



Quality Agency for  
Higher Education

## VI CENTRAL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION

### **Quality Assurance under the Impact of Changing Obstacles in Latvia**

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# Quality Assessment Procedures

## Licensing of a study programme

- non-cyclical procedure for each new study programme

## Accreditation of a study field

cyclical procedure for a study field in each HEI, every 2 or 6 years

## Accreditation of a higher education institution

- only once for each HEI shortly after the HEI has started operating

## Assessment of substantial changes

- non-cyclical activity based on the request of HEIs

# I. Changes due to the COVID-19

- **Online (partially) visits are organised according to the same rules and principles as the on-site visit**
- Verification of technical support and solutions for the online visit before visit
- Both HEI and Experts must ensure the possibility to participate fully in the online visits



# Assessment of remotely organized study process

Additionally, HEIs were required to **describe the approaches and resources used in the distance learning process.**

Assessment experts were also invited to assess the study process in the form of distance learning.

Technical equipment for the provision of studies

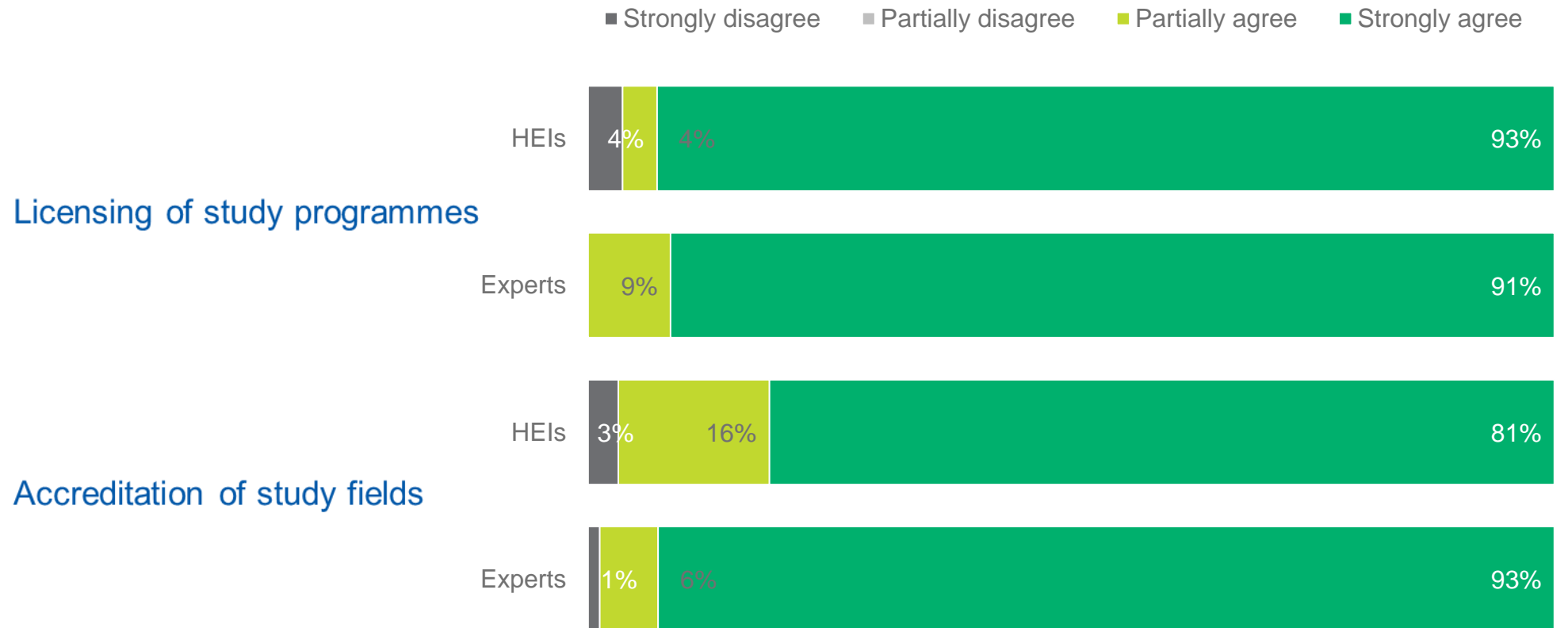
Distance learning materials

Informative and methodological materials, including adapted descriptions of study courses

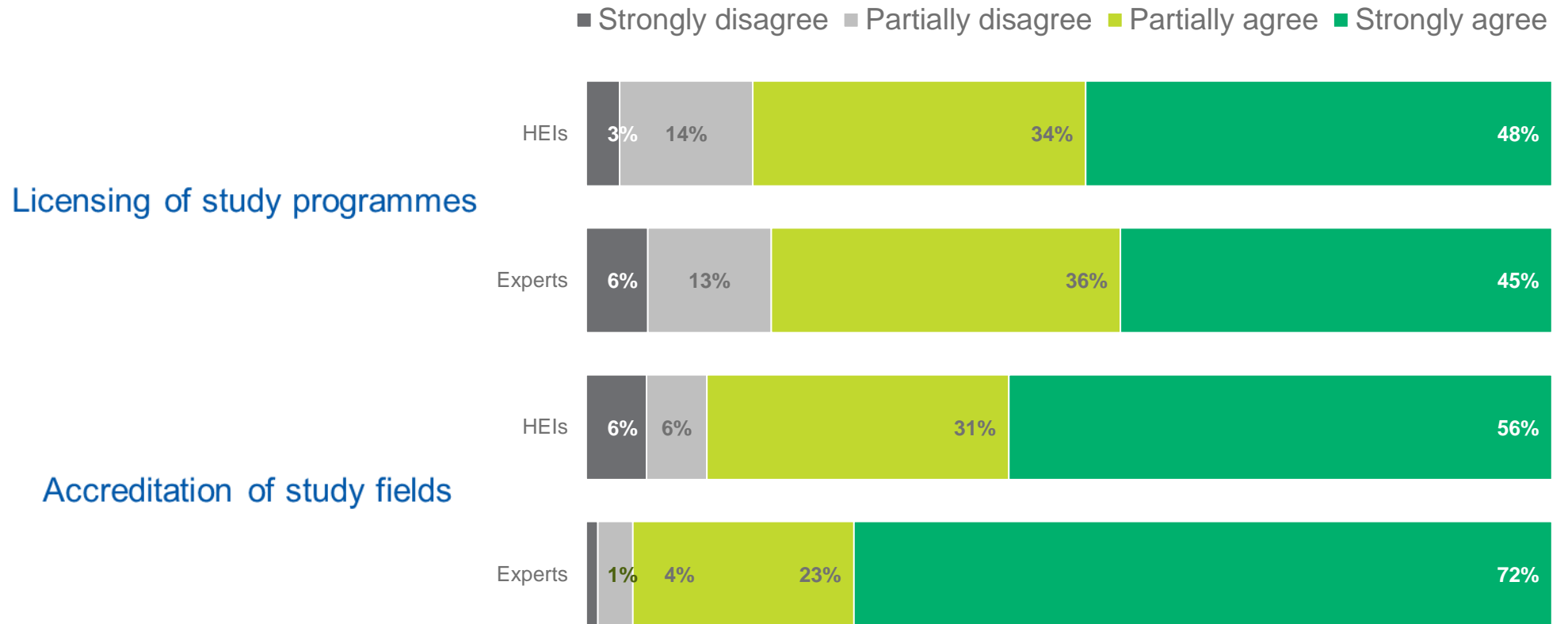
Support mechanisms for teachers and students

Organization of distance learning process

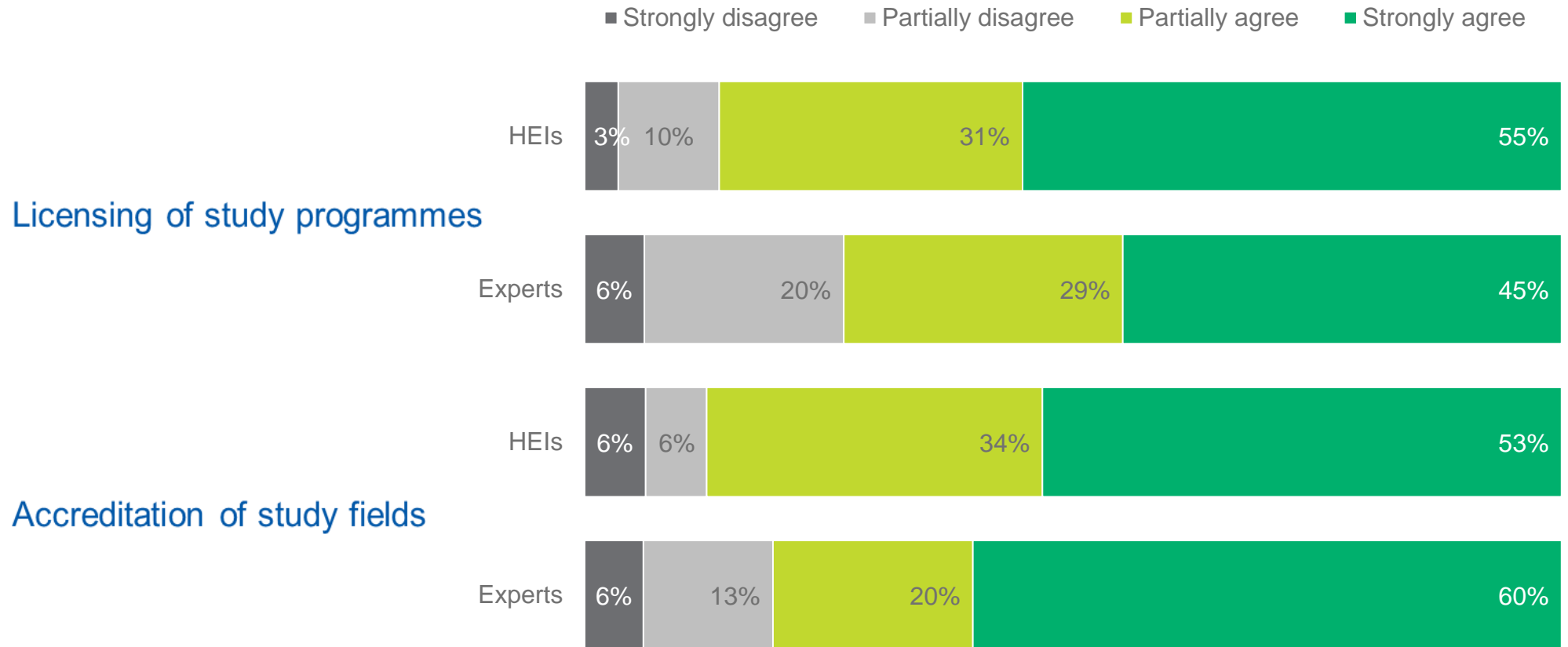
# Information on online visits was clear and received in a timely manner



# Possibility to sufficiently demonstrate/ assess the material and technical resources



# It is advisable to keep the concept of fully/ partially online site visits also in the future

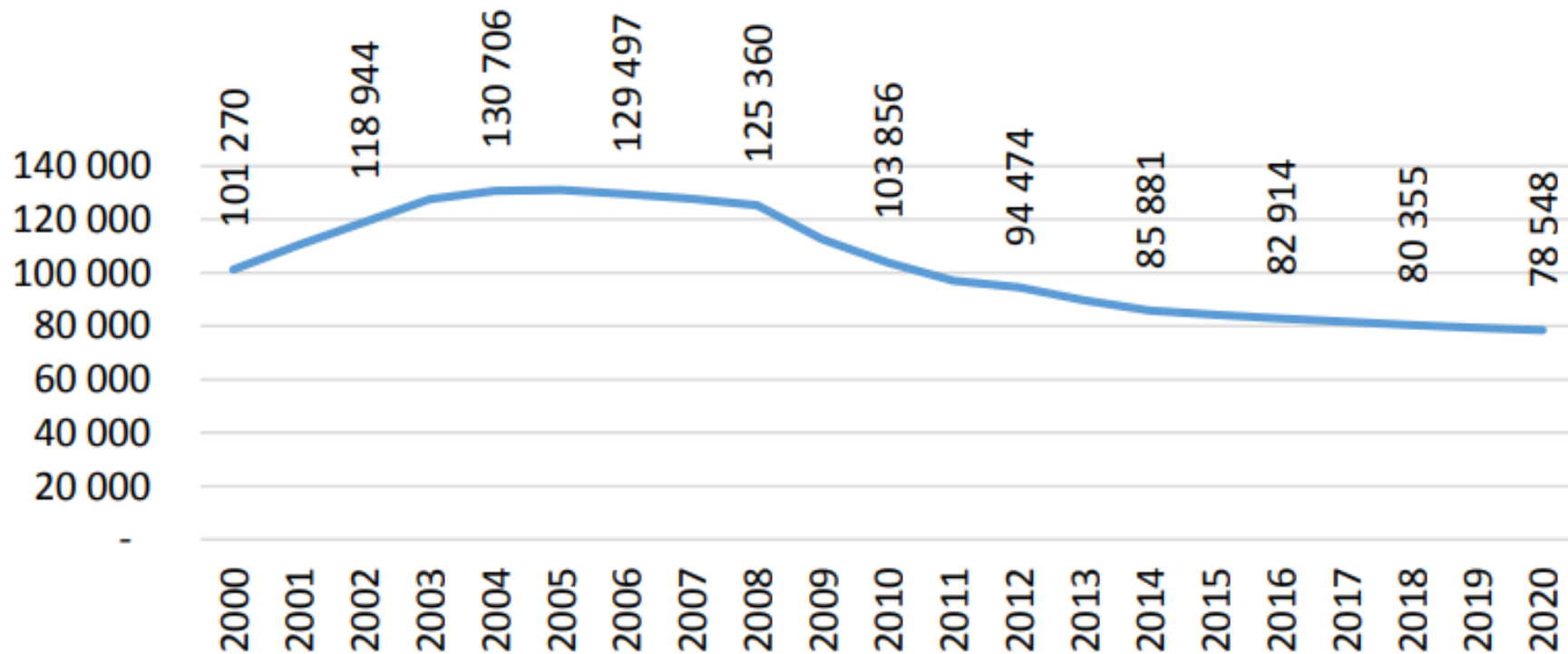


# Lessons learned/ suggestions for future

- Fully online assessments should be avoided but **partially online assessments could replace the onsite assessments** in specific circumstances
- **Expert training is more focused** if organised in an online mode and in several separate sessions
- **Expert internal discussions after the site visit are more productive** and can be better supported by the assessment coordinator, if organised in an online mode
- In some assessments, an online participation of some interviews that would not be interviewed onsite (partner institutions, international stakeholders) adds to the quality of the assessment
- Organize the assessment of the material and technical base using online video instead of recorded presentations or videos

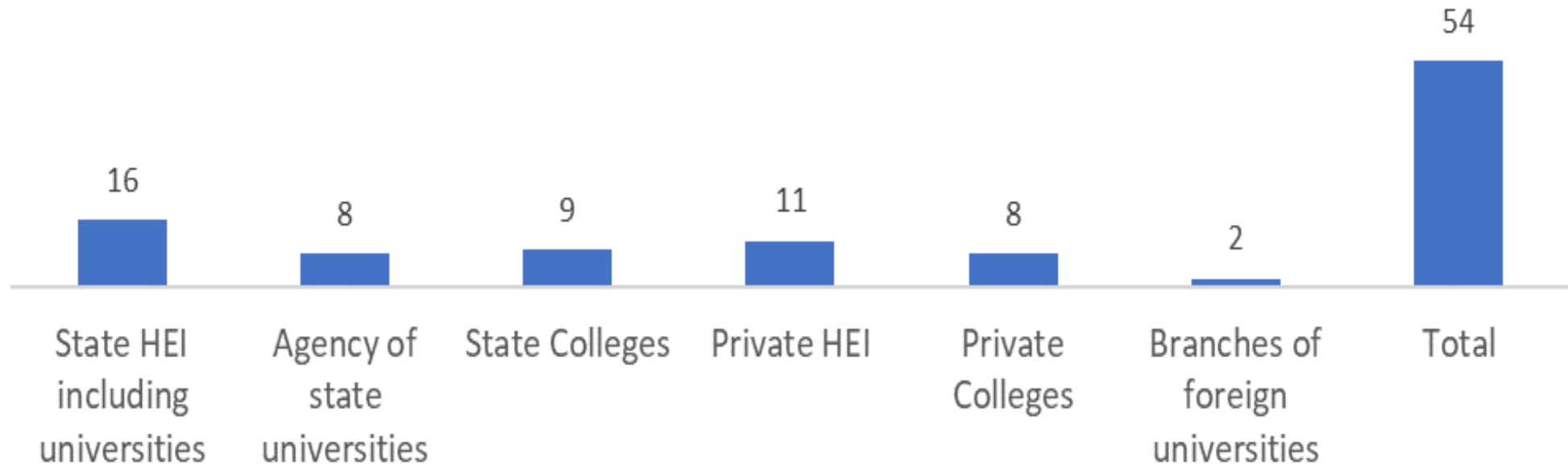


## II. The number of students is steadily decreasing



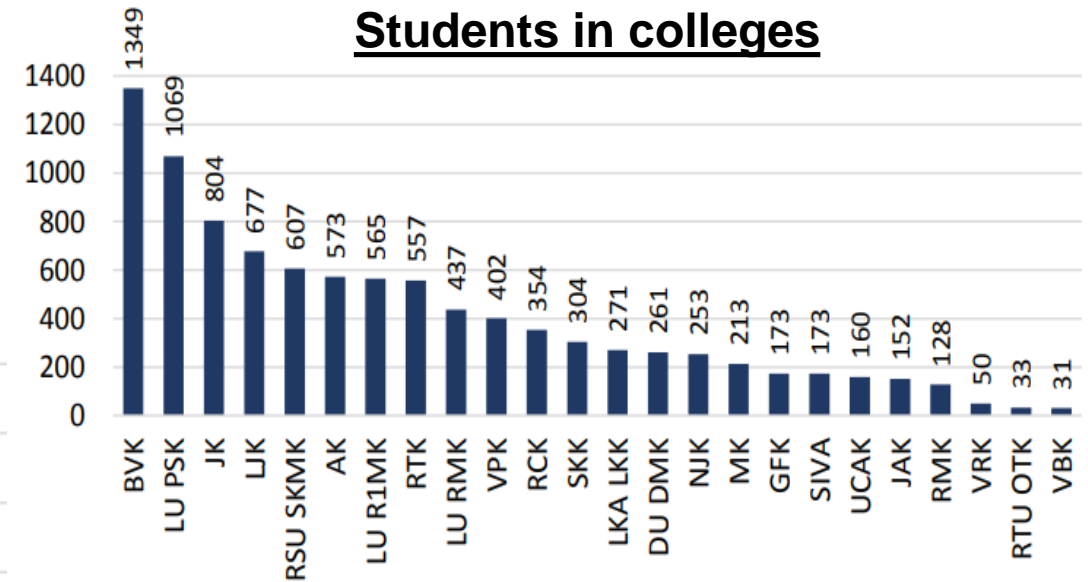
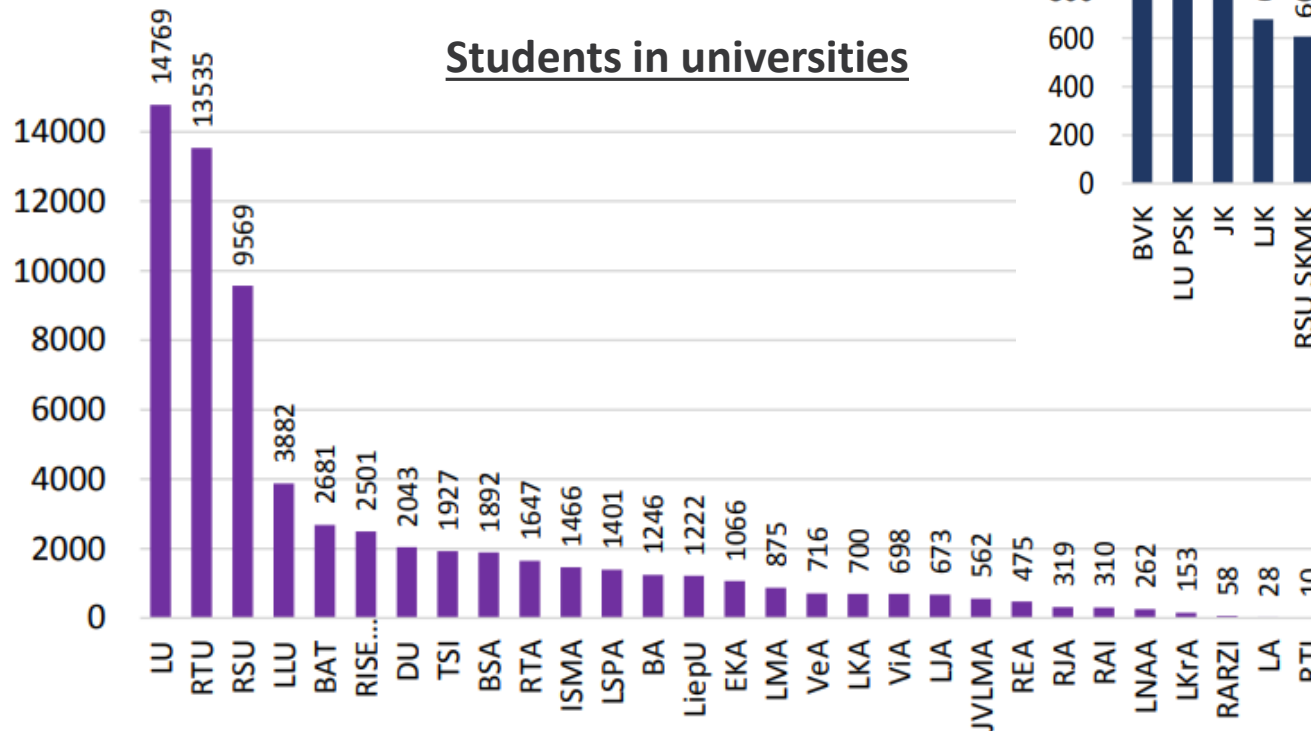
Students of higher education study programmes

# A large number of universities/ college and study programmes



Approximate number of study programmes – 970

# Number of institutions VS number of students (2020)



- 84% of the students in state Universities
- 62% of the students in state colleges

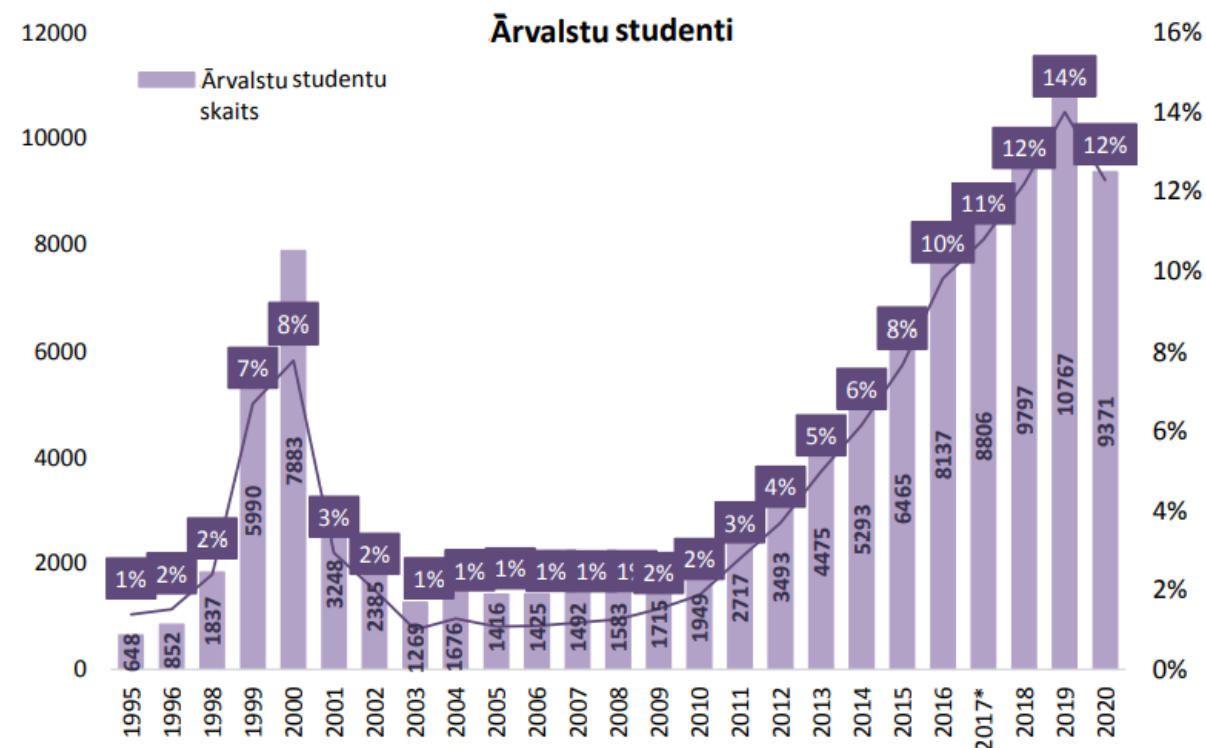
# Actions and solutions [1]

## Attract more international students

The number of study programmes implemented in English is increasing

Using ESF funding (projects) activities for raising teaching staff English knowledge level

In 2022, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior and 15 Latvian universities signed an agreement on good practices in attracting foreign students and ensuring studying



The number of foreign students is obtained from the number of mobile students and the total number of visitors to the Erasmus+

# Actions and solutions [2]

## Regulations on studies remotely

- Partial distance learning can be implemented up to **50 percent** of the number of contact hours determined for the implementation of study programme
- Partial distance learning **can not be organized in the practical and clinical training of medical education** in regulated professions and specialties in the field of health care
- During external assessment procedures increased attention is focused on the way of programme delivery

## Regulation on the development of sub-programmes

- Sub –programmes can be part of the study programme if meets a specific science field, the economy industry or the professional qualifications to be obtained
- Both programme and sub -programme goals and learning outcomes should be defined and interlinked

# Actions and solutions [3]



## **Recognition of foreign qualifications:**

Recognition of educational documents obtained in foreign countries, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Law, is carried out by the Academic Information Center **or a university that has obtained the right to carry out the examination of said documents.**

## **Microcredentials:**

It is planned to introduce microqualifications as a possible way of acquiring qualifications.

Latest amendments to the Law on Professional Education states that student can also receive a certificate of a partially acquired professional qualification.

# E-platform

(eplatforma.aika.lv)



Assessment of Higher Education Institutions,  
Accreditation of Study Directions and  
Licensing of Study Programmes

Higher Education Institutions ▾

Search

# Aims of the e-platform

- To **support** in implementing quality assurance procedures;
- To **decrease the burden** for higher education institutions when preparing and submitting the self-evaluation reports **and for experts** when preparing expert reports;
- Ensure **publicly available information** on higher education institutions, study fields and study programmes in Latvia

## USERS

Agency

Higher education institutions

Experts

Study Quality Committee



# Management of assessment procedures

## Technical possibilities

- Submission of applications and self-evaluation reports
- Reviewing the applications and self-evaluation reports
- Submission of additional information
- Selection and approval of expert groups
- Preparation of the agenda for site visit
- Preparation of the experts report
- Submission of comments on factual errors in the expert report
- Submission of reports on implementation of expert recommendations

# Next steps for external quality assessment

Licensing of study programs



Assessment of substantial changes in the study programs (with amendments)



Accreditation of universities and colleges

# Principles of institutional accreditation model development

Fit for purpose -  
evaluations

Relevance vs  
quality

Discussed with all  
parties involved

Promoting a  
culture of quality

Sequential and comprehensible  
evaluation procedures

Reduction of  
administrative  
burdens

Reliable results

**Autonomy and accountability of HEIs**

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