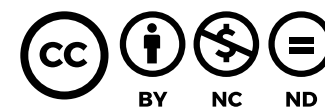


EUROPEAN ACADEMIC LIBRARY INDICATORS



The situation of French academic universities compared to other European countries.

2024 report with 2013-2022 data

six&dix



CONTENTS

1	THIRD EDITION OF THE REPORT	3
1.1	Things that have not changed compared to previous reports include the aim of the study, data, indicators and reservations	4
1.2	Things that have changed include timescales, countries, the source data of certain countries and reinforced consultation with some countries	6
1.3	The survey now covers 17 countries in 10 years	8
2	THERE ARE COMMON PRECONCEPTIONS IN THIS EUROPEAN CONTEXT	10
2.1	“Libraries are used less than they used to be” True, but this is recent, and importantly, is it a lasting trend?	11
2.2	“Students are borrowing far fewer printed materials” That is absolutely true	13
2.3	“Constant use of digital resources is exponential” True, but this is not in fact a huge trend	15
2.4	“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast” This is not what we observed	20
2.5	“There is no need to install workstations in library areas because everyone has a computer” True, but not altogether	27
2.6	“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change” Indicators vary on this point	29
3	THE SITUATION IN FRANCE - KEY POINTS	35
3.1	Student numbers rose steadily and significantly in 10 years, almost compensated by an increase in budgets, but still lagging behind European partners	36
3.2	Recently, floor area indicators fell a little	41
3.3	Opening hours are shorter and opening days fewer than elsewhere	45
3.4	Library visits record moderate numbers	48
3.5	Digital resource use is progressing but remains far below that of other countries	50
3.6	FTE staff numbers are lower than elsewhere, and falling, but staff costs are increasing	53
3.7	Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member is much lower than elsewhere	61
3.8	The highest proportion is in staff costs and the lowest in materials expenditure	65
3.9	Overall expenditure per student lies well below the European average (with reservations on comparability)	67
3.10	Summary of the situation in France in line with key indicators	71
4	WHAT NEXT?	74
4.1	Continuing to see new countries join the survey	75
4.2	Resetting the scope of data and indicators with partner countries	77
4.3	Moving towards a common tool?	80
5	APPENDICES	81
5.1	Common data	82
5.2	Common indicator	83
5.3	Links between the survey’s common data and ISO 2789 standards	85
5.4	Links between the survey’s common data and ISO 11620 standards	89

01

THIRD EDITION OF THE REPORT

This 2024 report updates the report published in 2018 (with 2013-2016 data), which was subsequently updated in 2022 (with 2017-2019 data).

Things that have not changed compared to previous reports include the aim of the study, data, indicators and reservations

In this report, **the main objective once again compares the situation of French academic libraries, and any changes**, with other European academic libraries. However, this increased consultation with various European partners marks a move towards a vision with broader European scope, and less focus on France.

The data and indicators are identical to previous reports (see appendix). They take into account current library challenges (support for Open Science for example), despite the fact that an overhaul of indicators would be key in a future report. And yet, a change in indicators could only exist in a scenario where all country partners' data sources evolved apace.

AS EARLY AS IN THE FIRST ISSUE, RESERVATIONS ON SOME OF THE REPORT'S CONCEPTS REMAIN RELEVANT:

- **The concept of “European average”** (that is, the average of indicators in a range of countries) can be challenged as it does not factor in the disparities in countries' population (Estonia has 1.3 million people and Germany has 83 million).
- **Academic libraries** that is, institutional libraries hosting both training and research activities, excluding national libraries – which is the case in France – as the BnF (Bibliothèque Nationale de France) does not contribute to the ESGBU (General Statistical Survey of Academic Libraries). These libraries are not guaranteed to be exactly identical to those of other countries.
- **The reliability of certain indicators** still provides no guarantee (for example physical visits and website visits) even though the development of the COUNTER standard (especially in France) is gradually helping to improve visibility and coherence of the measurements, regarding the measurement of digital resource use and services.
- **Comparative library budgets in Europe** remain skewed by factors such as the wide range of international standards of living (which are particularly obvious concerning Swiss and Scandinavian financial indicators), a wide range of budgets in higher education and research (staff costs) and potential differences in publishing markets (materials expenditure).

Things that have not changed compared to previous reports include the aim of the study, data, indicators and reservations



Lastly, because indicators are primarily based on student numbers, **this indicator will be more favorable if the latter population decreases without any resources being added.** Results may therefore need to be examined closely in the case of countries such as Austria, Denmark, Finland and Germany. Their student numbers having decreased, with resources unchanged, indicators have improved automatically. In contrast, student numbers rose in the Netherlands¹, in Norway and France. As such, unchanged resources will therefore result in less favorable indicators.

1. In the Netherlands, a new national policy now far less open to foreign students could reverse this trend.

Things that have changed include timescales, countries, the source data of certain countries and reinforced consultation with some countries

Three years, clearly not usual ones (2020, 2021 and 2022), were added, because libraries experienced the total or partial closure of libraries due to 2020 and 2021 lockdowns.

One of the specific aims of this report was to establish the extent to which 2022 could be seen to return to the “yardstick” of 2019 or whether the impact of lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 had led to more profound changes.

In 2020 and 2021, because of the pandemic, data entry of all the inputs required by a given country’s institution may not have been as comprehensive as usual. Since 2020, certain countries such as Finland have ceased to enter all these national data points.

A further two countries joined the survey: Belgium, (2021-2022) and Poland (2020- 2022). Other countries are likely to join in a future survey: Czechia and possibly Luxembourg².

As regards Belgium, it is interesting to note that ADBU’s invitation to join the survey enabled better understanding and consolidation of data in both Flemish and French speakers.

Unfortunately, in some countries, the data could not be incorporated into the survey. That is the case for Italy (there is no national survey there) and Portugal (we had no returns from our contacts).

2. There is in fact only one library in Luxembourg: the Luxembourg Learning Centre.

Things that have changed include timescales, countries, the source data of certain countries and reinforced consultation with some countries

Data from Cyprus was collected but could not be considered at the moment because of the low number of students concerned (15,000 students for a population of 900,000).

Data from Québec's academic libraries was added (from the 2013-2014 academic years and the 2020-2021 period), with a view to start a comparison with North American university libraries. Naturally, this data was not incorporated in the "European averages". SCONUL (United Kingdom) had also approached American partners.

There had been consultation with some of the partners surveyed (Belgium, Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom³) to better understand the data used, share their analysis and create a real collective momentum across Europe.

On the topic of source data, **certain countries overhauled their national data strategy more or less extensively** since the second survey: there were some minimal changes for the United Kingdom (which now includes APCs – article processing charges – or using eBook titles), and more significant changes for Switzerland⁴ and Hungary⁵ (as the country incorporates all its library data, some of it has to be removed from non-academic libraries) and the Netherlands⁶.

3. Germany's partners were invited in July, with no response to date.

4. Switzerland no longer records floor area, training hours, own resources, website visits but it does record use of journal articles and eBooks.

5. Since 2022, Hungary no longer records FTE library staff and periodical and eBooks titles.

6. Since 2022, the Netherlands no longer records user places, workstations, opening hours and materials expenditure on digital resources.

The survey now covers 17 countries in 10 years



THIS REPORT FOCUSES ON 10 YEARS (2013-2022) WITH 17 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES:

France, United Kingdom, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Spain, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Estonia, Sweden, Greece, Belgium, Poland.

Some of these countries are outside of the European Union (United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland), others being in the European Union but not in the Eurozone (Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Poland).

FIVE OF THESE COUNTRIES REPRESENT 83% OF THE 17 COUNTRIES' POPULATION COMBINED:

Germany (83 million), France (68 million), United Kingdom (67 million), Spain (47 million), Poland (38 million).

FOUR OF THESE COUNTRIES REPRESENT 80% OF THE STUDENT POPULATION IN THE 17 COUNTRIES

United Kingdom (2.3 million), Germany (2.2 million), France (1.9 million), Spain (1.8 million).

Overall, these 17 countries represent 10 million students for 366 million inhabitants (2.8% of the population) in 2022.

The survey now covers 17 countries in 10 years

And we could even say 18 countries, since Québec is added to the list of European countries, thus allowing a comparison with a non-European country.

The study then covers a total population of **366,279,217 inhabitants!**
(Eurostat data for the year 2022)

The color codes of the countries are used in the study's graphs.



+  **QUÉBEC**
8,730,868 in.



02

**THERE ARE COMMON
PRECONCEPTIONS
IN THIS EUROPEAN
CONTEXT**

“Libraries are used less than they used to be”

TRUE, BUT THIS IS RECENT, AND IMPORTANTLY, IS IT A LASTING TREND?

The number of physical visits per student increased steadily from 2013 to 2019, it obviously dipped sharply in 2020 and rose again in 2021 and 2022, without ever reverting to 2019 levels. Data from 2023 and 2024 will establish whether visits have recovered to this level again. Switzerland enjoyed the most favorable situation, thanks to strong recovery.

Increasingly, students combine in-person study on campuses with remote work. In certain cases, it is likely that living far away from the university or having access to good working conditions at home will decrease the number of visits to their campus, and therefore also to their library. Increases in the use of digital resources and decreases in printed materials would clearly reinforce this trend.

Changes in students' physical visits to academic libraries (ALs) lie at the crossroads of two contradictory trends: a tendency towards “remote study” outside of the campus and another towards longer stays in an AL once on campus, as the AL is also a place for community and social interaction.

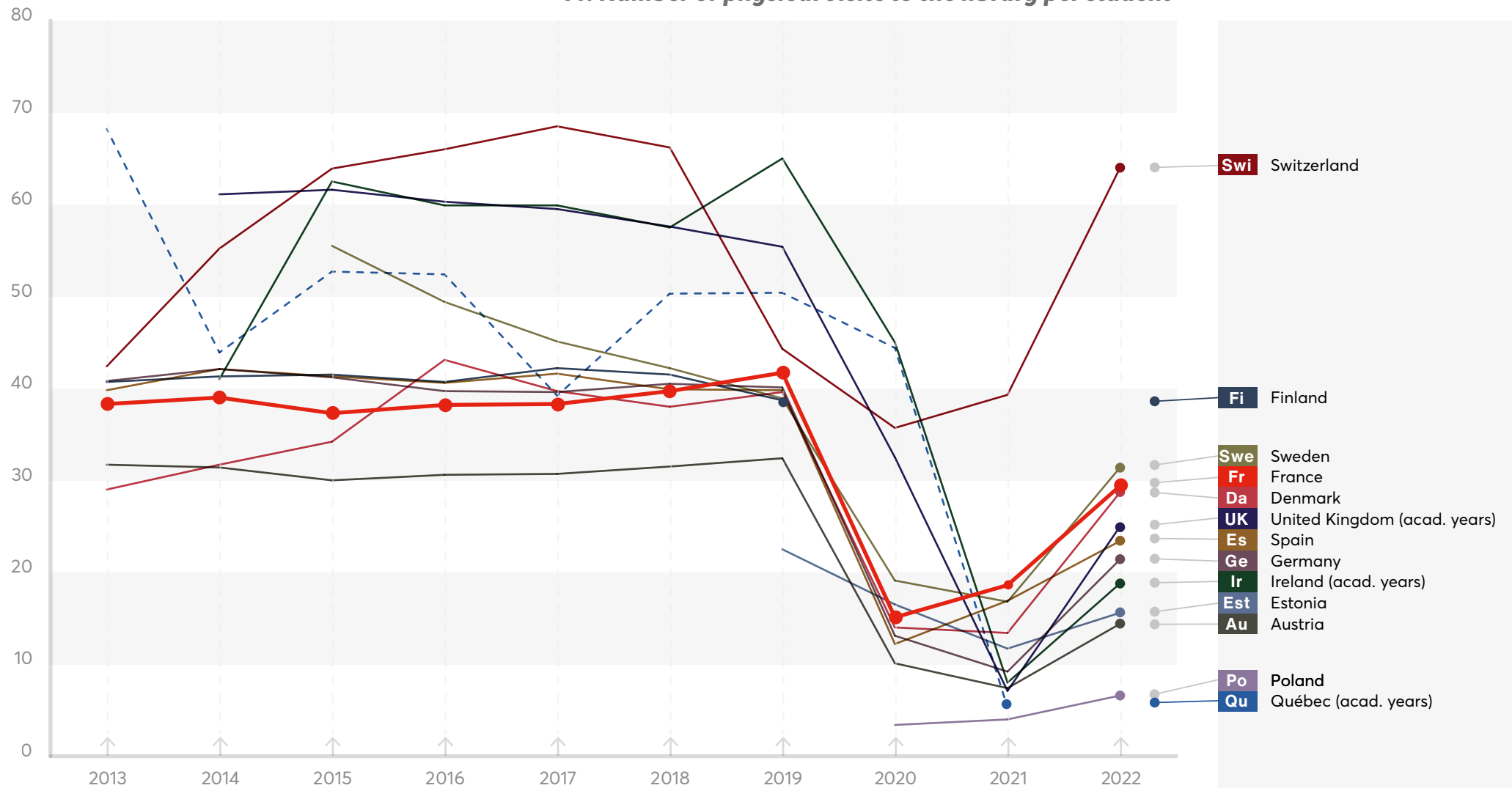
A campus may also contain places for study as well as informal areas, such as catering outlets, which are not included although students use them.

Again, the reliability of this indicator cannot be guaranteed because of probably disparate measurement methods, such as improvements in detecting group movements for example. However, if measurement methods remain the same from one year to the next for a given country, changes noted should match reality.

Moreover, most countries calculate this indicator by entering data for a civil year. Only the United Kingdom, Ireland and Québec enter the data for an academic year. Most countries witnessed the return to more frequent visits in the second term of 2022, with the end of limitations in opening hours and the return of ALs' full opening hours. However, the data here concerned the 2021-2022 academic year in the United Kingdom and Ireland, right in the middle of the Covid period. Which probably explains the more significant decreases for both these countries, compared with others which had entered the data as of 31/12/2022.

“Libraries are used less than they used to be”

14. Number of physical visits to the library per student



“Students are borrowing far fewer printed materials”

THAT IS ABSOLUTELY TRUE

Printed material document loans per student dropped overall by more than 50% (in other words, halved) in 10 years. The decrease was slow from 2013 to 2019, accelerated in 2020 and 2021 and was now reaching 2022 low levels.

Switzerland noted a massive decrease but loans remain at Swedish and Estonian levels.

In many institutions, if the digital version of the document has its printed “twin”, the digital document takes priority, often replacing the printed one.

These trends are bound to have an impact on the materials budgets of printed documents and on the salaries linked to the management of these printed materials: acquisitions, cataloging, processing, etc. (almost 25% of FTE in France).

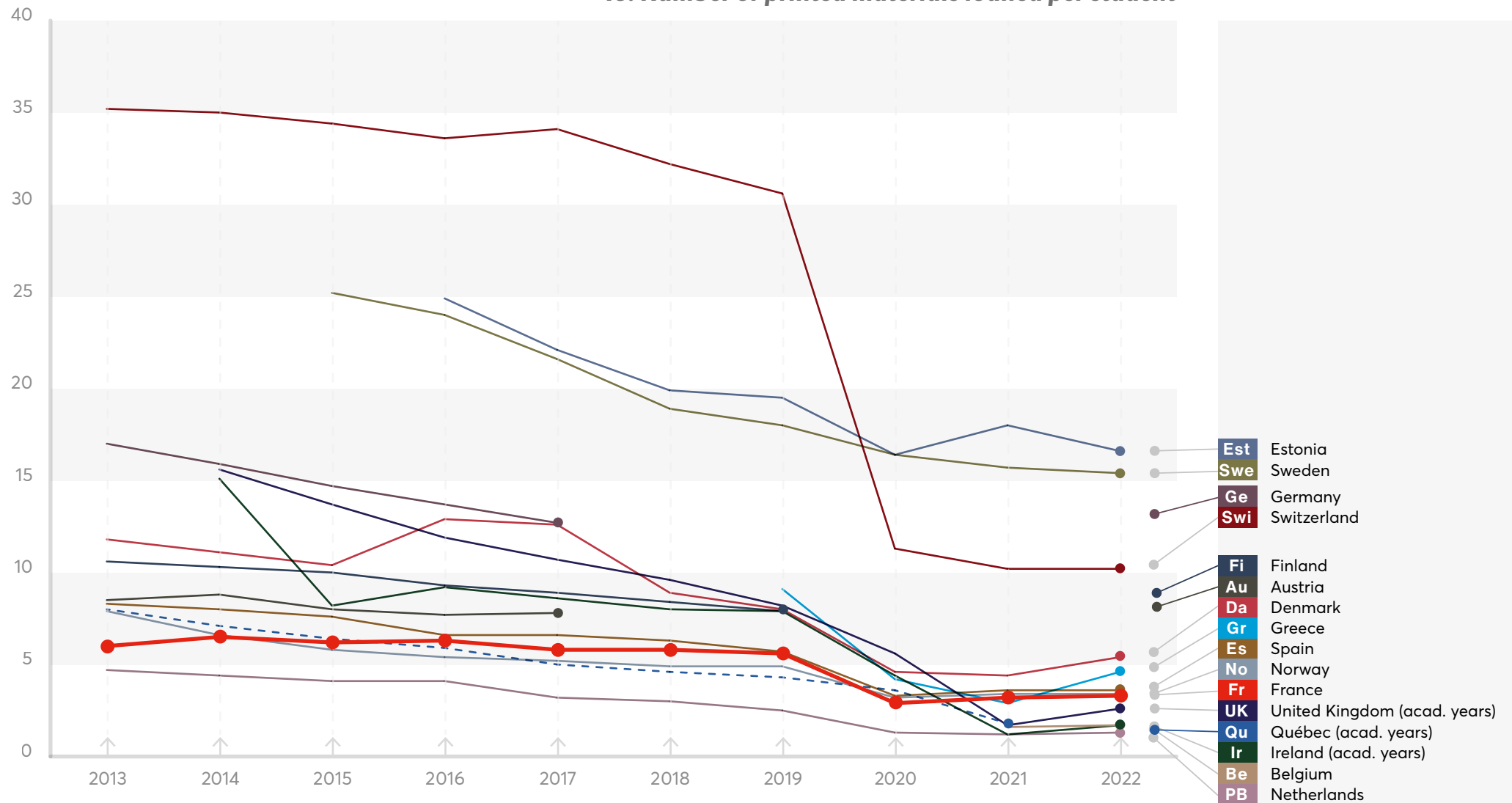
Longer loans, which represent a widely shared trend, mean that a document can be borrowed for longer, which lowers the indicator.

It would be important to take into account an “actual usage” indicator (loan duration at a user’s home) and consider renewal requests (which is what Germany and Austria do). A recent update in ISO standards increasingly emphasizes this concept of renewal and therefore use.

Other types of loan are undergoing developments that are not shown here (IT equipment loans, especially for computers at home over an academic year – a service developed in France during the Covid period – and loans of campus life objects).

“Students are borrowing far fewer printed materials”

18. Number of printed materials loaned per student



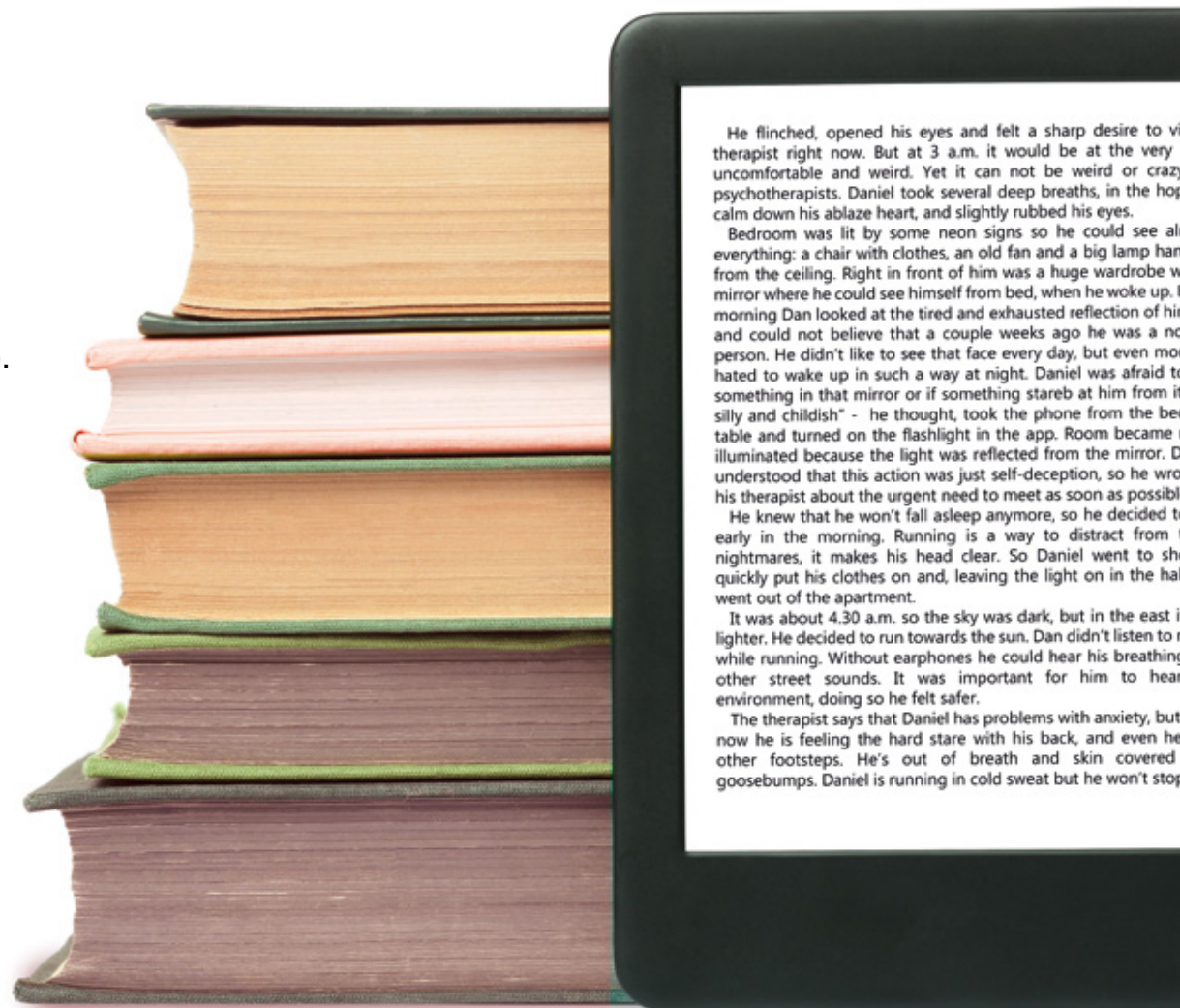
“Constant use of digital resources is exponential”

TRUE, BUT THIS IS NOT IN FACT A HUGE TREND

Use of periodical articles per student and academic staff in 10 years (+89%) was noted. There was a low in 2020, a high in 2021 and 2022 data returned to the 2019 trend.

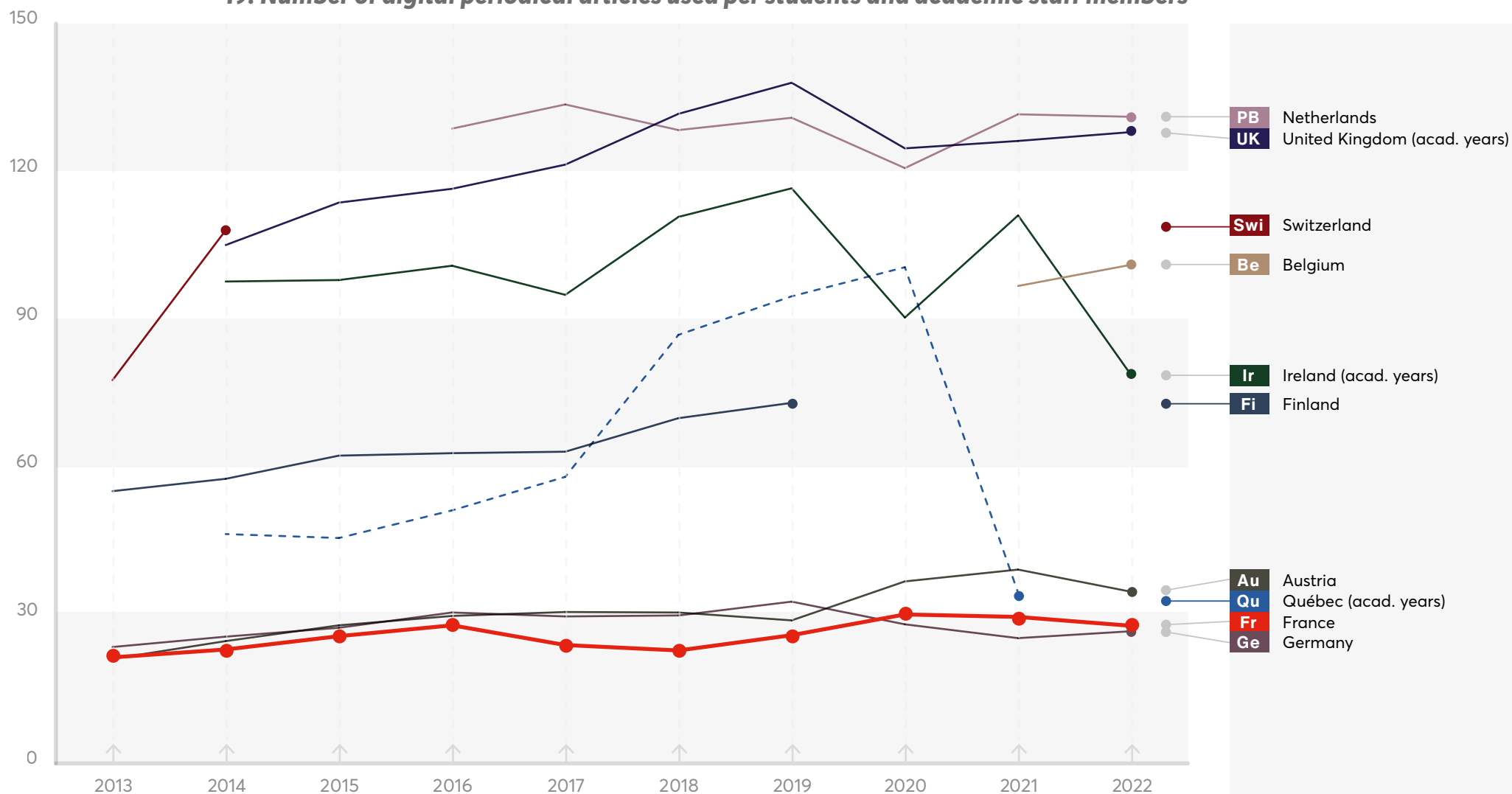
High levels of use in the United Kingdom may be the result of a largely English-speaking offering, also from the Netherlands (the latter having allocated more than 90% of expenditure to digital resources for more than 10 years).

Note that Denmark, Hungary, Estonia, Sweden and Poland do not appear in indicators I9 and I10 because academic staff numbers are not provided by these countries.



“Constant use of digital resources is exponential”

19. Number of digital periodical articles used per students and academic staff members



“Constant use of digital resources is exponential”

A much steeper rise in use could have been expected because of the fall in printed material loans. And yet this increase does not compensate the decrease in indicator I8 (number of loans per student).

This is because an AL is only one of the possible entry points to access online resources (materials resources may also be available in learning platforms) in a university.

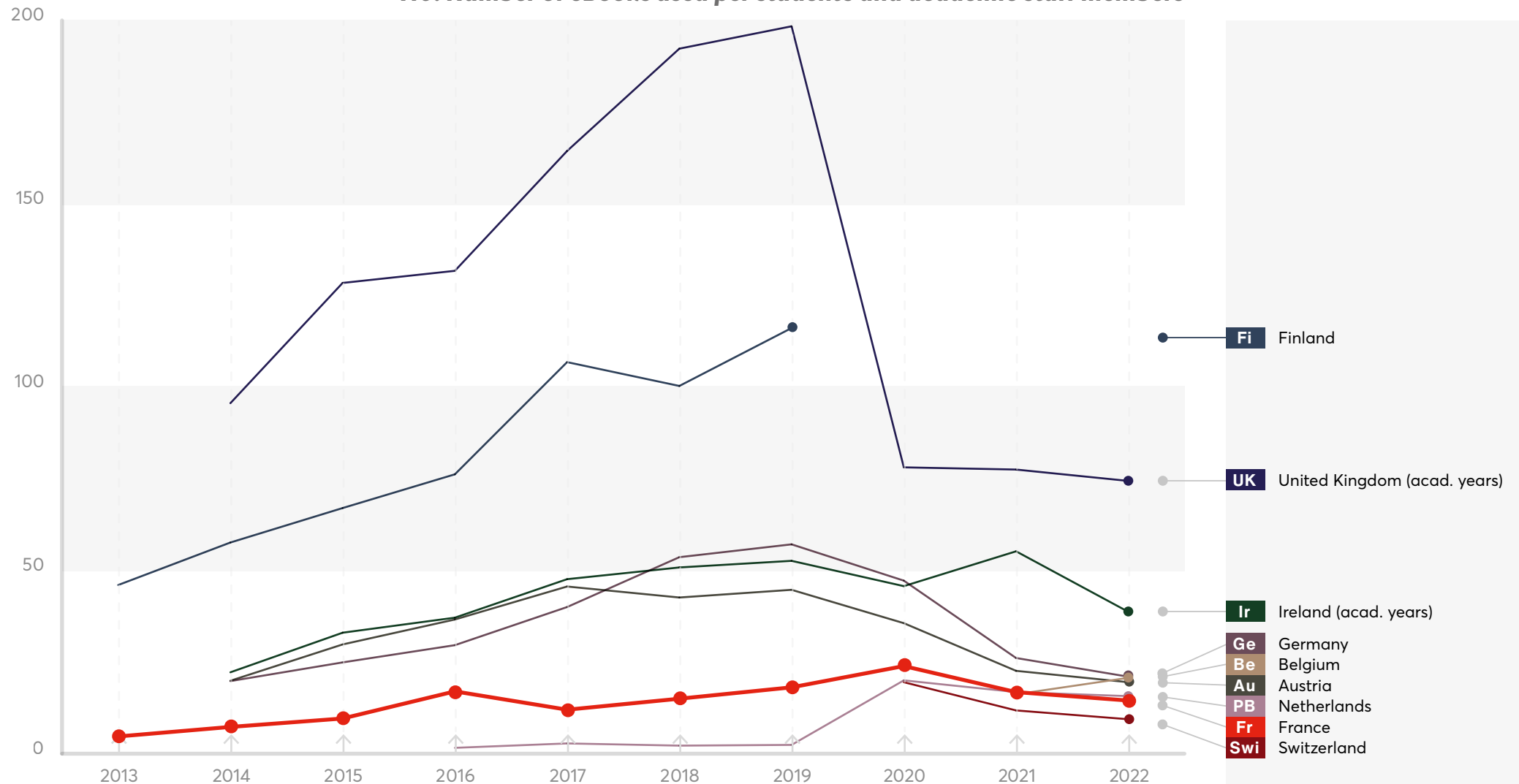
Changes in calculation methods for reading digital resources must also be taken into consideration: there is a gradual move to all COUNTER 4 and 5 standard resources with more targeted data in the ESGBU (the count is more accurate, but there is less to count). Interpreting the figures is not easy here, because factoring in different countries over the five past years created a time lag (this concerns data from ESGBU in France from 2021, but many other publishers were also still following COUNTER 4 standards).

There was a sharp drop in eBook use per student (minus 38% in 2022 compared to 2019) over the past three years which began in 2020 (probably because of strain on budgets). Values are very high in the United Kingdom because the measurement is counted in eBook sections. The pandemic led to this recent decrease but it also led to new calculation methods in some countries (see I9). Overall use has only progressed by more than 5% in 10 years.

The changes clearly correlate strongly with changes in the proportion of expenditure on digital resources, as part of total materials expenditure (around 80% on average.) The actual 10-year rise slowed in the 2020-2022 period. Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands reached percentages of between 90 to 100.

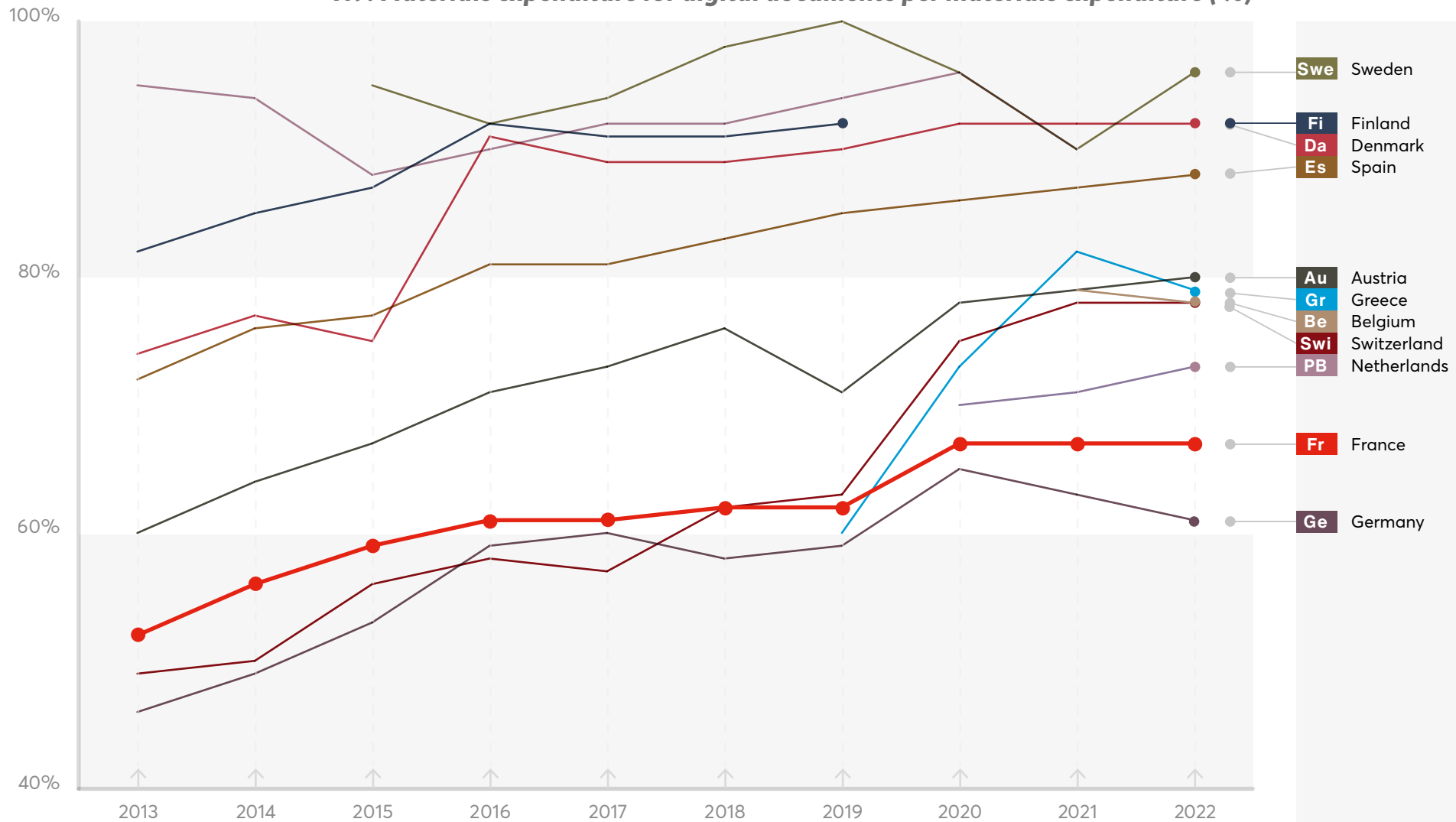
“Constant use of digital resources is exponential” TRUE

I10. Number of eBooks used per students and academic staff members



“Constant use of digital resources is exponential” TRUE

I19. Materials expenditure for digital documents per materials expenditure (%)



“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”

THIS IS NOT WHAT WE OBSERVED

In the past 10 years, the floor area for the public per student rose overall by 7.6% (knowing that only six countries produce this indicator).

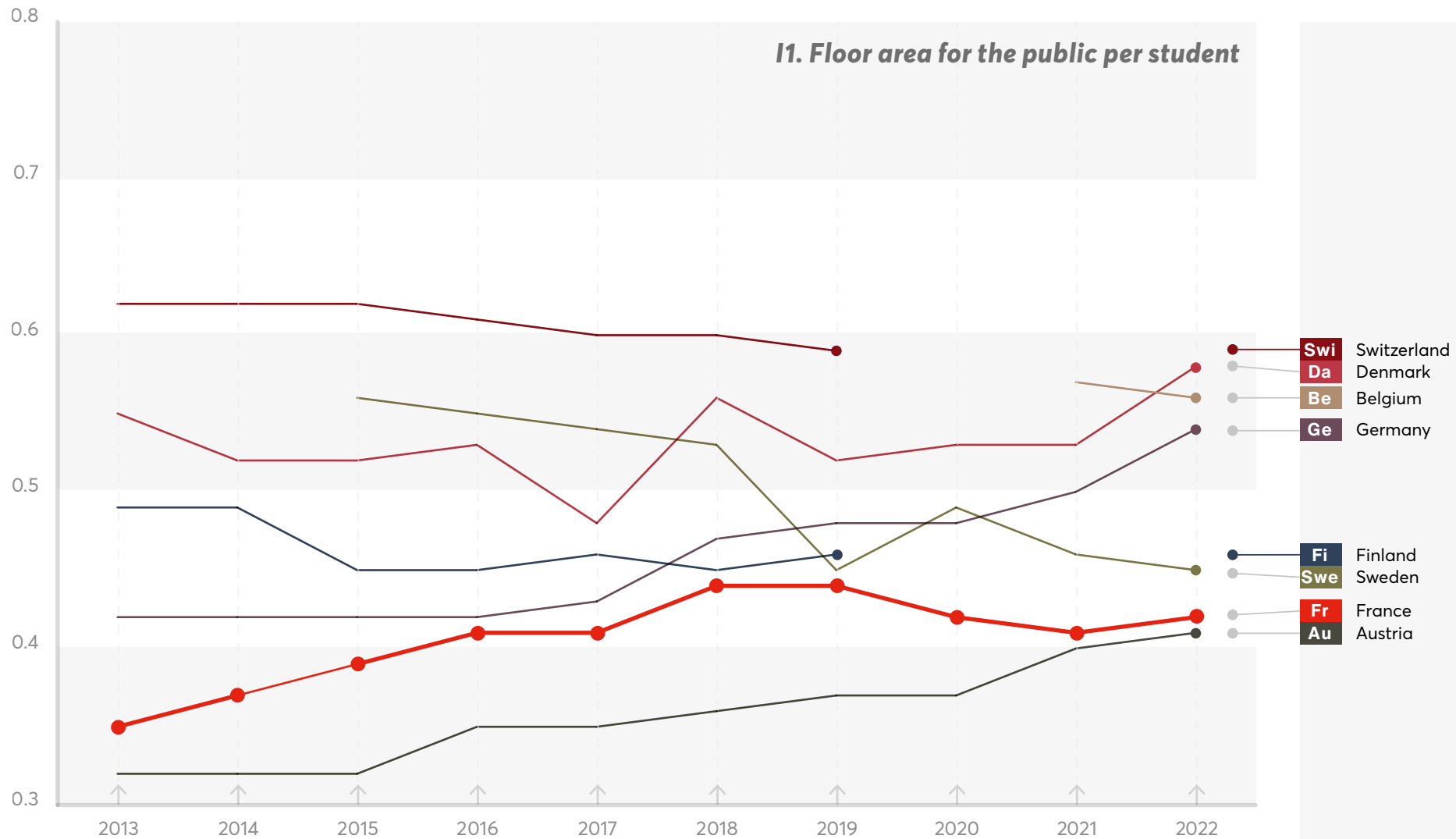
However, total square meters per student has dipped slightly by 6%. Switzerland and Denmark are in the most favorable situation.

It would seem that institutions optimize existing floor area to provide the public with more space. At a SCONUL discussion (United Kingdom) there was evidence, during the pandemic, that libraries had taken the opportunity to remove some collections and create more areas and user places for the public.

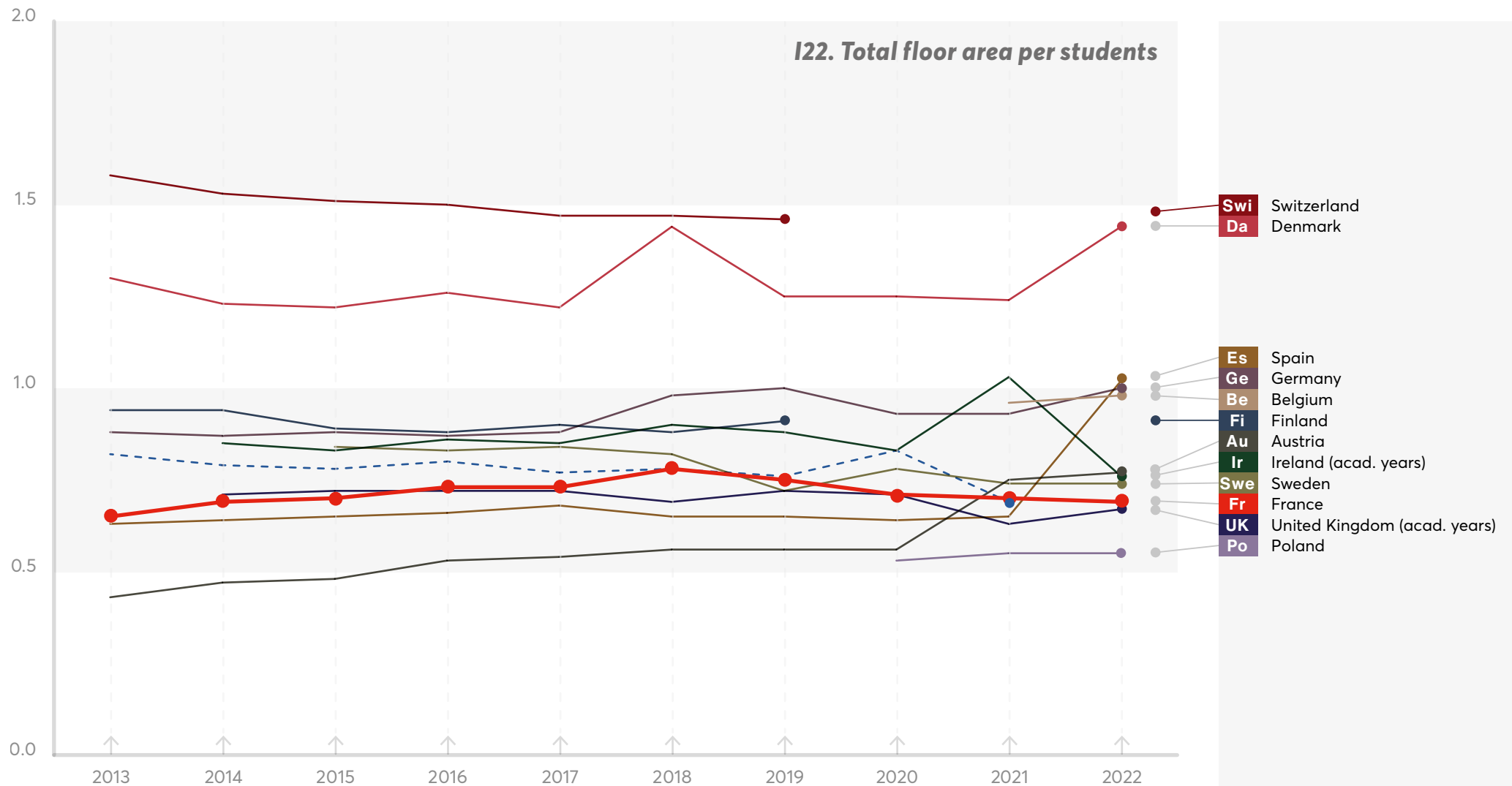
The United Kingdom has given thought to building warehouses for shared materials nationwide, with the objective of optimizing available floor area for the public by decreasing the area of printed collections⁷. Interlibrary loans are encouraged in the Netherlands.

7. <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/uk-distributed-print-book-collection-ukdpbc/>

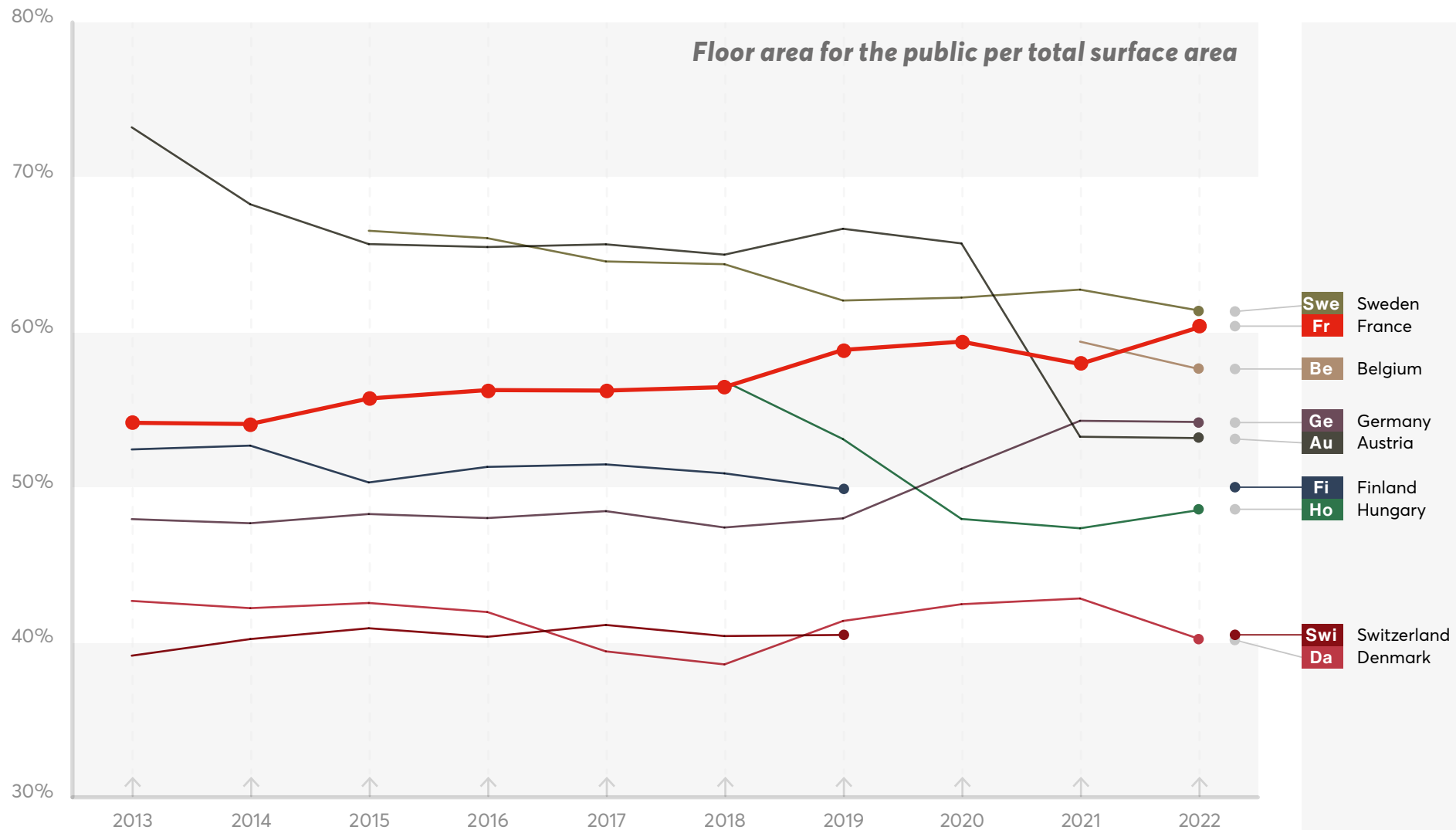
“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”



“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”



“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”



“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”

In addition, the number of places per student improved with a slight 8% decrease in 10 years, which ties in with an increase in public floor area.

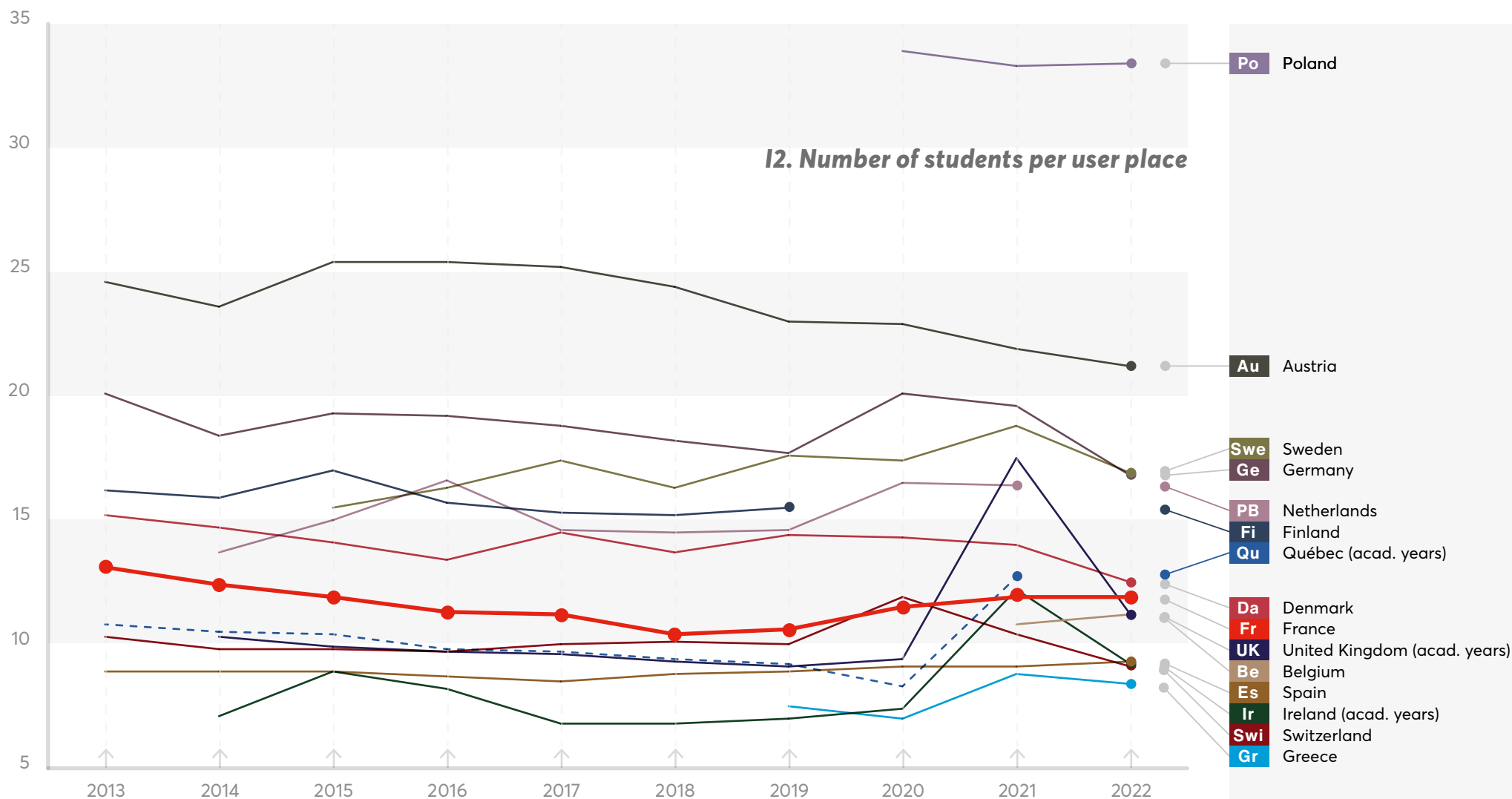
In the 2020-2022 period, there were marked changes between the United Kingdom and Ireland, apparently because of a problem with data collection on the number of user places in 2021 (few institutions responded).

The proportion of group work and study places also continues to increase, representing an average of 13%. Finland has recorded high percentages (20%) since 2013.

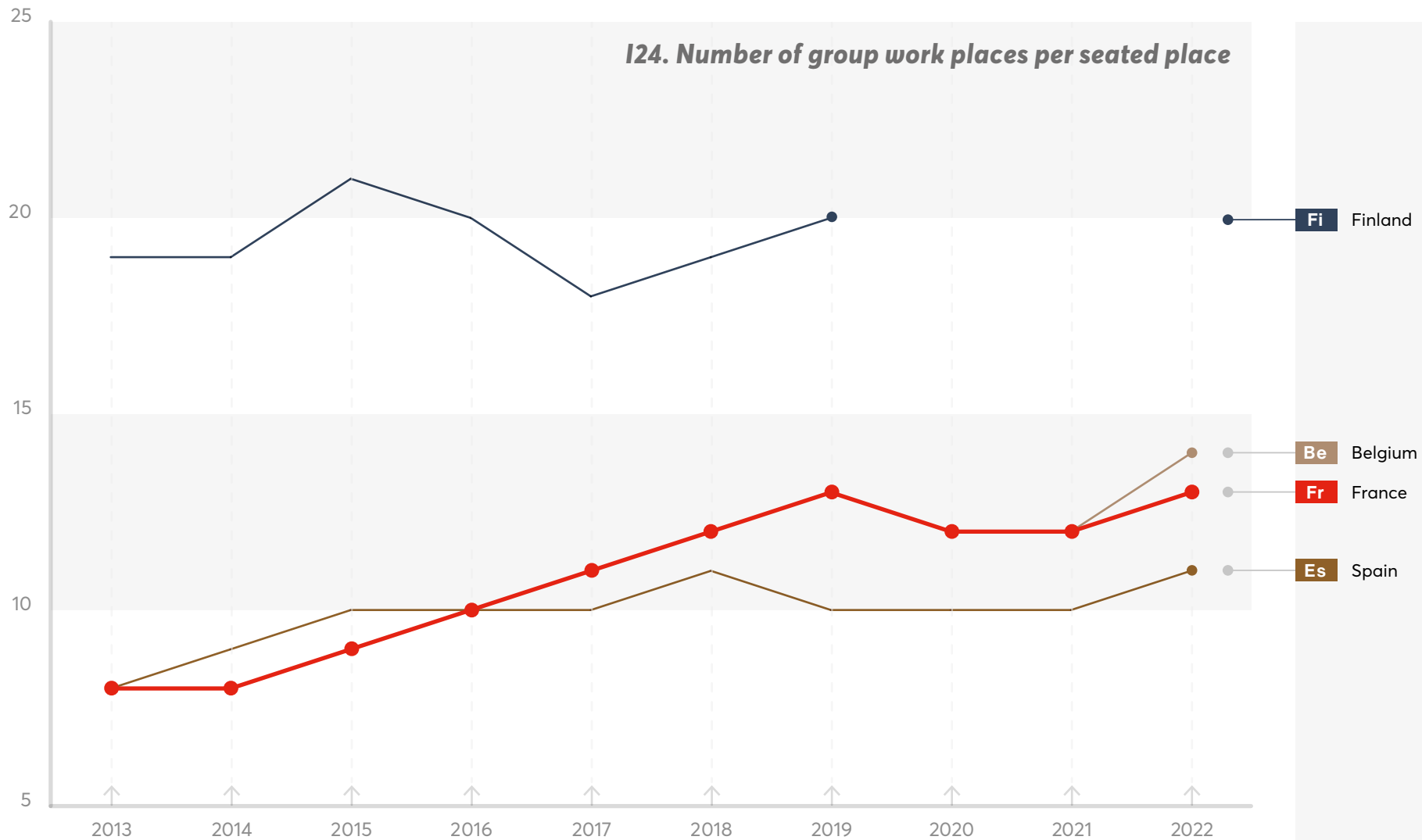
Student assessment methods clearly went from individual assessment requiring much reading to group assessment. A greater need for group study rooms is therefore required on the one hand and a drop in documentation use has been recorded on the other.

However, the indicator has only been followed in four countries, perhaps because areas are not categorized as neatly elsewhere. Areas considered for individual work may also be used for group work (comfortable seats, informal seating such as an easy chair, catering outlets, etc.).

“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”



“There is no longer any point in building libraries because digital resource use is growing fast”



“There is no need to install workstations in library areas because everyone has a computer”



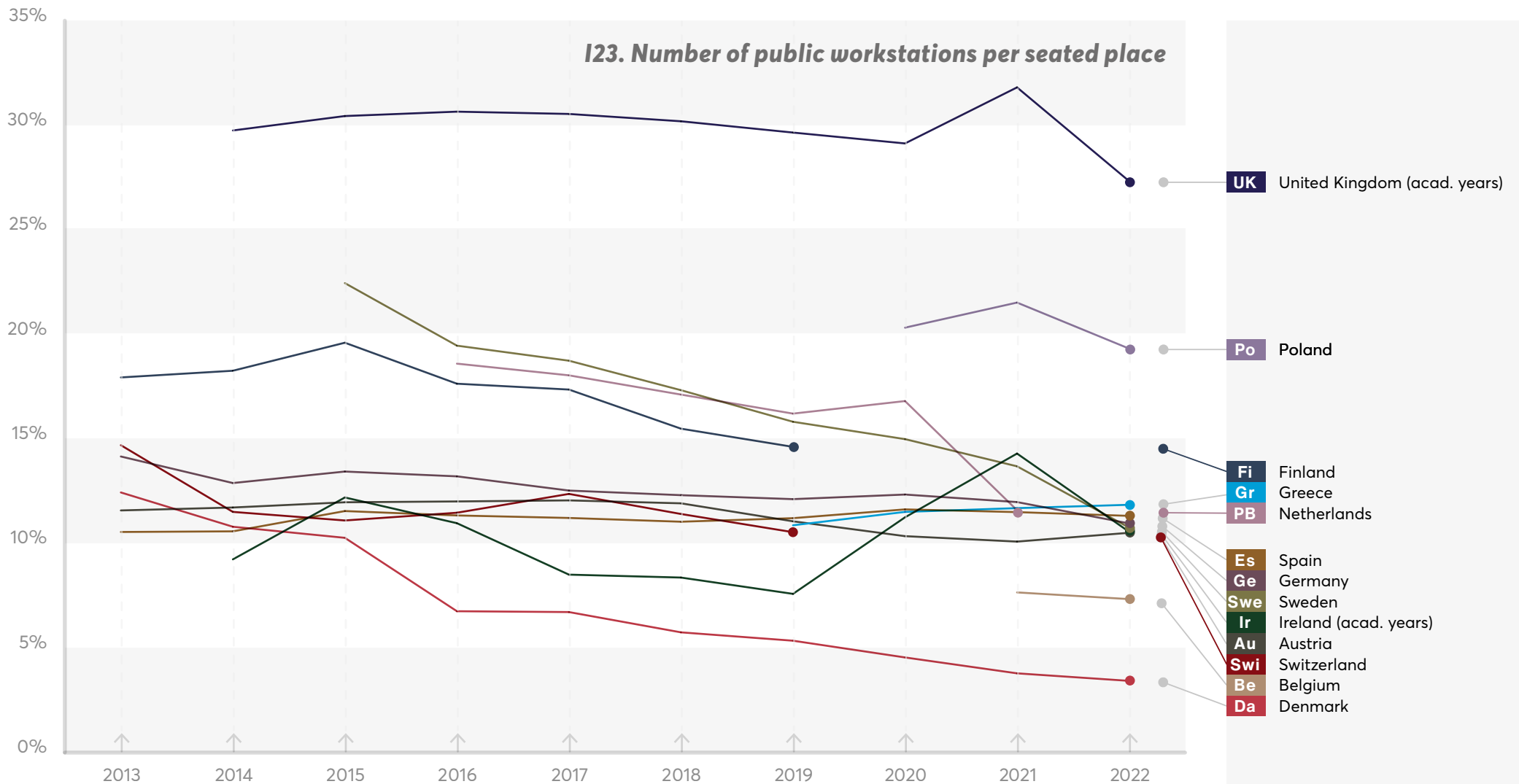
TRUE, BUT NOT ALTOGETHER

“Only” 9% of workstations per user place was recorded with fairly high ongoing provision (12% on average and 27% in 2022 in the United Kingdom).

Measuring the actual use of these workstations would clearly be useful. Developing computer loan services (daily or annual basis) should also be put forward.

Note that France does not monitor the number of public workstations.

“There is no need to install workstations in library areas because everyone has a computer”



“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

INDICATORS VARY ON THIS POINT

Opening days were obviously down in 2020, they rose again in 2021 and then in 2022, coming back to (around) 2019 values.

Weekly opening hours, however, continue to progress slowly.

This survey does not explain the peak noted in Denmark between 2017 and 2018. Spain's favorable situation can be explained by taking into account extended hours (and not a normal period).

Training for students did not drop as much: the number of students trained in 2022 almost matched those of 2019.

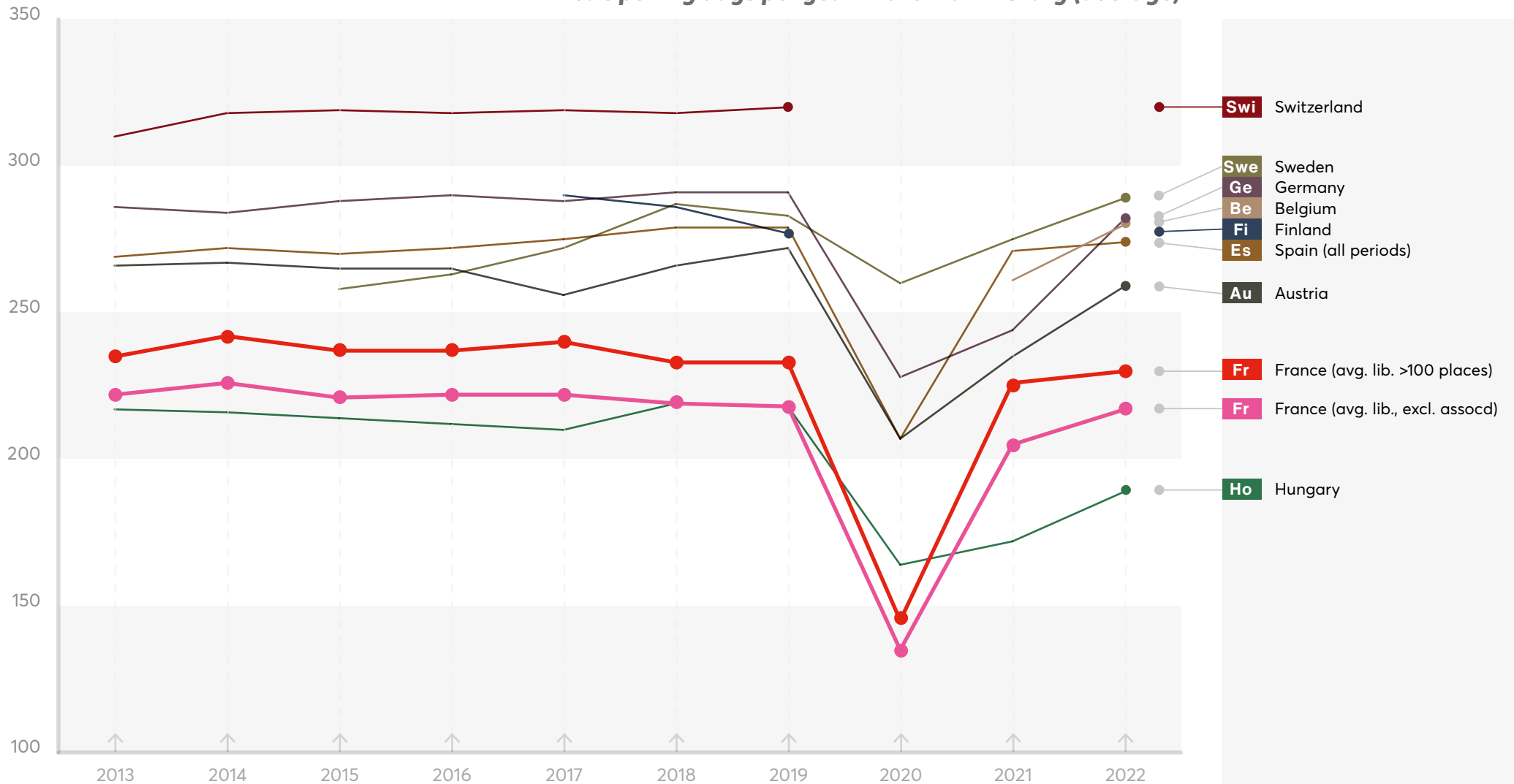
Student training periods dipped, not necessarily because of lockdowns. The reason for this might come from shorter sessions being developed, as well as online training that students can undertake independently.

In addition to data on materials training, it would be interesting to collect appointments with a librarian, throughout Europe, which have been mentioned in the ESGBU since 2023. These appointments are shorter and less formal and suited to each personal situation.

In 2019, **training for professional staff** has not quite returned to 2019 levels, but this was already an overall downward trend. Lastly, online training which has risen sharply, offered shorter formats than a full day, not necessarily requiring registration.

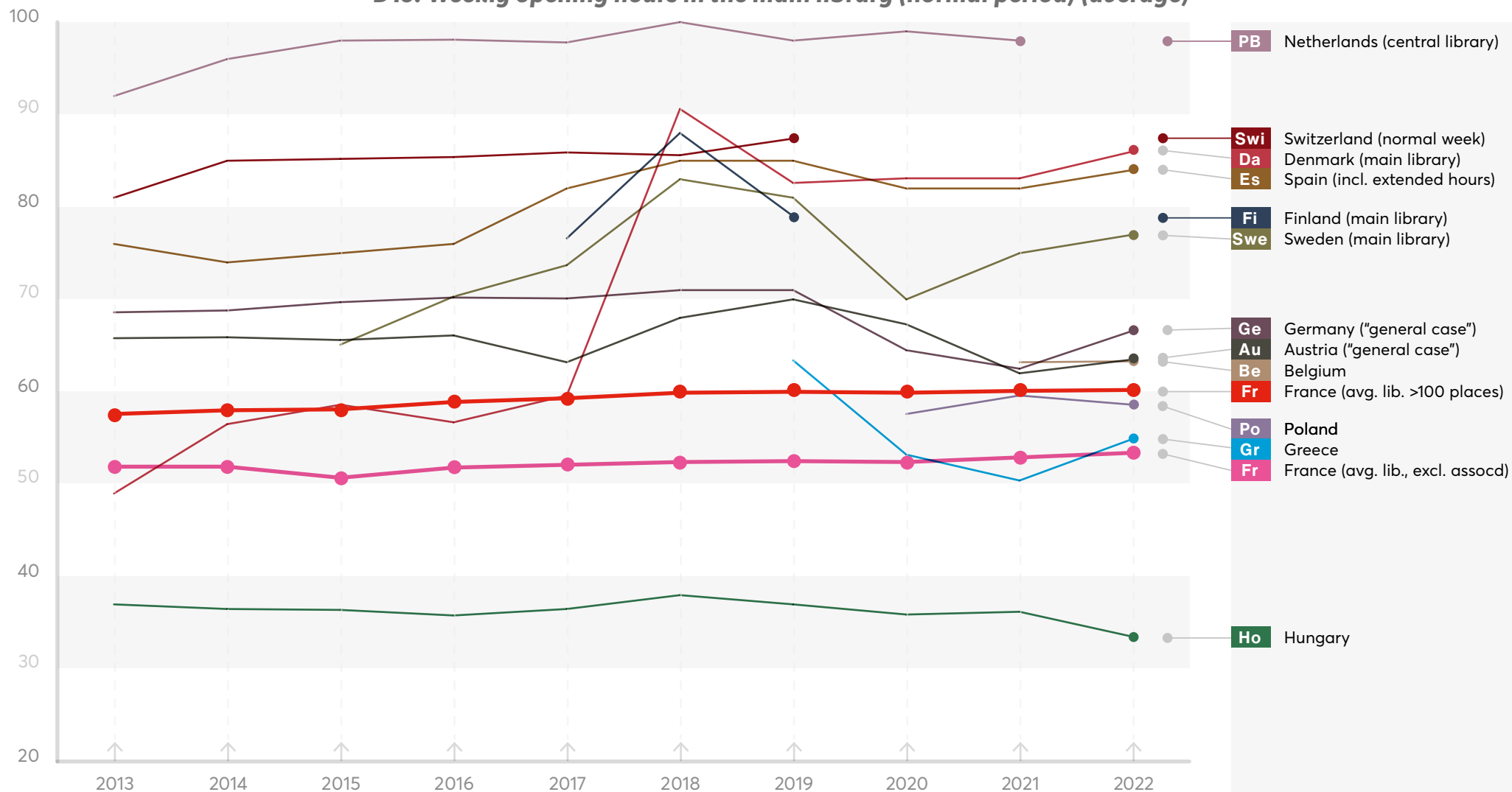
“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

D16. Opening days per year in the main library (average)



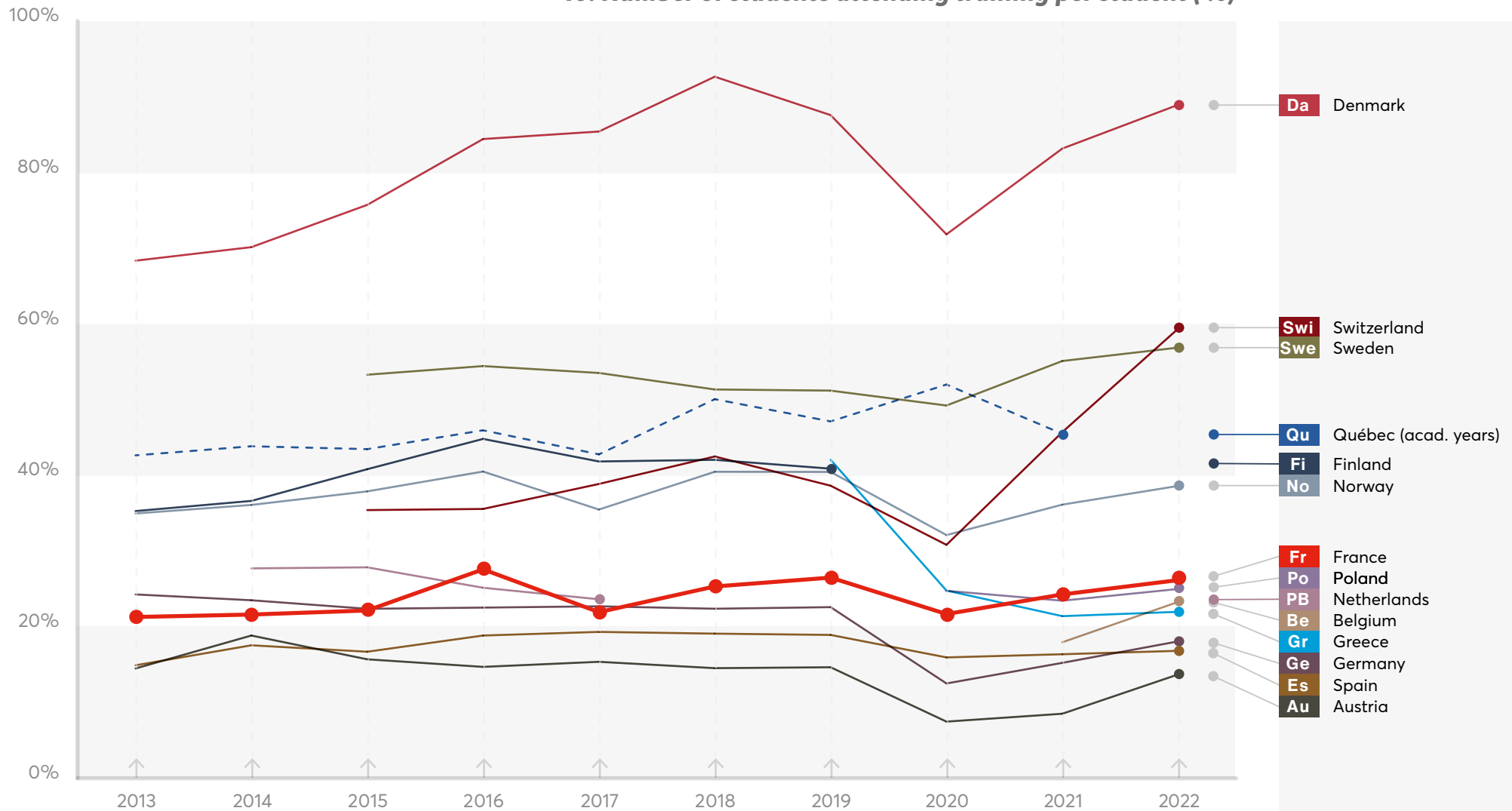
“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

D15. Weekly opening hours in the main library (normal period) (average)



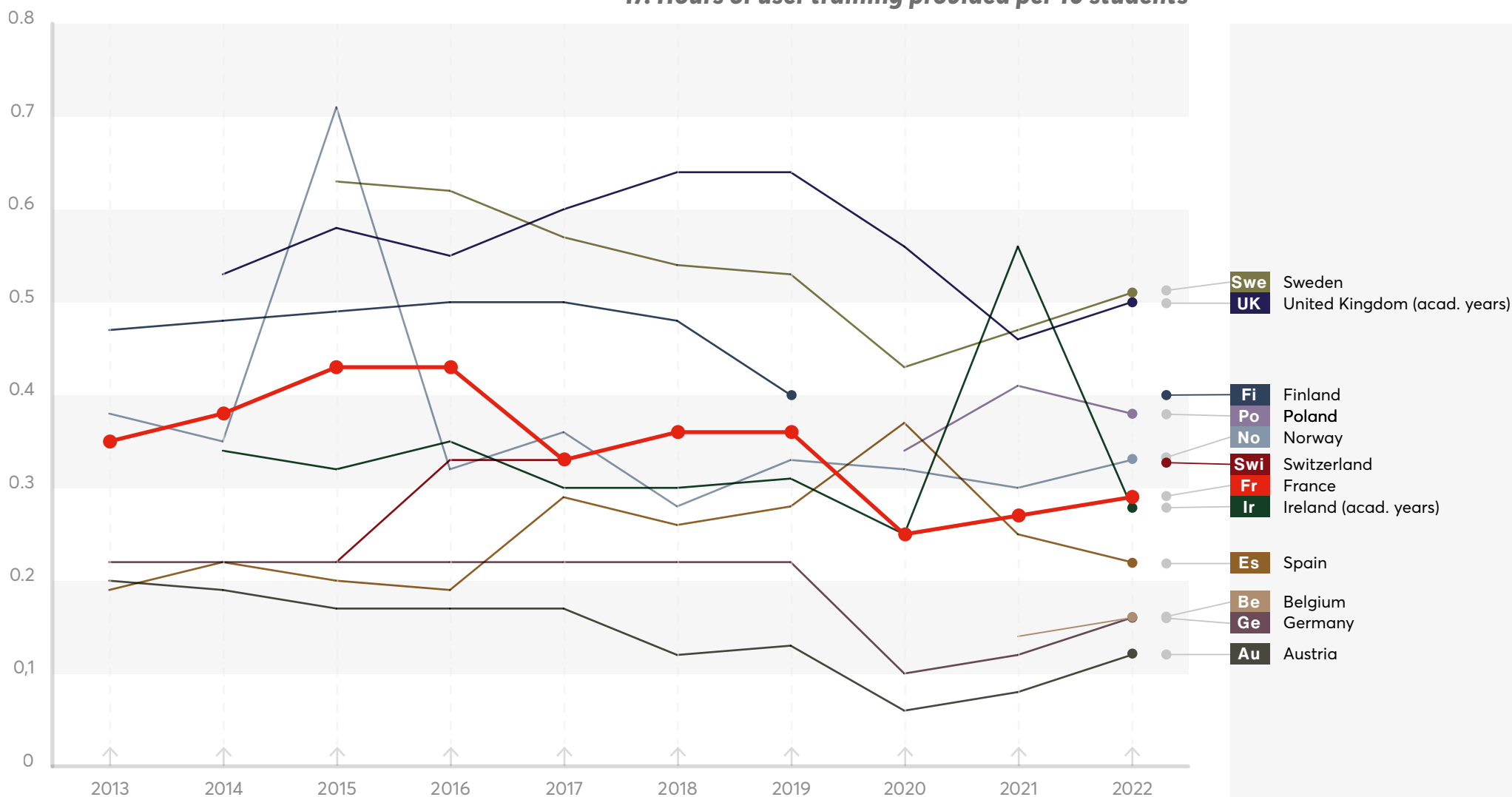
“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

16. Number of students attending training per student (%)



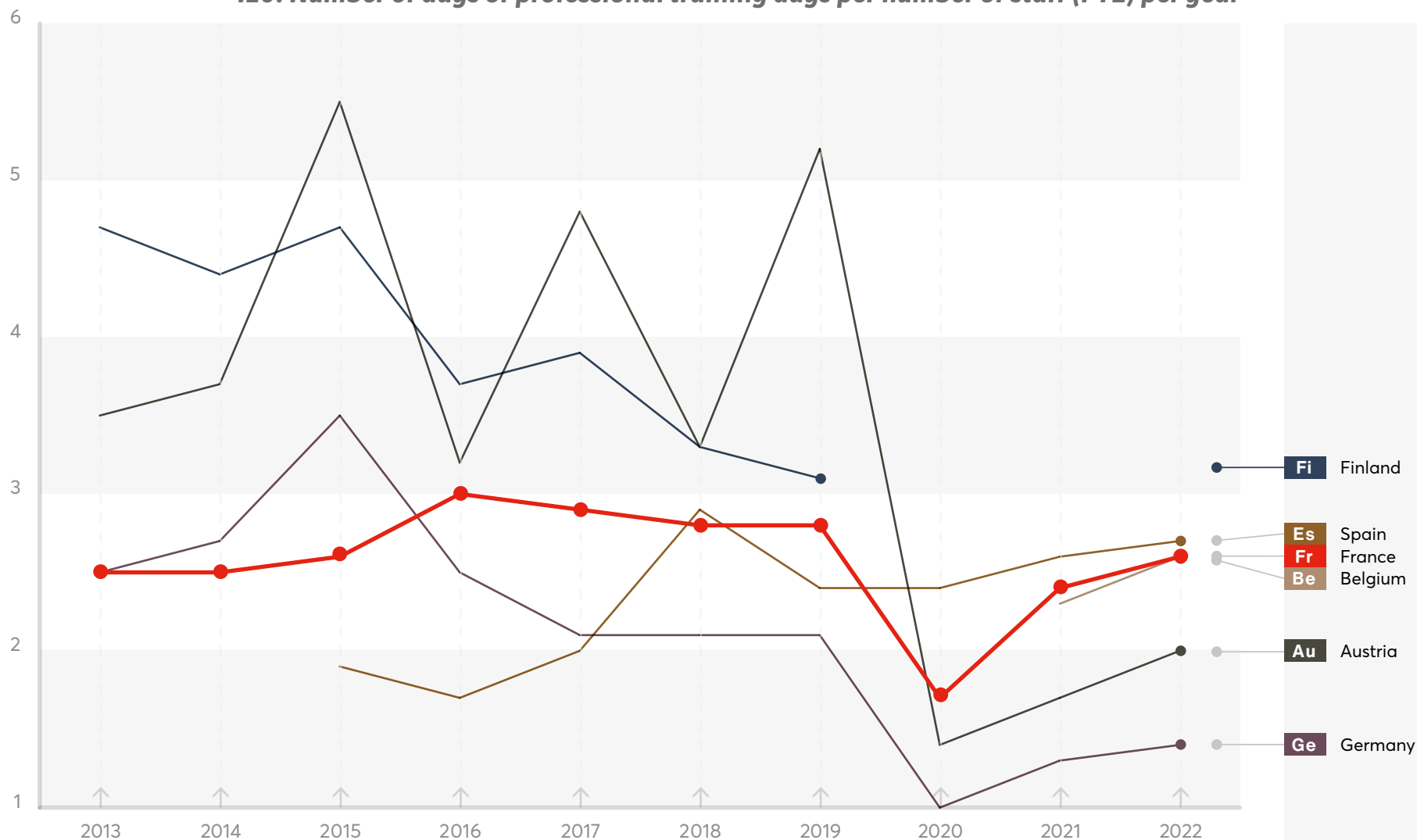
“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

17. Hours of user training provided per 10 students



“Lockdowns due to the pandemic resulted in lasting use change”

I20. Number of days of professional training days per number of staff (FTE) per year



03

THE SITUATION IN FRANCE - KEY POINTS

Increase in student numbers and in budgets these past 10 years



Student numbers rose steadily and significantly in 10 years, almost compensated by an increase in budgets, but still lagging behind European partners

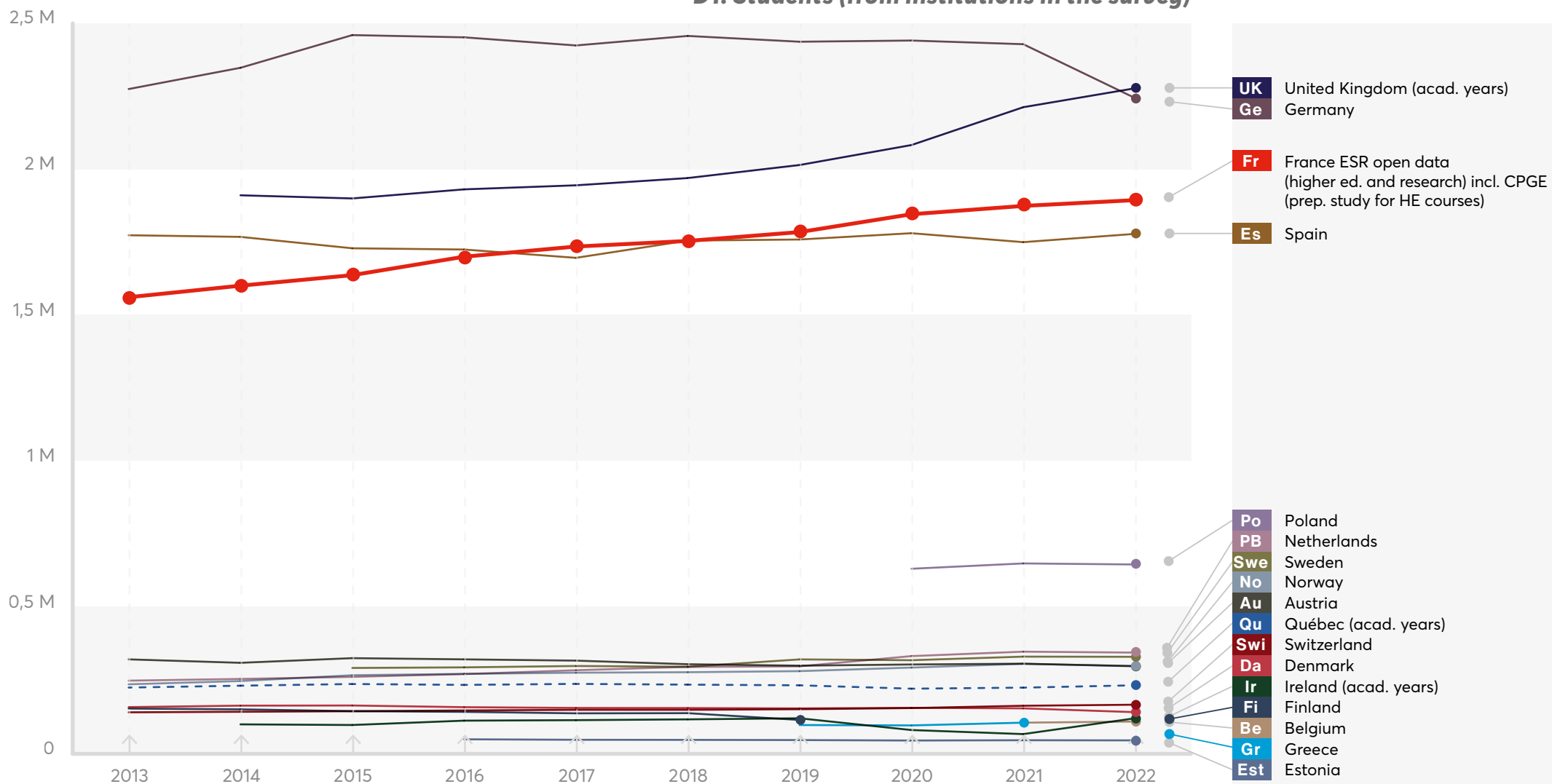


INCREASE IN STUDENT NUMBERS

This represents +21% in absolute terms in 10 years (+17% of students per inhabitant), the third largest increase in the 17 countries. However, the student per inhabitant rate (2.8% in 2022) remains the same as the European average.

Increase in student numbers and in budgets these past 10 years

D1. Students (from institutions in the survey)



Increase in student numbers and in budgets these past 10 years

INCREASE IN BUDGETS

The crux of the matter is whether or not French library budgets is funded and compensates the increase.

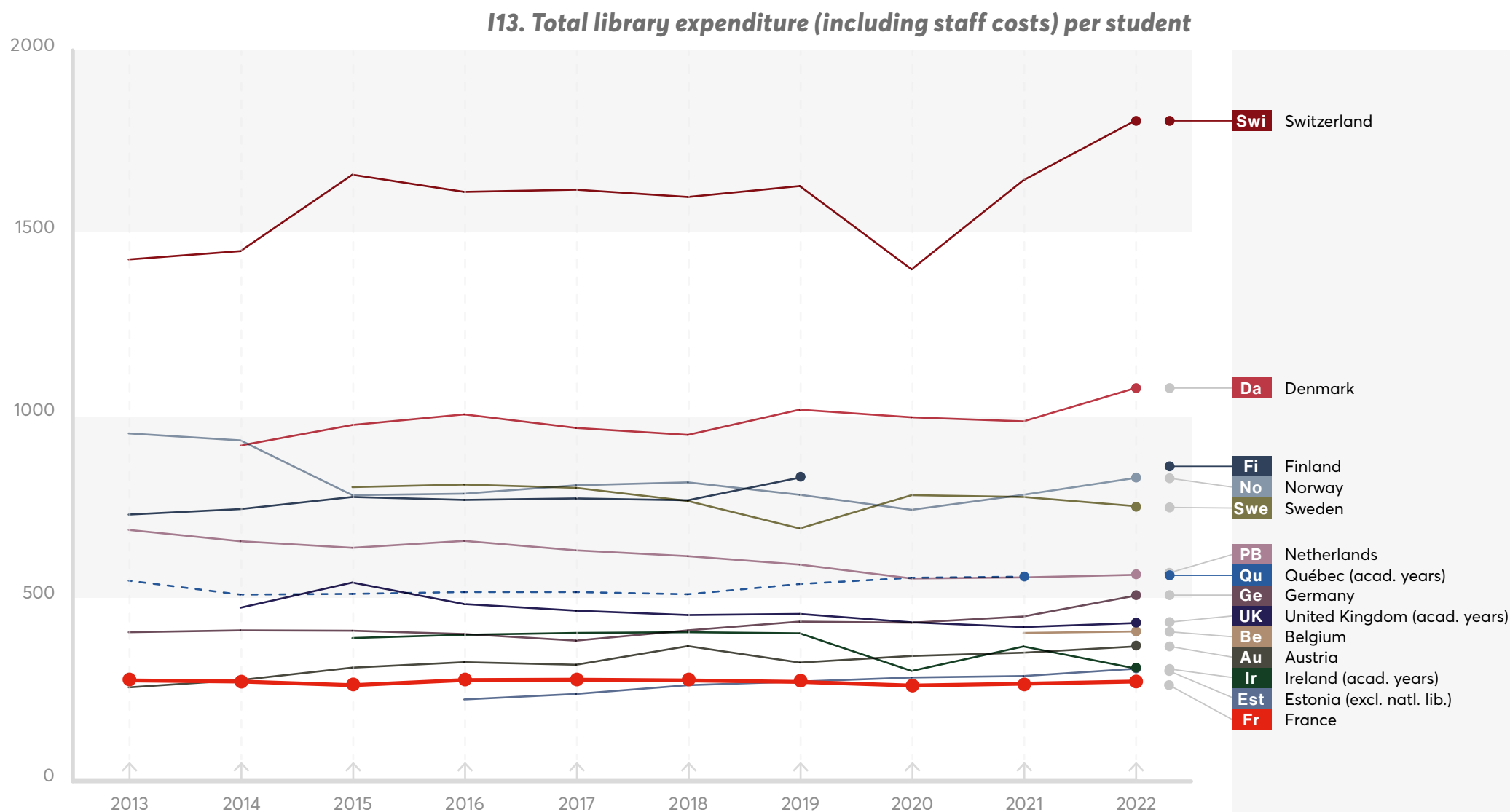
This is – not quite – the case (a 0.9% drop in expenditure per student in 10 years), knowing that overall expenditure per student remains at a lower level in the five past years than the average in Europe, excluding Switzerland (€273 instead of €530 in 2022).

Certain reservations on financial indicators per student deserve to be noted nonetheless:

- In terms of staff costs, the highest values are found in Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden, countries which enjoy high standards of living and a high level of social services (a likely proof of this correlation).
- Staff costs should also be analyzed bearing in mind the comparability in service offers and changes in productivity (especially if linked to digitization levels) when undertaking analysis.
- In terms of materials expenditure, comparing countries' cost of publication (print and digital) is no guarantee, given the outlook for the development of an Open Access offering (which does not necessarily require more spending for a broader offering).
- The practice of charging the university's fixed costs to the library (at a very low level in France) is a wide-ranging one. In particular, expenditure relating to utilities rose sharply in 2022 and 2023 and was paid for by other departments, such as maintenance, logistics, and property. Only members of a GIP (a public interest grouping) such as BULAC (a "language and civilizations university library") pay for utilities.
- Higher expenditure should naturally take inflation into account, given that significant inflation in Europe began in earnest in 2022.

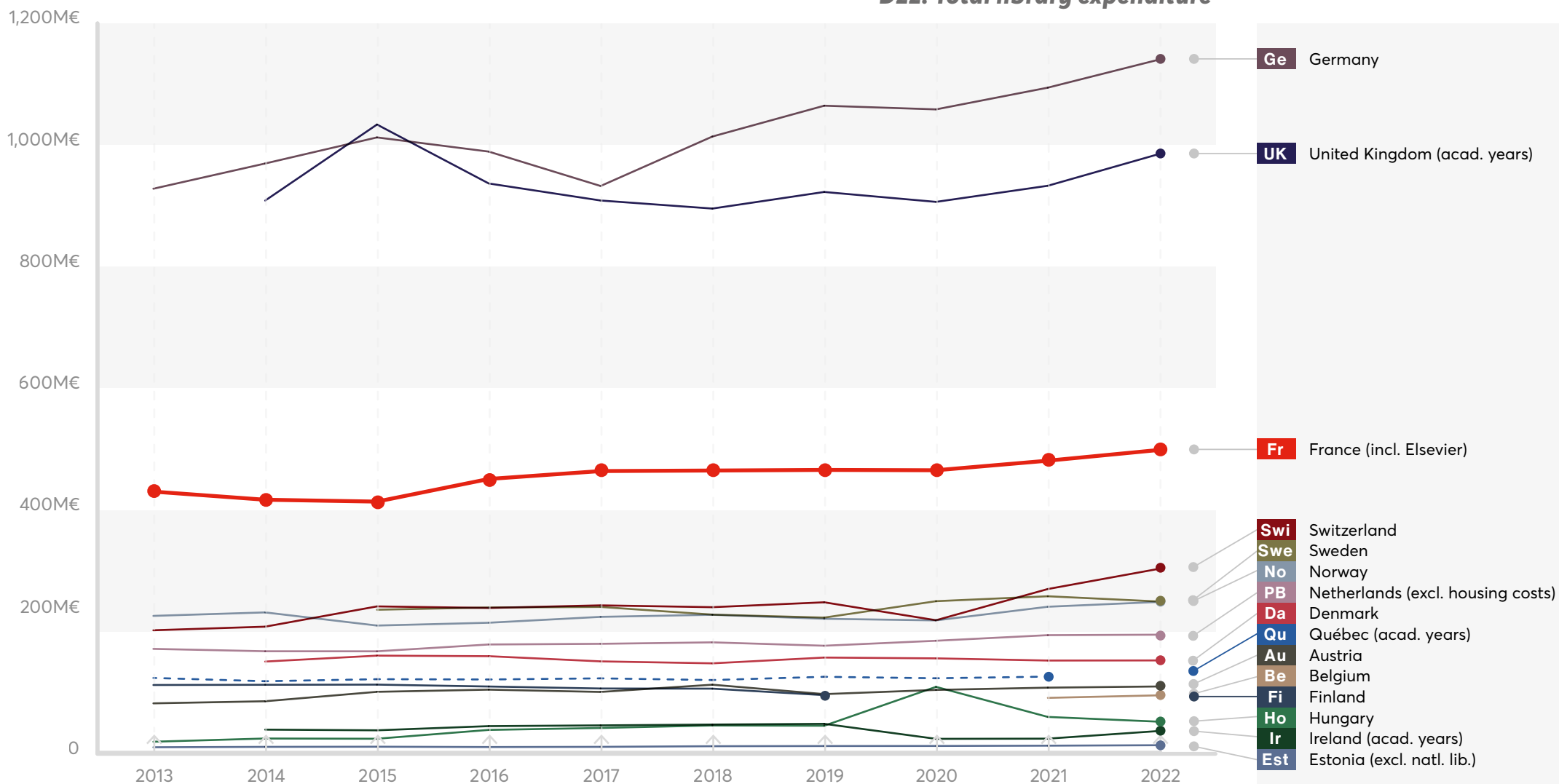
French library budgets increased in absolute terms by 20% in 10 years (+27% for staff costs, +8% for materials expenditure) with a specific increase in 2020-2022, probably due to a recovery effect and the end of all the building work being completed just before the pandemic.

Increase in student numbers and in budgets these past 10 years



Increase in student numbers and in budgets these past 10 years

D22. Total library expenditure



Recently, floor area indicators fell a little

There was a clear increase in floor area for the public until 2018-2019 but a slight drop was noted since (because of student numbers and ongoing construction). **However, recovery occurred in 2022** (resumption of building work was postponed in 2020 and 2021 because of lockdowns).

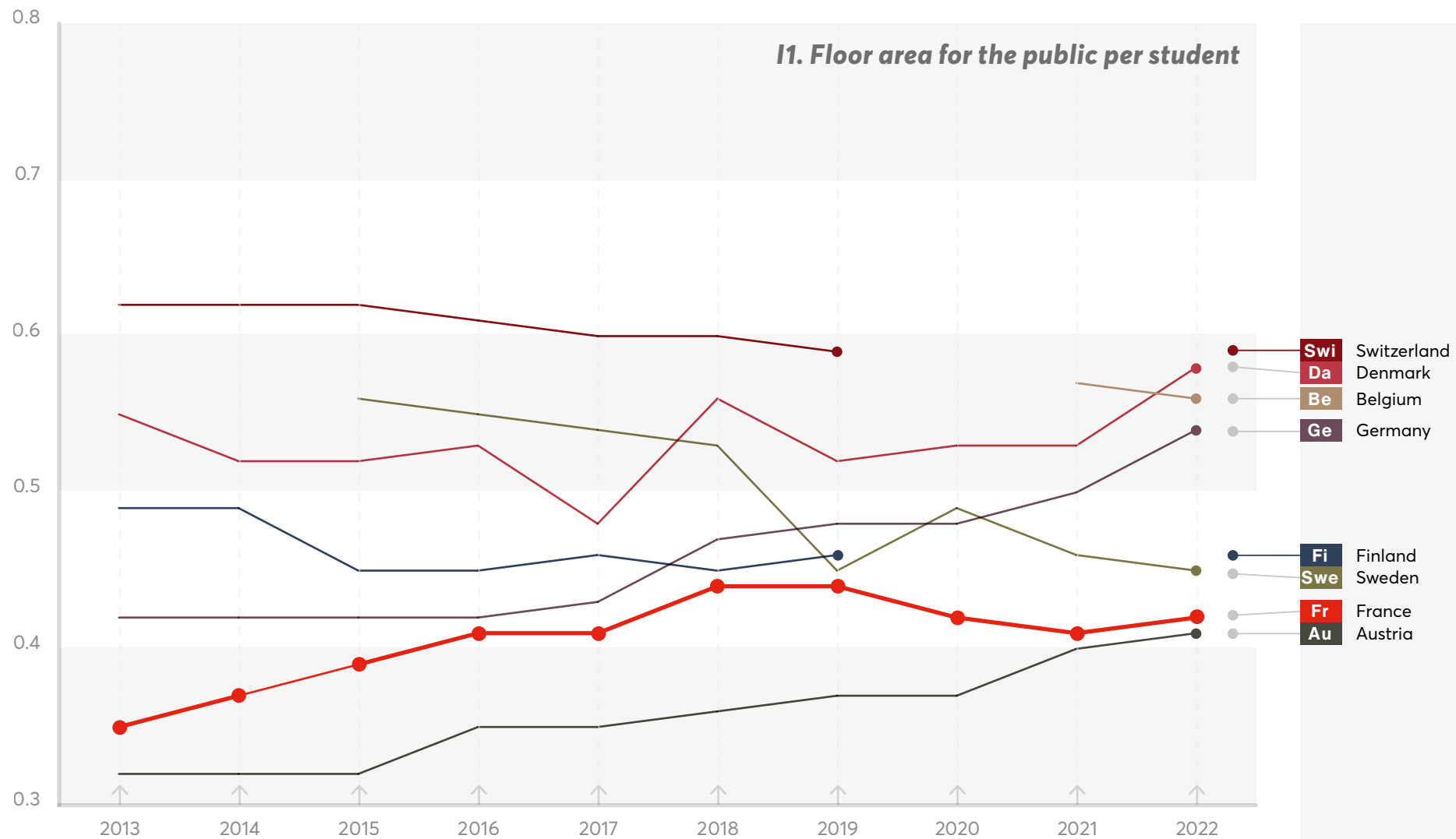
The fact that closing certain areas for several months, due to the pandemic (ventilation was insufficient), should be kept in mind as it naturally meant less floor area for the public. This unusual environment was also an opportunity in which to start certain rehabilitation and renovation projects, thus reducing available floor area for the public or indeed total surface area. In fact, the work carried out before the pandemic was stopped for several years for lack of timely deliveries of the materials needed. These fairly lengthy works must therefore be factored in the calculation of the indicators.

The number of students per user seat also needs to take into consideration building works and areas closed during the pandemic. In France, limited access to facilities in certain periods definitely impacted the data entered in the ESGBU and other platforms in Europe. Concerning the ESGBU, data entry was carried out for a civil year and most ALs experienced limited access over the course of 2021.

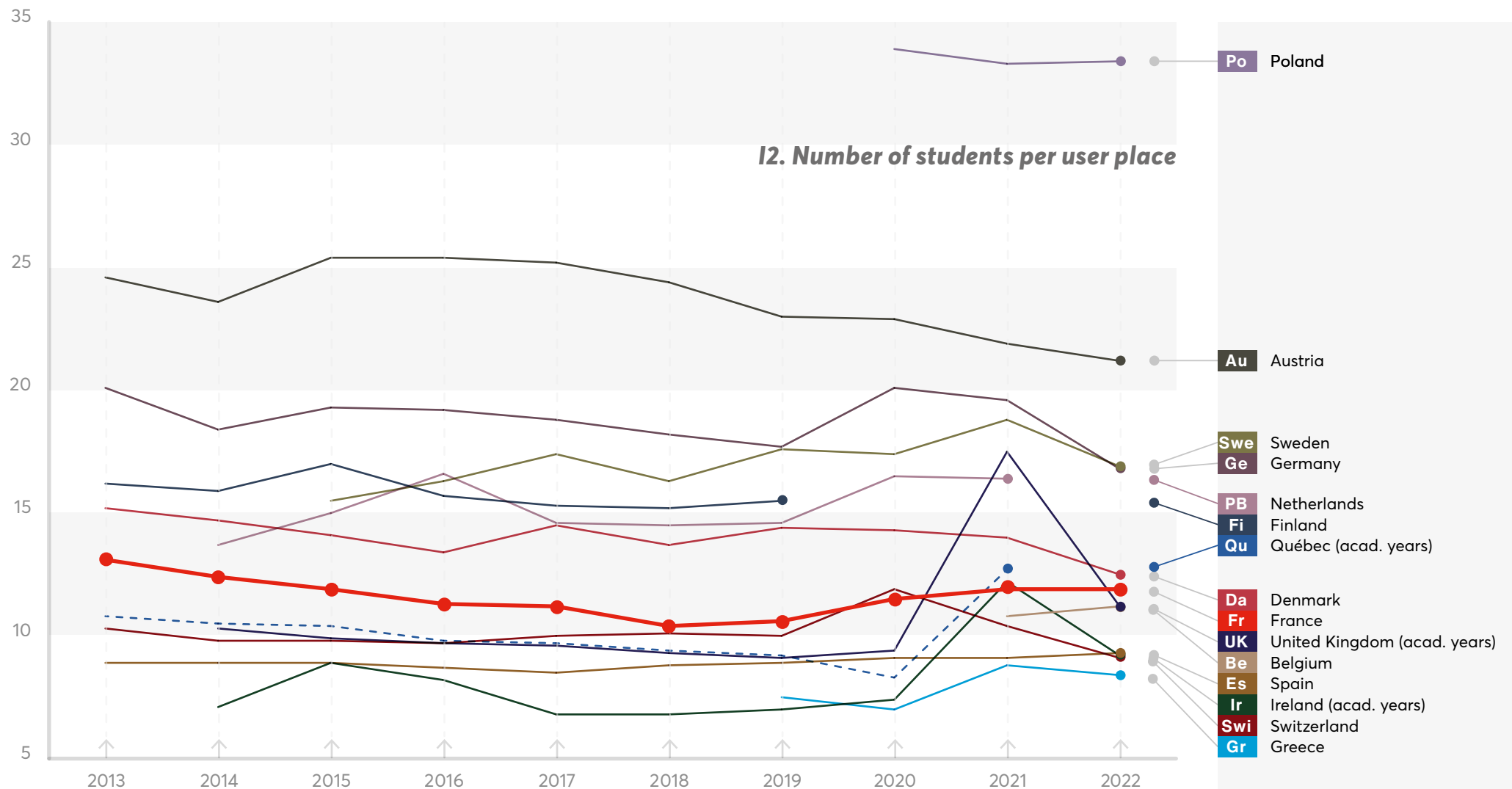
Of course, this should not conceal the real improvement in 10 years (+18% of floor area per student, +6% of floor area for the public per student and -9% for the number of students per user place) as well as a slightly more favorable situation than the average number of students per user place (11.9 in France as against 14.3 on average in Europe in 2022).

Good progress was mentioned regarding the proportion of group work places, achieving an indicator of +71% in 10 years.

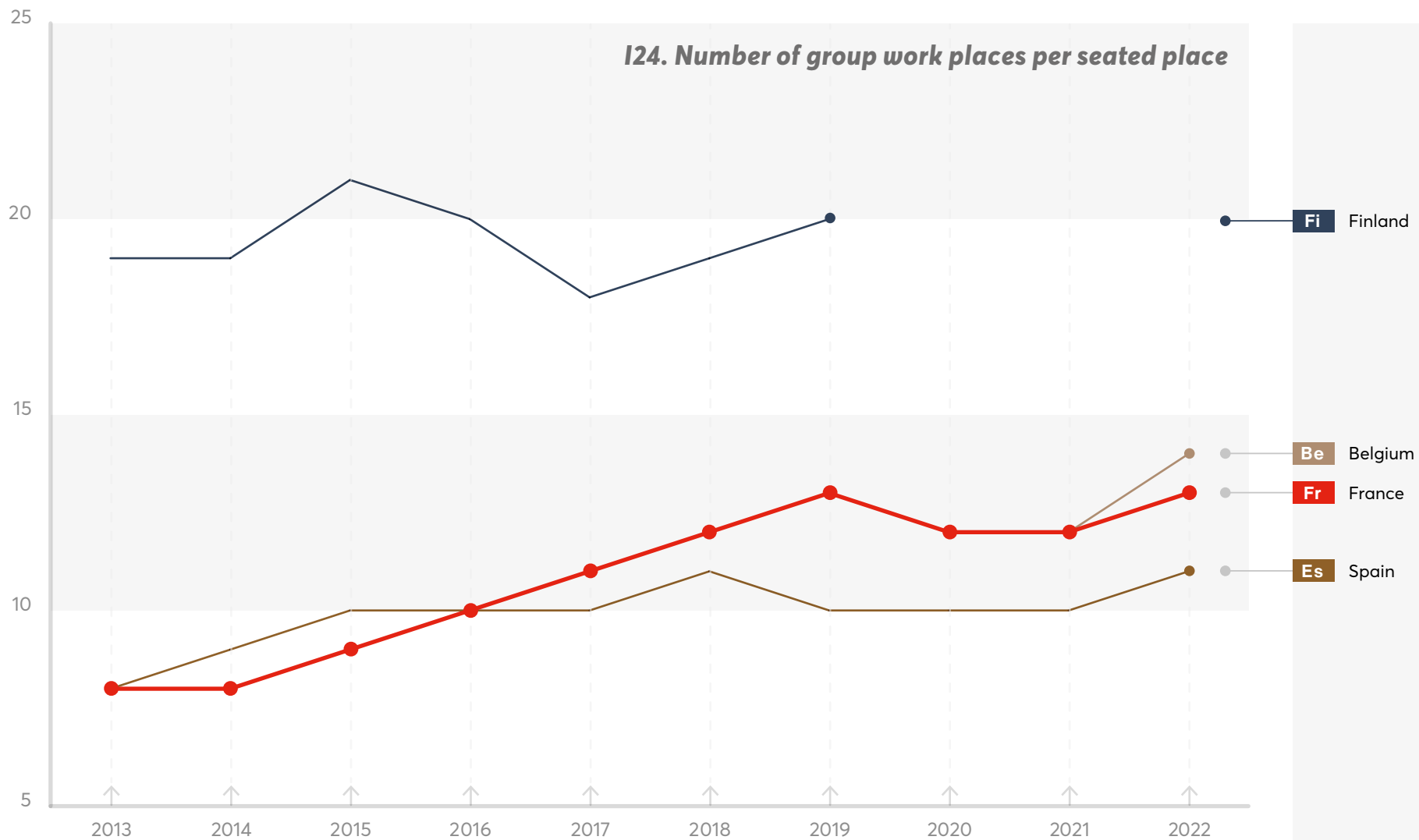
Recently, floor area indicators fell a little



Recently, floor area indicators fell a little



Recently, floor area indicators fell a little



Opening hours are shorter and opening days fewer than elsewhere

In first place, it is clear that France lags well behind the European average in terms of weekly opening hours, even for libraries equipped with more than 100 places (60 as against 65 weekly hours on average in 2022). Nevertheless, there has been a slight improvement in 2013-2022 (+3%).

As a reminder, in France, there is no such thing as a “main library” for the ESGBU (a library taken into account in the ISO 2789 standard for the purposes of this indicator). And yet, it is precisely such an establishment that opens longest in a library network, while opening hours are based on physical libraries’ (all libraries or just those with more than 100 places) average opening hours. This might explain why the impact of the “Bibliothèques ouvertes +” plan (Open Libraries +) was lower out of all the libraries concerned (opening hours were increased significantly in targeted libraries).

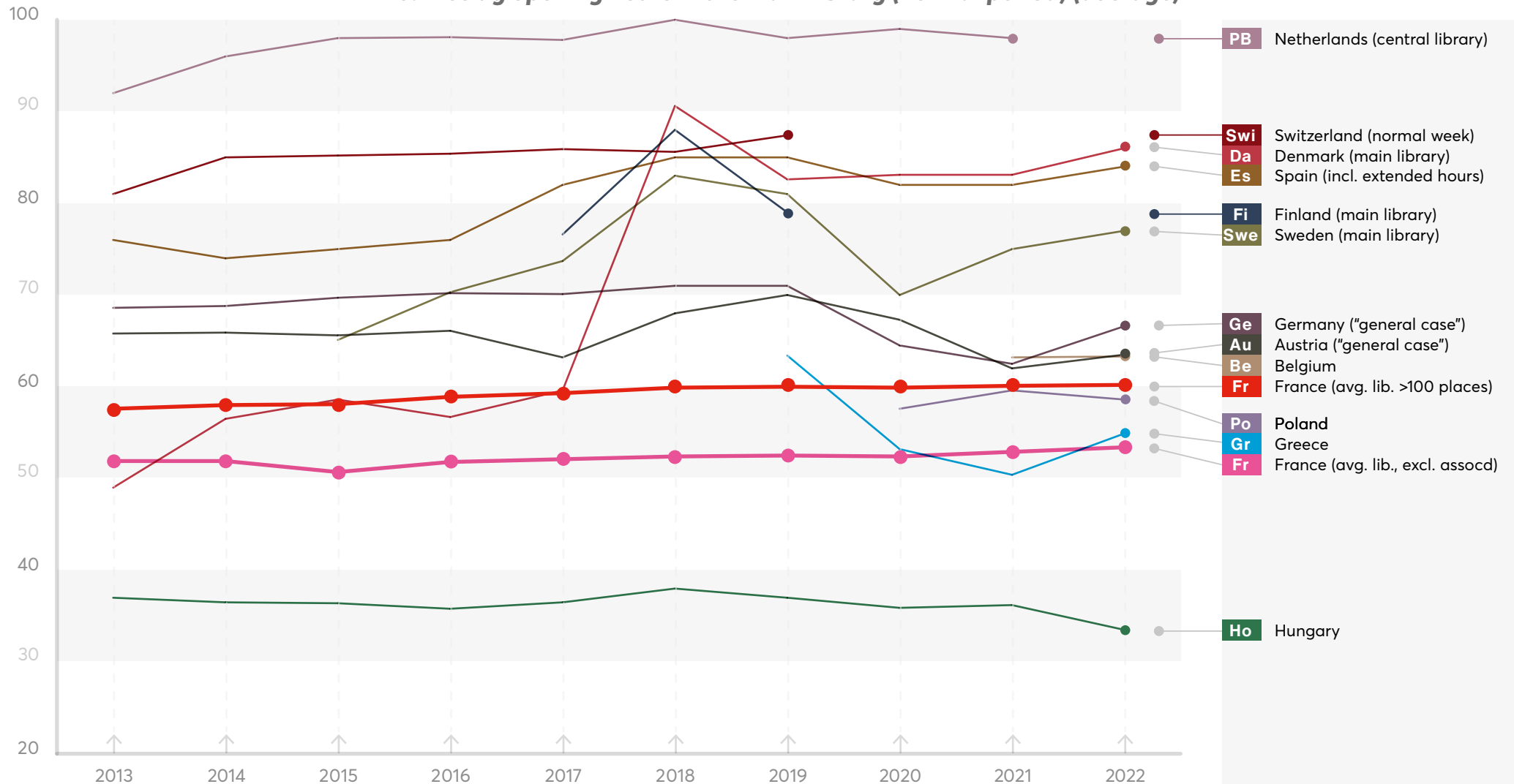
However, extended opening hours do not necessarily match the entirety of services offered in the library. Which is why some ALs open for long periods but only offer work areas, without documentation or services at certain times, or specific opening hours.

This is the situation concerning the number of opening days in the year (230 days for libraries of more than 100 places compared with 258 on average in 2022), with a drop in opening days, in 10 years (235 days in 2013 as against 230 in 2022).

Also, university opening hours operate in sync with academic schedules over the year (they are shorter and more fragmented in France than elsewhere).

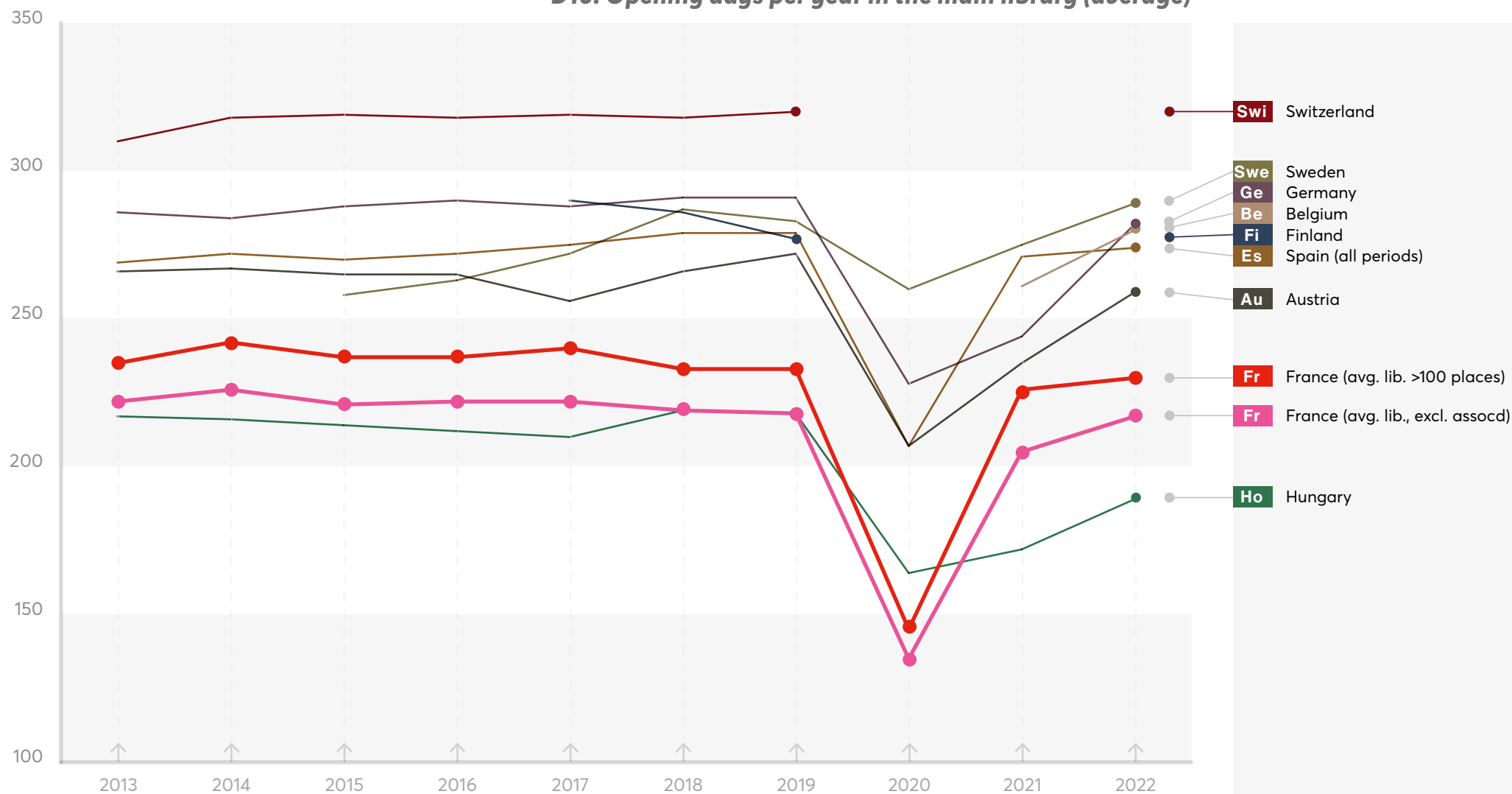
Opening hours are shorter and opening days fewer than elsewhere

D15. Weekly opening hours in the main library (normal period) (average)



Opening hours are shorter and opening days fewer than elsewhere

D16. Opening days per year in the main library (average)



Library visits record moderate numbers

The number of physical visits per student is a little above the 2022 European average (29.4 in France compared to the 25.3 European average). In 2022, the number of visits seems to have caught up better than elsewhere (ALs opened earlier than other services) without equaling the number of visits in 2013-2019.

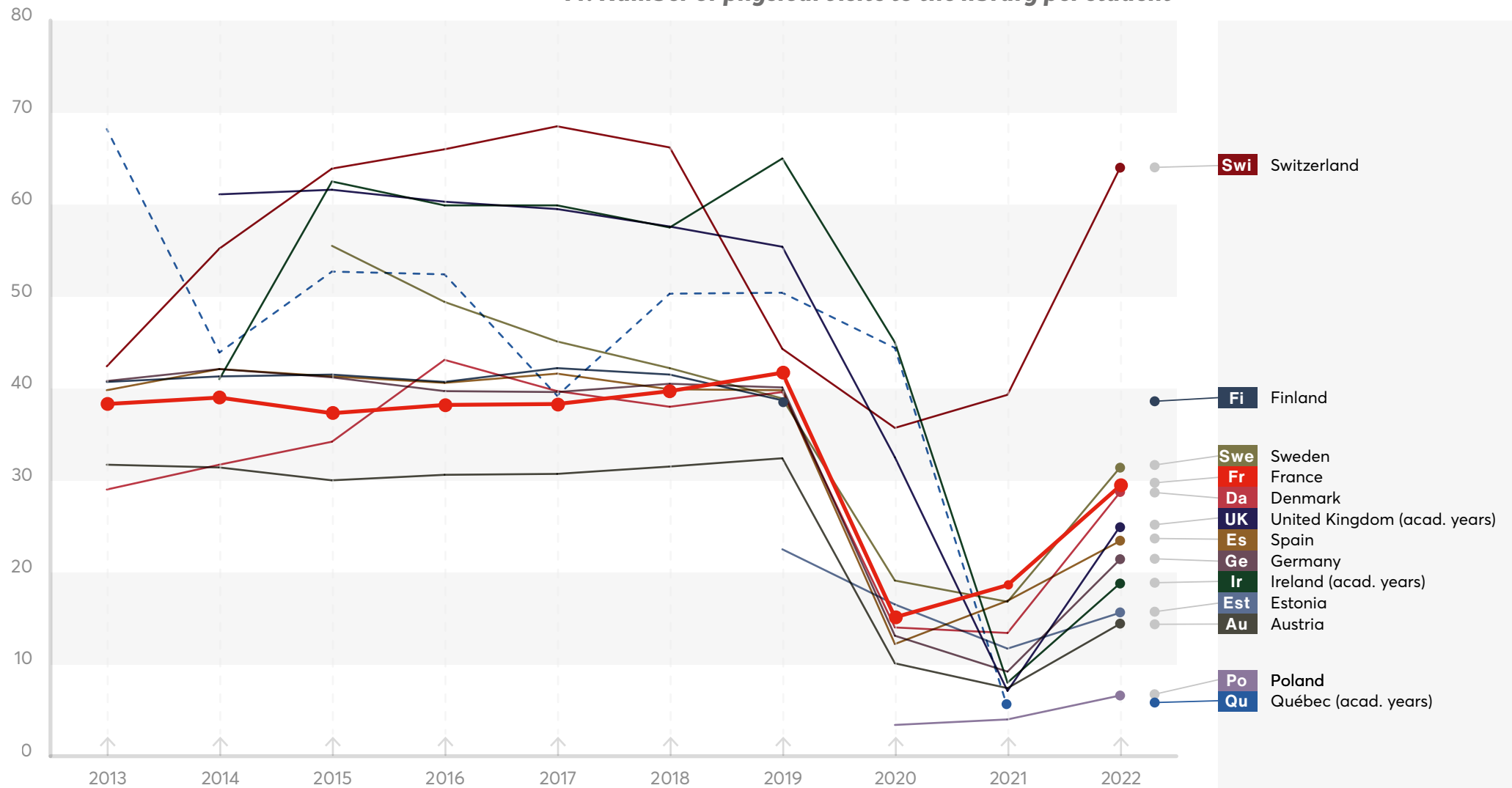
In 2023, more visits occurred in France because libraries became community living areas. There is a real need for collective, healthy competition which leads students to come together to work in the AL, to support each other and once there, to use group work areas or individual carrels.

It would be interesting to find out how long visits were and why they were made. Visiting a library often represents several needs that are met in a short space of time (meeting friends, working on a group project, accessing documentation and services in person, having a snack or meal).



Library visits record moderate numbers

14. Number of physical visits to the library per student



Digital resource use is progressing

BUT REMAINS FAR BELOW THAT OF OTHER COUNTRIES!

In France, the number of digital periodical articles used per student is 28 in 2022 (+29.5% in 10 years) compared with 75.5 on average (probably because of a primarily English-speaking publication offering or because French researchers read articles via research organizations like CNRS and INSERM and not via universities).

Many digital resources are used without them being accounted for in the statistics collected for digital resource use. For example, this is the case of Scholarvox which offers a number of online guides for first-time users.

The number of eBooks used per student is 14.5 in France in 2022 (+207% in 10 years) compared with 27 on average.

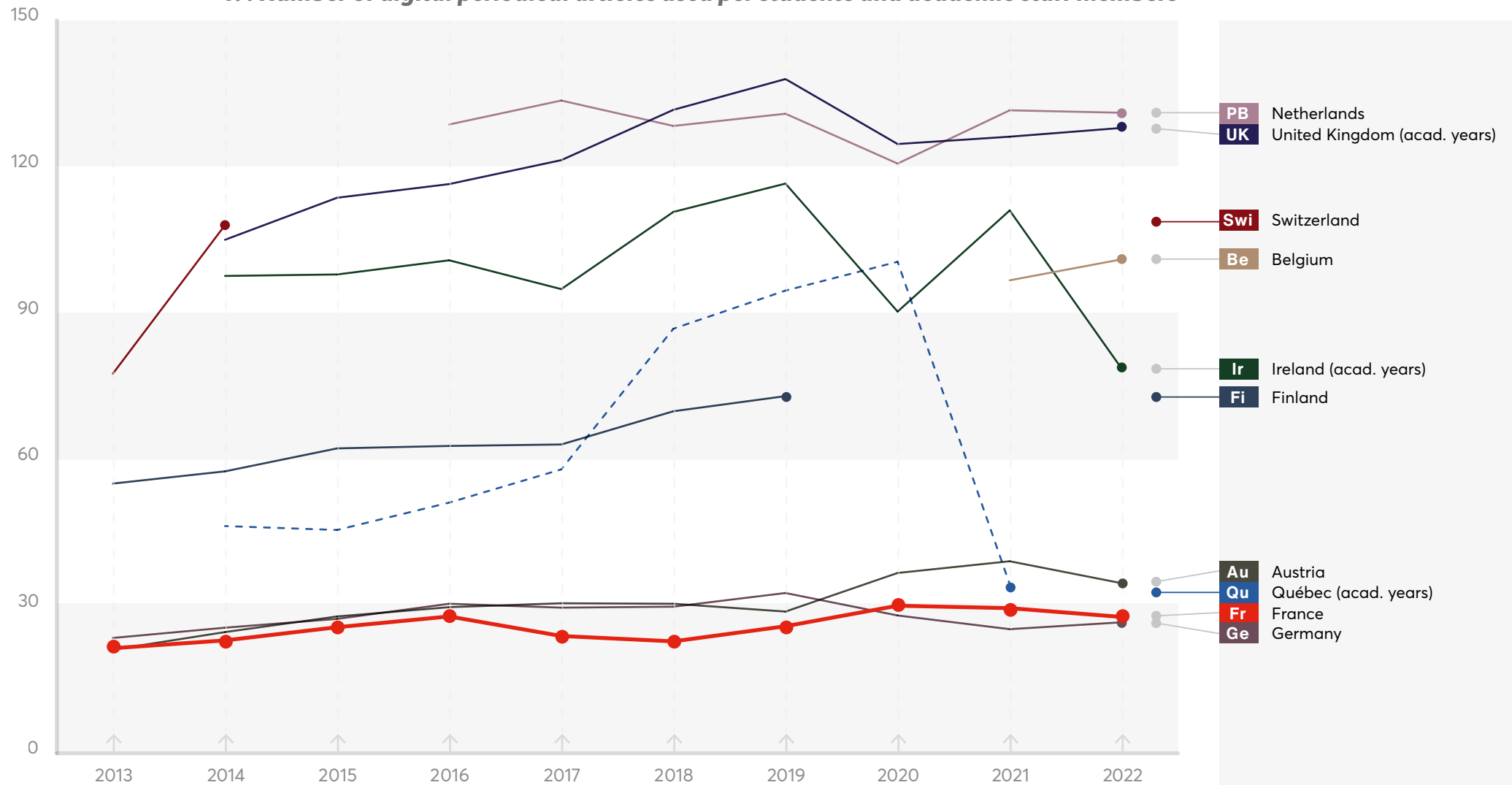
Note that Denmark, Hungary, Estonia, Sweden, and Poland do not appear in indicators I9 and I10 because academic staff numbers are not provided.

The 2021-2022 drop in these indicators can be explained because of the following:

- COUNTER measurements being included, which removes duplicates,
- the development of Open Access,
- subscription cancellations for financial reasons,
- the availability of other data sources (e.g. ISTEEX).

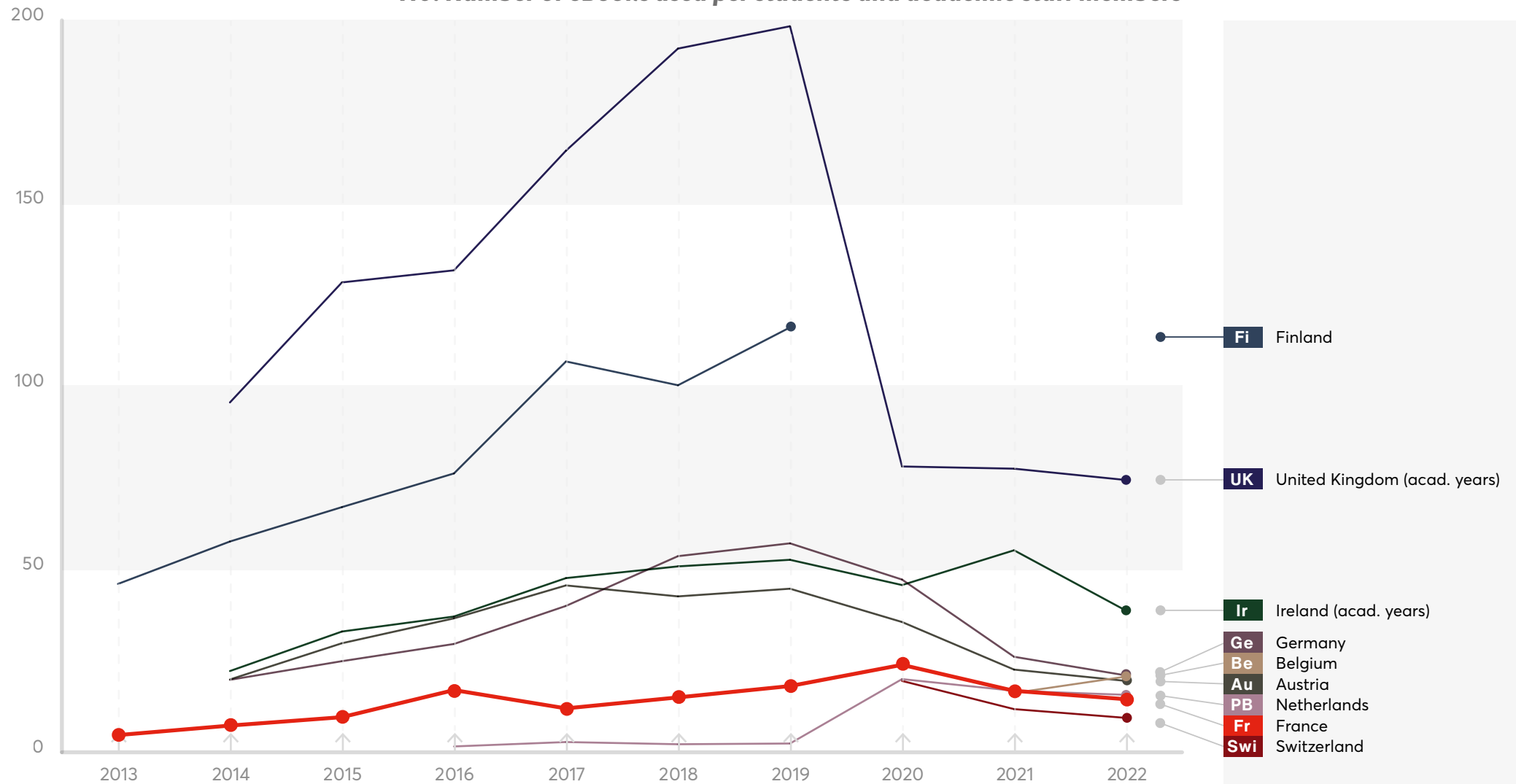
Digital resource use is progressing

19. Number of digital periodical articles used per students and academic staff members



Digital resource use is progressing

I10. Number of eBooks used per students and academic staff members



FTE staff numbers / Staff costs



FTE staff numbers are lower than elsewhere, and falling, but staff costs are increasing



FTE LIBRARY STAFF NUMBERS

The number of FTE library staff per thousand students is lower than elsewhere (3.4 in France versus the 2022 average) and decreasing (-12% in 10 years).

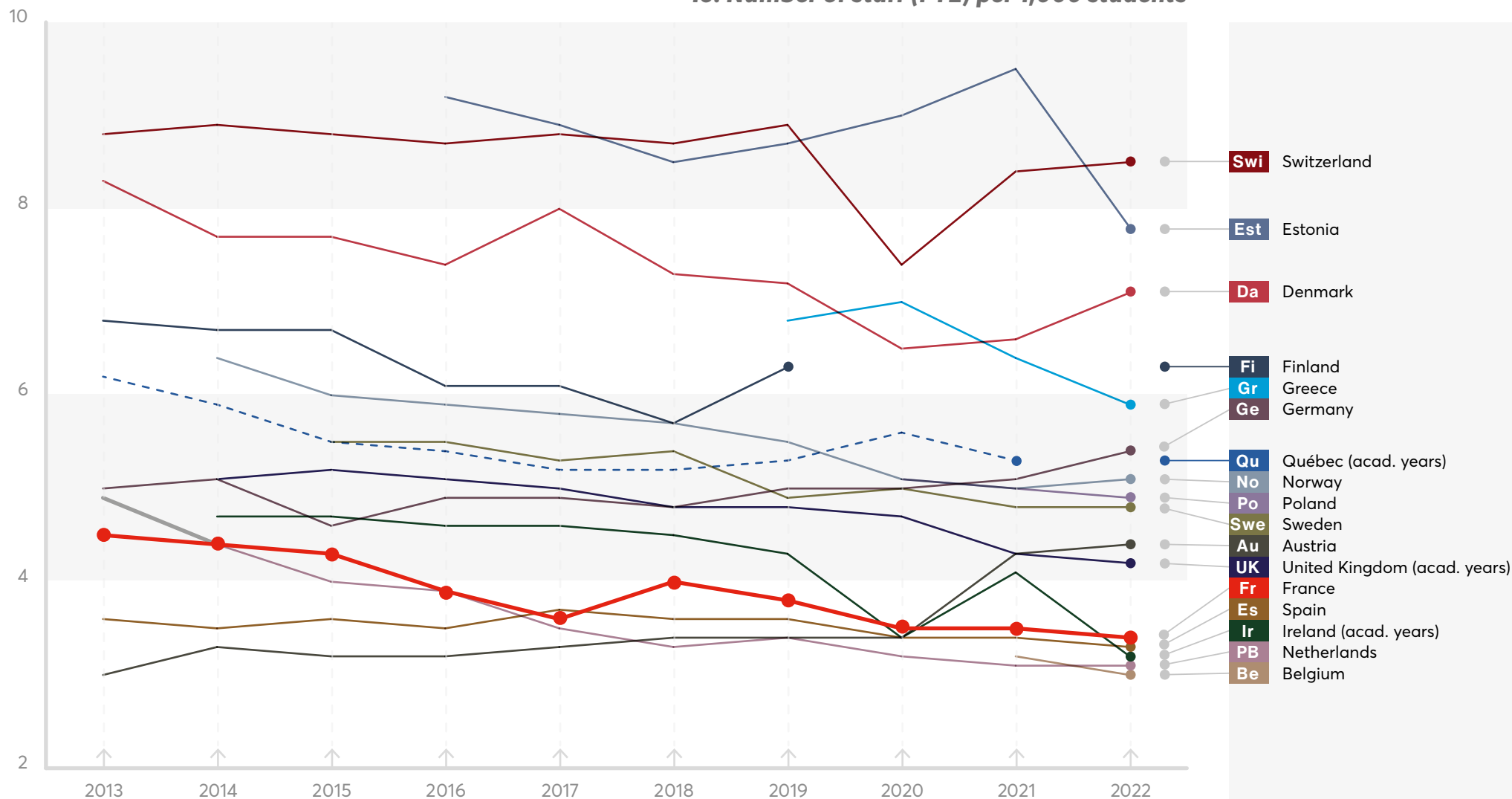
Overall, this indicator is dropping in all countries (-12% in 10 years).

The number of FTE library staff is also falling in absolute value: 7,083 in 2013 compared to 6,535 in 2022 (-7.7%).

Changes in the number of jobs should also be analyzed with changes in services and productivity in mind (especially those linked to digitization and skill levels).

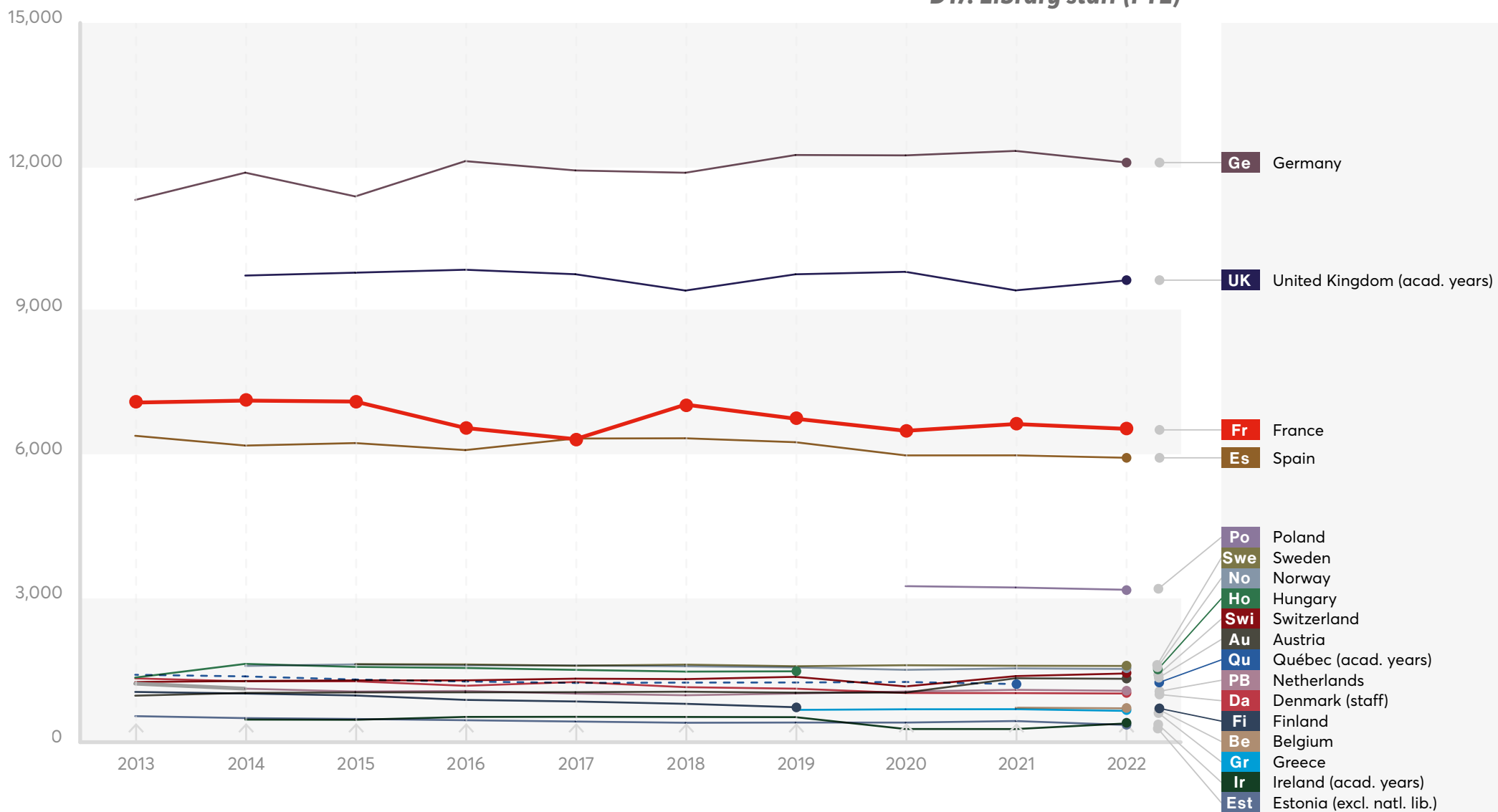
FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

13. Number of staff (FTE) per 1,000 students



FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

D17. Library staff (FTE)



FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

STAFF COSTS ARE INCREASING

Analyzing staff costs is, however, a different matter.

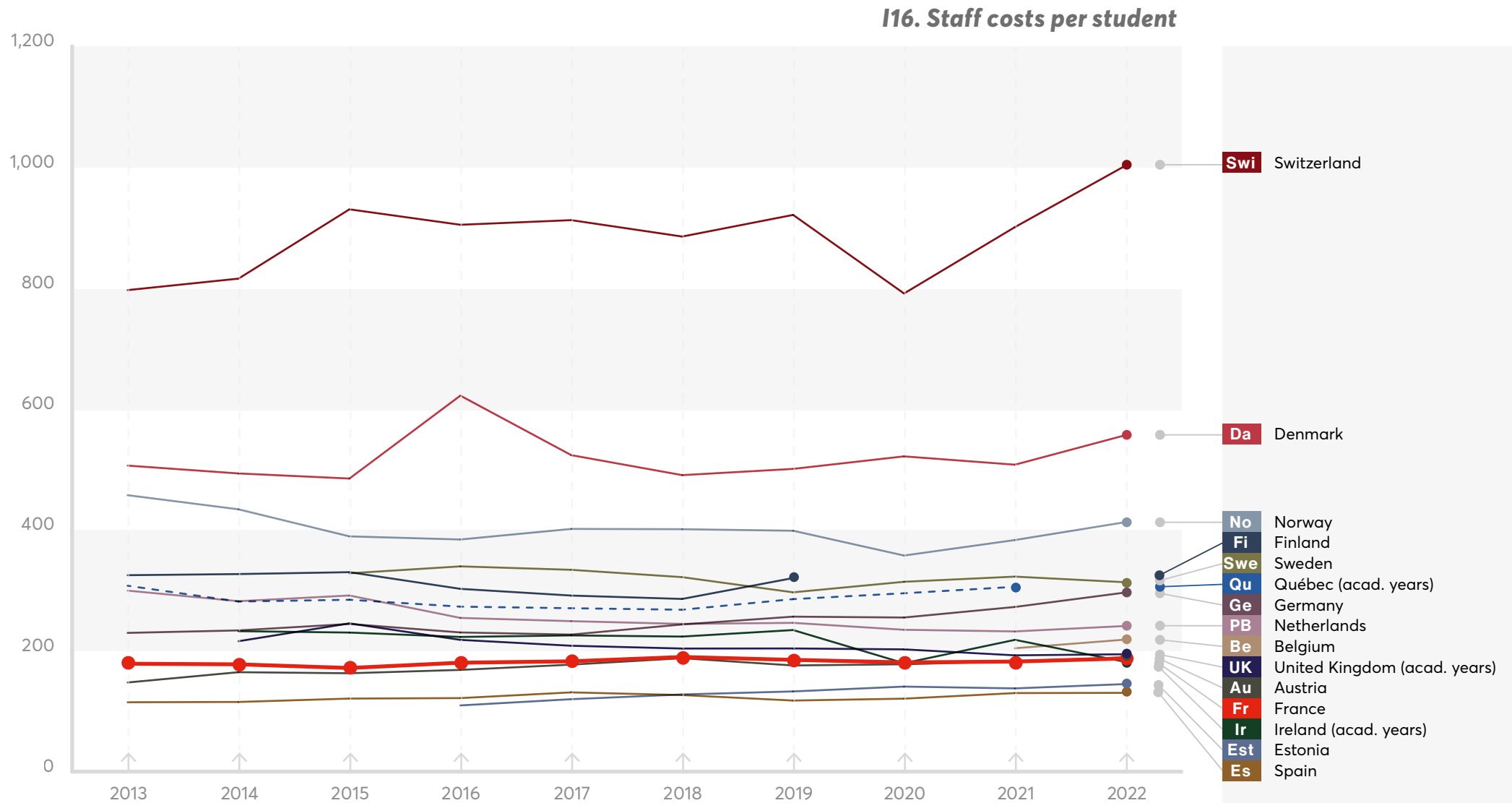
Staff expenditure per student has increased by 5% in 10 years, even though it remains far below the European average (excluding Switzerland): €187 compared with €256 in 2022.

Staff costs have increased in absolute value (+27% in 10 years).

In France, library staff expenditure per FTE represents €54k in 2022, compared to the European average (excluding Switzerland) of €57k but in France, **there has been an increase of +38% in 10 years.**

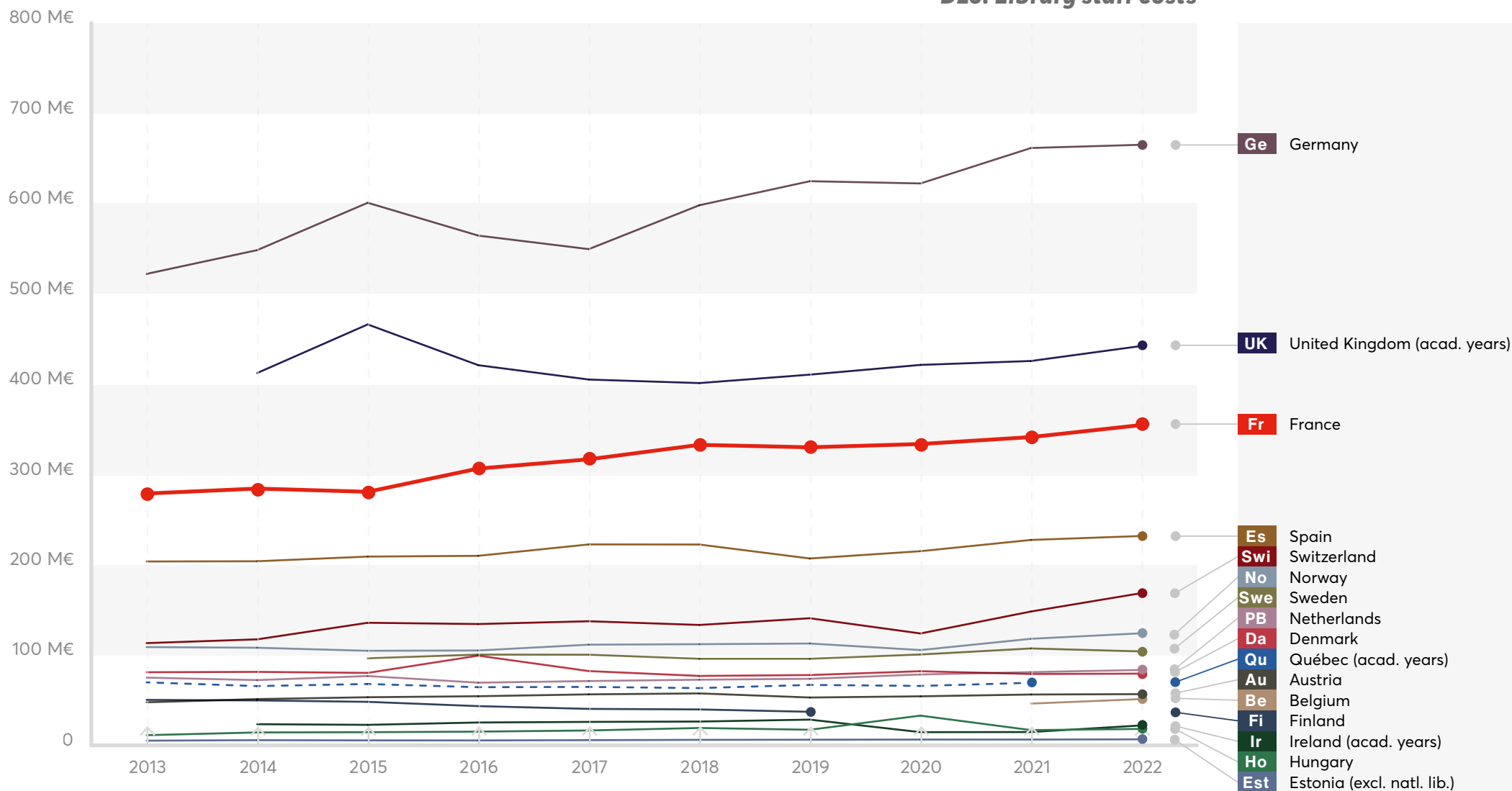
This is probably due to the rise in the average age of staff and the technical aspect of jobs, with an increasing number of staff in A and B categories.

FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

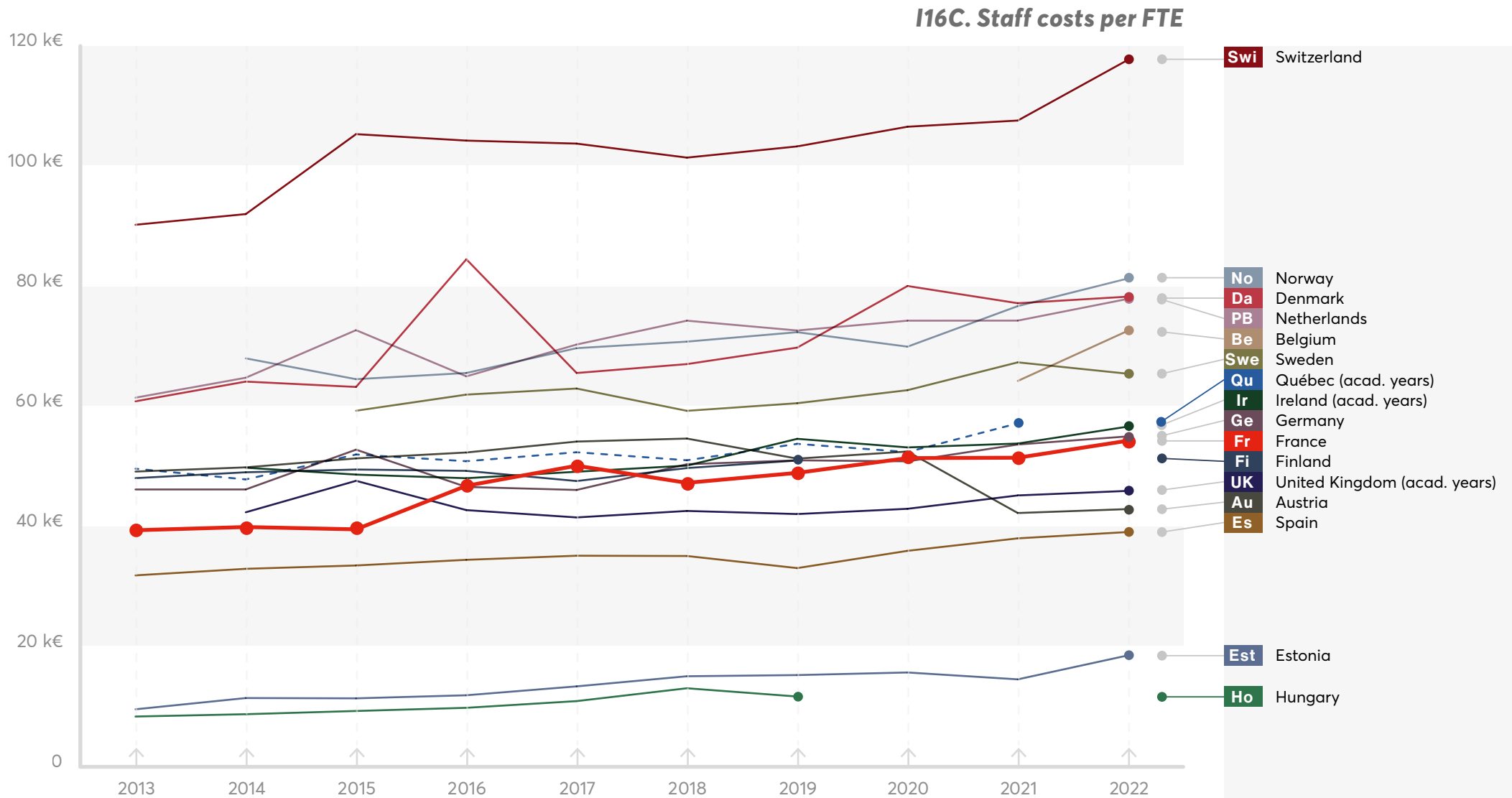


FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

D23. Library staff costs

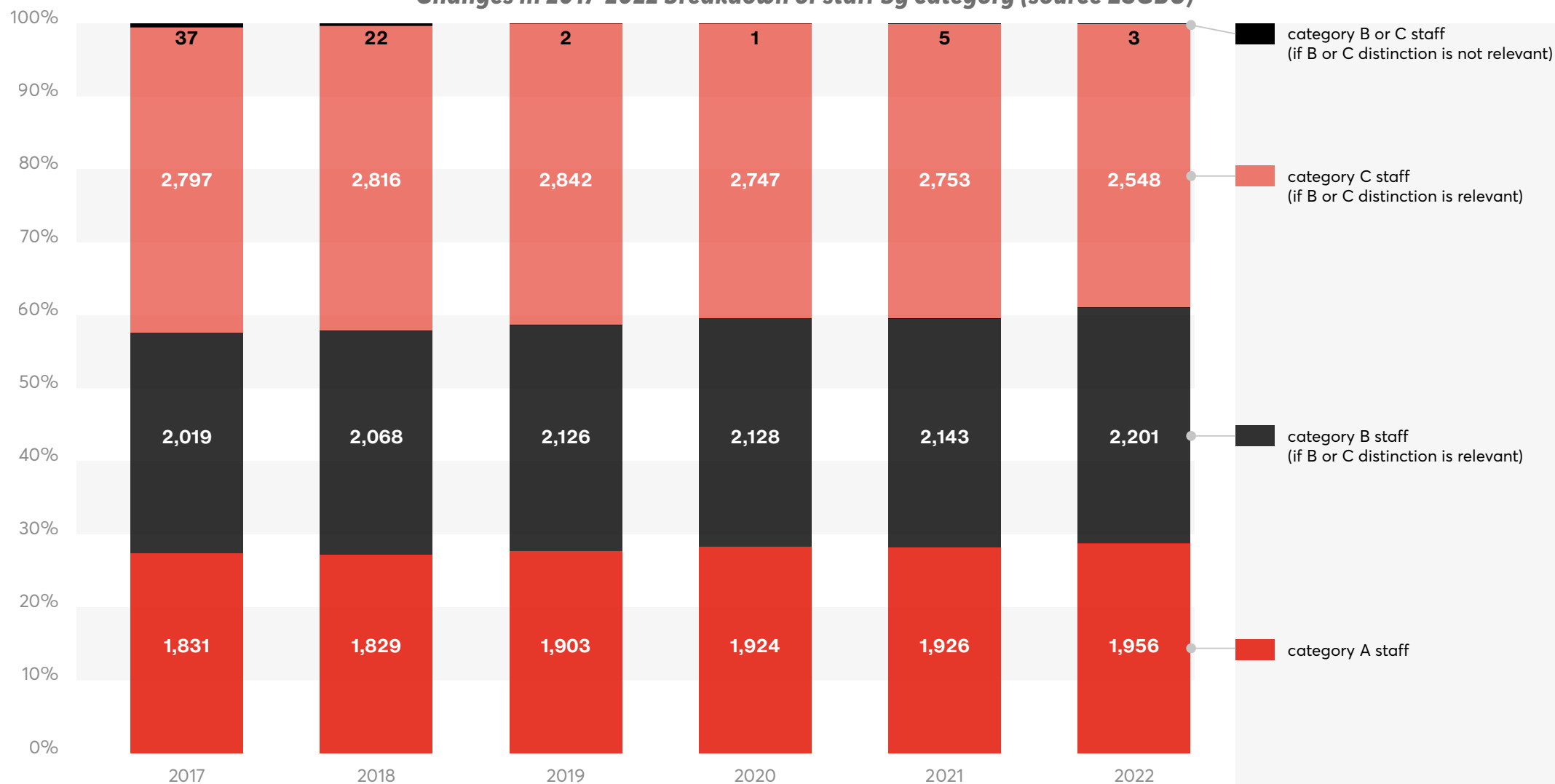


FTE staff numbers / Staff costs



FTE staff numbers / Staff costs

Changes in 2017-2022 breakdown of staff by category (source ESGBU)



Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member is much lower than elsewhere

Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member amount to €56k compared with the €128k European average, excluding Switzerland (and falling by 10% in 10 years).

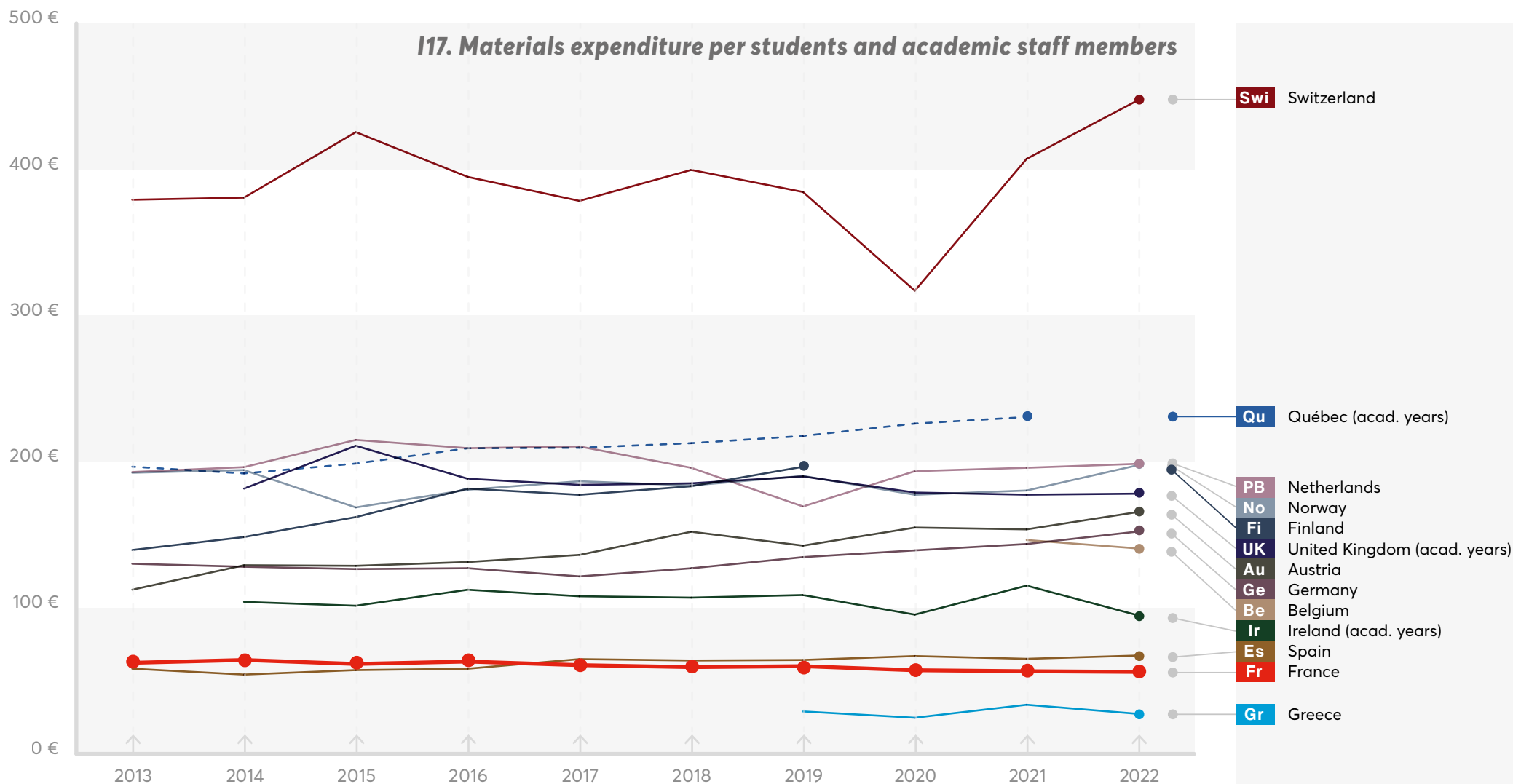
Note that Denmark, Hungary, Estonia, Sweden and Poland do not appear in indicators because academic staff numbers are not provided.

Materials expenditure has, however, increased by more than 8% in 10 years in absolute terms, without it compensating the increase in student numbers.

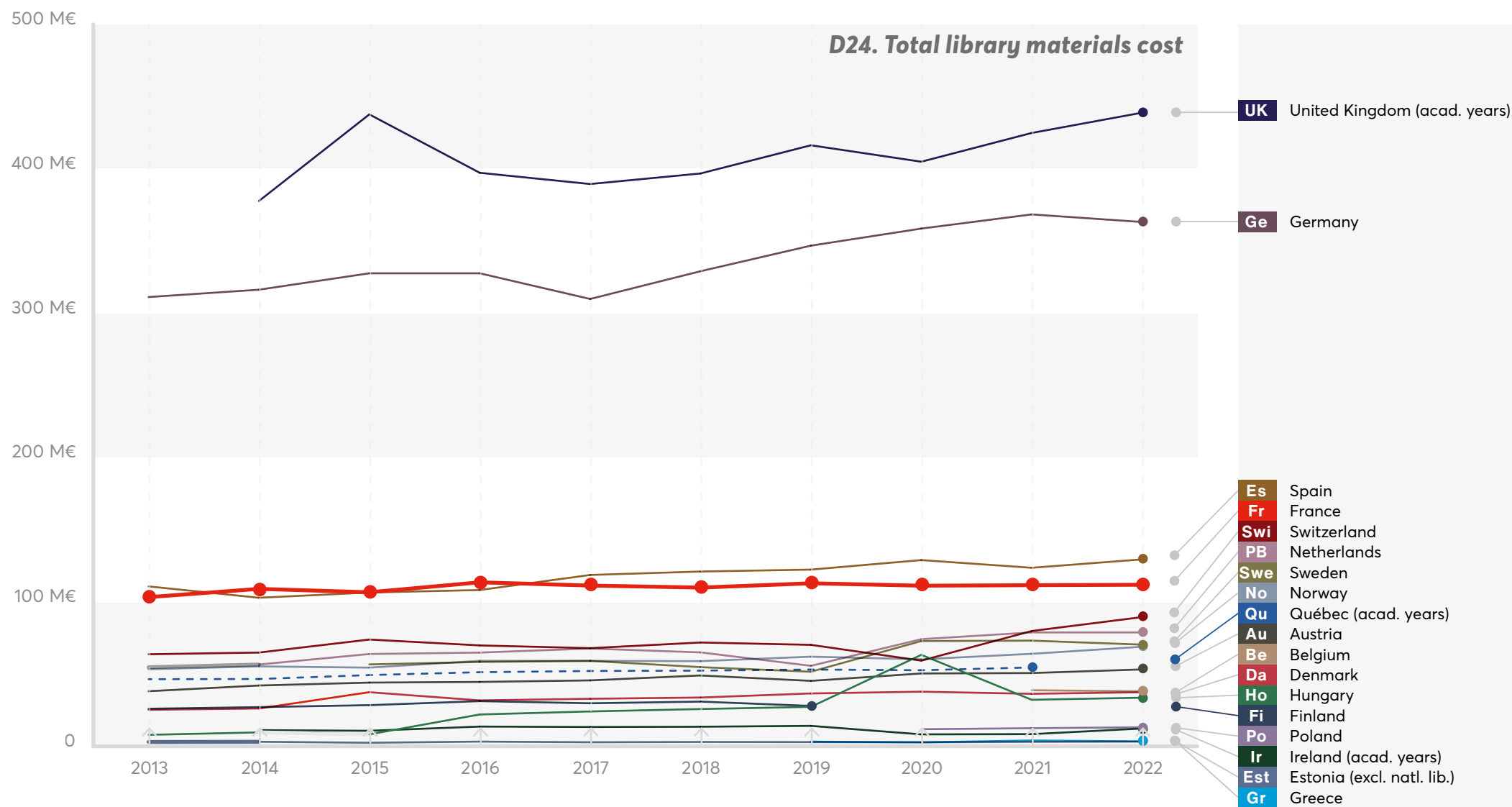
Materials expenditure includes spending on digital resources which now represents 67% (+29% in 10 years and +39% in absolute terms) even though this proportion remains below the European average (79% in 2022).

Digital resource expenditure includes digital periodicals and the latter represent 62% in 2022 (10% for eBooks). And yet, an increase in digital resource expenditure (+39% in 10 years) does not necessarily mean the offering is a broader one, rather that fees have increased for the same offering. At the same time, in France, better negotiation was achieved for certain resources, resulting in less spending for identical offering, thanks to the Couperin consortium. The development of Open Access offerings may also have an impact on this indicator: certain institutions (only a few so far) are starting to cancel fee-paying digital resources and turning to free Open Access resources instead.

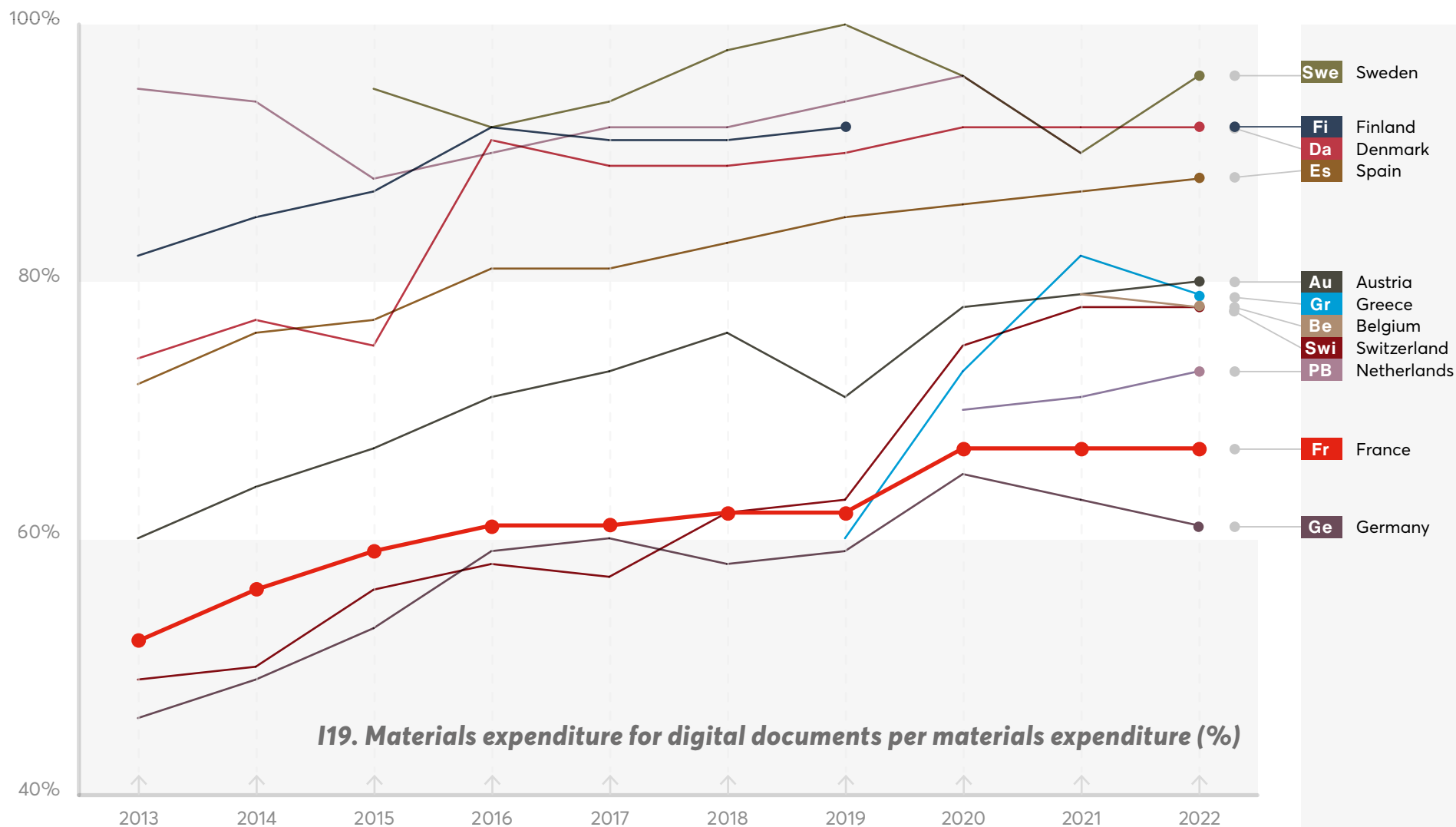
Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member is much lower than elsewhere



Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member is much lower than elsewhere



Materials expenditure per student and academic staff member is much lower than elsewhere



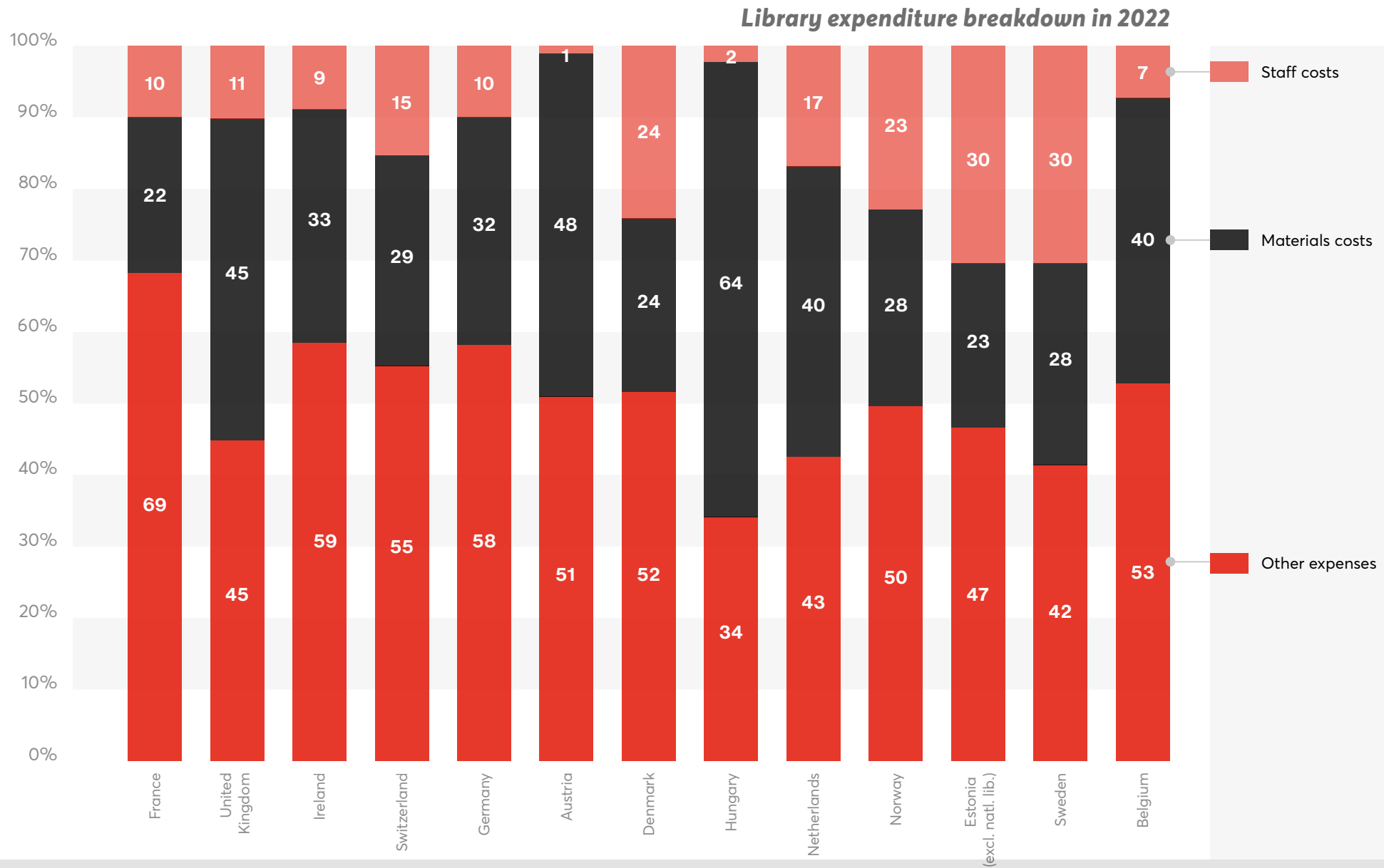
The highest proportion in staff costs and the lowest in materials expenditure



France has the following characteristics:

- **it has the lowest proportion of materials expenditure in total expenditure**
(22% compared with 35% on average in Europe)
- **it has the highest proportion of staff costs in total expenditure**
(69% compared with 51% on average in Europe)

The highest proportion in staff costs and the lowest in materials expenditure



Overall expenditure per student



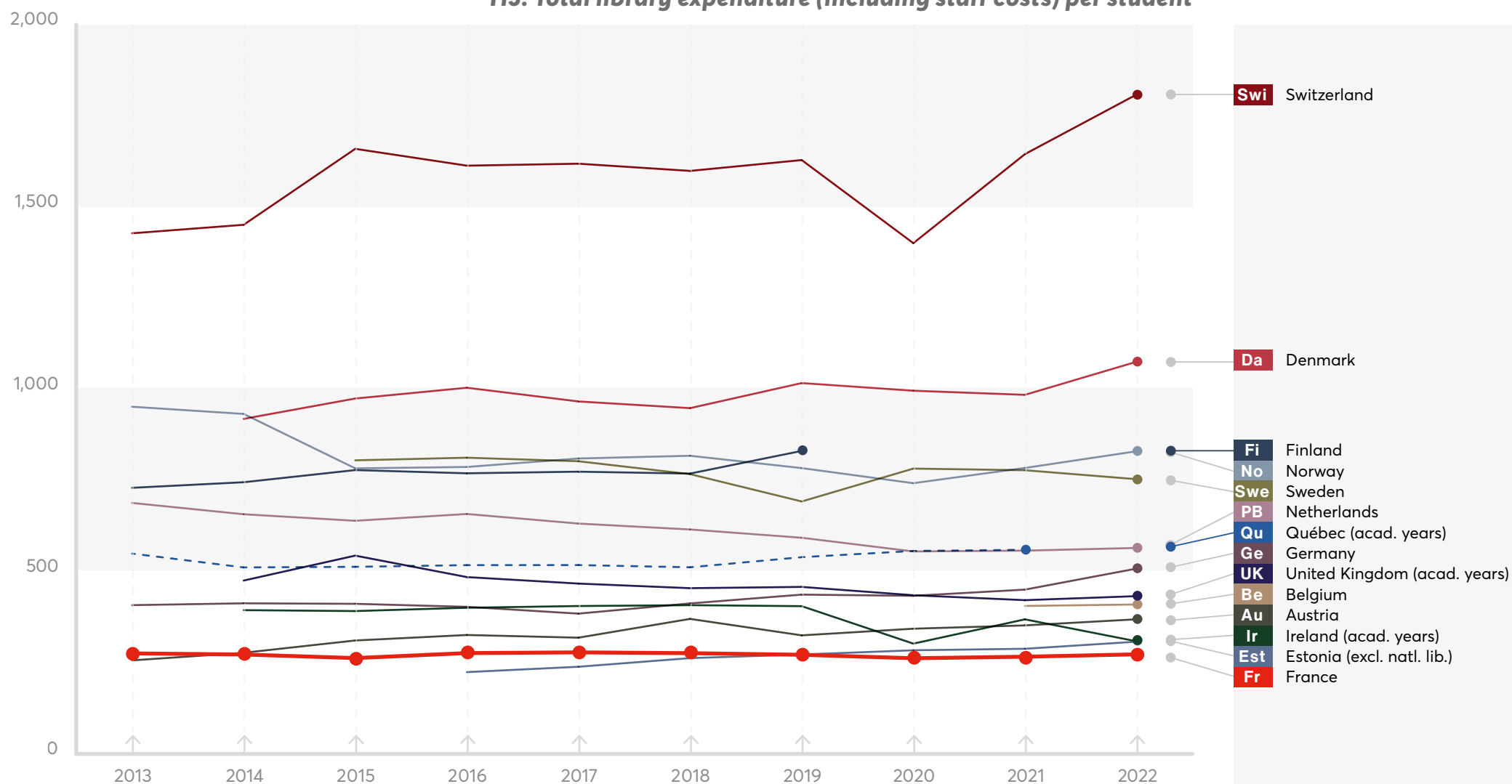
Overall expenditure per student lies well below the European average, with reservations on comparability.



This phenomenon has already been mentioned above (with associated reservations) but here is a reminder:

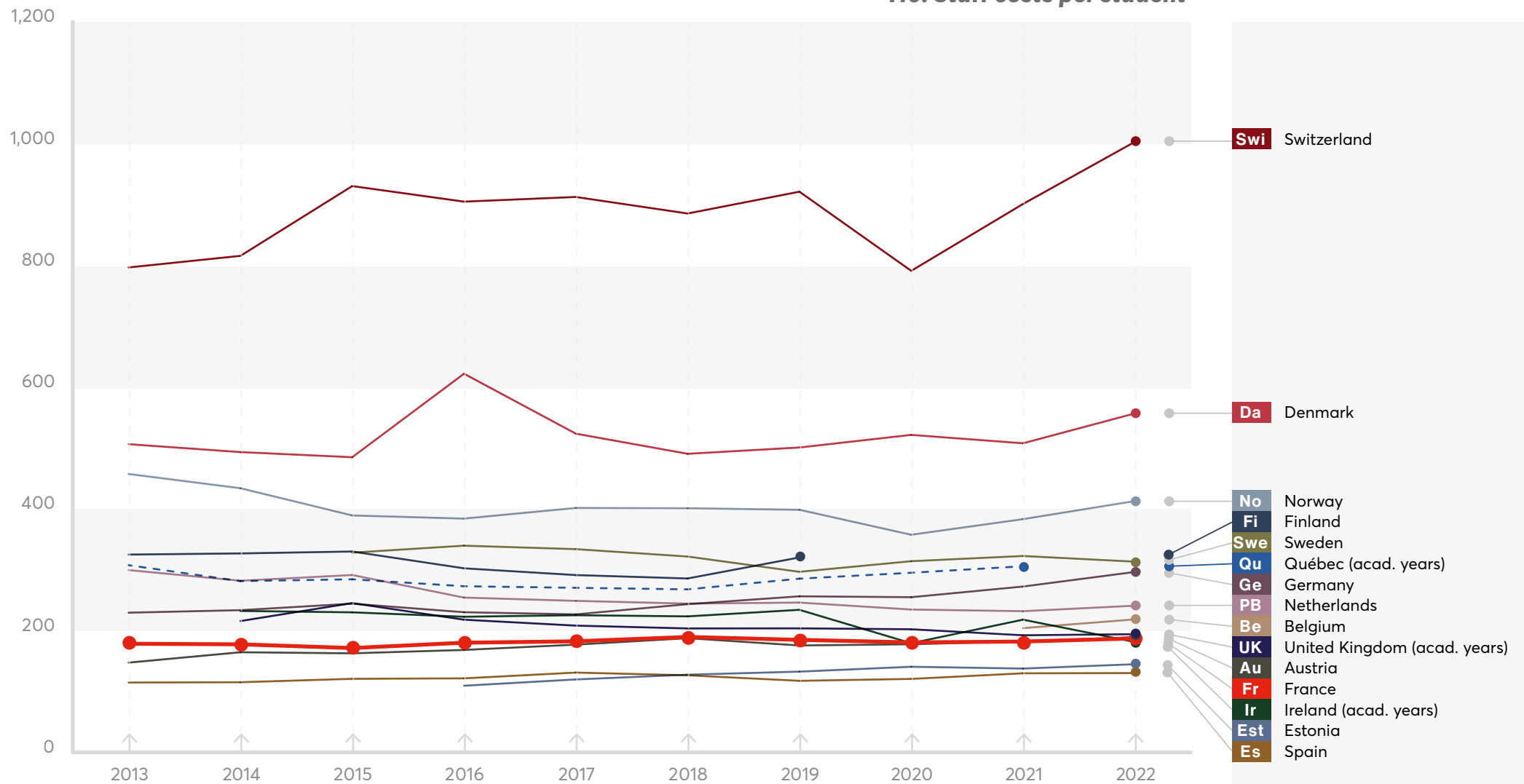
Overall expenditure per student

I13. Total library expenditure (including staff costs) per student



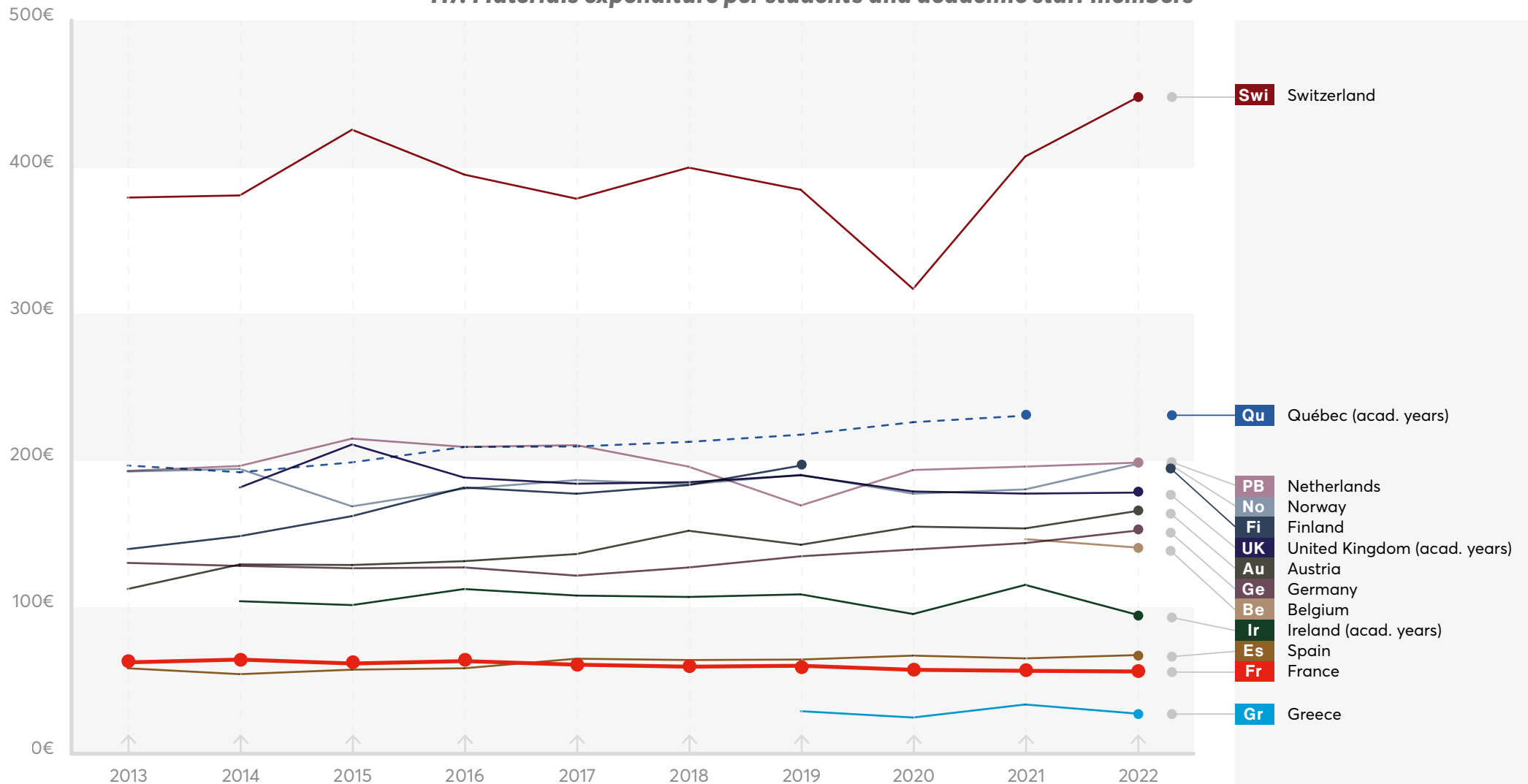
Overall expenditure per student

I16. Staff costs per student



Overall expenditure per student

I17. Materials expenditure per students and academic staff members



Summary of the situation in France in line with key indicators

CAPTIONS →

2013-2022 TRENDS:
 ↗ Increase
 ↗↗ Sharp increase (> +10%)
 ↘ Decrease
 ↘↘ Sharp decrease (> -10%)
 → Stabilité (+ ou - 1%)

✓ GOOD	Same as European average
⊖ MEDIUM	Below European average (or less favorable)
✗ POOR	Above European average (or more favorable)

2022 VALUES AND 2013-2022 CHANGES		COMPARABILITY (Indicator among countries)	FRANCE (institutions surveyed)	AVERAGE (of the 17 countries surveyed)	GERMANY	UNITED KINGDOM
T A R G E T L I B R A R Y P O P U L A T I O N						
D0	Population of countries surveyed	✓	68 million ↗ +3.5%	Total : 366 million ↗ +3.6%	83 million ↗ +3.4%	67 million ↗ +4.8%
D1	Students in countries surveyed	⊖	1.9 million ↗↗ 21%	Total >10.2 million (Finland Hungary NC)	2.2 million ↘ -1.4%	2.3 million ↗↗ +19%
I0	Student population %	⊖	2.8% ↗↗ +17.2%	2.8% (Finland Hungary NC)	2.7% ↘ -4.6%	3.4% ↗↗ +14.5%
P H Y S I C A L L I B R A R I E S						
I1	Public floor area / student	✓	0.42 sqm / ST ↗↗ +17.7%	0,49 sqm / ST ↗ +7,6%	0.59 sqm / ST (2019) ↘ -4.4%	NC
I2	Number of students / place	✓	11.9 ST / place ↘ -9%	14,3 ET / place ↘ -7,9%	9,1 ST / place ↘↘ -16.5%	11.2 ST / place ↗ +9.2%
D15	Opening hours / week (main lib.)	⊖	60.2 hours / week (lib. > 100 places) ↗ +4.5%	64,8 h / semaine ↗↗ +12,4%	66.6 h / week ↘ -2.9%	NC
D16	Opening days / year (main lib.)	⊖	230 days / year (lib. > 100 places) ↘ -2.1%	258 j / an ↘ -2,4%	291 days / year ↗ +1.9%	NC

Summary of the situation in France in line with key indicators

2022 VALUES AND 2013-2022 CHANGES		COMPARABILITY (Indicator among countries)	FRANCE (institutions surveyed)	AVERAGE (of the 17 countries surveyed)	GERMANY	UNITED KINGDOM
LIBRARY HUMAN RESOURCES						
I3	Number of staff (FTE) / 1,000 students	✓	3.4 FTE / 1,000 ST ↘ -24%	4,9 FTE / 1,000 ST ↘ -3.9%	5.4 FTE / 1,000 ST ↗ +8.4%	4.2 / 1,000 ST ↘ -17%
I20	Number of training days / year / staff (FTE)	⊖	2.6 days / week / FTE ↘ +7.1%	2.3 days / year / FTE ↘ -31%	1.4 days / year / FTE ↘ -43%	NC
LIBRARY EXPENDITURE						
I13	Total expenditure (incl. staff costs) / student	✓	273€ / ST → -0.9%	530€ / ST (excl. Switz) ↗ +3.6%	508€ / ST ↗ +24.6%	433€ / ST ↘ -9%
I16	Staff costs / student	⊖	187€ / ST ↗ +4.9%	256€ / ST (excl. Switz) ↘ -9.5%	296€ / ST ↗ +29.1%	194€ / ST ↘ -10%
I17	Materials expenditure / (ST+ASM)	⊖	56€ / (ST + ASM) ↘ -10%	128€ / (ST + ASM) (excl. Switz) → +0.8%	152€ / (ST + ASM) ↗ +16.9%	178€ / (ST + ASM) ↘ -1.9%
I18	Materials expenditure % / Total expenditure (incl. staff costs)	⊖	22% ↘ -9.9%	35% (excl. Switz) ↗ +13.7%	32% ↘ -5%	45% ↗ +7.1%
I25	Materials expenditure / Staff costs	⊖	0.32 ↘ -14.9%	0.74 (excl. Switz) ↗ +26.4%	0.55 ↘ -8.4%	0.99 ↗ +8.3%
I19	Materials expenditure for digital documents %	⊖	67% ↗ +28.8%	79% (excl. Switz) ↗ +15.4%	61% ↗ +34.3%	NC

Summary of the situation in France in line with key indicators

2022 VALUES AND 2013-2022 CHANGES		COMPARABILITY (Indicator among countries)	FRANCE (institutions surveyed)	AVERAGE (of the 17 countries surveyed)	GERMANY	UNITED KINGDOM
P H Y S I C A L U S A G E						
14	Number of visits / year / student (note: lockdown impact in 2021-2022)	⊗	29.4 visits / year / ST ↘↘ -23.3%	25.3 visits / year / ST ↘↘ -32.5%	21.4 visits / year / ST ↘↘ -47.5%	25 visits / year / ST ↘↘ -59.1%
18	Number of printed material loans / year / student	⊙	3.3 loans / year / ST ↘↘ -45.3%	5.8 loans / year / ST ↘↘ -52.5%	12.7 loans / year / ST (2017) ↘↘ -25.5% (2013-2017)	2.6 loans / year / ST ↘↘ -83%
V I R T U A L U S A G E						
19	Number of digital periodical articles used / year / (ST+ASM)	⊖	27.9 articles / year / (ST+ASM) ↗↗ +29.5%	75.5 articles / year / (ST+ASM) ↗↗ +89.3%	26.8 articles / year / (ST+ASM) ↗↗ +13.5%	126 articles / year / (ST+ASM) ↗↗ +21.7%
110	Number of eBooks used / year / (ST+ASM)	⊖	14.5 eBooks / year (ST+ASM) ↗↗ +204%	26.7 eBooks / year / (ST+ASM) ↗ +5.4%	21 eBooks / year / (ST+ASM) ↗ +5.9%	NC (section count)
U S E R T R A I N I N G						
16	Student training %	⊙	26% ↗↗ +22.9%	35% ↗↗ +15.9%	18% ↘↘ -25.5%	NC
17	Number of training hours / 10 students	⊙	0.29 heure ↘↘ -17%	0.29 hour ↘ -1.9%	0.16 hour ↘↘ -26.9%	0,5 hour ↘ -6.6%

04

WHAT NEXT?

Here are a few proposals
we suggest for a potential
future edition of this survey.

Continuing to see new countries join the survey

The table below shows the current level of involvement in European survey countries, based on their population (in decreasing order).

COUNTRY	POPULATION (EUROSTAT 2023)	COUNTRY INVOLVED IN THE SURVEY?
Germany	84,358,845	Yes
France	68,070,697	Yes
United Kingdom	66,971,411	Yes
Italy	58,850,717	No (no national survey)
Spain	48,059,777	Yes
Poland	36,753,736	Yes
Romania	19,051,562	No (no national survey)
Netherlands	17,811,291	Yes
Belgium	11,754,004	Yes
Czechia	10,827,529	Soon
Sweden	10,521,556	Yes
Portugal	10,467,366	No (no national survey)
Greece	10,394,055	Yes
Hungary	9,597,085	Yes
Austria	9,104,772	Yes
Switzerland	8,812,728	Yes
Serbia	6,664,449	Not requested
Bulgaria	6,447,710	Not requested

COUNTRY	POPULATION (EUROSTAT 2023)	COUNTRY INVOLVED IN THE SURVEY?
Denmark	5,932,654	Yes
Finland	5,563,970	Yes
Norway	5,488,984	Yes
Slovakia	5,428,792	No (no national survey)
Ireland	5,194,336	Yes
Croatia	3,850,894	Not requested
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3,271,000	Not requested
Lithuania	2,857,279	Not requested
Albania	2,761,785	Not requested
Moldova	2,512,758	Not requested
Slovenia	2,116,792	Not requested
Latvia	1,883,008	Not requested
North Macedonia	1,829,954	Not requested
Estonia	1,365,884	Yes
Cyprus	920,701	Yes (but not incorporated as such)
Luxembourg	660,809	Soon
Montenegro	616,695	Not requested

The next report on the survey will definitely incorporate data from Luxembourg (population of 660,000) and especially from Czechia (population of 11 million).

Continuing to see new countries join the survey

In order to expand the survey's main objective, that is, comparing situations and changes in French academic libraries with those of other European academic libraries, it would clearly be useful to have data from other countries:

- **Italy** (what help would the country need to embark on a national data collection exercise for each university?),
- **Portugal** (with whose contacts?),
- **possibly Romania** (a country which increasingly welcomes larger numbers of French healthcare students), but attempts to connect with the national association of Romanian libraries remained unfruitful, despite several chase-ups.

In Baltic countries (Lithuania, Latvia) and others from the former eastern bloc (Serbia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, Bosnia, etc.), the data collection process should also be assessed, depending on how useful it would be to meet the survey's objective. However, it would be unthinkable for these countries to join with the objective of a comparative study only at the scale of Europe.

Finally, the relevance of the nation-state, as a measurement tool, can be challenged in the context of increasing independence in countries and indeed some universities. Differences in human and financial resources are shown in greater relief from one institution to another in a given country, depending on its location such as a metropolitan or suburban areas. Would it not be more effective to compare the institutions of each capital or major European metropolitan area?



Resetting the scope of data and indicators with partner countries

This survey has run the end of its logical journey:

- by focusing primarily on the French situation compared to other European countries,
- by “making do” with countries’ easily available data.

Going forward, it is now essential to cooperate further with all countries. By involving themselves more, partner countries would need to review the report’s objectives, so that, in the end, each country could better understand the survey’s outcome.

A seminar in 2025 is being proposed to undertake this work with volunteer partner countries, over several days. The objective of the seminar would be to produce a dictionary of common data (a common glossary) and a list of indicators using this data.

As exchanges among several countries have shown (Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom⁸), it would be particularly useful to work with all partner countries on:

- the libraries to be incorporated in the survey,
- the review of data that needs to be collected, to produce truly useful indicators and better assess libraries’ contribution to their institutions’ strategy,
- setting out data collection methods to guarantee comparability of data and therefore indicators (especially relating to ISO standards and their evolution).

8. Germany’s partners were invited to join in July, with no response to date.

Resetting the scope of data and indicators with partner countries

Regarding the libraries to be incorporated in the survey, as such, academic libraries as such are identified as institutional libraries that provide both higher education training and research.

National libraries are therefore not represented in these institutions. This poses the question of the French situation, which has a national library hosting a significant audience of the country's researchers and doctoral students from higher education and research institutions.

Regarding data, the current collection of some data points could be discontinued as they had not been really useful or usable in the past three surveys (examples included website visits, the average number of digital journals and eBooks, own income, etc.).

The collection of other data could lead to definitions or methods of measurement that are shared, comprehensive, and therefore reliable.

For example:

- **loans** (with or without renewals? with the loan of objects?),
- **number of academic staff members** (FTE or physical persons),
- **digital resource use** (with COUNTER generalization),
- **categories of library staff's positions.**

Comparing financial data could also be challenged, perhaps with a correction index included, especially as regards staff costs.

Resetting the scope of data and indicators with partner countries

Data relating to printed collection stock (number of titles and copies of books, journals and other documents) and associated flows (monograph acquisition, journal subscriptions and associated budgets) is currently impossible to aggregate because the typology is too disparate. It would be useful to retrospectively measure these changes, while at the same time making sure not to spend too much time on measurements (certain countries now allocate more than 80% of their budgets to digital resources).

Institutions' overall expenditure, available in only five countries (United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece and Belgium) should be collected more broadly, in the sense that it would help measure the changes in library spending as a percentage, compared to that of institutional expenditure (from 3 to 4% until 2019 and from 2 to 3% since 2020, therefore representing a decrease). In France, the data point is too incomplete in the ESGBU for it to be used.

New data, and therefore new indicators, should be created to better assess the impact of libraries. This would require a significant number of partner countries to provide and produce these data sources from now on, for example:

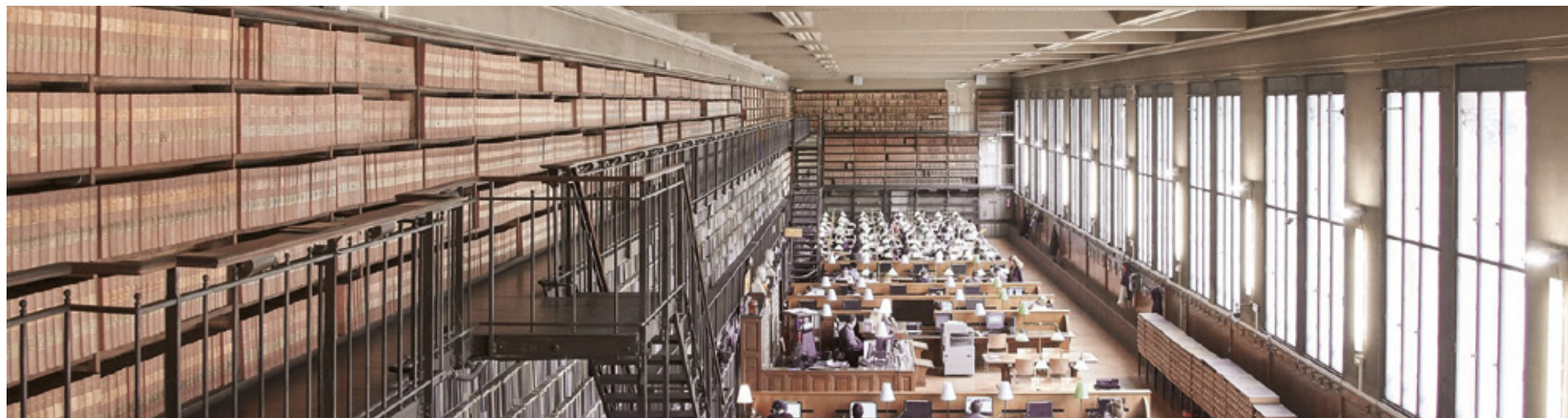
- **duration of library visits,**
- **use of resources in Open Access,**
- **APC expenses** (this data already exists in the United Kingdom and France),
- **the breakdown of library staff** (especially the proportion of FTE for user training or research support, especially Open Science).

Moving towards a common tool?

The implementation of a common tool (for common data collection, via data entry or standardized, imported files, and to produce and disseminate common indicators) could be considered, but only once this joint endeavor around data and indicators has been completed.

Not only would this system facilitate and accelerate data collection (in line with countries' timescales) the audience for results and analyses would broaden, thanks to:

- **on-demand tool requests**
- **data visualization functions**
- **institutional data made available for each country** to provide institutions with a European benchmark, based on “institution profile” (institutions of similar size and type, with similar disciplines, etc.),
- **editorial content** for quantitative analyses associated with qualitative ones.



05

APPENDICES



Common data

CONTEXT

- **D0** Country population

POTENTIAL LIBRARY AUDIENCE

- **D1** Institution students
- **D2** Institution teaching and other academic staff

PUBLIC USAGE OF LIBRARIES

- **D3** Printed material loans (excluding extensions)
- **D4** User visits (physical visits)
- **D5** Library website visits
- **D6** Digital periodical articles used
- **D7** eBooks used
- **D8** User training provided by libraries
- **D9** Hours of user training provided by libraries

RESOURCES – LIBRARY PREMISES

- **D10** Total floor area (sqm) (non-priority as total floor area is not readily comparable, depending on the library's location in the institution)
- **D11** Floor area for the public
- **D12** User places for the public
- **D13** Group work places (non-priority, as few countries are concerned)
- **D14** Number of public access workstations (non-priority, not recorded in France)
- **D15** Weekly opening hours in the main library (normal period) (average per institution)
- **D16** Opening days per year in the main library (average per institution)

RESOURCES – LIBRARY STAFF

- **D17** Library staff (FTE)
- **D18** Continuing education for library staff (days per year)

RESOURCES – LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

- **D19** Digital periodical titles available (average per institution) (non-priority and no guarantee of homogeneous data)
- **D20** eBook titles available (average per institution) (non-priority and no guarantee of homogeneous data)

RESOURCES – LIBRARY BUDGETS

- **D21** Institution's total expenditure (non-priority, as few countries are concerned)
- **D22** Total library expenditure (including staff costs)
- **D23** Library staff costs
- **D24** Library materials costs
- **D25** Materials cost of digital documents
- **D26** Materials cost of digital periodicals
- **D27** Materials cost of eBooks
- **D28** Total library income
- **D29** - **D29** Library income from the institution or its parent authority
- **D30** Library income from internal, own and local sources (except grants) (non-priority)

Common indicators

TARGET LIBRARY POPULATION

- **I0.** Number of students (of the institutions surveyed) per country population (%)

RESOURCES AND SERVICES: LIBRARY CAPACITY/AVAILABILITY

Area availability

- **I1.** Floor area for the public per student
- **I2.** Number of students per user place
- **I22.** Total floor area per student (non-priority)
- **I23.** Number of public access workstations per seated place (non-priority)
- **I24.** Number of group work places per seated place (%) (non-priority)
- **D15.** Weekly opening hours in the main library (normal period) (average per institution)
- **D16.** Opening days per year in the main library (average per institution)

Staff availability

- **I3.** Staff number (FTE) per 1,000 students

RESOURCES AND SERVICES: LIBRARY USAGE

Physical and virtual visits

- **I4.** Number of physical visits to the library per student
- **I5.** Number of virtual visits to the library (library website visits) per student

User training

- **I6.** Number of students attending training per student
- **I7.** Hours of user training provided per 10 students

Loans and usage

- **I8.** Number of printed material loans per student
- **I9.** Number of digital periodical articles used per students and academic staff members
- **I10.** Number of eBooks used per students and academic staff members

RESOURCES AND SERVICES: LIBRARY EFFICIENCY

Total expenditure

- **I11.** Total library expenditure (excluding staff costs) per student
- **I12.** Total library expenditure (excluding staff costs) per students and academic staff members
- **I13.** Total library expenditure (including staff costs) per student
- **I14.** Total library expenditure (including staff costs) per students and academic staff members
- **I15.** Total library expenditure per institution's total expenditure (%) (non-priority)

Staff costs

- **I16.** Staff costs per student (non-priority)
- **I16 B.** Staff costs per number of students and academic staff members (non-priority)
- **I16 C.** Staff costs per FTE

Common indicators

Materials expenditure

- **I17.** Materials expenditure per number of students and academic staff members
- **I18.** Materials expenditure per total library expenditure (including staff costs)
- **I25.** Materials expenditure per library staff costs

CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Collections

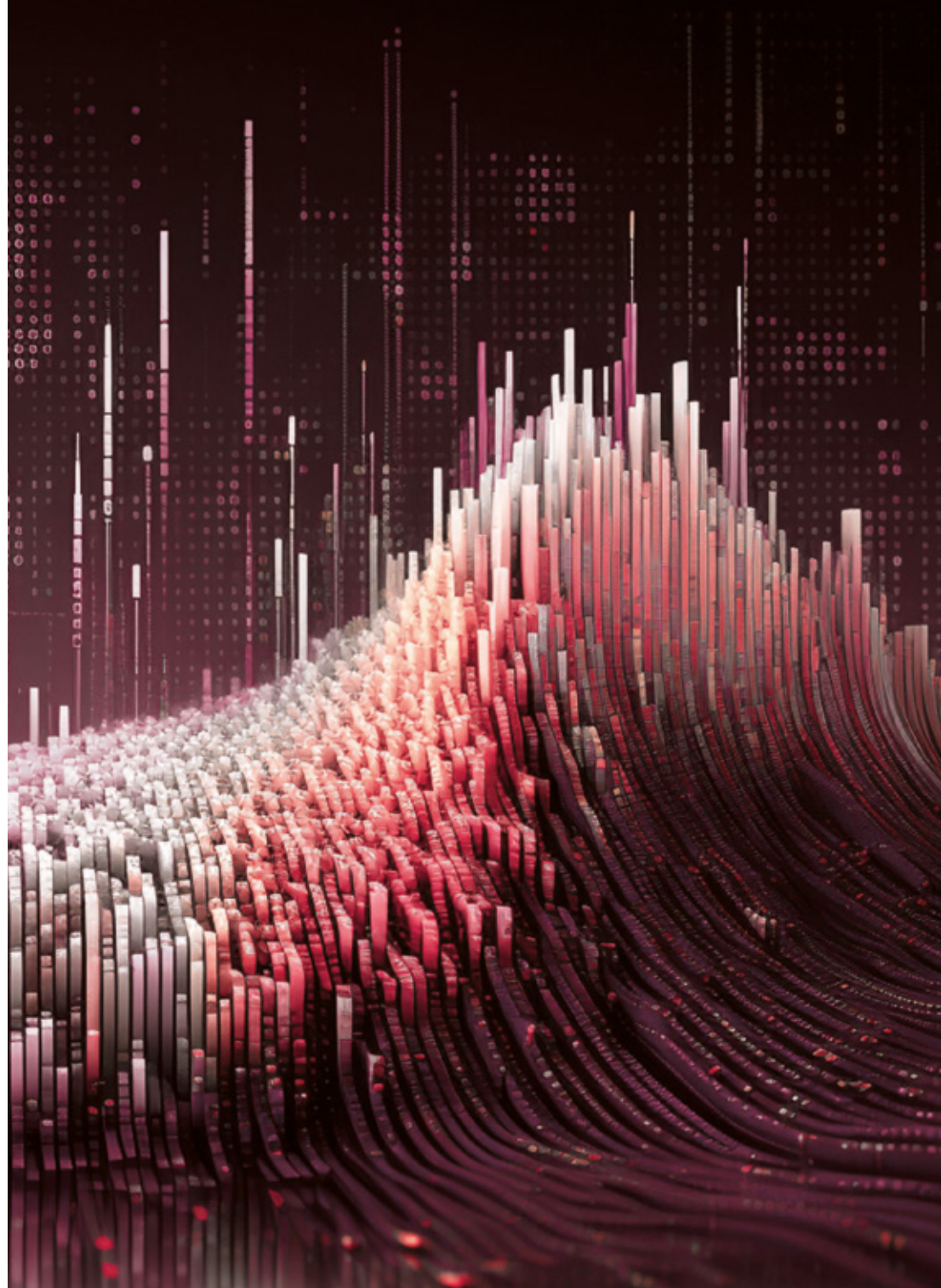
- **I19.** Materials expenditure for digital documents per materials expenditure

Staff

- **I20.** Number of days of professional training per staff (FTE)

Budgets

- **I21.** Library budgets which do not come from the institution or its parent authority (local authority grants, own resources, etc.) per total library expenditure (including staff costs)



ISO 2789 (2022-09): Information and documentation - International library statistics

	<i>COMMON DATA POINTS SELECTED</i>	<i>ISO2789 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
D0	Country population	Not applicable
D1	Institution students	Not applicable
D2	Institution teaching and other academic staff	Not applicable
D3	Printed material loans (excluding extensions/renewals)	3.2.29
D4	User visits (physical visits)	3.2.61
D5	Library website/portal visits	3.2.62
D6	Digital periodical articles used	No equivalent: see COUNTER JR1
D7	eBooks used	No equivalent: see COUNTER BR1, BR2

ISO 2789 (2022-09): Information and documentation - International library statistics

	<i>COMMON DATA POINTS SELECTED</i>	<i>ISO2789 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
D8	Users trained	7.2.11
D9	User training (hours)	7.2.11c
D10	Total floor area (sqm)	7.4.9.3
D11	Floor area for the public	7.4.9.2a / 7.4.9.2d
D12	Seated places for the public	7.4.3
D13	Group work places	-
D14	Number of workstations for the public	7.4.4
D15	Weekly opening hours in the main library (normal period)	7.4.1a

ISO 2789 (2022-09): Information and documentation - International library statistics

	<i>COMMON DATA POINTS SELECTED</i>	<i>ISO2789 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
D16	Opening days per year in the main library	7.4.2a
D17	Library staff (FTE)	7.7.2.1b
D18	Continuing education for staff (days in the year)	7.7.6a
D19	Digital periodical titles available	3.3.48
D20	eBook titles available	3.3.22
D21	Total institution expenditure	Not applicable
D22	Total library expenditure	7.6.1 / 7.6.2
D23	Staff costs	7.6.1.1

ISO 2789 (2022-09): Information and documentation - International library statistics

	<i>COMMON DATA POINTS SELECTED</i>	<i>ISO2789 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
D24	Total library materials costs	7.6.1.2 / 7.6.1.3 / 7.6.1.5
D25	Materials cost of digital documents	7.6.1.2
D26	Materials cost of digital periodicals	7.6.1.2f
D27	Materials cost of eBooks	7.6.1.2h
D28	Total library income	7.6.3
D29	Income from the institution or the parent authority	7.6.3a
D30	Library income from internal, own or local sources (excluding grants)	7.6.3f

ISO 11620 (2023-06): Information and documentation - Library performance indicators

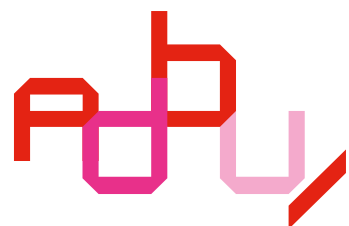
	<i>COMMON INDICATORS SUGGESTED BY THE SURVEY</i>	<i>11620 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
I0	Number of students (of the institutions surveyed) per country population (%)	Not applicable
I1	Floor area for the public per student	A1.3.1
I22	Total floor area per student (non-priority)	-
I2	Number of students per user place	A1.3.2
I3	Staff numbers (FTE) per 1,000 students	A1.4.1
I23	Number of public computer workstations per seated place (non-priority users)	-
I24	Number of group work places per seated place (non-priority) (%)	-
I4	Number of physical visits to the library per student	A2.2.1
I5	Number of virtual visits to the library (library website visits) per student	-

ISO 11620 (2023-06): Information and documentation - Library performance indicators

	<i>COMMON INDICATORS SUGGESTED BY THE SURVEY</i>	<i>11620 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
I6	Number of students attending training per student	A2.2.6
I7	Hours of user training provided per 10 students	-
I8	Number of printed material loans per student	-
I9	Number of digital periodical articles used per students and academic staff members	-
I10	Number of eBooks used per students and academic staff members	-
I11	Total library expenditure (excluding staff costs) per student	A3.4.1
I12	Total library expenditure (excluding staff costs) per students and academic staff members	A3.4.1
I13	Total library expenditure (including staff costs) per student	A3.4.1
I14	Total library expenditure (including staff costs) per students and academic staff members	A3.4.1

ISO 11620 (2023-06): Information and documentation - Library performance indicators

	<i>COMMON INDICATORS SUGGESTED BY THE SURVEY</i>	<i>11620 ASSOCIATED WITH OR CLOSE TO DATA POINT</i>
I15	Total library expenditure per institution's total expenditure (%) (non-priority)	A4.2.1
I16	Staff costs per student (non-priority)	-
I17	Materials expenditure per students and academic staff members	-
I18	Materials expenditure per total library expenditure (including staff costs)	-
I25	Materials expenditure per library's staff costs	-
I19	Materials expenditure for digital documents per materials expenditure	-
I20	Days of professional training per number of staff (FTE)	A4.1.2
I21	Library budgets which do not come from the institution or its parent authority (local authority grants, own resources, etc.) per library total expenditure (including staff costs)	A.4.2.1



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