HAKA
Estonian Quality
Agency for Education

Quality assurance of digitally enhanced higher education

Estonia

Population: 1,329 million

45 000 sq km

2222 islands

Forests 52,3 % of land area

Average monthly salary 1,741 EUR (2023)
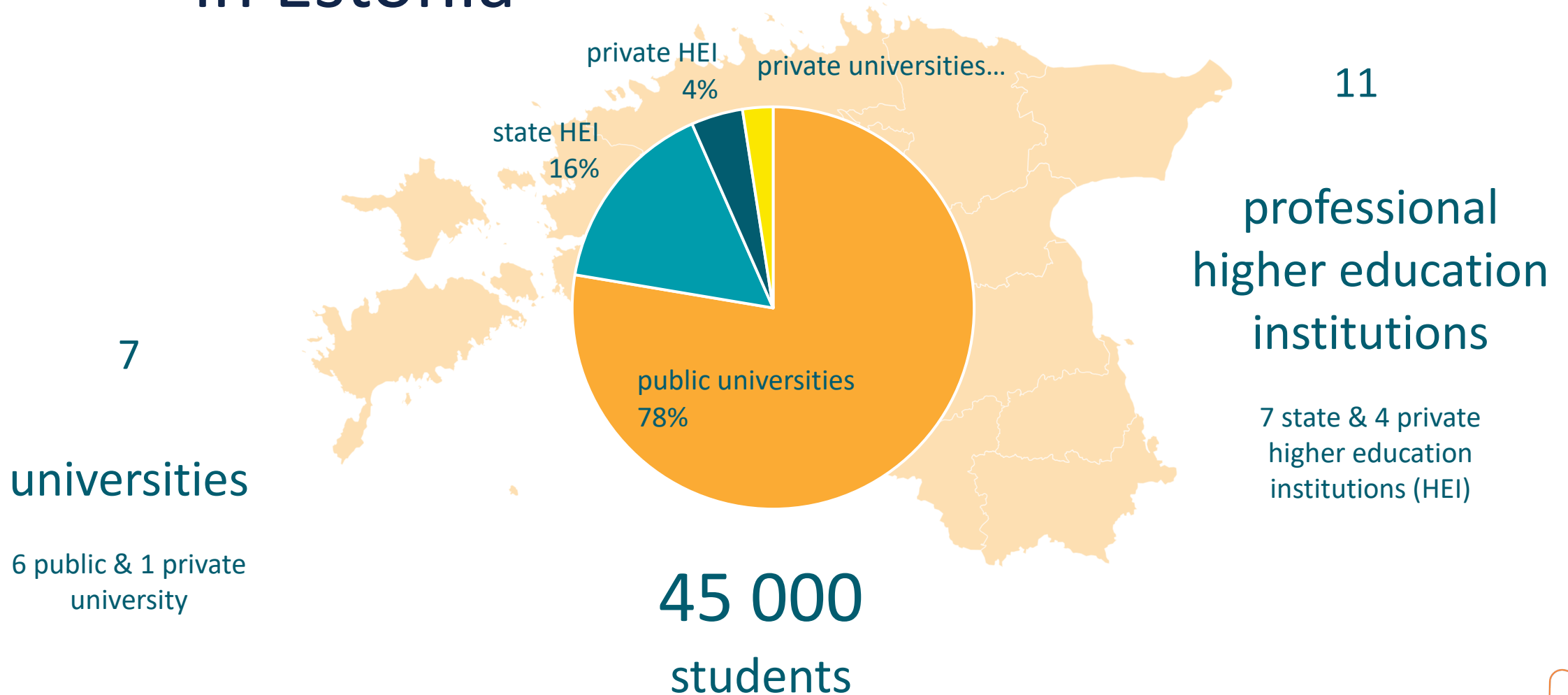
Unemployment rate 5,3 % (2023)

Neighbours: Finland, Latvia, Russia

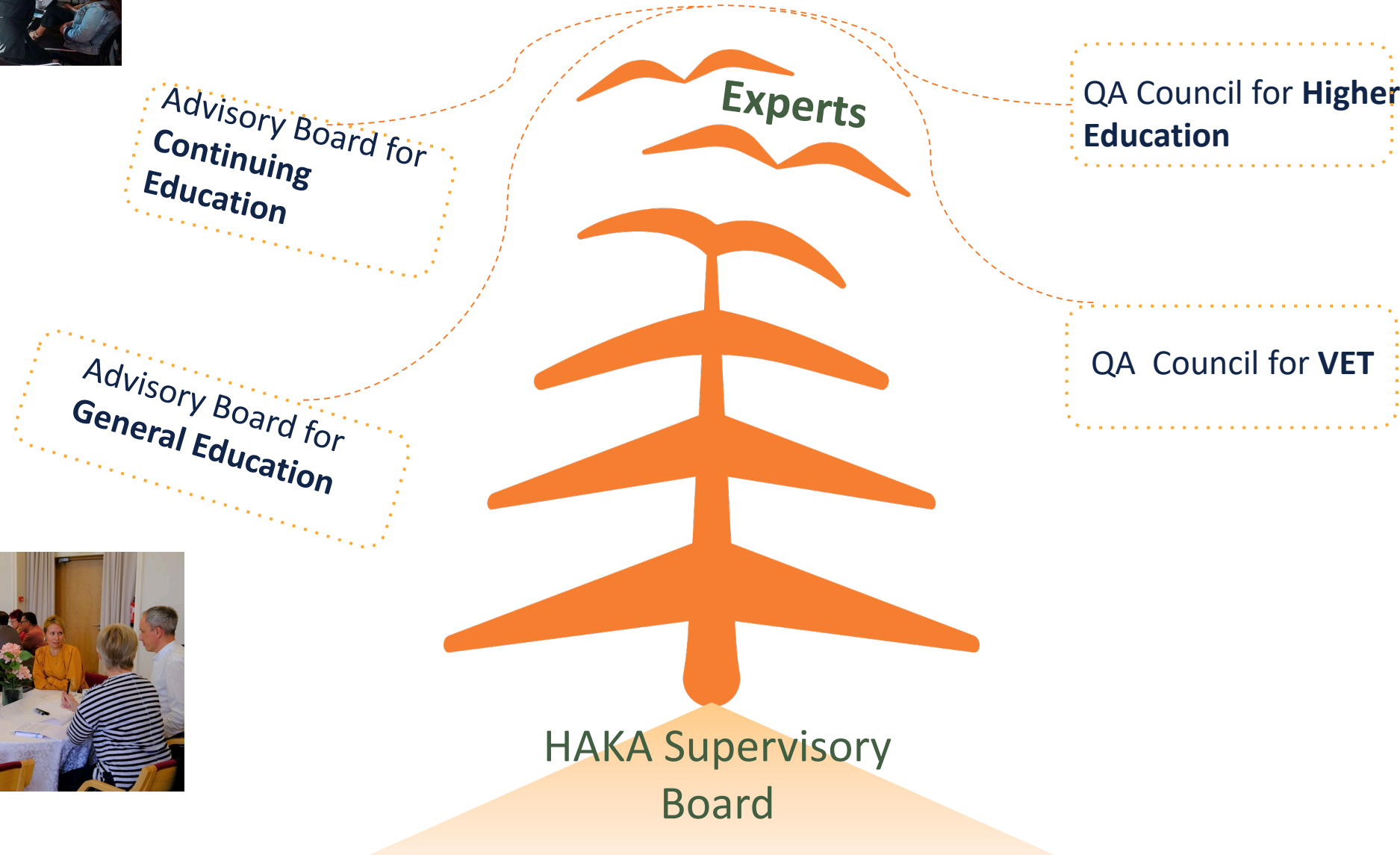# e-Government; E-Health; E-Business; E-Education?

Higher education in Estonia

private HEI
4%

private universities…

state HEI
16%

public universities
78%

11

professional higher education institutions

7 state & 4 private higher education institutions (HEI)

7

universities

6 public & 1 private university

45 000

students

Learners

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Experts

Advisory Board for **Continuing Education**

QA Council for **Higher Education**

Advisory Board for **General Education**

QA Council for **VET**

HAKA Supervisory Board

Activities of HAKA in a nutshell

HIGHER EDUCATION	VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING	CONTINUING EDUCATION	GENERAL EDUCATION
➤ Institutional accreditation ➤ Initial assessment of study programme groups ➤ Thematic review	➤ Quality assessment of study programme groups ➤ Initial assessment of study programme groups	➤ Deveolping the system for EQA in continuing education ➤ Quality assessment of continuing education (piloting)	➤ Developing the system for quality enhancement in general education ➤ Development programmes for quality enhancement

Development of standards and guidelines, trainings, analyses, international activities

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INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Projects and cross-border activities in QA:
  - in Moldova (2014-2015)
  - in Armenia (2019, 2022)
  - in Tajikistan (2018-2021)
- Twinning project with Finland (Karvi) in Azerbaijan (2015-2017)
- Twinning project with Germany (DAAD) in Georgia (2019-2021)

Provision of institutional accreditation and quality assessment of study programmes abroad.

What is the role of Quality Agency in enhancing the quality of digital teaching and learning in HEIs?

Through External Quality Assurance procedures to monitor developments in digital education

- Thematic assessments and analysis
- Assessment in the course of regular QA procedures
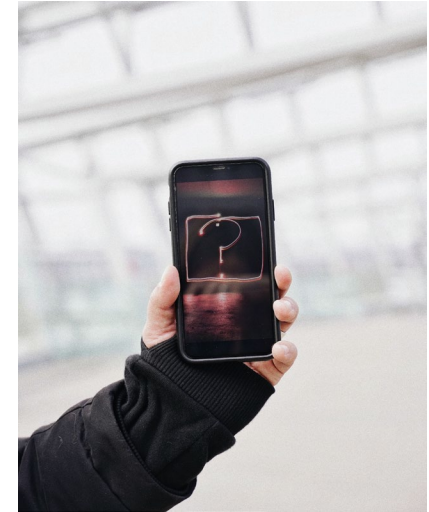
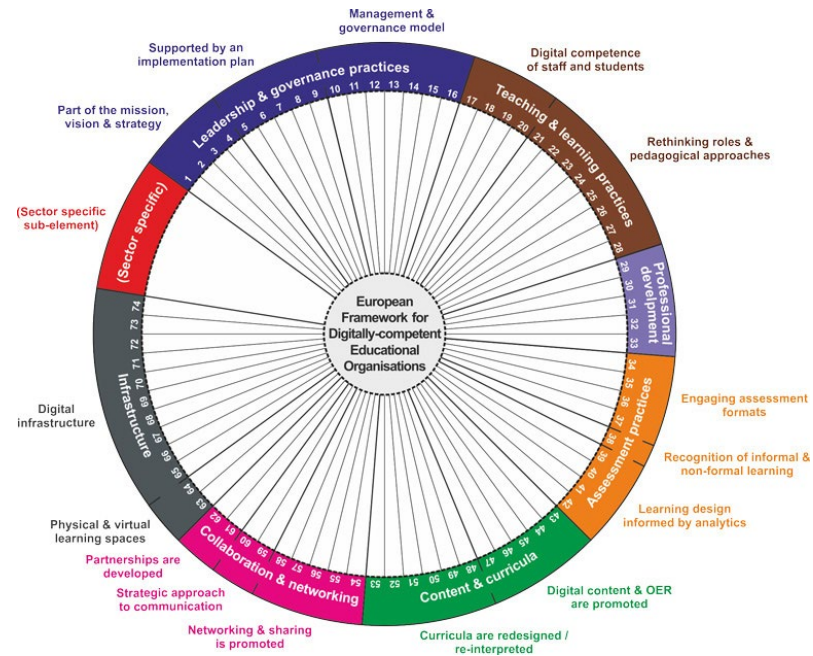To facilitate Internal Quality Assurance in HEIs

- Providing benchamarks, developing standards and guidelines on digital education provision

To provide platform to share best pracitice!

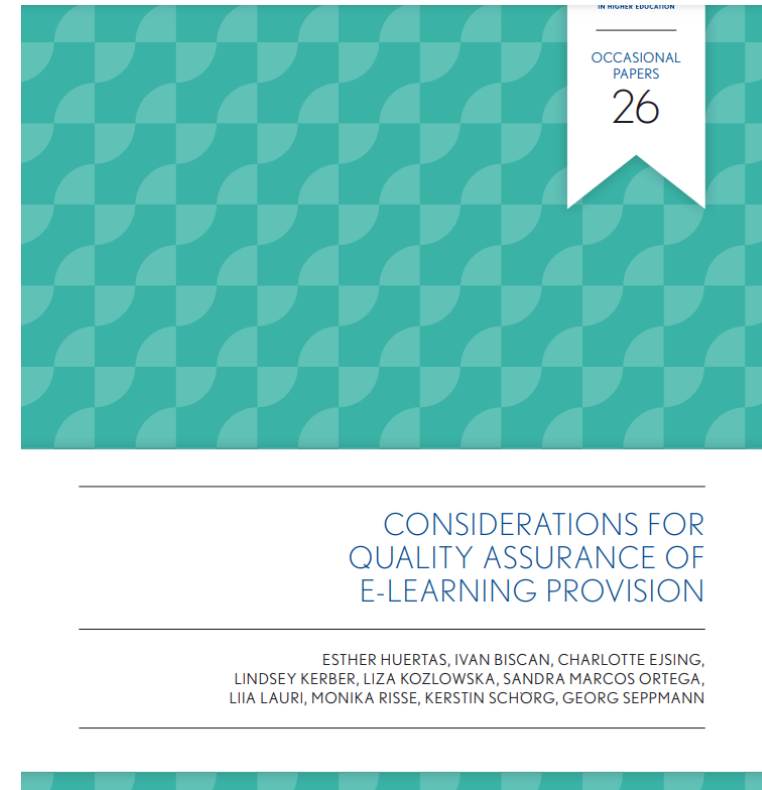# Quality criteria for online teaching and learning: several good examples exist

A European Framework for Digitally-Competent Educational Organisations

Quality criteria for online teaching and learning: some examples
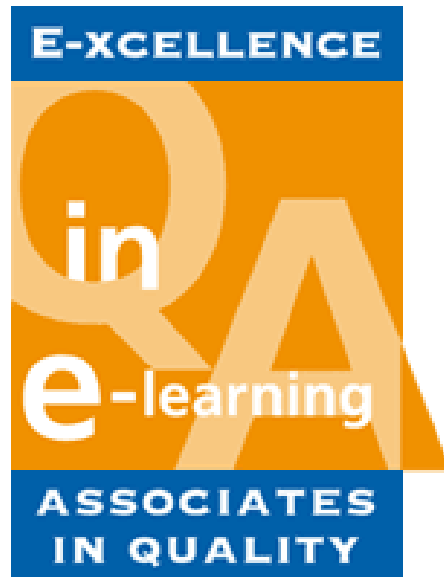
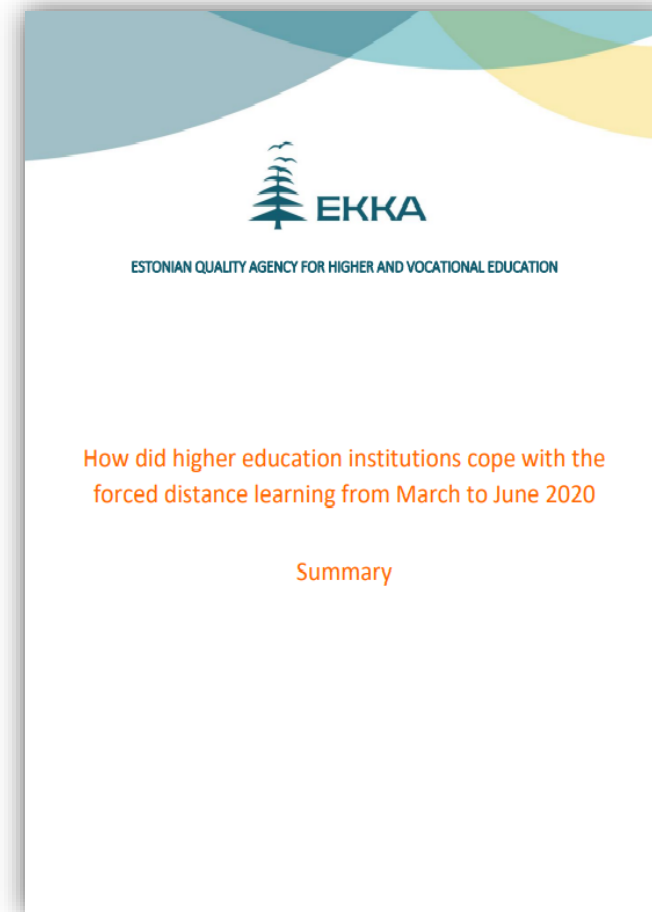
https://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu/images/E-xcellence_manual_2016_third_edition.pdf

IN HIGHER EDUCATION

OCCASIONAL PAPERS
26

CONSIDERATIONS FOR
QUALITY ASSURANCE OF
E-LEARNING PROVISION

ESTHER HUERTAS, IVAN BISCAN, CHARLOTTE EJSING,
LINDSEY KERBER, LIZA KOZLOWSKA, SANDRA MARCOS ORTEGA,
LIIA LAURI, MONIKA RISSE, KERSTIN SCHORG, GEORG SEPPMANN

Quality Assurance of teaching and learning in the times of Covid-19

- Thematic analyses conducted in 2020 and 2022

- How do the HEIs cope with the (forced) distance learning (in 2020)?

- What developments have taken place from 2020 to 2022?

EKKA

ESTONIAN QUALITY AGENCY FOR HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

How did higher education institutions cope with the forced distance learning from March to June 2020

Summary

https://i.pinimg.com/236x/ec/f9/3d/ecf93d3cfe567d7ebf48c09d39175ad8--extreme-sports-pictures-of.jpg

Key challenges for digital teaching and learning

- Methodology of digitally enhanced teaching and learning needs further developments

    How the students are encouraged to take responsibility and also be motivated to learn together in the web?

- Digital competence of academic staff

    Varies, needs time and willingness to develop

    What about visiting academic staff?

- Exams and practical studies in the web

    Good examples exist!

- More support staff, study designers, educational technologists is needed

- Resources

    Especially for the hybrid learning

Quality Label for e-courses (since 2008)

- The aim is to improve the quality of digitally enhanced teaching and learning and to share best practices.

- E-course is a systematic comprehensive set of materials, learning activities and guidelines for learners that support the partial or full execution of the learning process online.

- The Quality Label affirms the good quality of the e-course and shows that excellent results have been achieved in the application of digital technologies in the learning process.

- E-course self-evaluation and assessment criteria are set and regularly updated
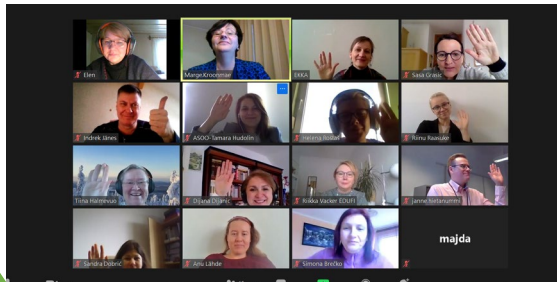
E- learning=digital learning: Using digital tools in teaching and learning

Distance learning
learner and teacher are (mostly) physically distant

Blended learning

Face to face learning

Online learning
(100% online)

Flexible Learning OR hybride learning

Guidelines for developing e-courses

https://oppevara.edu.ee/ekursus/

Quality criteria for e-courses

Quality Criteria for E-course Quality Label

I. Analysis
II. Planning of the study process
III. Course development
IV. Conducting the course
V. Assessment of the course

E-course self-analysis criteria

ANALYSIS

1: The course meets the needs and opportunities of the target group.

Have the background, motivation, prior knowledge, technical skills and opportunities of the target group been taken into account in the preparation of the course? When it comes to a course in a curriculum, you can assess whether your course contributes to achieving the goal of the curriculum as a whole.

2: The course objectives and learner-centred learning outcomes are formulated.

Make sure that the objectives and learning outcomes of the course are formulated in a comprehensible manner, creating an understanding of the minimum outcomes achieved by the participants on the course. The objectives are formulated on the basis of the curriculum and learning outcomes in a learner-centred manner, so that the learner is able to demonstrate that they have been achieved at the end of the course.

3: The content of the course supports the achievement of the course learning outcomes.

When assessing this criterion, review the course topics (substantive structure) to assess the alignment of the learning outcomes and topics.

PLANNING OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

4: The course syllabus is based on the requirements of the educational institution.

As a rule, an educational institution has a unified structure or a set of rules for drawing up syllabi, which is available to the teaching staff. Does the programme build on these requirements?

average learner on the learning process must be considered. Of course, this assessment is subjective and, depending on the course, there may be minor fluctuations (e.g. 1 ECTS or EKAP course cannot have a required reading list of 3000 pages per week or, conversely, 5 ECTS or EKAP course three chapters of 50 pages each. Both 1 ECTS and 1 EKAP account for 26 hours of work by a learner).

9: The development of learning skills (students are directed to reflect on what they have learned, to improve time planning skills, etc.) is supported.

Are recommendations for time planning, learning and the like provided in the course's learning guidelines?

10: Technological tools support the learning process.

The use of various technological tools (tests, forums, audio-video materials, etc.) in the teaching and learning process is not an end in itself but must be justified. Please assess whether the course's technological tools support the learning process.

11: The principle of integrity has been taken into account when designing the course so that the learning process is reflected in the online learning environment as a whole.

Does the course form a coherent whole? As the author of the course, have you thought about the approaches for the topics of the course, complemented by learning assignments and their distribution in the context of e-learning opportunities? Is the structure of the course simple and logical, and the structure comprehensible? Has the course found a suitable combination between e-learning and auditory learning?

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

12: The course is well structured and easy to use.

This criterion should be assessed based not only on the structure of the course but also on the explanations given in the guidelines for the learner and the course should be exmined "through the eyes of the learner". For example, whether all elements of the course (e.g. tools, materials, etc.) can be found intuitively.

13: Appropriate media (e.g. text, images, animations, audio, video, etc.) are used for presenting the material.

Assess the benefits of the chosen media to the learner in terms of achieving learning outcomes

https://ekka.edu.ee/wp-content/uploads/Self-evaluation-criteria-11.2021_EN.pdf

I Analysis

- The course meets the needs and opportunities of the audience.
- The course has formulated aims and learner-centred learning outcomes.
- The content of the course corresponds to the learning outcomes.

https://usabilitygeek.com/how-to-do-ux-competitor-analysis/

II Planning of the study process

- Subject syllabus relies on the requirements of the educational institution.

- The pre-knowledge, skills and prerequisite subjects necessary for the learners to participate in the course has been presented.

- The study activities and evaluation principles of the course correspond to the learning outcomes.

- Learners have been presented with the evaluation and feedbacking principles.

- The study materials and study activities correspond to the volume of the course.

- Support for the development of learning skills is provided (learners are guided towards reflection on their studies, developing time management skills etc.).

- Study process is supported by technological means.

- Study process is reflected as a whole in the web-based study environment.

LEARNING PROCESS

III Development of the course

- The course is well-structured and easy to use.
- Suitable media is used for providing the study materials (e.g., text, images, animations, audio, video etc.).
- The study materials comply with the best practices of creating digital study materials.
- Preparation of the study materials has followed the terms of use of the works of other authors
- Works of other authors used for illustrating of the course and preparation of study materials are referred to.
- The study guide is thorough and contains also an overview of class-room studies in case of blended learning.
- Use of the study environment does not require the student obtaining of separate paid additional software.
- The course is tested before use in actual study process.
- The course is in good technical order (links open, necessary tools are working, web based literature referred from the course is available).

IV Conducting the course

- Learners are provided with technical, organisational, social and pedagogical support

- Performance of the course follows the (planned) schedule.

- Active participation of the students in the study process is supported (interaction, generation of study communities, etc.)

- Systematic feedback is given to the learners about their progress in the course.

- The students are informed about the learning outcomes (grades, points).

https://www.chronicle.com/article/teaching-online-will-make-you-a-better-teacher-in-any-setting/

V Evaluation of the course

- Notes are made during the course with the aim to improve the course further.

- Course feedbacking system works (general evaluation of the course or getting feedback from students (incl. from e-learning point of view)

Application process

Self-evaluation

Idependently by applicant

Electronic template is provided

Institutional level

Review by the programme manager, head of the department or other

Expert level

A panel of experts will evaluate the e-course based on the agreed criteria.

Decision to award the quality label is taken at the expert level.

Result

- **E-courses meeting the quality criteria will be awarded quality labels.**

This will allow the author to apply the visual image of the quality label in the course learning environment and also with promotion of the course.

- **Candidates for the „best e-course of the year" will be nominated.**

The candidates are chosen from the e-courses that have been awarded the quality label within the current application round. As a result, one grant will be assigned to one e-course.

- **Feedback to applicants of the quality label.**

Every applicant will receive extensive feedback to improve the e-course from the panel of experts.

Quality Label: applications and awards

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Applications	36	32	32	31	43	66	60	40	41	47	45	42	42	52	132	86
Quality Labels awarded	16	19	18	19	27	34	41	24	30	38	37	32	34	34	97	66
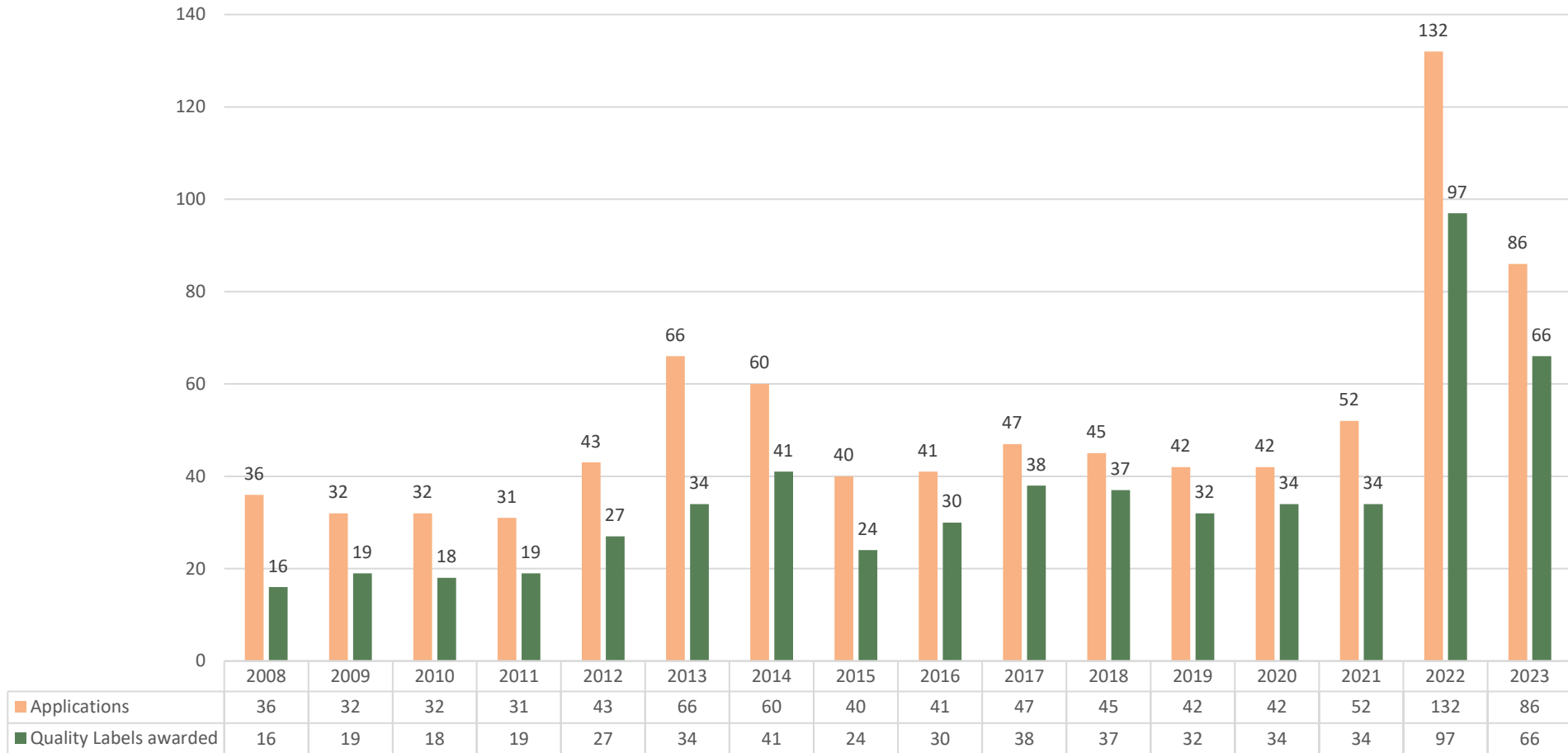
Annual thematic seminars on sharing the best practice

Quality Assurance of Digital Teaching and Learning (Mark Brown, Dublin City University)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YP43EJiDLX8

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGdHA2xI2S8
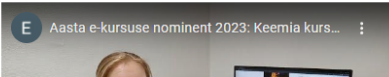
Presentations of the best e-courses

https://haka.ee/aasta-e-kursuse-nominendid/

Thank you!
Questions?

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Dr Liia Lauri

Assessment Director