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“Presentation of needs and analysis report on Quality Assurance at the private higher education institutions in Albania and Kosova”

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“Strategic Support on Strengthening the Quality Assurance Structures at the Private Higher Education Institutions in
Albania”

Project number: 561510-EPP-1-2015-1-AT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Venue: **European University in Tirana**
Blv. "Gjergj Fishta", Nd 70, H1, Tirana, Albania

Objectives of the presentation

- To give an overview with regard to the EU current situation on internal quality assurance
- The aim of the report is to get an overview of the current situation at the private higher education institutions in Albania and Kosova with regard to quality assurance processes and mechanisms on:
 - Quality of teaching and learning
 - Quality of research and development
 - Quality of (student) services
 - Quality of management

Internal quality assurance in Europe according to TREND Report 2015

Figure 9: Does your institution have an institutional quality assurance policy and system? (Q5)

Institutional quality assurance policy and system

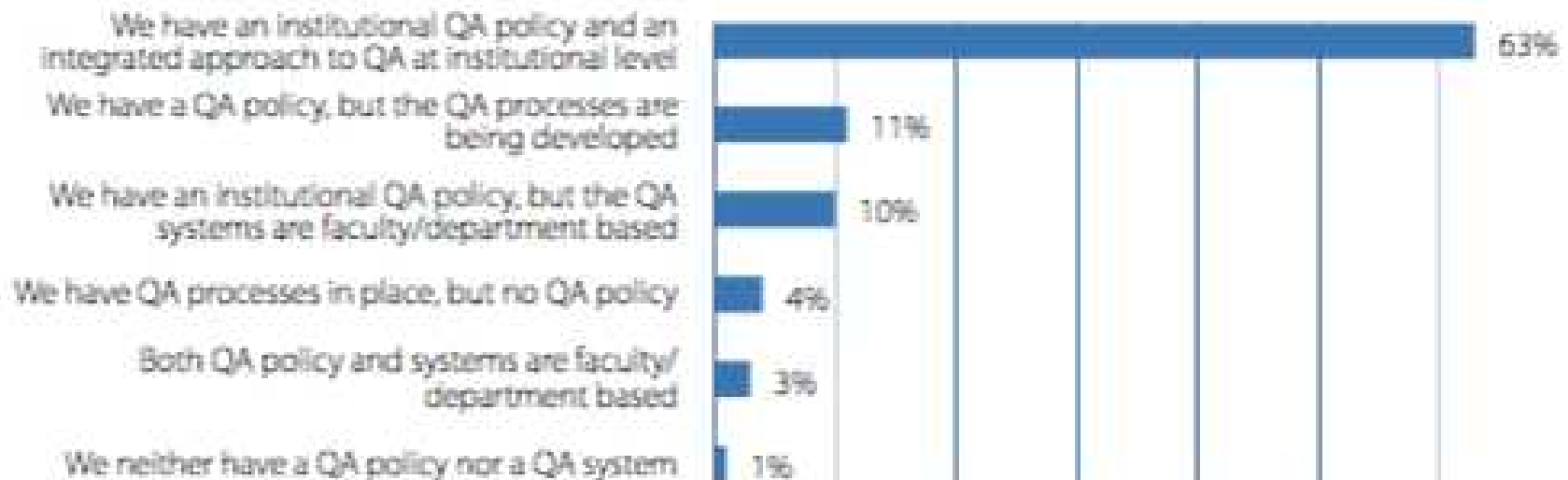


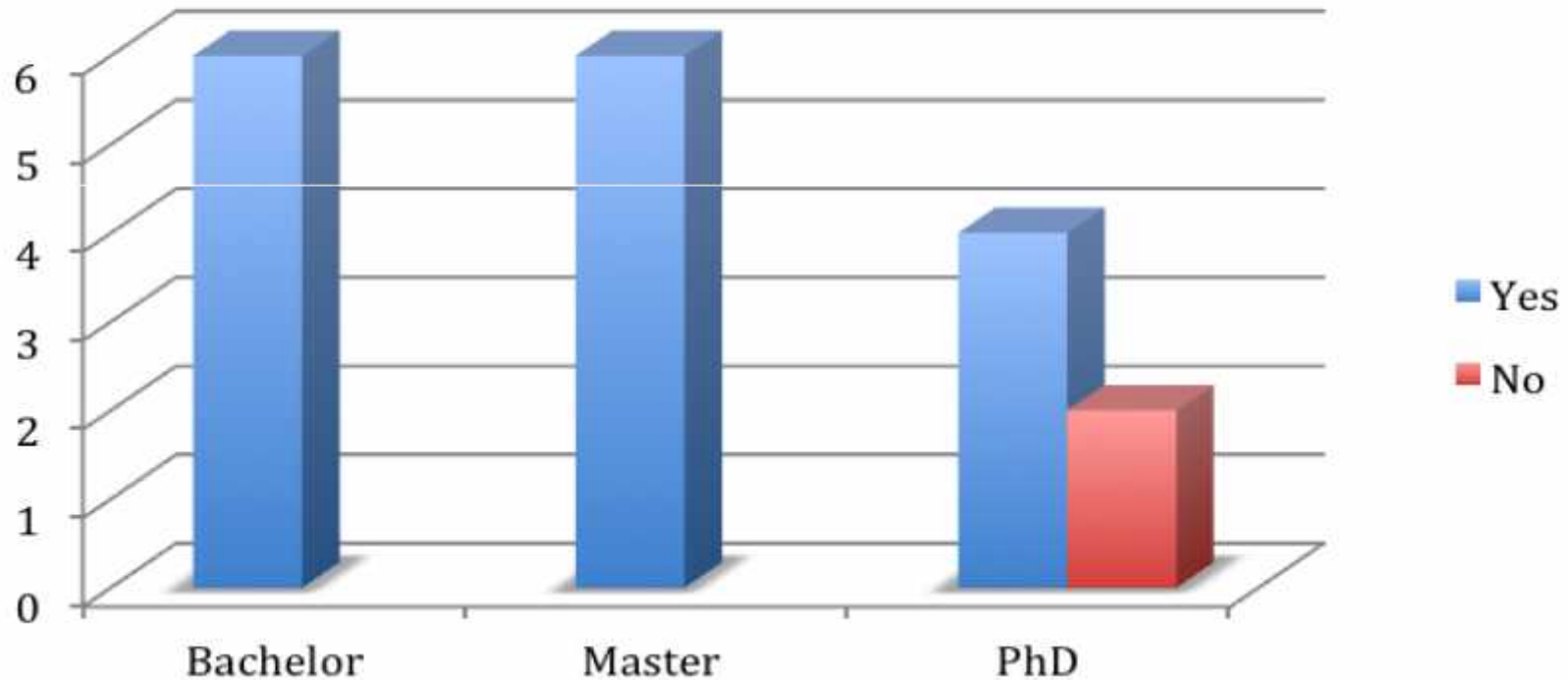
Table 2: Country data on institutions with an “institutional QA policy and an integrated approach to QA at institutional level” (Q51)

25%-49%	50%-74%	75%-100%
Czech Republic	Denmark	Austria
France	Germany	Belgium
Sweden	Greece	Finland
Turkey	Italy	Hungary
	Latvia	Ireland
	Netherlands	Lithuania
	Poland	Norway
	Portugal	Romania
	Russian Federation	Spain
	Slovakia	Switzerland
	Ukraine	United Kingdom

1. Quality of teaching and learning

How many curricula does your institution offer?

Levels of studies



- **Are these curricula structured according to the Bologna Process?**

In all of the institutions, the study programs are structured according to Bologna Process.

- **Are these curricula based on the requirements of the market? If yes, please comment on the procedures of stakeholder involvement!**

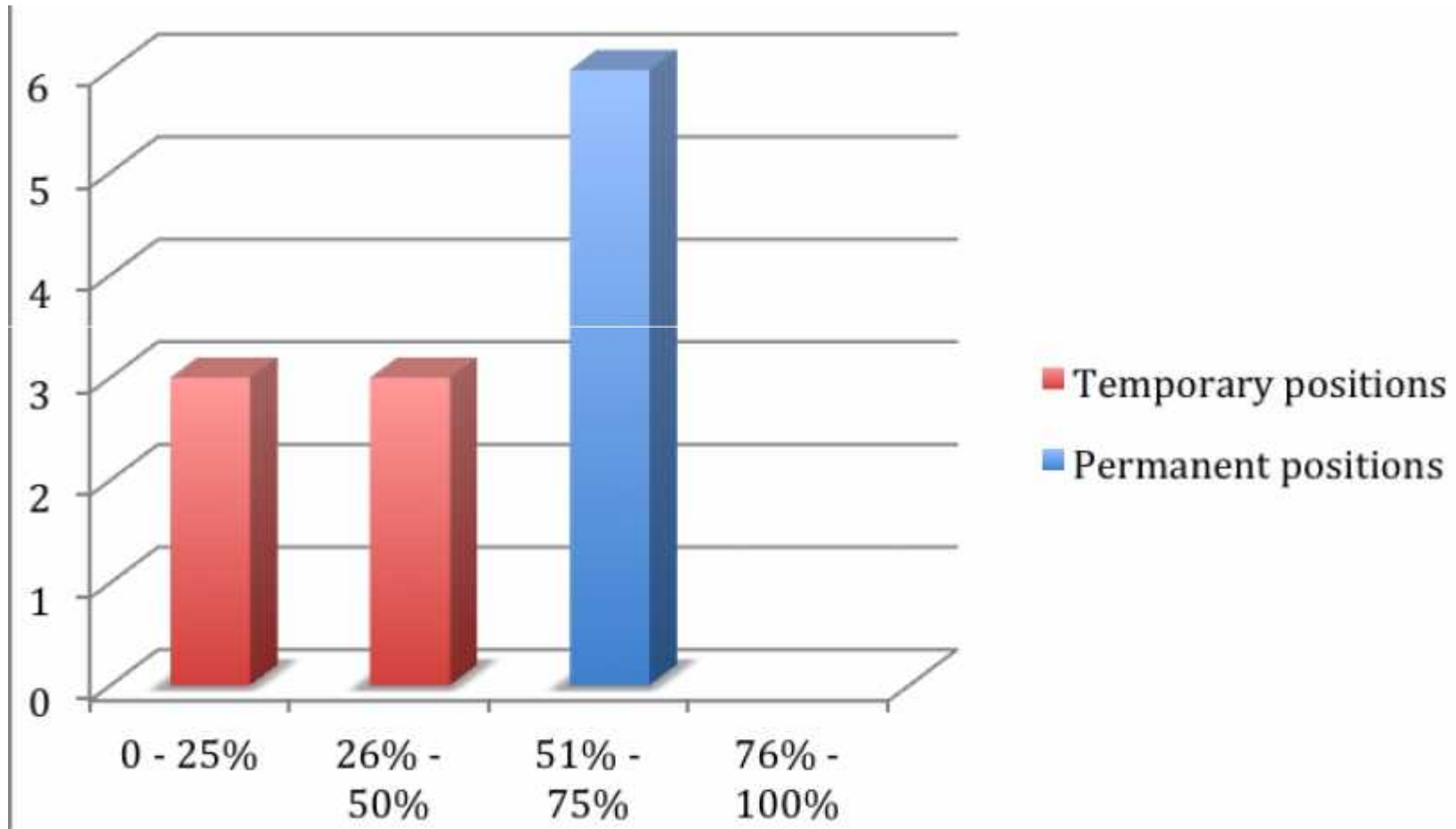
All of the institutions do carry out labour market research in different forms: via consultation with the main stakeholders, alumni interview, organization of focus groups etc.

Teaching personnel:

- **What are the criteria for recruitment of teaching personnel?**

Most of the institutions in the questionnaire have made more a general description of recruitment criteria on their staff.

Does your institution offer permanent or temporary positions? In case both applies, please comment on the percentage of permanent versus temporary positions!



Does your institution require Ph.D. title for professors and/or other categories of teaching personnel?

In all of the institutions for the category of Professor, PhD degree is required. Further, this issue is regulated with national laws in both countries. According to the profile of the course and study program, a lecturer can be also someone holding only Master degree.

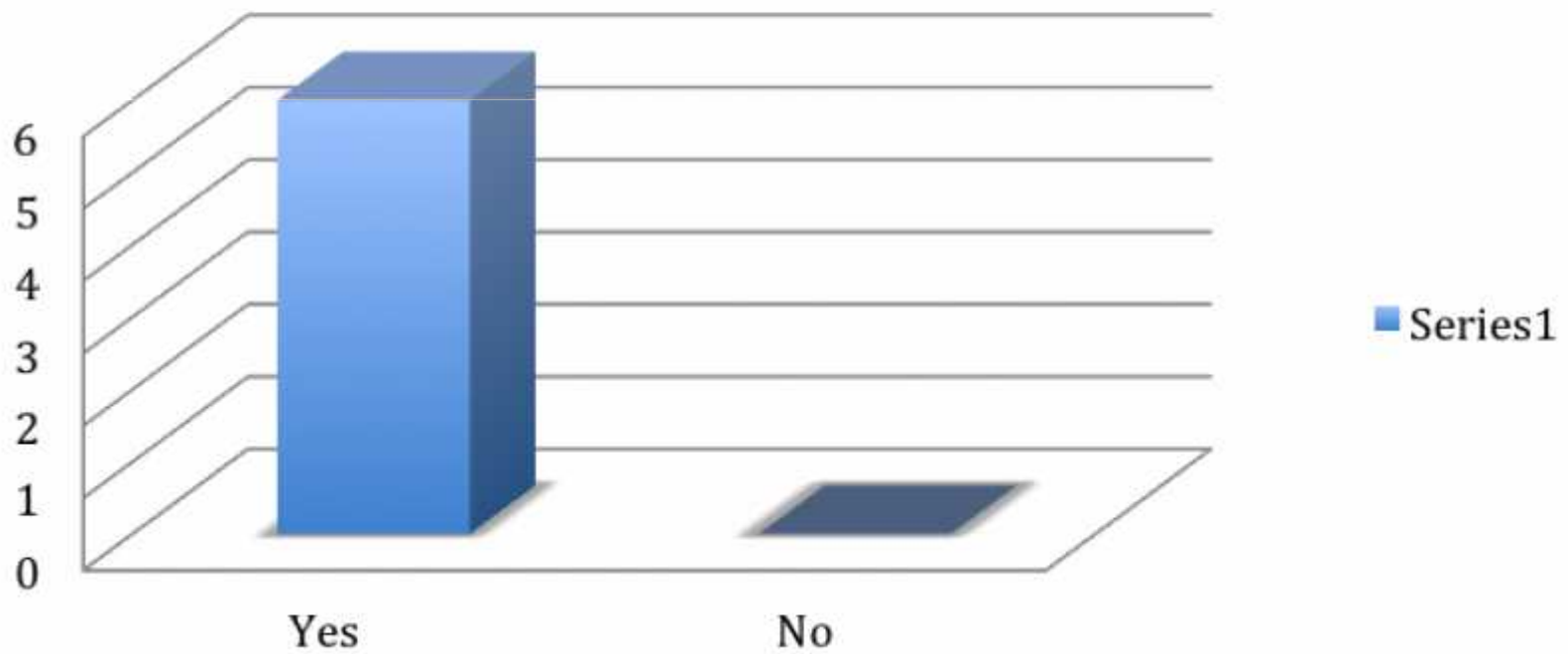
- **What are the selection criteria?**

Some of the selection criteria are in common for most of the institutions as:

- a. holding a PhD degree or PhD candidate (according to the specifics of the study program);*
- b. Teaching experience;*
- c. Publications in international peer-reviewed journals.*
- d. There are also some additional criteria which are in common only for some of the institutions*

Does your institution publicly advertise teaching appointments?

Public advertisement of teaching appointment



- **Does your institution negotiate target agreements with the teaching personnel?**

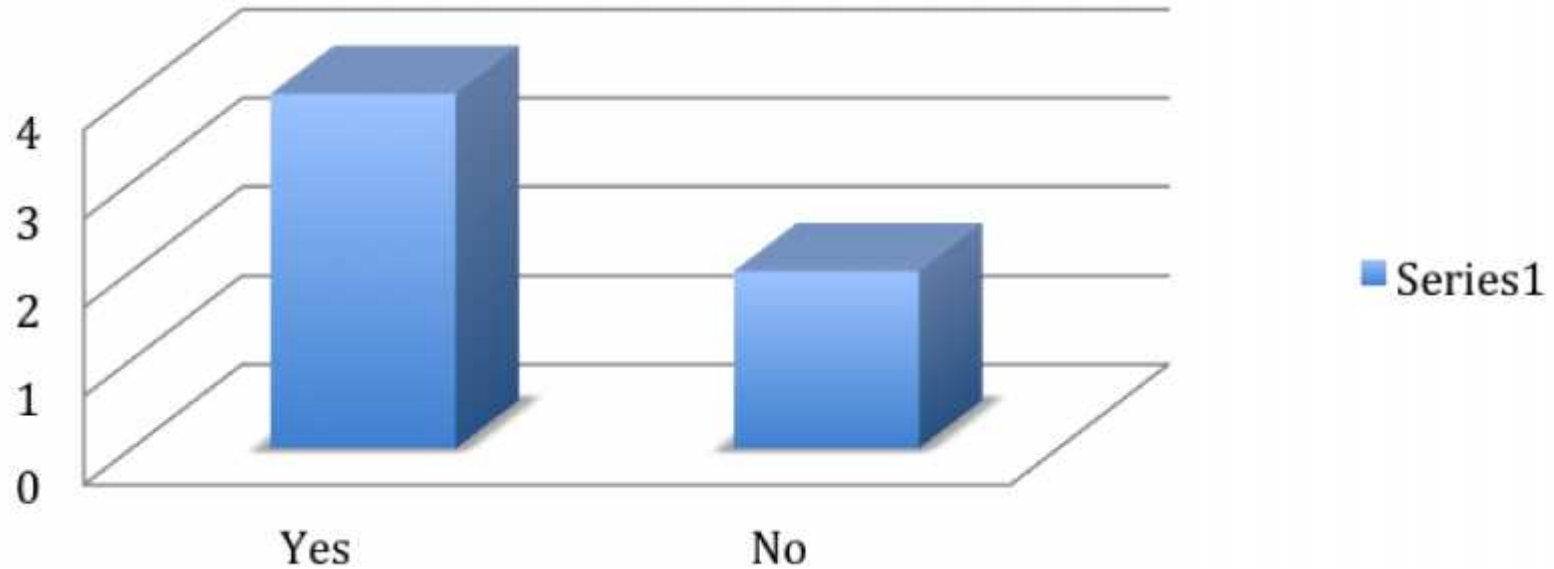
None of the institutions negotiates target agreement with their staff

- **By which means does your institution monitor the quality of teaching in relation to the educational objectives?**

Course evaluation filled out by the students is one of the most used tools to monitor the quality of teaching. Results are often processed via Quality Assurance unit/office and the feedback is forwarded to the relevant bodies Academic Committee, Management, Board for further steps

Does your institution offer awards for very good and/or innovative teaching?

Does your institution offer awards for very good and/or innovative teaching?



Does your institution enable/support/reinforce/request continuing scientific education of the teaching personnel?

All of the institutions apply policies to encourage the staff for continuing education by organizing different trainings and conferences from the institution for the purpose of capacity building;

- **Did your institution implement measures for gender mainstreaming?**

At most of the HEIs there are good examples of gender mainstreaming. It can be noticed that there are continuous efforts to first increase the percentage of female members among the academic staff, where according to the percentage presented still male gender prevails.

Students

- **What are the requirements for student enrolment?**

Diploma that certifies successful completion of the secondary school as set by national laws (passing the Matura Exam); Entrance Test. In some of the cases also the interview is applied.

- **Are students actively involved in teaching evaluations? How are they involved?**

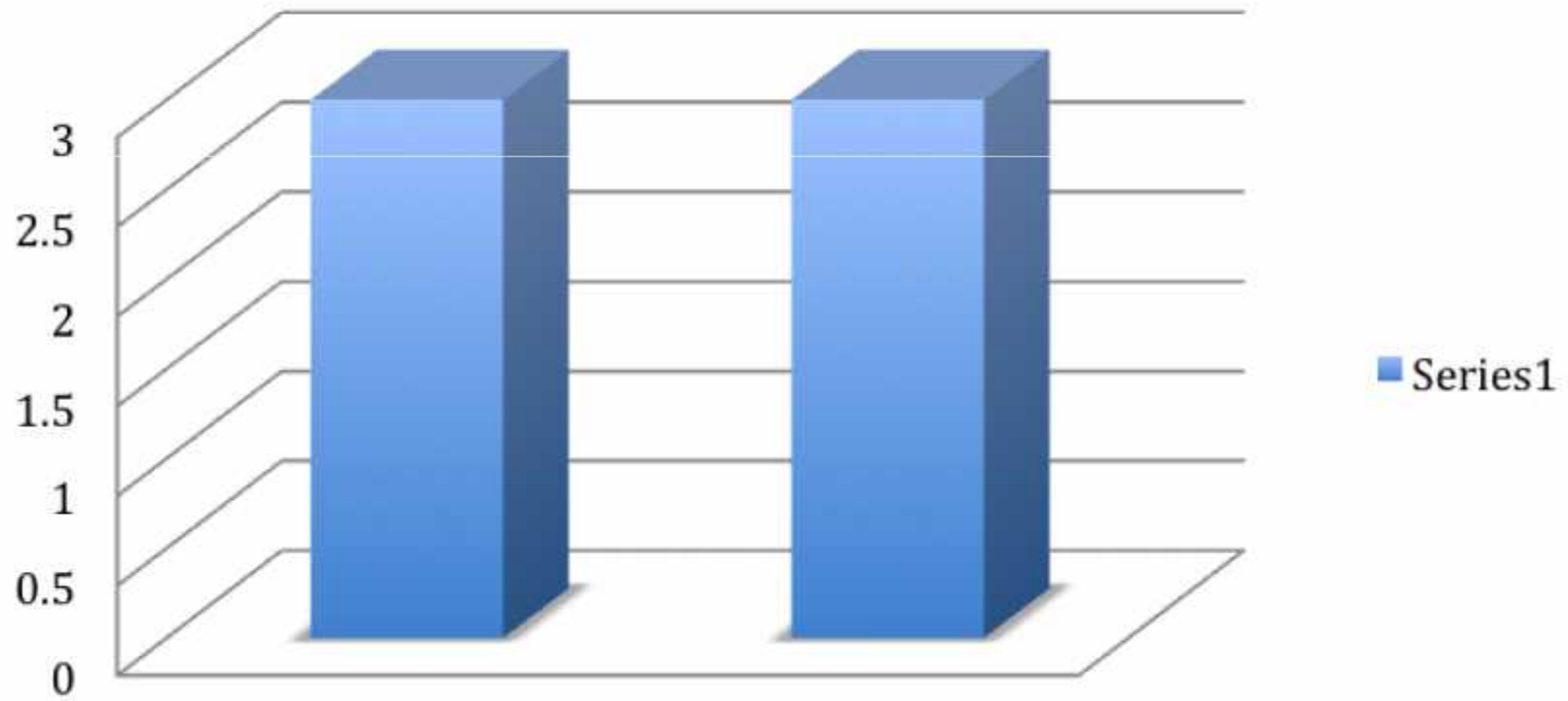
Mostly students participate in teaching evaluation via filling out a questionnaire, focus groups part of the Internal Quality Assurance unit.

- **Does your institution offer additional qualifications to enhance competitiveness nationally and internationally? If yes, which ones?**

All of the institutions considers the international cooperation as one of the most important ways to enhance the national and international competitiveness. One of the institutions offers internationally recognized certifications in the field of IT (CISCO, MS and ORACLE).

Does your institution offer joint study programmes with international higher education institutions?

JOINT study programmes



- **What services are provided for the students – IT services, international office, access to scientific literature, career center or others?**

Most of the institutions offer access to its students to the following services: IT services, international office access to scientific literature, career centre and other types of services.

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- **To what extent does your institution offer e-learning courses?**

For the time being none of the institutions offer e-Learning courses.

- **How many of the initially enrolled students of a given curriculum graduate? How high is the drop-out rate?**

According to the data provided from 50% - 65% of the students graduate within the normal length of study program, whereas drop – out rate varies from 10% - 20% across different institutions.

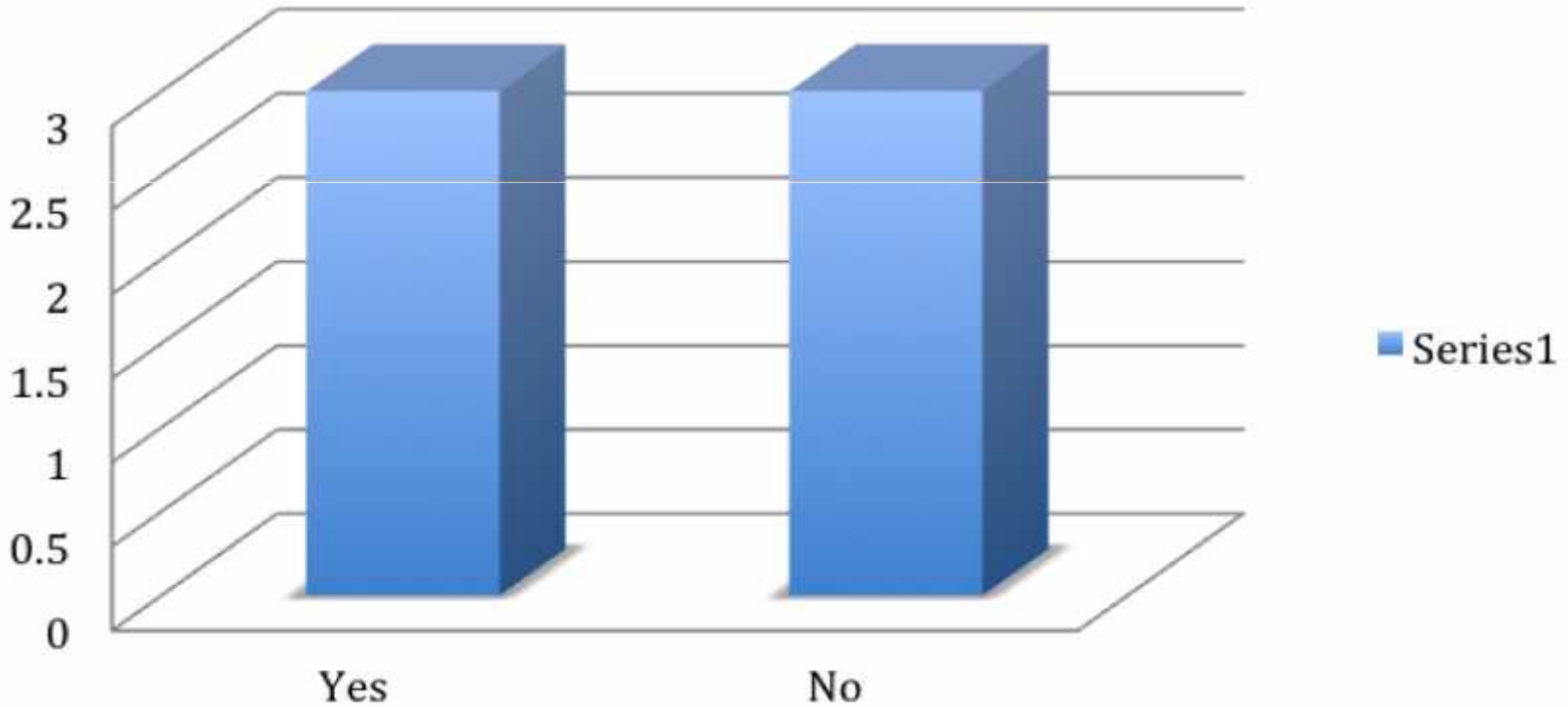
- **Is the drop-out rate depending on particular curricula?**

For most of the institutions the drop-out rate is not linked to a specific curricula, with exemption of one HEI that states that the drop-out rate is higher in the study programs in the field of engineering and architecture and lower in the field of business and economics.

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Does your institution have a graduate survey system allowing a feed-back for improvement of the curricula based on the success of your graduates at the labour market?

Graduate Survey System



- **How does your institution keep contact with the graduates?**

Most of the institutions keep contact with their graduates through Alumni Office, while only one HEI keeps such contact through Quality Assurance Office.

- **Does your institution provide curricula not accredited by the National Accreditation agencies? If yes, please specify the degree(s) obtained upon graduation!**

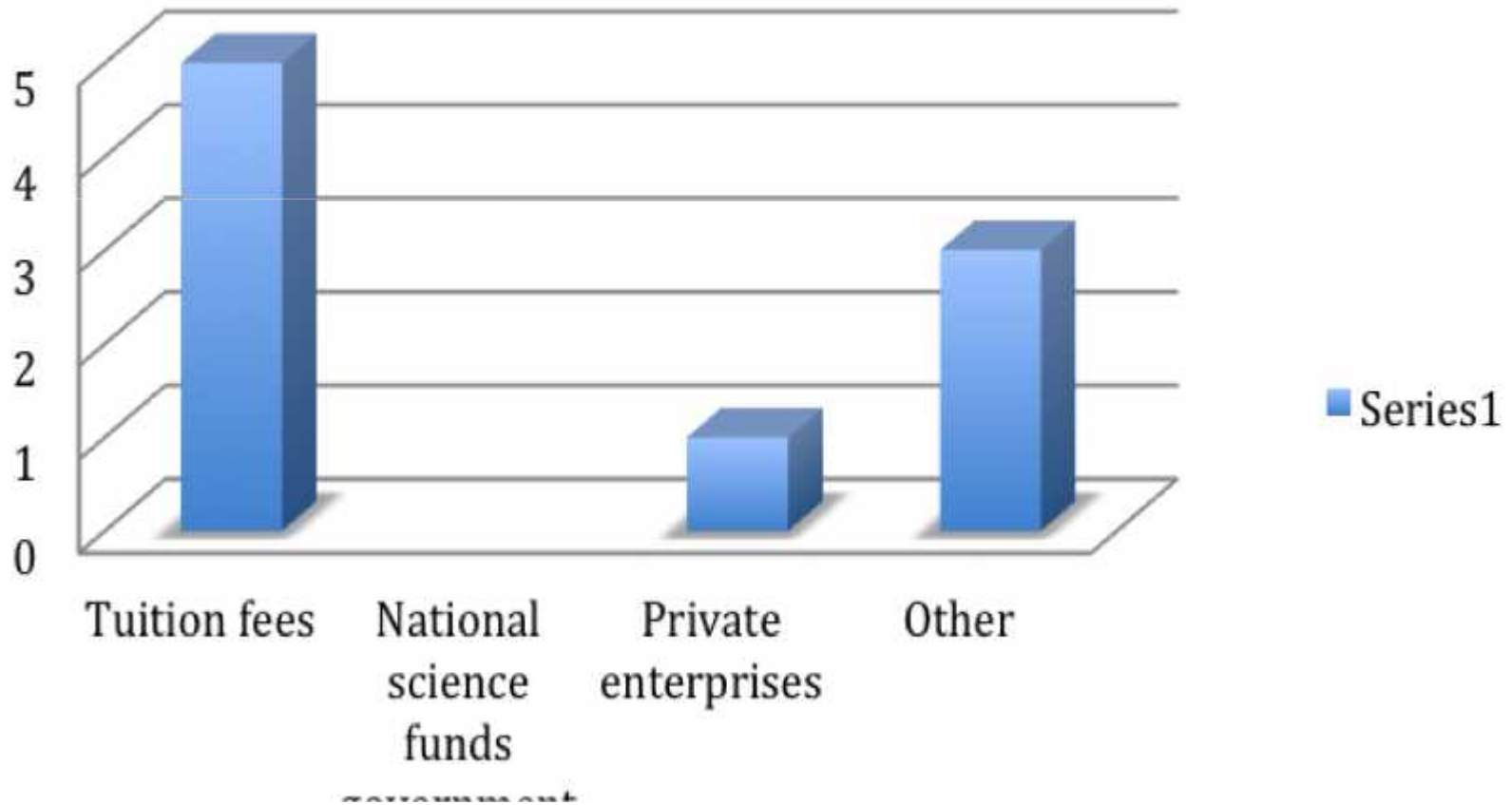
None of the institutions offers study programs, which are not accredited.

Quality of research and development

All of the project partners beneficiaries state that are research institutions, as

well

Finance of research activities



- **How does your institution provide access to international scientific literature (libraries and scientific databases)?**

All of the institutions ensures access to different online databases for its staff and students (EBSCO, Questia, Jstor, Cambridge Journals Online, IOPscience, New England Journal of Medicine, OECD-i Library, Taylor & Francis Library, Scopus); Library which contain books in English and Albanian languages as per their fields of studies. Some of the institutions also engages its staff to translate some relevant books from English to Albanian.

- **Please describe your research infrastructure!**

All of the institutions (except one) their research infrastructure depends largely in the fields of studies that they offer. For example one of the institutions possesses three laboratories civil engineering, electronics engineering and computer engineering; research institutes/centres are more common in the surveyed HEIs. These research centers posses access to different literature, and are supported by its staff and PhD students.

- **Is your institution involved in national and/or international research projects/programs?**

The five institutions participate in the international research projects.

- **Are the research achievements of your institution published – nationally, internationally?**

The main focus of all of the institutions is to publish their research results in internationally recognized journals. All the staff is engaged actively to seek the opportunities to publish internationally, while the HEI are also engaged in organization and participation in national conferences, publication of working paper series and their own journals.

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- **By which measures does your institution support research? Please describe!**

The budget of all HEIs support support in some or all of the following activities: a. Participation in internally-financed research projects; b. participation in international scientific conferences, symposiums and other scientific meetings; c. publication of scientific papers in an international scientific journal (listed in Thomson Reuters, Web of Science); d. publication of scientific papers in other international or national scientific journals.

- **By which means does your institution evaluate research at a regular basis – Peer review, benchmarking or other?**

Peer review and benchmarking are tools applied only by some of the HEIs.

- **Is budget allocation within your institution depending on the evaluation outcome?**

*Actually, none of the institutions apply a practise of budget allocation based on research outcomes. **The EU project partners can further share this practice.***

- *Does your institution adhere to quality standards such as GLP (good laboratory practise), GCP (good clinical practise) or other? If yes, which ones?*

Quality standards such as: GLP, GCP and other types of standards can be further presented in the workshops, study visits and other events by the EU project partners.

- **Does your institution adhere to good scientific practice rules, i.e. how do you prevent fraud and/or plagiarism?**

All of the institutions have clear written rules, which are transparent to its staff and students in order to comply with good scientific practice rules. By considering that fraud and plagiarism remains one the main challenges for all of the HEIs, some of the surveyed have also a plagiarism software.

Quality of student support services

- **Which services are provided by your institution? Please describe!**

Some of the services offered by the HEIs include (but not limited to): Career and Alumni Office; Student Union; Student Union Clubs; Counselling Centre; Academic Support Centre; International and Exchange Students Office; Mathematics Centre; Library; Writing Centre ; IT support; Coordination Office.

- **By which means does your institution evaluate these services – questionnaires, external review or other?**

The five HEIs evaluate the services via questionnaires, whereas only one through

- **Are there process optimization procedures applied?**

The answers are not very clear. Optimization processes should be shared in the workshop, study visits and events.

- **Are there measures of continuing training – courses the personnel has to attend for improvement, etc.?**

The staff is supported in all the cases to attend specific trainings to improve their skills, which would directly result in the enhancement of their daily work. A special attention is given to the staff, who have not received any training.

Quality of management

- **Is there a permanent management, Rector (or equivalent) and management board (or equivalent) or is it elected for a certain period?**

Only two HEIs have given a clear answer whether the governing bodies are permanent or elected for a certain period of time. The question has to be repeated.

- **Does your institution have an external advisory board? If yes, are there international members in the board?**

The 3 HEIs do have external advisory board, 2 of them do not have, while one of the institutions has not provided a clear answer.

- **Does your institution have an external supervisory board? If yes, are there international members in the board?**

Only one of the institutions do have an external supervisory board.

- **From which occupational areas are the members of the boards recruited?**

From business community, civil society, professors, media.

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- **Is the management subject of evaluation? If yes, describe how!**

In all of the institutions the management is subject of evaluation.

- **Does the management release a development plan?**

All of the HEIs release a development plan.

Quality Assurance Office

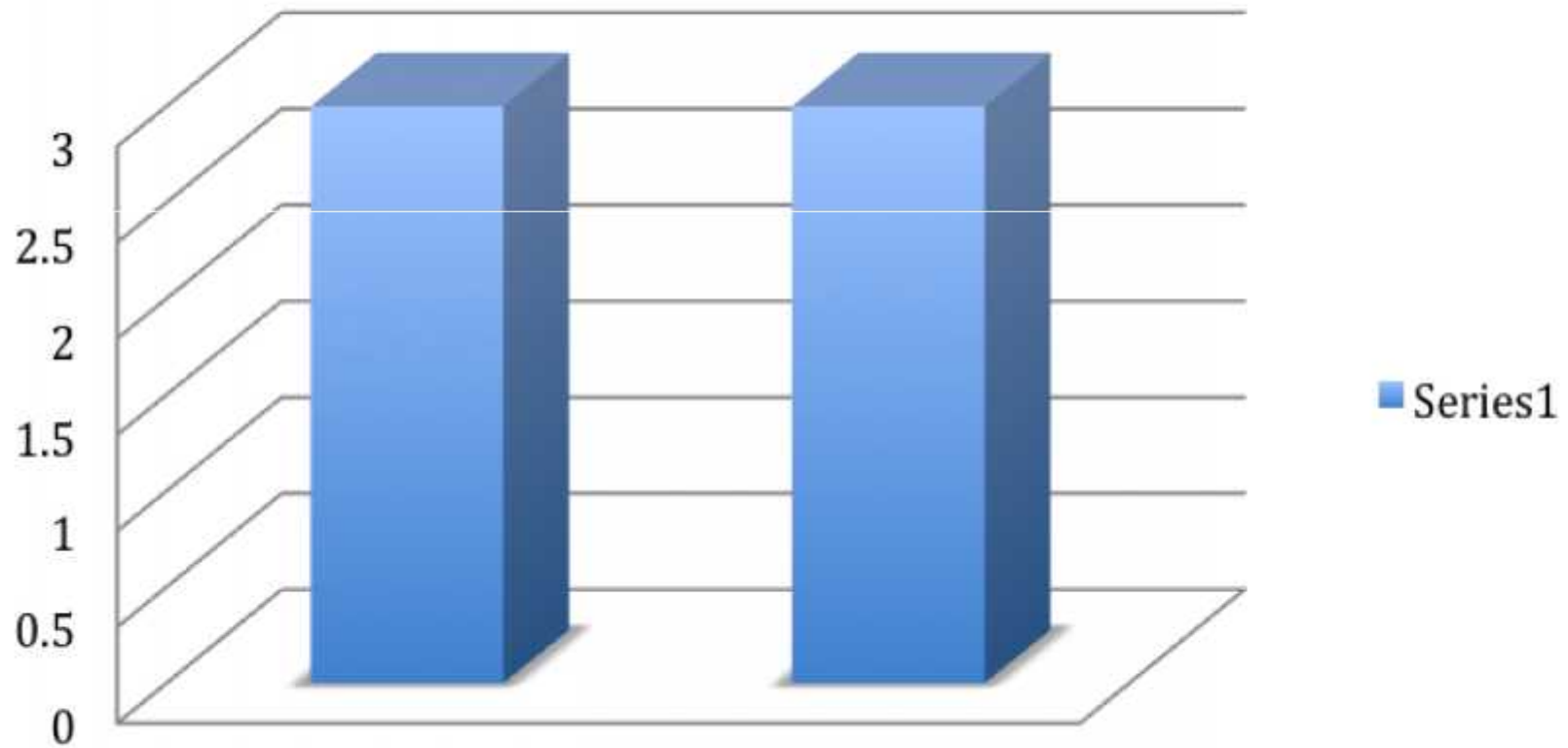
- **Did your institution establish a quality assurance office? If yes, specify the number of employees working there and the quality assurance measures the office is responsible for!**

*According, to the data processed the following terms have been used for quality assurance office: Quality Assurance Unit (3 HEIs); Quality Assurance Office (2 HEIs); Internal Evaluation Unit (1 HEI). **The used terms need to be further elaborated by the HEIs in the upcoming needs and analysis for the QA Office.** Most of the institutions specify the role of the QA office, but still more general description prevails instead of more specific task description*

- **Is there a requirement for additional training? If yes, please specify!**
All of the institutions do express the need for trainings in different fields.

Did the personnel in the quality assurance office receive any training? If yes, please specify!

Training of the QA office



- Thank you for your attention!