



EUROPEAN
Higher Education Area

**National Report regarding the Bologna
Process implementation
2009-2012**

Latvia

Part 1.0 BFUG Data Collection: administrative information

For which country do you fill in the questionnaire?

Latvia

Name(s) of the responsible BFUG member(s)

Gita Revalde Andrejs Rauhvargers

Email address of the responsible BFUG member(s)

andrejs.rauhvargers@lu.lv gita.revalde@izm.gov.lv

Contributors to the report

Government representatives = Arija Konstantinova, advisor to teh Minister of Eduaction and Reserach

Contributors to the report

Employer representatives = Inese Cvetkova, Latvian electrical Engineering and Electronics Industry association

Contributors to the report

Student representatives = Asnate Kazoka, Lavian Student Union

Contributors to the report

Academic and other staff representatives = Ilze Trapenciere, Education and Research trade Union; Elmars Bekeris, Riga Technical University

Contributors to the report

Other (please specify) =

Part 1.1 BFUG Data Collection on Context and Structures

1. Do your steering documents for higher education policy explicitly take account of demographic projections for your country?

No

2. How do these projections affect higher education policy planning?

3. Which of the following statements correspond to your higher education system?

- Higher education institutions can be either academically or professionally oriented
- Higher education institutions are only academically oriented
- Higher education institutions are either public or private
- All higher education institutions are public

HE programmes can be academic or professional

4. What is the number of institutions in the categories identified?

State HEIs 17, State short cycle colleges 17 Private HEIs 15, private short-cycle colleges 7

5. GENERAL DATA ON HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

5.1. Please provide the (approximate) percentages of first cycle study programmes across the following categories:

180 ECTS = 27

240 ECTS = 68

Other number of ECTS = 5

5.2. Please provide the (approximate) percentage of the total number of first cycle students enrolled in programmes of the following length:

180 ECTS = 27

240 ECTS = 68

Other number of ECTS = 5

5.3. Do degree programmes exist outside the typical Bologna 180-240 ECTS first cycle model (and/or calculated in years rather than credits)?

These may include integrated/long programmes leading either to a first or a second cycle degree.

Yes

5.4. In which study fields do these study programmes exist?

Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy (also Ba/Ma in another institution, veterinary)

5.5. What is the typical length of these degree programmes outside the Bologna 180-240 ECTS model?

Medicine - 360 ECTS, dentistry - 300 ECTS, pharmacy 300, veterinary - 360

5.6. What (approximate) percentage of all students studying for a first degree (including students enrolled in the Bologna cycle structures) is enrolled in these programmes?

5%

5.7. Please provide the (approximate) percentage of second cycle (master) programmes of the following length:

60-75 ECTS = 3

90 ECTS = 26

120 ECTS = 66

Other = 5

5.8. Please provide the percentages of the total number of second cycle students enrolled in programmes of the following length.

60-75 ECTS = 3

90 ECTS = 26

120 ECTS = 66

Other = 5

5.9. Do second cycle degree programmes exist in your country *outside* the typical Bologna model (i.e. other than 60-120 ECTS and/or calculated in years rather than credits)?

Yes

5.10. What is the typical length of these second cycle programmes outside the typical Bologna model?

150 ECTS

5.11. What percentage of all second cycle students is enrolled in these programmes?

4

5.12. In which study fields to these programmes exist?

N/A

5.13. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding general data on your country's higher education system.

6. PROGRESSION BETWEEN CYCLES

6.1. What percentage of first cycle programmes give access to at least one second cycle programme?

100%

Prescribed by law

6.1.1. Please provide a source for this information.

Law on Higher education institutions

6.2. What percentage of first cycle students continue to study in a second cycle *programme* after graduation from the first cycle (within two years)?

>10-25%

6.2.1. Please provide the source for this information.

MoES statistical report 2010

6.3. What are the requirements for holders of a first cycle degree to access a second cycle programme?

All students (Scale 1) Yes No Some No answer

All students (Scale 2) Yes No Some No answer

Holders of a first degree from a different study field (Scale 1) Yes No Some No answer

Holders of a first degree from a different study field (Scale 2) Yes No Some No answer

Holders of a first degree from a different higher education institution (Scale 1) Yes No Some No answer

Holders of a first degree from a different higher education institution (Scale 2) Yes No Some No answer

6.3.1. When you selected 'some' in any of the answers above, please explain.

It is not regulated by legislation, so different HEIs have different practices

6.4. What percentage of all second cycle programmes give access without further studies to third cycle studies?

100 %

6.4.1. Please provide a source for this information.

Law on HEIs

6.5. What percentage of second cycle graduates eventually enter into a third cycle programme?

15%

6.6. Is it possible for first cycle graduates to enter a third cycle programme without a second cycle degree?

No

6.6.1. Under which criteria is this possible?

6.7. What percentage of third cycle students enter into that cycle without a second cycle qualification?

0%

Law requires a "masters or equivalent degree" to enter doctoral studies

6.8. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding the progression between cycles.

Access to next cycle does not mean access to any programme in the second cycle. There usually are several possibilities in the next cycle but not unlimited

7. LINKING BOLOGNA AND NON-BOLOGNA PROGRAMMES

7.1. Is access to degree programmes outside the typical Bologna model organised in a different manner than for Bologna first cycle programmes?

No

7.1.1. Please explain the differences.

7.2. Is access to the second cycle specifically regulated for students holding a degree from a programme outside the typical Bologna model?

No

7.2.1. Please specify how it is regulated.

7.3. Is it possible for graduates of a first cycle degree outside the typical Bologna model to enter a third cycle programme without a second cycle degree?

No

7.3.1. Please specify for which graduates.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF THIRD CYCLE PROGRAMMES

8.1. What types of doctoral programmes exist in your higher education system? (These may include, but are not restricted to, traditional supervision-based doctoral education, structured doctoral programmes, professional doctoral programmes etc).

- mainstream - structured doctoral programmes of 3 or 4 year duration - doctoral schools - some possibilities of 'old type' non-structured doctoral studies mainly doing research for doctoral thesis

8.2. Do doctoral and/or graduate schools exist in your higher education system?

Yes

8.2.1. What are the main features of these schools and how many doctoral schools are there?

Multi-disciplinary, task-oriented, with methodological support to supervisors and doctoral candidates, thus fostering both quantity and quality of young doctors

8.3. Is the length of full-time third cycle (PhD) study programmes defined in your steering documents?

Yes

8.3.1. Please specify the number of years.

3 -4 years

8.3.2. What is the average length (in years) of full-time third cycle (PhD) study programmes?

3.5

8.4. Are doctoral studies included in your country's qualifications framework?

Yes

8.5. Are ECTS credits used in doctoral programmes?

Yes

Credits are generally used for the whole programme, although in some cases they may cover taught courses only

8.6. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding development of third cycle programmes.

It is rather often that doctoral students do not manage to defend their thesis within the official time and many of them take an additional year.

9. TREATMENT OF SHORT CYCLE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

9.1. In your system, do short cycle programmes linked to the first cycle of higher education exist?

Yes

9.2. How are short cycle higher education programmes linked to the Bologna structures? Please tick the most appropriate case(s) for your country.

Holders of short cycle qualifications when continuing their studies in the same field towards a bachelor degree....

- gain full credit for their previous studies
- gain full credit, but only if there is agreement between the institution providing the short cycle programme and the institution where the bachelor programme is taught
- gain full credit for their previous studies but in professional bachelor programmes only
- gain substantial (>50%) credit for their previous studies
- gain some (<50%) credit for their previous studies
- gain little (<5%) or no credit for their previous studies

9.3. Are short cycle programmes legally considered to be an integral part of your higher education system?

Yes, part of higher education

9.4. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding the treatment of short cycle higher education programmes.

Short cycle was meant as a possibility to prepare for labour market but they are actually often used more like community colleges, i.e. for continuation in bachelor studies

10. INTERNATIONAL JOINT DEGREES AND PROGRAMMES

10.1. Does national higher education legislation mention joint degrees?

No

10.1.1. Please provide a reference to the legislation and/or cite the relevant articles.

10.2. Does higher education legislation allow:

- Establishing joint programmes
- Yes
 - No
 - Legislation not clear
 - Legislation doesn't mention joint degrees
 - No answer

Awarding joint degrees Yes No Legislation not clear Legislation doesn't mention joint degrees
 No answer

10.3. Please estimate the percentage of institutions in your country that award joint degrees / are involved in at least one joint programme.

Award joint degrees > 75-100% > 50-75% > 25-50% > 10-25% > 5-10% > 0-5%
 0% No answer

Participate in joint programmes > 75-100% > 50-75% > 25-50% > 10-25% > 5-10% > 0-5%
 0% No answer

10.4. Please estimate the percentage of students in your country that graduated in the academic year 2009/10 ...

with a joint degree < 10% > 7.5-10% > 5-7.5% > 2.5-5% > 0 -2.5% 0% No answer

from a joint programme < 10% > 7.5-10% > 5-7.5% > 2.5-5% > 0 -2.5% 0% No answer

10.5. Do you have information about study fields in which joint programmes / joint degrees are most common?

No

10.5.1. Please explain briefly.

10.6. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your joint degrees and programmes.

Amendments to legislation are needed to allow awarding degrees jointly. The amendments have been prepared but the political process has been slow so far

Part 1.2 BFUG Data Collection on student-centred learning

1. Do your steering documents mention the concept of student -centred learning?

Yes

1.1. How do steering documents in your country define student-centred learning in higher education?

Yes, but not in laws on regulations, only in the reform plan of higher education, not in any legislation

1.2. How important ('1' not important, '5' very important) are the following categories in your steering documents and national policies?

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Independent learning | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 5 |
| Learning in small groups | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| Initial or in-service training in teaching for staff | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| Assessment based on learning outcomes | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| Recognition of prior learning | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| Learning outcomes | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 5 |
| Student/staff ratio | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |
| Student evaluation of teaching | <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 5 |

1.3. Are there any other important concepts on student-centred learning in your steering documents?

No

1.4. Please specify.

2. Please provide a reference for your steering documents covering student-centred learning.

Cabinet regulation on education clasification (2010), Instructions for peer groups for evaluation visits of HEI and programmes

3. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding the student-centred learning.

In the recent years studnet -centered learning has become an important topic in HEIs

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1. Are learning outcomes defined in your national steering documents? If so, please provide the definition.

No

4.2. Are ECTS credits linked with learning outcomes in higher education programmes in your country?

(This means that learning outcomes are formulated for all programme components and credits are awarded only when the stipulated learning outcomes are actually acquired.)

No

ECTS credits are of course awraded only when the tasks have been completed and assessment has taken place, but it is not linked

to learning outcomes in the understanding of "what the students can do" after completing the course

4.3. Does national policy steer and/or encourage the use of learning outcomes in developing curricula?

Yes, this is done through advisory measures (guidelines, recommendations etc)

4.3.1. Does your country provide specific support measures on the national level?

Seminars for HEIs on learning outcomes, organised by ENIC/NAIC, Rectors' Conference and Ministry, inclusion of student centered learning issues in staff further training courses

4.4. Does national policy steer student assessment procedures to focus on learning outcomes?

Yes, this is done through advisory measures (guidelines, recommendations etc)

Over at least 5 years around 10 national Bologna seminars have taken place where these issues have been emphasized. They are included in the upgrading courses of HE teaching staff.

4.5. Is there an offer of training programmes on topics such as student-centred learning and learning outcomes for academic staff?

- Compulsory Yes for all academic staff Yes for some academic staff No No answer
- Voluntary Yes for all academic staff Yes for some academic staff No No answer

4.5.1. Please specify for whom and give approximate % that participate.

4.6. Is the use of learning outcomes in curricula development and student assessment monitored by Quality Assurance procedures?

Yes

4.6.1. Please explain how, and provide a reference to further information.

Accreditation regulations (Cabinet regulation Nr 821 of 2006 stipulates that learning outcomes should be formulated for of the whole programme and all of its parts and that accreditation procedures should verify their presence. Regulations are not so detailed to explicitly mention use of LOs in curriculum development or student assessment

4.6. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes currently have become a central issue. High proportion of HEIs are currently work on their formulation. At the same time the understanding the meaning of LOs is not yet universal and has not reached all HE teaching staff.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER AND ACCUMULATION SYSTEM (ECTS)

5.1. In your country, do you use

a national credit system compatible with ECTS

5.1.1. Please provide details of how it is linked to ECTS (when applicable) and its main characteristics (e.g. how credits are calculated and whether the system is based on learning-outcomes).

The Latvian credits are defined as 40 credits for a full-time study year. It means that 1 Latvian credit is worth 1,5 ECTS credits. Learning outcomes are becoming linked with credits through ongoing process inside HEIs in which LOs of all courses and other parts of programmes are being formulated, i.e. credits gradually becoming LO-based.

5.2. In your country, what percentage of higher education institutions use ECTS for accumulation and transfer for all elements of study programmes?

100%

5.3. In your country, what percentage of programmes use ECTS for accumulation and transfer for all elements of study programmes?

100%

5.4. In the majority of higher education institutions and/or programmes, what is the basis to award ECTS in your country?

Combination of student workload and teacher-student contact hours

5.4.1. Please specify.

5.4.2. For student workload, is there a standard measure for the number of hours per credit?

Yes

5.4.3. What is the number of hours per credit?

26.6

5.4.4. What is the number of student teacher contact hours per credit?

13.3

5.4.5. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding ECTS implementation.

The above numbers of hours are for 1 ECTS credit point, for 1 Latvian credit point the numbers are respectively 40 and 20. Latvian Number of contact hours should not exceed 50% of the total student workload so 20 contact hours per credit is the maximum number

6. DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

6.1. Is the Diploma Supplement issued in higher education institutions and to students in all fields of study?

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| All students | <input checked="" type="radio"/> >75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 50-75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 25-49% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0-24% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0% | <input type="radio"/> No answer |
| Some students | <input type="radio"/> >75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 50-75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 25-49% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0-24% of HEIs | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 0% | <input type="radio"/> No answer |
| Upon request | <input type="radio"/> >75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 50-75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 25-49% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0-24% of HEIs | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 0% | <input type="radio"/> No answer |
| In certain fields of study | <input type="radio"/> >75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 50-75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 25-49% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0-24% of HEIs | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 0% | <input type="radio"/> No answer |
| No students | <input type="radio"/> >75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 50-75% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 25-49% of HEIs | <input type="radio"/> 0-24% of HEIs | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 0% | <input type="radio"/> No answer |

6.1.1. Please identify those fields.

6.1.2. Please specify to which students.

6.2. Is there any monitoring of how employers use the Diploma Supplement?

No

6.2.1. Please provide the most recent results regarding the level of satisfaction of employers.

6.3. Is there any monitoring of how higher education institutions use the Diploma Supplement?

No

6.3.1. Please provide the most recent results regarding the level of satisfaction of institutions.

6.4. In what language(s) is the Diploma Supplement issued?

Latvian. English

6.5. Is the Diploma Supplement issued

free of charge

6.5.1. Please provide the amount and the reason for the fee.

6.6. Please provide an example of your national Diploma Supplement (in pdf or similar format) and send it to data.collectors@ehea.info

6.7. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your diploma supplement.

In a small number of HEIs students who pay tuition fees receive DS free in Latvian language but have to pay for DS in English

7. NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS (NQFs)

7.1. Have you started the process to develop a National Qualification Framework in your country?

Yes

7.2. The BFUG working group on qualification frameworks has developed the following steps to assess the progress made in establishing a national qualification framework.

Please choose below the stage that best describes your national situation.

6. The NQF has been adopted in legislation or in other high level policy fora

7.2.1 Please provide the date when the step was completed.

05.10.2010

7.2.2. Please provide a reference for the decision to start developing a NQF.

In May, 2009 Rectors' Council established a working group for drafting national cycle descriptors compatible with both descriptors of EHEA-QF and EQF-LLL

7.2.3. Please provide a reference outlining the purpose of the NQF.

7.2.4. Please provide a reference to a document establishing or outlining the process of NQF development. Please also report, which stakeholders have been identified and which committees have been established.

7.2.5. Please provide a reference describing the agreed level structure, level descriptors and credit ranges.

7.2.6. Please provide a reference outlining the form and the results of the consultation. Please provide a reference for the design of the NQF as agreed by the stakeholders.

7.2.7. Which stakeholders have been consulted and how were they consulted?

7.2.8. Please provide a reference document for the adoption of the NQF.

Cabinet regulation No 931 of 05.10.2010 "On the amending the Regulation on education classification"

7.2.9. Are ECTS included in the NQF?

7.2.10. Please provide a reference for the decision to start the implementation of the NQF, including a reference to the roles of the different stakeholders.

7.2.11. Please provide a reference for the redesign of study programmes based on learning outcomes.

7.2.12. Please provide a reference outlining how qualifications have been included in the NQF.

7.2.13. Please provide a reference to the self-certification report.

7.3. Does a website exist in your country on which the National Qualification Framework can be consulted?

Yes

7.3.1. Please provide the link to that website.

<http://nki-latvija.lv/>

8. RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

8.1. Which institution/organisation makes final decisions on recognising foreign qualifications for the purpose of academic study and work in your country?

- Recognition for academic study
- Higher education institution
 - Central government authority (e.g. ministry)
 - Regional government authority (e.g. ministry)
 - National ENIC/NARIC centre
 - Regional/local specialised independent institution
 - Social partner organisation (employers' organisation, trade union etc)
 - Individual employers
 - Other
 - No answer
- Recognition for professional employment
- Higher education institution
 - Central government authority (e.g. ministry)
 - Regional government authority (e.g. ministry)
 - National ENIC/NARIC centre
 - Regional/local specialised independent institution
 - Social partner organisation (employers' organisation, trade union etc)
 - Individual employers
 - Other
 - No answer

8.1.1. Please specify.

8.2. Which of the following statements is specified in national legislation?

Recognition of qualification provided that no substantive differences can be proven

The question is created erroneously. Actually, it was meant for checking of whether ALL those principles are specified. They are not alternatives.

8.2.1. Please provide a reference to the relevant legislation.

Law on HEIs, art 85

8.3. What measures exist to ensure that these legal statements are implemented in practice?

Guidelines to HEIs by ENIC/NARIC centre, seminars for HEIs

8.4. Do higher education institutions typically:

make recognition decisions in faculties/departments

8.5. Are higher education institutions' recognition policy and practice typically evaluated in external Quality Assurance processes?

No

8.5.1. Please explain.

8.6. What measures exist to ensure that higher education institutions have fair recognition procedures for study and training periods abroad?

Guidelines for HEIs prepared by the ENIC/NARIC centre, seminars on recognition practices

8.7. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your system of recognition of qualifications.

Part 1.3 BFUG Data Collection on Quality Assurance

1. CHARACTER OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

1.1. Which situation applies in your country?

A single independent national agency for quality assurance has been established.

QA agency exists since 1994 and the first accreditation took place in 1996. In 2002 the first accreditation of Lavia was completed - all HEIs and all programmes were assessed by that time.

1.1.1. Please explain the main elements of your external quality assurance system. Which ministry or government-dependent agency is responsible for quality assurance? How is this responsibility managed in practice? If there are external evaluations of institutions and/or programmes, by whom are these evaluations undertaken, how often, and how are the outcomes of evaluation used?

1.1.2. Please explain the main elements of your external quality assurance system (if it exists). If there is no system of quality assurance, please state this explicitly.

1.2. What are the main outcomes of an external review undertaken by the different QA agencies?

Please choose..

1.3. What is the main outcome of an external review?

A decision granting permission for the institution or programme to operate, or that is a pre-requisite for the institution or programme to operate

1.4. Does the outcome of an external review normally have an impact on the funding of the institution or programme?

Yes

1.4.1. Please specify the normal impact of an external review.

Non-accredited programmes cannot have state subsidized study places which financially influences state HEIs. Private institutions are affected as well because state-recognised diplomas/degrees cannot be issued to graduates non-accredited programmes which would cause students leaving the institution and claiming the tuition fees back.

1.5. Does the agency cover:

All higher education institutions

1.5.1. Collectively, do the agencies cover:

Please choose..

1.6. What is the main "object" of the external evaluations undertaken?

Institutions and programmes

1.6.1. Are all institutions subject to external evaluation?

Please choose..

1.6.1.1. Please specify

1.6.2. Are all programmes in all cycles subject to external evaluation?

Please choose..

1.6.2.1. Please specify

1.6.3. Are all institutions and all programmes subject to external evaluation?

Yes

1.6.3.1. Please specify

1.7. How are the positive outcomes of Quality Assurance evaluations made available to the public?

All information about the results (joint and individual evaluation reports of experts, positive decision of Accreditation Commission) is available to the public at the web site of the national agency for quality assurance (HEQEC): www.aiknc.lv. The list of positive decisions about accreditation of HEI and their study programmes is published once a year in official newspaper "Latvijas Vēstnesis".

1.8. How are the negative outcomes of Quality Assurance evaluations made available to the public?

All information about the results (joint and individual evaluation reports of experts, negative decision of Accreditation Commission) is available to the public at the web site of the national agency for quality assurance (HEQEC): www.aiknc.lv

1.9. Which of the following issues are typically included in external quality assurance evaluations?

- Teaching
- Student support services
- Lifelong Learning provision
- Research
- Employability
- Internal Quality Assurance/Management system

- Other (please specify)

Assessment of Needs, objectives and outcomes of the study programme and Aims and objectives of HEI

1.9.1. For those issues that are typically included in external Quality Assurance evaluation, please briefly explain the approach.

Each expert must draft an individual report and participate in compiling the joint report of the expert team. As a plan for the evaluation report should be used questionnaire (please find in <http://www.aiknc.lv/en/ekspertiem.php>), which in case of the evaluation of study programme consists of 6 main parts (aspects) and 16 questions: I Needs, objectives and outcomes II The content and organization of the studies III Assessment of teaching and learning IV The management and support of the studies V Research (creative) activities of the staff and the students VI Quality assessment and mechanisms to ensure it The 16 questions contains all issues, mentioned as typically included in external Quality Assurance evaluation. For example, the questions Nr.7 (Counselling and guidance for students, academic supervision and consultations of the teaching staff, increasing of the students' motivation to study.) and Nr.11 (Methodological, informational and technical resources and facilities of the study programme.)

correspond to the issue Student support services, the question Nr.15 (Perspectives (potential possibilities) of successful work of graduates according to their acquired qualification.) corresponds to the issue Employability, the question Nr.15 (Readiness of students to further education and personal development.) corresponds to the issue Lifelong Learning provision. Experts must fill in the individual questionnaires and must assess by mark in four grades scale all 16 questions. Experts must write comments about all questions in individual and joint reports. Therefore the mentioned issues, that are typically included in external Quality Assurance evaluation, receive marks (in four grades scale) in all individual reports and comments in joint and individual reports.

1.10. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your external Quality Assurance system.

The evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions (HEI) and their study programmes (SP) in Latvia are organized according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), accepted by European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and confirmed in the framework of the Bologna process by ministers, responsible for higher education, at the meetings in Bergen, 2005 and London, 2007. According to the Law of Higher Education Institutions all HEI and their SP in Latvia should be accredited. The evaluation and accreditation procedures are described in the Rules of Cabinet of Ministers, accepted on 03.10.06., nr. 821. Main stages of the accreditation procedure are as follows: • The self evaluation of respective SP and preparation of the Self Evaluation Report is carried out by the HEI. • Self Evaluation Report and various other documents are submitted to the Ministry of Education & Science. • According to the existing Accreditation Regulations all above mentioned documents are passed to the Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (HEQEC) for the organization of the evaluation. • HEQEC creates proposal for the members of Evaluation Commission: find possible experts and put together with the proposals for observers from Latvian Association of students (representative from students) and from HEI (representative from employers). • Accreditation Commission confirms the proposal for the members of Evaluation Commission (sometimes with changes). • HEQEC carries out all necessary arrangements for the successful work of the confirmed Evaluation Commission. • Evaluation Commission experts during 2 days visit carry out a peer review of the respective SP or/and HEI, prepare (in written form – no later than 2 weeks after the site visit) Evaluation Commission's Joint Report and individual reports of experts and observers. Evaluation Commission's Joint Conclusion (short version of the Joint Report) must be prepared and reported in oral form at the end of the site visit, during the final meeting with staff and students of HEI. • Accreditation Commission after learning Evaluation Commission's reports, Self Evaluation Report, comments of persons responsible for respective SP, in an open meeting adopts the decision: accreditation for 6 years (for HEI – for unlimited time period), or - accreditation for 2 years, or - refusal to accredit. The Evaluation Commission experts are asked to relay mainly on their qualification and experience to prepare their conclusions drawing from the following sources: • ESG, EU regulations and recommendations, national regulations; • Self Evaluation Report and other documents about SP and/or HEI (list and CV's of academic staff, subjects descriptions, papers, theses, examination works and reports of students etc. ; • evidence of resources (library, equipment, facilities) used for realization of the study process; • results of discussions and/or surveys of opinions from students, graduates, employers; • various visits and interviews. 3. In the Evaluation Commission's Joint Report and in individual reports of experts it is recommended to give an opinion about: • goals and aims, of the SP and HEI, learning outcomes; • qualification of the staff; • organization, assessment and management of the study process; • information, equipment, finances and other resources, their management; • research, involvement of students in the research; • quality assurance, feedback; • strong and weak points, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Main topics, to be reviewed in the reports, are listed in the questionnaires, prepared by HEQEC, and put in Internet (<http://www.aiknc.lv/en/ekspertiem.php>). 4. The Evaluation Commission's Joint Conclusion shall be discussed at an open meeting to which all the interested parties shall be invited. 5. After this meeting the final Evaluation Commission's Joint Report must be prepared during no more than 2 weeks. Every expert and observer has to prepare his (her) Individual Report. Questionnaires for SP, HEI and branches could be used (as plans for the reports) and filled in, in accordance with requirements for the reports of experts and observers. 6. Each SP or HEI must be evaluated by at least three experts (at least one from abroad), but one expert can evaluate many different SP. Each expert must write an individual report and participate in the creation of the Evaluation Commission's Joint Report. One Evaluation Commission can evaluate more than one SP. Evaluation reports, written by experts, may be on more than one SP (in case of evaluation more than one SP by one Evaluation Commission) but must contain individual recommendations concerning accreditation of each SP under consideration.

2. CROSS-BORDER EVALUATION

2.1. Does your national quality assurance system or legislative framework allow higher education institutions to choose a quality assurance agency from outside your country (instead of your national quality assurance agency)?

No

2.1.1. If some institutions are able to choose, please specify which ones.

2.1.2. If no, please go to section XVII.

2.2. Which conditions apply to the choice of a quality assurance agency from another country?

Other (please specify)

State legislation does not mention which QA agency should be used. It theoretically means that HEIs can freely choose any QA agency without regard to its ENQA or EQAR membership. However, HEIs hesitate to choose outside agencies.

2.3. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding Cross-Border Evaluation.

In a small number of cases Latvian HEIs have chosen to be evaluated by a foreign QA agency. However, the experts participating in the evaluation were formally appointed as experts acting for the Latvian HEQUEC and they had to act according to Latvian Regulations. In another case the evaluation was done by the Central and Eastern European Management Association (CEEMAN) however the decision on accreditation in Latvia was anyway taken by the Latvian Accreditation Commission.

3. EVALUATION OF THE EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM AGAINST THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA (ESG)

3.1. Has the agency been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines?

- Yes, for the purpose of ENQA membership
- Yes, for an application to EQAR
- Yes, independently of ENQA/EQAR
- Such an evaluation is planned but has not yet taken place
- No

3.2. If an evaluation has been conducted, was the application successful?

The application to ENQA was not successful. The application was not submitted to EQAR, because the forecast was negative. Currently the necessary improvements have been made and the report has been re-submitted to ENQA and to EQAR

4. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1. Is there a formal requirement that students are involved in any of the following? For each answer, please specify the relevant source.

Student involvement in governance structures of national quality assurance agencies

One member (from eight) of the Board of AIKNC (HEQEC) is from Latvian Students' Association. One organization (out of twelve) of the Council of AIKNC (HEQEC) is Latvian Students' Association. (Statute of AIKNC (HEQEC))

As full members in external review teams

As observers in external review teams

In all Evaluation Commissions (external review teams) must be at least one representative delegated by Latvian Students' Association. (Accreditation regulations 03.10.2006. Cabinet Reg Nr.821)

In the preparation of self evaluation reports

In the decision making process for external reviews

In follow-up procedures

Other, please specify

4.2. Is there a formal requirement that international peers/experts are involved in any of the following:

- In governance structures of national QA agencies
- As full members in external review teams
- As observers in external review teams
- In the decision making process for external reviews
- In follow-up procedures
- Other (please specify)

4.3. Is there a formal requirement that academic staff are involved?

- In governance structures of national QA agencies
- As full members in external review teams
- As observers in external review teams
- In the preparation of self evaluation reports
- In the decision making process for external reviews
- In follow-up procedures
- Other (please specify)

4.4. Are there any formal requirements regarding the involvement of employers in external QA processes.

Yes

In all external review teams appointed for evaluation of professional study programmes must comprise at least one representative of employers delegated by the HEL. (Accreditation regulations 03.10.2006. Cabinet Reg Nr.821)

4.5. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding the involvement of stakeholders in external QA.

5. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

5.1. Are there formal requirements for higher education institutions to develop internal quality assurance systems?

Yes

5.1.1. Please specify these requirements and the relevant source.

“... 5. Quality assurance: 5.1. Constant operation of a quality improvement system, regular development and discussion of long-term development plans; 11. Quality assurance and guaranties: 11.1. annual discussion of positive and negative features, changes, opportunities and plans for development of the higher education programme, internal self-assessment and constant operation of a quality improvement system; ...” (Cabinet Reg.No. 821 , 2006)

5.2. Who is primarily responsible for deciding the focus of internal quality assurance processes?

Higher education institutions

5.2.1. Please specify.

5.3. Are there formal requirements for students to be involved in internal quality assurance systems?

No

5.3.1. Please go to Question 5.6.

5.3.2. Is there a requirement for students to be involved in the preparation of self evaluation reports?

Please choose..

5.3.2.1. Is there a requirement for students to be involved in decision-making as an outcome of evaluation?

Please choose..

5.4. How many higher education institutions have published a strategy/policy for the continuous enhancement of quality in the past 5 years?

0-<25%

5.5. How many higher education institutions have arrangements in place for the internal approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards?

More than 75%

5.5.1. Please describe what kind of arrangements are in place.

Internal arrangements include an internal assessment of a programme before the first admission of students, periodic re-approvals, usually before the external review, yearly preparation of self-assessment reports, student surveys

5.6. How many higher education institutions publish up to date and objective information about the programmes and awards offered?

All

5.7. How many higher education institutions publish critical and negative outcomes of quality assurance evaluations?

50-<75%

5.7.1. Please provide a source for this information, and links to examples of critical/negative evaluations.

Actually, HEIs often don't need to publish neither negative nor positive outcomes since the reports of expert groups and self-assessment reports of HEI are public - they are posted on the web of the QA agency. In addition, about half the HEIs say they publicize negative outcomes - although sometimes in the internal network of the HEI - so it is not fully public.

5.8. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding Internal Quality Assurance.

Part 1.4 BFUG Data Collection on Lifelong Learning

1. Do steering documents for higher education in your country contain a definition of lifelong learning?

No

2. How do your steering documents define lifelong learning?

3. What is the common understanding of lifelong learning in your country?

adult education which multifaceted education process which ensures personal development and competitiveness in the labour market within the whole life

4. What are the main forms of lifelong learning provision in which higher education institutions are involved in your country?

professional upgrading courses for employed individuals, re-qualification for unemployed, offering parts of HE programmes(courses, modules)to individuals or businesses),etc.

5. Is lifelong learning a recognised mission of higher education institutions?

Yes, of all institutions

Vast majority of HEIs see LLL as their mission. It is not however required by legislation.

6. For which institutions is lifelong learning a recognised mission?

7. Are there legal requirements for higher education institutions to offer lifelong learning provision?

No

8. Please provide a reference to the relevant legislation or regulation.

9. Are there legal restrictions or constraints for higher education institutions to offer lifelong learning provision?

Yes

10. Please explain these restrictions, and provide a reference to relevant legislation/regulations

Most HEIs see the lack of regulations allowing and regulating RPL as a restriction for development of LLL within HEIs.

11. Which are the three (maximum) most significant groups of intended users of lifelong learning services offered by higher education institutions?

- Adults in employment
- Unemployed adults
- Retired citizens
- Part-time students
- Adults without higher education qualifications

Other, please specify

12. Where does the funding of lifelong learning provision in higher education come from?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> general higher education budget | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> special budget for lifelong learning | EU funds for support of re-qualification of unemployed | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private contributions from students | Student fees are the main avenue of funding LLL | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private contributions from business and industry | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other, please specify | funds of HEIs themselves | (i.e. funds earned by HEIs, NOT state budget) |

13. To what degree is the provision of lifelong learning in higher education funded from the public budget?

Mainly the part for training of the unemployed - in this area it is 100% public money

Part 2.1 BFUG Data Collection on policies to widen participation and increase flexibility

1. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

2. Do individuals that meet higher education entry standards have a guaranteed right to higher education?

No

2.1 Please specify.

3. Which statement best describes your country's policy approach regarding the goal that the student body entering, participating and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of the population?

This goal is not explicitly reflected in higher education policy.

4. UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

4.1. Please describe how your country's steering documents define underrepresented groups (e.g. based on socio-economic status, gender, ethnicity, disability, geography, other).

4.2. For each of these groups, please briefly describe the national/regional policies and measures that are put in place to address under-representation. These may include, but are not restricted to laws, regulations, campaigns, incentives, other actions etc.

4.3. How does your higher education system determine whether an individual belongs to a particular group (e.g. self-declaration)?

4.4. Is there any funding reserved for measures to increase participation of under-represented groups?

Please choose..

4.4.1. Please specify.

4.5. Do you have national targets/goals for participation of those groups that you identify as under-represented in higher education?

Please choose..

4.5.1. Please explain these targets briefly and name the groups to which they apply.

4.6. Does your country offer more public funding to higher education institutions to stimulate access for underrepresented groups?

Please choose..

4.6.1. Please specify and identify variation between different groups, where they exist.

4.7. Is the effect of measures to increase participation of each of the groups monitored in your country?

Please choose..

4.7.1. Please specify.

4.8. Please provide details on how the higher education participation and graduation of each of the groups that you identify as underrepresented is monitored in your country.

4.8.1. What data is collected?

4.9. Is there a system to monitor the composition of the student body (in terms of groups identified as underrepresented) by subject?

Please choose..

4.10. When are data generally collected?

Please choose..

4.10.1. Where an approach different from the general approach is used for any group, please specify.

4.11. Where is information provided by this monitoring system published (provide a reference and link)?

5. GENERAL POLICY APPROACH TO WIDENING PARTICIPATION

5.1. If your country has a general policy approach to increase and widen participation and to overcome obstacles to access, please explain your approach briefly and provide reference to relevant documents.

5.2. How does your country's policy explicitly identify the obstacles that it addresses?

5.3. What are the criteria used to measure and evaluate the success of specific initiatives and measures?

5.4. In your country, is the composition of the student body monitored according to certain criteria?

Please choose..

5.4.1. Who monitors on the basis of which criteria?

5.5. How is this data used in higher education policy?

5.6. How are measures to remove obstacles to access primarily funded? If your country has a mixed system, please choose all adequate boxes. Please only indicate the most important source(s).

- From the general higher education budget
- From a specific budget
- From university budget
- There are no measures to remove obstacles to access

6. DIFFERENT APPROACH TO WIDENING PARTICIPATION

6.1. Please explain the characteristics of your country's policy to achieve the goal that the student body reflects the diversity of the population.

6.2. Does your country's policy approach explicitly identify obstacles to higher education?

Please choose..

6.2.1. Please describe these obstacles.

6.3. Does your country's policy approach make reference to parts/groups in the population?

Please choose..

6.3.1. Please describe these groups.

6.4. What measures does your country's policy take?

6.5. How does your country assess whether its policy has been successful?

7. COMPLETION OF STUDIES

7.1. Does your country have policies aiming to increase the level of completion of studies?

No

7.1.1. Please describe the main features of these policies.

7.2. Are student completion rates monitored in your country?

Yes, at the level of higher education institutions

7.2.1. What use is then made of the data?

To analyze: reasons of dropout, efficiency of study programmes, for dialog with employers, improving programmes, plan the admission

7.3. Are there any incentives for higher education institutions to improve student completion rates?

No

7.3.1. Please specify the nature of these incentives.

7.3.2. Are there any other incentives (e.g. it is a subject covered in external quality assurance procedures)?

external QA uses completion rates as one of the indicators

8. STUDENT SERVICES

While higher education institutions offer multiple services, in the following questions, the focus lies on **academic guidance services**, career guidance services and psychological counselling services.

8.1. What kind of student services are commonly provided by higher education institutions?

- Academic guidance services
- Career guidance services
- Psychological counselling services
- Other
- No services

8.1.1. Please specify.

Number of services is different in different HEIs, different HEIs can form no to all of the abovementioned services

8.2. Who are the main users of the services?

All students

8.2.1. Please specify.

8.3. Please provide the main source(s) of funding.

usually the funds of the HEI - i.e. the funds earned by HEI through e.g. student fees.

8.4. What are the main tasks of the services?

mainly - advice on studies and career

8.5. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your national policies to widen participation.

9. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

10. Does your country's higher education policy focus on promoting the flexible provision of higher education (e.g. changing the intensity of study programmes according to personal circumstance through part-time study, distance learning and e-learning)?

Yes

10.1. Please provide details of specific policy measures.

Flexible provision is not emphasized in the current legislation. It is however included in the draft law on Higher education. Unfortunately the adoption process of the above law is cumbersome and lasts already for several years. However, part-time studies, distance learning and e-learning as well as branches of HEIs in more remote areas are the typical policy of the HEIs in Latvia

11. Does your country's policy on flexible provision of higher education contain a special focus linked to the goal of widening participation for underrepresented groups?

No

11.1. Please explain how higher education policy aims to attain this goal.

12. Are there regulations or other policy measures regarding the relationship between employers and higher education institutions in fostering flexible learning?

No

13. Please provide details of these measures.

14. Please describe up to five main access routes to higher education (including, but not limited to, entry with a school leaving certificate, entry with a vocational education certificate, entry without formal certification) and, if possible, provide approximate percentages of students entering through this route in parenthesis (). If less than five main routes exist, please write "n/a" in the remaining fields.

Route 1: = general secondary school certificate (ISCED 3A)

Route 2: = vocational secondary school certificate certifying completion of 4-year vocational secondary programme which is also equivalent to ISCED 3A

Route 3: = n/a

Route 4: = n/a

Route 5: = n/a

15. Do higher education regulations and steering documents promote flexible entry to higher education, e.g. through alternative access routes?

No

15.1. Please briefly describe these measures.

16. PART-TIME STUDY

16.1. In your country, is there any official status other than full-time student?

Yes

16.1.1. If yes, what formal status does exist?

part-time studies

16.1.2. How do you define it?

kind of studies where less than 40 LV credits (60 ECTS) are earned per year and where the total student workload is less than 40 hours per week

16.1.3. What are the reasons for offering a different student status?

According to law, full-time students are staff members of the HEI and they are highly represented at all governing bodies of the HEI. Part-time students, being more remote to the HEI are considered less competent to make decisions on important issues.

16.1.4. How are these students treated differently (e.g. fees, student support, etc.)?

part-time students do not belong to the personnel of the HEI while full-time students do; part-time students are not eligible for scholarships but only for loans

16.1.5. Please describe the most common understanding/concept of part-time studies.

16.2. In your country, do you have an explicit policy to encourage part-time study provision by higher education institutions?

No

16.2.1. Please describe briefly the main elements and provide the source.

16.3. Which one of the following statements best describes the current situation in your country?

Higher education institutions have autonomy to decide, but most of them offer part-time studies

16.3.1. Please specify

17. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

17.1. In your country, is there a legislation regulating recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning?

No

17.1.1. How does your legislation in higher education define prior learning?

17.1.2. Do your steering documents in higher education define prior learning?

No

17.1.3. How do your steering documents in higher education define prior learning?

17.2. In your country, apart from formal learning, what can be taken into account and recognised as prior learning in higher education?

- Prior non-formal learning (e.g. various non-certified courses)
- Prior informal learning (e.g. work experience)

17.3. Prior learning as defined by your steering documents can ...

- be used to gain admission to a higher education study programme
- be taken into account as partial fulfilment of a higher education study programme (e.g. to reduce the required amount of courses to be taken/credits to be gained)
- Other: prior work experience can replace job placements

17.4. Based on your steering documents or legislation, can applicants for higher education have prior non-formal or informal learning assessed and recognised?

Legislation neither expressly permits nor prohibits higher education institutions to implement procedures for validation of non-formal and informal learning

17.5. If recognition of prior non-formal or informal learning is permitted by legislation but is not a right, is it:

Very unusual practice in higher education institutions (less than 5%)

17.6. What measures are in place to ensure that assessment of learning is based on reliable and valid evidence?

Because RPL is not explicitly provided for in legislation concerning HE, HEI practices are monitored by the Education Quality Service inspections (not to be confused with QA agency!)

17.7. Is institutional practice in recognition of prior learning explicitly included in the quality assurance processes used to evaluate institutions and/or programmes?

No

17.8. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding flexibility of higher education studies.

Part 2.2 BFUG Data Collection on student contributions and support

1. STUDENT FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The focus of the questions is on students, and is not limited to full-time daytime students. Furthermore, all first and second cycle students are included. Third cycle students are excluded except when explicitly mentioned. Similarly, the focus is on home students or equivalent. International students are only included when explicitly mentioned.

1.1. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

2. In your country, does any higher education home student at a public higher education institution have to pay a fee of any kind?

Contributions to student unions are not included!

Yes

3. In which currency are contributions to higher education institutions and other study costs paid in your country?

Latvian Lats

4. In principle, which home students at public higher education institutions have to pay fees?

- During studies All students Specific groups of students No answer
- After studies All students Specific groups of students No answer

4.1. Which main exemptions to this principle exist in your country?

4.2. Which of the following criteria determine whether a student has to pay fees?

- Need
- Merit There is merit-based contest for state funded study places in all disciplines
- Part-time/Full-time/Distance learning All part-time and distance students have to pay. state funded places are allocated only in full-time studies
- Field of study Proportion of state-funded study places is greater in sciences, engineering, computer sciences, medicine and the smallest in economics, management and humanities

5. With regard to fees, are home students in the second cycle treated differently to those in the first cycle?

No

5.1. In principle, which second cycle students at public higher education institutions have to pay fees?

- During studies All students Specific groups of students No answer
- After studies All students Specific groups of students No answer

5.2. What main exemptions to this principle exist in your country?

5.3. Which of the following criteria determine whether a student has to pay fees?

- Need
- Merit
- Part-time/Full-time/Distance learning
- Field of study

6. What is the minimum, maximum and most common amount of fees payable by home students in the first cycle? Please multiply any annual fees (including registration, tuition, administration, graduation and other fees) by the most common length of programmes in this cycle and add fees to be paid only once to that amount.

Minimum amount = 500 Lats (711 EUR) per year, 2133 EUR for BA progr

Maximum amount = 4700 Lats (6687 EUR) per year, 33437 EUR per 5-year programme

Most common amount = 850 Lats (1209 EUR) per year, 4233 EUR per 3,5 year BA progr

6.1. Which home students pay the minimum and the maximum amount in the first cycle? (e.g. students in certain subjects, students in need, students with good academic performance, part-time students, other...)

three factors: field: lowest fees are in law and social sciences, higher fees in sciences and engineering, highest - dentistry and medicine; type of studies - fees are somewhat lower for distance studies level of studies: fees are higher in doctoral studies compared to BA and MA studies

6.2. Please provide the percentage of students paying the minimum and the maximum amount in the first cycle. If precise data are not available, please provide an estimate.

No fees (state funded places) - 34% Smallest fees (estimate) - 3% Most common (estimate) - 47% Highest (estimate) 15%

7. What is the minimum, maximum and most common amount of fees payable by home students in the second cycle? Please multiply any annual fees (including registration, tuition, administration, graduation and other fees) by the most common length of programmes in this cycle and add fees to be paid only once to that amount.

Minimum amount = 1850 Lats (711 EUR) per year, 2133 EUR for BA progr

Maximum amount = 7080 Lats (10074 EUR) per year, 33437 EUR per 5-year programme

Most common amount = 850 Lats (1209 EUR) per year, 4233 EUR per 3,5 year BA progr

7.1. Which home students pay the *minimum* amount in the second cycle? (e.g. students in certain subjects, students in need, students with good academic performance, part-time students, other...)

field: lowest fees are in law and social sciences type of studies - fees are somewhat lower for distance studies

7.2. Which home students pay the *maximum* amount in the second cycle? (e.g. students in certain subjects, students in need, students with good academic performance, part-time students, other...)

field: higher fees in sciences and engineering, highest - dentistry and medicine;

7.3. Please provide the (approximate) percentage of students paying the minimum and the maximum amount in the second cycle. If precise data are not available, please provide an estimate.

No fees (state funded places) - 34% Smallest fees(estimate) - 3% Most common (estimate) - 47% Highest (estimate) 15%

8. Concerning fees, are international students treated differently in your country from home students?

Yes

8.1. What is the minimum, maximum and most common amount of fees (including registration, tuition, administration and graduation fees) payable by international students in the first cycle?

Minimum amount = not available

Maximum amount = not available

Most common amount = not available

8.2. According to your country's steering documents, students from which countries are considered international students?

All non-residents of Latvia are considered international students. For the fees issue, however, EU and EEA studnets are treated same way as Latvian students

9. Who defines the fee amounts for any student in the first cycle?

- Each higher education institution defines its own fees
- Higher education institutions can define their fees, but there are limits set by the central/regional authority
- Higher education institutions can define their fees, but they have to be approved by the central/regional authority
- Central/regional authority defines the value range of fees

10. Who defines the fee amounts for any student in the second cycle?

- Each higher education institution defines its own fees
- Higher education institutions can define their fees, but there are limits set by the central/regional authority
- Higher education institutions can define their fees, but they have to be approved by the central/regional authority
- Central/regional authority defines the value range of fees

11. Do students have to pay compulsory contributions to student unions/representations?

No

11.1. Please provide the payable amounts and explain differences between cycles and students, where they exist.

12. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

12.1. Please identify the main focus of your country's student support system.

A combination of grants and loans for students and of tax benefits for parents

grants are available just to 15% of those full-time students who study at state-funded study places. Loans are of two kinds: 1) "study loans" for covering tuition fee - available to all fee-paying students, 2) student loans - meant to cover daily subsistence which are calculated as 120 Lats (171 EUR) per month and are available just to part of students. Students or parents who have paid the tuition fees are eligible for tax reduction.

12.2. The following questions deal with public grants and loans separately. If there is a combined system of grants and loans in your country, please provide information about your system here. In this case, please still answer the questions on grants/scholarships and loans, keeping in mind the relevant parts of your combined system.

grants are available just to 15% of those full-time students whose study fees are covered by state. Loans are of two kinds: 1) "study loans" for covering tuition fee - available to all fee-paying students, 2) student loans - meant to cover daily subsistence which are calculated as 120 Lats (171 EUR) per month and are available just to part of students.

13. PUBLIC GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

13.1. Does any student receive public financial support in the form of grants and/or scholarships?

Yes, students of all cycles

13.2. Which first cycle students are eligible for grants and/or scholarships?

Specific groups of students

13.2.1. Which groups of students receive grants and/or scholarships?

Need-based

Allocation of grants used to be merit-based but have become nearly only need-based in the years of economic crisis.

Merit-based

Part-time/Full-time/Distance learning

Field of study

In sciences, engineering and medicine there are more state-financed study places, and hence also the scholarships

A precondition to receive a grant is studying in state-funded study place.

The 15% below means 15% of the state funded students. As the percentage of state-funded study places is 34%, the percentage of those receiving grants is $0,15 \cdot 0,34 = 5\%$ of all students

13.2.2. What percentage of first cycle students receives a grant and/or scholarship?

5

13.3. What is the minimum, maximum and most common value of grants/scholarships available to first cycle students in higher education?

Minimum = 70 Lats/month

Maximum = 70 Lats/month

Most common = 70 Lats/month

13.4. Which second cycle students are eligible to receive grants and/or scholarships?

Specific groups of second cycle students

same as for 1st cycle - grants are allocated to 15% to those studying in state funded study places

13.4.1. Which groups of students receive grants and/or scholarships?

Need

Allocation of grants used to be merit-based but have become nearly only need-based in the years of economic crisis.

Merit

Part-time/Full-time/Distance learning

Field of study

A precondition to receive a grant is studying in state-funded study place.

The 15% below means 15% of the state funded students. As the percentage of state-funded study places is 34%, the percentage of those receiving grants is $0,15 * 0,34 = 5\%$ of all students

13.4.2. What percentage of second cycle students receives a grant and/or scholarship?

5

13.4.3. What is the minimum, maximum and most common value of grants/scholarships available to second cycle students in higher education?

70 Lats/month = 100 Eur/month

13.5. What percentage of all students receives a grant and/or scholarship?

15

14. STUDENT LOANS

14.1. In your country, can any student take out publicly subsidised or guaranteed loans to cover their expenses of higher education studies?

Yes, students of all cycles

14.2. Are all first cycle students eligible to receive loans?

Yes

14.2.1. On what criteria are the groups of first cycle students eligible for loans differentiated?

Need-based criteria

Merit-based criteria

Full-time, part-time, distant learners, etc.

Field of studies

Based on cycle the student is enrolled in

14.2.2. What is the minimum, maximum and most common value of loans that first cycle students receive? Please provide the amount per year.

Minimum first cycle = 1030 Lats/year = 1466 EUR/year

Most common first cycle = 1300 Lats/year = 1850 Eur/year

Maximum first cycle = 4700 Lats/year = 6687 Eur/year

14.2.3. Are all second cycle students eligible to receive loans?

Yes

14.2.4. On what criteria are the groups of second cycle students eligible for loans differentiated?

- Need-based criteria
- Merit-based criteria
- Full-time, part-time, distant learners, etc.
- Field of studies
- Based on cycle the student is enrolled in

14.2.5. What is the minimum, maximum and most common value of loans that second cycle students receive? Please provide the amount per year.

Minimum second cycle = 1300 Lats/year = 1850 Eur/year

Most common second cycle = 1500 Lats/year = 2134 Eur/year

Maximum second cycle = Lats/year = 10074 Eur/year

14.3. If different types of loans exist in your country, please provide the details here.

The loan described above (the "study loan") is a loan aimed at paying tuition fee and the size of loan is exactly the size of tuition fee. In addition, a loan for subsistence ("student loan") of 120 Lats/month is available to a limited number of students. Those loans are state-guaranteed.

14.4. What percentage of students takes out loans?

In the first cycle = 20

In the second cycle = 15

Of all students = 18

14.5. Are student loans publicly subsidised or guaranteed?

Yes

14.5.1. Please explain the form of this guarantee/subsidy.

State guaranty is issued for taking loan from private banks. However, private banks often disregard the state guarantee and require up to two private guarantors in addition. Loans are partly subsidized in 2 ways: 1) the bank interest in the 1st year after graduation is covered by state; 2) if the bank interest rate is above 5%, state covers the difference.

14.5.2. What conditions govern the cancellation or reduction of a state guaranteed/subsidised debt incurred by students after completion of their study period?

- Income too low
- Studies successfully completed on time
- Exceptional merit in studies
- Age or length of period in debt
- Disability For disabled persons of categories 1 and 2 state covers loans completely
- Parenthood Regarding "student loan" only - state reduces the repayable sum for 30% for each child
- Death In the event of death of student state covers the loan,
- Early repayment of loan If the loan is repaid within 1 year after completion of studies, state compensates the interest rate
- No debt cancellation
- No debt reduction

14.6. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your grants and loan system.

There are two types loans possible: 1)"study loan" which is equal to the tuition fee paid by the student; 2) "student loan" meant for everyday subsistence which is limited to 120 Lats/month = 171 Eur/month. The two loans are granted separately and have different rules for re-payment.

15. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

16. Do any student's parents receive tax-related benefits (tax relief of any kind, which is not limited to income tax) for tertiary education expenses?

- 1st cycle Yes No No answer
- 2nd cycle Yes No No answer

17. Which students' parents are eligible to receive such non-tax based benefit?

Some

17.1. What are the criteria upon which eligibility is decided?

- Income of parents too low
- Income of student too low
- Age of student (child)
- Disability
- Parenthood of student (child)
- Other

17.1.1. Please specify.

Those parents who have paid the tuition fees of their children are eligible for a tax reduction - the taxable sum is reduced for the sum of the study fee paid

17.2. Are parents of students in the first or in the second cycle treated differently?

No

17.2.1. Please explain the difference.

18. Can the parents of any student enrolled at a higher education institution receive tax-based financial benefits (tax relief)?

Yes

19. What are the forms and values of the granted tax relief? The information you enter may be an absolute amount or a share of a person's taxable income expressed as percentage.

Reduction of the taxable income for the sum paid as tuition fee of their children

19.1. Is there a difference for parents whose children are first or second cycle students?

No

19.2. Please explain the difference.

20. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your benefits for students' parents (including guardians).

21. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

22. Does any student receive tax-related benefits (tax relief of any kind, which is not limited to income tax) for tertiary education expenses?

1st cycle Yes No No answer

2nd cycle Yes No No answer

22.1. What are the criteria to determine who is eligible?

They are enrolled as a student at a recognised higher education institution

They are under a certain age (please specify)

They have another particular civil status (e.g. married, parenthood, other)

Income-dependent

Tax can be reduced if student himself pays tuition fee

If a student him/herself pay tuition fee, his/her taxable income is reduced for the amount of tuition fee paid.

23. In your country, do any forms of public non-cash student support exist?

1st cycle Yes No No answer

2nd cycle Yes No No answer

24. What forms of public non-cash student support exist?

Subsidised accommodation: 1st cycle

Subsidised accommodation: 2nd cycle

Subsidised health insurance: 1st cycle

Subsidised health insurance: 2nd cycle

24.1. Please specify the details of existing subsidies.

The subsidy is implicit rather than direct. Subsidized accommodation regards only the students who study in state-funded study place, i.e. currently around 34% students. The subsidy is included in the cost of a subsidized study place which state allocates to the HEI. However, the state subsidy per student place has dropped due to economic crisis and therefore the subsidy for accommodation becomes theoretical rather than real.

25. Who is eligible to receive such non-cash support?

Subsidised accommodation All students Specific groups of students based on pre-defined criteria No answer

Subsidised health insurance All students Specific groups of students based on pre-defined criteria No answer

Other subsidies All students Specific groups of students based on pre-defined criteria No answer

25.1. What are the criteria to determine who is eligible?

Income of parents too low

Income of student too low

Age of student

Disability

Parenthood of student

Only students whose study fee is covered by state

25.2. Is there a difference in eligibility between first and second cycle students?

25.3. Please explain the difference.

There is no difference

26. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding public non-cash student support.

27. Do you want to answer this section now or later?

Now

28. What is the typical status of a candidate preparing a third cycle (PhD) qualification?

- Student
- They hold an employment contract with a HEI

28.1. Please explain why you selected multiple options?

I did not select multiple options

28.2. Are there differences between students of different subject areas?

No

28.3. Please explain the difference.

29. What are the main funding sources for candidates preparing a third cycle (PhD) qualification?

Latvian state budget funding of study places, EU Social Fund (scholarships), student's own resources

30. Please explain any differences in the fees they are required to pay, compared to your answers for first and second cycle students, as well as differences in grants, loans and other support that may be provided.

The principle is the same - merit-based selection to state-funded places. Selection for EU Social Fund scholarships is also merit based. Loans for covering study fee are possible.

31. Please explain the nature of the contracts candidates preparing a PhD have with their higher education institution.

32. Please specify any fees third cycle candidates that are typically neither "fully student" nor "fully employee" have to pay, as well as any support that may be provided.

Those doctoral students who fail to receive state-subsidized study places have to pay tuition fees. Same principles as in the first 2 cycles are applied - more subsidized study places are allocated in sciences, engineering, computer science and medicine

33. Please provide any additional relevant comments for consideration regarding your doctoral education.

Questionnaire on student and staff mobility

A Preliminary remarks

In the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, the European Ministers responsible for higher education agreed that “mobility shall be the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area”. They called upon each country to increase mobility of students, , to ensure its high quality and to diversify its types and scope. At least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad in 2020”. They also called for mobility of teachers, early-stage researchers and staff. At the same time, the Ministers underlined the importance of more balanced mobility across the European Higher Education Area. The findings of the Bologna Process Independent Assessment which were presented on the occasion of Bologna Ministerial Anniversary Conference in Budapest/Vienna on 11/12 March 2010 again underlined the need for action to enhance and better balance student and staff mobility.

This questionnaire on mobility is part of the general questionnaire used to collect information for the 2012 integrated implementation report. To give the BFUG Working Group on Mobility sufficient time and the necessary material to fulfil its terms of reference of drafting a European Higher Education Area Strategy for Mobility to be decided by the Ministers in 2012, the questions on mobility are being asked a few months earlier than the questions on the other themes. However, when the general questionnaire is sent out in early 2011, each country will have the opportunity to update its responses to the mobility questions should any significant changes have occurred.

When completing this questionnaire, please pay particular attention to the following two points:

- Information provided in this questionnaire should be supported by references whenever they are available. Please include the title and internet links, where available, for all publications and texts (national policy documents, national and/or international empirical surveys etc) which you have used to provide your responses to the specific questions.
- When providing a response for your country, please be aware that different stakeholders in the higher education system may have varying opinions or experience with regard to the issue at hand. Please make every effort to consult with stakeholders before finalising your answers to ensure that a balanced and consensual response is provided.

Please return this questionnaire to the Bologna Secretariat until 30 September, 2010 at the latest. If you have any queries on the questionnaire, please contact: secretariat@ehea.info.

B Details on the completion of the questionnaire

B.1. Who contributed to the completion of this report? Please provide the names and functions.

B.1.a Government representatives

Gita Revalde - Director of Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education and Science,
Vesma Abizare- senior officer, Ministry of Education and Science

B.1.b Stakeholder representatives

B.1.c Other contributors

C National strategies and action plans

The following questions look at national quantitative targets and at policies aiming to foster mobility.

C.1. Does your country have national strategies or action plans to foster mobility?

Yes

No → please continue with section C.6.

C.1.a If yes, please provide a reference.

C.1.b If yes, when was the national strategy or action plan adopted, and when was the most recent revision?

Adopted:

Most recent revision:

C.2. Does the strategy include national quantitative targets for the different forms of student mobility in higher education?

Please specify the target, including the date, in the appropriate box (e.g. 20% by 2020).

	All forms of mobility	Credit mobility ¹	Degree mobility ²
Inbound			
Outbound			
No target			

C.2.a Please provide a reference for the target.

C.2.b Are these targets the same for students in all cycles or are there differences?

Same

Differences

¹ Mobility to a different country in the context of a programme in the home institution for which credits are awarded

² Mobility for an entire degree programme

C.2.b.i If there are differences according to the degree cycle, please specify.

C.3. Does your country's national strategy/action plan include staff mobility in higher education?

Yes

No

C.3.a If yes, does it include quantitative targets for staff mobility?

Yes

No

C.3.a.i If yes, please specify

C.4. Does your national strategy/action plan prioritise particular geographic regions for student and/or staff mobility?

Yes

No

C.4.a If yes, please complete the following table by ticking the boxes where applicable.

Priority Region	Incoming students	Outgoing students	Incoming staff	Outgoing staff
EHEA				
USA/Canada				
Latin America				
Australia, New Zealand				
Middle East				
Africa				
Asia				
Other (please specify)				

C.4.b If you have regional priorities, please give reasons.

C.5. Does your country monitor the impact of your national strategy or action plan?

Yes

No

C.5.a If yes, please provide information on how this monitoring is undertaken. Who is responsible, how regularly is monitoring conducted, and what have been the most recent results?

C.6. Are there, in your country, any strategies or programmes below the national level (e.g. regional, institutional) to foster mobility?

Yes

No

C.6.a If yes, please explain and/or give examples.

There is an action line within the Reform Plan on necessary reforms on Higher Education and Research 2010-2012 for increase the exportability of higher education. The plan includes some measures to foster mobility.

C.7. Can national students who study in a higher education institution in another country receive a grant/scholarship under the same conditions as students studying in the country?

Yes, for degree mobility

Yes, for credit mobility

Yes, for both

No

C.7.a If yes, do the following restrictions apply?

	Degree mobility	Credit mobility
Grants/scholarships are restricted to specific countries (if so, please specify which countries, e.g. EU member states, EHEA countries, other countries/world regions)	EU member countries	
Grants/scholarships are restricted to specific programmes (if so, please specify)	Only for programmes having state financed budget places	
Other restrictions apply (please specify)		
No restrictions apply		

C.8. Has your country implemented any of the following financial support measures to foster student mobility?

Measure	Credit mobility	Degree mobility
loans for incoming students		x
grants/scholarships for incoming students		x
Loans for outgoing students	x	
Grants/scholarships for outgoing students		
Other: (please specify)		

C.9. Has your country implemented other support measures or programmes to foster student mobility? (Measures may include, but are not restricted to, accommodation/transport subsidies for international students, improvements in recognition practice, exchange programmes, targeted guidance services etc.)

In the university level there are many measures. The help to improve the study programmes for the international students is foreseen by means of the European Social fund

D Identifying and removing obstacles to mobility

D.1. Has your higher education policy been informed by any surveys or research that have considered obstacles to student mobility?

Yes

No

D.1.a If yes, please provide references to those surveys and/or research that have influenced your policy on mobility?

D.2. In this context, please rank the three most important obstacles to incoming and outgoing student mobility addressed in national programmes and measures? (Most important = 1, second most important = 2, and third most important = 3)

Obstacles to student mobility	Incoming mobility	Outgoing mobility
Funding		1
Recognition		3
Language	3	
Curriculum/Study organisation		2
Legal issues	2	
Motivating and informing students	1	
Other, please specify:		Job conditions

D.3. Are at least some of the obstacles that you ranked above particularly important in specific study cycles?

Yes

No

D.3.a If yes, please specify.

bachelor and master

D.4. Are at least some of the obstacles that you ranked above particularly important in specific fields of studies?

Yes

No

D.4.a If yes, please specify.

D.5. Are the obstacles that you ranked above particularly relevant for credit mobility?

Yes

No

D.5.a If yes, please specify.

D.6. Are the obstacles that you ranked above particularly important for degree mobility?

Yes

No

D.6.a If yes, please specify.

D.7. What measures/programmes has your country implemented to tackle and remove the obstacles to student mobility that you mentioned?

D.8. Has your country monitored the effects of these measures/programmes?

Yes

No

D.8.a If yes, please provide information on how this monitoring is undertaken. Who is responsible, how regularly is monitoring conducted, and what have been the most recent results?

D.9. Has your higher education policy been informed by any surveys or research that have considered obstacles to staff mobility?

Yes

No

D.9.a If yes, please provide references to those surveys or research that have influenced your policy on staff mobility?

D.10. In this context, please rank the three most important obstacles to incoming and outgoing staff mobility? (Most important = 1, second most important = 2, and third most important = 3)

Obstacles to staff mobility	Incoming mobility	Outgoing mobility
Immigration restrictions	2	2
Recognition issues		
Language issues	1	
Incompatibility of pension and/or social security systems	3	1
Legal issues		
Other, please specify:	Motivation	

D.11. What measures/programmes has your country implemented to tackle and remove the obstacles to staff mobility that you mentioned?

D.12. Has your country monitored the effects of these measures/programmes?

Yes

No

D.12.a If yes, please provide information on how this monitoring is undertaken. Who is responsible, how regularly is monitoring conducted, and what have been the most recent results?

E Balanced student mobility flows

When looking at global and intra-European mobility flows, significant imbalances between continents, countries, regions and institutions become visible. In the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, the European Ministers therefore asked the BFUG to consider how balanced mobility could be achieved within the EHEA. With the 2009 Bologna Policy Forum Statement, Ministers from across the world declared that they “advocate a balanced exchange of teachers, researchers and students between [their] countries and promote fair and fruitful ‘brain circulation’”.

The following questions aim at collecting information on the understanding of the term “balanced mobility and on national strategies and measures to achieve more balanced mobility.

E.1. Which of the following situations for student mobility applies to your country?

	Total mobility	Credit mobility	Degree mobility
more incoming than outgoing students	1176 outgoing students in 2009*		
more outgoing than incoming students	1715 incoming students in 2009*		
approximately the same number of incoming and outgoing students			
No information available		x	x

E.1.a What is the statistical source for this information? Please supply statistical data.

Data collected by the Ministry of Education and Science

E.2. Is the situation described above regarded as balanced mobility?

Yes

No

E.2.a Please explain and include a definition of “balanced mobility” as it is used in your country.

The same number of incoming and outgoing students

E.3. Does your country have significant imbalances of student mobility flows with particular countries or regions?

Yes

No

E.3.a If yes, with which countries or regions are mobility flows most imbalanced?

For Former Soviet Union countries - More incoming students than outgoing

For EU countries - more outgoing than incoming

E.4. Does your mobility strategy/action plan for higher education address the issues of balance of student mobility flows?

Yes

No

E.4.a If yes, what are the main concerns addressed?

E.4.b If yes, which measures have been undertaken to address these concerns regarding the balance of student mobility flows?

Space for Comments: reemigration grants for young scientists