Staff development for learning and teaching at European universities

Co-funded by the European Union

Are you ready to...

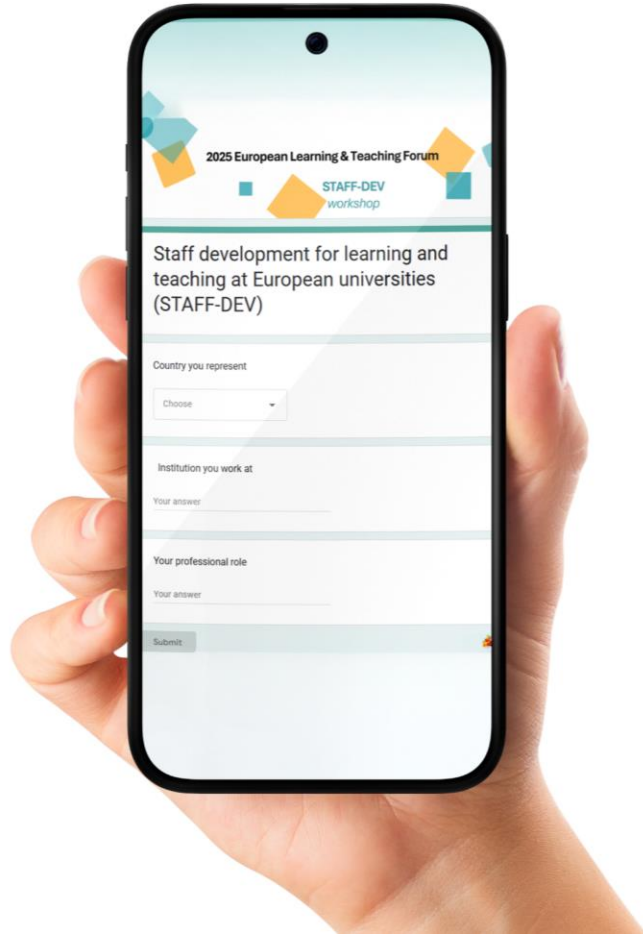
... discuss and deepen understanding of how staff development is currently organised across Europe?

... exchange ideas on ways forward, including in your own context?

RESULTS

Let’s create a snapshot of who’s in the room

Please fill in a short form about your country, institution, and professional role



The keyword was chosen to spark ideas about the diverse strengths of staff development and the **IMPACT it makes**

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
I	M	P	A	C	T
inspire	mentor	publish	analyze	conceptualize	think
innovate	mobilize	participate	admit	co-create	transform
include	measure	propose	activate	communicate	teach
investigate	monitor	peer-review	assess	confirm	transverse
improve	mediate	prove	apply	challenge	test

Project

- Co-funded by the Erasmus+
- From January 2024 to December 2026

- To map the situation at European HEIs
- To support HEIs in designing staff development and exchanging on how they do it
- To draw lessons to share with policy makers and the sector

Utrecht University
UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
eua EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION
RUHR UNIVERSITÄT BOCHUM
RUB
UCC University College Cork, Ireland Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

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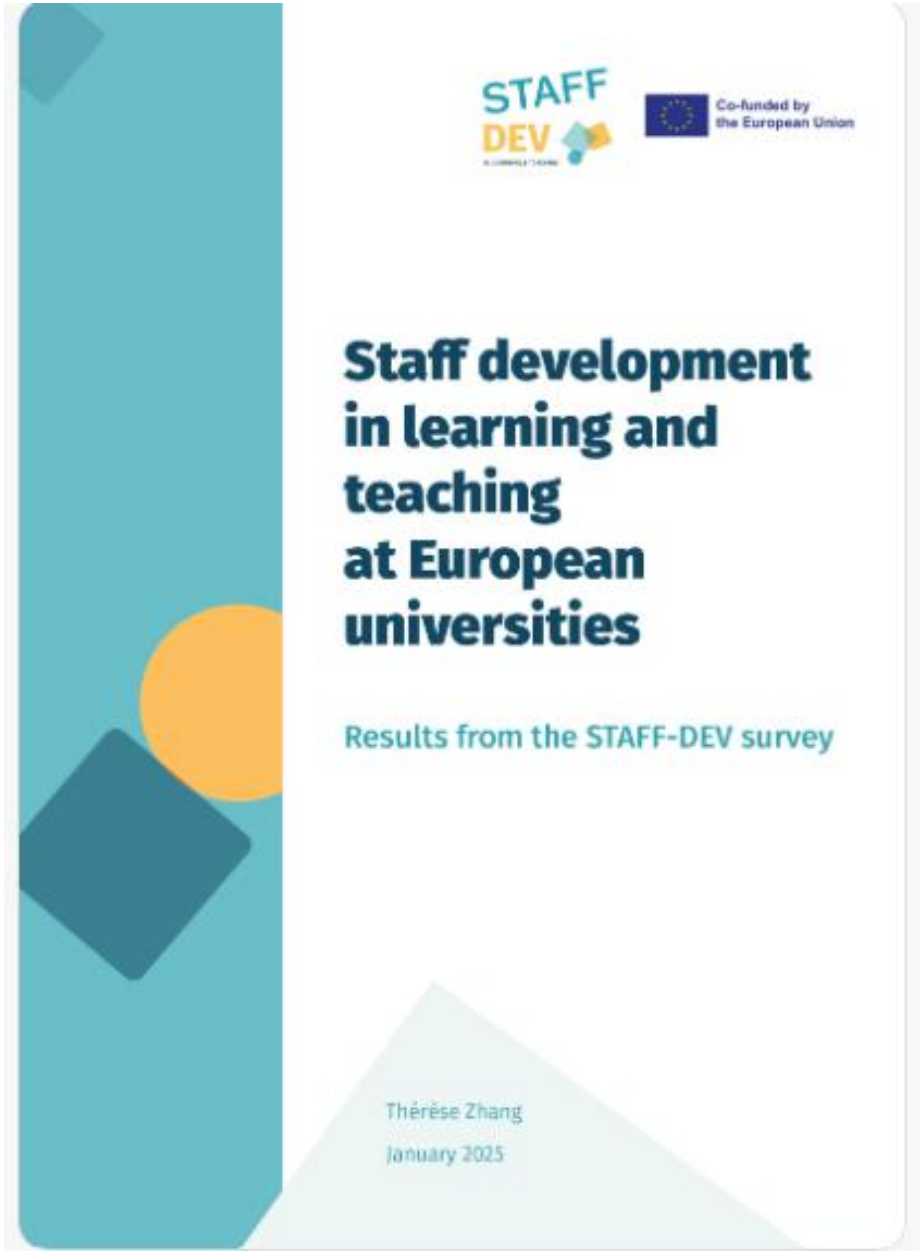

STAFF DEV
Co-funded by the European Union
Staff development in learning and teaching at European universities
Results from the STAFF-DEV survey
Thérèse Zhang
January 2025

bitly

Teaching enhancement in place at European HEIs

Recognition of good teaching

(e.g. awards, career development, incentives)

- **66%** in place
- **13%** planned

Source: Trends 2018

Staff development

- 84% of HEIs across the EHEA offer training in pedagogy and didactics

Source: Trends 2024

Main obstacle to the enhancement of teaching

1. Lack of funding
2. Lack of recognition for teaching in career progression

Source: Trends 2018, Trends 2024

How staff development is conceptualised and organised

Fig. 4 – In your country, who organises SD in teaching?
N = 163

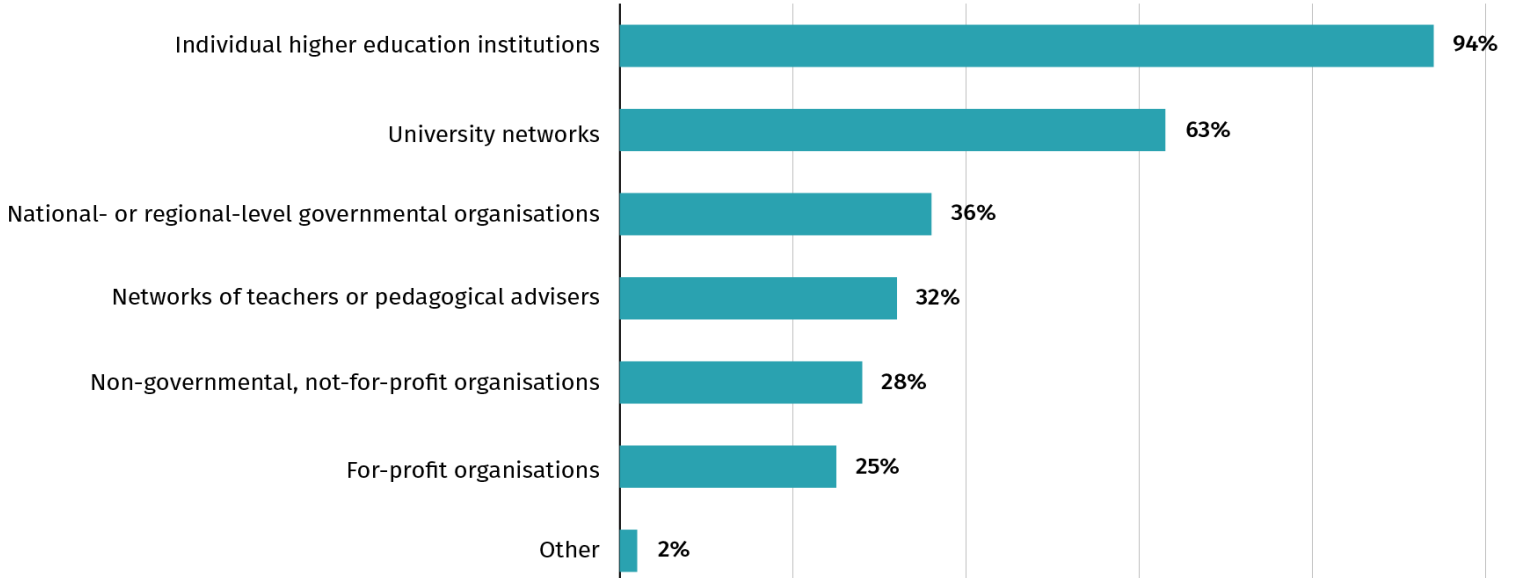
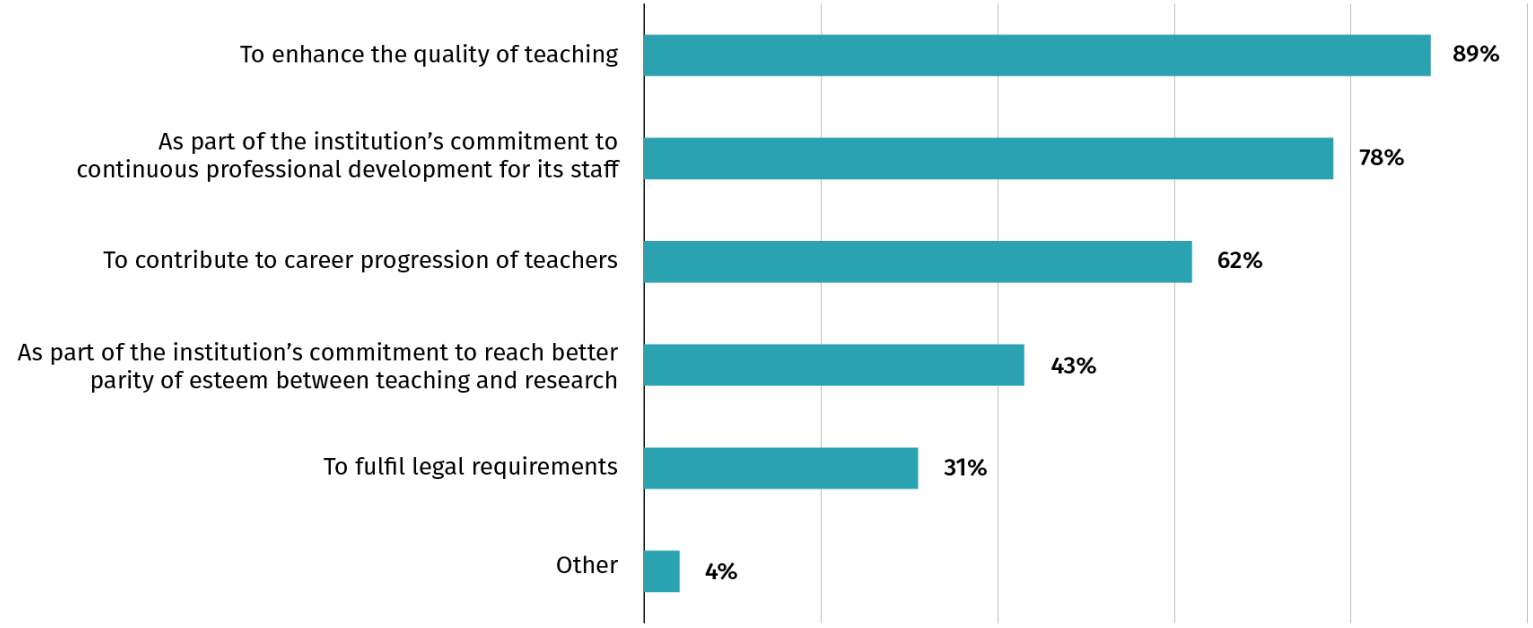


Fig. 6 – Purpose of offering SD (as described in the L&T strategy)
N = 119



How HEIs see value in staff development

Community building and wellbeing perspective

- Creating and maintaining a sense of community and engagement
- Contributing to teachers' self-confidence and mutual support
- Overcoming frustration over (common) challenges

Institutional perspective

- Creating and maintaining a sense of accountability
- Supporting the institution's pedagogical vision across disciplines and departments, with emphasis on similar values and competences

Individual development perspective

- Supporting the implementation of newly acquired competences into classrooms
- Better informing teachers, broaden their capacity to address transversal aspects
- Improving awareness to engage students through active learning methods
- Helping to tackle new challenges

How staff development is conceptualised and organised

- Intertwined! Not easy to make a clear demarcation line
- Many activities organised by the institution are structured, but do not include any assessment upon completion.

Formal

Organised by the institution
Assigned learning objectives + assessment
More general use

96% of STAFF-DEV respondents offer it

Self-organised

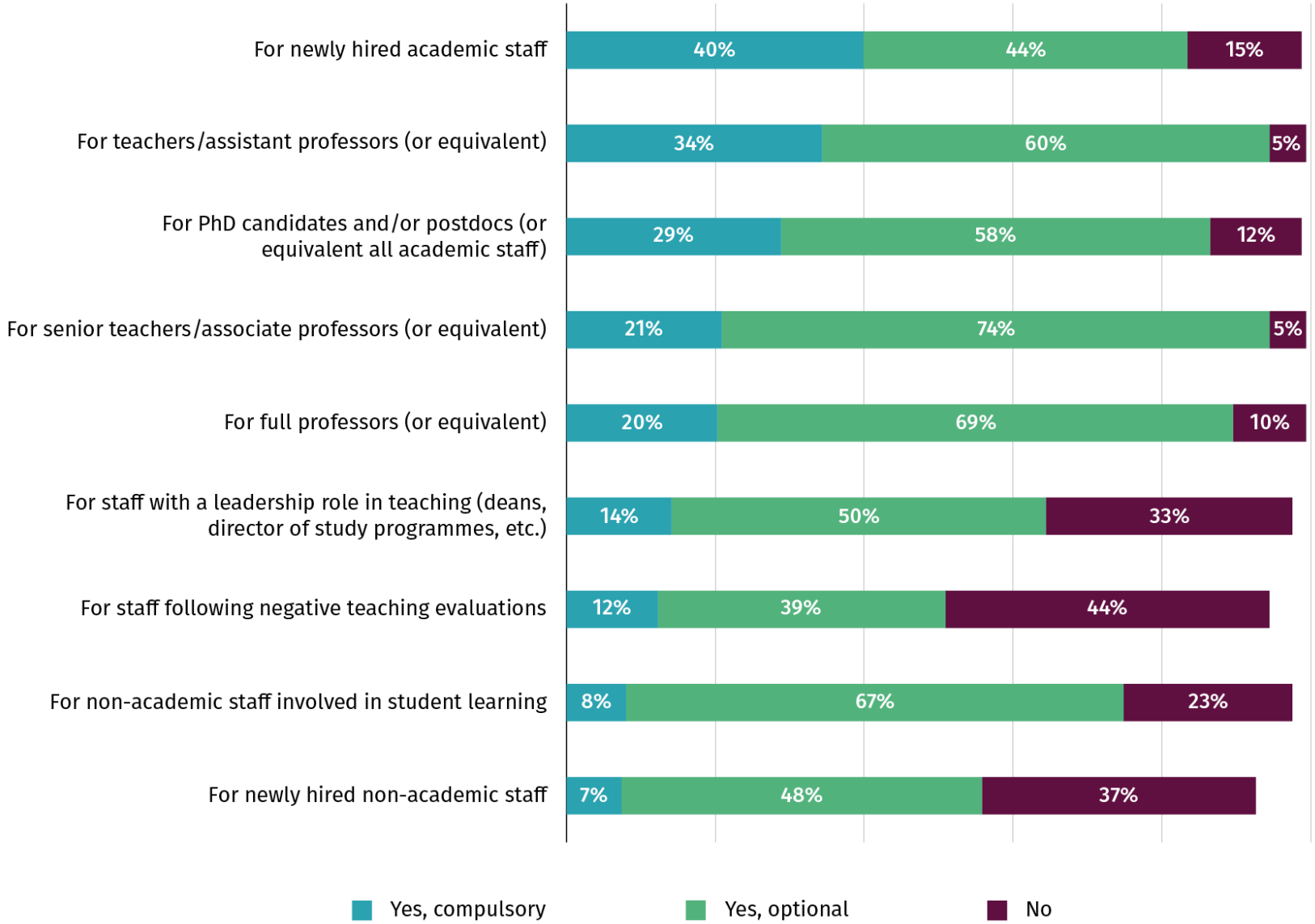
By individuals, groups or the institution
Typically optional
Used for specificities and immediate needs

71% of STAFF-DEV respondents offer it

Some grey zones:

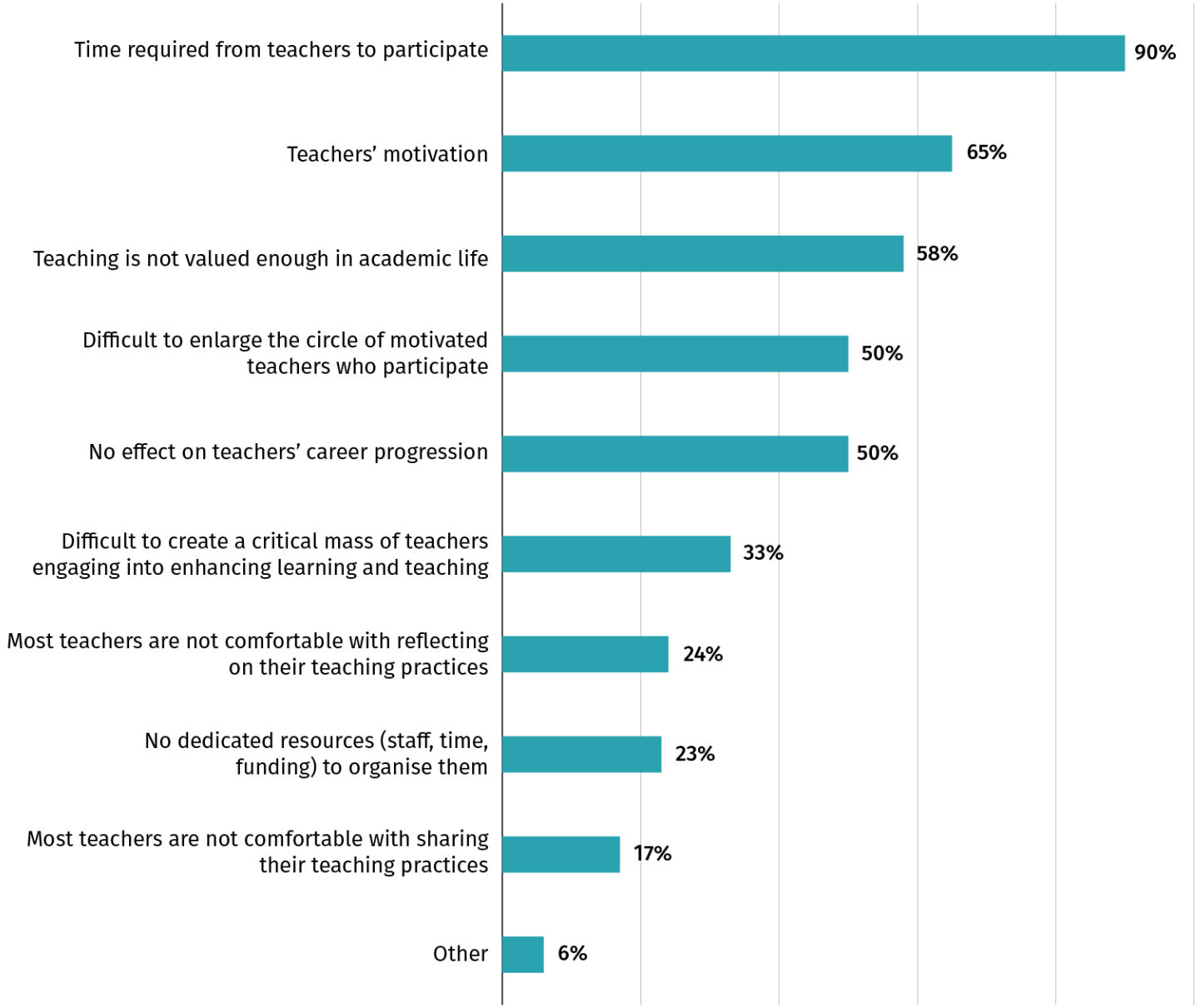
- Courses not mandatory as such, yet required for staff to take them in the course of their career
- Depends more on the status of the person, the state of advancement in career and teaching experience

Fig. 9 – Formal SD offered. N = 162



How universities support professional development for teachers: relation with recognition and career progression

Fig. 15 – Challenges to proposing and organising SD
N = 163



BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

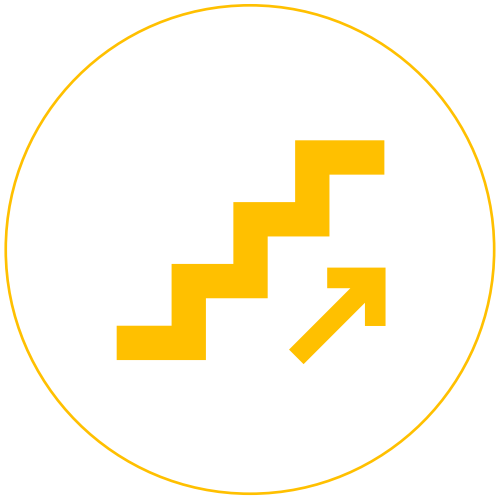
Time

Institutional and National support

Lack of stability in HEI Leadership
Lack of stability in budget
Lack of stability in government

ENABLERS FOR ENGAGEMENT

Connectivity



Career Progression

Recognition

How universities support professional development for teachers: relation with recognition and career progression

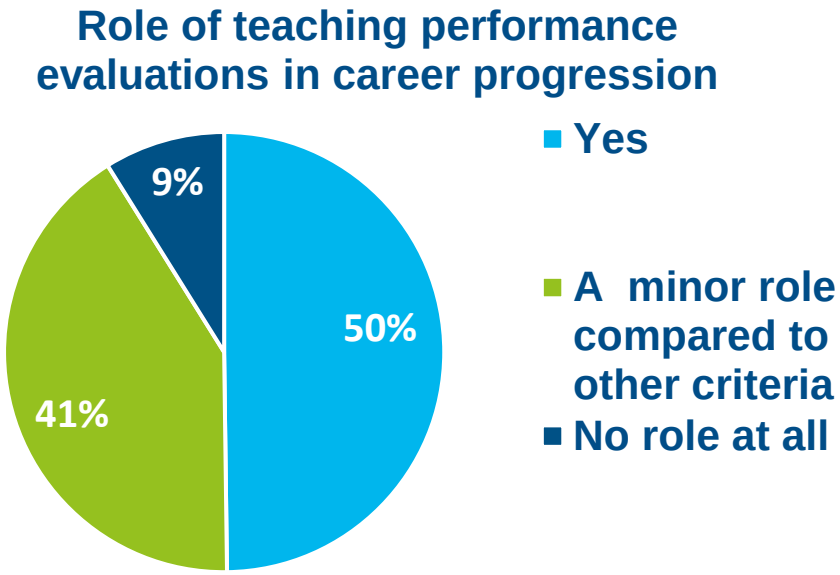
How to assess teaching?

- Student feedback:

The most widespread practice (97% of HEIs)

But HEIs also commented that they need to improve how to approach teaching performance evaluation.

- More appropriate (and complementary) tools?



Source: Trends 2024 data
N=489

Teaching portfolios

43% use it
10% plan to introduce it

Source: Trends 2018 data
N=303

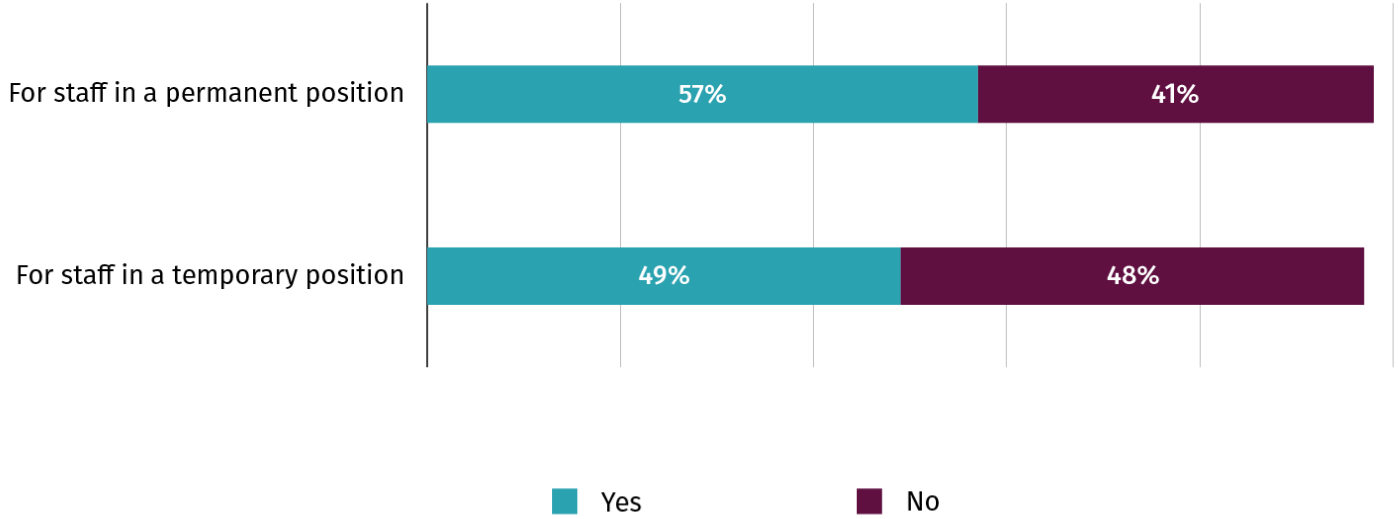
Peer feedback systems

34% use it
11% plan to introduce it

Processes wherein SD can be taken into account and need to be documented :

1. When academic staff start their position
2. In the context of a periodic evaluation
3. Upon renewal of their contract in the case of temporary staff
4. When moving from a temporary to a permanent status

Fig. 20 – Does formal SD account for career progression?
N = 160

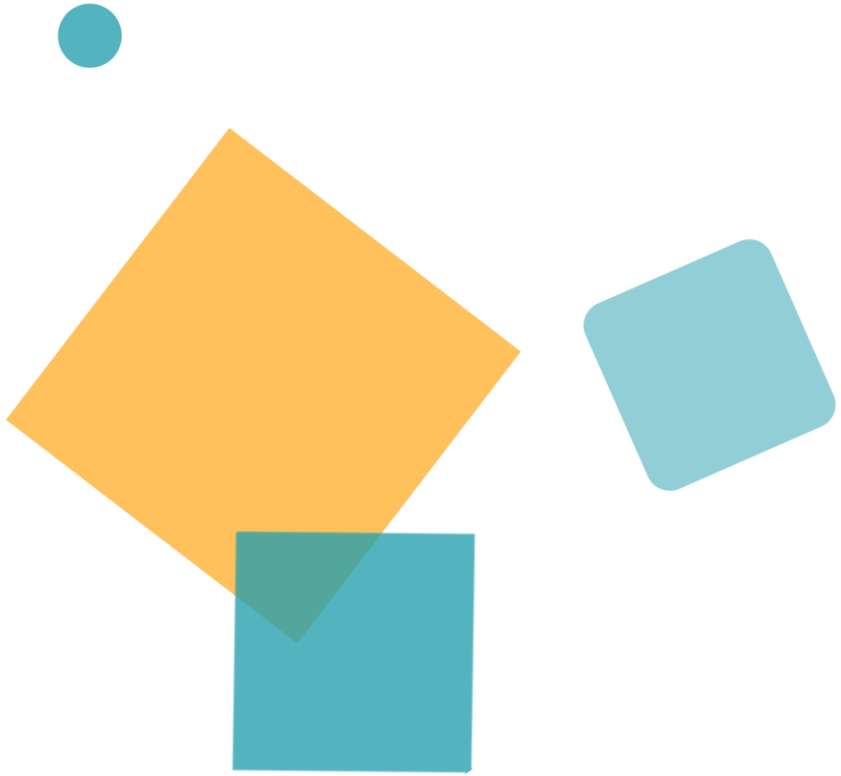


- Country differences:
  - Temporary staff: in nearly all HEIs in BE FL, PL, FI, ES, UK vs much less in IT, FR, PT, CZ, DE, IE
  - Permanent staff: in (nearly) all HEIs in FI, UK, SE, PL vs much less in DE, PT, CZ, CH
- The way teaching plays a role in career progression is not always clear: blurry zone between what is compulsory, what is an incentive, and what is optional yet still expected from individual teachers.

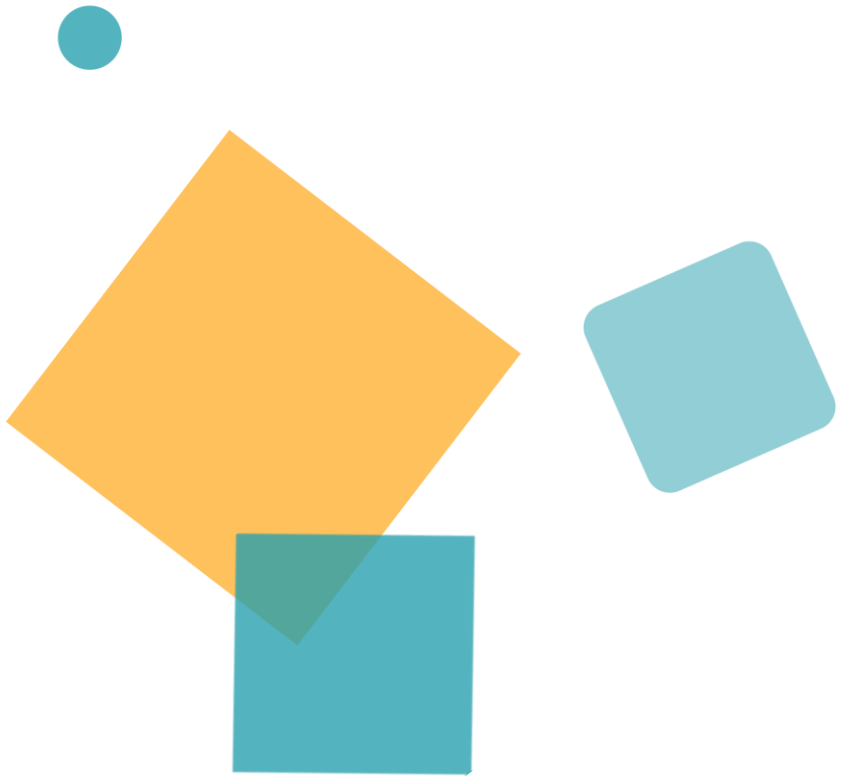
Small group discussion

What strikes you in this presentation of the situation regarding staff development?

What can you relate with?



Work in pairs



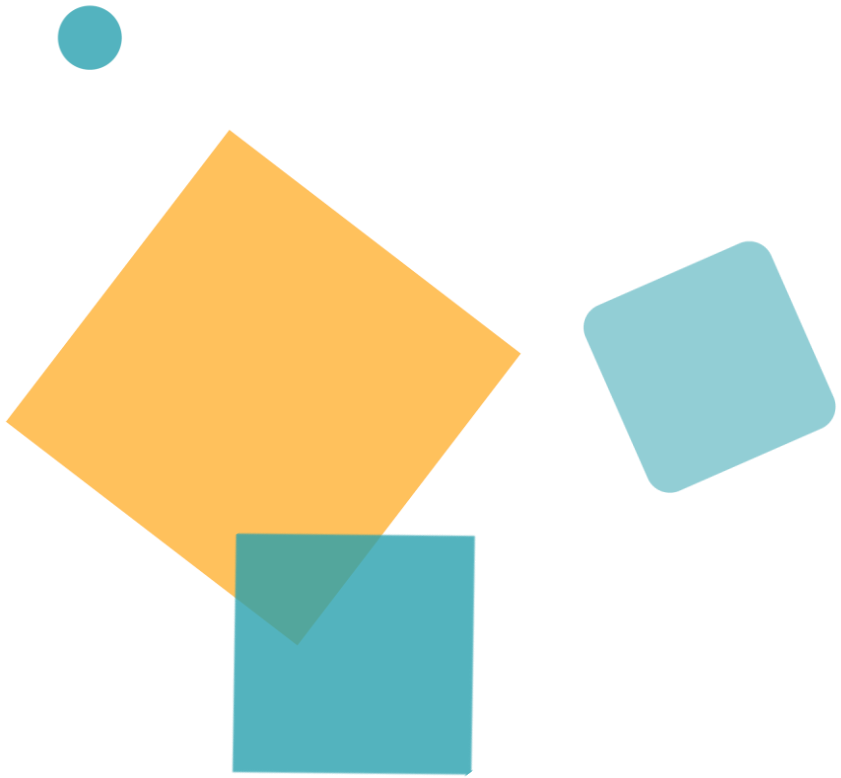
Forward-looking ambitions:

How would you define the next steps or ways forward, in your context?

What would be realistic and feasible, as next (small) step(s)?

Let’s share…

What would you need to realise these ambitions or next steps?



Our project next steps

Practice sharing and capacity building (WP3)

To provide capacity-building opportunities for HEIs, through a series of peer-learning and training activities

- 3 Thematic Peer Groups (2025-2026)
- Apply for the first STAFF-DEV Master Class: deadline 7 March 2025

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Thank you for your participation

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Email: gohar.hovhannisyan@eua.eu

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