

External quality assurance of research, unveiling agencies' realities



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The ENQA WG on EQA of research



Duration: 18 months (September 2023 – January 2025)

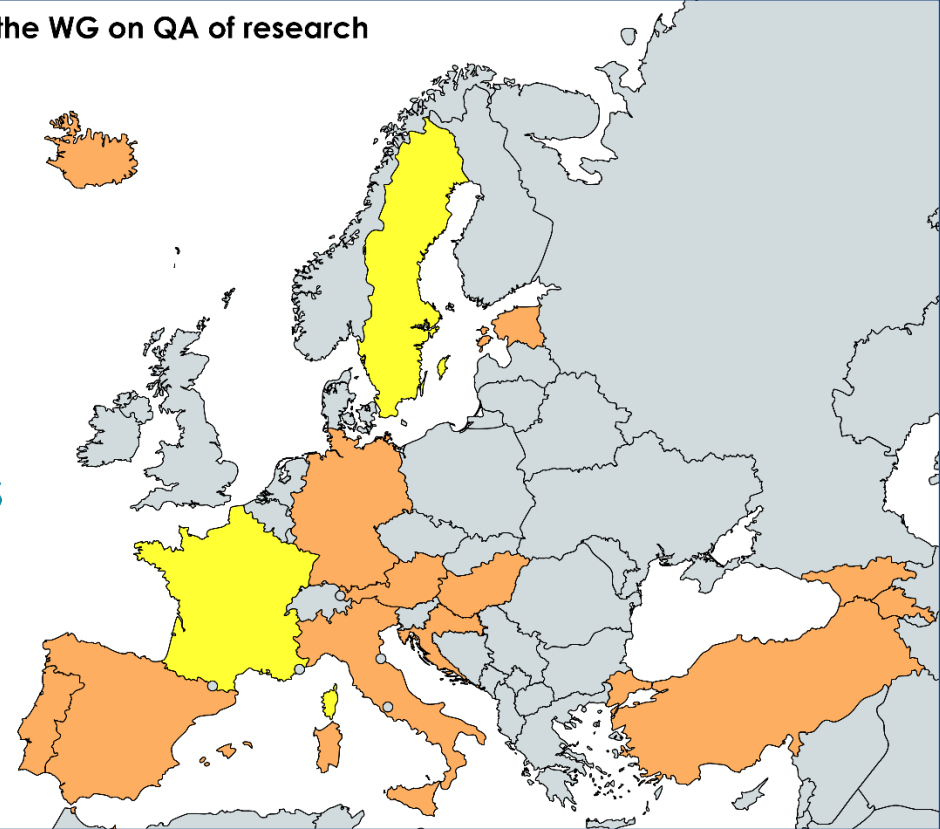


Objective: take stock of the agencies' procedures for external quality assurance of research in HEIs to inform agencies and share practices

⇒ The final report will provide agencies with reflective questions to support them in developing EQA of research

Composition of the WG on QA of research

Members
Co-chairs



Why EQA of research?

To improve the quality of research

Complement research assessment procedures, take a broader perspective and contribute to enhancing the quality of research

Endorse international and regional concerns on the quality of the research environment

To follow HEIs' developments

56% of HEIs consider education and research as two equally important missions and 11% consider research as more important than education (EUA, 2024)

93% of HEIs cover research in their IQA procedures (EUA, 2023)

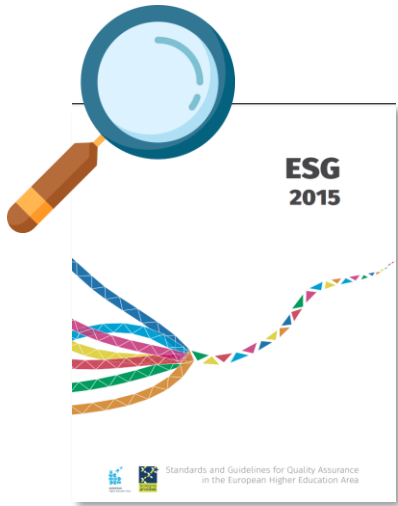
To foster the link between HE and research

Train enlightened students who are able to face the challenges of the 21st century

To shed light on undocumented activities many agencies carry out

Share practices of support enhancement of EQA

What do the ESG say?



“

Guideline 1.1.

Quality assurance policies are most effective when they reflect the **relationship between research and learning & teaching**

”

“

Guideline 1.5.

HEIs provide a supportive environment that “encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the **link between education and research**”

”

“

Guideline 1.9

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes “include the **evaluation of the content of the programme in the light of the latest research** in the given discipline thus ensuring that the programme is up to date”.

”

Defining EQA of research

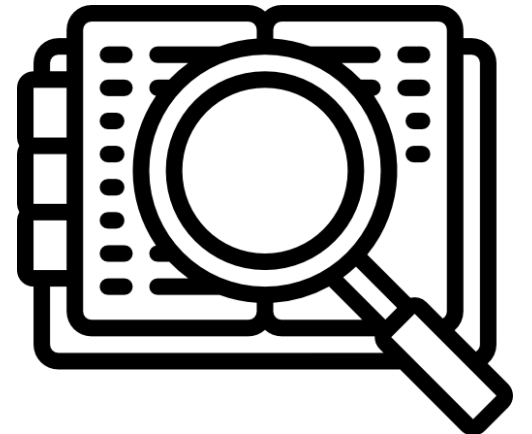
“ External quality assurance of research

An all-embracing term referring to a regular process of reviewing (monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and enhancing) the quality of the **research environment at HEIs**, including its interrelations with the education and societal impact missions of HEIs.

”

⇒ EQA of Research **≠** Research assessment

⇒ **Research assessment:** evaluating research outputs



Key data from the survey analysis

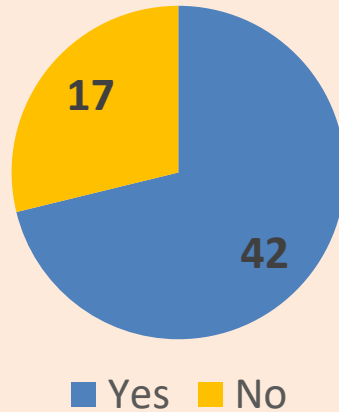


59 responding agencies

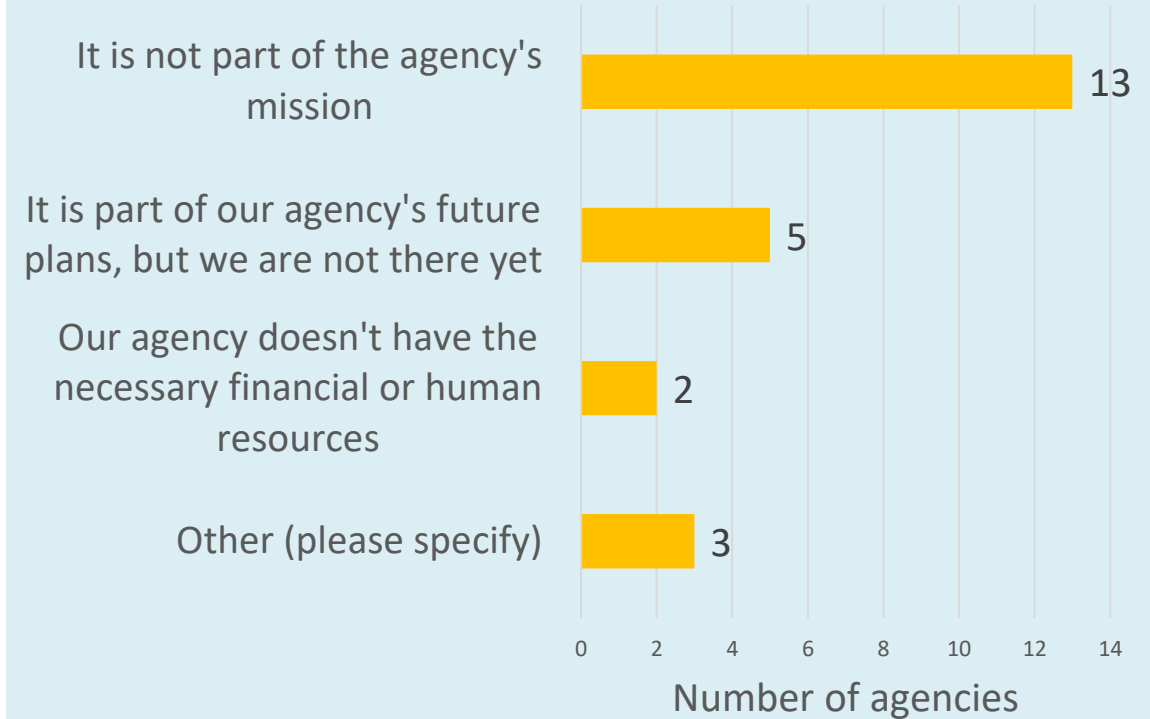


Located in 34 countries
(9 from Spain and 6 from Germany)

Is your agency engaged in external quality assurance of research at the HEIs? (N=59)

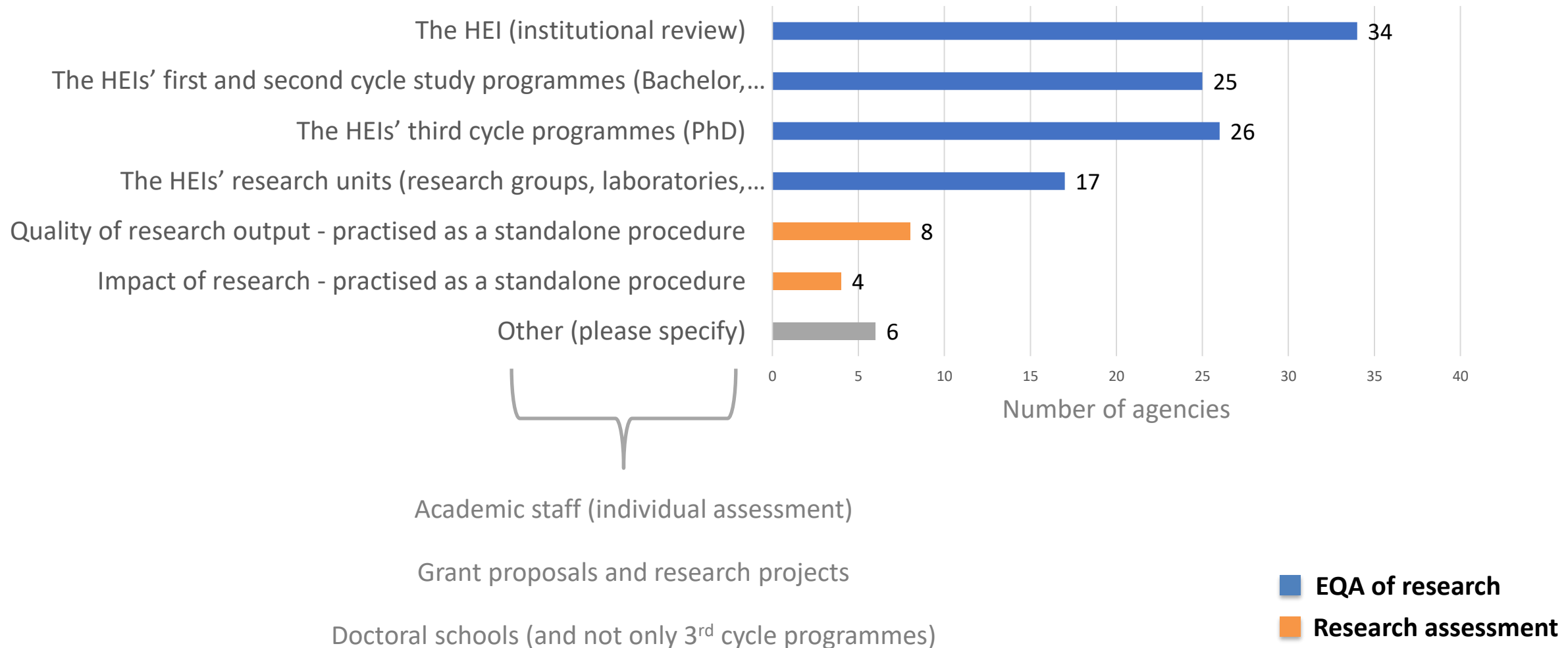


If your answer is “No”, what is the reason (or reasons, multiple answers allowed) for not engaging in this area? (N=17)



Key data from the survey analysis

What is the focus of the procedures carried out by your agency that focus on research ? (N=42)

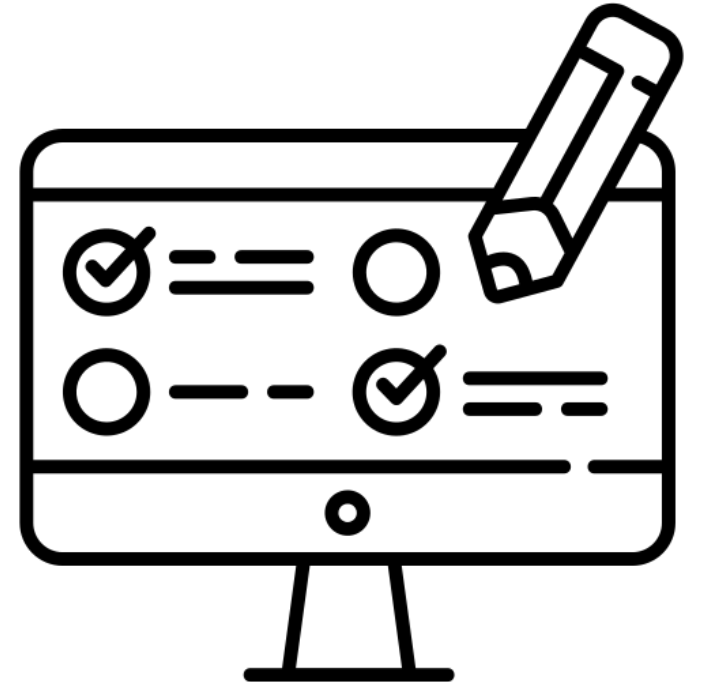


Key data from the survey analysis

Survey of the 42 agencies that reported carrying out EQA of research on 3 themes

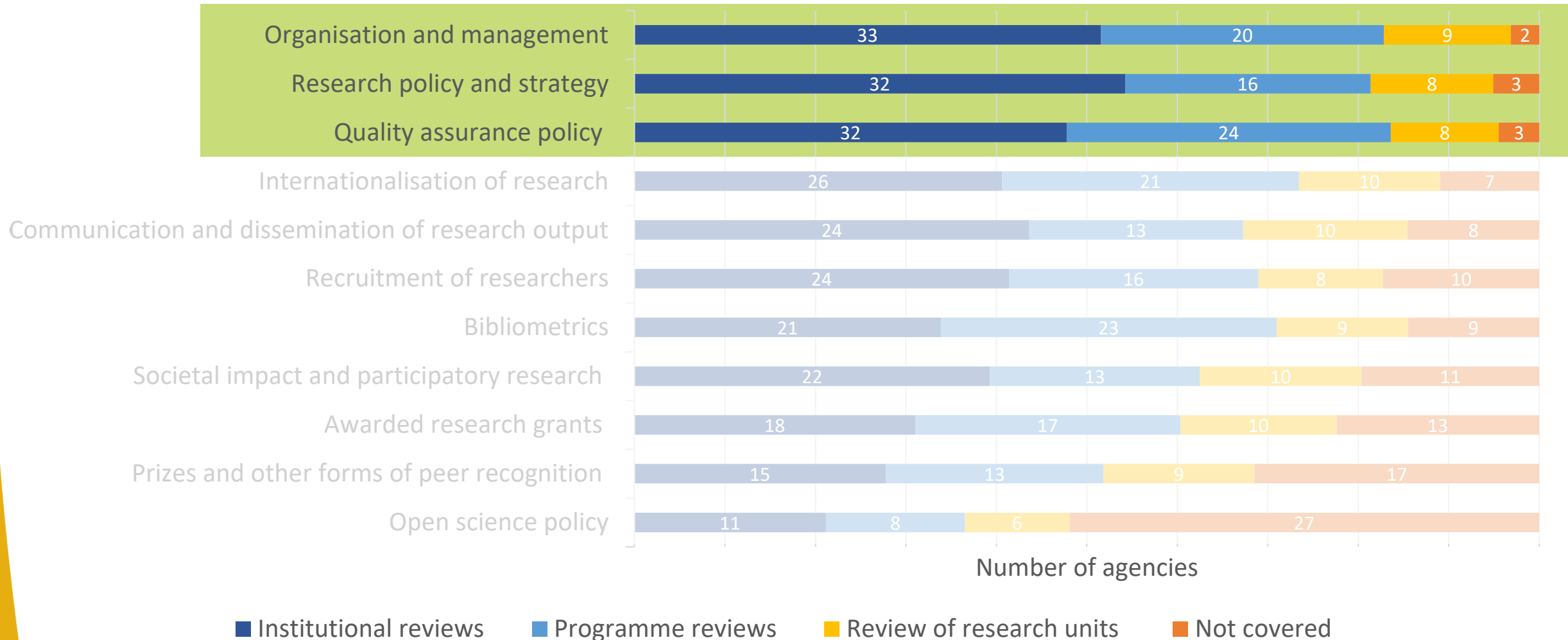
What do agencies cover in their standards and guidelines in terms of:

- General aspects of **research management and policy**
- Elements of the **research environment**
- Aspects of the **link between HE and research**



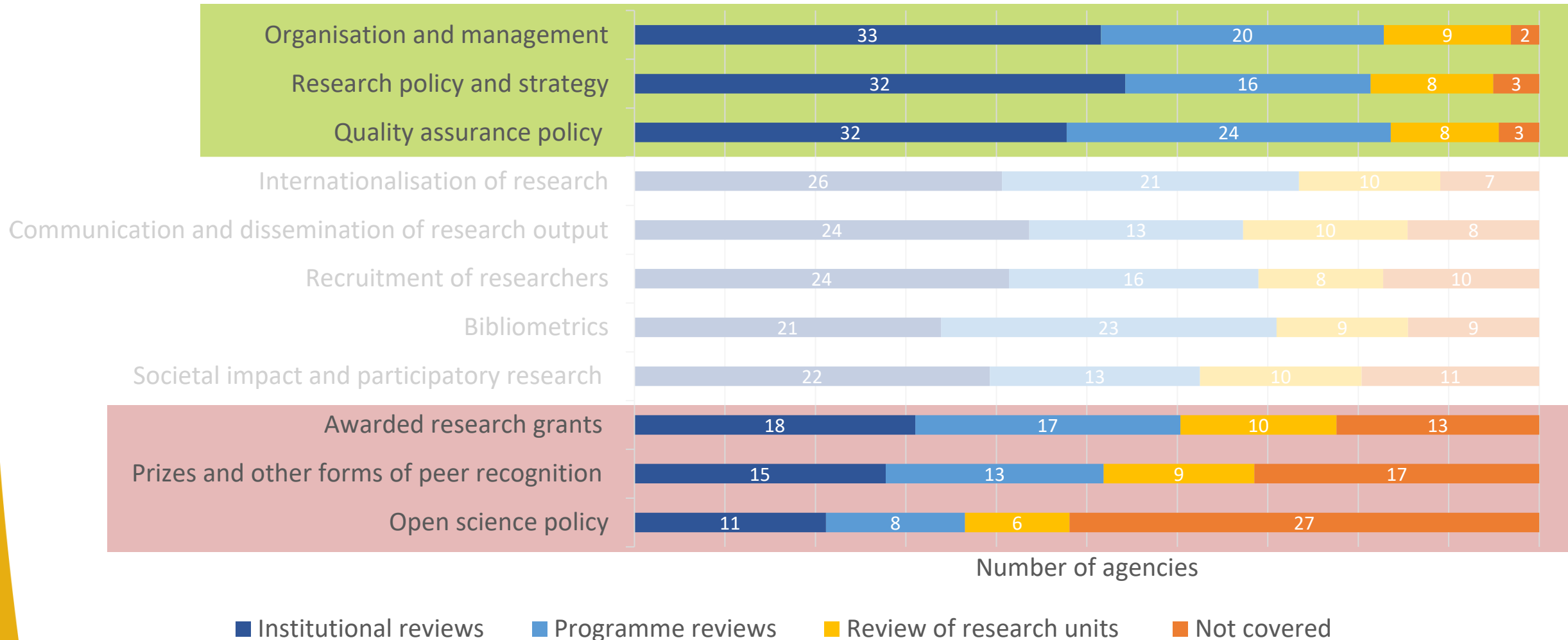
Key data from the survey analysis

General aspects of research management and policy covered by agencies in their EQA of research procedure (N=42)



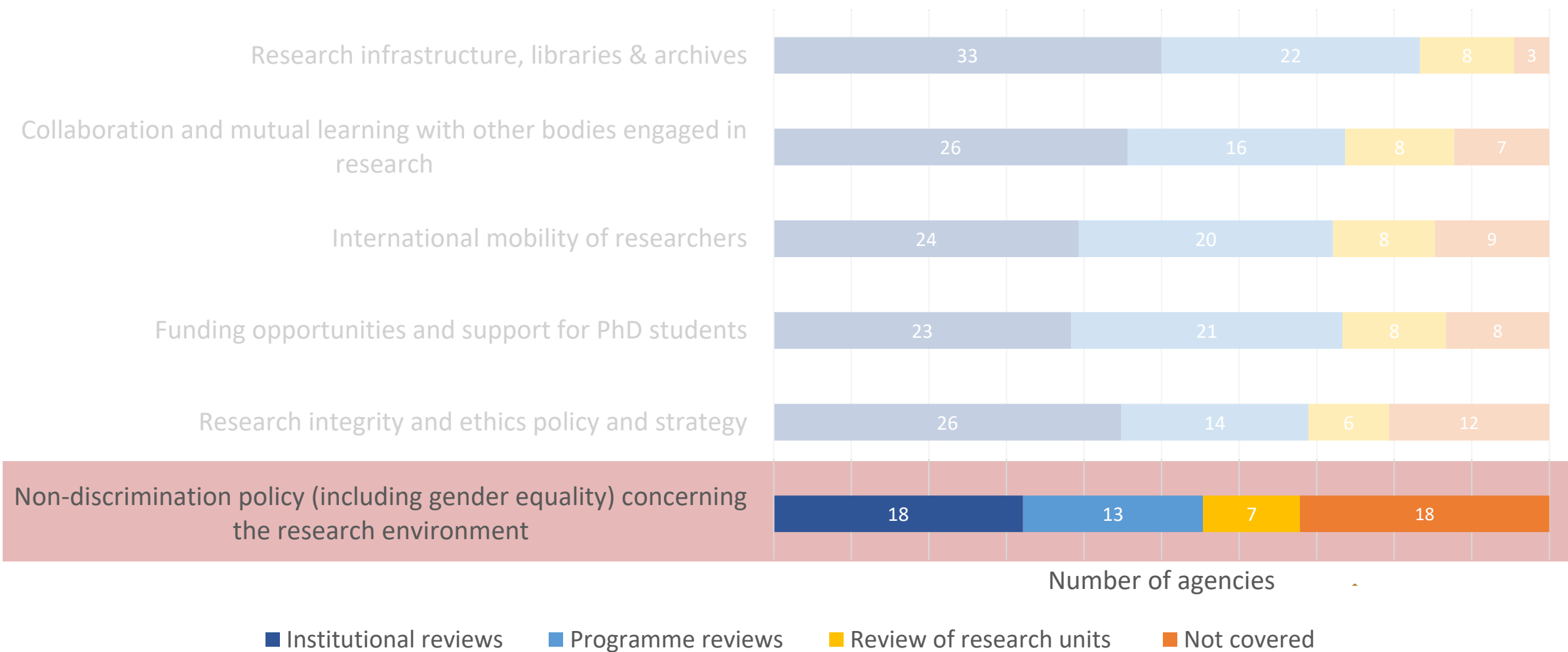
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General aspects of research management and policy covered by agencies in their EQA of research procedure (N=42)



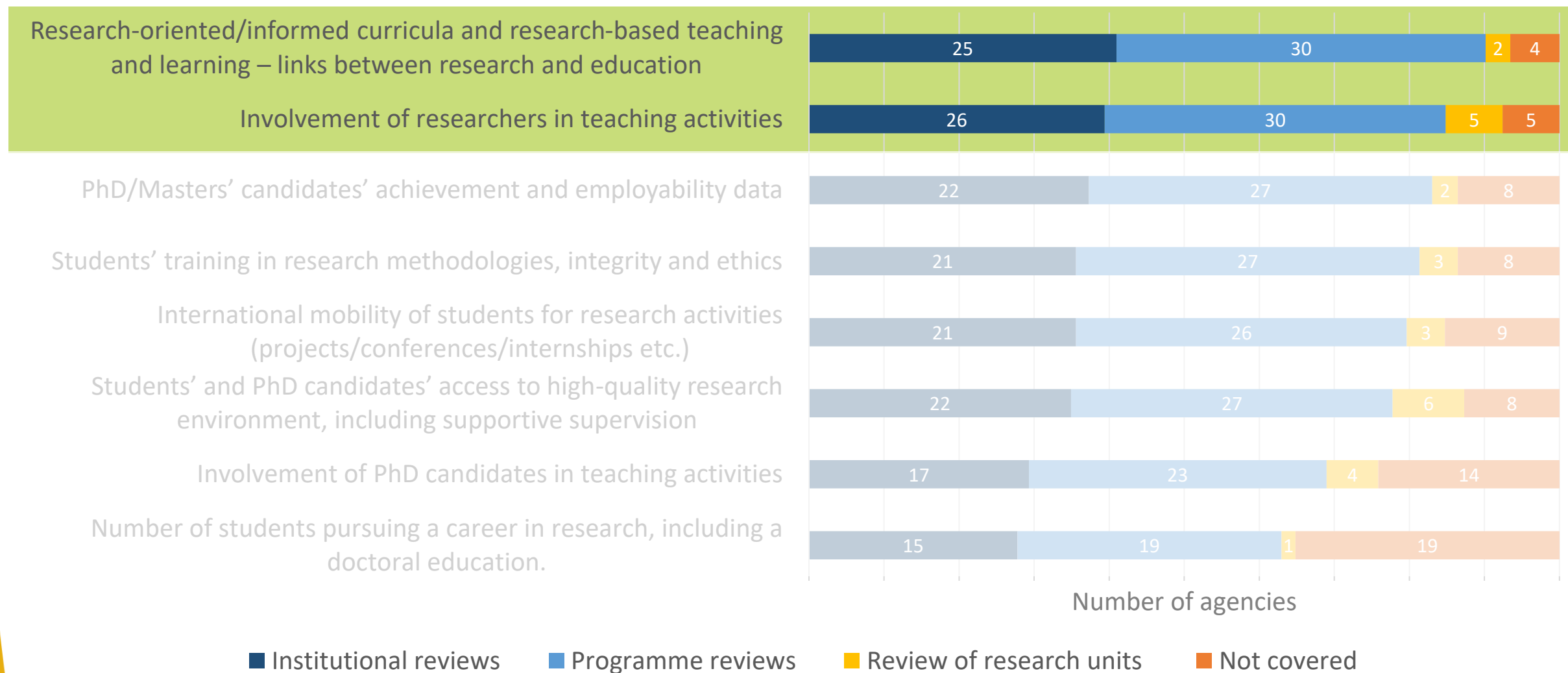
Key data from the survey analysis

Elements of the research environment covered by agencies in their EQA of research procedure (N=49)



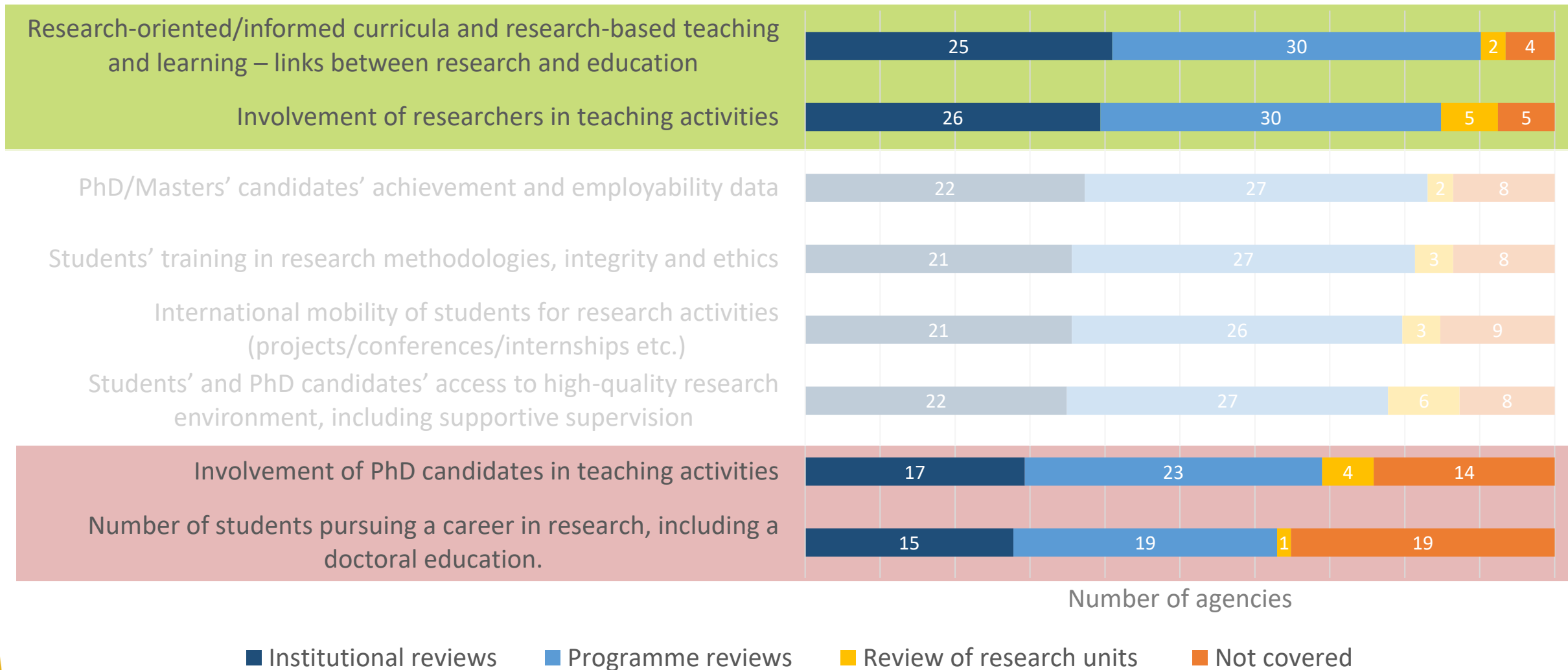
Key data from the survey analysis

Aspects of the link between HE and research covered agencies in their EQA of research procedure (N=49)



Key data from the survey analysis

Aspects of the link between HE and research covered agencies in their EQA of research procedure (N=49)



EQA of research at the doctoral level

EQA of research at the doctoral level requires a transversal perspective, through the lens of the three themes mentioned in the study:

- General aspects of **research management and policy**
- Elements of the **research environment**
- Aspects of the **link between HE and research**

26/42 agencies claim to be involved in EQA of research at the doctoral level

- Mainly in 3rd cycle study programme review (standalone procedure)
- Some as part of the institutional review
- Some in the review of doctoral schools (standalone procedure)

