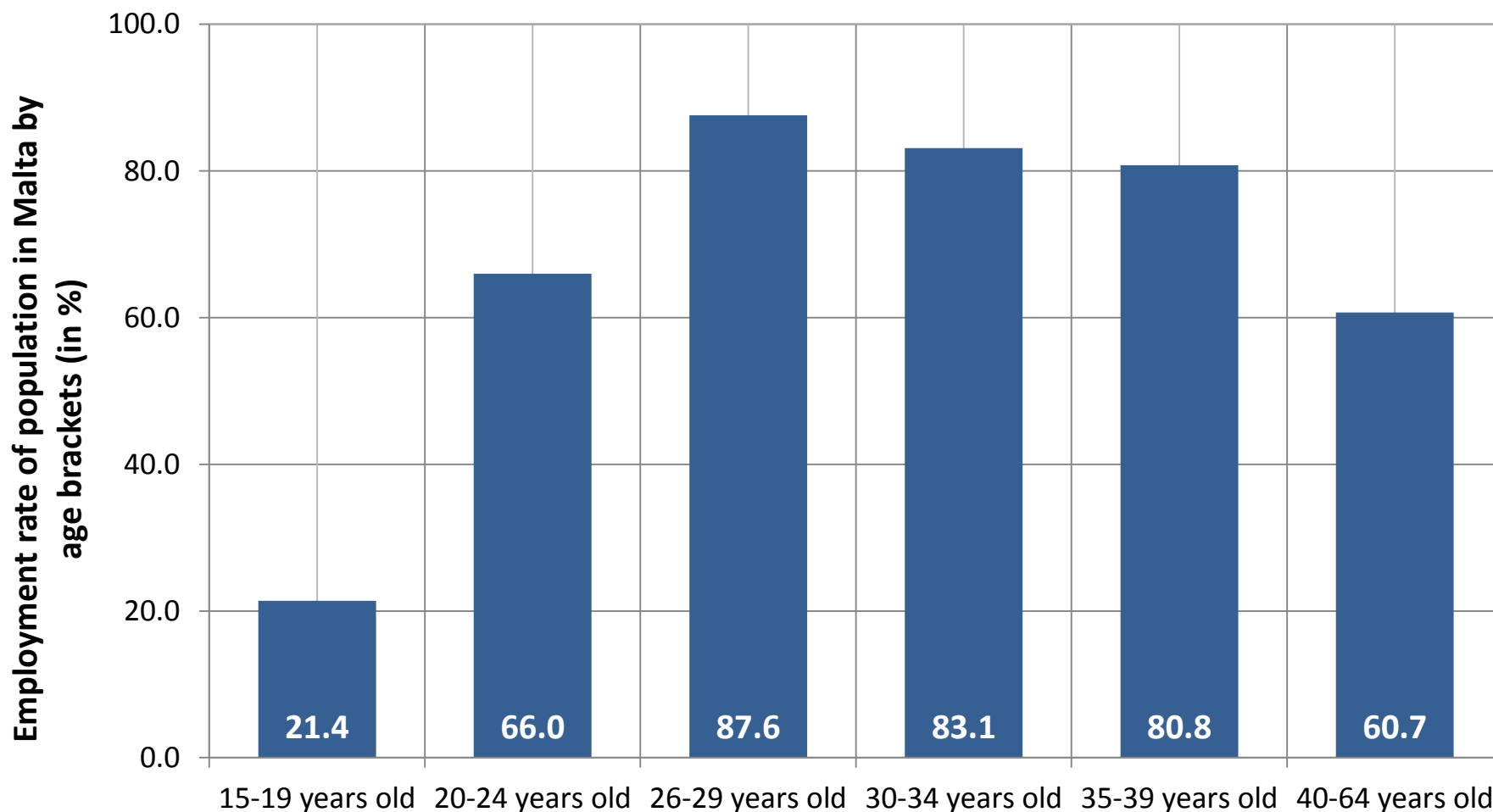
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Unemployment rate among 15-24 year olds in Malta and the EU 28



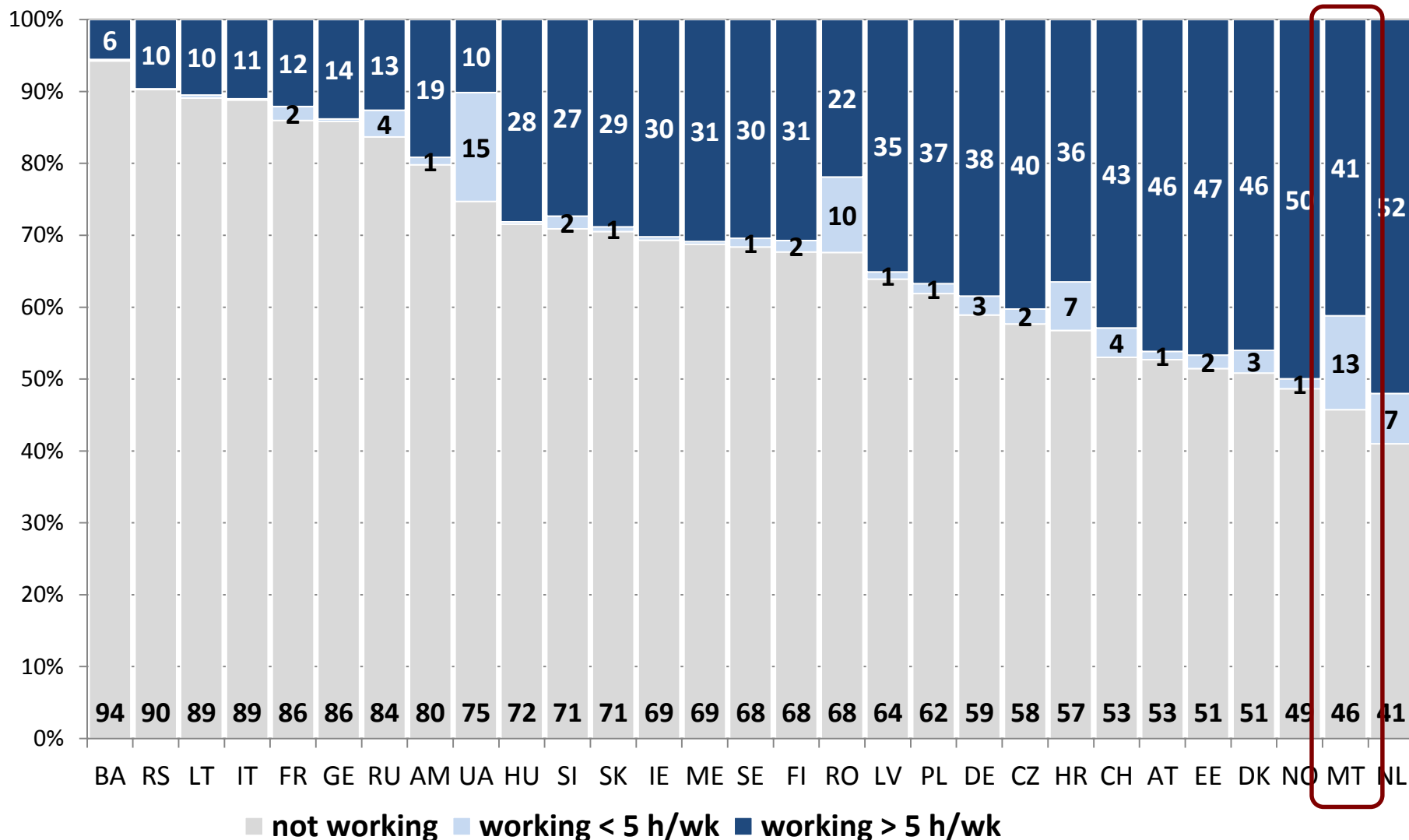
Source: Custom graph based on EUROSTAT data

Employment rate in Malta in 2016 by age

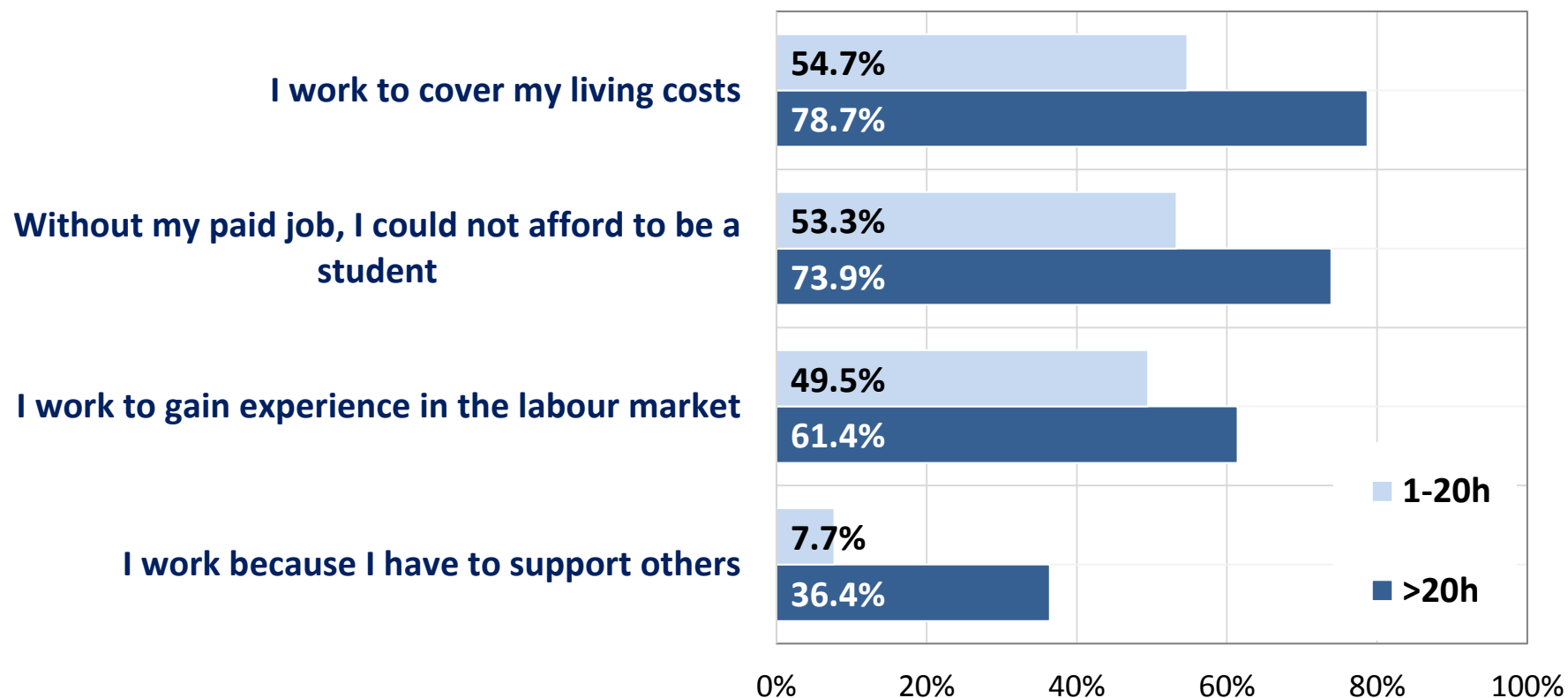


Source: EUROSTAT

Employment rate of HE students during term time



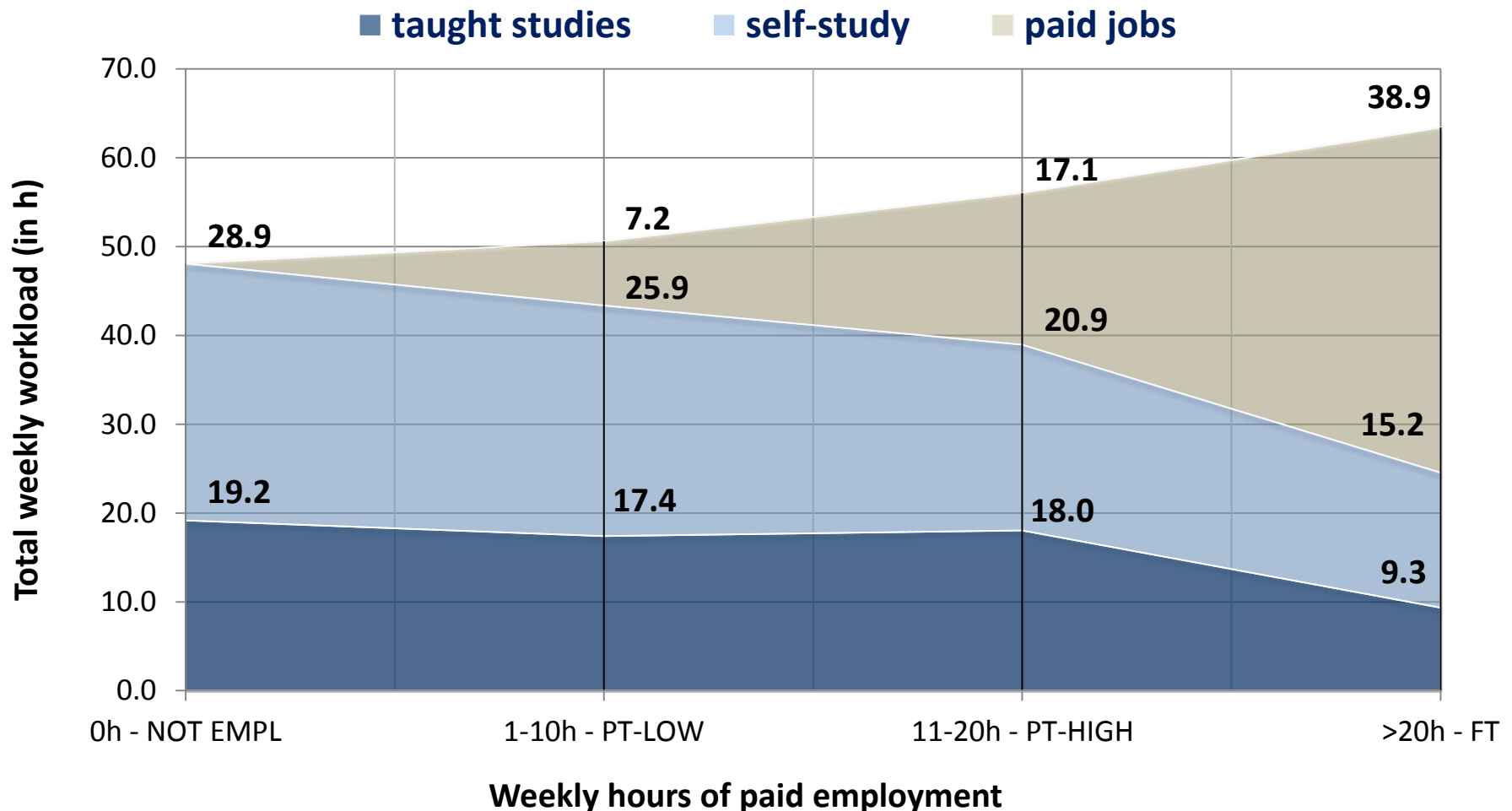
Reasons for working during term time by hours per week spent in paid jobs



Share of students for whom the statement applies 'totally' or 'mainly'

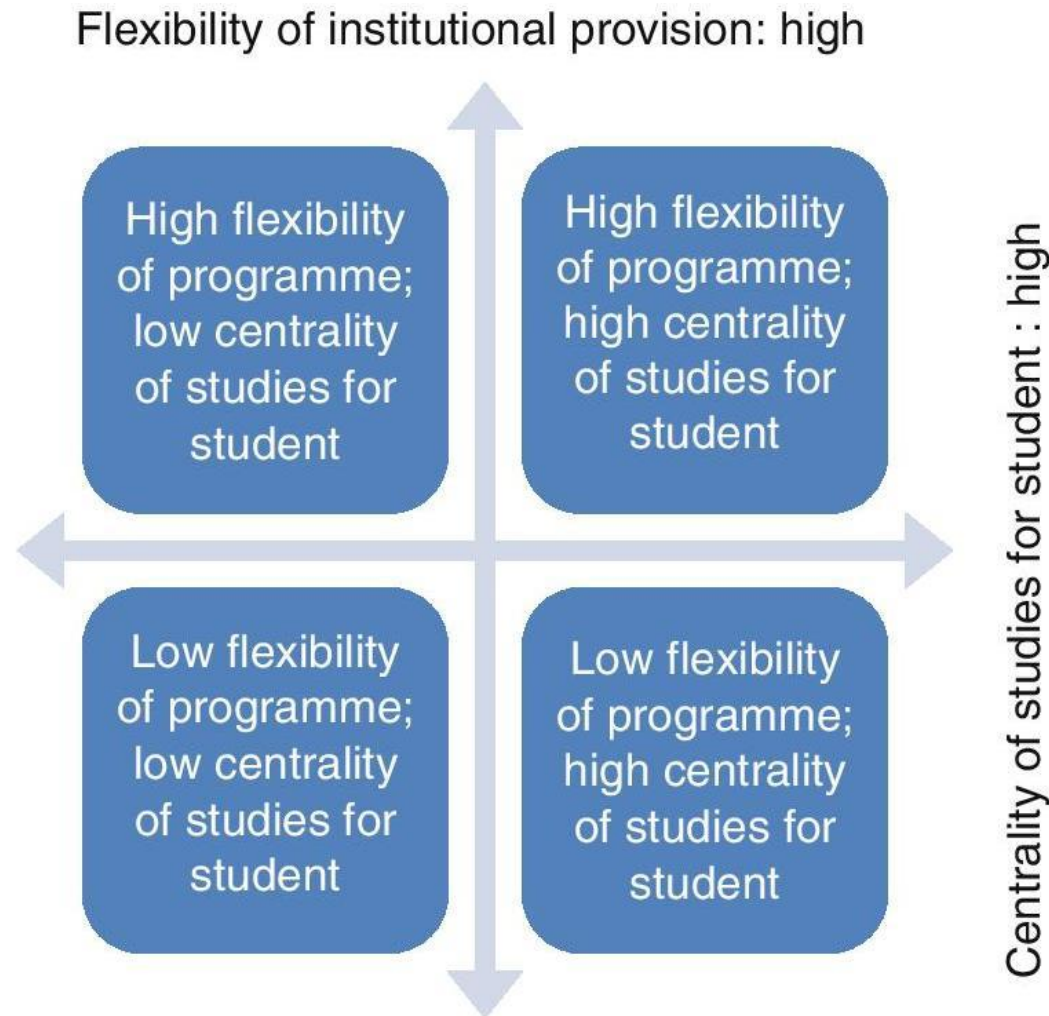
Source: EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Time budget of all students for study-related activities by extent of employment – Malta (h/wk)

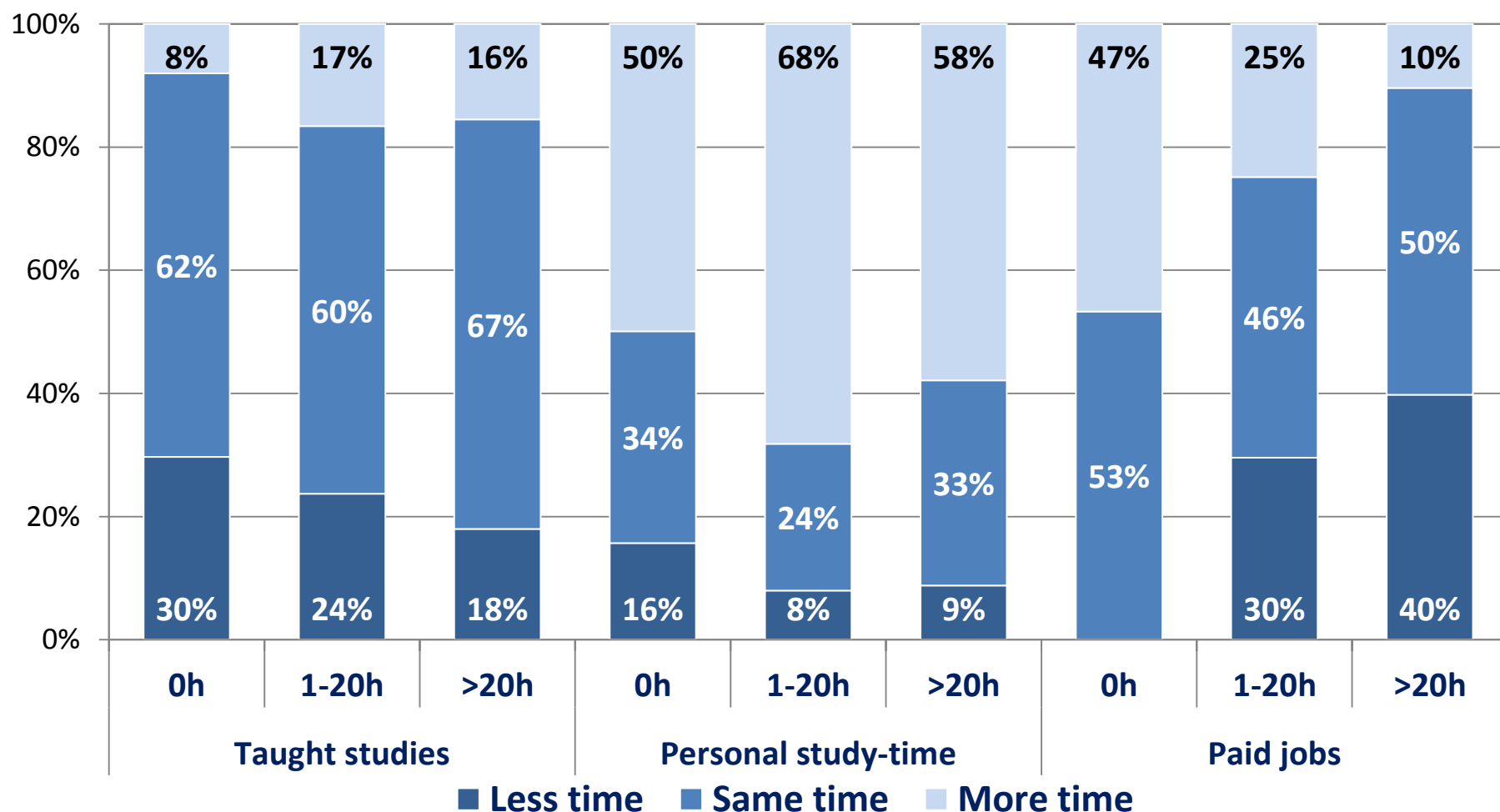


Source: EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Four constellations of organizational learning

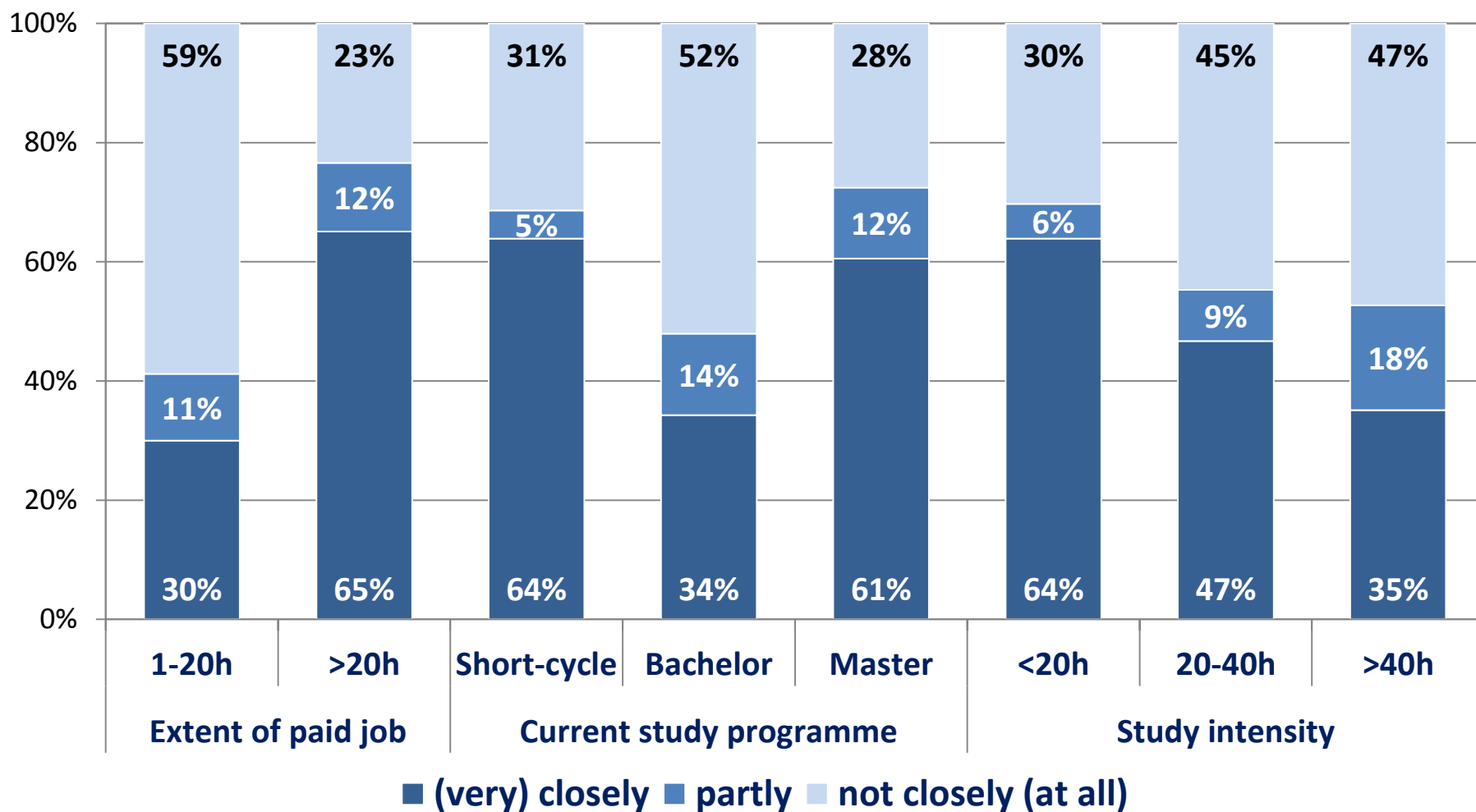


Students' satisfaction with time spent on taught studies, personal studies and paid jobs by extent of employment



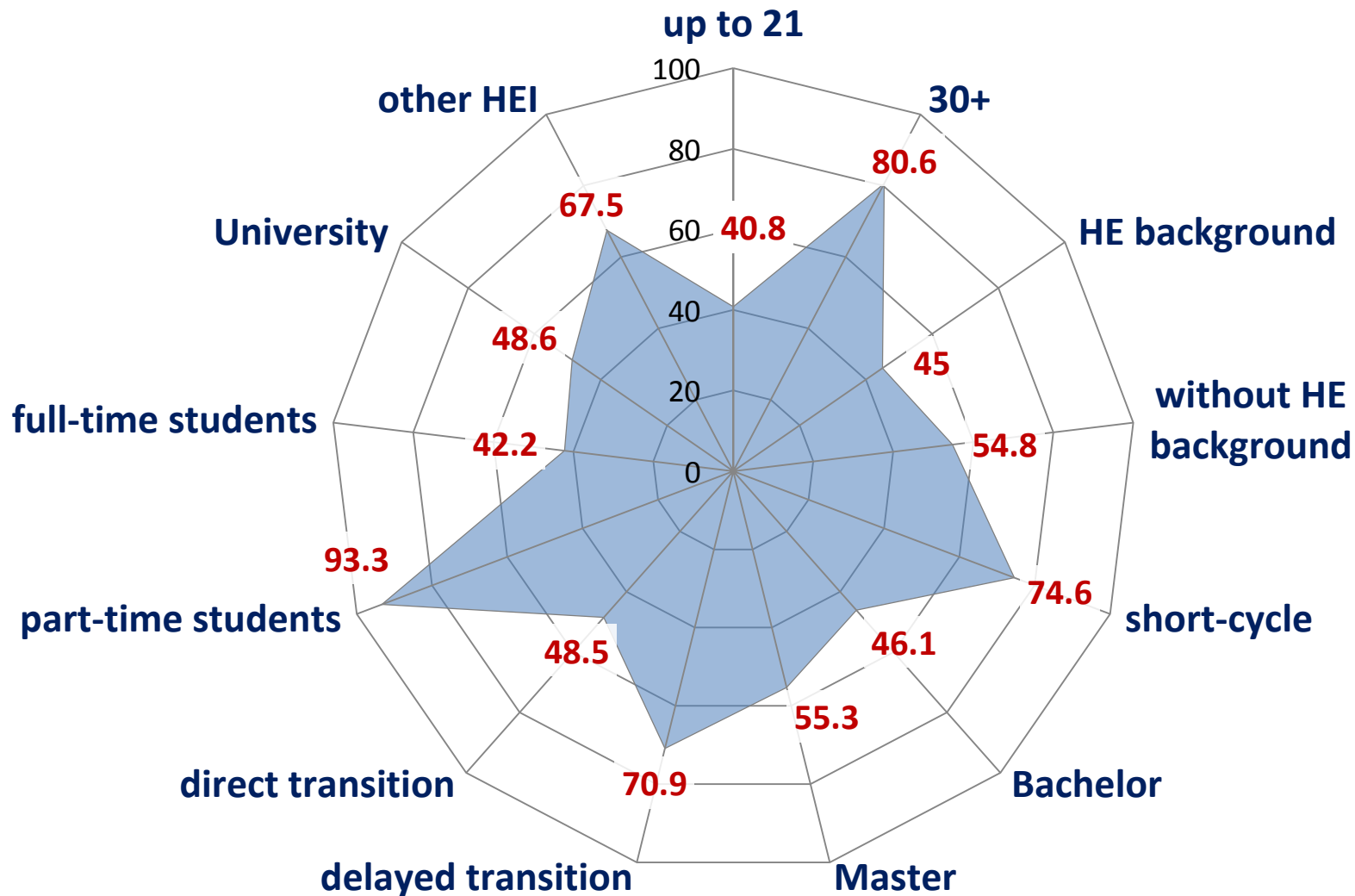
Source: EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Link between studies and job of students working throughout the lecture period



Source: EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Key findings – Profile of working students in Malta



Source: EUROSTUDENT VI national data MT

Recommendations

Ensure adequate **support to students**

Incentives for participation in further & higher education:

- Improve possibilities to **combine work and learning**
- Provision of **flexible forms** of education and training
- **Additional options** for selection of the content of education
- **Recognition of skills** developed through informal learning and non-formal education (Prior Learning Assessment and **Recognition**)
- Encouraging **employers to support** employees participation in further and higher education

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