

# European University Institute and First Generation Initiative

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# PART 1

# FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS/ RESEARCHERS

# 1. Who are we talking about?

<b>First generation students (FGS)</b>	<b>Continuing generation students (CGS)</b>
Students whose parents do not hold an academic degree	Students whose parents have earned an academic degree (a bachelor degree or a higher degree)

## 2. What do we know about FGS?

1. Our society is becoming more unequal, and the educational advantage that the wealthy enjoy in higher education is increasing
2. The poorest students with above-average test scores have a 26% college graduation rate compared to a 30% graduate rate for below-average scores from the wealthiest households (T. Brown-Nagin, *Rethinking Proxies for Disadvantage in Higher Education: A First Generation Students' Project*, University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 2014 , Article 8, p. 467)
3. 3 years after beginning higher education, only 48% of FGS were persisting in their programmes compared with 67% for CGS

# 3. What are they struggling with? In general...

1. Financial: financial situation, economic uncertainty
2. Psychological: insecurity, stress, feeling of non-belonging
3. Social: social alienation, marginalization, poor social integration

## 4. ...academically:

1. less likely to enroll in universities
2. less prestigious institutions attended
3. lower gains in intellectual development
4. lower average grades
5. fewer credit hours completed
6. major problems in distant education programmes

# 5. How to change the situation?

1. Provide clear information about applicant funding
2. Establish personal relationship with FGS
3. Promote faculty-student interaction
4. Establish faculty mentoring
5. Establish staff member mentoring
6. Establish tutoring special for FGS
7. Organise FG learning community
8. Provide a reading list on challenges for FGS
9. Create sense of belonging
10. Help to build a network



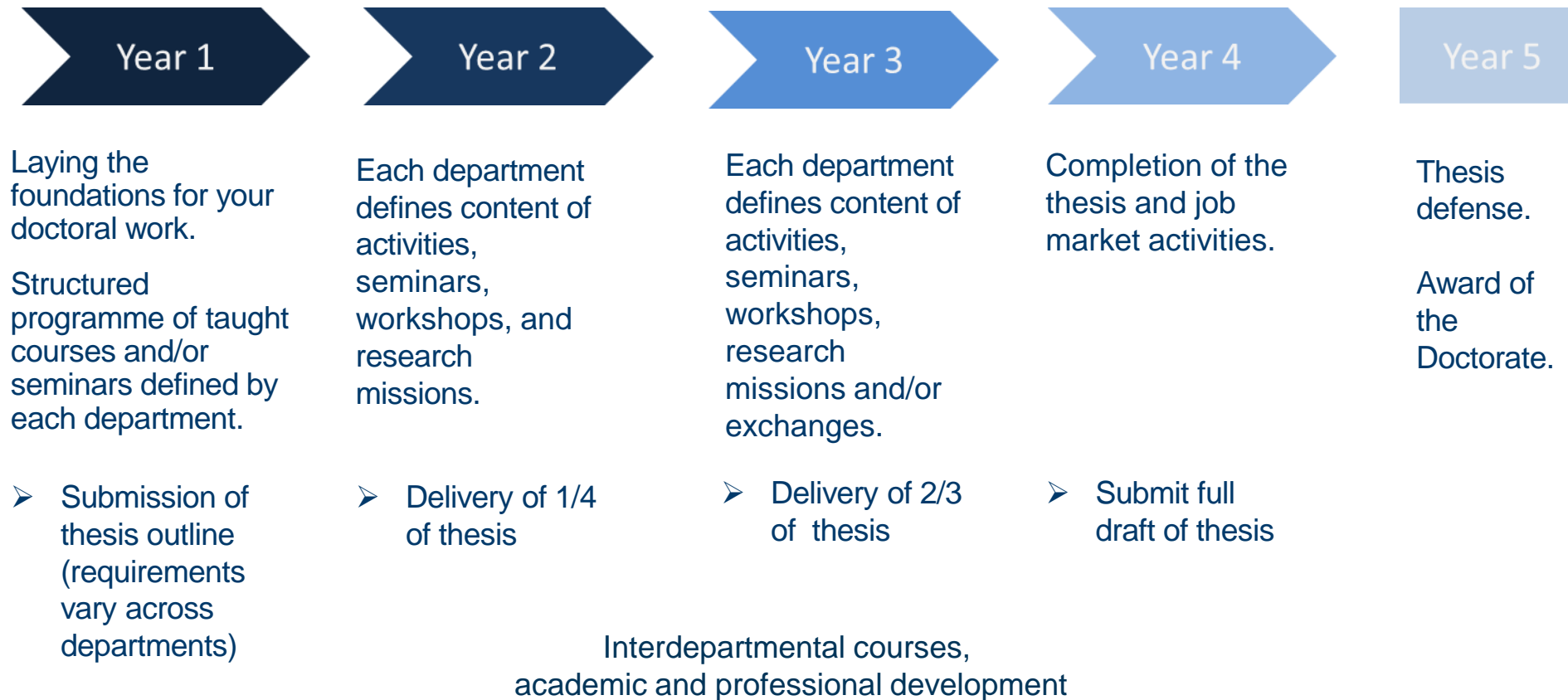
# PART 2

# THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

# 1. About the EUI

- Founded in 1972
- 23 member states (EU minus Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania)
- Focusing on doctoral and post-doctoral studies, and advanced research
- Every year up to 150 fully-funded scholarships are available in: Economics, History and Civilisation, Law, Political and Social Sciences
- Around 600 doctoral students (researchers)
- Structured PhD program
- Around 100 fulltime and part time faculty members
- Around 100 fellows

# 2. Structured PhD Programme



# PART 3

# FIRST GENERATION INITIATIVE AT EUI

# 1. Educational background of applicants

## PhD programme (cohort 2021-22):

	Parental educational level	Overall (1069)		Preselected (315)		Proposed (186)		Admitted (115)	
FGS	None	403	38%	89	28%	49	26%	32	28%
CGS	BA	255	24%	65	21%	37	21%	22	19%
	MA	237	22%	102	32%	68	36%	43	37%
	PhD	174	16%	59	19%	32	17%	18	16%

## 2. EUI First Generation Initiative

### 2.1. Peer group programme

Opportunities for exchange among FGS Ph.D. researchers and Master students can help participants to open up, share common experiences, and reassure them that they are not alone with their questions or doubts. The EUI organises small peer groups as a safe space to meet informally and talk about first-generation issues.

Researchers and students who joined the 4 peer groups that were created: 12.

*Relevance from literature: create sense of belonging*

# 2. EUI First Generation Initiative

## 2.2 Mentoring programme of the EUI Alumni Association

This programme provides an opportunity for first-generation doctoral researchers and Master students to connect with EUI Alumni who are available to share their FG experience and give support and advice. The EUI provides, on request, a list of alumni available for individual meetings.

Number of Alumni and Alumnae willing to be mentors: 10.

Number of mentees: ?

*Relevance from literature:* establish faculty mentoring

## 2. EUI First Generation Initiative

### 2.3. Individual exchange with EUI professors or senior fellows

A short survey conducted among FG EUI researchers and students revealed that most of them considered individual meetings with senior academics helpful, to address any potential disadvantage related to being first-generation at the EUI.

The EUI provides a list of professors and senior fellows available for individual meetings.

Mentors: 7 faculty members and 1 Max Weber Fellow.

*Relevance from literature:* establish tutoring special for FGS and personal relationship with FGS



## 2. EUI First Generation Initiative

### 2.4. First-generation meetings (experience sharing)

Meetings for all EUI academics who identify as FGS are organised at the beginning and the end of each academic year to inform about the initiative, take stock and collect new ideas. During these occasions FGS faculty members and fellows share their experiences.

We organised several meetings during this academic year (2021-2022).

*Relevance from literature:* help to built a network

# 2. EUI First Generation Initiative

## 2.5. Mailing list

The EUI academics who identify as FGS are part of a mailing list to get up-dates, make comments or proposals on initiatives.

Number of newsletter subscribers: 75.

*Relevance from literature:* promote faculty-student interaction

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# Thank you!



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