5.8 Relative financial size

One might expect that, all other things being equal, countries with a higher GNI per capita would have a higher budget than countries with a lower GNI per capita. (Note: GNI stands for Gross National Income; this term replaces the old Gross National Product indicator.)

In order to see if this is true, we have produced two graphs: one showing the NREN budget per student in relation to the GNI per capita and another one to show the NREN budget per capita (so the NREN budget per inhabitant of a country) in relationship to the GNI per capita. The population figures and the GNI per capita figures date from 2000 (source: World Development Indicators, 2002).

The figures seem to indicate that at both extremes, the expectation as formulated above is more or less correct: the poorest countries have the lowest budgets per student and per capita, the richest countries have the highest per capita budgets. In between these extremes, however, there are large fluctuations. In part, these are due to the fact that NRENs have different tasks in different countries. This may explain, for example, the case of Luxemburg (the only NREN to provide Internet connectivity to all primary schools). Another explanation may be that some countries are investing in upgrades that others countries have accomplished already or have yet to start with. Differences between the two graphs are largely explained by demographic factors: some countries have a much larger student population relative to the total population than others.

Graph 5.8.1 Budget per student
Graph 5.8.2: Budget per capita

The graph illustrates the GNI per capita and the NREN budget per capita for various countries in Europe. The x-axis represents different countries, and the y-axis shows the budget per capita in EUR and US$. The data is displayed for the year 2002.