

## OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AIKA'S STRATEGIC GOALS 2017–2023

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## INTRODUCTION

On 8 March 2017, the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council approved the strategic directions for the development of AIKA for 2017–2021, setting five strategic goals:

- 1** | To ensure the compliance of the system for external quality assurance in higher education of Latvia with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.
- 2** | To conduct the external quality assessment of higher education in Latvia and facilitate the improvement of systems for internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, study fields, and study programmes.
- 3** | To ensure the financial sustainability of the Agency for the implementation of its mission in the appropriate quality and in accordance with the adopted values.
- 4** | To serve as the competence centre for quality assurance in higher education in Latvia and promote the international visibility and recognition of higher education of Latvia.
- 5** | To promote the Agency's international collaboration and competitiveness by participating in the development of higher education assessment policies and fostering the quality assessment and improvement.

### ▶ OPERATIONAL PLAN •

During the strategy implementation period, an operational plan, along with an annual report on the implemented activities, have been prepared. All annual reports are publicly available on the website of [AIKA](#).

### ▶ CONDUCTING OF A SURVEY •

In February 2022, AIKA conducted a survey among higher education institutions and other collaboration partners in Latvia to gather their feedback on the implementation of the 2017–2021 strategy and to identify areas that require greater focus in the next strategy period (53 respondents participated in the survey).

### ▶ EVALUATION •

Based on the annual reports on the implemented activities, the AIKA self-assessment process conducted in 2023, and the feedback provided by the collaboration partners, AIKA has conducted an evaluation of the implementation of the strategic goals set for 2017–2023.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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To ensure the compliance of the system for external quality assurance in higher education of Latvia with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

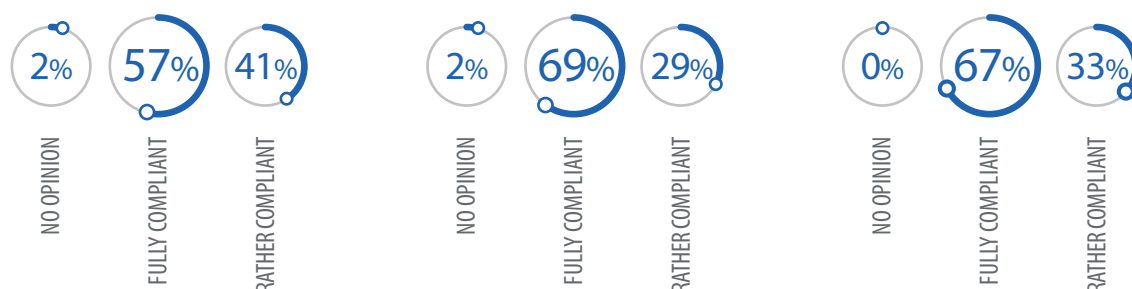
## ► AGENCY'S VALUES •

Upon commencing the operation, the Agency set the compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, as one of its main goals.

The following Agency's values were defined:



THE PARTNERS HAVE EVALUATED THE COMPLIANCE OF THE AGENCY'S OPERATION WITH THE DEFINED VALUES AS FOLLOWS:



## ► BINDING REGULATIONS •

In 2015, the Agency's existence and operational independence, which are essential for compliance with the ESG, were specified in the Law on Higher Education Institutions. Several Cabinet Regulations were developed pursuant to the ESG ([Regulations Regarding the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions, Colleges, and Study Fields](#) and [Regulations Regarding the Licensing of Study Programmes](#)), which came into force with the commencement of the Agency's operations.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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In order to ensure the successful operation of the Agency, the strategic **management structure** was developed.



On 1 January 2019, these functions were consolidated into one, constituting the Study Quality Commission.



In order to ensure the successful operation of the Agency, the website [www.aika.lv](http://www.aika.lv) was created, where up-to-date information on the regulatory framework and the Agency's activities is always available.

In 2017, following the approval of the regulations and the discussion of potential changes with the collaboration partners, including with the representatives of HEIs/colleges and experts, several amendments were proposed, resulting in an improved regulatory framework that came into force on 1 January 2019.

The improved regulatory framework includes the following:



## AGENCY'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE ESG

In February 2018, as part of the evaluation coordinated by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the Agency was assessed for compliance with the ESG.

STANDARD	COMPLIANCE
ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance	Substantial compliance
ESG 2.2 Designing methodologies fit for purpose	Substantial compliance
ESG 2.3 Implementing processes	Full compliance
ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts	Full compliance
ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes	Substantial compliance
ESG 2.6 Reporting	Substantial compliance
ESG 2.7 Complaints and appeals	Partial compliance
ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance	Substantial compliance
ESG 3.2 Official status	Full compliance
ESG 3.3 Independence	Substantial compliance
ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis	Substantial compliance
ESG 3.5 Resources	Full compliance
ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct	Full compliance
ESG 3.7 Cyclical external review of agencies	Full compliance

THE EXPERT GROUP ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE AGENCY GENERALLY COMPLIES WITH THE ESG.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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ASSESSMENT OF AGENCY'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE ESG BY ITS COLLABORATION PARTNERS

## ▶ ENQA MEMBERSHIP STATUS •

On 21 June 2018, the ENQA Board made a decision regarding the ENQA membership status of the Agency. Consequently, on 6 December 2018, the Register Committee of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) decided to **include the Agency in EQAR** until 30 June 2023.

## ▶ RECTIFICATION OF SHORTCOMINGS •

The Agency's improved regulatory framework also addressed and rectified shortcomings identified during the ENQA assessment, such as excessive detail in the methodological aspects and documentation to be prepared within the framework of the assessment processes at the level of Cabinet Regulations (ESG 2.2, 3.1), the absence of an independent Appeals Commission (ESG 2.7), and concerns about the sufficiency of resources in the long term, given the large number of study fields to be assessed simultaneously (ESG 3.5).

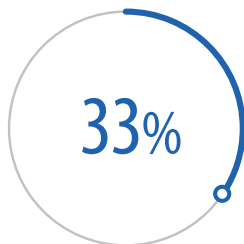
## ▶ INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT •

For each assessment procedure, the Agency developed a methodology, guidelines for HEIs/colleges on preparing an application and/or a self-assessment report, and guidelines for experts on preparing an expert opinion, in accordance with the ESG, and published them on their website.

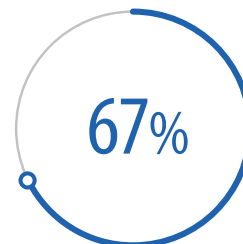
## ▶ MONITORING OF CURRENT EVENTS •

The Agency recognizes that ensuring compliance with the ESG is an ongoing process. Therefore, during the reporting period, it has regularly monitored changes in the Law on Higher Education Institutions and other laws and regulations, assessed their potential impact on the Agency's compliance with the ESG, and taken appropriate actions accordingly.

## ▶ ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT •



THE GOAL HAS BEEN FULLY ACHIEVED



THE GOAL HAS RATHER BEEN ACHIEVED

■ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS ■

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### ▶ COMMENTS FROM COLLABORATION PARTNERS •

- **What is your organisation's view of the role and impact of AIKA in the development of higher education policy in Latvia?**
- *AIKA is an independent institution for quality assurance in higher education that can certainly provide an objective and data-driven opinion on the development of education policy in Latvia.*
- *AIKA's activities and thematic reports contribute to the improvement and international recognition of the quality of higher education in Latvia.*
- *The role of AIKA in the implementation of education policy is commendable. However, its involvement in the policy execution is insufficient. More is expected from AIKA in initiating legislative changes, for example, regarding the quality management of joint, interdisciplinary programmes or issues related to the degrees awarded. It would be necessary to assess certain legislative norms to determine whether they facilitate the development of higher education institutions, and if not, to drive changes. It would be helpful to gain a deeper insight into the best practices of assessment agencies, especially those working with highly prestigious universities.*
- *Best practice examples should be provided to inspire the growth of domestic higher education institutions. For instance, in the areas of internationalisation and digitalisation, AIKA should be more proactive in promoting these through its activities and development. As for the assessment procedures, experts should focus as much as possible on providing conceptual recommendations and advice, particularly related to the industry.*
- *Regular maintenance of the quality of the European Higher Education Area and the professional activities of higher education institutions. The ability to reduce stagnation and inertia in university thinking regarding knowledge transfer and research.*

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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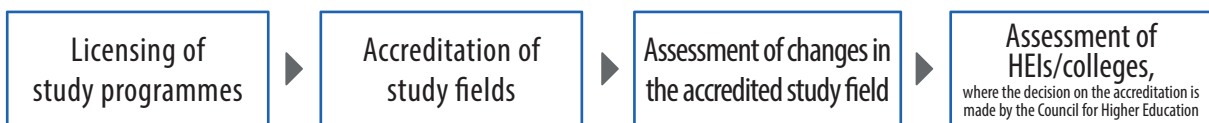
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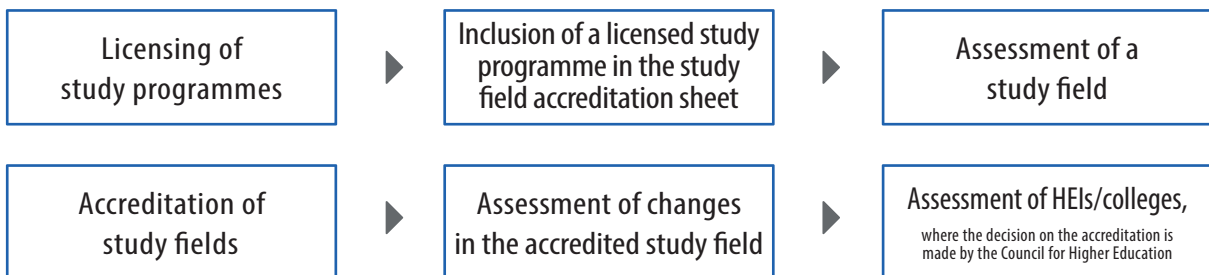
To conduct the external quality assessment of higher education in Latvia and facilitate the improvement of systems for internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, study fields, and study programmes.

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT

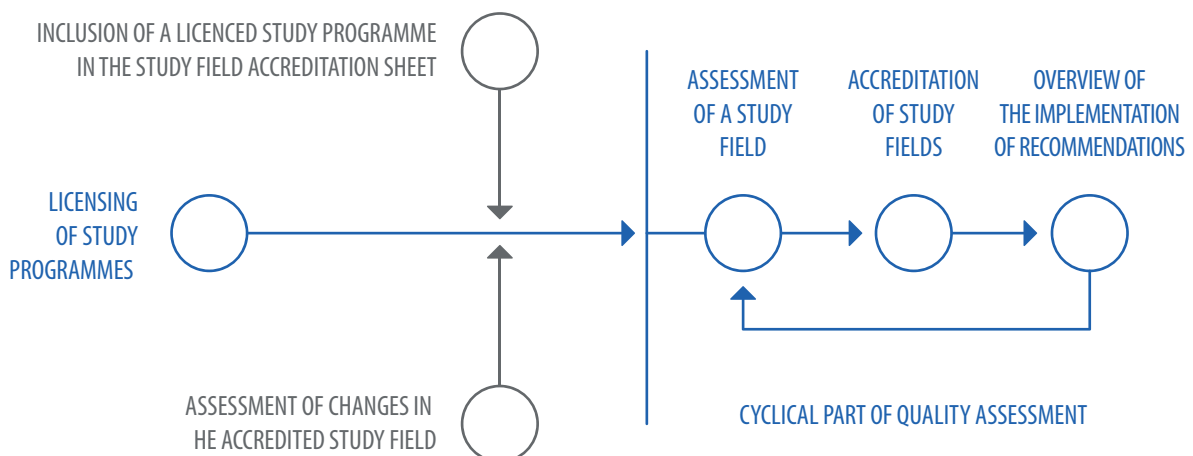
In 2015, upon commencing the operation, the Agency established the following external quality assessment procedures:



Upon reviewing the regulatory framework, the procedures implemented by the Agency were restructured, with separate evaluation of study programmes and accreditation, as well as the introduction of a new procedure – inclusion of a licensed study programme in the study field accreditation sheet. Since 1 January 2019, the Agency has been implementing the following procedures:



## EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES SCHEME





## STRATEGIC GOAL

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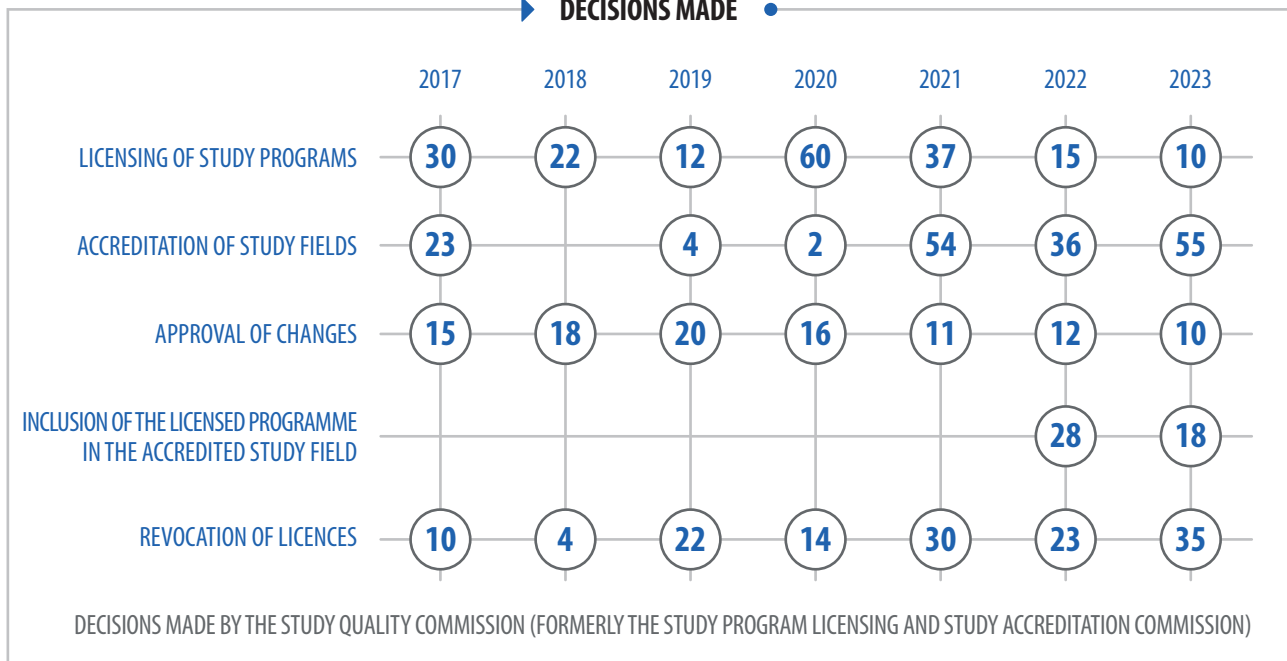
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### ▶ DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURE •

Since 1 April 2019, for all procedures implemented by the Agency, excluding the assessment of HEIs/colleges, the decision-making falls within the competence of the Study Quality Commission (formerly the Study Programme Licensing Commission and the Study Accreditation Commission).

### ▶ DECISIONS MADE •



### ▶ ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONS •

From 2017 to 2022, the Agency has also organised the assessment of one higher education institution (HOTEL SCHOOL Hotel Management College).

### ▶ PROCEDURE-RELATED CHALLENGES •

Assessment procedures were performed in accordance with the methodologies and guidelines for HEIs/colleges and experts, as approved by the Agency. During the reporting period, the frequent changes in external regulatory framework and the restrictions related to COVID-19 presented challenges, which required changes to be made to the methodologies and guidelines within a short period of time.

### ▶ KEY FUNCTIONS FOR THE COLLABORATION PARTNERS •

When evaluating the Agency's activities during the 2017–2022 period, collaboration partners have recognised the accreditation of HEIs/colleges and study fields, as well as the licensing of study programmes, as the most important functions of the Agency for their organisation.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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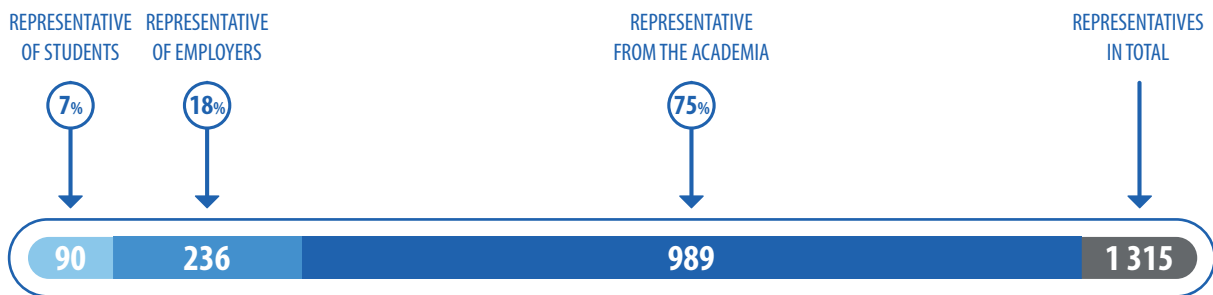
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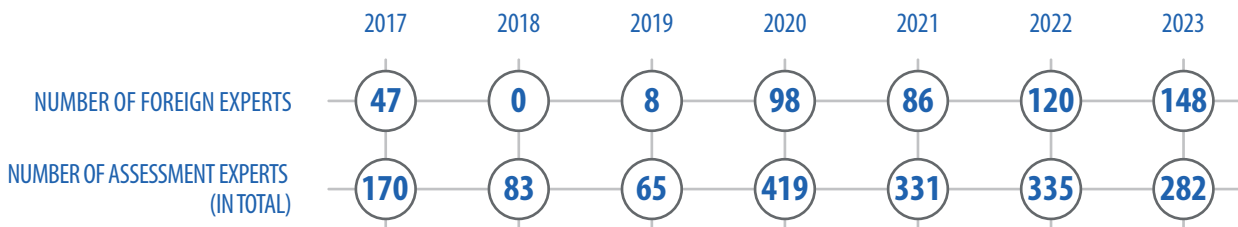
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## EXPERTS DATABASE

The Agency has created a database with experts from the academia and the community of employers and students. The database includes information from the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (AIKNC) and the Ministry of Education and Science, as well as a significant number of new experts. The database primarily contains information about academic experts from Latvia and abroad. However, it also includes details on the experts from the community of employers and students involved in the assessment of study fields.



## DYNAMICS OF EXPERTS INVOLVED IN THE PROCEDURES



## SELECTION AND TRAINING OF EXPERTS

Information on experts is compiled on an e-platform for ensuring the accreditation and licensing process, which offers a continuous opportunity for new experts to apply. The selection of experts for assessment procedures follows the established Criteria and Principles for Expert Selection. In order to ensure a high level of expert competence, the Agency provides **training for experts** both before each assessment procedure and regularly during the academic year.

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EXPERT TRAINING AND SEMINARS



# STRATEGIC GOAL

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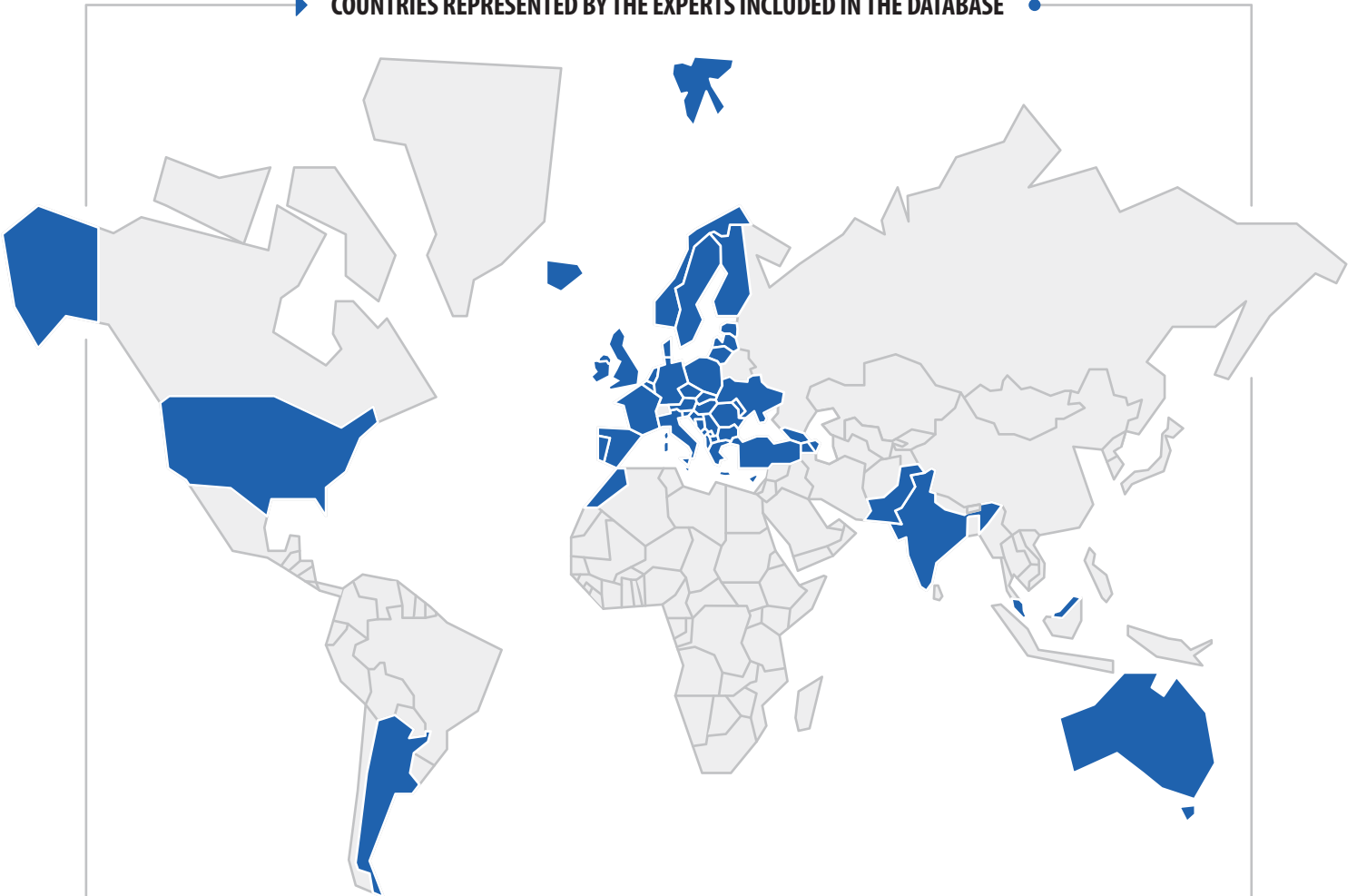
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▶ COUNTRIES REPRESENTED BY THE EXPERTS INCLUDED IN THE DATABASE •



COUNTRY	NUMBER	COUNTRY	NUMBER	COUNTRY	NUMBER
LATVIA	478	SPAIN	12	SLOVAKIA	4
CROATIA	79	BELGIUM	10	SWEDEN	4
ROMANIA	76	TURKEY	10	USA	3
ITALY	71	MALTA	9	ARMENIA	2
LITHUANIA	64	NETHERLANDS	9	AZERBAIJAN	2
CYPRUS	54	IRELAND	8	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	2
ESTONIA	40	KOSOVO	8	BULGARIA	2
SLOVENIA	36	PORTUGAL	7	INDIA	2
UK	34	UKRAINE	7	MONTENEGRO	2
GEORGIA	32	NORTH MACEDONIA	7	MOLDOVA	2
ALBANIA	20	AUSTRIA	6	ARGENTINA	1
FINLAND	19	NORWAY	6	AUSTRALIA	1
CZECH REPUBLIC	18	SERBIA	6	ICELAND	1
GREECE	17	HUNGARY	6	MALAYSIA	1
POLAND	16	DENMARK	4	MOROCCO	1
GERMANY	14	FRANCE	4	PAKISTAN	1

## STRATEGIC GOAL

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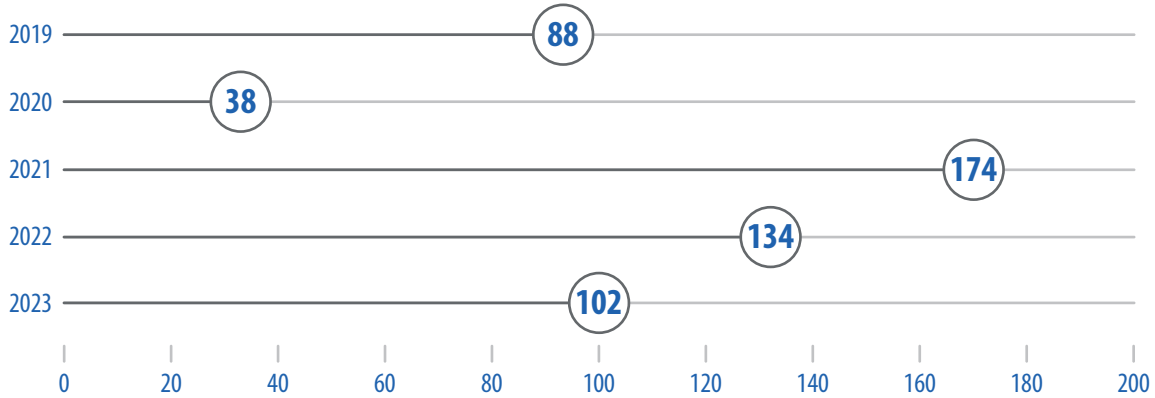
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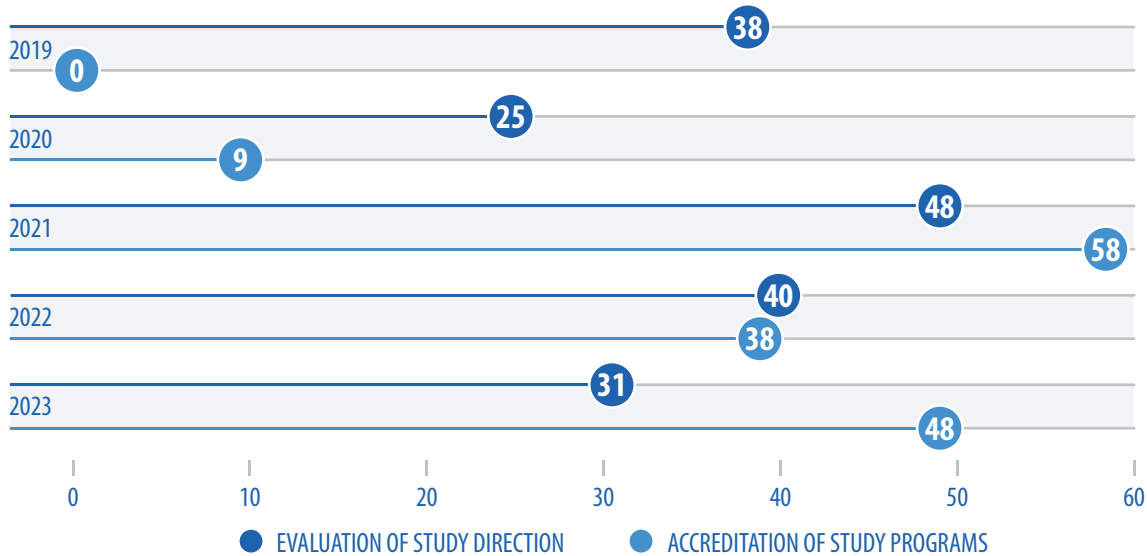
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### E-PLATFORM

The e-platform for ensuring the accreditation and licensing process was launched in 2019. By the end of 2023, the e-platform had 536 registered users from HEIs/colleges.



Between 2017 and 2023, 182 procedures for the assessment of study fields and 153 procedures for the accreditation of study fields were submitted on the e-platform.



### FEEDBACK

**Feedback** from HEIs/colleges and experts is collected following the assessment procedures and is **taken into account for improving the procedures**. The received recommendations and areas for improvement have also been summarised in the [Agency's publications](#).

### ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Assessment follow-up activities are an essential element of the assessment procedures. Since 2019, the Agency has been working on thematic analysis for each assessed study field.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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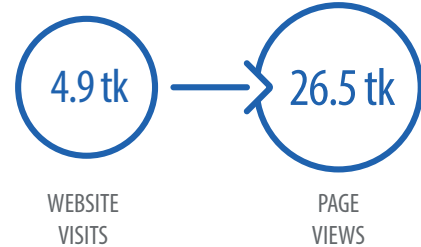
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## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The Agency maintains the following communication channels on a daily basis: the Agency's website [www.aika.lv](http://www.aika.lv), the e-platform for ensuring the accreditation of study fields and the licensing of study programmes at <https://eplatforma.aika.lv/>, the Agency's section on the AIC website, and Agency's YouTube account: [@augstakasizglitiba860](https://www.youtube.com/@augstakasizglitiba860).



HOME

CONTACTS

INFORMATION ON SESSIONS OF THE STUDY QUALITY COMMISSION

INTERNAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS

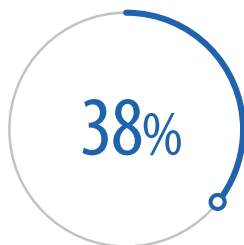
MOST VIEWED PAGES

ATHE RENEWED AIKA'S WEBSITE [WWW.AIKA.LV](http://WWW.AIKA.LV) WAS LAUNCHED IN 2019

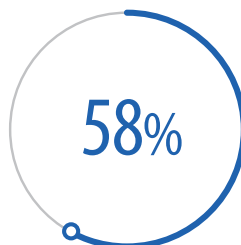
## PUBLIC INFORMATION

Since 2019, the Agency's **e-platform for ensuring the accreditation of study fields and the licensing of study programmes** contains all up-to-date information on the accreditation status of HEIs/colleges, study fields, and study programmes, with this information also duplicated in the State Education Information System.

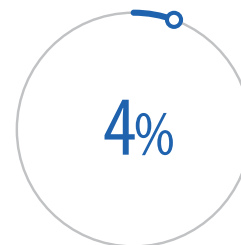
## ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT



THE GOAL HAS BEEN FULLY ACHIEVED



THE GOAL HAS RATHER BEEN ACHIEVED



THE GOAL HAS RATHER NOT BEEN ACHIEVED

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS

## COMMENTS FROM COLLABORATION PARTNERS

- **What is your organisation's view of the role of AIKA in the improvement of internal quality assurance systems of HEIs?**
- *AIKA plays a significant role. After the recent seminar, we started reorganising our quality assurance system (QAS).*
- *AIKA ensures the external assessment of quality assurance systems established by the institution, offering both short-term and long-term recommendations for quality improvement.*
- *Without the work done by AIKA, changes would likely be very minimal, if any. The role of AIKA is of particular importance.*
- *The Agency has significantly raised the HEI's awareness of ESG and the adaptation of its internal processes.*
- *AIKA plays an important role, as during the external assessment, AIKA facilitates the improvement of the internal quality assurance system and its compliance with the established requirements.*
- *The Agency's role is both supportive and motivating.*

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## COLLABORATION PARTNERS

In order for the Agency to be able to fulfil its functions, it collaborates with the Student Union of Latvia, the Employers' Confederation of Latvia, the Council for Higher Education, the Council of Rectors, the Latvian Association of Colleges, the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Latvia, the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Latvian Council of Science, the State Education Quality Service, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Latvia, various certification institutions, the Ministry of Health, and international collaboration partners.

### COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



Augstākās izglītības padome

[www.aip.lv](http://www.aip.lv)

### STATE EDUCATION QUALITY SERVICE



Izglītības kvalitātes valsts dienests

[www.ikvd.gov.lv](http://www.ikvd.gov.lv)

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE



Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija

[www.izm.gov.lv](http://www.izm.gov.lv)

### FREE TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION OF LATVIA



[www.lbas.lv](http://www.lbas.lv)

### EMPLOYERS' CONFEDERATION OF LATVIA



[www.lddk.lv](http://www.lddk.lv)

### TRADE UNION OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE WORKERS OF LATVIA



[www.lizda.lv](http://www.lizda.lv)

### LATVIAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES



[www.kolasoc.lv](http://www.kolasoc.lv)

### STUDENT UNION OF LATVIA



[www.lsa.lv](http://www.lsa.lv)

### THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF LATVIA



[www.chamber.lv](http://www.chamber.lv)

### LATVIAN COUNCIL OF SCIENCE



Latvijas Zinātnes padome

[www.lzp.gov.lv](http://www.lzp.gov.lv)

### COUNCIL OF RECTORS



REKTORU PADOME

[www.rektorupadome.lv](http://www.rektorupadome.lv)

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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To ensure the financial sustainability of the Agency for the implementation of its mission in the appropriate quality and in accordance with the adopted values.

## FUNDING

The Agency has been operating, based on three sources of funding:

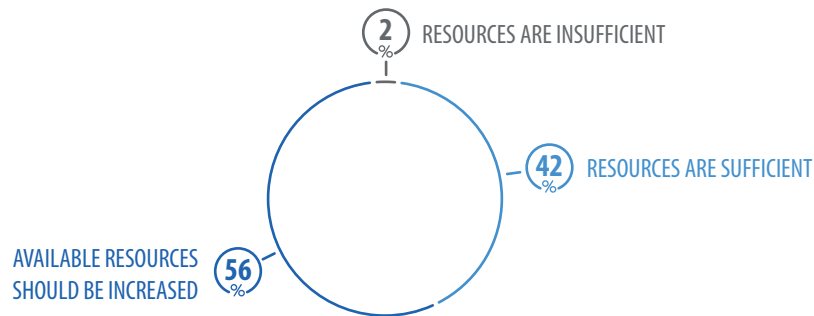
Government grant

Fee for assessment procedures outlined in the Agency's price list

Collaboration projects

The government grant and the fee for assessment procedures account for the largest portion of the Agency's budget, covering its operational expenses, while additional project funding allows for increasing staff capacity and deepening the Agency's areas of operation.

## EVALUATION OF FUNDING



Based on the feedback provided by the collaboration partners, more than half of the respondents (58.54%) believe that the available resources, in proportion to the functions carried out by the Agency, should be increased and/or are insufficient.

■ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS ■

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING

During the reporting period, the Agency has secured additional funding within the framework of several projects. The most significant support in increasing the Agency's capacity was provided by the European Social Fund co-financed project "Support for the Fulfilment of EQAR Agency Requirements", which was implemented from 2016 to 2019.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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## COLLABORATION PROJECTS

During the reporting period, the Agency participated as a partner in the implementation of 6 international projects.

2016 - 2018

LINKING ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (LIREQA)

LIREQA

2018 - 2020

SUPPORT IN STRENGTHENING THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AZERBAIJAN (TWINNING PROJETS)



2019 - 2021

DEVELOPING A EUROPEAN APPROACH FOR COMPREHENSIVE QUALITY ASSURANCE OF (EUROPEAN) UNIVERSITY NETWORKS (EUNIQ)



2020 - 2022

ENHANCING THE COVERAGE AND CONNECTIVITY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EHEA THROUGH DEQAR (DEQAR CONNECT)

DEQAR

2020 - 2022

MICROCREDENTIALS LINKED TO BOLOGNA KEY COMMITMENTS (MICROBOL)



2020 - 2022

ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT (ROADMAP)

ROADMAP

## ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

26%

THE GOAL HAS BEEN FULLY ACHIEVED

74%

THE GOAL HAS RATHER BEEN ACHIEVED

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS

## COMMENTS FROM COLLABORATION PARTNERS

- **How does your organisation assess the sufficiency of AIKA's resources for performing its designated functions? If the answer is "The available resources should be increased" or "Resources are insufficient", please provide a comment.**
- *Under intense assessment conditions, it would be necessary to increase the human resources involved in the assessment process.*
- *It is currently apparent that AIKA would benefit from additional resources. At this point, the high level of activity at AIKA appears to rely on the enthusiasm and willingness of its employees to work.*
- *The Agency's workload is very high, considering the number of programmes and the requirements that must be met when organising the assessment and accreditation process. In order for AIKA to remain objective and continue its operations with quality, additional funding for the Agency's activities needs to be sought by the State. It is unacceptable that the sessions of the Study Quality Commission take place only once a month, or even less frequently.*



# STRATEGIC GOAL

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To serve as the competence centre for quality assurance in higher education in Latvia and promote the international visibility and recognition of higher education of Latvia.

## ► ORGANISED SEMINARS •

During the reporting period, the Agency has organised several seminars, with topics chosen based on current issues during the specific period. According to the feedback provided by the participants, special focus was placed on ensuring that the seminars included the perspective of policymakers, best practice examples from Latvian HEIs/colleges, and international partners.

As the global situation evolved, the Agency offered seminars and training sessions in both face-to-face and online formats, using different technological tools.

2017

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 200

- "PILOT ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT SEMINAR";
- "TRENDS IN STUDY PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT";
- "HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY MONITORING AND E-PLATFORM CONCEPT".

2018

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 311

- "THE IMPORTANCE OF POST-EVALUATION ACTIVITIES IN THE PROCESS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION";
- "DIRECTIONS OF CHANGE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA";
- "THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS IN ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION";
- "ADVANCEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS OF ACADEMIC STAFF: CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCE".

2019

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 219

- "ON NEW QUALITY ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES AND E-PLATFORM FOR ENSURING THE ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING PROCESS";
- "ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN LATVIA – OPPORTUNITIES AND PREREQUISITES";
- "SEMINAR/DISCUSSION ON QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION TO CREATE A QUALITY ASSESSMENT MODEL WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS THAT IS AIMING TOWARDS EFFECTIVE QUALITY ASSURANCE WHILE REDUCING THE BUREAUCRACY BURDEN".

2020

ALL EMPLOYEES

COVID-19 AIKA EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN VARIOUS WEBINARS.

2021

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: ~47

- VEBINĀRS AUGSTSKOLĀM/KOLEDŽAĀM, "IESKATS PLĀNOTAJĀS IZMAIŅĀS AĢENTŪRAS METODIKĀ UN VADLĪNIJĀS";
- AUGSTSKOLU/ KOLEDŽU PĀRSTĀVJIEM ORGANIZĒTS VEBINĀRS, KURA IETVAROS PREZENTĒTI AĢENTŪRAS ANALĪTISKAJĀ ZIŅOJUMĀ "NOVĒRTĒŠANU ORGANIZĒŠANA COVID-19 LAIKĀ. IESAISTĪTO PUŠU SKATĪJUMS".

2022

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: ~56

- WEBINAR FOR HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES ON THE EVALUATION OF STUDY PROGRAMS;
- "ON GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT";
- "ON GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT".

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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## ▶ INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS •

Alongside its widely attended seminars, the Agency has offered individual consultations to representatives of HEIs/colleges and has actively participated in the seminars organised by HEIs/colleges by providing information on various aspects of quality assessment.

## ▶ ENHANCEMENT OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCE •

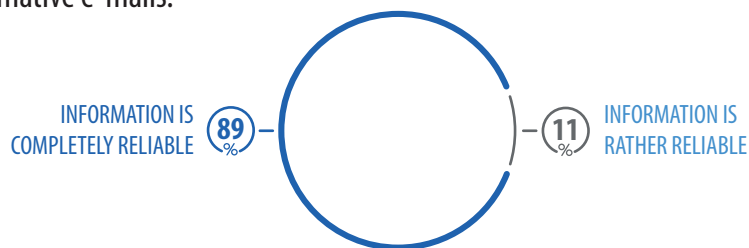
The Agency supports the enhancement of competence not only for the representatives of HEIs/colleges but also for the Agency's employees, regularly engaging in various activities both in Latvia and internationally, while also reviewing staff responsibilities.

During the reporting period, the Agency organised 7 competence enhancement seminars for the Agency's employees and/or the members of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Council and the Study Quality Commission, including 10 experience exchange visits to quality assurance agencies abroad.

The enhancement of employee competence also takes place on a regular basis by evaluating the feedback provided by the employees and individually tailoring professional development and motivation-enhancing activities.

## ▶ INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION •

More than 60% of the respondents frequently use procedure methodologies and guidelines, seminar materials, information on the Agency's planned events, and information that is publicly available on the e-platform. The most commonly used communication channels during the reporting period include the Agency's website and informative e-mails.

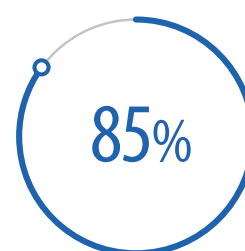


■ EVALUATION OF THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS ON THE RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION ■

## ▶ PUBLIC IMAGE •



THE AGENCY'S PUBLIC IMAGE IS GOOD OR RATHER GOOD



AGENCY'S VISIBILITY

■ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS ■

# STRATEGIC GOAL

1

2

3

4

5

## ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

33%

THE GOAL HAS BEEN FULLY ACHIEVED

67%

THE GOAL HAS RATHER BEEN ACHIEVED

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY'S COLLABORATION PARTNERS

## COMMENTS FROM COLLABORATION PARTNERS

- **Please provide your opinion as to whether the visibility needs to be strengthened and offer suggestions.**
- *AIKA is well-known in the higher education environment, so I am not sure whether its visibility should be strengthened in society, particularly among parents and prospective students. There are other sources of information serving that purpose.*
- *Work with the media – provision of comments about quality and monitoring of education. Inform the public about the quality of higher education.*
- *In the higher education environment, where the visibility of AIKA plays a crucial role, it is already visible. On a societal level, it should be evaluated whether it is necessary for AIKA to be visible.*
- *For some reason, the two abbreviations, AIKA and AIC, tend to get confused. It might be necessary to consistently highlight the distinction between them to make it completely understandable.*

# STRATEGIC GOAL

1

2

3






3

5

To promote the Agency's international collaboration and competitiveness by participating in the development of higher education assessment policies and fostering the quality assessment and improvement.

## ▶ PARTICIPATION IN AGENCY NETWORKS •

Upon commencing its activities, the Agency evaluated the range of active international organisations and deliberately became a member of several organisations. The Agency's participation in ENQA and registration in EQAR has been a priority, but its involvement in the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (CEENQA), and the CHEA International Quality Group has also played a significant role in its development.

2015	INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (INQAAHE)	
2016	CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (CEENQA)	
2017	EUROPEAN ACCREDITATION CONSORTIUM (ECA)	
2018	EUROPEAN NETWORK OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES (ENQA)	
2018	COUNCIL FOR ACCOUNTING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP (CIQG)	

Since the commencement of the operation, the Agency has been an active member of the Informal Baltic Quality Assurance Agencies Network (BQAA) and the Nordic Quality Assurance Agencies Network (NOQA).

A significant achievement during the reporting period was the election of the Agency's Director, Jolanta Silka, and her active participation in both the boards of CEENQA (2018–2022) and ENQA (2021–present), which ensures the Agency's representation at the international level and its awareness of and involvement in international developments.

During the reporting period, the Agency has signed a memorandum of cooperation with an agency whose support has been crucial in achieving the goals set out in the strategy – NAQA (Ukraine).

The formation and development of the Agency's image has been significantly influenced not only by participation in international networks but also by bilateral cooperation with other agencies, particularly with the neighbouring agencies EKKA (Estonia) and SKVC (Lithuania), as well as ASHE (Croatia), AQ Austria (Austria), AAQ (Switzerland), AE3S (Portugal), Unibasq (Spain), NOKUT (Norway), AI (Denmark), and SQAA (Slovenia).

## STRATEGIC GOAL

1

2

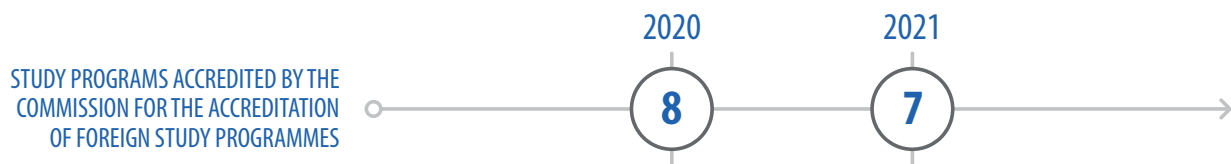
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3

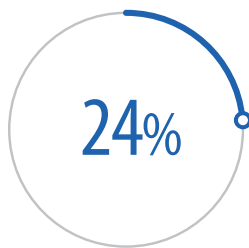
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### ▶ ACTIVITIES ABROAD •

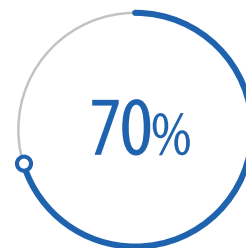
Upon commencing the implementation of the strategy, the Agency set as one of its goals to offer quality assessment procedures abroad as an EQAR-registered agency. During the reporting period, the Agency collaborated with the German agency ASIIN to conduct the assessment of the study field “Information Technology, Computer Engineering, Electronics, Telecommunications, Computer Management, and Computer Science” implemented at the University of Latvia. It also increased its visibility in Ukraine and Azerbaijan through participation in the piloting of study programme assessment methodologies and carried out 5 assessment procedures in Ukraine. To ensure the status of the Agency’s decisions, a Commission for the Accreditation of Foreign Study Programmes and corresponding regulations were established.



### ▶ ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT •



THE GOAL HAS BEEN FULLY ACHIEVED



THE GOAL HAS RATHER BEEN ACHIEVED

■ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG THE AGENCY’S COLLABORATION PARTNERS ■

### ▶ COMMENTS FROM COLLABORATION PARTNERS •

As for the Agency’s international activities, the surveyed collaboration partners reported that the most noticeable are the elected positions in international organisations, participation in international agency networks, and exchange of experiences with agencies from other countries. Meanwhile, the most significant activities for the long-term development of the Agency are considered to be participation in international agency networks, exchange of experiences with agencies from other countries, involvement in international projects, cooperation/ memorandum agreements with agencies from other countries, and work in international working groups.

### ▶ EXTENSION OF THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD •

In parallel, following an evaluation of the impact of COVID-19 on the strategy’s progress and the feedback from collaboration partners, it was determined that external circumstances made the complete execution of the planned activities impossible. Consequently, the strategy implementation period was extended until 2023.



Quality Agency for  
Higher Education

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