

Final results of the Mensa project

B.A. Agribusiness, 4th semester

Module: AB 19: International Agricultural Extension and Business Consulting
Summer Term 2013

Background and objective of the Mensa project

Background

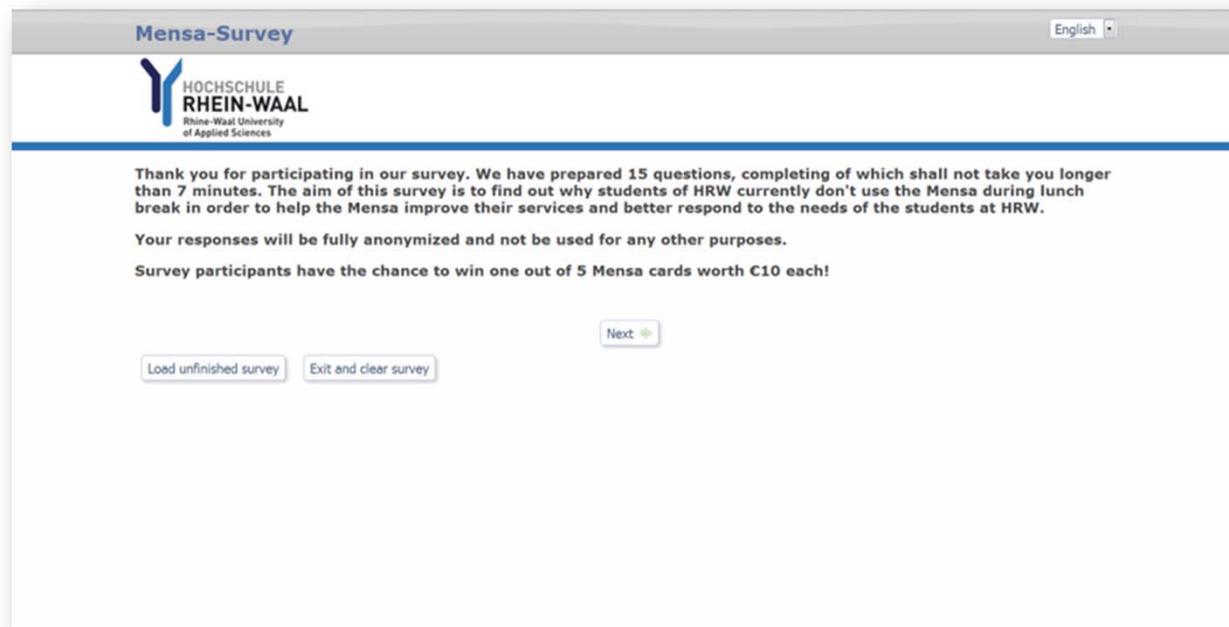
- “Mensa” at HSRW has recently opened (September 2012)
- Given the particular situation at HSRW (high percentage of foreign students, university still in build-up, rural location) there is uncertainty about the fact what students expect and which students use the “Mensa”
- Many students have the opinion that there is room for improvement (waiting-queues)

Objectives

- Better identify the customer groups
- Identify students’ expectations and preferences
- Find out reasons why students who not have lunch at “Mensa” do not use it
- Recommend improvements of “Mensa” to further increase its attractiveness

To learn about lunch habits and preferences, we conducted an online-survey among students in Kleve in spring 2013

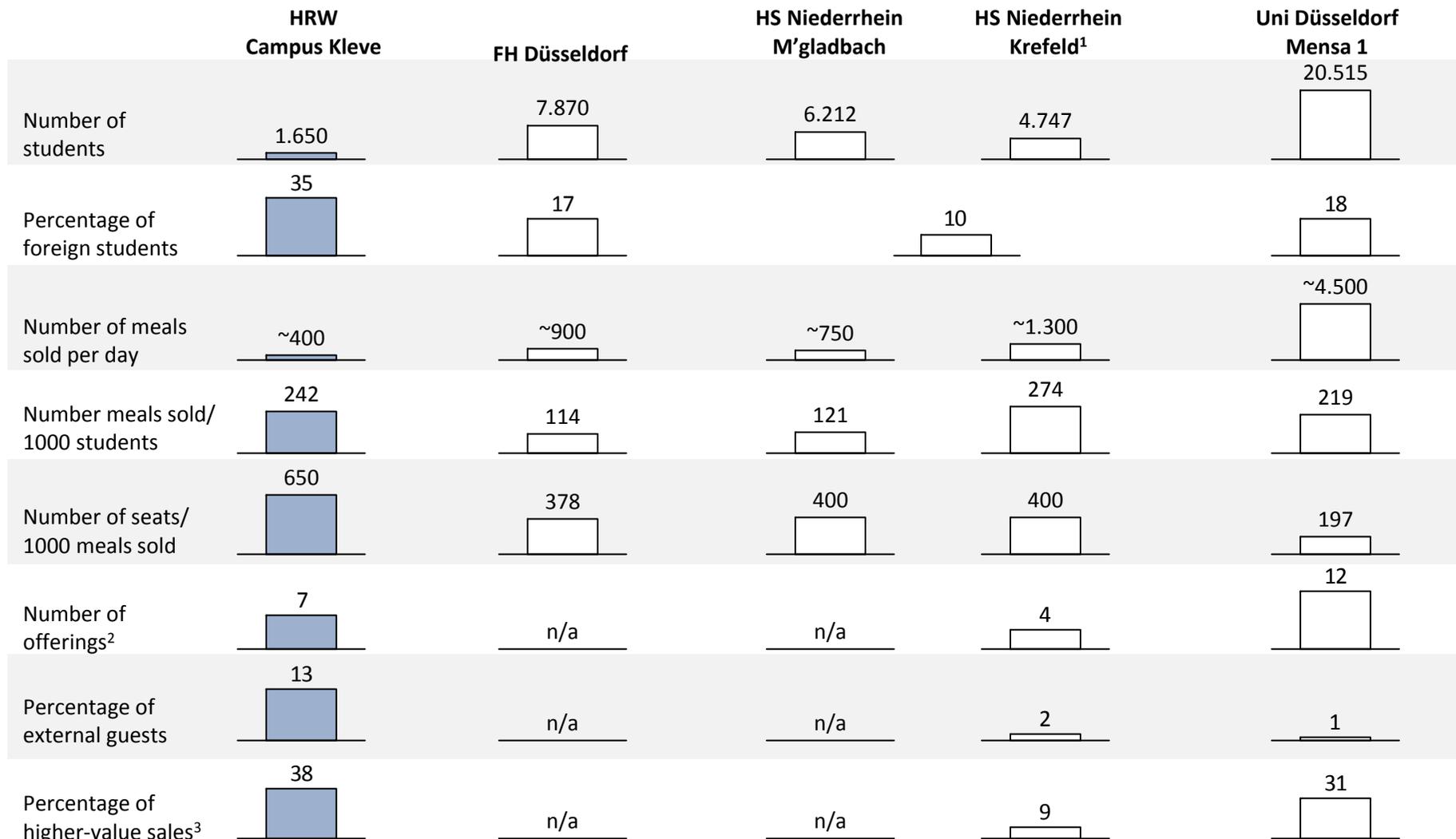
- On www.mensa-survey.de the students were able to join the survey (16th April – 6th May)
- The invitations were send to all students at the campus Cleve twice
- The survey consisted of 21 questions
- Over 500 responses (1/3 of all students)



We used a variety of additional data sources

- Mensa Card Data
 - From “Studentenwerk” we got the sales data of the winter term 2012/2013
 - We derived insights into peak times of “Mensa Use”, most popular types of food
- Time-Table Analysis
 - From the Student Service Center we collected the timetables of all full time study programs in Cleve for the winter term 2012/2013, as well as the number of students enrolled in these programs
 - We identified the time periods available for lunch break for students and the number of students who use the “Mensa” during a particular time slot
- Menu Analysis
 - We took the weekly menus of the past winter term and classified the meals into cuisines and categories
 - This data was compared with students’ food preferences obtained in the “Mensa Survey”
- Pass-Through Analysis
 - During the first two weeks of April we asked one group of students to record their times of “Mensa-Use”
 - From this data we computed peak times and average duration of “Mensa-Use”
- Benchmark Analysis
 - From public available data and data from “Studentenwerk” we computed indicators to compare “Mensa” at HSRW with other Mensa Places in the Region

Mensa Kleve compares well with other Mensa sites in the region – percentage of external guests and higher-value sales comparatively high



1 Including Mensa Frankenring and Mensa Obergath

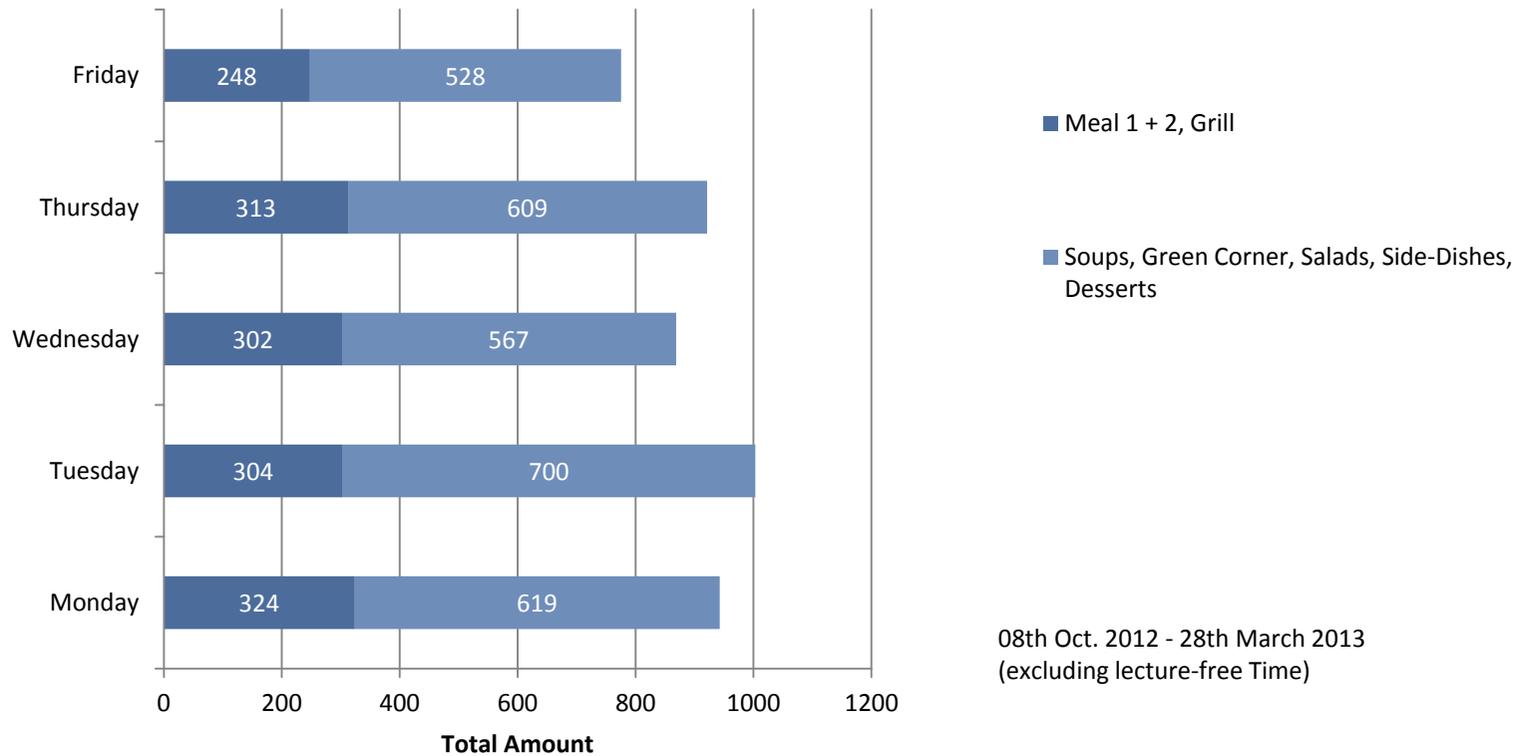
2 E.g., Meal 1, Meal 2, GreenCorner, Grill, Salad buffet, Wok, Soups

3 Including Gratin, GreenCorner, Grill, Pan, Salad buffet, Wok, MensaVital

Source: Studentenwerk Düsseldorf (2013), University websites

The Mensa in Kleve sells approximately 400 meals per day on average, with Monday and Tuesday being the most important days

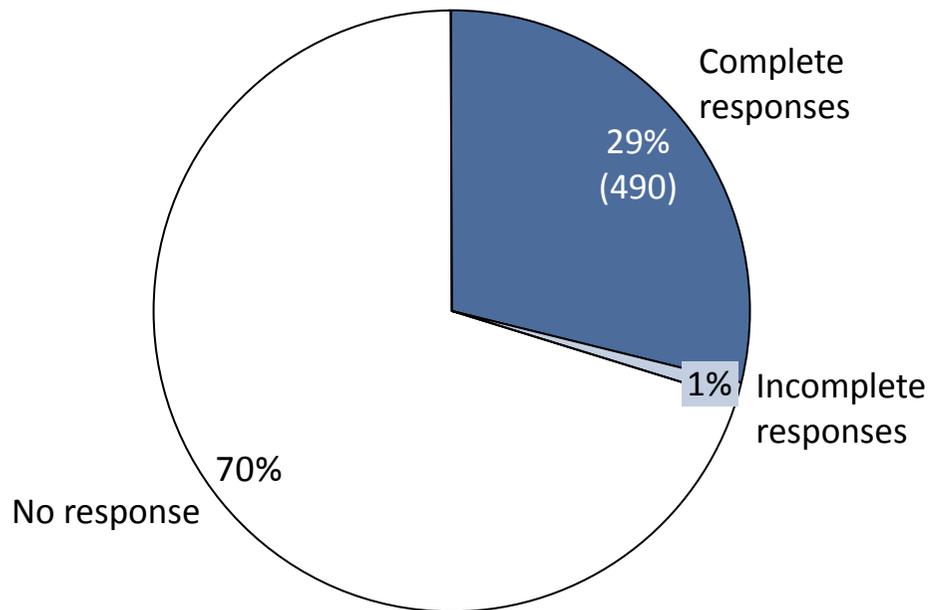
Amount of Meals on Average



Source: Mensa card data (2013)

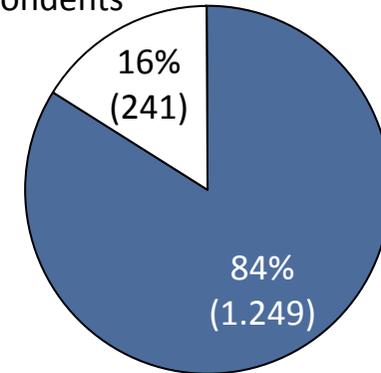
Approximately 30% of all students responded to our Mensa survey – however, the survey mainly reached students who use the Mensa

Number of survey responses



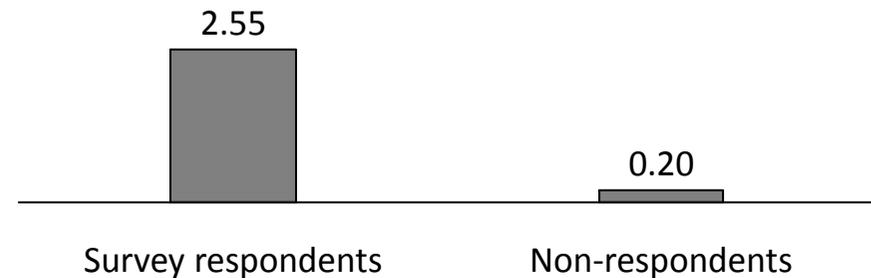
Average number of meals sold per week¹ during lecture period, Percent

...to non-respondents



...to survey respondents

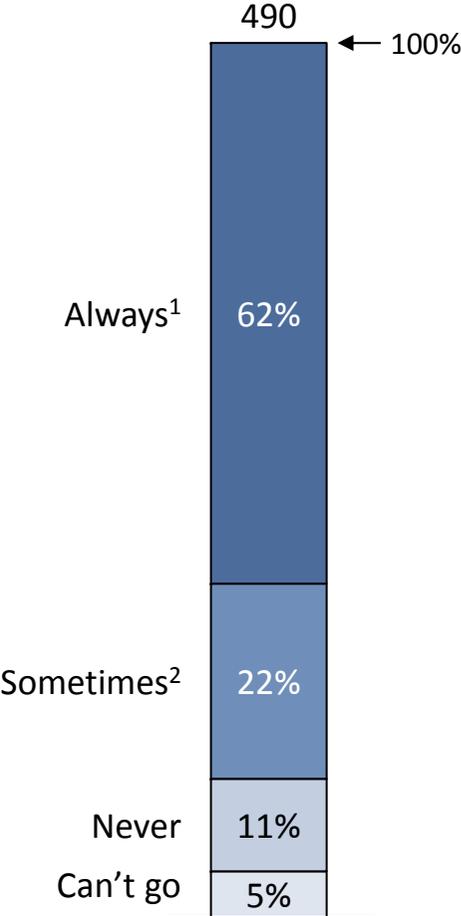
Average number of meals sold per week¹ to respondents and non-respondents during lecture period



¹ Only including Meal 1, Meal 2, and Grill
Source: Mensa survey (2013)

>80% of survey respondents use the Mensa sometimes or more regularly

Frequency of using the Mensa, Percent

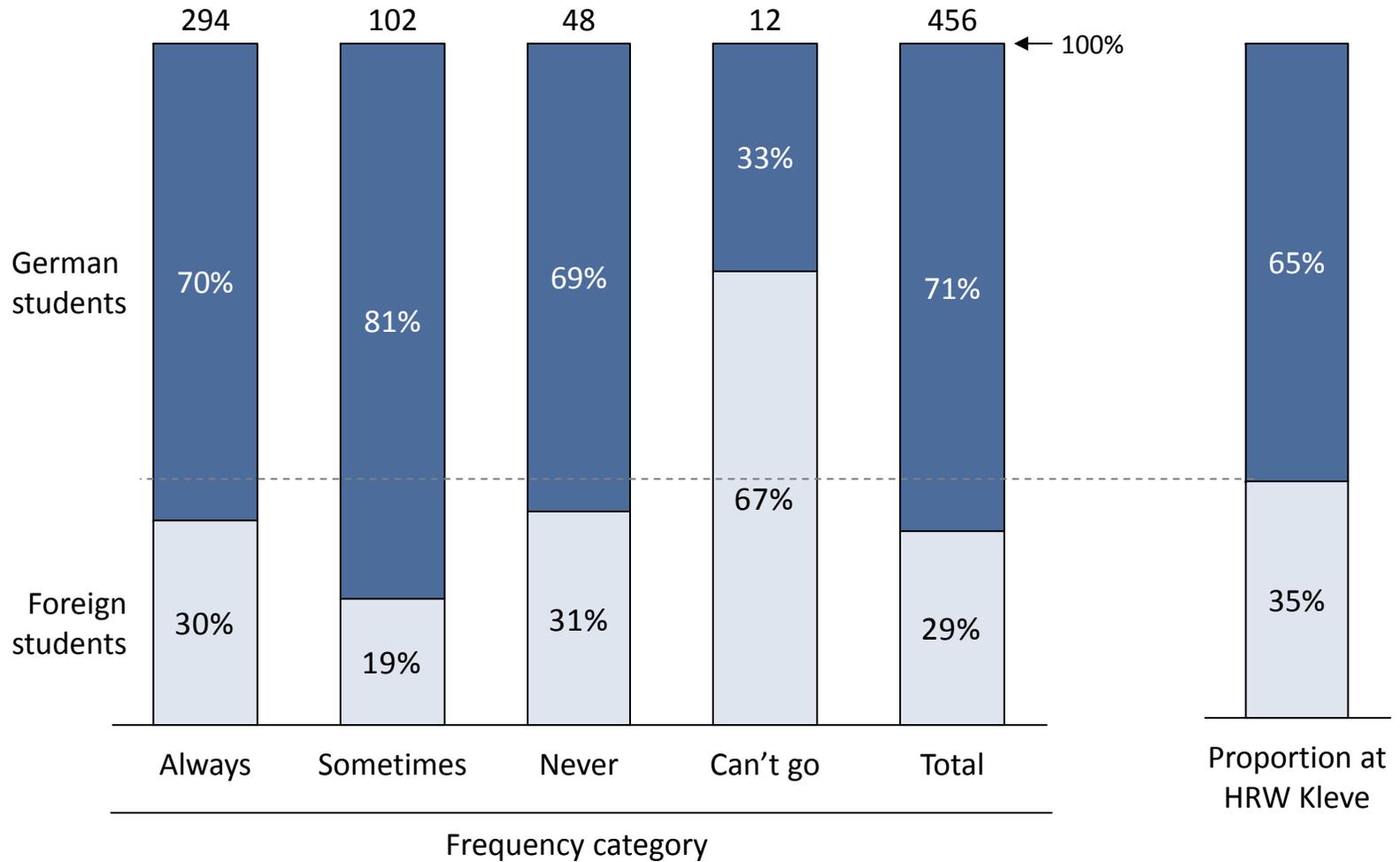


How often do you go to Mensa?

1 As often or one time less per week than they could go
2 More than 2 times less per week than they could go
Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Foreign students are currently under-represented among Mensa guests

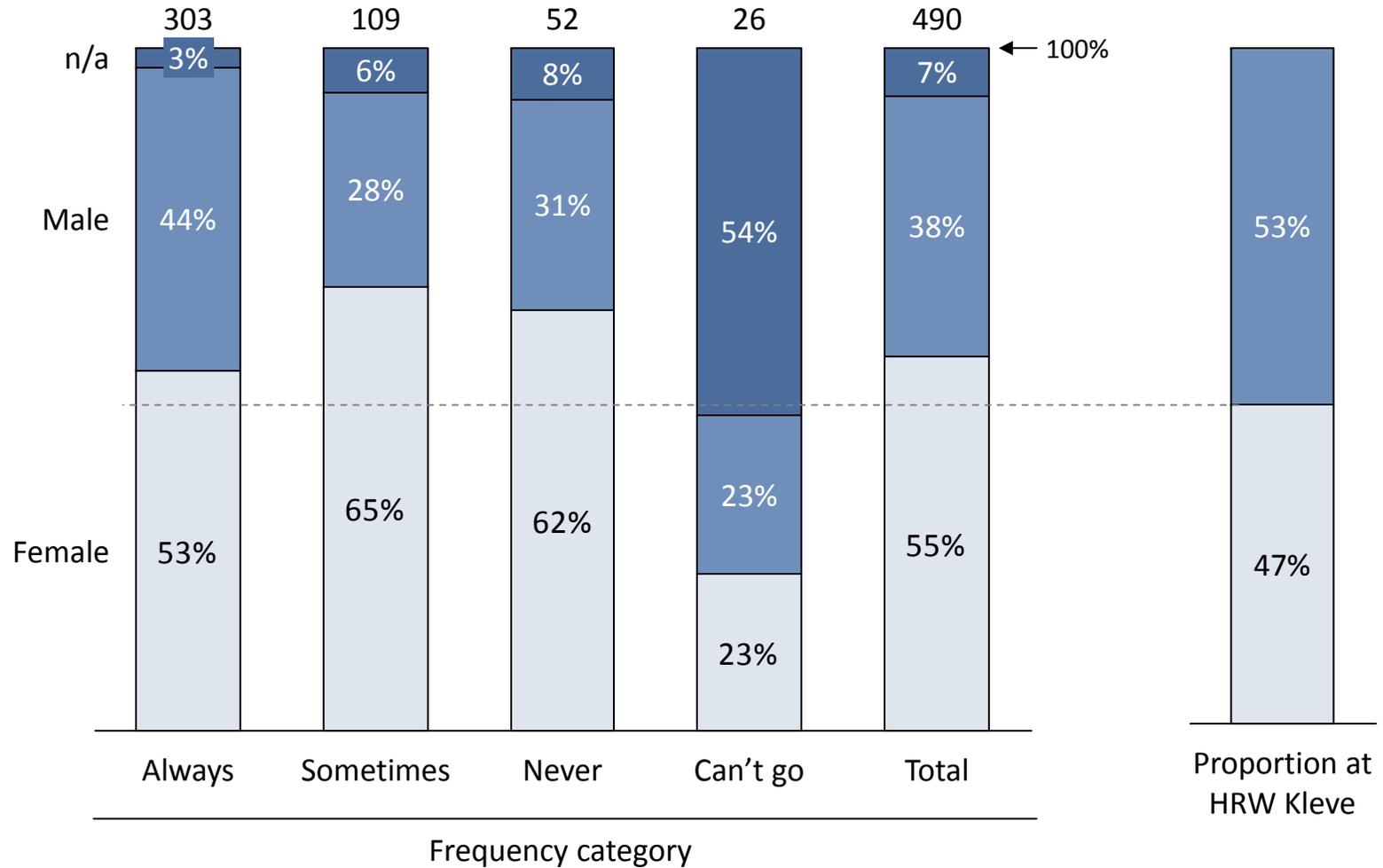
Percentage of students in frequency categories, by origin of students



Source: Mensa survey (2013)

The majority of Mensa customers are female students – but male students tend to use the Mensa more regularly

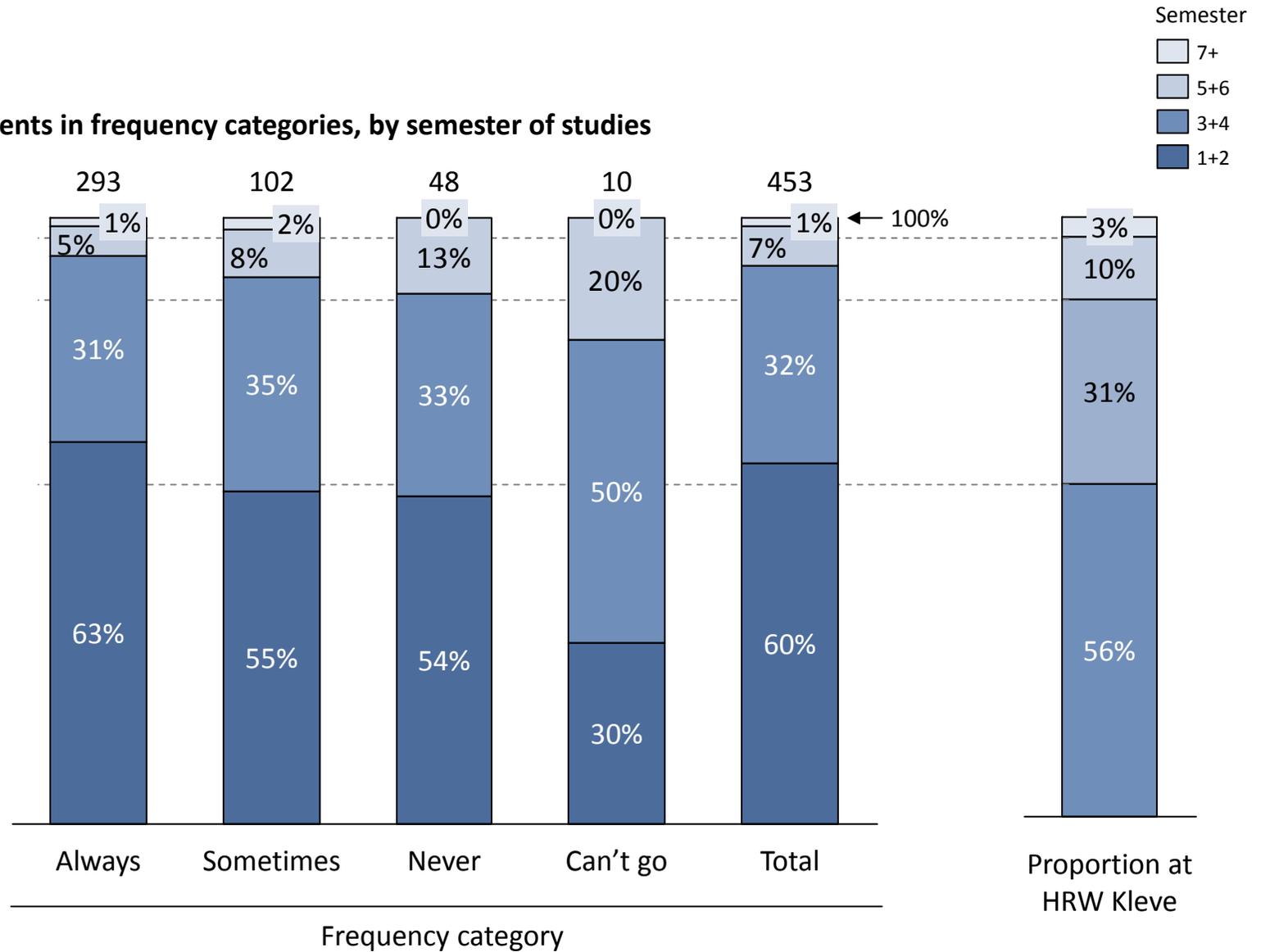
Percentage of students in frequency categories, by gender



Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Students in early stages of their studies tend to use the Mensa more regularly

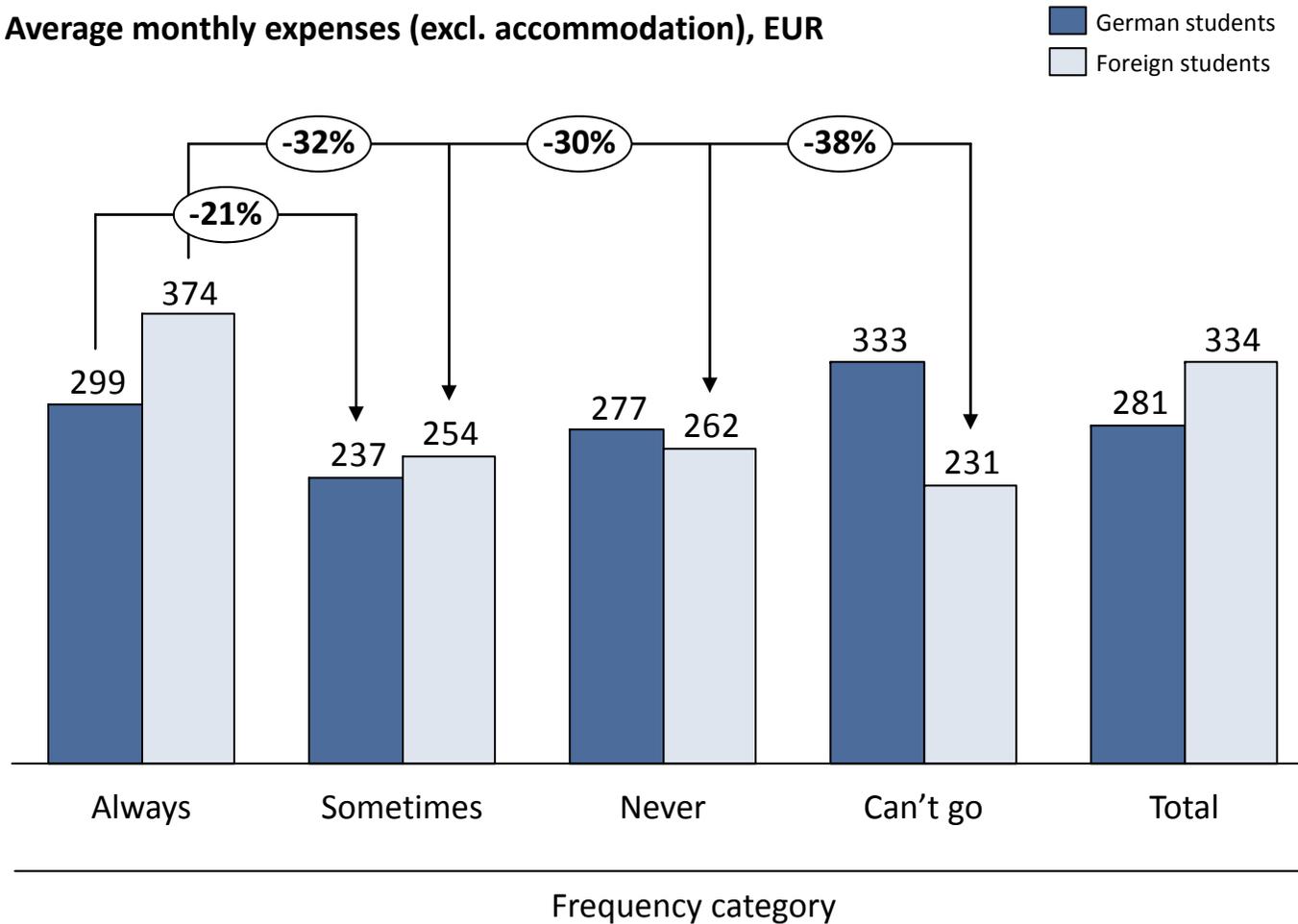
Percentage of students in frequency categories, by semester of studies



Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Students who do not use the Mensa more often may do so because they cannot afford – this holds particularly for foreign students

Average monthly expenses (excl. accommodation), EUR

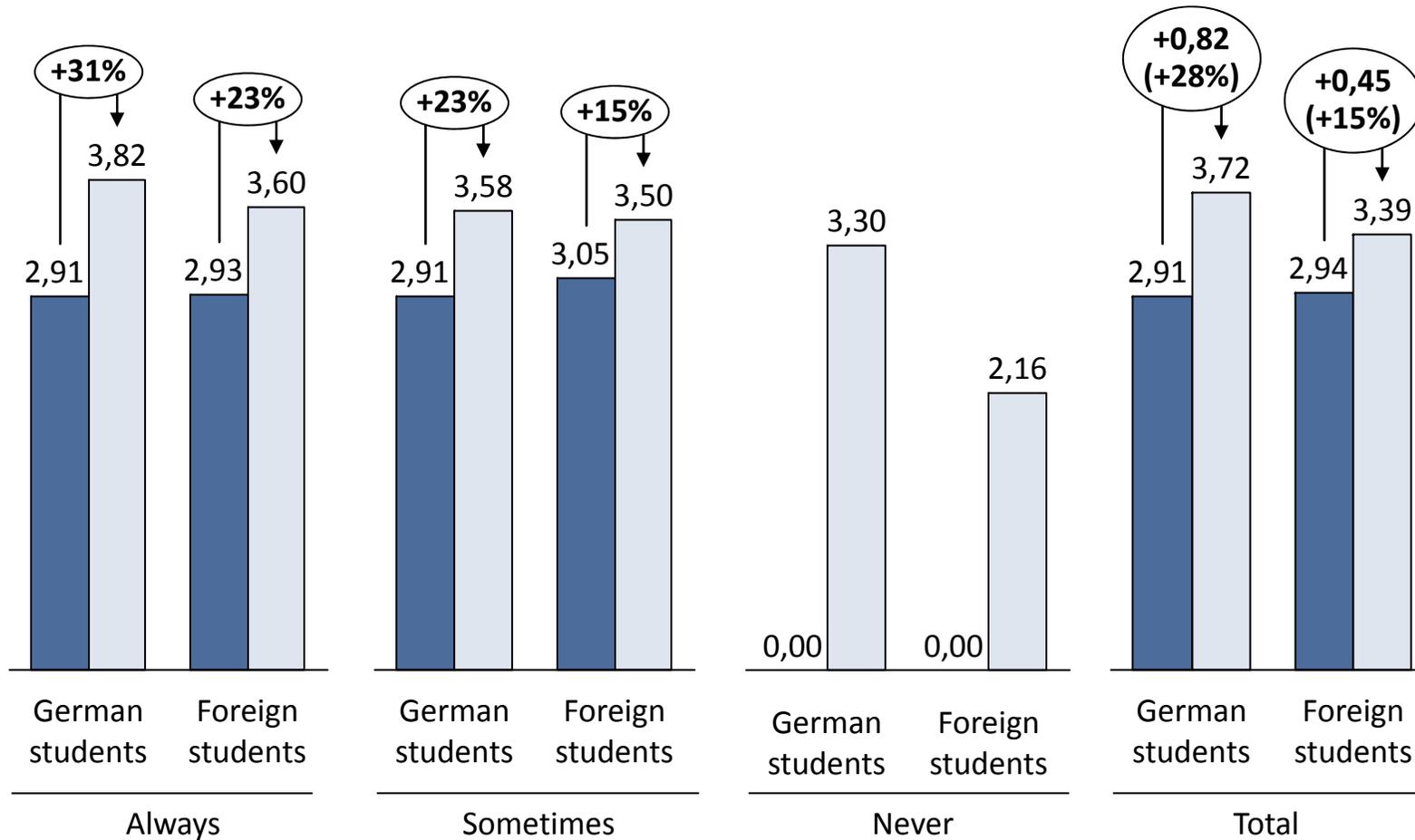


Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Students willingness to spend per meal is between 0,45-0,82 EUR above current prices – and willingness to pay is higher the more often students use the Mensa

■ Spend actually
 ■ Willing to spend

Average expenditure and willingness to spend per meal, EUR

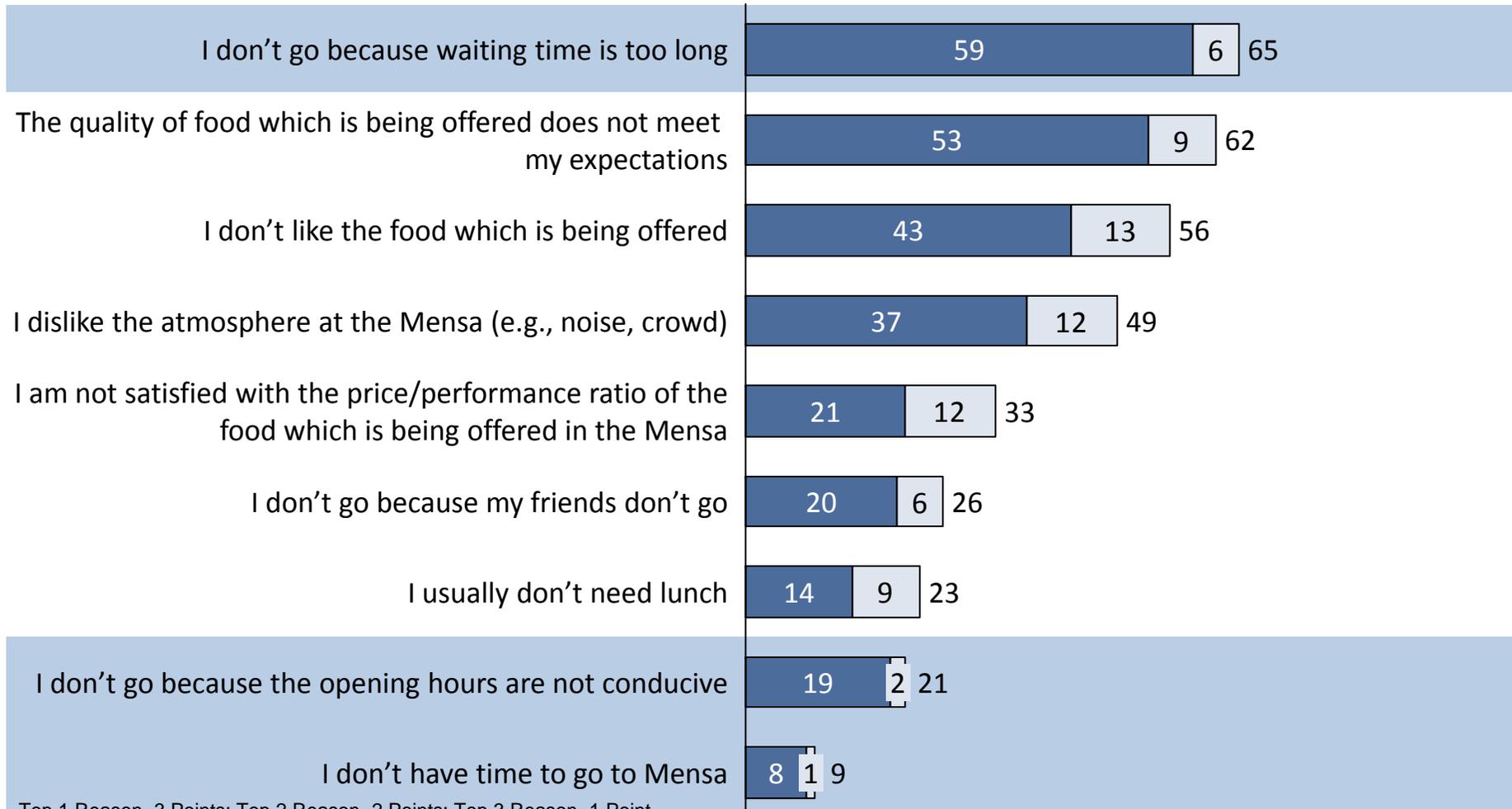


1 Mensa card data, winter semester 2012-2013
 Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Approximately 30% of the students who do not use the Mensa are discouraged by long waiting times and other time constraints...

Top three reasons why students don't use the Mensa more frequently, Sum of ranks

Never
 Can't go

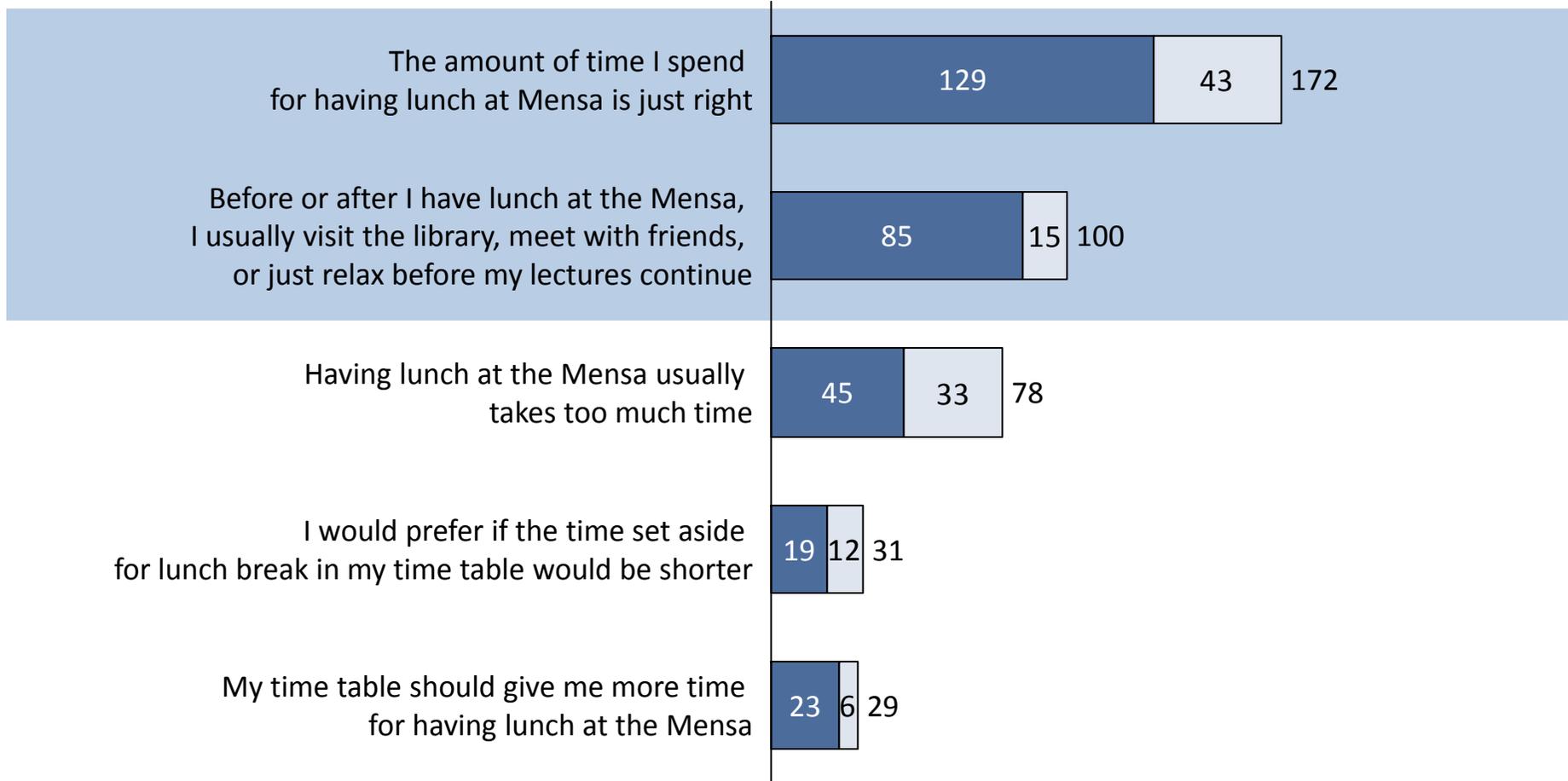


Top 1 Reason=3 Points; Top 2 Reason=2 Points; Top 3 Reason=1 Point
 Source: Mensa survey (2013)

...while ~67% of those who regularly use the Mensa feel the length of their lunch break is appropriate

Top three reasons why students don't use the Mensa more frequently, Sum of ranks

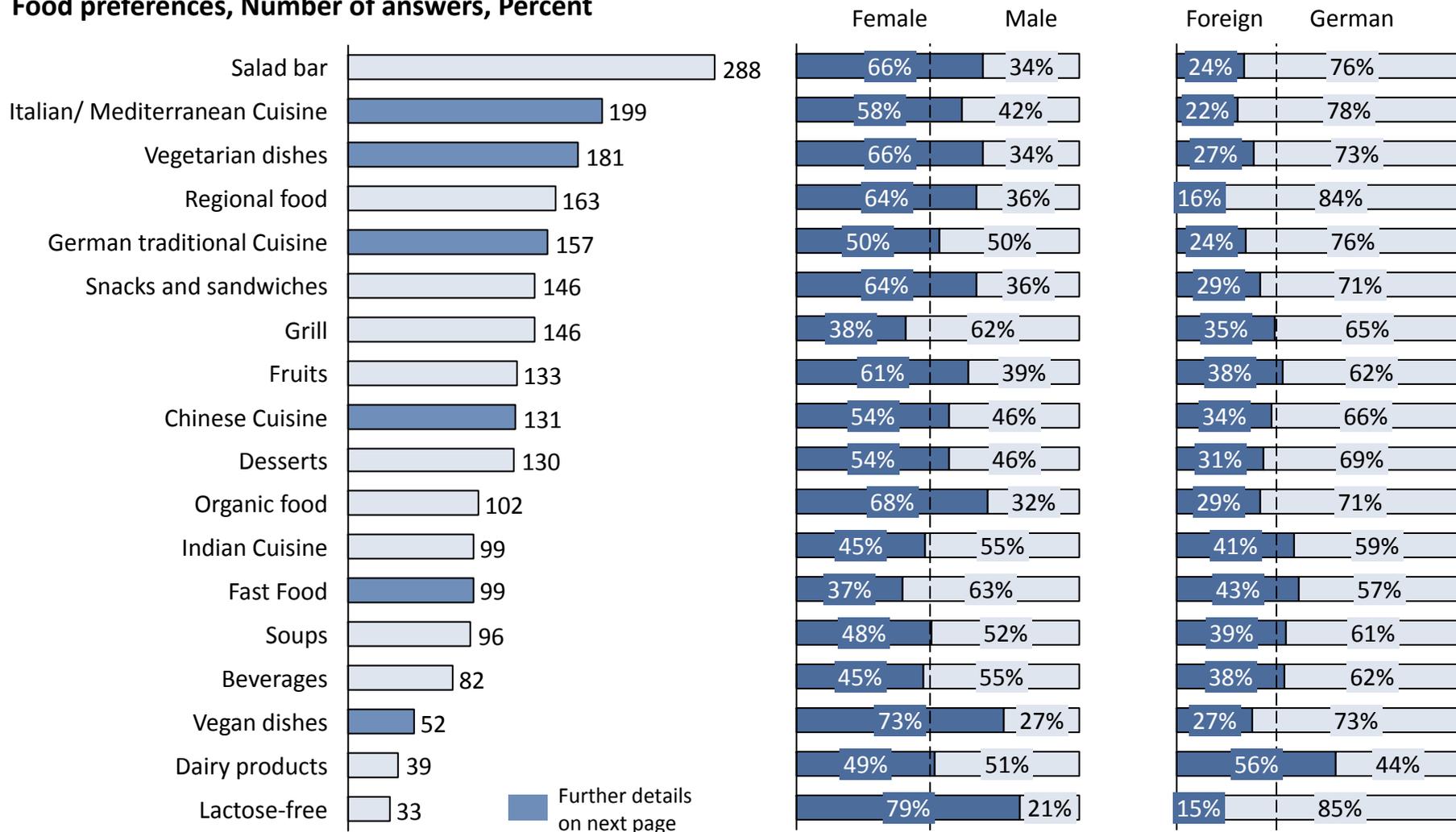
Always
Sometimes



Top 1 Reason=3 Points; Top 2 Reason=2 Points; Top 3 Reason=1 Point
Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Salad bar is most popular offer – female students tend to prefer healthy food, while foreign students particularly value dairy products, fast food, and Indian cuisine

Food preferences, Number of answers, Percent



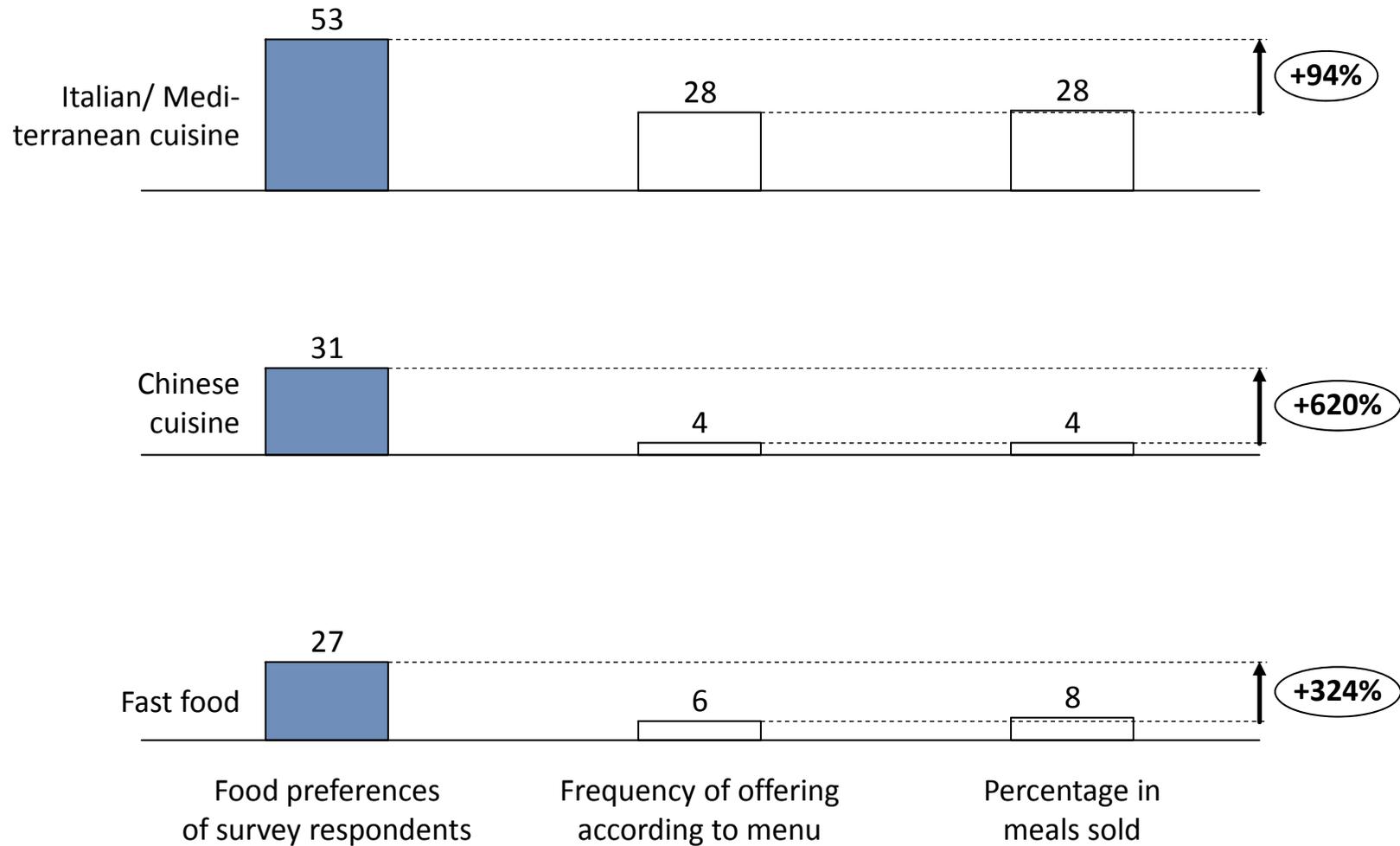
Source: Mensa survey (2013)

47%

35%

Students clearly would like to eat more Italian/ Mediterranean and Chinese cuisine, as well as Fast food...

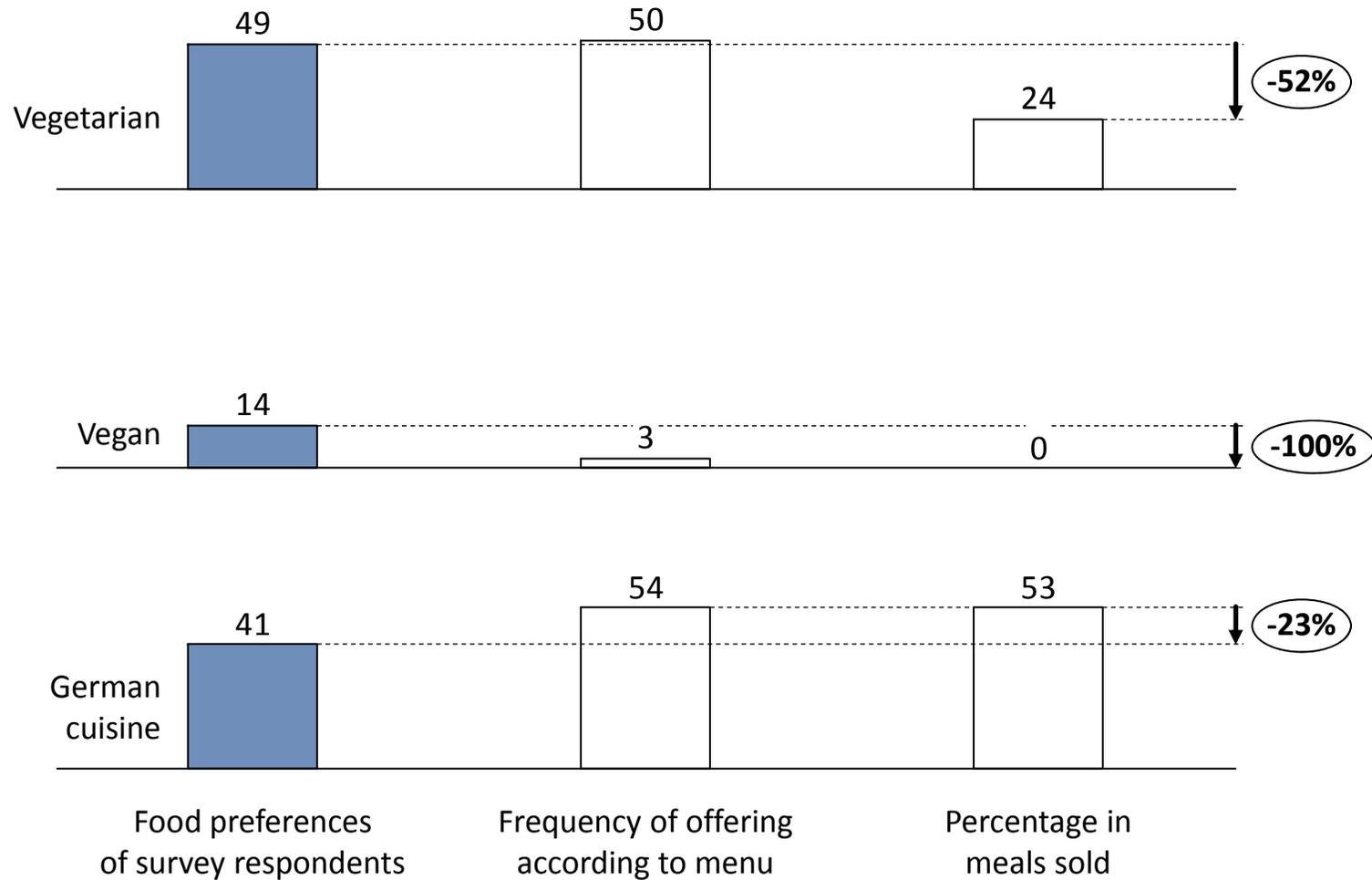
Food preferences, frequency of offering, and actual sale of various types of food, Percent



Source: Mensa survey (2013), Menu analysis (2013), Mensa card data (2013)

...while vegetarian and vegan dishes are less frequently sold than one would expect, indicating that it does not fully meet students' expectations

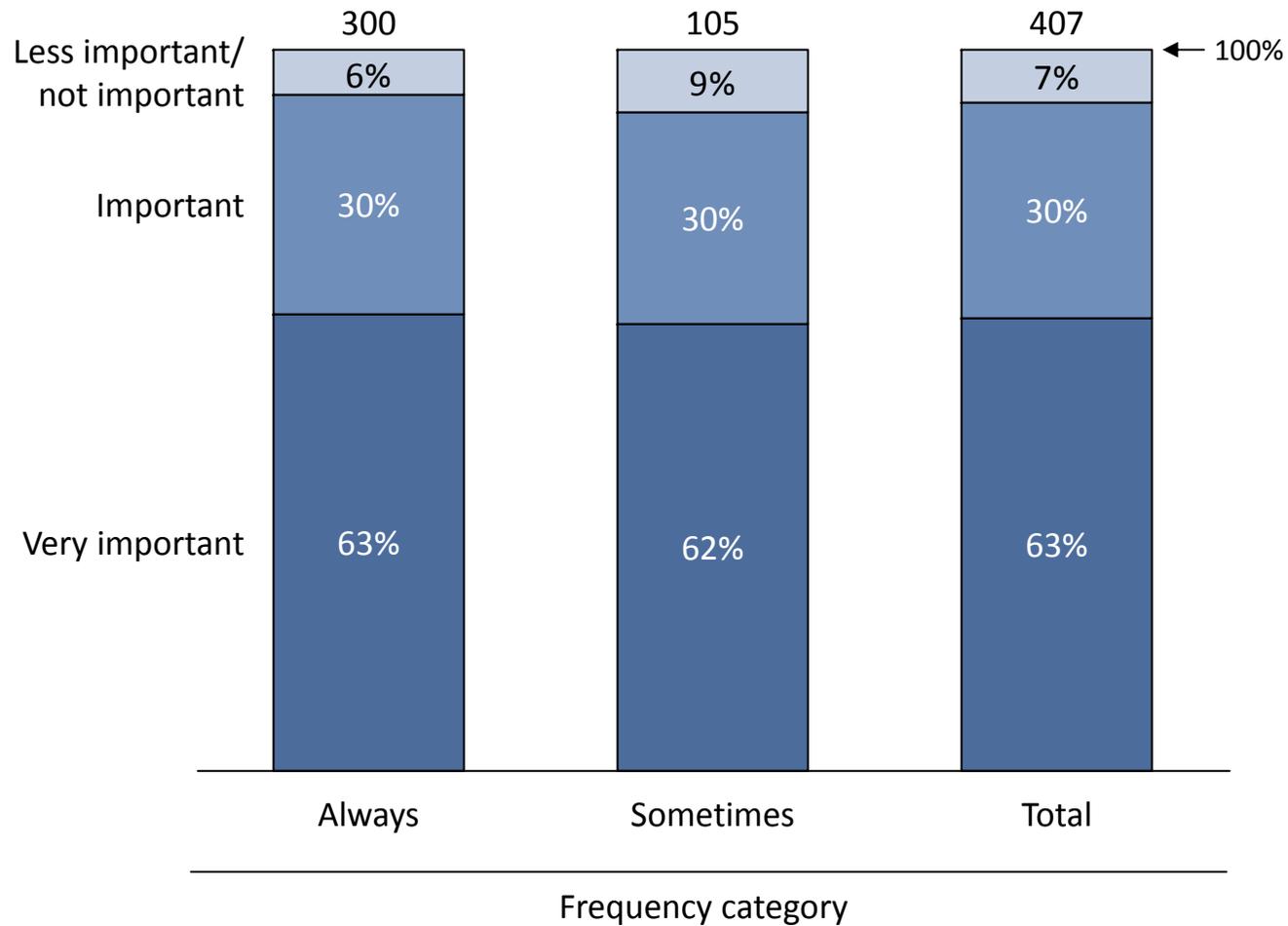
Food preferences, frequency of offering, and actual sale of various types of food, Percent



Source: Mensa survey (2013), Menu analysis (2013), Mensa card data (2013)

More than 90% of the students that use the Mensa consider the self-service for side dishes being important or very important

Percentage of responses by frequency categories

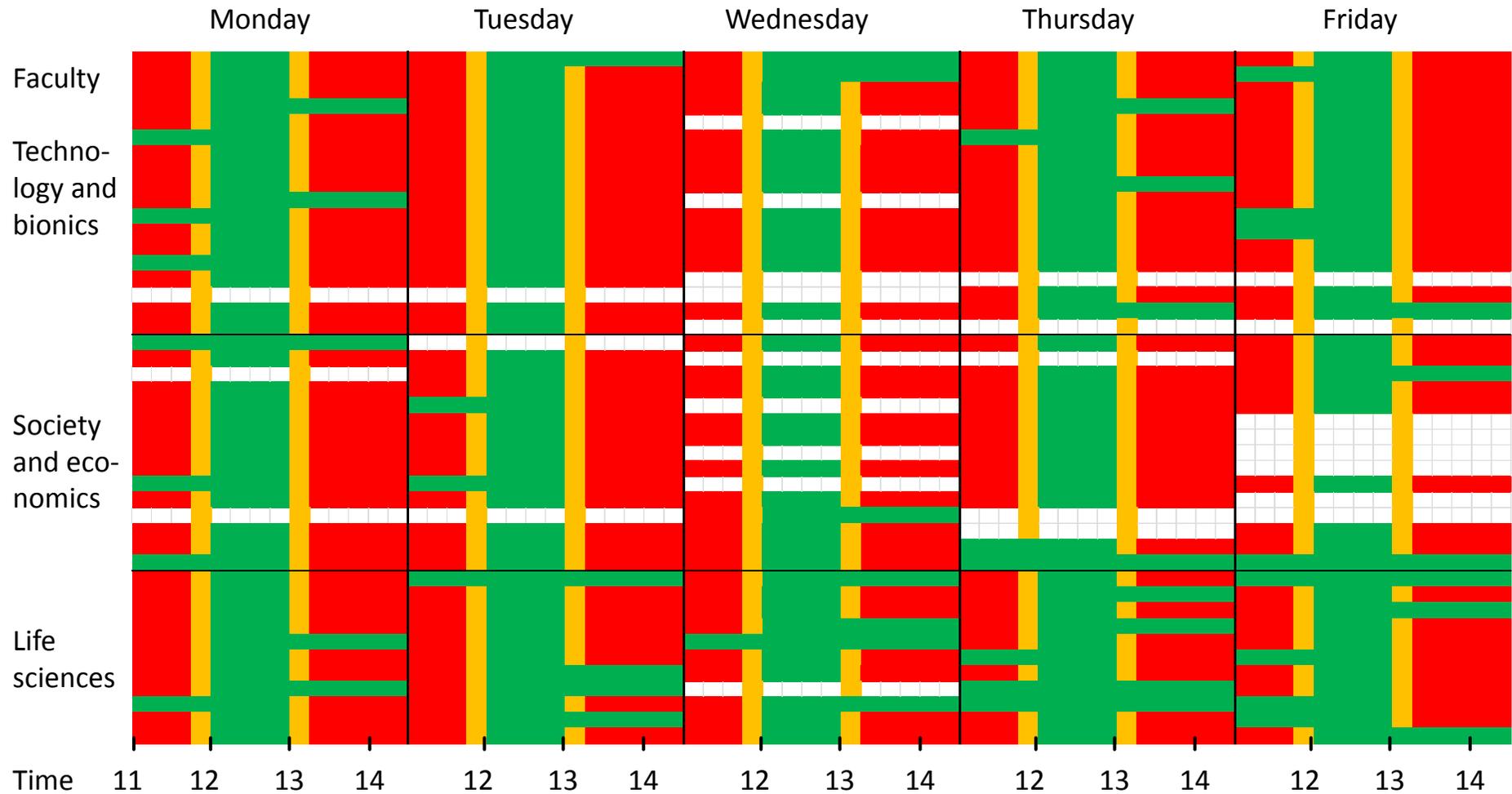


Source: Mensa survey (2013)

For most students, time tables only allow a lunch break between 12-13 o'clock...

- Available
- Not available
- Available if class ends early/ starts late

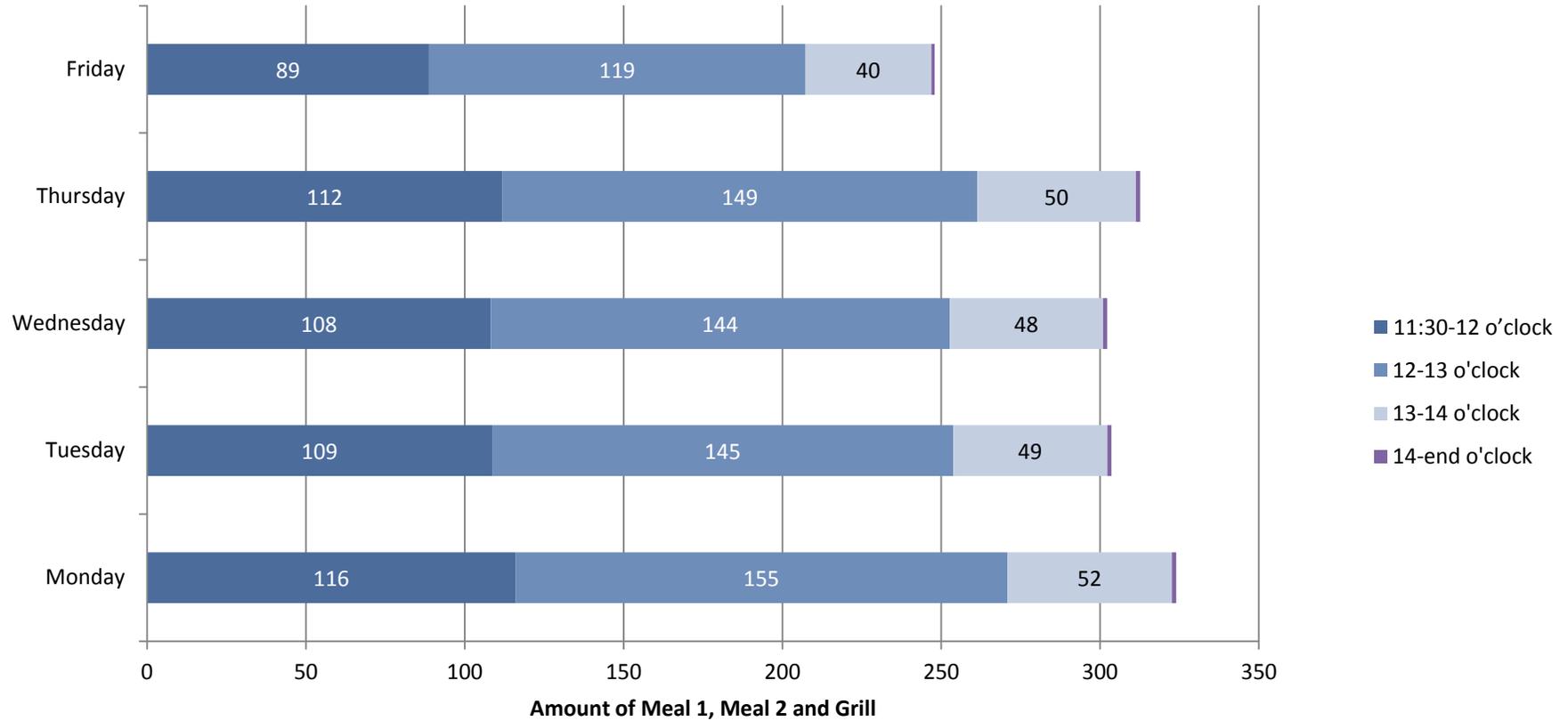
Time slots in students' time tables¹ available for lunch break



¹ Based on winter semester 2012/13 for all full-time study programs at HRW
 Source: Time table analysis (2013)

...therefore, ~85% of the students have their lunches between 11:30-13 o'clock

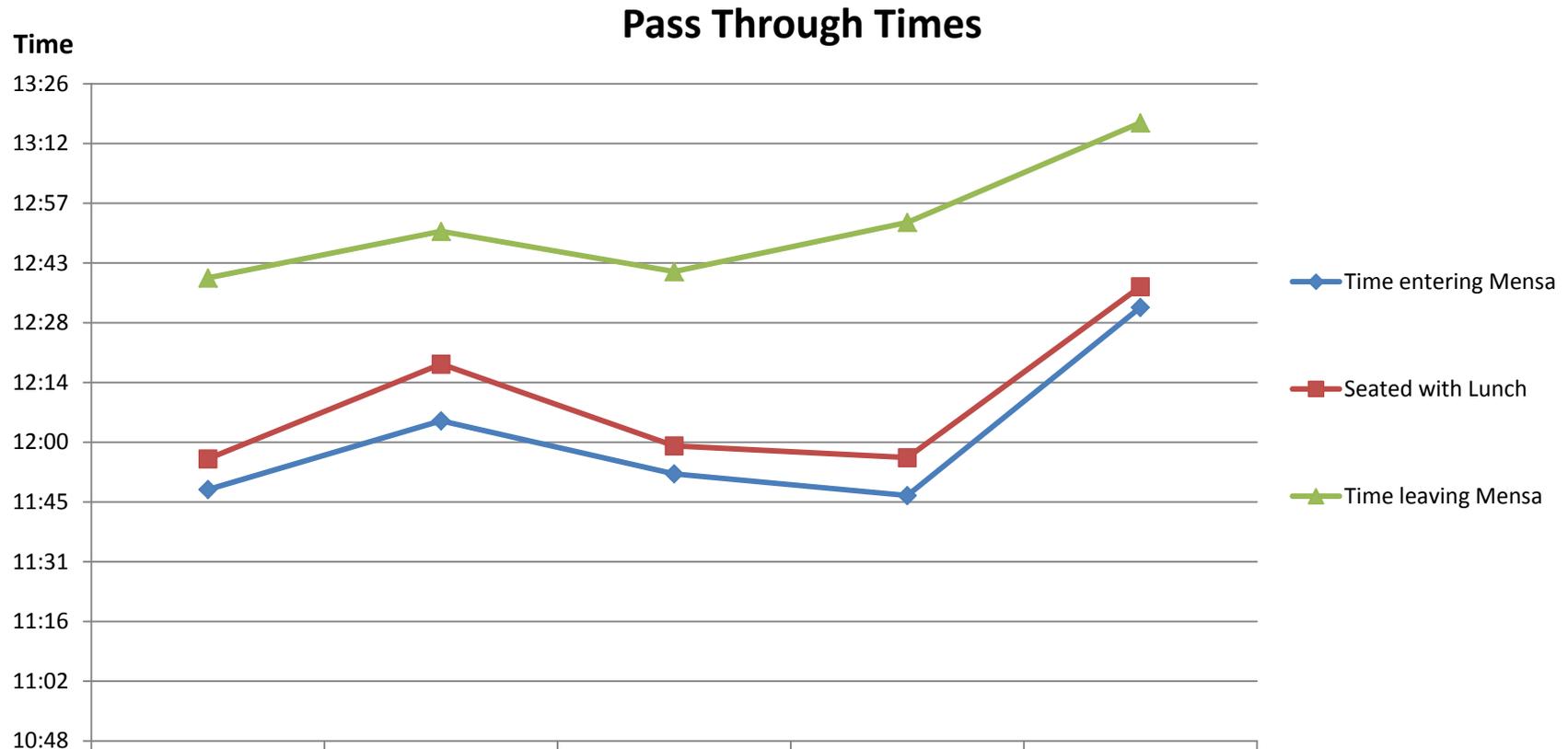
Average Amount of Meals and Peak Times



08th of Oct. 2012 - 28th of March 2013
(excluding lecture-free Time)

Source: Mensa card data (2013), Pass-through analysis (2013)

Students, on average, spend 51 minutes for their lunch break – average queuing time 8 minutes with peak on Tuesdays



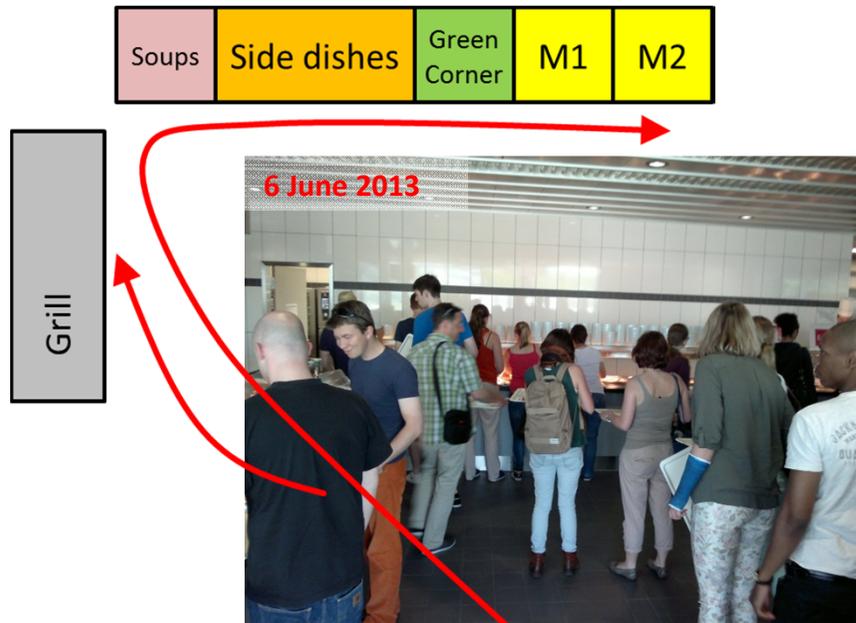
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Average
Average queuing time	7 min	13 min	6 min	9 min	5 min	8 min
Total duration	51 min	45 min	48 min	1:05 h	44 min	51 min

Source: Pass-through analysis (2013), Sample taken during first two weeks of April 2013, N= 11

By re-arranging the order of dishes in the food counter, students could queue in several waiting lines and pass-through could be increased

Current arrangement

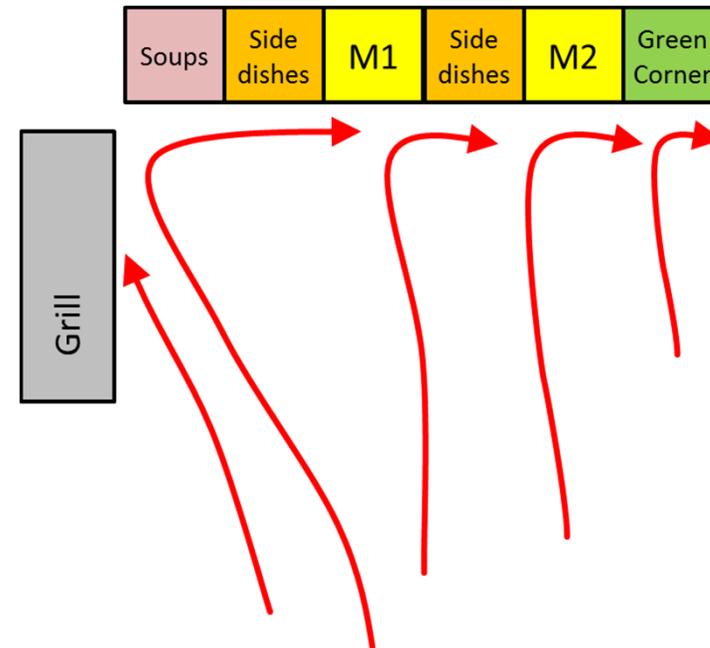
- Most students queue in one waiting line
- During peak times, a long queue runs from food counter up to the entrance area
- Guests typically proceed as follows:



Source: Pass-through analysis (2013)

Proposed new arrangement

- By providing two side dish areas, guests are encouraged to queue in several parallel waiting lines for the meal they select upon entering the “Mensa”
- Single large queue will be replaced by several shorter waiting lines
- Students will progress faster to the cashiers



Ideas and comments raised by the survey respondents

“Everything is perfect!”

“Please make some African dishes”

“Longer opening hours”

“I think that the Mensa improved very much compared to the beginning of last semester. I really enjoy eating there.”

“More fish fillet instead of breaded fish”

“Some classes scheduled very late in the evenings. I can’t even get a good coffee on these days”

“Theme weeks every now and then.”

“Please offer free [hot] tap water”

“More opportunities to sit outside during summer”

“The spoons for taking the side dishes are too long”

“Salad bar is great!”

“Rotate the meals in such a way that the same menus are not always available on the same working days after some weeks!”

“Mensa staff is nice but barely speaks English. Clearly display menu and ingredients in English.”

“I’m usually satisfied with the food and variety that Mensa offers, but some dishes contain a lot of fat.”

“Put available side dishes and GreenCorner on the display screens, too”

“More cozy atmosphere. Decoration of tables, green flowers inside the Mensa to beautify it”

“Better declaration of allergens and if a meal is lactose-free or not.”

“Sometimes the meals are not warm enough. Especially the side dishes!”

“Show more clearly which food is being sold by weight”

Source: Mensa survey (2013)

Conclusions

- The “Mensa-survey” yielded very useful insights into users preferences as well as eating habits and has reached a sufficient number of students
- Compared to other places “Mensa” at HSRW is performing quite well
- 25% of the students studying in Cleve are already visiting the “Mensa” on a daily basis
- Foreign students are currently under-represented among “Mensa” guests
- The majority of “Mensa” customers are female students – but male students tend to use the “Mensa” more regularly
- Students who do not use the “Mensa” more often may do so because they cannot afford – this holds particularly for foreign students
- Willingness to pay 0,50 – 0,80€ more for a meal suggests that most students value the meals they get in the “Mensa”
- Long waiting lines during peak hours mostly discourage students who never go from having lunch in the “Mensa”
- The current “Mensa” offers cover mostly the food preferences of German students as opposed to international students
- The self-service and salad bar are highly valued among students
- Students want to have more Italian / Mediterranean and Chinese cuisine, as well as Fast food
- Due to the current time-tables, peak times for “Mensa–Use” are from 11:30-13 o’clock
- The current setup of the food counters is one cause of the long waiting queues

Recommendations

- Most students queue in one waiting line:
By re-arranging the order of dishes in the food counter, students could queue in several waiting lines and pass-through could be increased
- Most students have their lunch between 11:30 and 13:00 leading to long waiting queues:
By re-arranging the time-tables the number of visitors could be spread more equally
- International students are an important customer group and their requirements are not fully met:
 - Increase the offer of dairy products and international cuisines (Indian)
 - Display the name of the meals in English
 - More clearly indicate the type of meat
 - Encourage “Mensa Staff” to learn English
- Regularly conduct a “Mensa Survey”:
Also focus more on students who do not use the “Mensa”



Thank you for listening!

Are there any questions or remarks?