



# European Students' Union

## European Quality Assurance Forum

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Student Experts' Pool



# Biographical note

- BA in Psychology; MA studies in Educational Management
- Present: MA Clinical Psychology & BA in International Affairs
- ESU pool for students experts on QA, member 2009- present
- EUA IEP experts' pool, member 2009- present
- ANOSR Academic Affairs Commission, member 2008-2010

# Content

- ESUs' involvement in QA
- QUEST
- Why this study?
- How we've done it?
- What we've learnt?
  - Students & QA Policy Discussions
  - Students & Accreditation Processes
  - Students & Internal QA
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  - Students & QAA governance
  - Students & QA – general picture
- Good practices of student involvement in QA
- Conclusions and discussions

# ESUs' Involvement in QA (1)

In designing and promoting the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG).

Has performed in 2008 the first QA agency audit (ARACIS) entirely carried out by a student review panel.

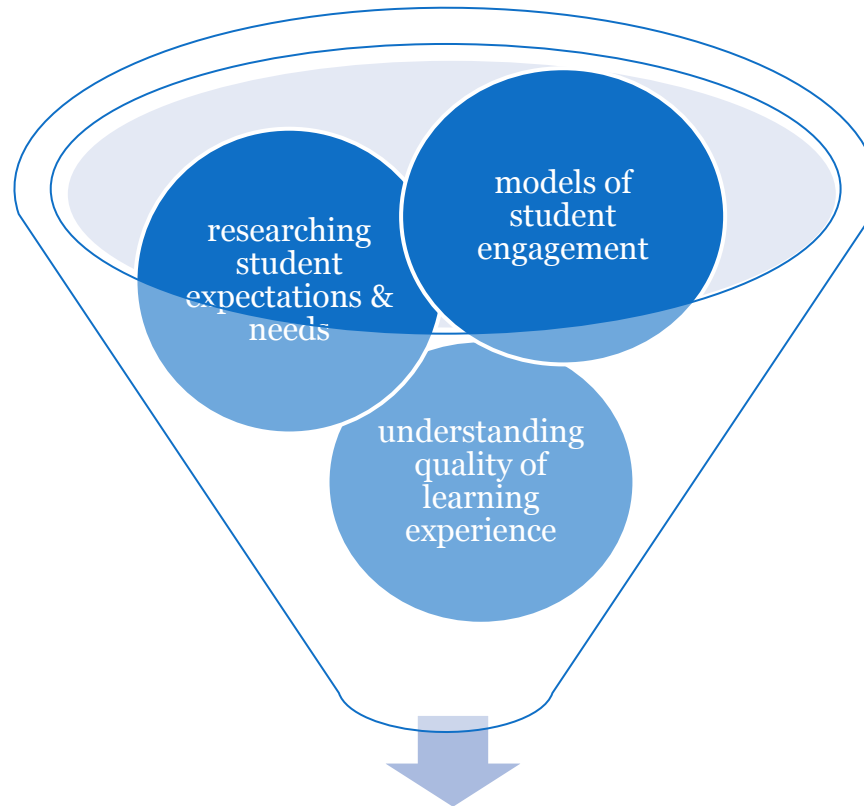
Has been involved in the revision of UNESCO/ OECD guidelines for quality provision in cross-border higher education (2005).

Overview of QA implementation in the BP → BWSE and BAFL.



# ESUs' Involvement in QA (2)

- EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)
- ENQA quality assurance agencies' evaluations
- Institutional evaluations organized by national quality assurance agencies
- LLP funded project 2009-2012 Quest for Quality for Students
- LLP funded common project of E4 (MAP- ESG)



**QUALITY CONCEPT**

# Why this study?

- *students are full partners in HE governance*  
(Berlin Communiqué of 2003 European Ministers of Education)
- Track students input in QA
- Genuine Quality Culture – inclusion and full participation of all stakeholders of HE
- Benefits brought by students
  - Learner perspective
  - Largest stakeholder
  - Interest
  - Overall development
  - Relevance and role of QA

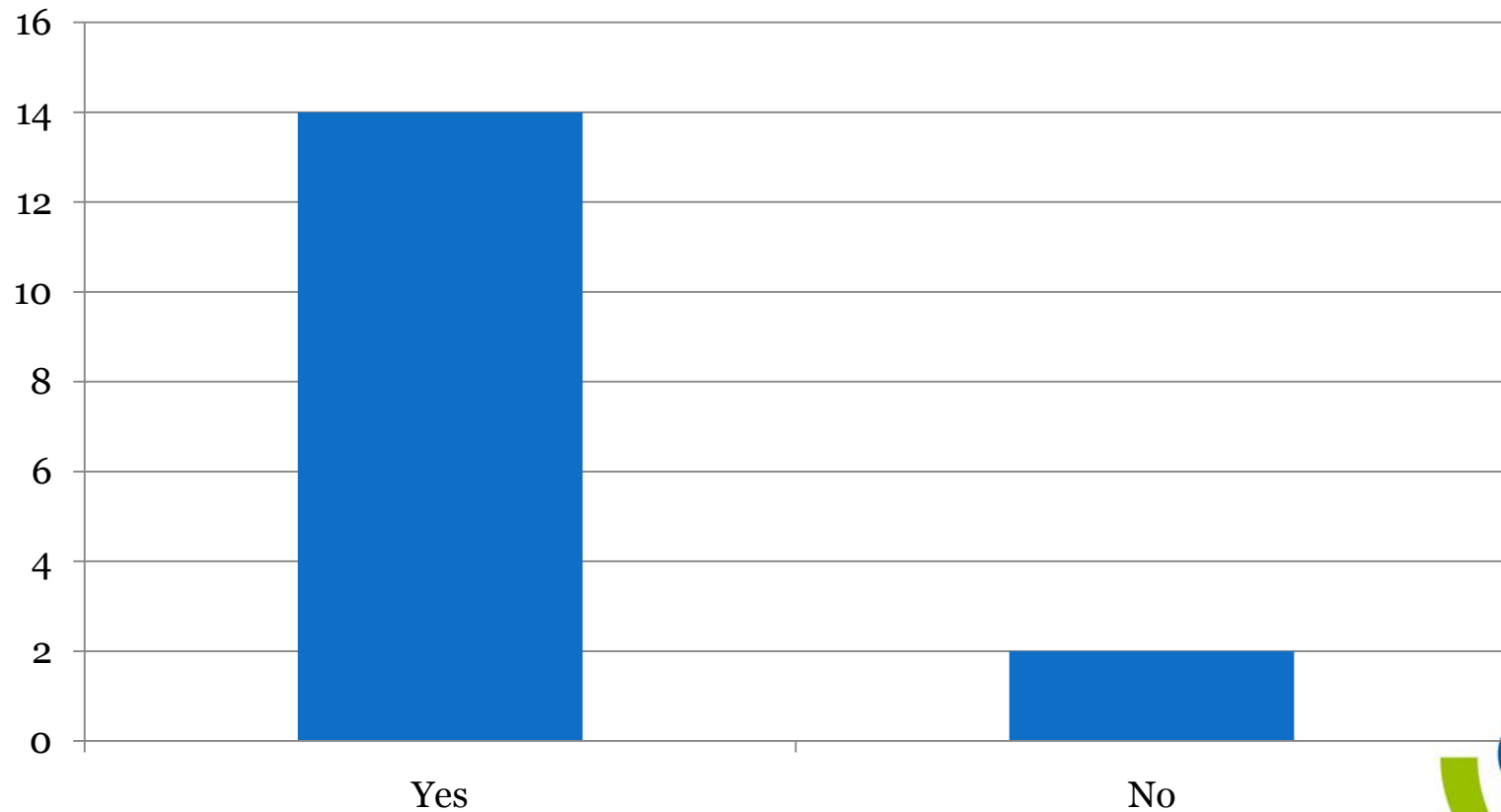
# Methodology

- mapping exercise - QUEST Wsh 1 *Students Representatives Empowerment on QA in HE* (Edinburgh between 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July 2011)
- Instrument: questionnaire (14 q.)
- Participants: students 16 European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK -Scotland)





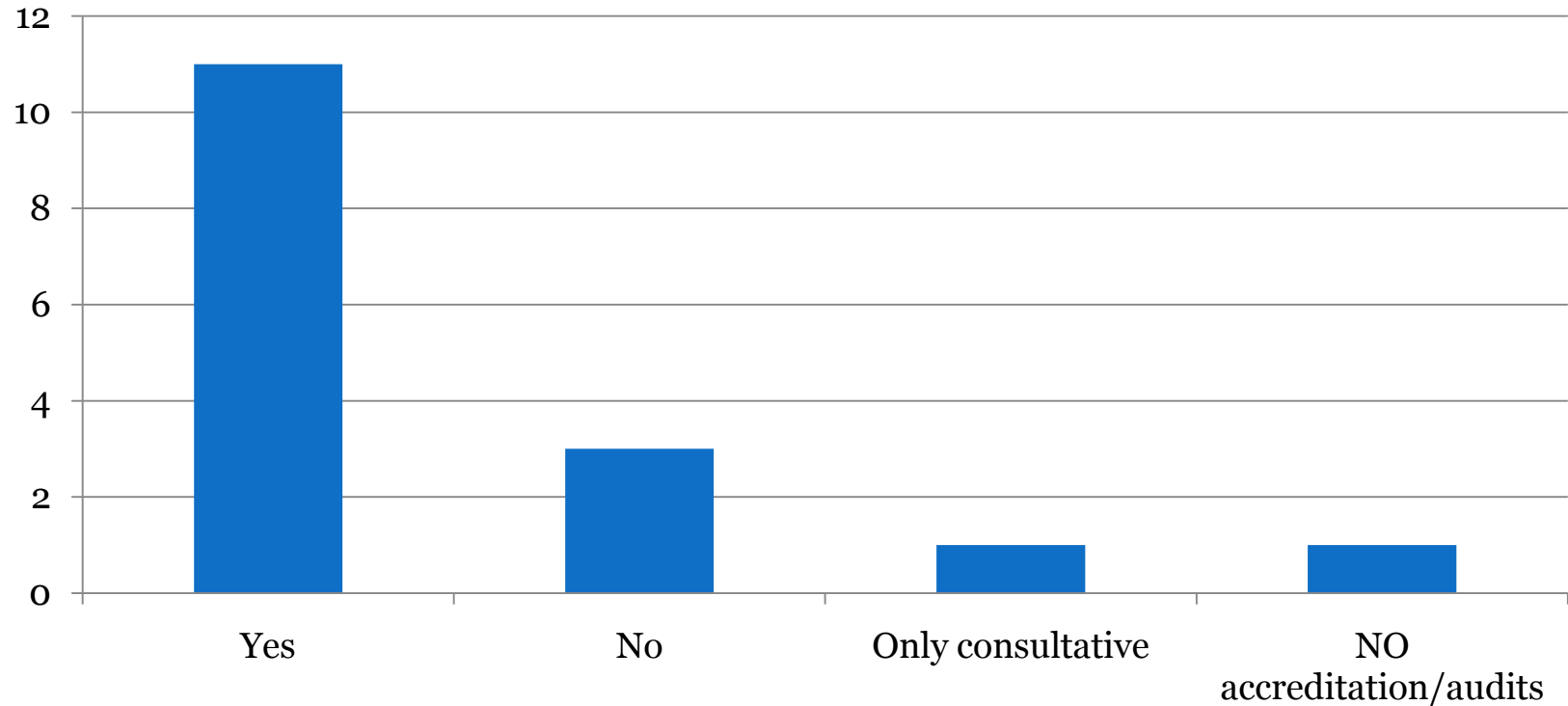
# Students & QA Policy Discussions



# Main findings – Policy-making involvement

- Formal involvement vs. Genuine involvement
- Levels of involvement
- Disproportionality between national & local involvement (Slovenia)
- Student training for QA policy discussions (Bulgaria)
- sometimes completely left out of discussions (Italy & Switzerland) ,whilst in other countries, students are very well involved in QA policy discussion (Latvia, Romania, Finland).
- by law student involvement in policy discussions at almost all levels (Sweden).

# Students & accreditation/audit decisions



# Main findings- Accreditation/audit decisions

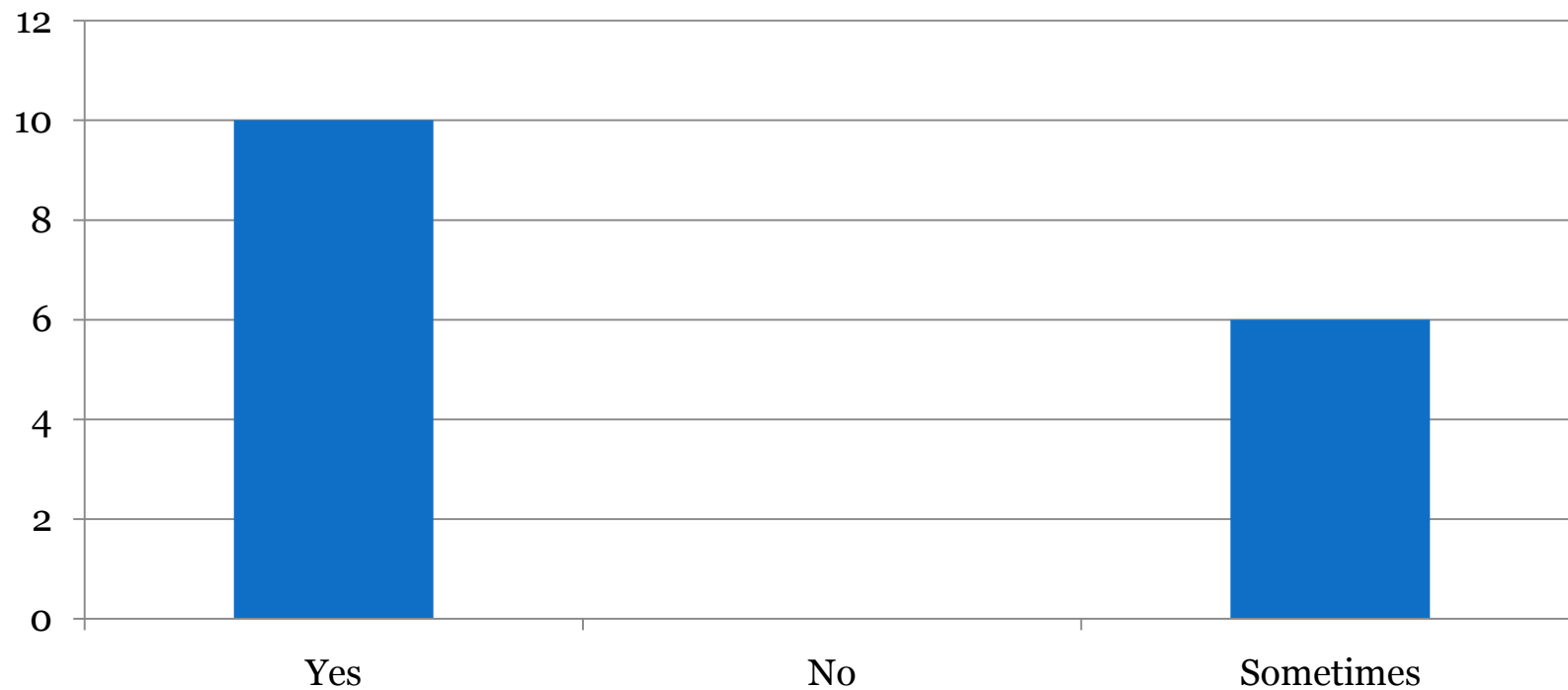
Degrees of involvement:

- No involvement (Romania, Malta, Switzerland, Portugal, Sweden )
- Poor involvement (Italy, Bulgaria)
- Consultative role (Czech Republic)
- Full members, with voting right (Macedonia, Slovenia, Lithuania, UK, Latvia, Finland, Spain, Germany)

*! Student involvement in programme accreditation/audits/evaluations was always higher than involvement in institutional accreditation/audits/evaluations*



# Students & Internal QA



# Main findings - Internal QA

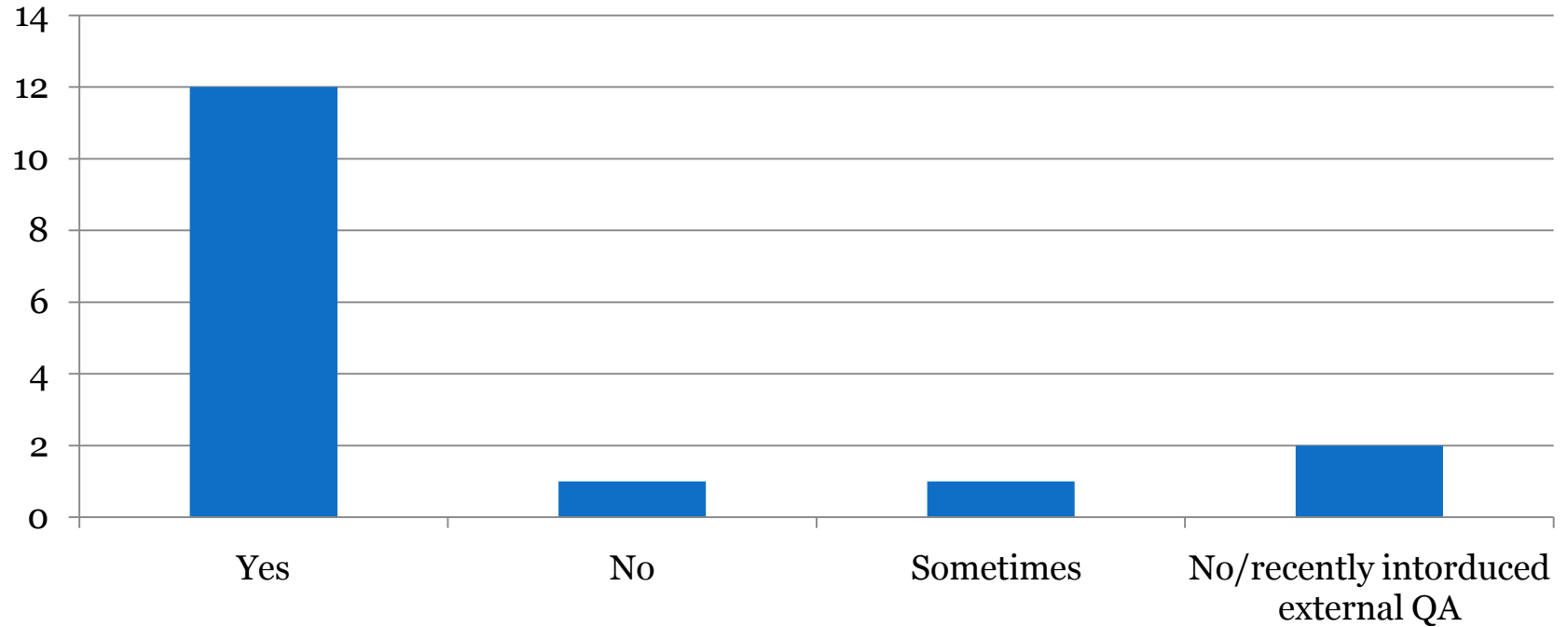
*! 63% of students said that they were involved in internal QA whereas 37% said that they were only involved sometimes.*

Different levels and methods of involving students :

Students as:

- Members of QA units (at Uni. /Faculty level)
- Different purposes:
  - Preparation of self –evaluation report (Romania, Slovenia)
  - Evaluation of curricula (Czech Republic)
  - Evaluation & validation of programmes (Malta)
  - Planning and implementing QA policies (Finland)
  - Comprehensive involvement (UK,Sweden,Spain, Bulgaria, Italy)
- Can vary from HEI to HEI (Lithuania, Switzerland,Latvia,Portugal, Germany)

# Students & External QA





# Main findings - external QA (1)

*! 75% of students claimed to be well involved in external QA. The other 25% claimed to be either not involved or to be sometimes involved depending on other circumstances or to have no external QA structure.*

Degrees of involvement:

- None – no QA Agency (Malta)
- Only on consultative level (Italy)
- Recent QA Agency & student involvement is in the pipeline (Macedonia and Portugal)
- Students as full partners, part of the review panels (Sweden, Finland, Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Latvia, Switzerland, Romania, Slovenia, UK, and Czech Republic )

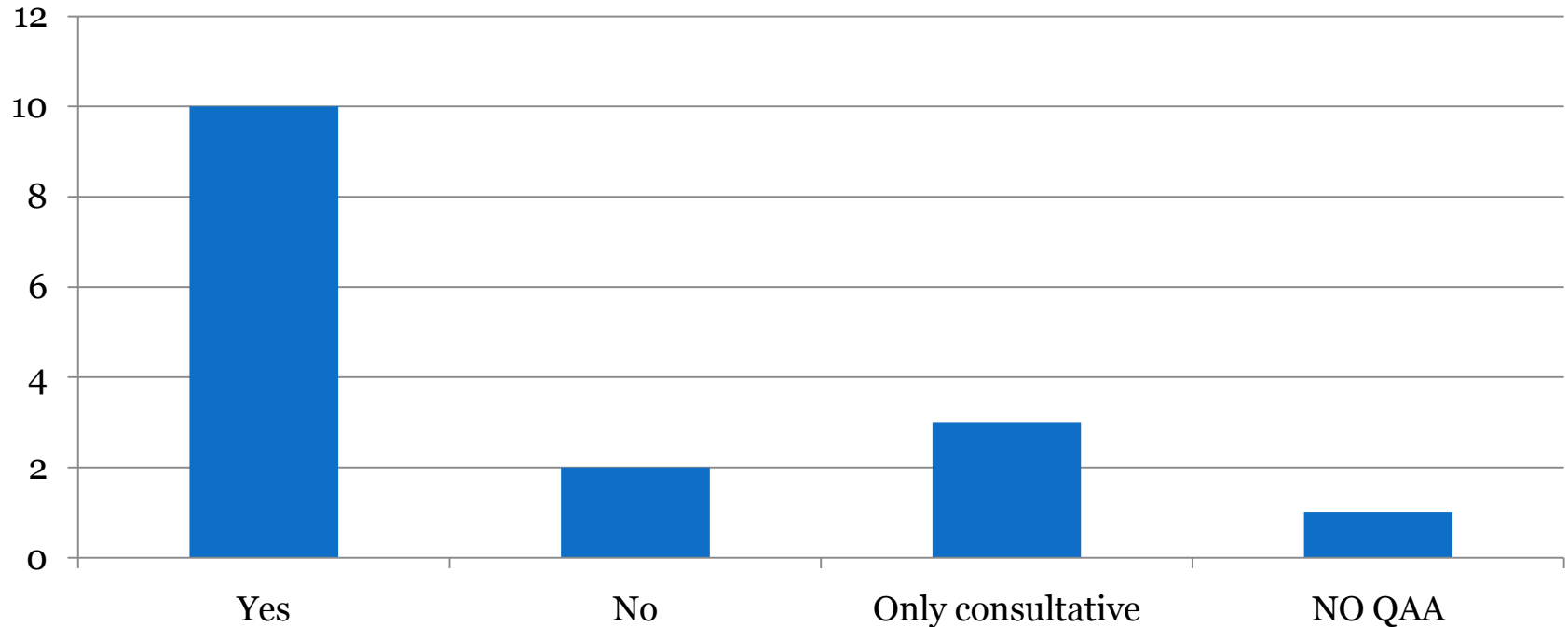
# Main findings - external QA (2)

Challenge: presumable lack of interest from the student part for involvement in external QA



access to information + skills-building opportunities and training

# Students & QAA governance



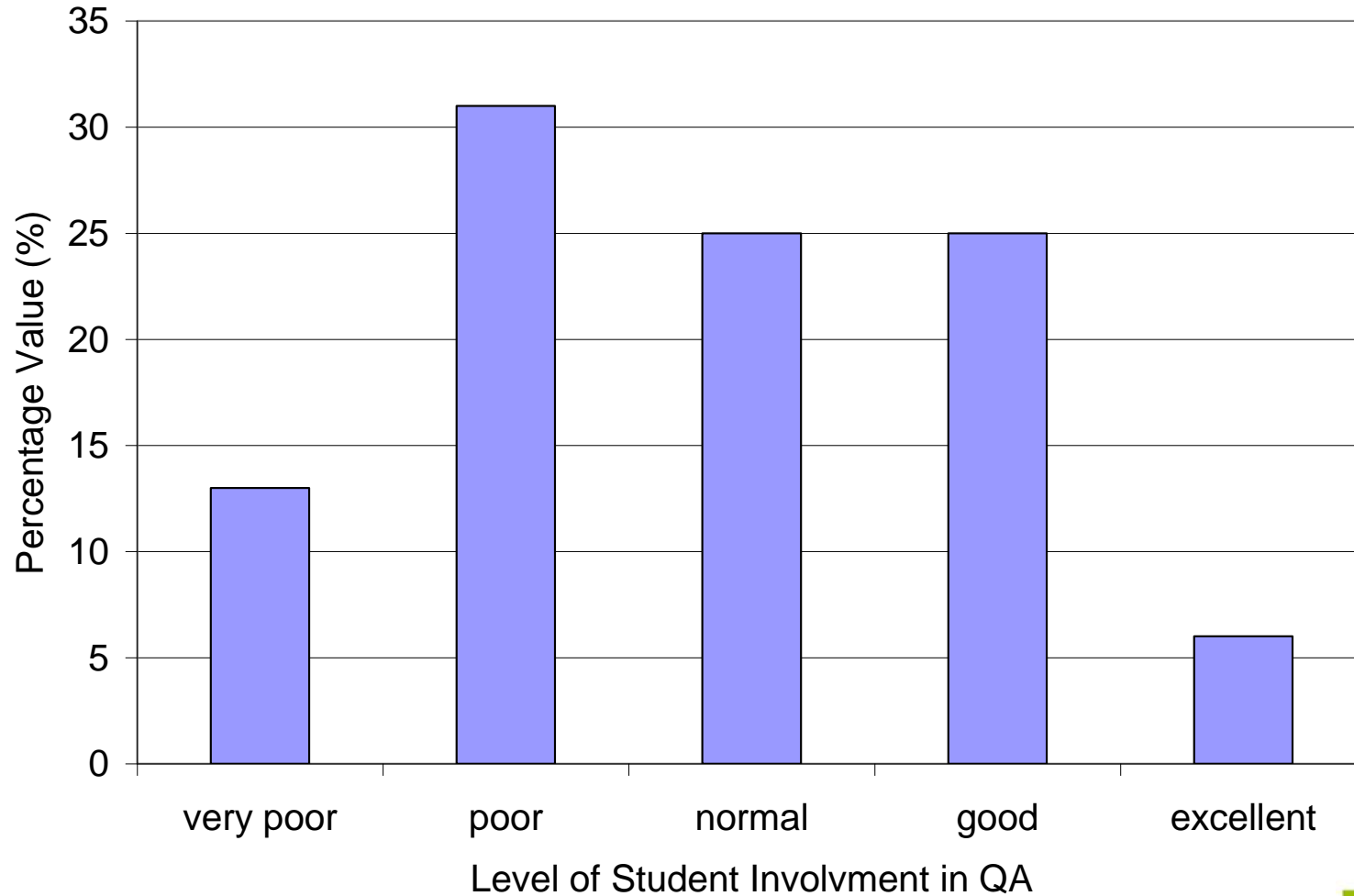
# Main findings - QAA Governance

*! 63% of students said that they were involved in QAA governance. The other 37% claimed to be not involved, involved only on a consultative level or not involved due to no presence of any QAA.*

Degrees of involvement:

- None (Malta-No QAA, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Bulgaria)
- Consultative role (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Latvia)
- Partial/limited (UK, Germany-10QAAs, Sweden, Macedonia)
- Full:equal members with voting rights (Romania, Slovenia, Finland)

# Overall involvement of students in QA



# Good practices

Student Experts' Pool (National/European)

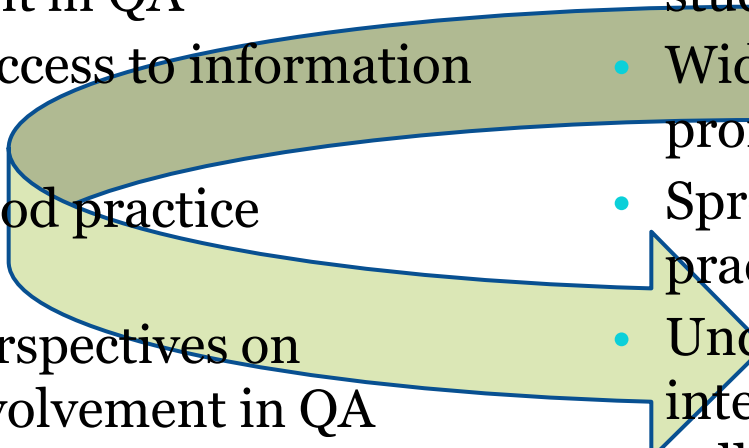
Trainings for QA skills building

Discussions & Seminar for students + academics together

QAA-NUS collaboration

Students as partners – depicted in laws, internal regulations of HEIs

# Conclusions and discussions

- Different levels of student involvement in QA
  - Different access to information
  - Isolated good practice examples
  - Various perspectives on student involvement in QA
  - Bureaucratization of QA
  - Harmonize & benefit from student input in QA
  - Widen access to information, promote accountability tools
  - Spread and use positive practices across EHEA
  - Understand Q culture as an integrative, participative and collaborative process
  - Genuine Q culture, not relied in paper but in change in everyday HEI life
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# Quality and trust: at the heart of what we do

- Question: How can we achieve more trust?
- Answer: By increasing involvement of students in QA at all levels.



# Thank you!

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