

# Stakeholders' perspective on the use and usefulness of quality assurance reports

Maiki Udam, EKKA



# Project EQArep

*aims to*

- *map and compare systematically the current publication practices across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA);*
- *explore the different needs of stakeholders for transparent and comparable information and*
- *develop guidelines for different types of quality assurance reports in the EHEA.*

# Outline

- Methodology
- Results
  - Purposes to search information
  - Sources to get information
  - Reasons why not to use reports by QAA-s
  - Usefulness of reports
  - Places to find the reports
  - Expected information about performance of HEIs
  - Preferable format of information
  - Preferable sources of information

# Methodology

- Drafting the questionnaire – Dec 2012
- Feedback from Advisory Board (EUA, ESU, Business Europe, EURASHE) – Jan 2013
- Questionnaire sent to stakeholders – Feb 2013
- Analysis of results – March 2013

# Stakeholders

- Higher education institutions
- Students
- Public authorities / Government offices
- Employers



Country	Respondents
Ireland	37
Estonia	35
Switzerland	21
Croatia	15
Romania	3
Italy	3
France	3
Other countries (8)	10
<b>Sum</b>	<b>127</b>

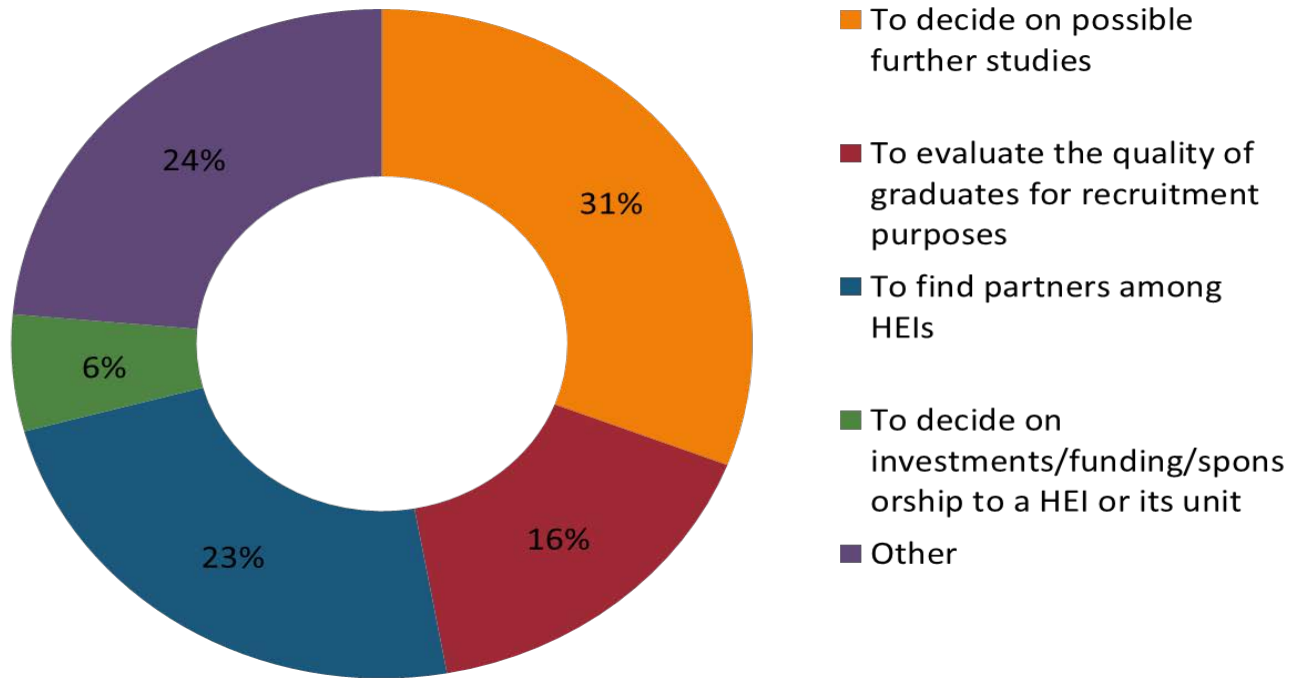
Group	N° asked	N° responded	Response rate
HEI	112	78	70%
Student	86	24	28%
Public authority	48	10	21%
Employer	30	3	10%

*Employers do not read QA reports at all because they are not interested in IQA mechanisms of HEIs. The relevant information for the professional world is performance which is translated into quantitative indicators through various rankings.*

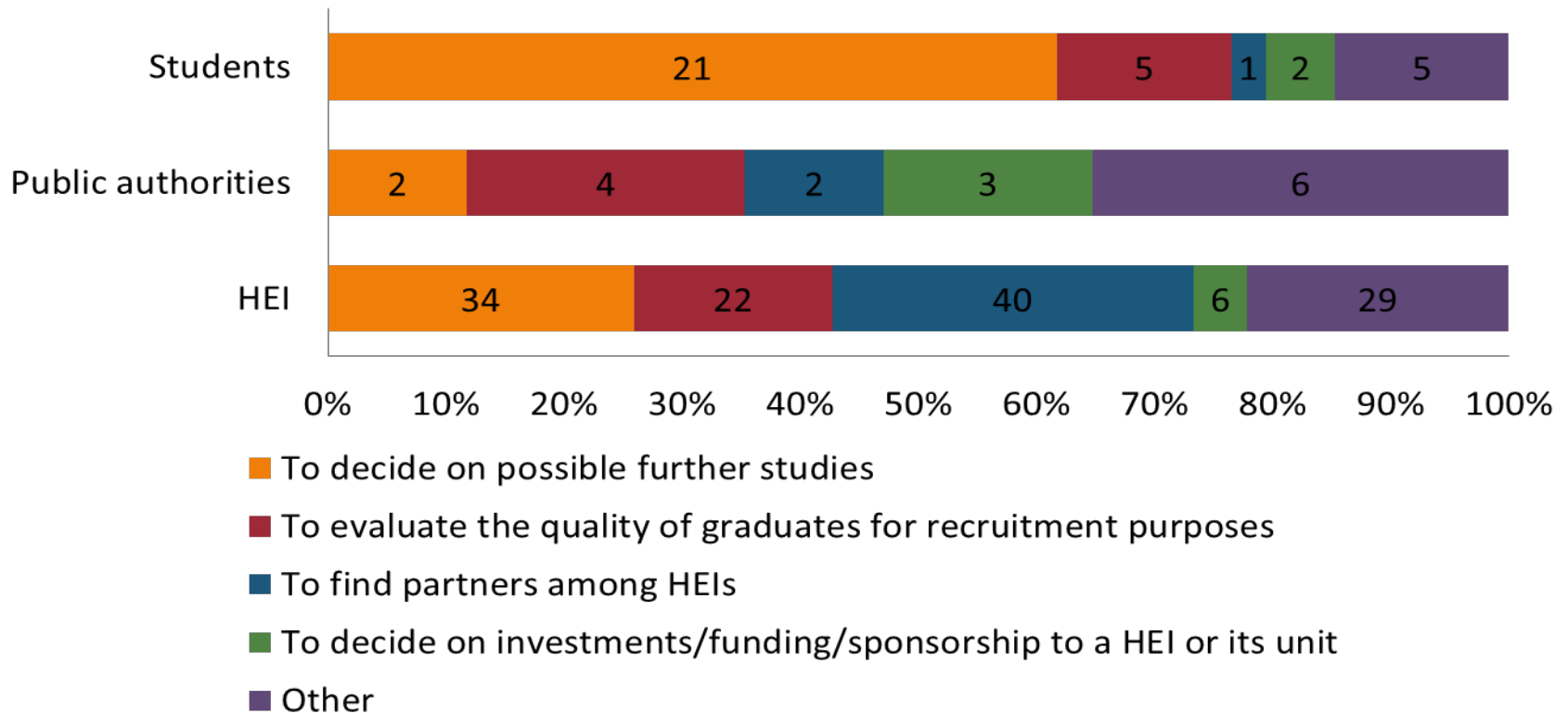
(Workshop in Tallinn, May 2013)



# For what purposes have you searched information about the quality of a HEI and study programmes?



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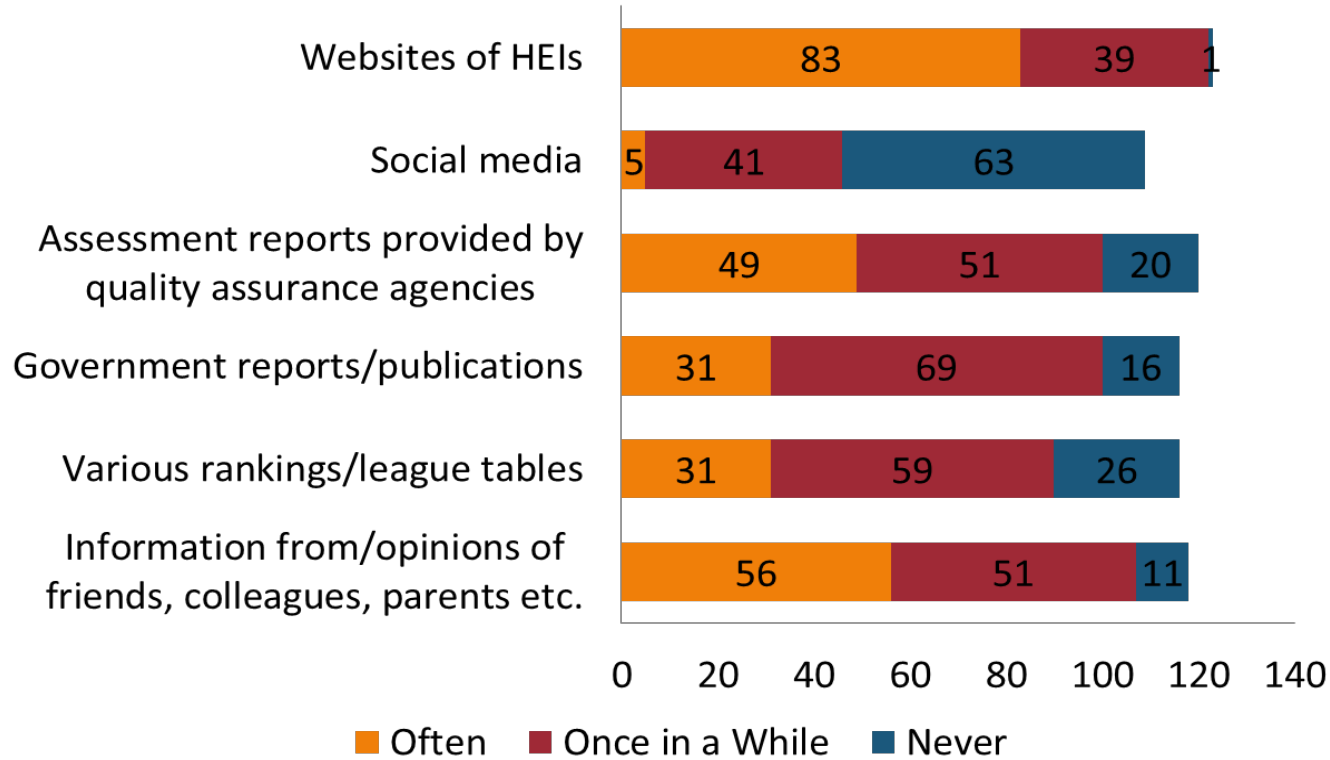


# 40 comments („Other“)

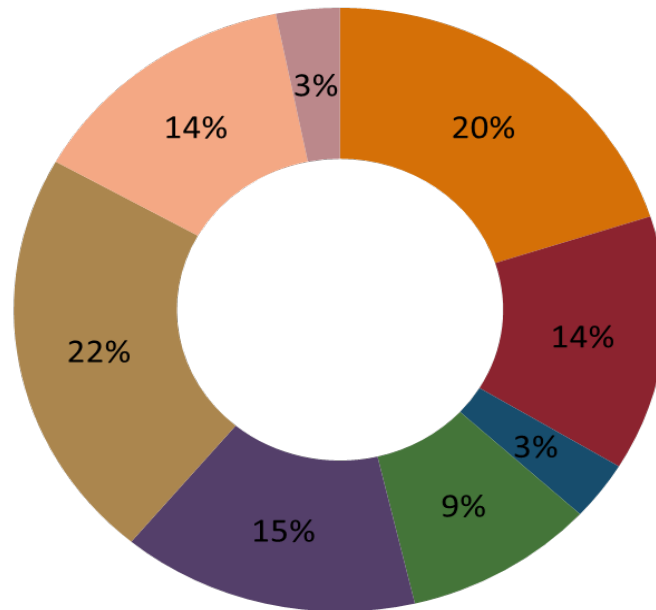
- To learn about IQA systems in other HEI-s
- For comparison/benchmarking (similar programs, QA procedures)
- To do research



# Sources to get information about the quality of HEI and study programmes

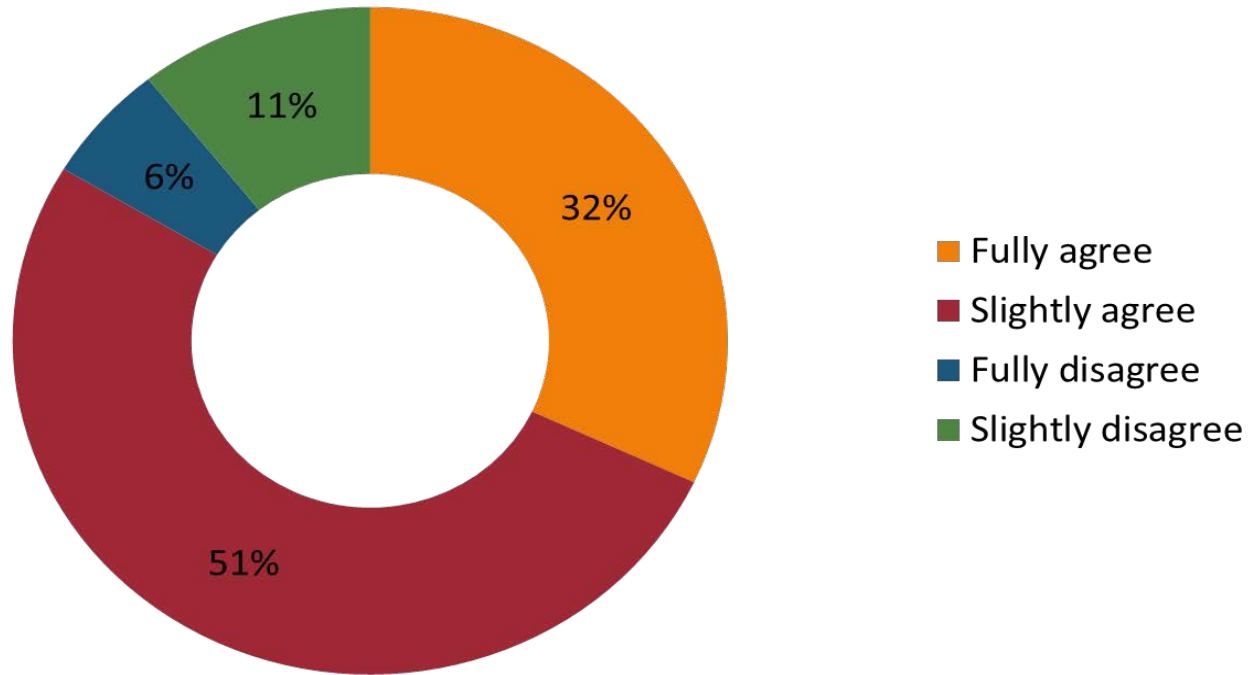


# Reasons why not to use reports by QAA-s



- I found the needed information elsewhere
- The reports are too long
- here are no reports in English/language I understand
- The reports are in a too complicated language
- The reports do not contain the information I need
- Did not know where to find them

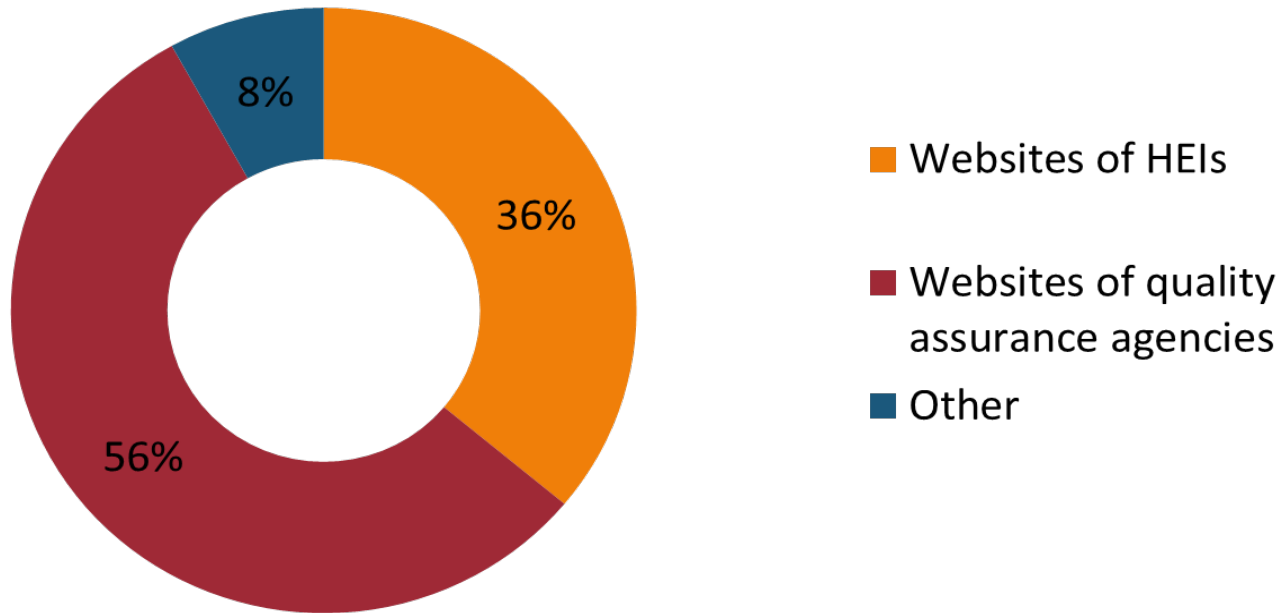
If you use reports by quality assurance agencies, do you find them helpful in providing information about HEIs/programmes?



# 55 comments

- The reports are comprehensive, covering all relevant areas
- Needed:
  - Comparability (international standards)
  - User-friendliness (incl language, length etc)

# If you use reports by QAA-s, where did you find them?



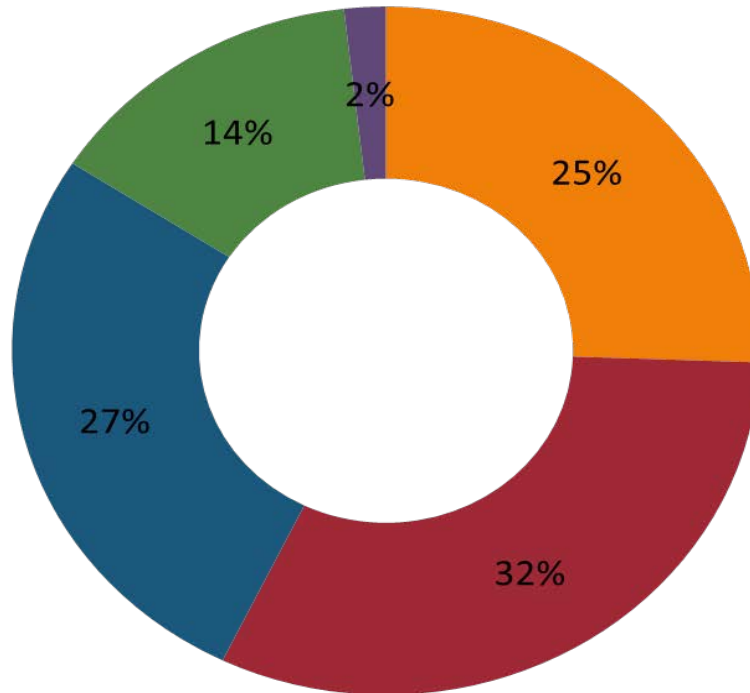


## What information do you need to make decisions for further learning, partnerships, comparisons with other institutions etc.?

Content of study programmes	96
Accreditation status of institutions/study programmes	80
Strategic planning, management, governance	78
Qualifications of teaching staff	74
Internal quality assurance system	73
Student support system	67
Employability/employment of graduates	66
Reputation of teaching staff	59
Number of research grants, publications, citations	57
Application and admission statistics	57
Condition of infrastructure	54
Institution's ability to respond diverse students' needs	46
Financial resources	45
History and traditions	37
Institution's position in league tables	29
Other	4

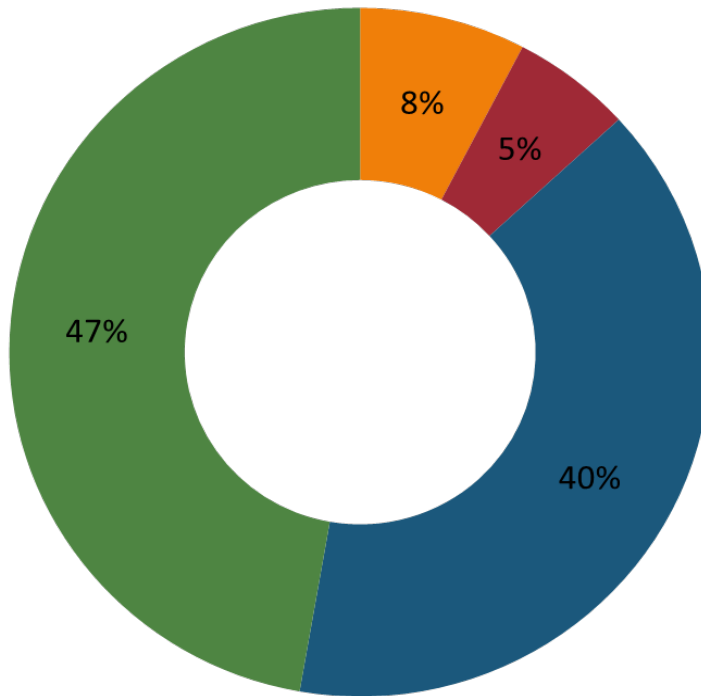
	HEI	Public authorities	Students
Content of study programmes	69(1)	9(2-6)	27(1)
Accreditation status of institutions/study programmes	62(2)	9(2-6)	13(9-10)
Strategic planning, management, governance	61(3)	8(7)	14(8)
Internal quality assurance system	56(4)	7(8-9)	12(11-12)
Qualifications of teaching staff	53(5)	9(2-6)	17(4-5)
Student support system	47(6)	9(2-6)	18(3)
Number of research grants, publications, citations	46(7)	7(8-9)	9(13)
Reputation of teaching staff	44(8)	4(13)	16(6)
Employability/employment of graduates	40(9)	10(1)	21(2)
Application and admission statistics	40(10)	6(10-12)	15(7)
Condition of infrastructure	35(11)	6(10-12)	17(4-5)
Institution's ability to respond diverse students' needs	32(12)	6(10-12)	12(11-12)
History and traditions	30(13)	1(15-16)	8(14)
Financial resources	28(14)	9(2-6)	13(9-10)
Institution's position in league tables	22(15)	2(14)	6(15)
Other (please name below)	6(16)	1(15-16)	1(16)

# Preferable format of information



- Table(s) of numerical data indicating the most important aspects of a HEI/programme
- A short concentrated summary describing the main strengths and areas for improvement of a HEI/programme
- Comparative data with other institutions
- A comprehensive report providing extensive information about strengths and areas for improvement in management and core processes (study process, research and development), explaining also the possible reasons for a given situation

# Preferable sources of information



- Printed reports in the libraries/quality assurance agencies/HEIs
- Social media (please name the most preferred source, e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- Webpages of quality assurance agencies
- Webpages of HEIs

# Conclusions (1)

- Some differences between HEI-s, students, government representatives: purposes to find information; information expected
- Very low response rate from employers indicates that they do not see themselves as a target group for quality assurance of higher education institutions
- Assessment reports are the 3rd source of information, after websites of HEI-s and friends/parents/colleagues

## Conclusions (2)

- Reports are helpful but should be more comparable and user-friendly
- Reports should contain comparative data with other institutions in the format of short concentrated summary and tables
- Reports should be accessible both on the webpages of HEI-s and QAA-s (preferably linked to each other)

