

Lower education level in the thinly populated areas even for the younger generations

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) classifies the educational level of the population into three broad groups: low, medium and high (following the ISCED classification¹). The LFS also distinguishes three types of zones according to their degree of urbanisation¹: densely, intermediate and thinly populated. Looking at the education features of the population from the LFS 2003, the thinly populated areas have:

- A lower level of education overall and in all age groups compared to the densely populated areas;
- Similar percentages of men and women with a high level of education.

Thinly populated areas have a higher percentage of people with a low level of education than densely populated areas²

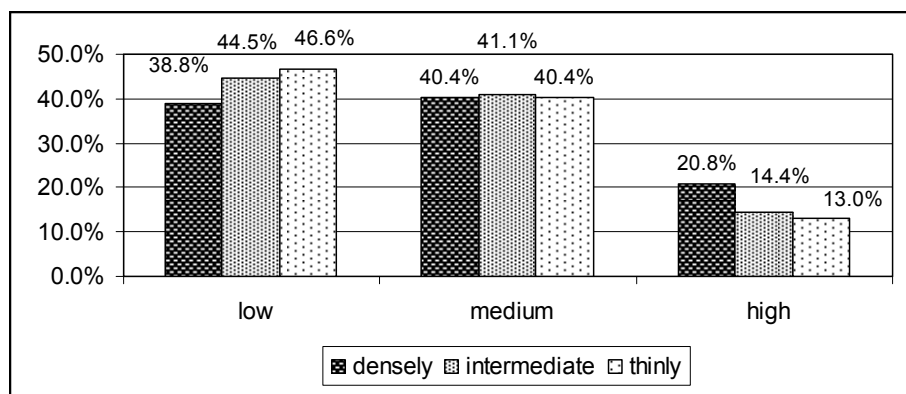


Figure 1: % of population aged 15 and over by level of education and by degree of urbanisation (2003)

People with a low level of education account for 46.6% of the population in thinly populated areas against 38.8% in the densely populated areas. On the other hand people with a high level of education account for 13.0% of the population in thinly populated areas, against 20.8% in the densely populated ones.



¹ For the definition see the annex.

² Aggregate statistics in this publication cover all 25 MS except Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, i.e. 90% of the EU25 population.

In most Member States the thinly populated areas have a higher percentage of low education level in the population³

The percentage of the population with a low education level is higher in the thinly populated areas of all but two of the Member States, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom. Some countries show particularly large differences between the thinly and densely populated

areas. For example, in Greece the proportion of people with low education level is 82.0% in the thinly populated areas, compared with 43.3% in the densely populated areas.

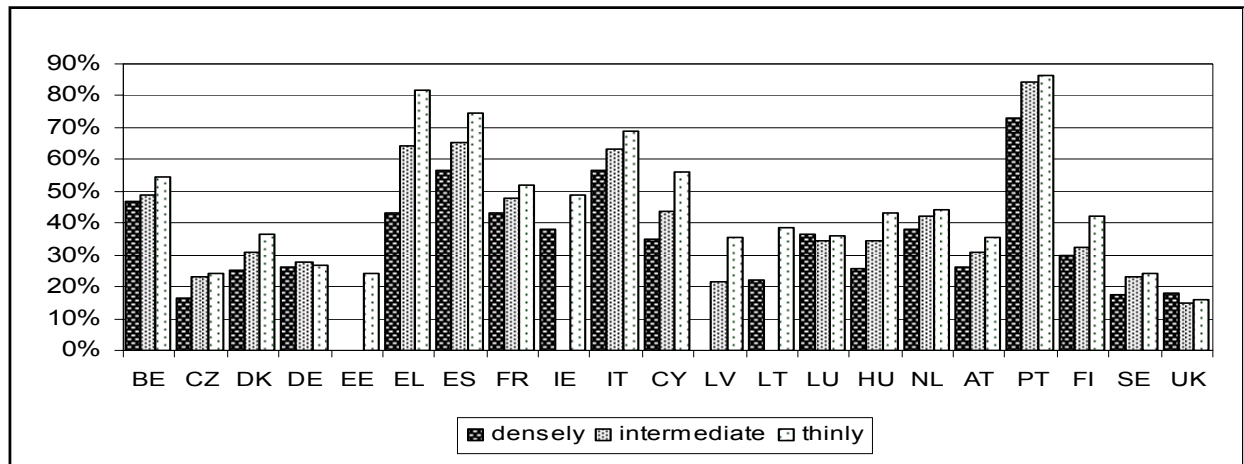


Figure 2: % of population aged 15 and over with low level of education by degree of urbanisation (2003)

Fewer highly educated people in the thinly populated areas

In all Member States but the United Kingdom, there is a higher percentage of people with a high level of education in the densely populated areas than in the thinly populated.

In the United Kingdom the percentages in all areas are more evenly distributed.

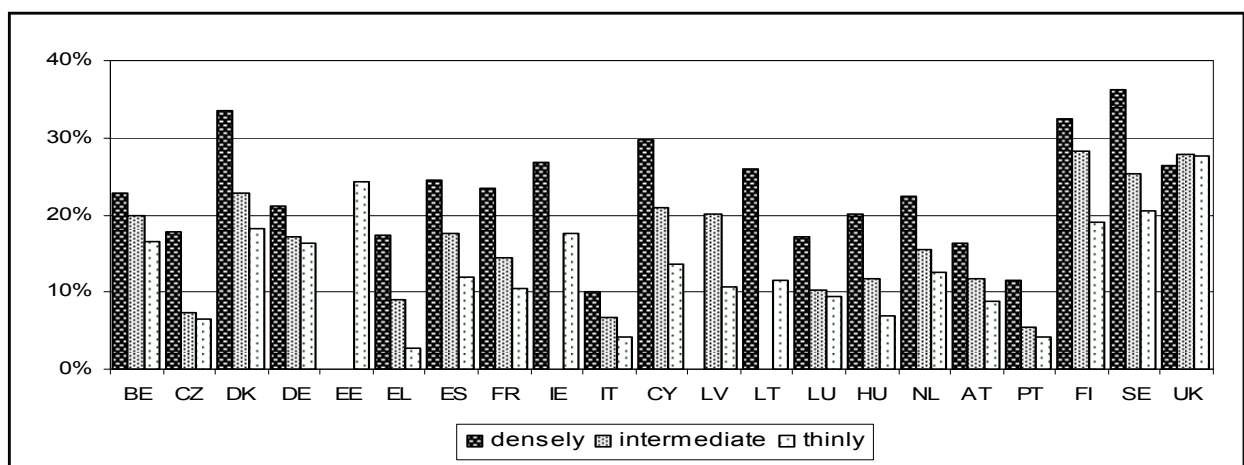


Figure 3: % of population aged 15 and over with high level of education by degree of urbanisation (2003)

³ Sweden does not code the degree of urbanisation for people under 15.

Women present higher proportion with a low level of education in all areas²

When the sexes are compared, it is seen that, in all areas there is a greater percentage of women with a low level of education.

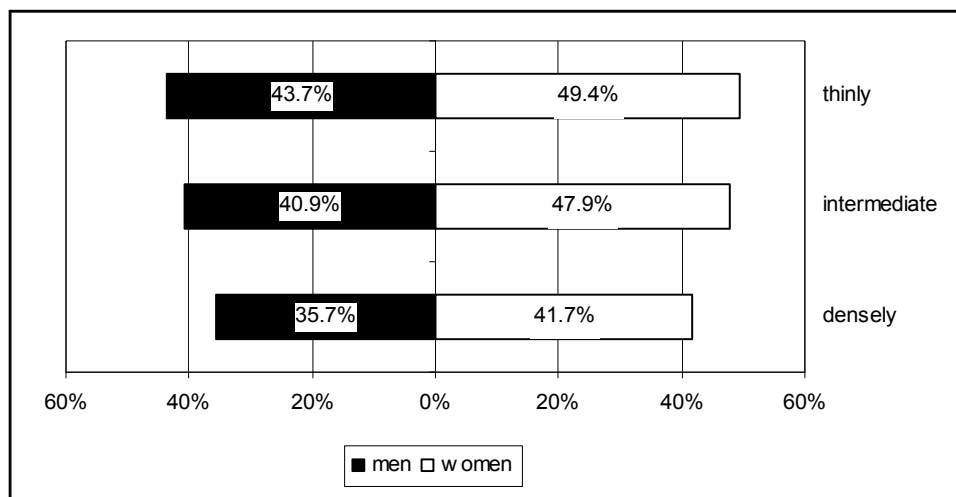


Figure 4: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with low education level by degree of urbanisation (2003)

Fewer women with medium education level especially in the thinly populated areas²

The proportion of men with a medium level of education exceeds that for women in all areas.

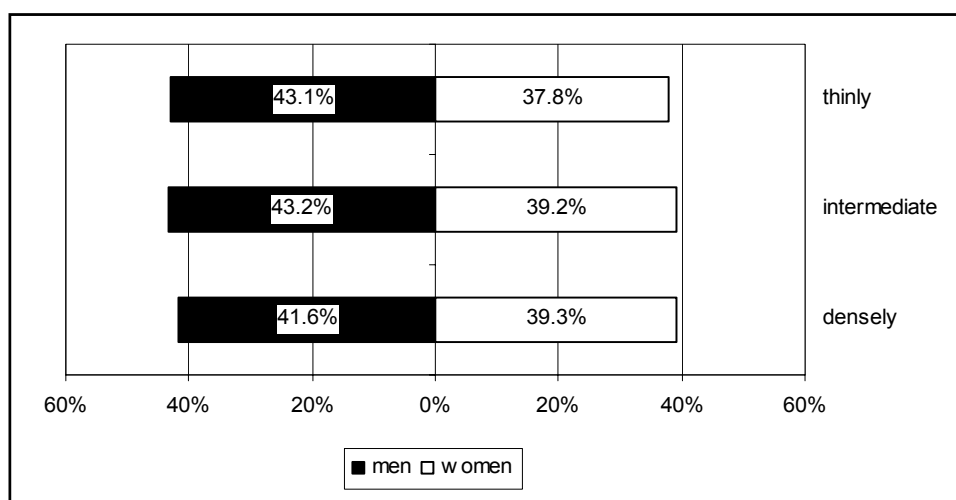


Figure 5: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with medium education level by degree of urbanisation (2003)

Women and men present similar percentages with a high level of education in the thinly populated areas²

The proportion of men with a high level of education also exceeds that for women in the intermediate and densely populated areas.

There is no significant difference between the sexes in the thinly populated areas.

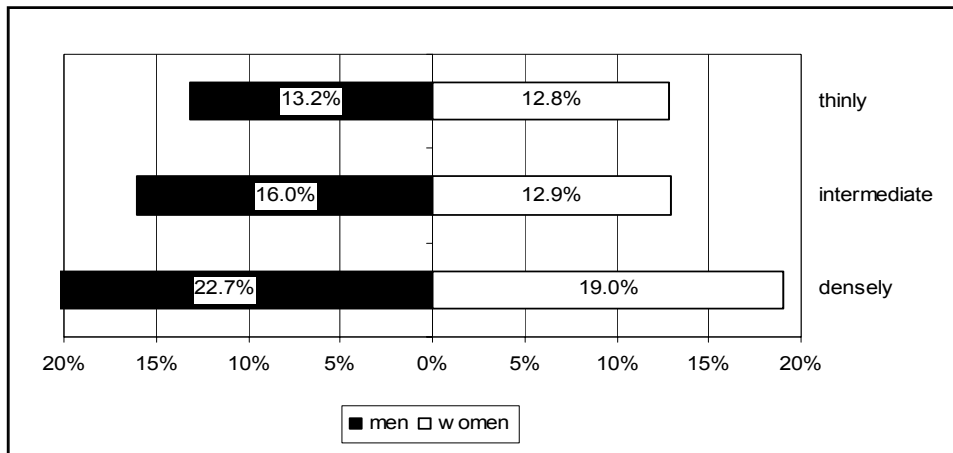


Figure 6: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with high education level by degree of urbanisation (2003)

Men in six Member States have a higher percentage of low education level in the thinly populated areas

In the thinly populated areas of six Member States (Estonia, Spain, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal and Sweden) there is a higher percentage of men with a low level of education than women.

In the thinly populated areas of all the other Member States the proportion of women with a low level of education exceeds that of men.

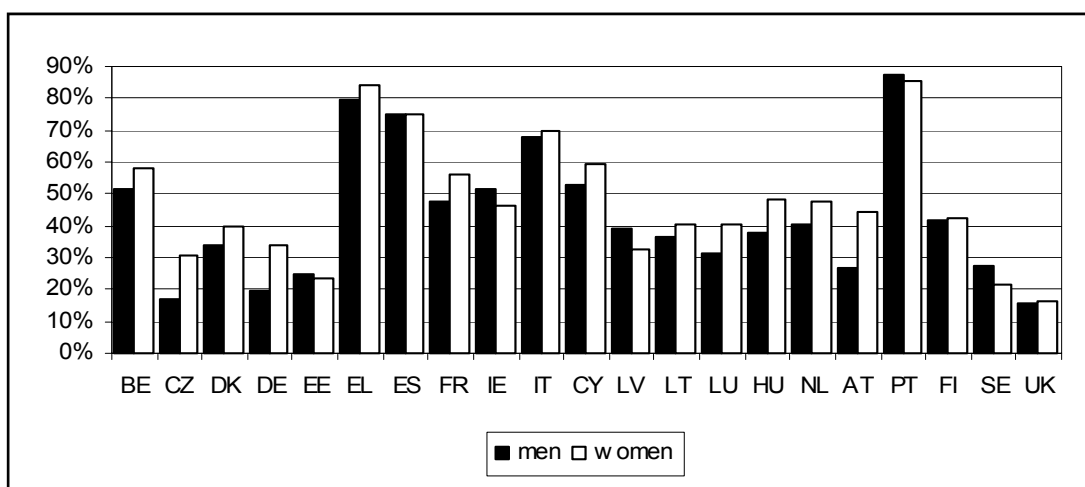


Figure 7: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with low education in thinly populated areas (2003)

Lower percentage of women with a medium level of education in the thinly populated areas in nearly all Member States

With the exception of Ireland, Latvia and Portugal, the percentage of men with a medium level of

education exceeds that of women in the thinly populated areas.

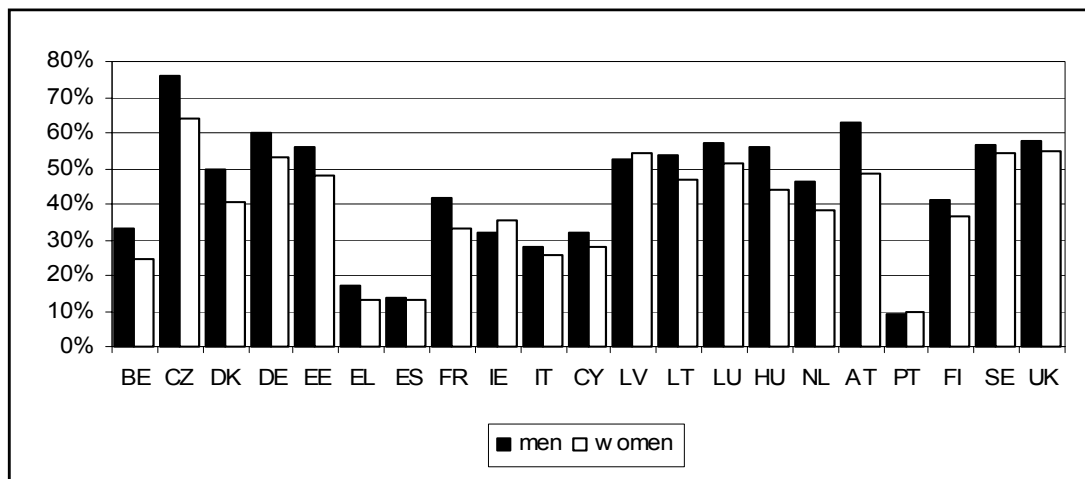


Figure 8: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with medium education in thinly populated areas (2003)

Greater proportion of highly educated women in the thinly populated areas of more than half of the Member States

Women in Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, France, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the

United Kingdom record a higher percentage with high education level than for men.

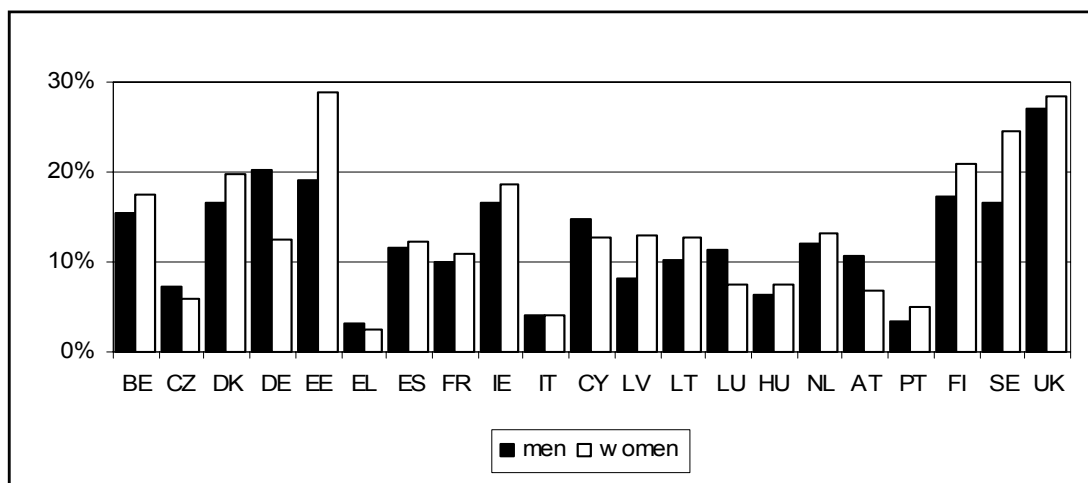


Figure 9: % of men and % of women aged 15 and over with high education in thinly populated areas (2003)

Higher percentage of population with low level of education in thinly populated areas for all age groups²

The percentage of population with low education level is higher in the thinly populated areas compared to the densely ones, for all age groups considered in the analysis. The reverse is true for the high education level.

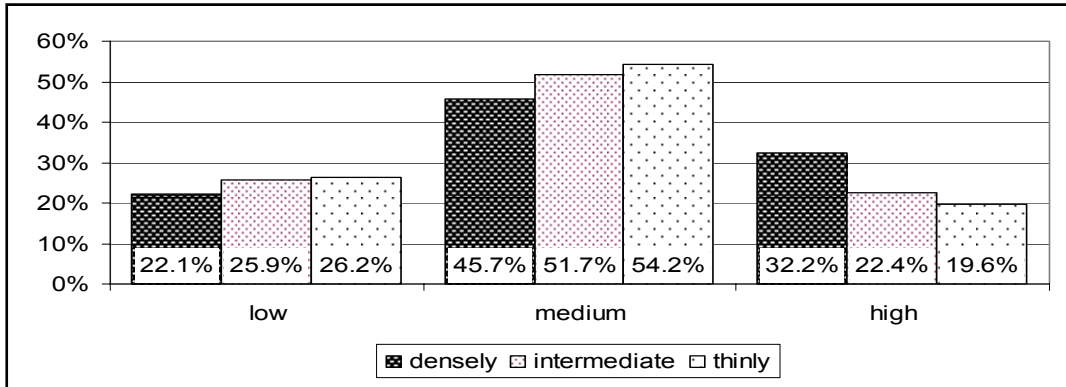


Figure 10: Level of education of population in age group 25-34 in % by degree of urbanisation (2003)

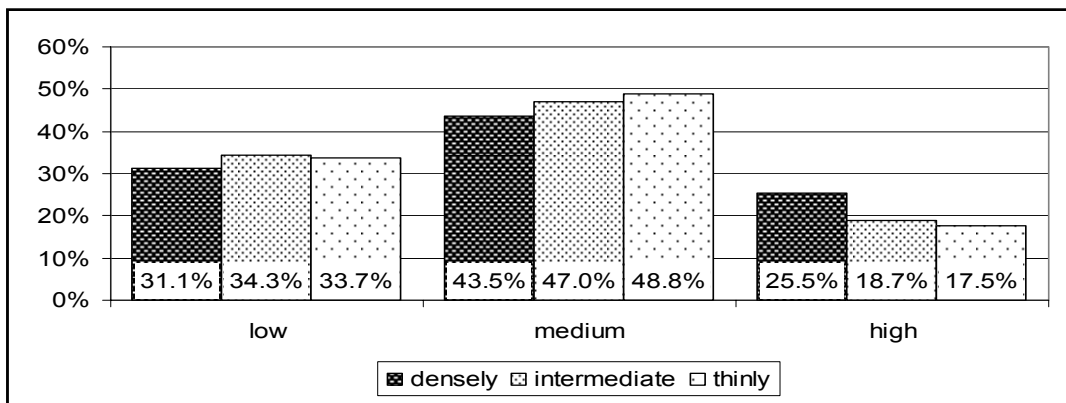


Figure 11: Level of education of population in age group 35-54 in % by degree of urbanisation (2003)

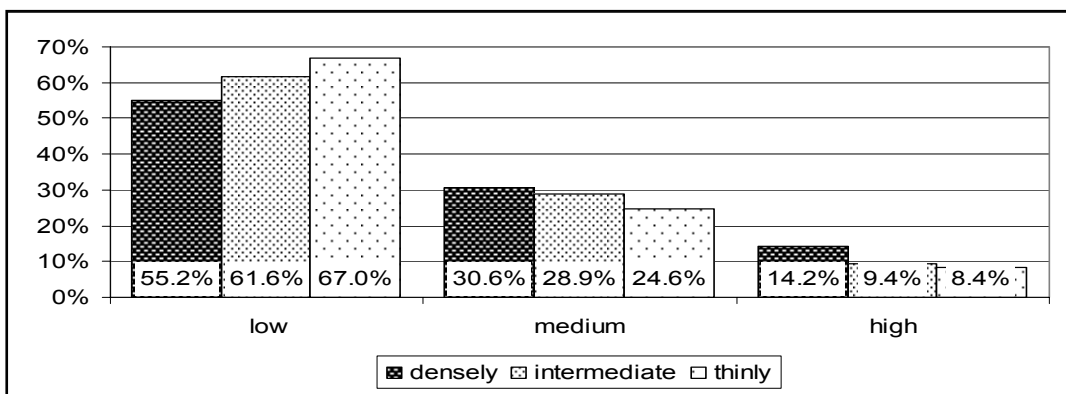


Figure 12: Level of education of population in age group 55 and over in % by degree of urbanisation (2003)

Medium education level prevails in the age group 35-54 in the thinly populated areas

In thirteen of the Member States the medium education level prevails among the population in the age group 35-54. The low education level accounts for the highest

proportion in seven Member States (Belgium, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus and Portugal).

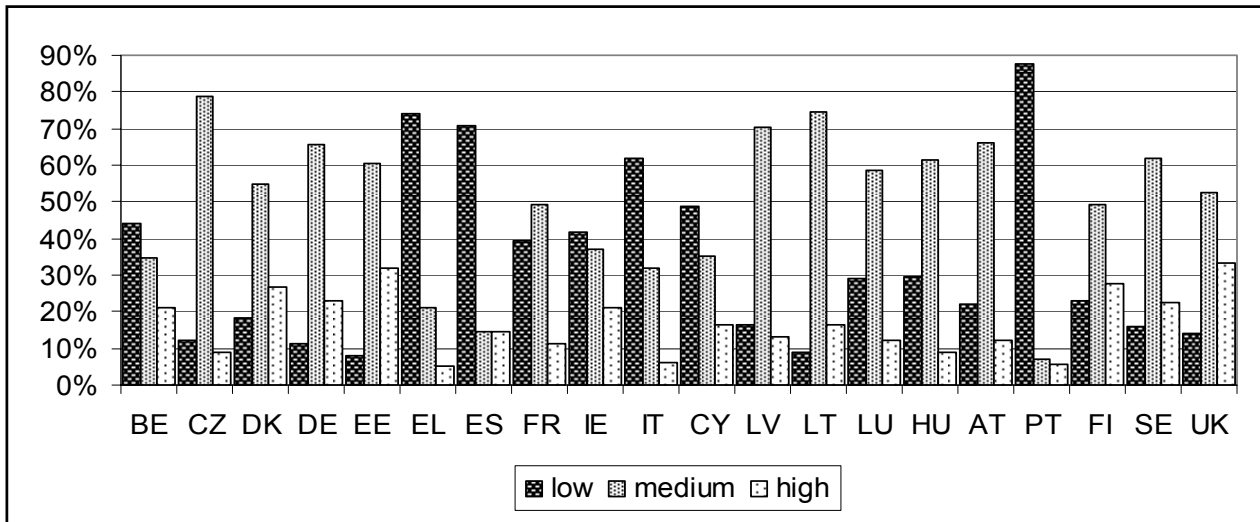


Figure 13: Level of education of population in age group 35-54 in thinly populated areas in % (2003)

Annex: DEFINITIONS

The 2003 European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS) was conducted in the 25 Member States of the European Union and 3 countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in accordance with Council Regulation (EEC) No. 577/98 of 9 March 1998. Two Candidate countries also participated in the 2003 survey. The EU LFS is a large household sample survey providing quarterly results on labour participation of people aged 15 and over as well as on persons outside the labour force.

Results presented here correspond to second quarter of 2003 for all the countries except Austria and France for which the results presented correspond to 1st quarter.

Degree of urbanisation: The concept "urbanisation" has been introduced in order to indicate the features of the area where the interviewed person lives. Three area types have been identified as follows:

- Densely populated area: refers to a set of closely related local units, each one of which having a density greater than 500 inhabitants per km², and the total population of which being of at least 50 000 inhabitants;
- Intermediate area: refers to a set of closely related local units that do not pertain to a densely populated area, each one of which having density greater than 100 inhabitants per km², and where the total population is at least of 50 000 inhabitants or it refers to a set that is adjacent to a highly populated area.
- Thinly populated area: refers to a set of closely related local units that are not part of a densely populated area, or of an intermediate area.

Level of education: The level of education is based in the ISCED 1997 classification (International Standard Classification of Education).

- Low encloses all levels up to the compulsory education
- Medium comprises all the post compulsory education not tertiary
- High comprises all tertiary education including university education

Further information:

➤ **Databases**

[EUROSTAT Website/General and regional statistics/Regions/Education statistics/Education statistics - ISCED97](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/General_and_regional_statistics/Regions/Education_statistics/Education_statistics_-_ISCED97)

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