Teaching enhancement in the European Higher Education Area

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The European University Association

- Established in 2001
- +/- 800 higher education institutions in 47 countries
- 33 National Rectors Conferences
- Voice of universities in policy making – European Higher Education Area and European Research Area
- Facilitates dialogue on higher education and research
- Range of services – sharing practices, institutional development

Enhancement of teaching and the role of academic staff
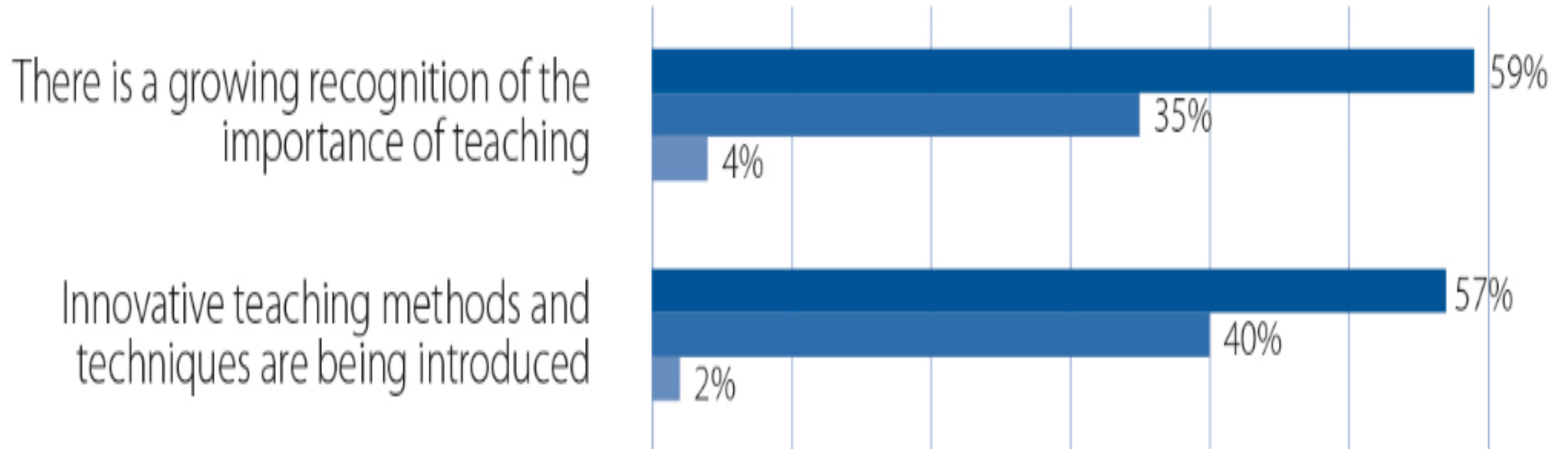
Trends 2015, Figure 22:
Do the following statements reflect the current situation at your institution?

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Outcomes from previous years

TRENDS 2018
Learning and teaching in the European Higher Education Area

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- Trends 2018: https://bit.ly/2EfCb4F

- 18 Thematic Peer Groups (TPG) since 2017

- Annual European L&T Forum (Feb. 2022, Bilbao)

- Reports (L&T Paper Series): https://bit.ly/2EMAFp6

- EUA position paper on learning and teaching in Europe's universities: https://bit.ly/2Ts3e31

- Webinars, *Expert Voices* from TPG members

- The EFFECT Project (2015-2018) and the Ten European Principles for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching: https://bit.ly/2K91gNY

Context:

Increased attention to L&T throughout the institution (92%)

Trends 2018. Q9, Q12, Q18

Institutional development

↓

L&T strategy (86%)

↓

Central unit for L&T (65%)

↓

High interest in **external cooperation** in L&T

Yes / To some extent

Increased students' expectations towards teachers (91%)

+

Increasing diversity of the study body (85%)

Context:

Increasing awareness and commitment towards

Student-centred learning

- **Education that is geared towards student learning and success**

- **Education provision that is defined by intended learning outcomes and most fit-for-purpose learning process**

- **Taking into account the student's individual background and ensuring they take part in shaping the learning process**

⇒ **Need for an institutional approach to the implementation of SCL**

⇒ **NOT about one single approach prevailing in classrooms!**

Who is teaching?

Trends 2018. Q. 33

Responsibility for teaching shared among different staff profiles

- In 14% of HEIs, **professors** take on >50% of teaching load
- In 60% of HEIs, **teaching support staff** take up to 50% of teaching load
- In 32% of HEIs, **researchers, experts, or students** take up to 50%

Formal requirements for teaching

- Most common for professors, associate/assistant professors: **doctorate**
- Formal teacher training for doctoral candidates: in only 11 of the 49 EHEA systems
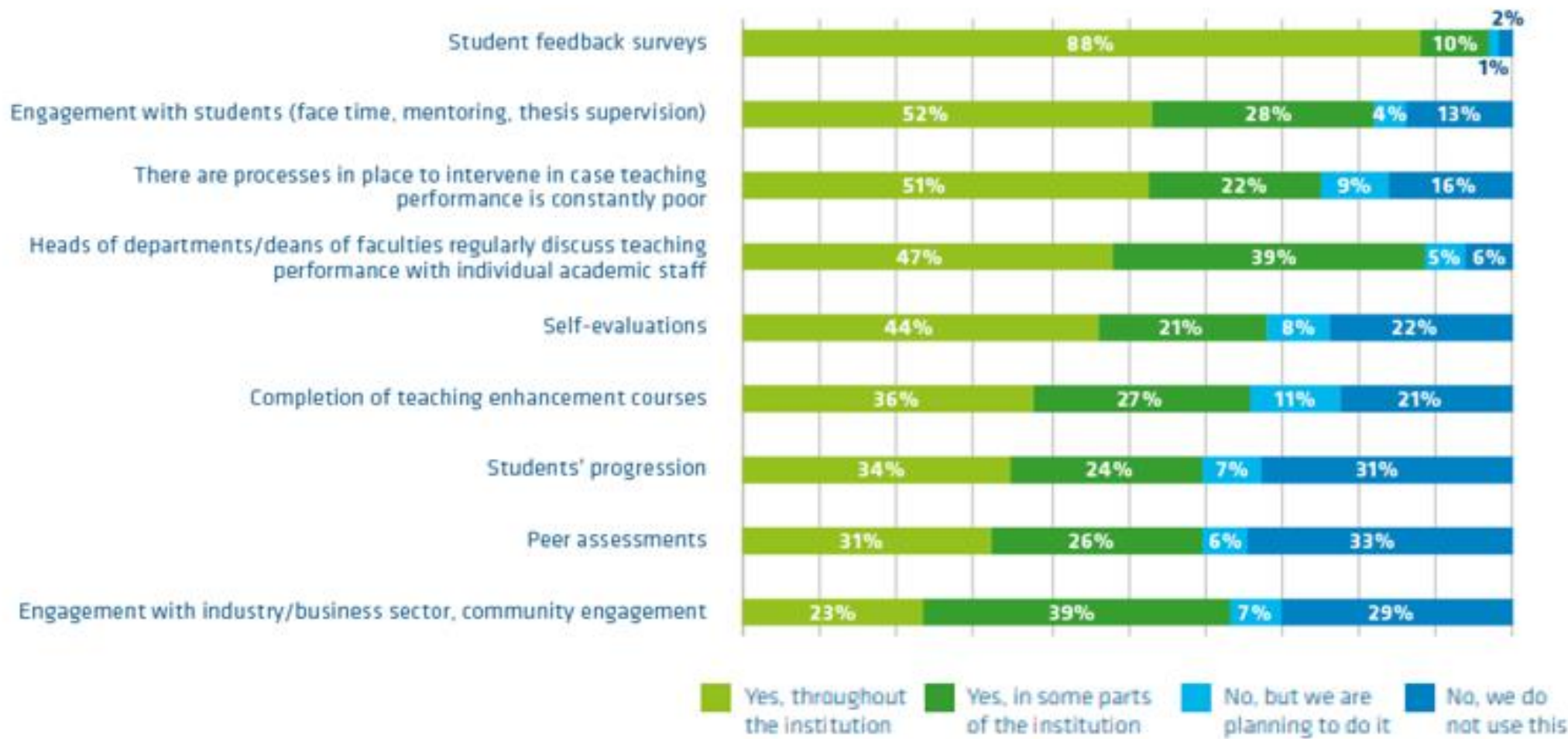- Difference in requirements between academic staff and other staff categories

Evaluation of teaching performance

- Results often little or no impact on **career progression** (lack of recognition for T)?
- **Student feedback** still most widespread measure (98%), but general dissatisfaction with present approaches and willingness to enhance them

Assessing teaching

Trends 2018, Q. 36

Which of the following means and criteria are used for the assessment of teaching? (Q. 36; N = 275)

	Yes, throughout the institution	Yes, in some parts of the institution	No, but we are planning to do it	No, we do not use this
Student feedback surveys	88%	10%		2%
Engagement with students (face time, mentoring, thesis supervision)	52%	28%	4%	13%
There are processes in place to intervene in case teaching performance is constantly poor	51%	22%	9%	16%
Heads of departments/deans of faculties regularly discuss teaching performance with individual academic staff	47%	39%	5%	6%
Self-evaluations	44%	21%	8%	22%
Completion of teaching enhancement courses	36%	27%	11%	21%
Students' progression	34%	24%	7%	31%
Peer assessments	31%	26%	6%	33%
Engagement with industry/business sector, community engagement	23%	39%	7%	29%

Staff development:

What is in place at higher education institutions?

Trends 2018. Q. 38, Q. 39

Recognition of good teaching (e.g. awards, career development, incentives)
- **66%** in place
- **13%** planned

Voluntary courses
- **77%** in place
- **13%** planned

Compulsory courses
- **37%** in place
- **17%** planned

Training on learning outcomes
- **39%** on request only
- **25%** for all teaching staff
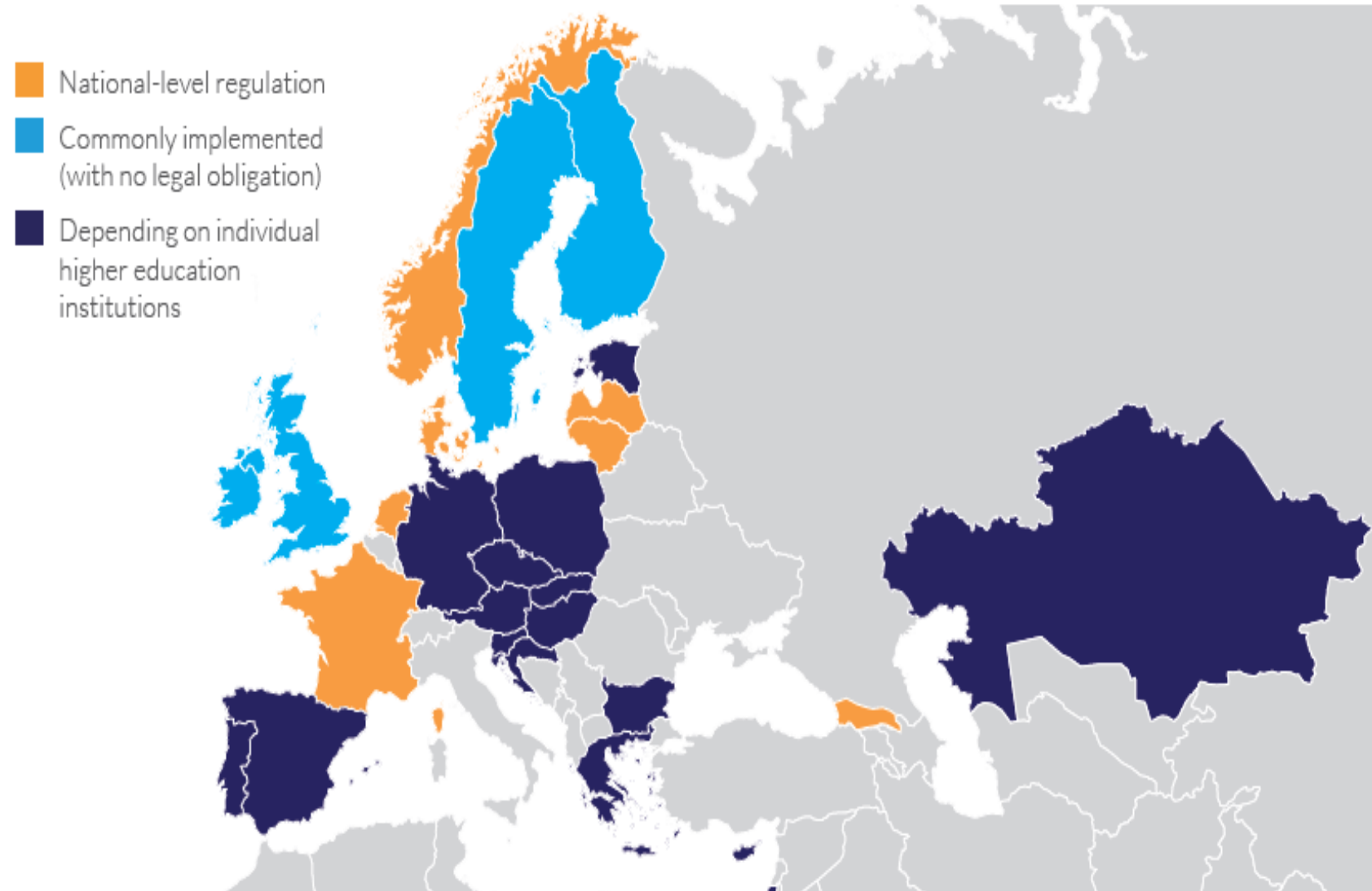- **12%** for new teaching staff only

Other measures to support teaching
- Portfolios
- Self-evaluations
- Peer feedback
- Team teaching

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o **Teaching enhancement=** any kind of formal pedagogical staff development or training provided to teachers (such as initial teacher training and continuous professional development)

o 7 of the 28 systems mapped regulate teaching enhancement (DK, FR, GE, LV, LT, NL, NO)

o While not legally required, teaching enhancement is very common in another 4 systems (FI, IE, SE, UK)

o 17 systems rely mainly on measures at individual universities

Source:

EFFECT study on national initiatives in learning and teaching, 2018 (https://bitly.ly/2L6QHvm)

Fig.2 – Regulation of teaching enhancement

National-level regulation

Commonly implemented (with no legal obligation)

Depending on individual higher education institutions

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- **Differences across countries/systems:**
  - ✓ In most of them, pedagogical training does not account for much in career progression.
  - ✓ Not often regulated at national level.
  - ✓ Inter-university and national initiatives are rare.

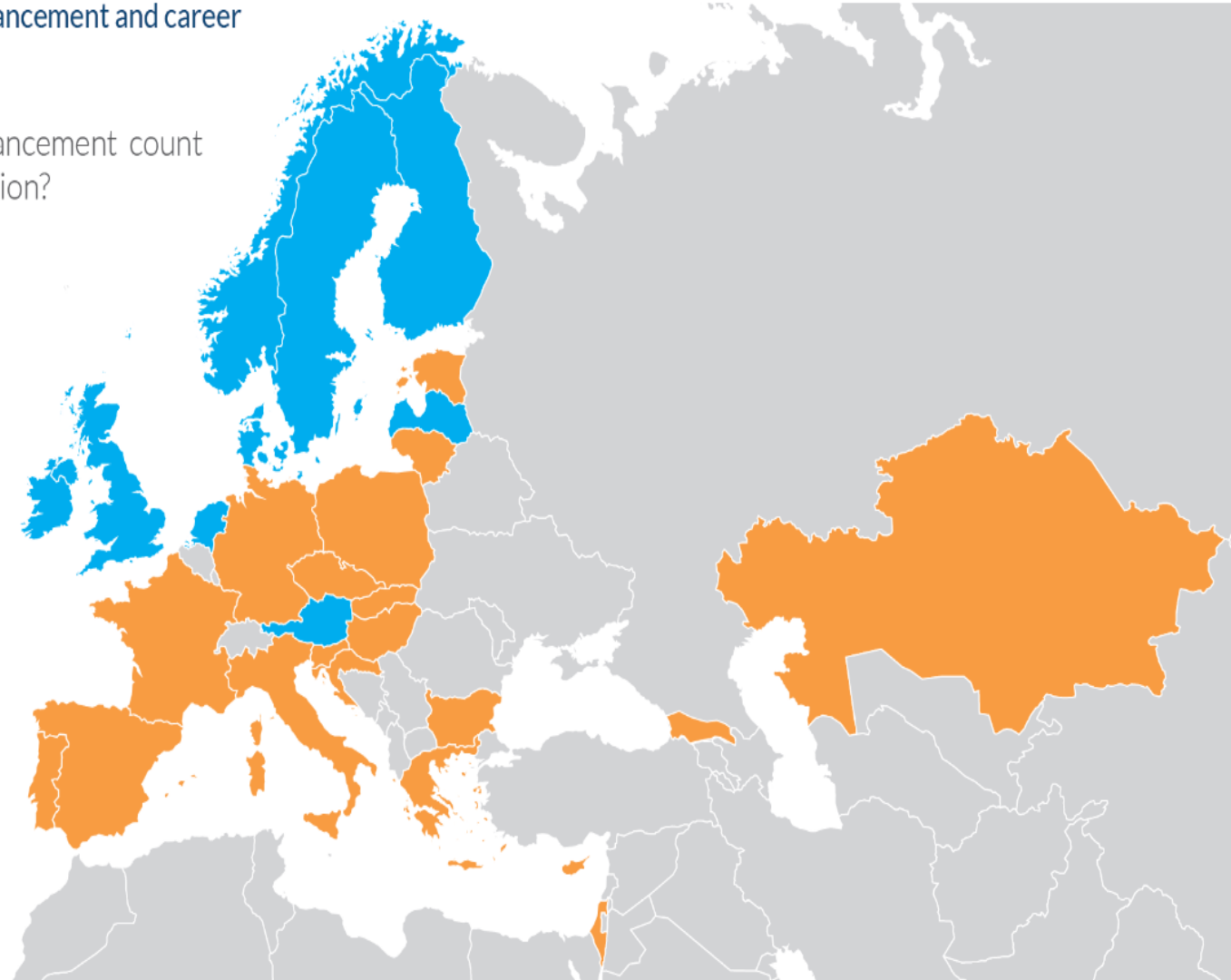Generally, lies on **individual institutions**.

Source:

EFFECT study on national initiatives in learning and teaching (https://bitly.ly/2L6QHvm)

Fig.3 – Teaching enhancement and career progression

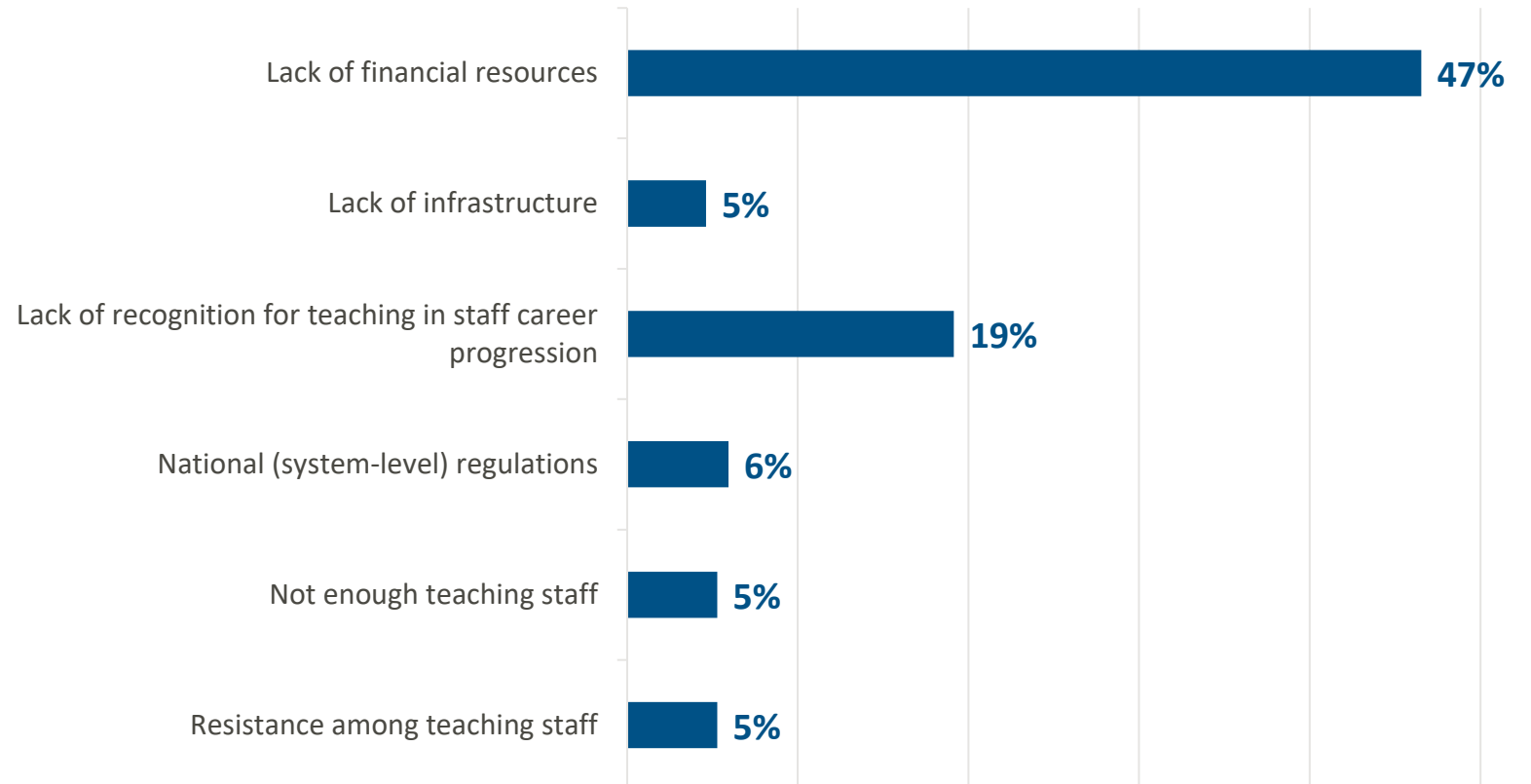Does teaching enhancement count for career progression?

- 🟦 Yes
- 🟧 No, very little
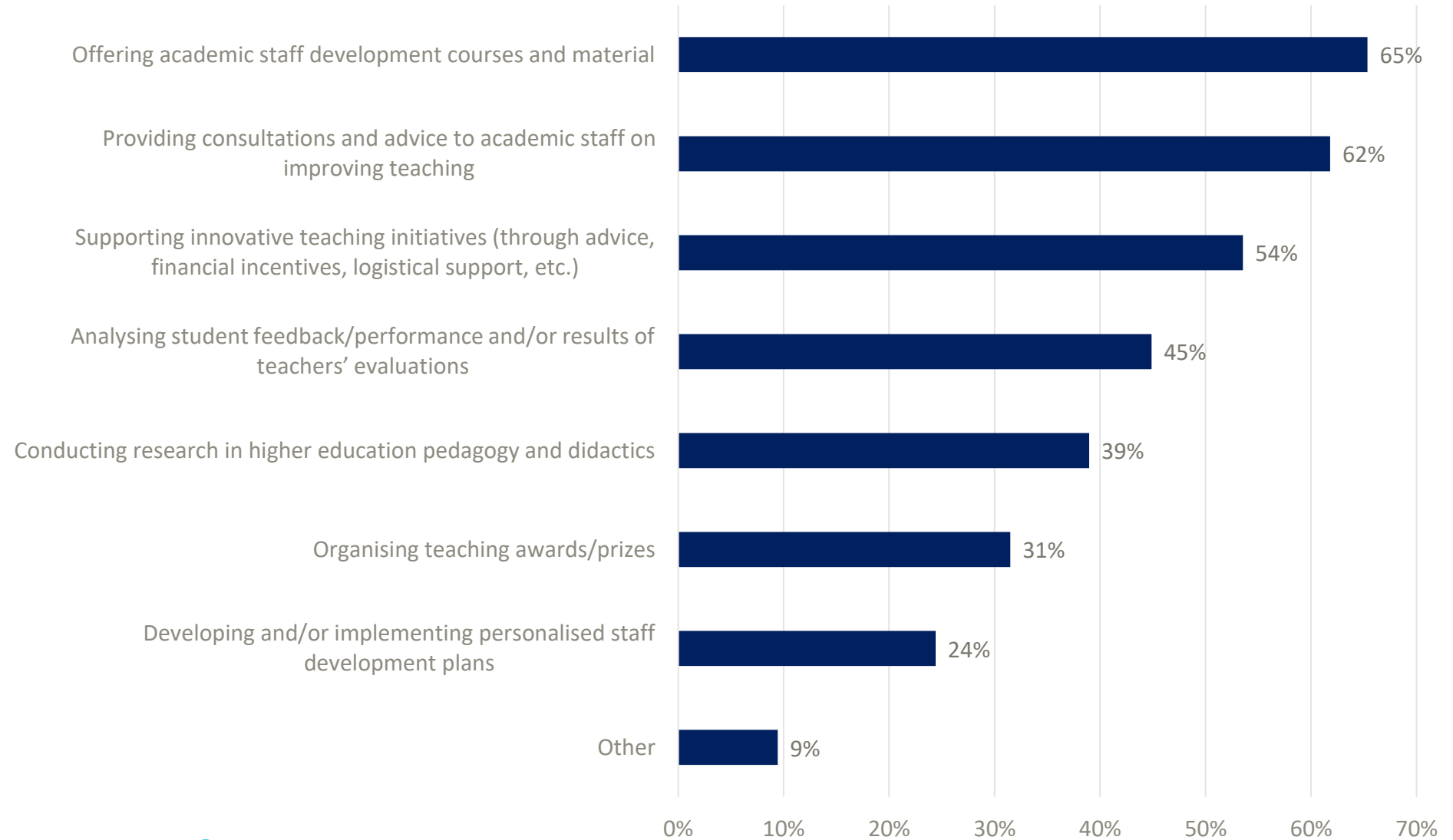
Top obstacles for L&T

Number one obstacle (out of top 3)

- Lack of financial resources — **47%**
- Lack of infrastructure — **5%**
- Lack of recognition for teaching in staff career progression — **19%**
- National (system-level) regulations — **6%**
- Not enough teaching staff — **5%**
- Resistance among teaching staff — **5%**

Trends 2018. Q17

Role and function of the L&T unit/centre

Offering academic staff development courses and material — 65%

Providing consultations and advice to academic staff on improving teaching — 62%

Supporting innovative teaching initiatives (through advice, financial incentives, logistical support, etc.) — 54%

Analysing student feedback/performance and/or results of teachers' evaluations — 45%

Conducting research in higher education pedagogy and didactics — 39%

Organising teaching awards/prizes — 31%

Developing and/or implementing personalised staff development plans — 24%

Other — 9%

Trends 2018. Q. 12.1

Concluding points

Institutional level: capacity for change

- Collaboration within the institution: role of leadership, structures such as L&T centres
- Evolving and changing roles of staff
- Overall implications for the institution: individual, group, collective levels
- Opportunities from the Covid19 crisis: reflect on own teaching, importance of student-centred learning, support from education developers

Exchange & collaboration crucial for L&T development

- Within and across institutions: developing communities of practice
- Better connecting teaching, research, and research on teaching
- Exchanges/projects among institutions and national initiatives
- Erasmus+, Bologna Process, university associations

Key challenges

- Institutional & policy attention to the education mission
- Career development and professional identity of academics
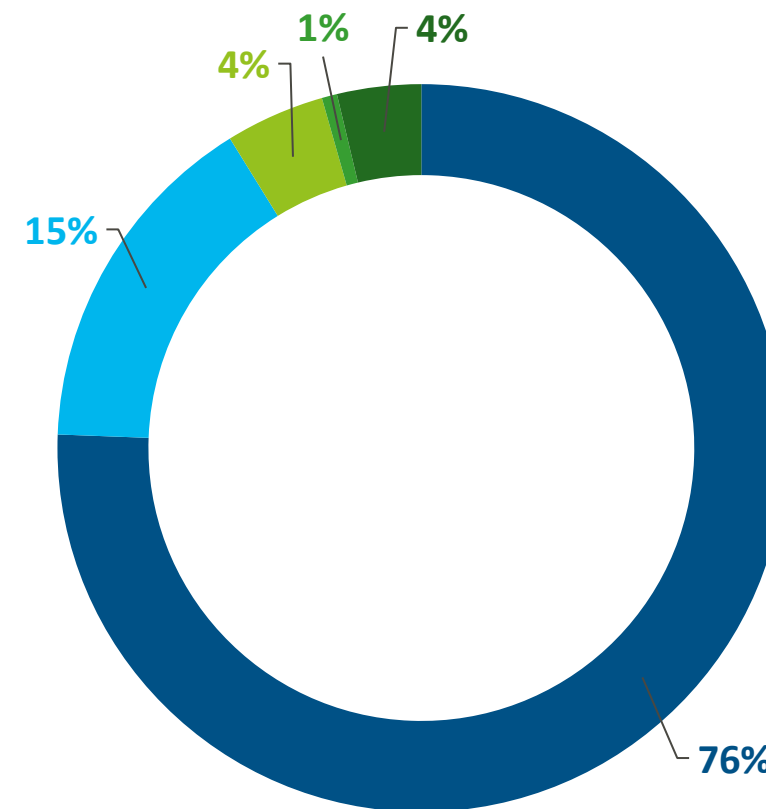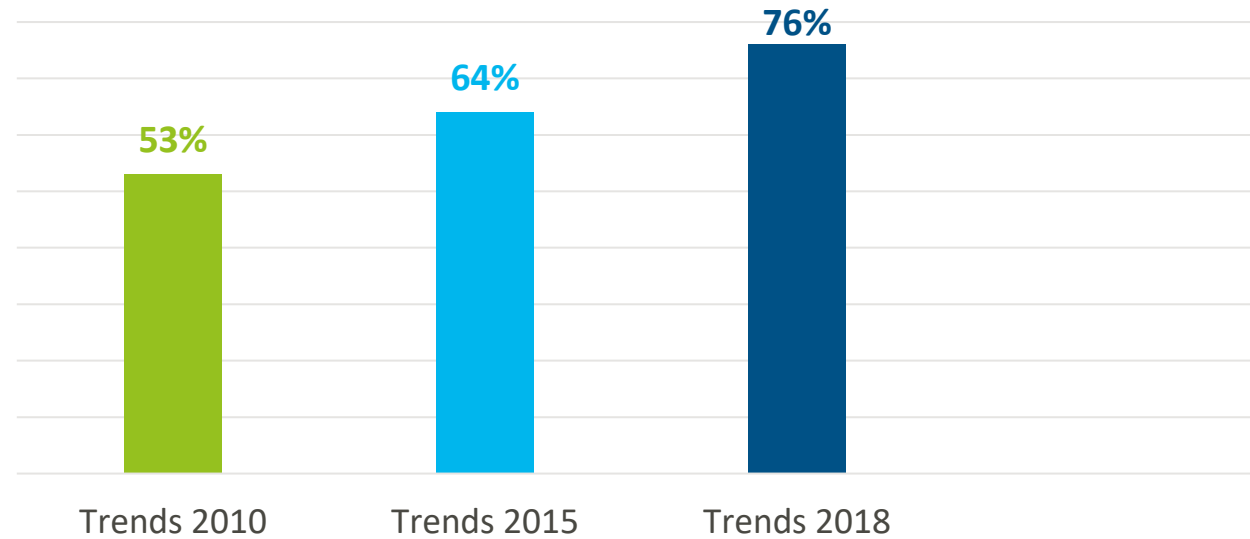- Funding, incentive and support mechanisms

Learning outcomes developed

1% 4%

4%

15%

76%

- Yes, for all courses (across the institution)
- Yes, for some courses
- No, but we intend to develop them
- No
- Information unavailable

Trends 2018. Q. 22

Learning outcomes for all courses

53% Trends 2010

64% Trends 2015

76% Trends 2018

Effects of introducing LO ("Yes it is the case" + "Yes, to some extent")	
Course contents revised	92%
Assessment and examinations revised	88%
Students more aware of their learning objectives	85%
Teaching methods changed	82%
Cooperation among teaching staff improved; course duplication reduced	75%
Dropout decreased	33%
No real change	56%
Student pass rates improved	44%

Trends 2018. Q. 22, Q. 22.1

Trends 2015. Q. 36

Trends 2010. Q. 19

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