



**Turkish Higher Education
Quality Council**

2023

Higher Education Evaluation And Quality Assurance

STATUS REPORT



2023
HIGHER EDUCATION
EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
STATUS REPORT



Turkish Higher Education Quality Council

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Prof. Ümit KOCABIÇAK

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Preface

The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council's (THEQC) 2023 Higher Education Evaluation and Quality Assurance Status Report includes the Institutional External Evaluation Program, Follow-up Program, Institutional Accreditation Program, and Mid-term Evaluation Program processes of higher education institutions and the activities carried out for quality assurance. In addition, the report also includes the monitoring and authorisation activities for accreditation agencies that carry out program accreditation processes in higher education institutions (HEIs).

THEQC was established under the Council of Higher Education in 2015 for the quality assurance system to be established and strengthened in the field of higher education in Türkiye. Having started its external evaluation activities in 2016, THEQC became an administratively and financially autonomous institution in 2017, and its founding regulation was promulgated in the Official Gazette in 2018. THEQC was established to guide HEIs to develop, strengthen and internalize their quality assurance system and disseminate a quality culture. THEQC's mission is to strengthen quality assurance systems in higher education to contribute to the continuous development of HEIs and the achievement of universal



qualifications by individuals, and its vision is to be an effective and internationally recognised institution in the field of higher education quality assurance.

In line with its mission, THEQC has adopted the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) as the framework for Türkiye, a member of the European Higher Education Area, and has continued its activities through external evaluation and accreditation programs developed by taking into account the essential characteristics of the Turkish higher education system. As a result of its efforts, THEQC has been a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education since 2020. THEQC is also a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQA/AHE), and the American Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG), and the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA). Additionally, THEQC was registered by the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) on 3 March 2023.

THEQC first guides them to write their Institutional Self-Evaluation Reports annually to prepare HEIs for the processes of institutional external evaluation, follow-up, institutional accreditation and mid-term evaluation. After examination of the ISERs, institutions are subjected to the Institutional External Evaluation Program based on the evaluation criteria developed, and Institutional Feedback Reports are written by independent evaluators after paying a site visit to the institutions. An institution is included in the Follow-up Program, as a result of which a Follow-up Report is written, to evaluate whether an institution has improved its areas for improvement, and then in the Institutional Accreditation Program after which an accreditation decision is taken. THEQC grants full accreditation and conditional accreditation to HEIs that succeed in the Institutional Accreditation Program or decides on the refusal of accreditation if they fall below the accreditation standards. With the accreditation decision, the aspects open to improvement are also communicated to the institution.

HEIs that were granted accreditation in the scope of the IAP are included in the Mid-term Evaluation Program at the end of two years. This program reviews whether the institution's strengths have been maintained and its areas for improvement have been improved. After this program, a Mid-term Evaluation Report is written and accordingly, one of the decisions to continue or terminate accreditation in institutions holding full accreditation,



and to elevate it to full accreditation or to terminate accreditation in institutions holding conditional accreditation are taken by THEQC.

In 2023, THEQC included two HEIs in the Institutional External Evaluation, 24 in the Follow-up Program, 21 in the Institutional Accreditation, and nine in the Mid-term Evaluation Program, and shared the reports and decisions with the public.

While THEQC continues its activities for the establishment, development and continuous improvement of the quality assurance system of 208 HEIs in Türkiye, it also monitors and authorises the activities of 24 national accreditation agencies that provide program accreditation to HEIs and undertakes the recognition of international accreditation agencies.



Executive Summary

Prof. Ümit Kocabiçak has been in office as the President of THEQC since 22.06.2023, following the resignation of Prof. Muhsin Kar in April 2023.

Since its establishment, THEQC has been working on the evaluation of the activities of higher education institutions in line with their mission, vision and objectives, the recognition and authorization of independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies, and the dissemination of quality assurance culture in higher education within the framework of the criteria determined to ensure internal and external quality assurance in the higher education system. THEQC publishes the Higher Education Evaluation and Quality Assurance Status Report (Status Report) to inform stakeholders in the higher education system by analysing the findings obtained as a result of these annual works. Covering the activities in 2023, this report provides information about the activities of THEQC, shares the findings of internal and external evaluations, and assesses the current state of program accreditation in the higher education system.

THEQC conducts the external evaluation of HEIs through the Institutional External Evaluation Program (IEEP), Follow-up Program (FuP), Institutional Accreditation Program (IAP), and Mid-term Evaluation Program (MtEP). In the external evaluation process, each HEI annually writes an Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) following the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report Writing Guide. THEQC conducts the institutional external evaluation activities utilizing the Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation Criteria and the Institutional External Evaluation, Institutional Accreditation, and Follow-up Programs Guide documents that are updated in certain periods considering the experience THEQC gains as a result of its practices. Institutional external evaluation processes of THEQC are carried out with a holistic perspective under four main headings, namely Leadership, Governance and Quality, Learning and Teaching, Research and Development, and Service to Society, with 14 criteria and 46 sub-criteria. Additionally, THEQC continues to develop and improve its evaluation criteria by following international quality processes and introducing new versions of evaluation documents.

THEQC supports HEIs in establishing their quality assurance systems and encourages them to define their mission and vision in line with their needs. It also encourages state and foundation universities to develop their strategic plan although it is not a legal obligation for



foundation universities. THEQC attaches importance to institutions establishing systematic follow-up mechanisms and developing quality assurance systems by taking into account the regional, national and international developments of HEIs to determine whether the indicator targets set by linking the goals and objectives of the strategic plan developed for five-year periods with quality assurance systems have been achieved.

In accordance with the Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance and the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council, THEQC first initiates the IEEP. IEEP is essentially an evaluation process of the internal quality assurance systems of the HEIs with a focus on the continuous improvement approach of the institutions and their strengths and areas for improvement by independent evaluation teams within the framework of the THEQC criteria. At the end of the process, an Institutional Feedback Report (IFR) is written by the evaluation team and published on the official website of THEQC after the approval of the Council. So far, 191 HEIs have been evaluated in the IEEP, which was conducted for the first time in 2016. The ratio of all HEIs evaluated in the IEEP reached 92%. The remaining HEIs have not been included in the program because they have not yet graduated the first cohort of students. These institutions will be included in the IEEP after they graduate their students. Accordingly, two HEIs were included in the IEEP in 2023. According to the findings obtained from the self- and external evaluation reports of these institutions, it is seen that all components of the internal quality assurance system in the evaluated institutions are predominantly at the planning and doing levels and that the "Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA)" cycle has been completed for a small number of criteria; however, the stage that contains best practices requiring the completion of the PDCA cycle more than once has not yet been achieved. Considering that these institutions are newly established and have graduated their first cohorts of students, it is an expected result that they concentrate on the first steps of maturity levels in the PDCA cycle.

Since 2020, the Follow-up Program has been implemented to monitor progress in institutions evaluated under the IEEP. HEIs included in the IEEP are included in the follow-up process in the second year following the evaluation year at the earliest. The FuP aims to evaluate whether the HEI that has undergone the external evaluation process has improved its areas for improvement and whether its strengths have been maintained. The output of the evaluations carried out by independent evaluation teams is a Follow-up Report published with the decision of the Council.



As of 2023, 170 HEIs were evaluated in the FuP, and the ratio of all HEIs evaluated in the program reached 82%. In 2023, 24 HEIs were included and evaluated in the FuP. As a result of the evaluation of the follow-up reports, it is understood that the improvement works proposed in the IFRs have been systematically implemented and the strengths have been maintained.

IAP is a type of external evaluation program that started in 2020. Although this program is similar to the IEEP in terms of evaluation criteria, it differs in terms of the decisions to grant or refuse accreditation at the end of the IAP. As of 2023, 74 HEIs have been included in the IAP, 52 of which were granted conditional accreditation (2 years), 21 full accreditation (5 years) and one refusal of accreditation. In 2023, 21 HEIs were included in the IAP, 17 of which were granted conditional accreditation, three full accreditation and one refusal of accreditation. In 2023, when the IARs of the institutions evaluated within the scope of IAP are evaluated, it is seen that the institutions adopted a continuous improvement approach within the framework of the PDCA cycle at a rate of 20% in the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading, 15% in the Learning and Teaching heading, 10% in the Research and Development heading, and 8% in the Service to Society heading of the THEQC evaluation criteria.

HEIs that underwent the accreditation process in 2021 were included in the mid-term evaluation in 2023. While it was decided to continue the accreditation of six of these institutions with full accreditation, one of the three institutions with conditional accreditation was upgraded to full accreditation, while it was decided for two of them to maintain conditional [2+2] accreditation again following the Institutional External Evaluation, Institutional Accreditation, and Follow-up Programs Guide Version 2.1 that was employed when the accreditation decisions were taken in 2021.

Program accreditation, an important tool in the higher education quality assurance system, is carried out by national or international independent accreditation agencies in Türkiye. The authorisation of national accreditation agencies and the recognition of international accreditation agencies are THEQC's responsibilities. As of 2023, there are 24 national accreditation agencies holding the Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificate, and 13 international accreditation agencies recognised by THEQC. As of 2023, the number of accredited bachelor's programs in HEIs is 1,198, and the ratio of these programs to all bachelor's programs that graduated their first cohort of students is 15.71%. In 2023, the number of field-based accredited programs increased by 2.13% compared to 2022. Regarding



the total number of accreditations by field, the ratio of Engineering reached 28.46%; Arts and Sciences 19.53%; Social Sciences 18.36%; Educational Sciences 20.03%; Health Sciences 4.84%; Communication 6.51%, and Tourism Education 3.08%. In 2023, compared to 2022, there is an increase in program accreditations by 4% in Arts and Sciences, 5.26% in Educational Sciences, 59.42% in Social Sciences and 6.84% in Communication. In general, it is understood that HEIs are motivated to increase the number of program accreditations.

THEQC also carries out various activities with students, one of the most important stakeholders of the quality assurance system in higher education. These activities are carried out by the Students Commission, all members of which are higher education students. The "Quality Ambassador Handbook" written by the Students Commission was shared with the public as an important resource aiming to inform higher education students. THEQC supports the establishment and activities of students' quality societies at HEIs.

THEQC closely follows international activities in the field of higher education quality assurance and aims to develop the national system with current approaches at the international level. In line with this goal, THEQC expands its communication network with memberships to various international umbrella organisations in the quality assurance field and engages in various international collaborations. In 2023, one of the most important developments for THEQC was undoubtedly its registration to the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). EQAR registration, which is one of the responsible organisations for higher education quality assurance in Europe, is considered an important development in terms of the visibility of the national quality assurance system and increasing its validity in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). As of 2023, the evaluation reports of the institutions included in THEQC's external evaluation programs have started to be published on the EQAR official website. THEQC is also a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), another important umbrella organisation for quality assurance in the EHEA. As a prerequisite for this membership, THEQC undergoes regular external evaluations and ensures its criteria and processes are in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) (2015). THEQC is also a full member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), and the American Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG), and the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (IQA).



Within the scope of internationalization activities, THEQC carries out quality assurance works as per the Framework Action Plan for Cooperation Between the Republic of Türkiye and the TRNC, which is annexed to the Agreement on Economic and Financial Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Türkiye and the Government of the TRNC in 2022, signed between the Republic of Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Additionally, THEQC continues its activities started in 2022 in the international arena with agencies and institutions such as Akhmet Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University, the Agency for Quality in Higher Education of North Macedonia (AQHE), Turkish Maarif Foundation, the Mauritanian Authority for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (AMAQ-ES), the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova (ANACEC), the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HEA). In this context, THEQC completed its preparations to carry out international institutional accreditation activities in the future following the demands of external stakeholders.



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Abbreviations Index

Abbreviations	Explanation
A&HCI	Arts & Humanities Citation Index
MtER	Mid-term Evaluation Report
MtEP	Mid-term Evaluation Program
AMAQ-ES	Mauritanian Authority for Quality Assurance of Higher Education
ANACEC	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova
APQN	Asia Pacific Quality Network
AQHE	Agency for Quality in Higher Education of North Macedonia
ARWU	Academic Ranking of World Universities
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
CHEA/CIQG	Council for Higher Education Accreditation/CHEA International Quality Group
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
ESU	European Students' Union
EUA	European University Association
HEA	Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance of Bosnia and Herzegovina
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IQA	Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World
IAP	Institutional Accreditation Program
IAR	Institutional Accreditation Report
IEE	Institutional External Evaluation
IEEA	Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation
IEEAC	Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation Criteria
IEEP	Institutional External Evaluation Program,
IFR	Institutional Feedback Report
QAMIS	Quality Assurance Management Information System
ISER	Institutional Self-Evaluation Report
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
NTU	Nanyang Technological University Rankings
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
QS	QS World University Rankings
RUR	Round University Rankings
SSCI	Social Sciences Citation Index
THE	Times Higher Education
NQF-HETR	National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Türkiye
URAP	University Ranking by Academic Performance
WOS	Web of Science
HEIE	Higher Education Institutions Exam
CoHE	Council of Higher Education
THEQC	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council
HEI(s)	Higher Education Institution(s)



1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2016, THEQC has evaluated its activities in the previous year and published its findings and recommendations for the national higher education quality assurance system in a Status Report every year presenting it to the relevant stakeholders of higher education. This report aims to inform the relevant stakeholders about the activities of THEQC during the year, interpret the current status of the national quality assurance system in the light of the findings obtained as a result of internal and external quality assurance evaluations of higher education institutions, and to give suggestions for the improvement of the system in this context.

The 2023 Status Report includes introductory and general information on THEQC, data taken from the evaluation reports of two institutions evaluated in the IEEP, 24 institutions in the Follow-up Program, and 21 institutions in the IAP, and their analyses.

Program accreditations, another part of the higher education quality assurance system, are carried out by independent accreditation agencies, and the registration and authorisation process of these agencies is carried out by THEQC. In this context, the Status Report also includes findings regarding the authorised and recognised accreditation agencies and the number and diversity of programs accredited by these agencies.

Student involvement in quality assurance processes is an important part of the higher education quality assurance system. Therefore, a series of activities are carried out by THEQC for students, one of the most important stakeholders of the system, to help them internalize the quality culture. Another part of this report covers and evaluates the activities carried out to increase the efficient involvement of students in the quality processes and the findings obtained from these activities.

THEQC values the involvement of all relevant stakeholders of higher education in quality assurance. In this context, THEQC also examines and evaluates the stakeholder opinions received during the year in the status report in terms of improving its processes.

The second chapter of this report provides general information. After the third and fourth chapters on internal and external evaluation processes, accreditation agencies authorised and recognised by THEQC and their assessments are presented. Following the chapter on student involvement and stakeholder evaluation of THEQC activities, the



conclusion and recommendations are discussed. The holistic results obtained from all analyses and assessments made for stakeholders and processes are included in the final chapter of the report. The last chapter discusses the areas for improvement and suggestions for the relevant stakeholders of the higher education system for the internalization, dissemination and institutionalization of quality assurance culture in higher education institutions.



2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1. General Introduction and Overview of 2023

THEQC carries out the work for the internalization of internal and external quality assurance systems by HEIs in Türkiye, as one of the important indicators of the Bologna process. In addition to being a public institution with administrative and financial autonomy, THEQC operates as an agency for institutional evaluations in the field of higher education in Türkiye and as an umbrella agency for the program accreditation agencies it authorises and recognises. THEQC supports the establishment of internal quality assurance systems for HEIs to deliver learning and teaching, research and development, and service to society activities, as well as administrative services, within the framework of the criteria set in compliance with international quality assurance standards. In this respect, THEQC accredits institutions that have reached a certain level of maturity in quality assurance activities, authorises independent national accreditation agencies for program accreditation, and recognises international accreditation agencies. It also organises events to raise awareness to spread and internalize the quality culture among individuals and throughout institutions and the higher education system.

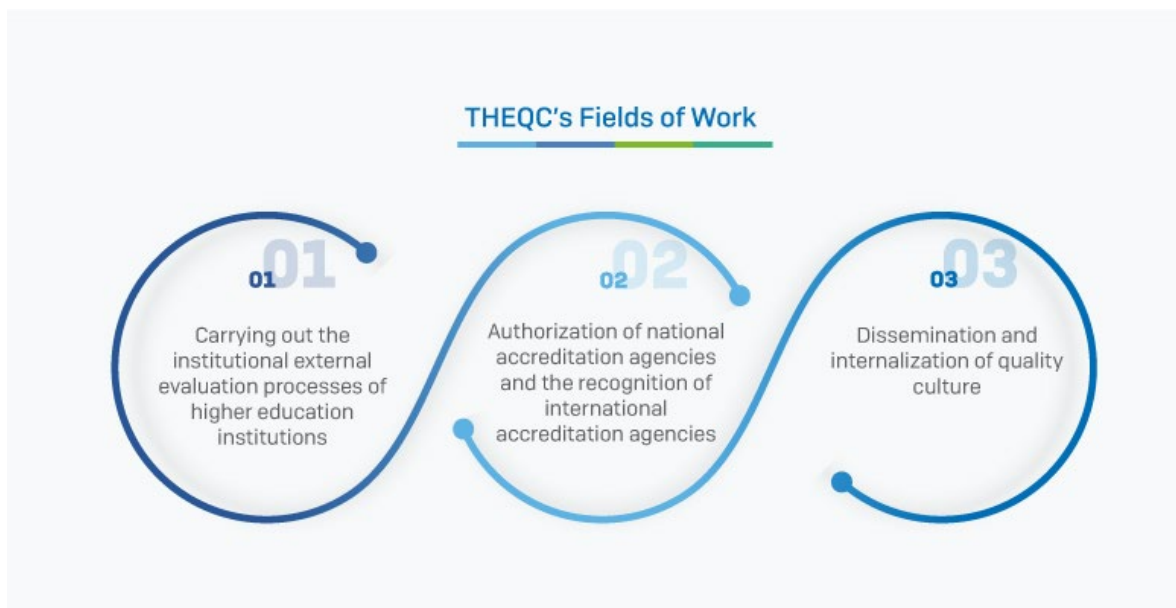


Diagram 1. THEQC's Fields of Work

Although THEQC carried out the evaluation processes in 2023 based on the THEQC Evaluation Criteria version 3.1, it should be noted that the accreditation processes of HEIs included in the IAP in 2021 were carried out according to version 2.1. In addition to their alignment with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), THEQC's evaluation criteria adopt a perspective specific to Türkiye with main headings, such as research and development and service to society. THEQC conducts its holistic evaluations based on 14 criteria and 46 sub-criteria under Leadership, Governance and Quality, Learning and Teaching, Research and Development, and Service to Society main headings.



Diagram 2. THEQC's Evaluation Programs

THEQC maintains its institutional external evaluation and accreditation activities through four consecutive programs (Diagram 2). Between 2016 and 2023, THEQC evaluated 191 HEIs in the scope of the IEEP, 170 out of the HEIs evaluated in the IEEP in the scope of the Follow-up Program, and 74 out of the ones whose evaluations were completed in these two programs in the IAP. In 2023, 21 HEIs were included in the IAP, two in the IEEP, and 24 in the



FuP and completed their evaluation processes. In 2023, nine HEIs that had previously been evaluated in the IAP were included in the mid-term evaluation process. Out of these institutions, the decision to continue accreditation was taken for six HEIs as a result of their follow-up. It was decided to upgrade one of the three HEIs with conditional accreditation to full accreditation and to maintain the conditional accreditation of the other two institutions based on the 2+2 rule. Table 1 shows the number of HEIs that completed THEQC's evaluation programs by year and their rate.

Table 1. Summary of Evaluation Programs

	2016-2019	2020			2021			2022			2023				Total	Total Completion Rate (for Türkiye)
Institutional External Evaluation	160	13			13			3			2				191	92%
Follow-up	-	58			44			43			25				170	82%
Institutional Accreditation	-	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	74	36%
		6	5	11	7	5	12	5	25	30	3	17	1	21		
Mid-term Evaluation	-	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Total	Full	Conditional	Revocation	Total	9	12%
											7	2	-	9		

All HEIs that fulfil the prerequisites are planned to be included in the IAP until 2027, with the amendment to the Regulation in 2021. Universities with institutional accreditation continue to be listed in the Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide for Higher Education Institution Exam (YKS). However, it can be stated that THEQC, whose ESG compliance was confirmed with the EQAR registration in March 2023, started to contribute to the visibility of HEIs in EHEA by publishing evaluation reports of IEEP and IAP in the EQAR database.

In February 2023, the earthquake, the epicentre of which was Kahramanmaraş and affected 11 provinces, once again revealed the importance of change management, risk



management and quality assurance competencies for regional universities. HEIs reflected their experience from the pandemic period to distance education for the continuation of teaching and learning activities. In particular, the efforts of the institutions in the epicentre and region of the earthquake in terms of service to society and social responsibility are commendable. THEQC offered flexibility in the quality assurance responsibilities of institutions in the region, providing exemptions and deferrals of the timelines for writing their ISERs and conducting evaluation programs.

In July 2023, with the amendment of the regulation published in July 2023, THEQC gained the legal authority to implement the International Institutional Accreditation Program, the Joint Institutional Evaluation and Accreditation Program, and the Graduate School Evaluation Program. With the Regulation on THEQC Experts published in the same calendar year, it is legally possible to employ and train specialised staff on quality assurance in the Turkish higher education system. In this context, with the staff to be allocated to THEQC, the agency will expand its staff with independent experts in the field of quality assurance in higher education.

In 2023, the number of national program accreditation agencies authorised increased to 24. In this period, calls were made to the relevant agencies and HEIs to apply for recognition in Türkiye, especially for international agencies that did not apply for recognition. As a result of these calls, THEQC recognised two new agencies. In 2023, monitoring reports were written for the relevant agencies by THEQC academic experts, considering the annual activities of 22 national agencies. As of 2023, the total number of accredited programs reached 1,446, including 248 by international accreditation agencies and 1,198 by national accreditation agencies.

2.2. International Relations Activities

THEQC continues international collaborations with various international organisations within the framework of its strategic goal of internationalization in higher education quality assurance. In this respect, memberships to the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation/International Quality Group (CHEA/CIQG), as well as full membership to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) have been maintained. One of the most important developments can be regarded as



the registration of THEQC by EQAR in 2023. This registration is perceived as proof that THEQC's activities align with the ESG and is considered an important step for Türkiye in terms of diploma recognition and equivalence in the EHEA.

In 2023, THEQC also expanded its cooperation with countries within the same cultural geography as Türkiye. In this framework, related delegations from Turkmenistan, Sudan and Malaysia paid working visits to THEQC. Contacts with HEIs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were increased and a working visit was paid to a university in Sarajevo. In addition, within the scope of collaboration with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) for the accreditation of HEIs, YÖDAK and THEQC organised the "Workshop on Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education."

THEQC reinforced its international presence by participating in the Eurasian Higher Education Summit (EURIE) organised by the Eurasian Universities Association (EURAS). THEQC's participation in this event further strengthened its role in the field of quality assurance in higher education at the international level. In 2023, THEQC's efforts to increase its international visibility gained momentum. With the EQAR registration, reports on THEQC's institutional external evaluation and institutional accreditation activities were started to be published in the EQAR database (DEQAR). This success maximised the quality assurance compliance indicators of the Turkish higher education system within the scope of the Bologna Process.

2023 was a year in which important steps were taken for THEQC to prepare for international accreditation activities. For this purpose, THEQC paid working visits to university campuses in Sarajevo and Tirana to evaluate international accreditation opportunities, create a common understanding, understand the expectations of universities abroad, and introduce THEQC's rating system and external evaluation system.

Throughout 2023, THEQC continued its contacts on higher education with representatives of countries, such as Japan, Malaysia, Azerbaijan, TRNC, Turkmenistan and Georgia, and participated in various international events. In addition, THEQC took important steps in the field of international cooperation and quality assurance by participating in an event organised in the UK with the theme of inclusiveness and sustainable quality in higher education.



THEQC's relations with ENQA and EQAR are of great importance for its internationalization activities. These relations allow THEQC to learn about the latest trends and developments and play an active role in the quality assurance society in the EHEA. In this framework, THEQC participated in the ENQA General Assembly Meeting and the ENQA Forum in Tbilisi and voted in the election of three new members of ENQA in 2023. Participation in these meetings supports Türkiye's commitment to quality assurance in higher education and THEQC's goals to increase its recognition in this field. THEQC also continues its activities as an active member of various working groups organised by ENQA. Accordingly, as a member of the Bologna Follow-up Group, THEQC contributed to the EU Progress Reports for 2023 by cooperating with the European Union (EU) on implementing quality assurance processes and creating a quality assurance culture in Türkiye.

THEQC is part of the IMINQA Working Group on quality assurance of micro-credentials and the ENQA Working Group on quality assurance of research, and the Council's experts participated in webinars organised by organisations such as EUA, ENQA, INQAAHE and EQAR during 2023.

In addition to all these international activities, institutional external evaluation and institutional accreditation reports, written by THEQC evaluation teams after the evaluation of HEIs, were started to be published on the EQAR database.

Prof. Muhsin KAR, THEQC President, attended the 8th Eurasian Higher Education Summit (EURIE) organised by the Eurasian Universities Union (EURAS), which hosted more than 200 institutions from 72 countries, on 1-3 March 2023, as a speaker.

THEQC representatives also attended the 7th Workshop on Updating EURYDICE, EURYPEDIA and the Structure of the Turkish Educational System Book, during which they contributed to the update of 11.2 Quality assurance in higher education part of the Eurypedia database. Prof. Mustafa Çufalı, THEQC Vice President, and Asst. Prof. M. Ayşegül Kozak Çakır, International Relations Coordinator, attended the ENQA Members Forum in Tbilisi on 19-21 April 2023. Prof. Feyza Arıcıoğlu, THEQC Council member, Lecturer Erdem Sarıaydın, and Ömer Faruk Yıldız represented THEQC at an activity on "Building Resilient Futures: Ensuring Inclusive and Sustainable Quality in Higher Education" in London on 18-20 October 2023. Asst. Prof. M. Ayşegül Kozak Çakır also attended the ENQA 2023 General Assembly meeting held to provide concrete links between quality assurance and recognition with a focus on



understanding the latest policy developments and approaches in Dublin between 25-27 October 2023.

Within the scope of THEQC's international activities, some international delegations such as the Sudanese higher education delegation, the Turkmenistan delegation and officials from the Embassy of Japan paid working visits to THEQC. Prof. Muhsin Kar, THEQC President; Prof. Mustafa Çufalı, THEQC Vice-President, and THEQC academic experts attended the meetings in which the visiting delegations were informed about the quality assurance framework in Türkiye and the quality assurance activities performed by THEQC for the Turkish HEIs, as well as discussions about possible collaboration opportunities between the institutions.

2.3. Follow-Up of Institutional Indicators

Institutional indicators are tools used to monitor the level of attainment of HEIs' goals and objectives. Quality, measurable and traceable indicators can contribute significantly to the institutions' development and the systematic and data-based improvement of strategic goals and related processes.

THEQC monitors institutional indicators in the context of quality assurance criteria to support the internal and external quality assurance systems of HEIs and contribute to the follow-up and improvement understanding based on information management systems to become an effective part of the Turkish higher education culture. While data on the institutional indicators were obtained from resources such as information published on <http://istatistik.yok.gov.tr> webpage, data entered by the institution itself, data provided by ÖSYM, and various national and international ranking institutions (URAP, THE, WOS, Scopus, etc.) or data calculated by the Council before 2023, a data warehouse consisting of 300 indicators was created through a joint study conducted by CoHE and THEQC for the data preparation for 2023. This work allows data to be collected from a single source and the process to be followed with a common work schedule. Data sources for some indicators changed in this study. HEIs entered 74 indicator values with their evidence into the provided interface, while simultaneously data on other indicators were provided from YÖKSİS, relevant institutions (Ministry of Industry and Technology, TÜBİTAK, ÖSYM, etc.) and websites such as InCites. The data collection process was carried out in two stages through the prepared interface. Data was collected for 70 indicators in the first stage and for 300 indicators in the



second stage. In the second stage, the data collected was shared and improvements were made considering feedback. The 300 data collected constitute input for the Institutional Indicator Reports published on the THEQC webpage for 2023.

The institutional indicators monitored by THEQC are grouped under the following headings: Information about the institution, quality assurance system, learning and teaching, research and development, service to society and governance system. There are a total of 131 institutional indicators defined under these headings. These indicators are reported through the Quality Assurance Management Information System (QAMIS).

Under the information on the institution heading there are 34 indicators related to the physical and structural status of learning, teaching, governance and research areas, as well as the number of students and academicians. Under the quality assurance system heading, there are 25 defined indicators regarding the realization rates of learning, teaching, research, governance and service to society activities included in the strategic plan of the institution, Türkiye and world university rankings published by URAP, SCIMAGO, THE, QS, RUR, WEBOMETRICS, USNEWS, NTU and ARWU platforms, works aiming at disseminating the quality culture, and the satisfaction rates.

There are 32 indicators defined to monitor and improve the learning and teaching activities of universities under the Learning and Teaching heading. Under the research and development heading, there are 26 indicators defined regarding the research and development activities of universities, the projects they carry out, and the number of publications in national and international refereed journals.

Institutional indicators monitored by THEQC are also very important tools in terms of revealing the relationships between institutional performance and maturity of quality assurance processes with quantitative parameters. With these indicators, it is possible to access indicators regarding institutional information and the activities, developments, and sustainability of leadership and quality assurance system, learning and teaching, research and development, and service to society between 2015 and 2023. Institutional indicators are used in external evaluation processes, and institutions can also see the changes in their own performance processes over the years.



2.4. Current Numbers in the Turkish Higher Education System¹

There were 208 HEIs, including 129 state universities, 75 foundation universities, and four foundation vocational schools in the Turkish higher education system in the 2022-2023 academic year. The HEIs offered 7,932 associate degree programs, 9,668 bachelor's programs, 16,660 master's programs, and 11,889 doctoral programs. A total of 6,950,142 students were studying in these programs, including 2,647,054 students at the associate degree level, 3,754,095 students at the bachelor's degree level, 434,485 students at the master's degree level and 114,508 students at the doctoral level.

¹ 2022-2023 learning and teaching data were taken from <http://istatistik.yok.gov.tr>



3. INSTITUTIONAL SELF-EVALUATION PROCESSES

3.1. Contributions to Self-Evaluation Works

Continuing its efforts to establish internal quality assurance systems of HEIs and to spread the quality process and culture, THEQC organised an information meeting, consisting of morning and afternoon sessions, for the quality commissions of HEIs on 15 March 2023. At the meetings, detailed information was given to the participants on "Internal quality assurance or ISER writing?", "What is the evidence?", "Introduction of ISER Writing Guide 3.2", "Introduction of QAMIS". THEQC also organised the "Workshop on Quality Assurance in Graduate Education" to create a quality assurance framework for graduate schools offering graduate education in Ankara on 20 January 2023 and in Istanbul on 23 January 2023.

Participating in the conferences on "Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education" organised at Osmaniye Korkut Ata University and Iskenderun Technical University, President Kar stated that THEQC developed quality assurance evaluation and accreditation criteria aligned with international standards for HEIs by considering the characteristics of Türkiye and that THEQC paid particular attention to the institutions' provision of field-specific competencies and increase of alumni employability. Prof. Mustafa Çufalı, THEQC Vice President, attended the conference on "Quality Culture and Accreditation in Higher Education" at Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University and made a presentation about the evaluation processes of THEQC and the status of universities in Türkiye regarding quality assurance by referring to the purpose of quality assurance and accreditation in higher education at the conference. President Ümit Kocabıçak contributed to the 31st Meeting of the Deans Council of Communication Faculty in Tunceli and the ceremony organised for the "5-Star Outstanding Performance Certificate" awarded to Kırşehir Ahi Evran University by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) with presentations on "Quality Assurance Systems and Accreditation" and "Quality Assurance System Works in Higher Education."

In October 2023, Prof. Hüseyin Ağır, THEQC Expert, participated in the Quality Assurance System Workshop organised at Karadeniz Technical University with the participation of 148 participants from 42 universities. He made a presentation on the quality process and the issues to be considered when writing self-evaluation reports.



THEQC Students Commission organised activities titled, "The Role of Higher Education Students in the Construction of a Quality Assurance Culture" and "Active Stakeholder of the Internal Quality Assurance System: Students" in 11 HEIs with the participation of 1,726 students in total, to involve students in quality processes, ensure their effective involvement in the processes and make sure that students adopt the quality culture.

3.2. ISER Feedback Reports

THEQC writes ISER Feedback Reports to evaluate the ISERs written and submitted to the Council by higher education institutions each year. The objectives of the ISER Feedback Reports can be listed as follows:

- To contribute to the quality of ISER writing processes of HEIs,
- To improve the use of the THEQC Rubric in the self-evaluation activities of higher education institutions,
- To provide input to the training of their Quality Commissions by determining the needs of quality commissions in HEIs.

For these purposes, the 2022 ISERs of 21 HEIs included in the IAP in 2023 were reviewed and evaluated by a group of THEQC experts competent in self- and external evaluation processes and the use of the THEQC Rubric. ISER feedback is taken into account when an HEI is included in the IAP. Feedback is shared with both the institution and the IAP evaluation team. The evaluation is carried out through the ISER Feedback Form and the evaluation dimensions can be listed as follows:

- The effectiveness of self-evaluation works and stakeholder involvement in the report,
- The inclusiveness, prevalence, clarity and participation of the work of the quality commission,
- Objectivity and evidence-based nature of the self-evaluation processes of the institutions (re-scoring THEQC Rubric over ISER and comparison with institutional scores),
- Adequacy of improvement work.



These aspects, given in the ISER Evaluation Form, evaluate the maturity level of an institution's self-evaluation report rather than evaluating the maturity level of its internal quality assurance system. Content analyses were performed on the data obtained, and the most frequently encountered problems in ISERs were identified as in Table 2.

Table 2. Common Problems Encountered in 2023 Institutional Self-Evaluation Reports

Common Problem	Prevalence (%)
Insufficient explanations and evidence of stakeholder involvement in the internal quality assurance system	25.4
Failure to support follow-up and/or improvement works with evidence/explanations suitable for maturity level 4	90.7
Insufficiency of concrete evidence regarding the surveys conducted within the scope of follow-up and improvement works in the institution	45.4
Limited feedback from external stakeholders	40.9

Table 2 shows that the most common problem encountered in the analysed ISERs stems from the choice of maturity level 4. In selecting this maturity level, the institutions are expected to consider and support with evidence the following key aspects in particular:

- Maturity level 3 has been completed, in other words, practices for sub-criteria have spread throughout the institution,
- Existence of systematic follow-up and evaluation, showing evidence that results are analysed and evaluated with stakeholders (analysis reports, survey questions, results, etc.),
- Improvements have been made in the practices related to the sub-criterion and evidence is presented,
- Reflecting stakeholder views in decision-making mechanisms.

The maturity levels given by HEIs to themselves were also evaluated one by one within the scope of the ISER evaluation work, and the scores obtained as a result of the self-evaluation of the university and the scores obtained in the ISER evaluation study are compared in Table 3.



Table 3. Feedback Score Change for Institutional Self-Evaluation Reports

Main Headings	ISER Score	Feedback Score	Change (%)
Leadership, Governance and Quality	227.81	192.19	15.64
Learning and Teaching	304.67	256.57	15.79
Research and Development	147.33	127.05	13.77
Service to Society	74.10	60.00	19.02
Total Score	753.90	633.52	15.97

Table 3 shows that the scores obtained as a result of the maturity levels that HEIs give themselves during the self-evaluation process decreased by 15.97% within the scope of the ISER feedback study. While the most significant proportional difference is 19.02% in the heading of Service to Society, the lowest difference is in Research and Development with 13.77%. Overall, it is seen that the main differences stem from the inadequacy of institutions to provide sufficient evidence in their ISERs and the mismatch between the evidence and the relevant sub-criteria. The lack of sufficient explanations to match the high maturity levels assigned and the inclusion of topics that are not related to the sub-criteria in the text; not ensuring the continuity of the PDCA cycle by closing it more than once that would meet the maturity level 5, not ensuring the continuity of exemplary practices within the scope of this framework, and not supporting the texts with relevant and compatible evidence can be listed as other reasons for the lower maturity levels in ISER feedback. It is essential for a more successful accreditation process for the institutions that will be included in the IAP to take these score changes into account.



4. INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION PROCESSES

4.1. External Evaluation Programs

In this section, external evaluation programs conducted by THEQC for HEIs are assessed under sub-sections IEEP, Follow-up Program, IAP and Mid-term Evaluation.

4.1.1. Institutional External Evaluation Program

IEEP is a peer evaluation process which is performed by an independent evaluation team assigned by THEQC and in which each HEI is involved once in five years after graduating their first cohort of students. The Leadership, Governance and Quality, Learning and Reaching, Research and Development, and Service to Society processes are evaluated to reveal to what extent HEIs meet the criteria regarding the maturity levels of the PDCA cycle. The institution's evaluation report is disclosed to the public after the evaluation. After THEQC determines the institutions to be included in the program, the evaluation team members, who will carry out the evaluation process, are selected from the evaluator pool and assigned to the teams. After reviewing the institution's most recent ISER, the evaluation team conducts a pre-visit and a site visit to the institution. After the visits, the IFR written by the evaluation team is reviewed by THEQC experts and shared with the public.

4.1.2. Follow-up Program

HEIs are included in the Follow-up Program at the earliest in the second year following the completion of the IEEP. The program aims to evaluate the improvement process in the HEI after the IEEP. The main evaluation scope of the Follow-up Program consists of the "areas for improvement" mentioned in the Institutional Feedback Reports written after the institution's external evaluation. When forming the follow-up team, attention is paid to ensuring that there are evaluators who have previously served on that institution's IEEP team. After completing its work on the ISER, IFR, institutional indicators, and other necessary additional documentation of the institution, the follow-up team conducts a remote or face-to-face site visit on a predetermined day. A Follow-up Report written by the follow-up team is approved and published by THEQC.



4.1.3. Institutional Accreditation Program

The IAP is a peer evaluation process performed by an independent evaluation team assigned by THEQC. In this process, the Leadership, Governance and Quality, Learning and Teaching, Research and Development, and Service to Society processes are evaluated to reveal to what extent HEIs meet the criteria regarding the maturity levels of the PDCA cycle, and an accreditation decision is taken for the institutions. The steps of the IAP process can be listed as follows:

- Receiving declarations of intention from HEIs to be included in the IAP,
- Selection of the institutions to be included in the IAP,
- Signing the IAP Agreement,
- Writing of ISERs,
- Evaluator training and the formation of evaluation teams,
- Blended site visit,
- Writing of IARs, and
- Consistency work and meetings with team leaders.

THEQC grants full accreditation and conditional accreditation to HEIs that meet enough criteria in the IAP or decides on the refusal of accreditation if they are below expectations. The most important thing that distinguishes the IAP from IEEP and FuP is that an institutional accreditation decision is taken as a result of the IAP. As a result of IAP, it is expected that HEIs will transform into constantly improving structures, their internal and external quality assurance systems will be strengthened, and their international reputation and competitiveness will increase. The accreditation works of HEIs guide the institutions to achieve their missions and objectives.

The IAP process is carried out by the evaluation teams created by THEQC within the scope of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report Writing Guide version 3.1 and the Evaluation Programs Guide version 3.1.1. The score distribution in the IAP is as shown in Diagram 3.



Diagram 3. Score Distribution by Main Headings in the Institutional Accreditation Program

4.1.4. Mid-term Evaluation Program

HEIs whose IAP evaluations ended with the grant of full or conditional accreditation are included in the mid-term evaluation process in the second year following the accreditation decision taken for them. The mid-term evaluation aims to assess the development of quality processes in HEIs for which full or conditional accreditation was granted. The MtEP may result in these decisions: the continuation of full accreditation, the revocation of full accreditation, the upgrading of conditional accreditation to full accreditation, or the revocation of conditional accreditation.

4.2. Profiles of the Institutions Included in External Evaluation Programs

4.2.1. Institutions Included in the Institutional External Evaluation Program

HEIs in Table 4 went through the IEEP process in 2023. Both of these institutions are state universities.



Table 4. Institutions Included in the Institutional External Evaluation Program in 2023

HEI	Type	Region
Applied Sciences University of Isparta	State	Mediterranean
İzmir Democracy University	State	Aegean

4.2.2. Institutions Included in the Follow-Up Program

HEIs in Table 5 went through the FuP process in 2023. 12 of the universities included in the Follow-up Program process are state universities, and the number of foundation universities is 12.

Table 5. Institutions Included in the Follow-Up Program in 2023

HEI	Type	Region
Acıbadem Mehmet Ali Aydınlar University	Foundation	Marmara
Afyonkarahisar Health Sciences University	State	Aegean
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University	State	Central Anatolia
Antalya Bilim University	Foundation	Mediterranean
Bandırma Onyedli Eylül University	State	Marmara
Beykoz University	Foundation	Marmara
Eskişehir Technical University	State	Central Anatolia
Ibn Haldun University	Foundation	Marmara
İstanbul 29 Mayıs University	Foundation	Marmara
İstanbul Gedik University	Foundation	Marmara
İstanbul Gelişim University	Foundation	Marmara
İstanbul Rumeli University	Foundation	Marmara
İstanbul University - Cerrahpaşa	State	Marmara
İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University	Foundation	Marmara
Istinye University	Foundation	Marmara
Kayseri University	State	Central Anatolia
Konya Food and Agriculture University	Foundation	Central Anatolia
Konya Technical University	State	Central Anatolia
Kütahya Health Sciences University	State	Aegean
Health Sciences University	State	Marmara
Sakarya University of Applied Sciences	State	Marmara
Sanko University	Foundation	Southeastern Anatolia
Tarsus University	State	Mediterranean
Trabzon University	State	Black Sea



4.2.3. Institutions Included in the Institutional Accreditation Program

In 2023, 21 HEIs out of 26 applicants were included in the IAP process that was initiated in 2020, and THEQC took an accreditation decision for them as a result of the evaluations. 14 of these institutions are state universities and seven are foundation universities. HEIs included in the IAP are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Having been evaluated within the scope of IEEP before,
- Completion of the FuP,
- Distribution of state and foundation universities,
- Geographical distribution,
- Number of accredited programs,
- Whether it is a research university or a candidate research university, and
- ISER feedback.

Table 6. Institutions Included in the Institutional Accreditation Program in 2023

HEI	Type	Region
Marmara University	State	Marmara
Toros University	Foundation	Mediterranean
Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University	State	Central Anatolia
İstanbul University	State	Marmara
Erzurum Technical University	State	Eastern Anatolia
İstanbul Medipol University	Foundation	Marmara
Cappadocia University	Foundation	Central Anatolia
Turkish-German University	State	Marmara
Afyon Kocatepe University	State	Aegean
Nuh Naci Yazgan University	Foundation	Central Anatolia
Pamukkale University	State	Aegean
Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University	State	Eastern Anatolia
Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	State	Mediterranean
İzmir Katip Çelebi University	State	Aegean
Biruni University	Foundation	Marmara
Bartın University	State	Black Sea
Yozgat Bozok University	State	Central Anatolia
Yaşar University	Foundation	Aegean
Bezmialem Vakıf University	Foundation	Marmara
Dicle University	State	Southeastern Anatolia
Kilis 7 Aralık University	State	Southeastern Anatolia



4.2.4. Institutions Included in the Mid-term Evaluation Program

6 HEIs that were granted full accreditation in 2021 were evaluated in the mid-term evaluation in 2023 and it was decided to continue the accreditation of these institutions. As a result of the mid-term evaluation of the three HEIs that were granted conditional accreditation, one was upgraded to full accreditation, while two were decided to continue with conditional accreditation. Following the Institutional External Evaluation, Institutional Accreditation, and Follow-up Programs Guide Version 2.1, which was in effect when these institutions were being evaluated in the Mid-term Evaluation, institutions with IAR results below 650 points were granted two-year conditional accreditation in accordance with the 2+2 rule, and those above 650 points were upgraded to full accreditation.

Table 7. Accreditation Decisions Taken After the Mid-term Evaluation Program

HEI	Accreditation Decision in 2021	Accreditation Decision in 2023	Region
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University	Full	Full	Central Anatolia
Ege University	Full	Full	Aegean
Erciyes University	Full	Full	Central Anatolia
İstanbul Technical University	Full	Full	Marmara
Koç University	Full	Full	Marmara
TED University	Full	Full	Central Anatolia
Akdeniz University	Conditional	Full	Mediterranean
Atatürk University	Conditional	Conditional	Eastern Anatolia
Ondokuz Mayıs University	Conditional	Conditional	Black Sea

4.3. Evaluators

The IEEP, FuP, IAP and MtEP are carried out by evaluation teams assigned by THEQC. These processes are conveyed to the Council with the contributions of THEQC experts. Evaluation teams consist of academics, administrative staff and students who are trained by THEQC and included in the evaluator pool. Those who want to take a role in the evaluation teams can apply through the evaluator application module which they can access on the



official website of THEQC. Evaluator applications are assessed by the Commission on Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation, preferably prioritising those who have domestic and international experience. To be included in the evaluator pool, students must attend and complete the Quality Ambassador Training Program organised by the THEQC Students Commission every year.

4.3.1. Institutional External Evaluation Program Teams

In 2023, 16 evaluators from 16 HEIs took place in two IEEP teams. The evaluators consisted of nine professors, one associate professor, two assistant professors, two administrative staff and two student evaluators. The rate of female and male evaluators was equal in both teams. No observers were assigned to the IEEP teams.

4.3.2. Follow-up Program Teams

24 teams were formed for the FuP. The teams included a total of 96 evaluators, four evaluators in each team from different HEIs. Of these, 48 were faculty members, 24 administrative staff and 24 students. No observers were assigned to the FuP teams.

4.3.3. Institutional Accreditation Program Teams

In 2023, 21 evaluation teams were formed within the scope of IAP. 174 evaluators from 83 different HEIs took part in the evaluation teams formed. 50% of the evaluators were female and 50% were male. Of the evaluators, 100 were professors, seven were associate professors, three were assistant professors, one was a lecturer, 21 were administrative staff, and 21 were students. 21 staff were assigned as THEQC observers to the 2023 IAP evaluation teams.

4.3.4. Mid-term Evaluation Program Teams

ISERs of six HEIs that were granted full accreditation in 2020 and a report drafted by an academic expert and Council member were examined by the Commission on Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation. The Commission recommended not to conduct site visits for mid-term evaluation of these HEIs in 2023, and the Council decided for them to continue full accreditation. Three evaluation teams were formed for the remaining three HEIs to be evaluated in the MtEP. 18 evaluators from 17 different HEIs took part in the evaluation teams formed. 45% of these evaluators were female and 55% were male. 12 of the evaluators



were academic staff with the title of professor, three were administrative staff and three were students. Included in the MtEP in 2023, Gaziantep University, as an institution affected by the earthquake, was excluded from the program with a Council decision in line with the declaration of intent of the institution, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission refers to the Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation Commission.

4.4. Evaluation of Reports

4.4.1. Evaluation of Institutional Accreditation Reports

In 2023, THEQC included 21 HEIs in IAP, three of which were fully accredited and 17 were conditionally accredited. Refusal of accreditation was decided for one HEI. Table 8 presents the ISER scores, preliminary evaluation scores, team evaluation scores, post-consistency evaluation scores, and final scores of the institutions for which final decisions were given, as well as the accreditation decisions.

Table 8. Accreditation Status for 21 HEIs in 2023

Name of Institution	ISER Score	Team Score	Final Score After Consistency Work	Accreditation Decision
University A	643	563.00	563.00	Conditional Accreditation
University B	658	576.00	562.00	Conditional Accreditation
University C	676	665.00	651.00	Conditional Accreditation
University D	680	680.00	698.00	Full Accreditation
University E	692	618.00	557.00	Conditional Accreditation
University F	705	709.00	660.00	Conditional Accreditation
University G	725	658.00	632.00	Conditional Accreditation
University H	729	586.00	576.00	Conditional Accreditation
University I	748	654.00	654.00	Full Accreditation
University J	762	639.00	633.00	Conditional Accreditation
University K	781	655.00	635.00	Conditional Accreditation
University L	785	681.00	613.00	Conditional Accreditation
University M	790	708.00	698.00	Full Accreditation



University N	793	659.00	609.00	Conditional Accreditation
University O	800	676.00	673.00	Conditional Accreditation
University P	812	613.00	542.00	Conditional Accreditation
University Q	820	600.00	584.00	Conditional Accreditation
University R	838	639.00	614.00	Conditional Accreditation
University S	870	595.00	552.00	Conditional Accreditation
University T	Earthquake Zone	617.00	596.00	Conditional Accreditation
University U	Earthquake Zone	493.00	492.00	Conditional Accreditation

In 2023, the IARs of HEIs included in the IAP were analysed within the scope of the IEEAC. Although it is seen that accredited institutions reached a certain level of maturity in the processes carried out under the main headings "Leadership, Governance and Quality", "Learning and Teaching", "Research and Development" and "Service to Society", it is understood that "follow-up and improvement" activities should also be continued to close the PDCA cycle.

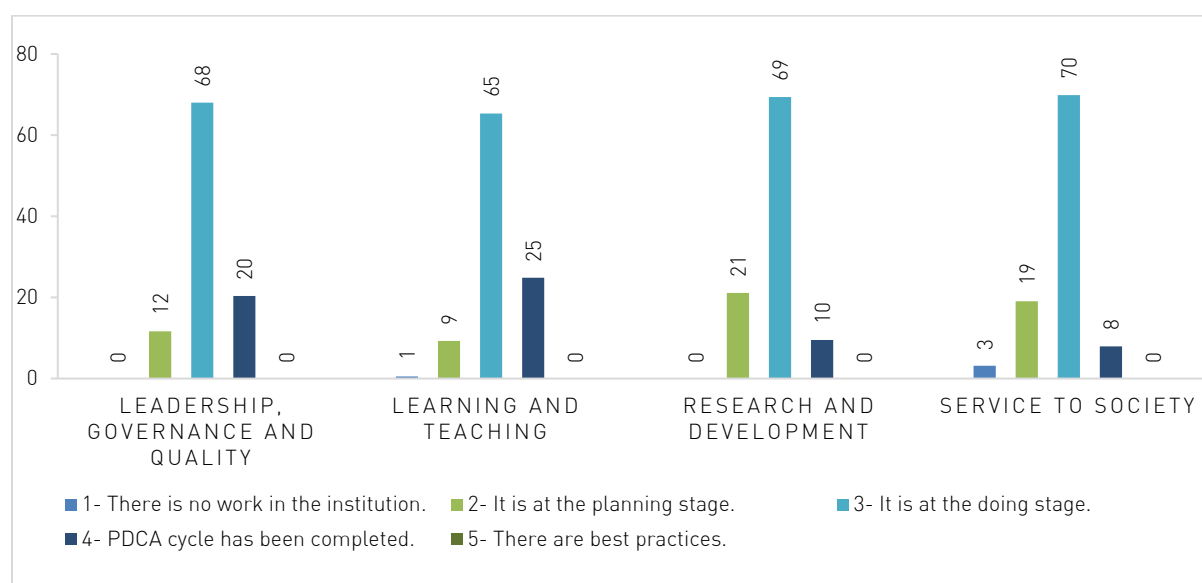


Diagram 4. Maturity Levels in the Institutional Accreditation Reports by Main Headings

Under the main headings "Leadership, Governance and Quality", 12% of the institutions are in the planning phase, 68% have spread the practices through the institution



(follow-up and improvement mechanisms are not mature), and 20% have completed the PDCA cycle. Examples for maturity level 5 are not available yet. These results point to the need for further structuring of the quality assurance systems under this main heading.

Under the main heading "Learning and Teaching", 65% are in the doing phase of the processes, 25% have completed PDCA cycles, and 9% are in the planning phase. It is understood that institutions made significant progress in this area; however, follow-up and improvement processes need to be further developed. It is also stated that there are no examples of best practice.

Under the main heading "Research and Development", it is found that 69% are not mature in terms of their follow-up and improvement mechanisms, while 21% are in the planning phase. The rate of completion of PDCA cycles is 10% and there are no examples of best practices in this area yet. These results indicate that improvement efforts in research and development processes should be accelerated.

The main heading "Service to Society" stands out as the least mature area compared to the other headings. It is observed that 70% of the institutions have deficiencies in follow-up and improvement processes, while 19% are at the planning stage. The rate of those completing PDCA cycles remains at 8% and again there are no examples of best practices. This situation reveals the need for significant improvement and restructuring in service to society processes.

4.4.1.1. Leadership, Governance and Quality

All 21 IARs completed in 2023 were examined and the maturity levels of the institutions' quality assurance systems were discussed separately considering the THEQC criteria which are presented below. In this respect, the IARs were evaluated with three different approaches:

1. Evaluation of the maturity levels in the Status Report according to the percentages determined for each criterion by compiling the frequencies of the maturity levels determined for the sub-criteria of 14 criteria,
2. Evaluation of the strengths and the areas for improvement of the main headings,



3. Comparison of quality assurance systems' maturity levels of institutions accredited for two and five years.

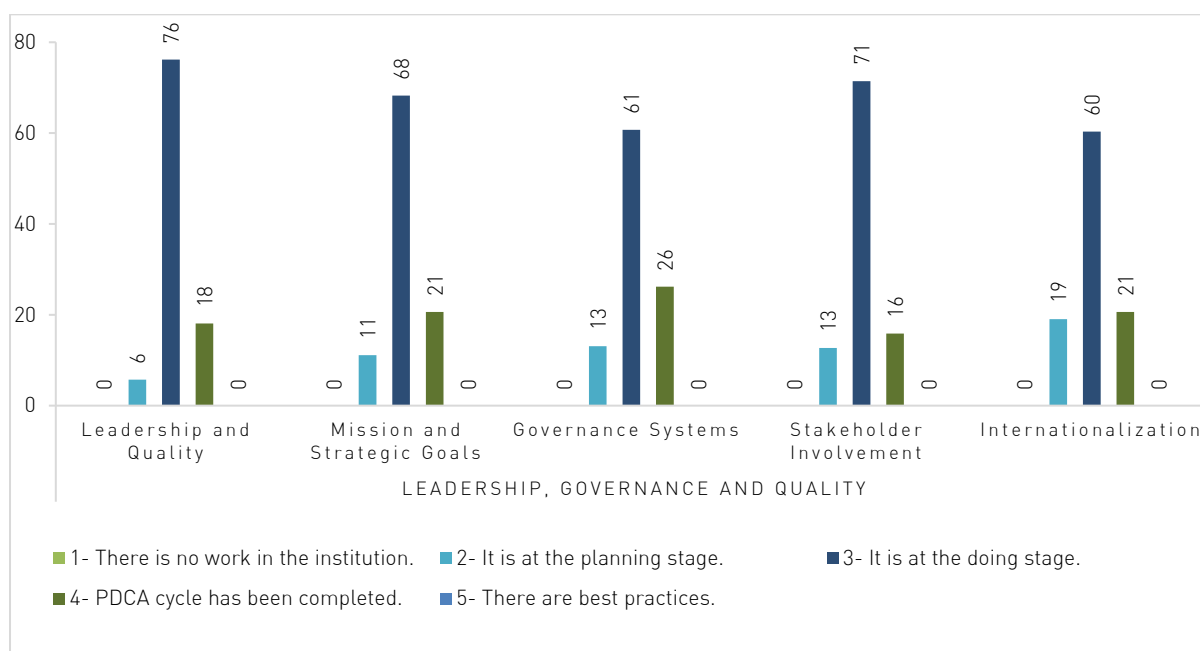


Diagram 5. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading

The institutions should have a governance model to enable institutional transformation, utilise leadership approaches, create internal quality assurance mechanisms and internalize the quality assurance culture. There are 18 sub-criteria of the Leadership and Quality, Mission and Strategic Goals, Governance Systems, Stakeholder Involvement, and Internationalization criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality main heading, and institutions are evaluated according to the criteria under the main heading. The fulfilment levels of these criteria are presented in Diagram 5.

4.4.1.1.1. Leadership and Quality

The data show that the institutions should have a governance model to enable institutional transformation, utilise leadership approaches, create internal quality assurance mechanisms and internalize the quality assurance culture. In this area, the majority of institutions (76%) are still in the doing phase, about 18% completed the PDCA cycle, but about 6% are still in the planning phase. The lack of best practice examples suggests that institutions should continue their efforts to mature their quality assurance systems.



4.4.1.1.2. Mission and Strategic Goals

According to the Mission and Strategic Goals criterion, institutions should determine quality assurance policies as part of their strategic management, develop strategies to implement these policies and share them with the public. The data show that about 11% of the institutions are in the planning phase, 68% are in the doing phase and 21% completed the PDCA cycle. The fact that no institution has reached full maturity in this area suggests that more work needs to be done to align performance indicators with strategic objectives.

4.4.1.1.3. Governance systems

The institutions should have a system to manage financial, human and information resources and processes to ensure the achievement of their strategic objectives in qualitative and quantitative manners. The data show that about 61% of institutions are in the doing phase, 26% completed the PDCA cycle, and 13% are still in the planning phase. While significant progress has been made under this criterion, it is understood that these systems need to be matured in all institutions.

4.4.1.1.4. Stakeholder Involvement

The institutions should establish and manage the necessary systems to receive and respond to the feedback of their internal and external stakeholders to ensure their involvement in strategic decisions and processes, and to use them for decision-making. The data show that 71% of institutions are still in the doing phase, while about 13% are in the planning phase. The scarcity of best practices emphasises the need for institutions to develop stakeholder involvement strategies.

4.4.1.1.5. Internationalization

The institutions should manage their processes, form the organizational structure and monitor and evaluate periodically results in accordance with their internationalization strategy and objectives. The data show that about 60% of the institutions are in the doing phase and 21% completed the PDCA cycle. This reveals the need for more widespread and mature practices in the field of internationalization.

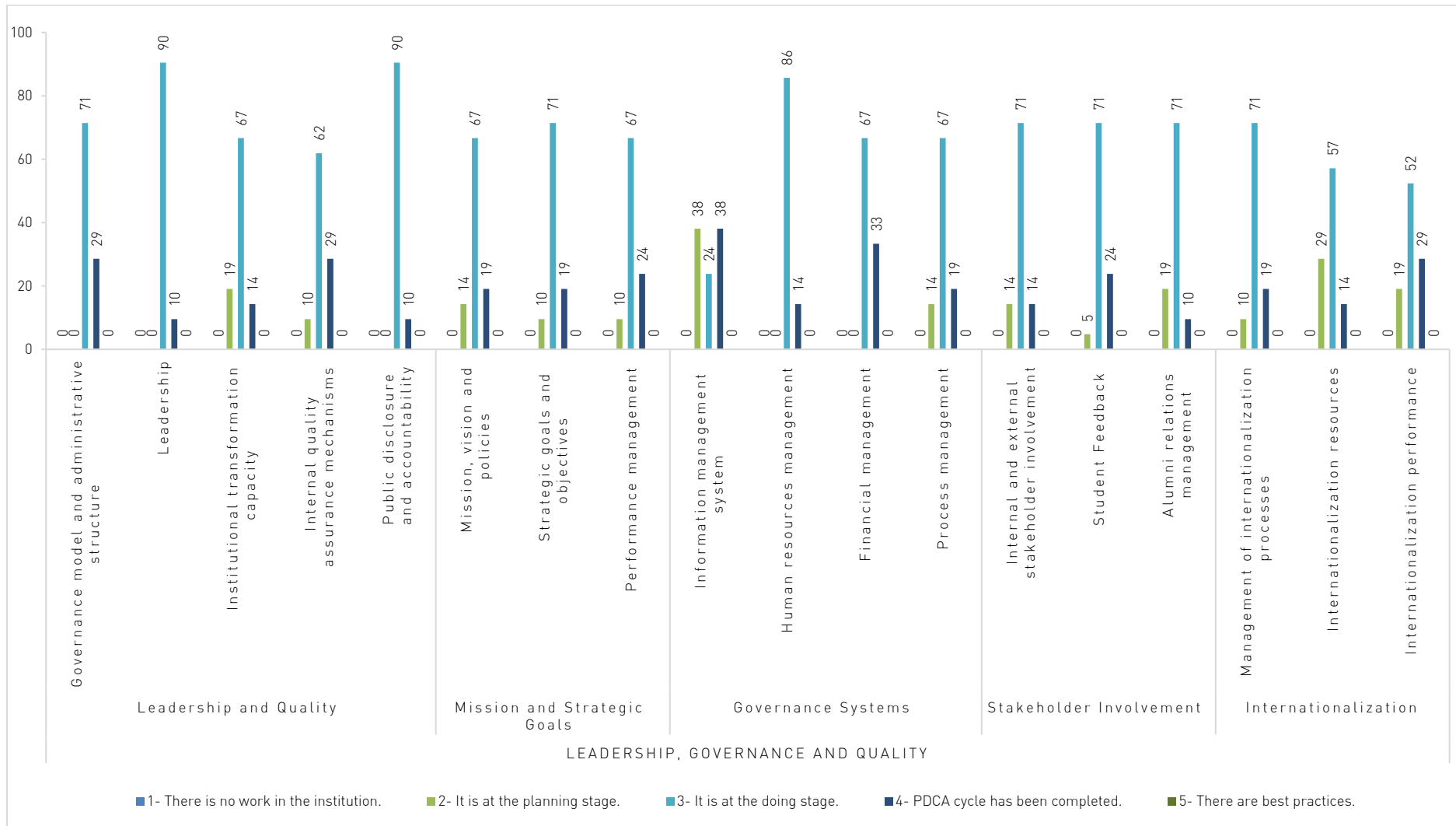


Diagram 6. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading

4.4.1.2. Learning and Teaching

For the Learning and Teaching heading, institutions included in the IAP were evaluated using 18 sub-criteria under Program Design, Evaluation and Update, Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation), Learning Resources and Academic Support Services, and Teaching Staff criteria. The fulfilment levels of these criteria are presented in Diagram 7.

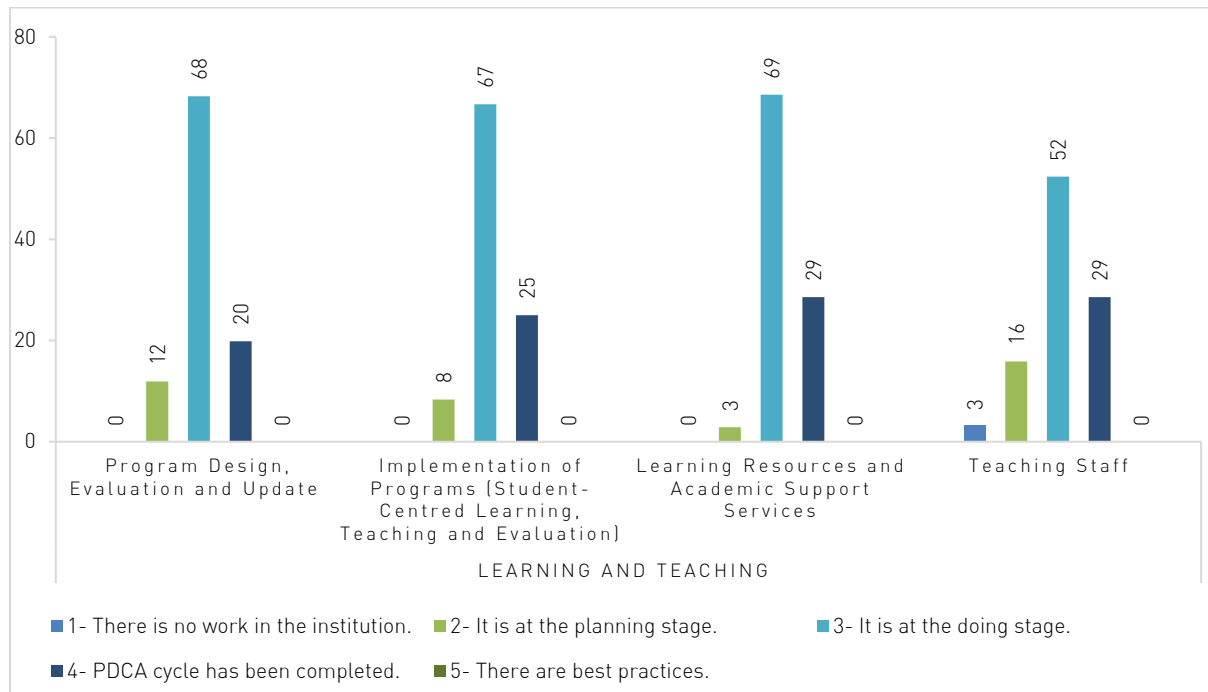


Diagram 7. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading

4.4.1.2.1. Program Design, Evaluation and Update

Under this criterion, institutions are required to align their curricula with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Turkey (NQF-HETR) and to periodically evaluate and update them. As seen in Diagram 7, 68% of the institutions are still in the doing phase, and mechanisms for follow-up and continuous improvement of these processes are at about 20%. While 12% of the institutions are in the planning phase, there are no institutions where no work has been carried out or where there is a best practice. These data suggest that more progress needs to be made in the design and updating of programs.



4.4.1.2.2. Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)

Institutions should aim to produce qualified graduates by applying student-centred and competency-based teaching methods. Under this criterion, approximately 67% of institutions are in the doing phase, and 25% completed follow-up and improvement processes. The rate of institutions in the planning phase is 8%. There are no institutions where no work has been carried out or where there is a best practice. These data point to the need to develop follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms in the field of implementation of programs.

4.4.1.2.3. Learning Resources and Academic Support Services

Institutions need to have sufficient learning resources and academic support services to achieve their objectives. According to the data, about 69% of institutions remained in the doing phase, while 29% completed the PDCA cycle. Approximately 3% of them are in the planning phase, while there are no institutions where no work has yet been carried out or where there is a best practice. These results suggest that follow-up and improvement mechanisms in the field of learning resources and academic support services should be expanded.

4.4.1.2.4. Teaching Staff

The institutions should be fair and transparent in all the processes pertaining to the recruitment, appointment, promotion and teaching assignments of the teaching staff. As seen in Diagram 8, 52% of institutions are in the doing phase, and about 29% completed the PDCA cycle. The rate of institutions in the planning phase is approximately 16%, and that of institutions where there is no work is 3%. There is also no best practice example from any institution for this criterion. This situation points to the need to improve processes in the field of teaching staff.

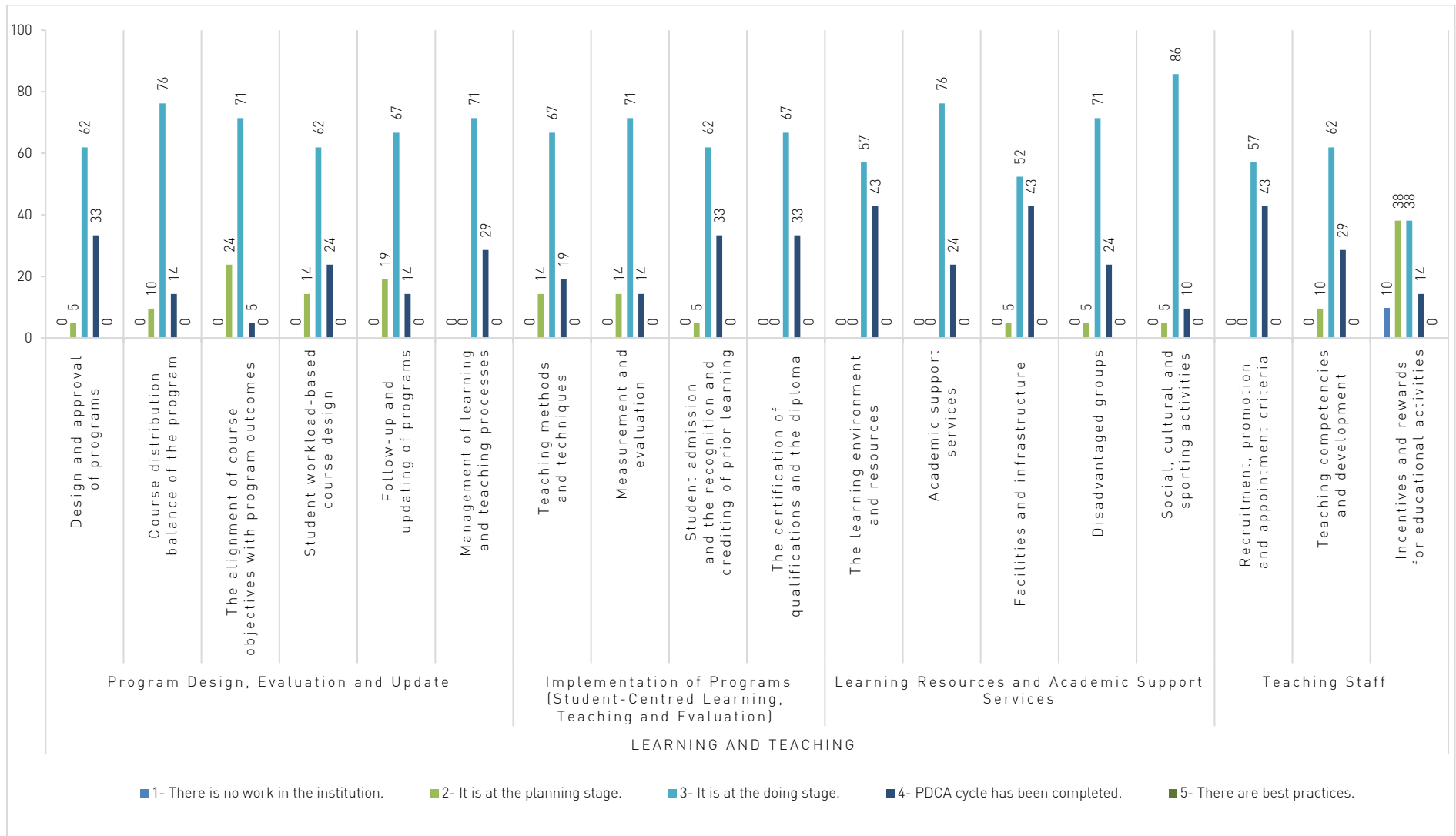


Diagram 8. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading



4.4.1.3. Research and Development

Under the Research and Development heading, there are three criteria, namely the Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources, Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports, and Research Performance, and seven sub-criteria. The institutions' research methods and resources, competence, collaborations with other institutions, support received and research performances were evaluated through the sub-criteria. The status of the institutions in terms of relevant criteria is seen in Diagram 9.

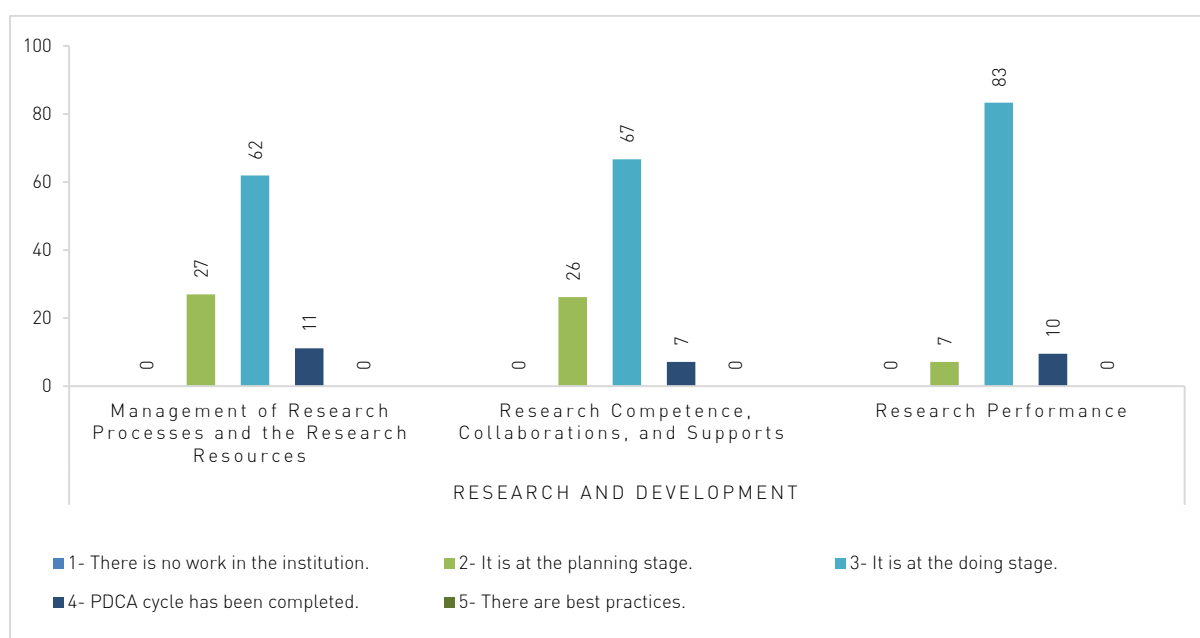


Diagram 9. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Research and Development heading

4.4.1.3.1. Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources

The institutions should manage their research activities in a way that is aligned with their academic priorities determined within the framework of their strategic plan, as well as the local, regional and national development objectives, adding value and transforming their activities into social benefits. They should provide the required physical infrastructure and financial resources for research activities and enable their effective use. For this criterion, approximately 62% of institutions are in the doing phase, and 11% completed follow-up and improvement processes. 27% of the institutions are in the planning phase. There are no best practices in this field yet.



4.4.1.3.2. Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports

The institutions should give opportunities (training, collaborations, supports, etc.) to teaching staff and researchers to maintain and improve their scientific research competence . For this criterion, approximately 67% of institutions are in the doing phase, and 7% completed follow-up and improvement processes in 2023. 26% of the institutions are in the planning phase.

4.4.1.3.3. Research Performance

Research performance is a critical indicator to measure the academic achievements and scientific contributions of institutions. According to the 2023 data, the majority of institutions (83%) are in the doing phase in terms of research performance; however, these practices need to be integrated into follow-up and continuous improvement processes. Approximately 10% of the institutions completed these processes and completed the PDCA cycle. 7% of institutions are still in the planning stage, indicating that they are in the process of developing systems for measuring and evaluating research performance. However, it is noteworthy that there are no best practices for this criterion either.

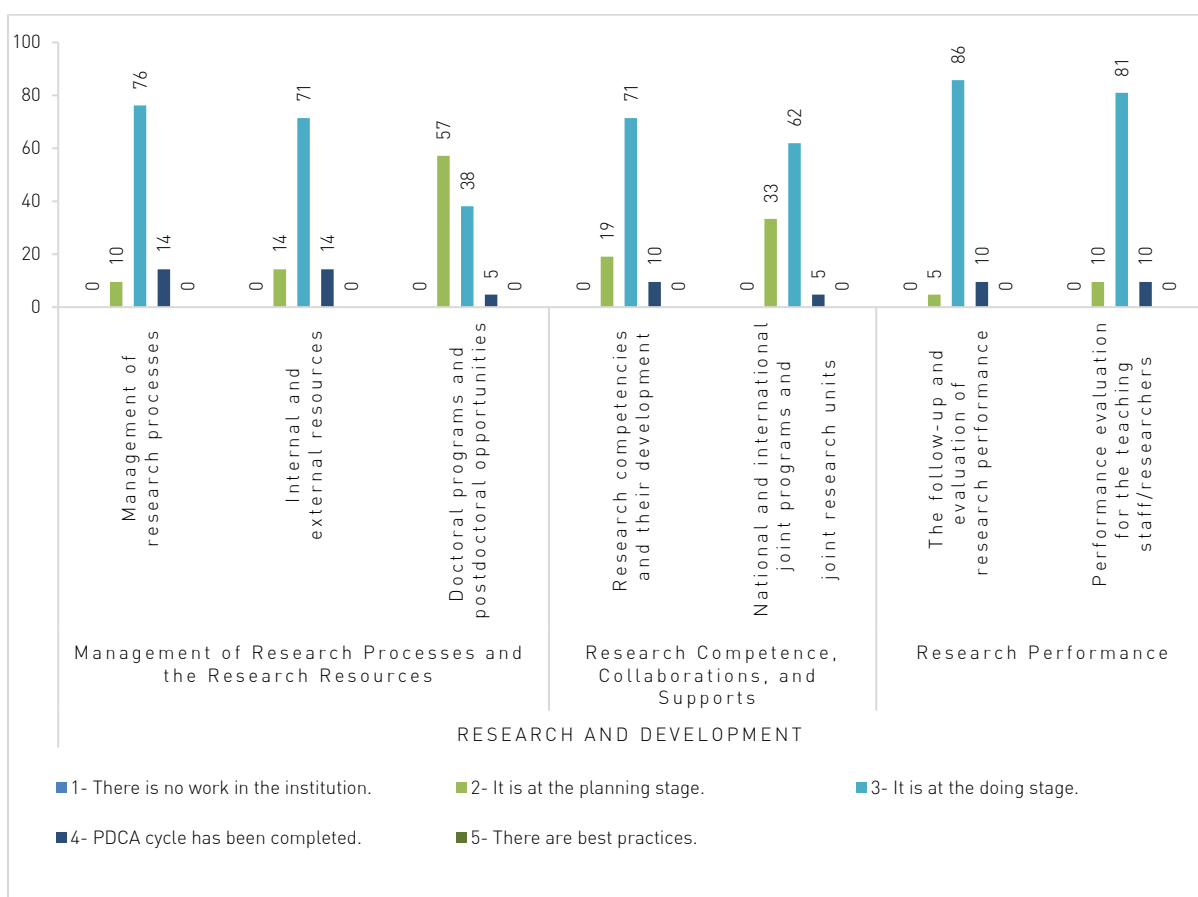


Diagram 10. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Research and Development heading

4.4.1.4. Service to Society

The Service to Society heading is evaluated through three sub-criteria under two criteria, namely the Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources, and the Service to Society Performance. Within the scope of these criteria, the service to society activities of institutions were evaluated and the fulfilment of these criteria is shown in Diagram 11.

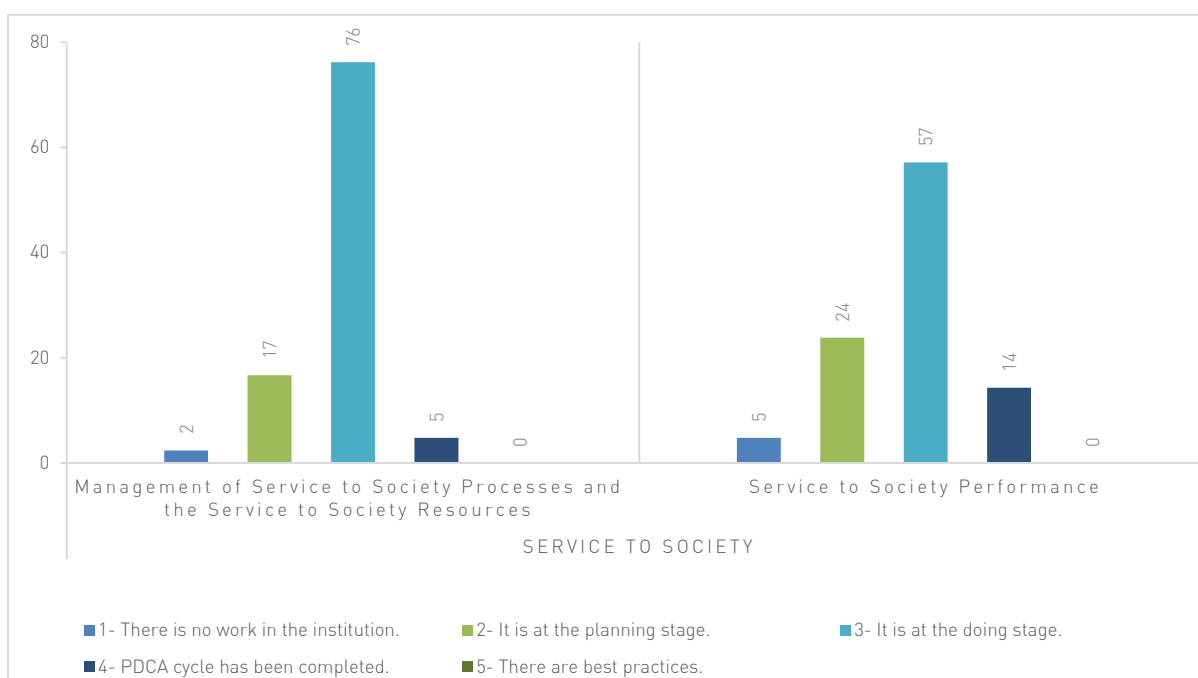


Diagram 11. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Service to Society heading

4.4.1.4.1. Management of Service to Society Processes

In the scope of the management of service to society processes sub-criterion, the institutions should carry out their service to society activities in accordance with their objectives and strategies and in line with the local, regional and national development goals. This sub-criterion also includes the establishment of an appropriate organisational structure for the management of the service to society processes. According to the 2023 data, 76% of the institutions are in the doing phase for these processes. Follow-up and improvement processes were completed in 5% of institutions and 17% are in the planning phase. In 2% of the institutions, no work has been carried out yet and there is no institution exemplifying a best practice. This situation shows that follow-up and improvement processes are not sufficiently carried out in the management of service to society processes and the organisational structure.

4.4.1.4.2. Resources

The institutions should have the required physical, technical and financial resources of suitable quality and quantity and enable their effective use to maintain their service to society activities. According to the 2023 data, 76% of institutions remained at the doing stage and no institution completed the PDCA cycle. 24% of the institutions are in the planning phase.



There are no best practices in this field yet. These data show that more effort is needed for the follow-up and improvement of service to society resources.

4.4.1.4.3. Follow-up and Improvement of Service to Society Performance

The institutions should periodically monitor and continuously improve the activities they maintain in line with their service to society strategy and objectives. According to the 2023 data, 57% of the institutions are in the doing phase. Follow-up and improvement processes were completed in 14% of the institutions and 24% are in the planning phase. In 5%, no work has been conducted yet. These data reveal that there are significant gaps in follow-up and improvement of service to society performance.

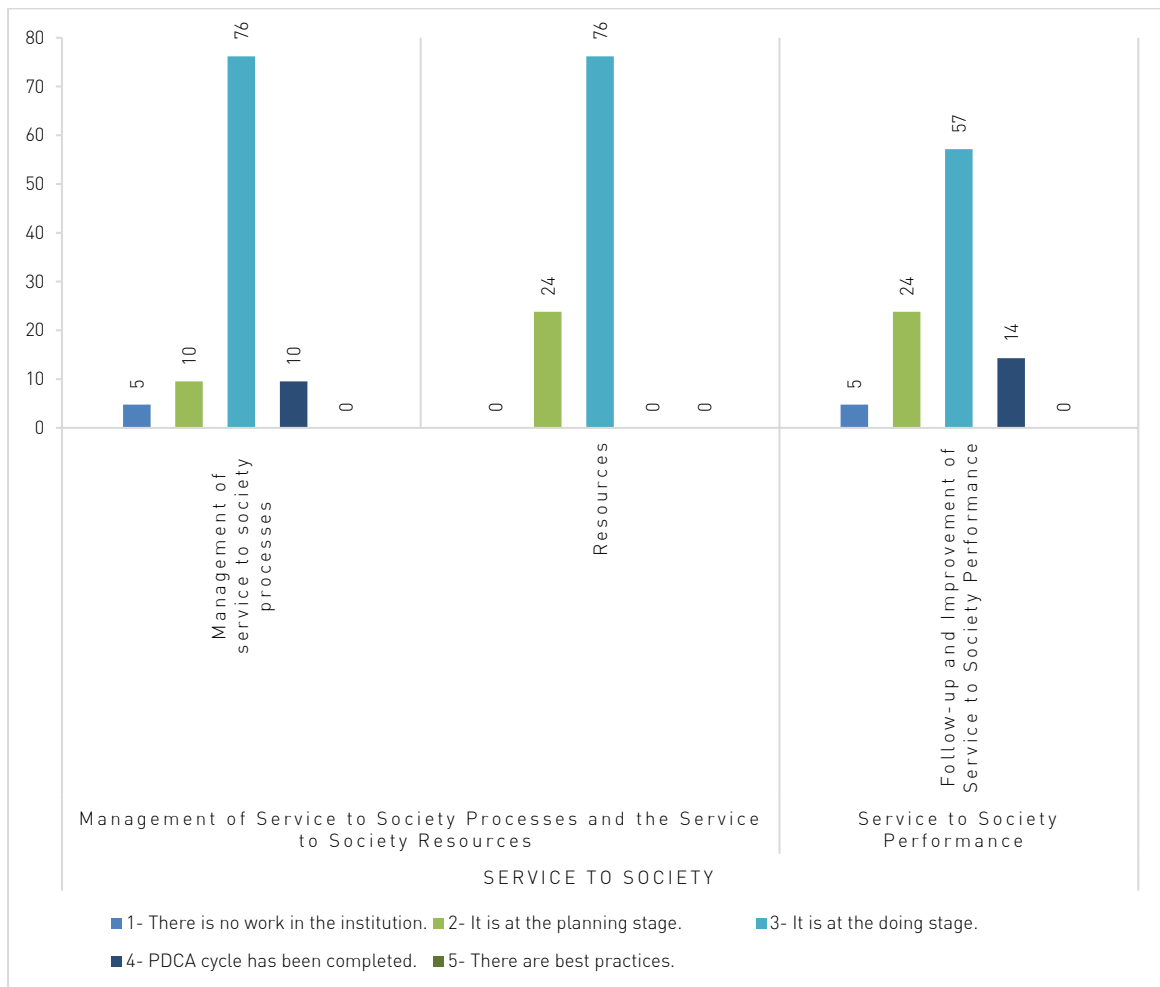


Diagram 12. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Service to Society heading



4.4.1.5. Areas for Improvement and Strengths

The 2023 IARs of 21 HEIs, out of which one was refused, three were granted full accreditation and 17 were granted conditional accreditation, were analysed and the strengths and areas for improvement for full and conditional accreditation are presented under four main headings.

Table 9. Areas for Improvement in HEIs with Conditional Accreditation

		Areas for Improvement in HEIs with Conditional Accreditation
Leadership, Governance and Quality	Leadership and Quality	73
	Mission and Strategic Goals	44
	Governance Systems	54
	Stakeholder Involvement	46
	Internationalization	41
Learning and Teaching	Program Design, Evaluation, and Update	91
	Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)	52
	Learning Resources and Academic Support Services	65
	Teaching Staff	40
Research and Development	Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources	47
	Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports	33
	Research Performance	32
Service to Society	Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources	33
	Service to Society Performance	16

While creating these tables, maturity levels 1, 2, and 3 were considered areas for improvement, and maturity levels 4 and 5 were considered strengths. It should be noted that there is no comparison between the HEIs with conditional and full accreditation.



The tables show the common strengths and areas for improvement and the number of HEIs with full and conditional accreditation that have them under the main headings of Leadership, Governance and Quality, Learning and Teaching, Research and Development, and Service to Society.

The areas that require the most effort for improvement are the leadership and quality systems (73) under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading. This suggests that leadership and quality processes need to be improved. There are areas for improvement in other sub-criteria, such as mission and strategic goals (44) and governance systems (54).

Under the heading of Learning and Teaching, the area that requires the most effort for improvement is found in Program Design, Evaluation and Update (91), while Implementation of Programs (student-centred learning, teaching and evaluation) and Learning Resources and Academic Support Services are also noteworthy. Under this heading, Teaching Staff (40) stands out as the area open for less improvement.

Under the Research and Development heading, the area for improvement is Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources (47), while there is less need for improvement in Research Competence, Collaboration and Supports (33) and Research Performance (32).

Under the Service to Society heading, Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources (33) stand out as an important area that needs to be improved in institutions holding conditional accreditation.



Table 10. Areas for Improvement in HEIs with Full Accreditation

		Areas for Improvement in HEIs with Full Accreditation
Leadership, Governance and Quality	Leadership and Quality	11
	Mission and Strategic Goals	6
	Governance Systems	5
	Stakeholder Involvement	7
	Internationalization	6
Learning and Teaching	Program Design, Evaluation, and Update	7
	Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)	5
	Learning Resources and Academic Support Services	7
	Teaching Staff	3
Research and Development	Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources	7
	Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports	4
	Research Performance	5
Service to Society	Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources	5
	Service to Society Performance	1

Under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading, the areas that require the most effort for improvement are Leadership and Quality (11) and Stakeholder Involvement (7). This suggests that institutions holding full accreditation also need to make improvements in these areas.

Under the heading of Learning and Teaching, Program Design, Evaluation and Update (7) and Learning Resources and Academic Support Services (7) are among the areas that require the most effort for improvement, while there are also some deficiencies in the Teaching Staff.



Under the heading of Research and Development, the most improvement is required in Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources (7) and Research Performance (5); however, significant progress has been made in these areas in general.

Under the Service to Society heading, there are more areas for improvement in other criteria except for Service to Society Performance (1).

Table 11. Strengths in HEIs with Conditional Accreditation

		Strengths in HEIs with Conditional Accreditation
Leadership, Governance and Quality	Leadership and Quality	12
	Mission and Strategic Goals	7
	Governance Systems	14
	Stakeholder Involvement	5
	Internationalization	10
Learning and Teaching	Program Design, Evaluation, and Update	11
	Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)	16
	Learning Resources and Academic Support Services	20
	Teaching Staff	11
Research and Development	Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources	4
	Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports	1
	Research Performance	2
Service to Society	Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources	1
	Service to Society Performance	1

Under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading, strengths in areas, such as Governance Systems (14) and Leadership and Quality (12) stand out. However, strengths are more limited in Mission and Strategic Goals and Stakeholder Involvement.



Under the heading of Learning and Teaching, Learning Resources and Academic Support Services (20) criterion stands out as a strength, while Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation) also draws attention.

Under the heading of Research and Development, it is observed that strengths are limited, particularly with the Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources (4).

It is understood that the strengths under the Service to Society heading are quite limited, and there are deficiencies, especially in the Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources, and Service to Society Performance.

Table 12. Strengths in HEIs with Full Accreditation

		Strengths in HEIs with Full Accreditation
Leadership, Governance and Quality	Leadership and Quality	4
	Mission and Strategic Goals	3
	Governance Systems	7
	Stakeholder Involvement	2
	Internationalization	3
Learning and Teaching	Program Design, Evaluation, and Update	11
	Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)	5
	Learning Resources and Academic Support Services	8
	Teaching Staff	6
Research and Development	Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources	2
	Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports	2
	Research Performance	1
Service to Society	Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources	1
	Service to Society Performance	2



Under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading, strengths are Governance Systems (7) and Leadership and Quality (4).

Under the heading of Learning and Teaching, Program Design, Evaluation and Update (11) and Learning Resources and Academic Support Services (8) stand out as strengths.

Under the Research and Development heading, there are strengths, such as Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources (2) and Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports (2).

Except for Service to Society Performance (2), there are fewer strengths under the Service to Society heading.

4.4.1.6. Comparison of the Average Maturity Levels of Leadership, Governance and Quality Systems in Accredited Institutions

A comparison of the average maturity levels of the criteria under the heading of Leadership, Governance and Quality among the accredited institutions is presented in Diagram 13. It is observed that follow-up and improvement activities continue in all criteria in institutions holding full accreditation. On the other hand, institutions with conditional accreditation have lower levels of maturity than those with full accreditation, especially in Leadership and Quality, Mission and Strategic Goals, and Governance Systems. In the criteria of Stakeholder Involvement and Internationalization, it is understood that institutions holding full accreditation carry out these processes in a more mature and systematic manner. This suggests that institutions with full accreditation have established more robust follow-up and improvement mechanisms. It should be emphasised that institutions with conditional accreditation should strengthen these mechanisms. Institutions holding full accreditation need to improve their leadership and quality, mission and strategic goals, and the mechanisms for stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes. However, it is seen that the maturity levels of Internationalization and Governance Systems criteria are higher than that of other criteria.

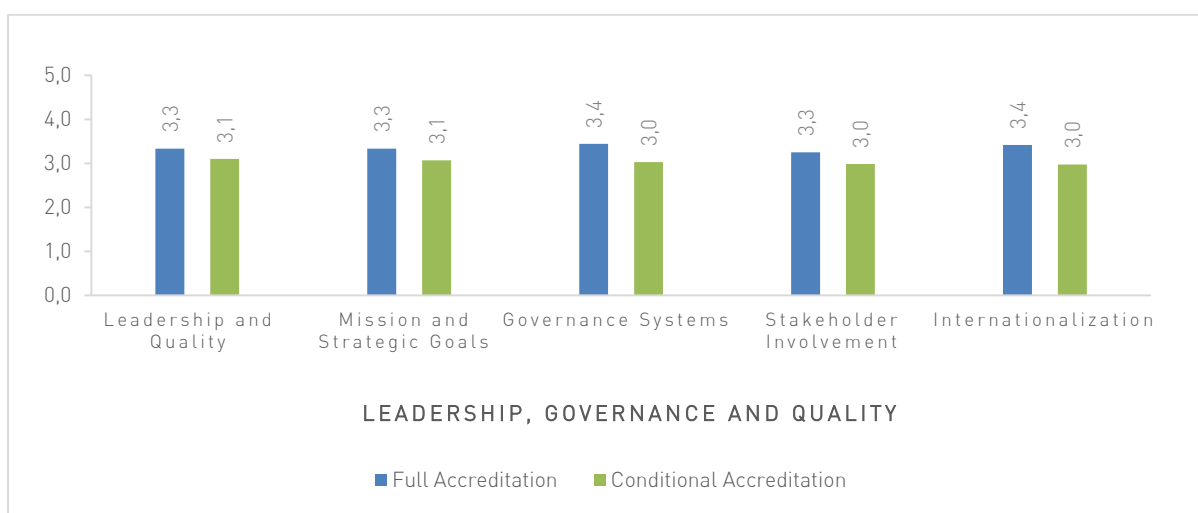


Diagram 13. Comparison of the Average Maturity Levels of Leadership, Governance and Quality Processes in Accredited Institutions

A comparison of the average maturity levels of the criteria under the heading of Learning and Teaching among the accredited institutions is presented in Diagram 14.

Institutions with full accreditation have a higher level of maturity than those with conditional accreditation in Program Design, Evaluation and Update. This shows that these institutions focus more on follow-up and improvement in this process. Institutions with conditional accreditation still keep developing the process, and their practices need to become widespread throughout the institution.

The Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation) criterion is similarly more developed in fully accredited institutions than in conditionally accredited ones. It is observed that student-centred approaches are applied more and follow-up and improvement processes are more advanced in institutions holding full accreditation than the ones with conditional accreditation.

Institutions with full accreditation in the field of Learning Resources and Academic Support Services are significantly ahead of those with conditional accreditation, and it is understood that the PDCA cycle is operated and continuous improvement mechanisms are applied in this process. Although institutions with conditional accreditation are making progress in this area, they have not reached full maturity.

For the Teaching Staff criterion, there is a significant difference between the fully and conditionally accredited institutions. Institutions with full accreditation are more advanced in

monitoring and improving the processes related to teaching staff, while institutions with conditional accreditation stay behind in this process. In general, fully accredited institutions have higher levels of maturity than conditionally accredited institutions for each criterion. Institutions with conditional accreditation are still in the initial stages of follow-up and improvement processes.

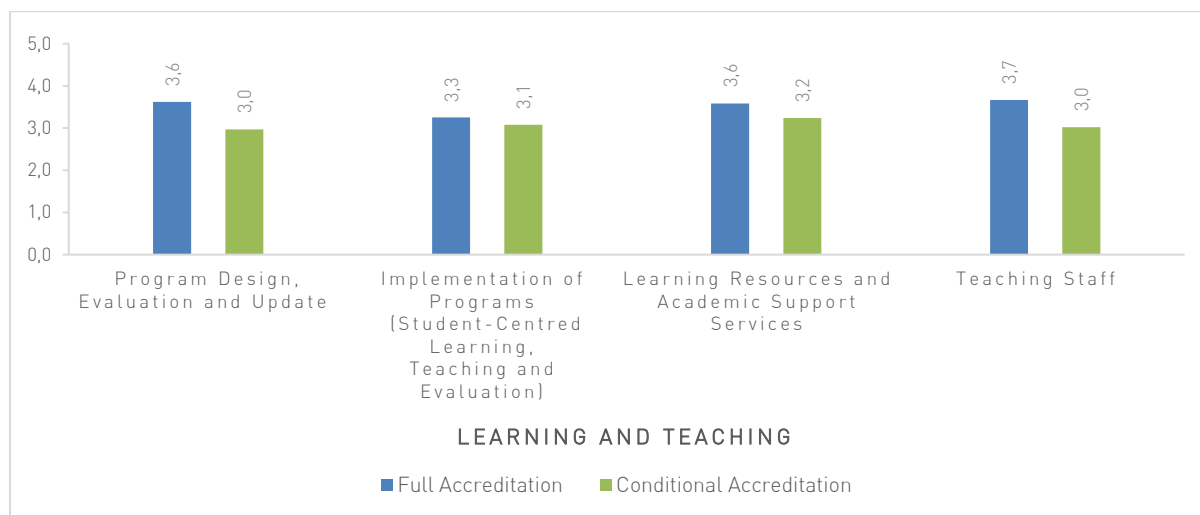


Diagram 14. Comparison of the Average Maturity Levels of Learning and Teaching Processes in Accredited Institutions

A comparison of maturity levels of Research and Development processes in accredited institutions is presented in Diagram 15. Accordingly, it is seen that the institutions that received conditional accreditation are still in the planning and doing phases. Especially in the sub-criteria of Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources and Research Competence, Collaborations, and Supports, institutions are at the planning and doing stages, and follow-up and improvement mechanisms have not yet been fully established. The low level of maturity of institutions in these processes indicates that they need a transition to follow-up and continuous improvement processes. In Research Performance, it is seen that follow-up and improvement processes partially started; however, the need for improvement continues here as well.

Institutions with full accreditation have an average score of 3 to 4 points, indicating that follow-up and improvement activities were partially carried out. Institutions with full accreditation in the areas of Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources, Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports, and Research Performance partially established and implemented follow-up and improvement mechanisms. However,

further improvement work is needed to complete the PDCA cycle in these institutions. In general, institutions with conditional accreditation are in the planning and doing phases, while institutions with full accreditation started to implement partial follow-up and improvement processes. However, institutions with full accreditation are expected to further improve their processes and develop follow-up and improvement mechanisms.

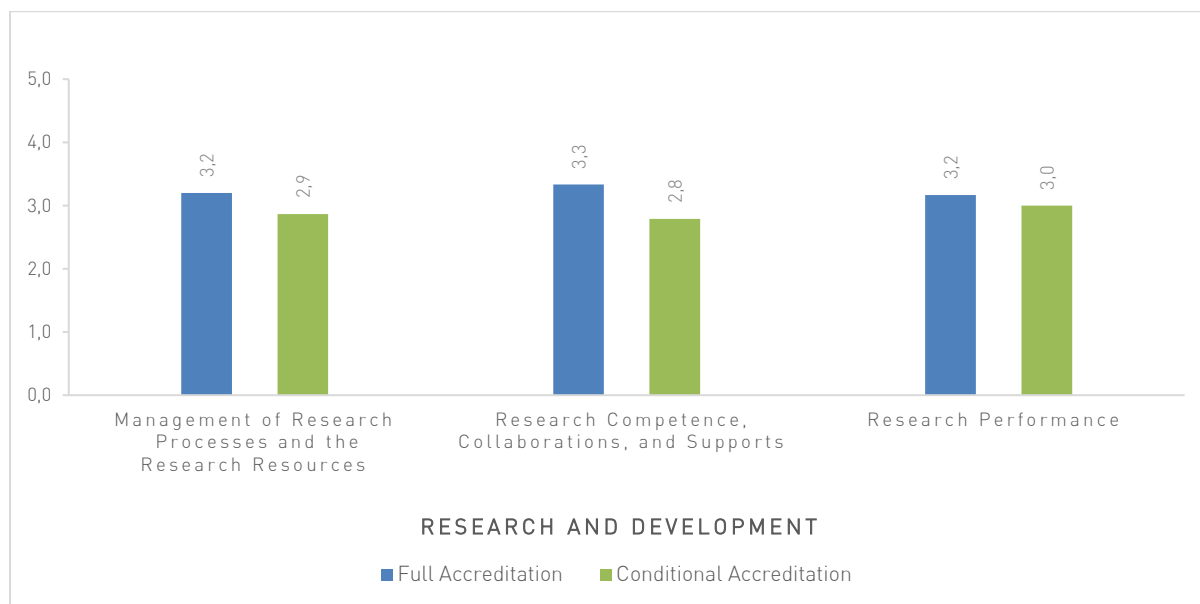


Diagram 15. Comparison of the Average Maturity Levels of Research and Development Processes in Accredited Institutions

A comparison of maturity levels of Service to Society processes in accredited institutions is presented in Diagram 16.

In fully accredited institutions, follow-up and improvement activities are partially carried out in service to society processes. Institutions with full accreditation have an average score of 3 to 4 in the areas of Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources and Service to Society Performance, and started follow-up and improvement activities in these processes; however, it is understood that these processes have not yet been completed. Although it is apparent that follow-up and improvement mechanisms are more advanced, especially in Service to Society Performance, the related processes need to be completed. Institutions with conditional accreditation are still in the planning and doing phases. They started to make practices, with an average score of 2 to 3 in the areas of Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources and Service to Society Performance; however, follow-up and improvement mechanisms have

not yet been established. While conditionally accredited institutions made progress in these processes, their low level of maturity indicates that they need to focus more on follow-up and continuous improvement processes. In general, it is observed that the processes under the Service to Society heading are at lower maturity levels in all institutions compared to other criteria and this area is considered as an area for improvement. Institutions with full accreditation are partially engaged in follow-up and improvement processes, while institutions with conditional accreditation are still in the planning and doing phases.

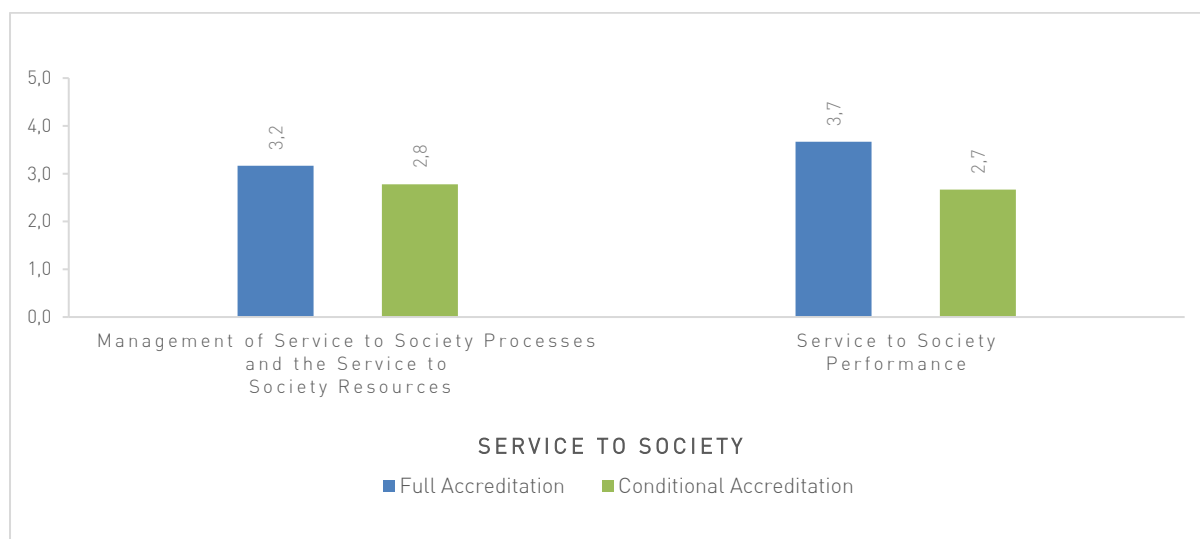


Diagram 16. Comparison of the Average Maturity Levels of Service to Society Processes in Accredited Institutions

4.4.1.7. Institutional Accreditation Program Evaluation Consistency

The maturity of the quality assurance processes of institutions is also analysed by the THEQC experts through reports (especially the IARs and the previously written IFRs, the ISERs) and alternative evidence to determine the consistency of the evaluations made by the IAP teams. Consistency analyses are conducted in three stages:

In the first stage, a THEQC expert and a Council member review the report separately. In the second stage, the evaluations of the expert and the Council member are compared through a panel and a common attitude is achieved in consistency work. In the last stage, if deemed necessary, the IAR and consistency evaluations are negotiated with the team leaders and final evaluations are made.



Within the scope of consistency works, the correlational relationships between the scores given to the institutions by the IAP team and the final scores obtained in the consistency process are analysed. As a part of this process, also the relations between IAR-ISER differences and Consistency-ISER differences are examined. Table 13 provides an overview of the evaluation scores obtained in the 2023 IAP period.

Table 13. Average Evaluation Scores for the 2023 Institutional Accreditation Program Period

Score Type	Average	Standard Deviation	Highest	Lowest
ISER	757.1	59.5	901	624
IAR _(team)	632.5	52.1	709	493
IAR _(final)	606.5	55.9	698	492
ISER-IAR _(team) difference	124.5	78.7	408	24
ISER-IAR _(final) difference	150.6	78.6	409	61
IAR _(team) -IAR _(final) difference	26.04	25.5	71	-18

Table 13 shows that the scores at ISERs, IARs and the final version of evaluation reports reveal that institutions perceive their maturity levels as higher in their self-evaluation (ISER scores). This is evident from the fact that the average ISER score of 757.1 is well above the average score in IARs written by the evaluation teams (632.5) and the average score in the final IARs (606.5). This indicates that the institutions' perceptions of the maturity levels of their quality assurance systems are higher than the results of external evaluations.

The average difference between the scores in ISERs and IARs by teams is 124.5, with a standard deviation of 78.7, indicating a significant difference in perceptions and diversity between HEIs' self-evaluations and external evaluation results. Moreover, the average difference between the scores in ISERs and final IARs is 150.6, reflecting that the consistency work had a significant impact on the evaluation scores.

On the other hand, the average difference between the scores in IARs by teams and the final IARs is 26.04, with a low standard deviation (25.5), suggesting a high level of consistency between the IAP team evaluation and the final evaluation. This shows that the external evaluation processes under the IAP are reliable and objective. As shown in Table 14, the high correlation coefficient between the scores in the IARs by teams and the final IARs (0.89**) indicates that the external evaluation process was consistent and that the IAP team's



evaluations largely reflected the final results. This relation implies that the evaluations made by the IAP team are reliable and consistent with the final decision.

Moreover, the high correlation coefficient (0.94**) between the difference between the scores in ISERs and the IARs by teams and the final IAR difference indicates that the difference between HEIs' self-evaluation scores and IAR scores has a strong relationship with the final IAR evaluation results. This strongly illustrates the IAR evaluations' compliance both with THEQC's evaluation understanding and the inter-consistency.

Table 14. Consistency Coefficients for the 2023 Institutional Accreditation Program Period

	IAR(team)	ISER-IAR(team) difference
IAR _(final)	0.89**	
ISER-IAR _(final) difference		0.94**

** p<.01

4.4.2. Evaluation of the Mid-term Evaluation Reports

In 2023, the MtERs of HEIs included in the MtEP were analysed through the institutional external evaluation and accreditation criteria. Although it is seen that accredited institutions reached a certain level of maturity in the processes carried out under the main headings "Leadership, Governance and Quality", "Learning and Teaching", "Research and Development" and "Service to Society", improvement activities continue to be an area that requires more effort.

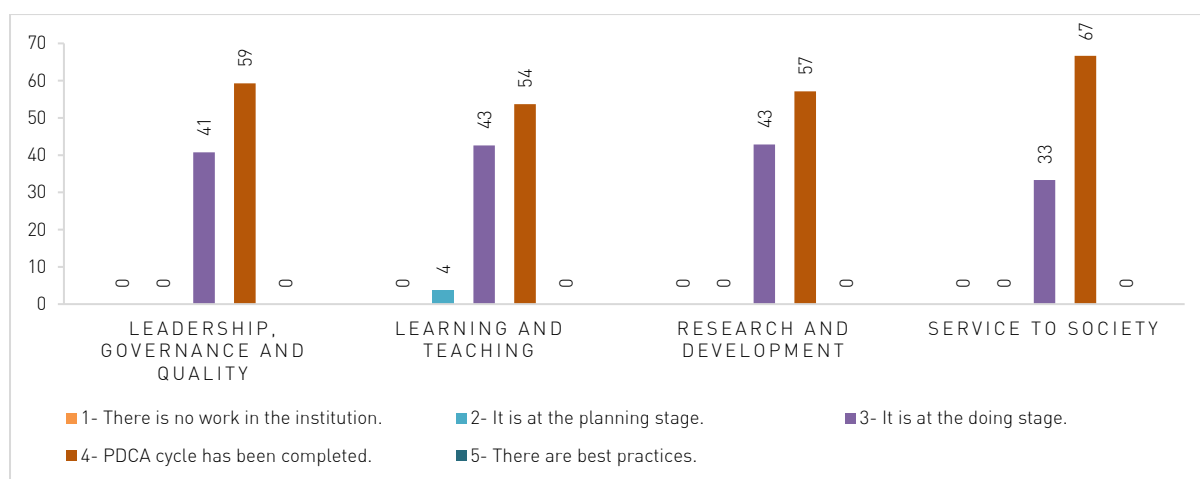


Diagram 17. Maturity Levels in the Mid-term Evaluation Reports by Main Headings



The data obtained from the MtERs reveal that 41% of the institutions are in the doing phase, while 59% completed the PDCA cycle. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for the criteria. In addition, best practices are not available under this heading. These results indicate that significant progress has been made in structuring the quality assurance system; however, the practices need to be disseminated and monitored.

Under the main heading "Learning and Teaching", 43% are in the doing phase of the processes, 54% have completed PDCA cycles, and 4% are in the planning phase. It is understood that institutions made significant progress in this area; however, follow-up and improvement processes need to be further developed. Best practices are also not available under this heading.

Under the main heading "Research and Development", it is found that 43% matured their follow-up and improvement mechanisms, and 57% completed the PDCA cycle. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for the criteria. Best practices are not available under this heading. These results suggest that efforts to expand follow-up and improvement mechanisms in research and development processes should be increased.

Under the heading of "Service to Society", 33% are in the doing phase of the processes and 67% completed the PDCA cycle. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for the criteria. Best practices are not available under this heading. This shows that the level of maturity of service to society processes has increased even though follow-up and improvement efforts need to be expanded.

4.4.2.1. Leadership, Governance and Quality

All 3 MtERs completed in 2023 were examined and the maturity levels of the institutions' quality assurance systems were discussed separately considering the THEQC criteria. In this respect, the MtERs were evaluated with three different approaches:

1. Evaluation of the maturity levels in the Status Report according to the percentages determined for each criterion by compiling the frequencies of the maturity levels determined for the sub-criteria of 14 criteria,



2. Evaluation of the strengths and the areas for improvement of the main headings,
3. Comparison of quality assurance systems' maturity levels of institutions accredited for two and five years.

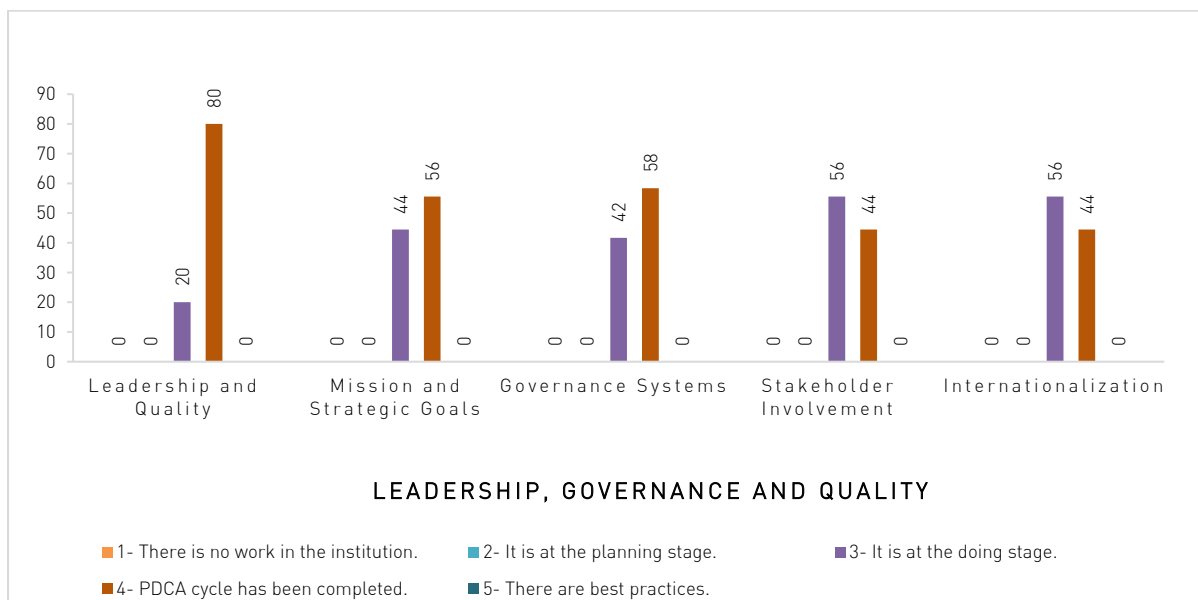


Diagram 18. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading

The institutions should have a governance model to enable institutional transformation, utilise leadership approaches, create internal quality assurance mechanisms and internalize the quality assurance culture. There are 18 sub-criteria of the Leadership and Quality, Mission and Strategic Goals, Governance Systems, Stakeholder Involvement, and Internationalization criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality main heading, and institutions are evaluated according to the sub-criteria. The fulfilment levels of these criteria are presented in Diagram 18.

4.4.2.1.1. Leadership and Quality

The indicators in Diagram 18 show that 80% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 20% are in the doing phase. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for this criterion. These results suggest that institutions have reached a significant level of maturity in their leadership and quality processes; however, follow-up and continuous improvement efforts need to be maintained.



4.4.2.1.2. Mission and Strategic Goals

For the "Mission and Strategic Goals" criterion, 56% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 44% are in the doing phase. There is no institution in the planning phase. These data show that significant progress has been made in implementing the strategic goals; however, follow-up and evaluation processes need to be further strengthened.

4.4.2.1.3. Governance Systems

The data show that 58% of the institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 42% are in the doing phase. There is no institution in the planning phase. These results reveal that governance systems are largely mature, on the other hand, continuous follow-up and improvement mechanisms need to be fully implemented.

4.4.2.1.4. Stakeholder Involvement

The institutions should establish and manage the necessary systems to receive and respond to the feedback of their internal and external stakeholders to ensure their involvement in strategic decisions and processes, and to use them for decision-making. As seen in Diagram 19, 56% of institutions are in the doing phase, and 44% completed the PDCA cycle. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for this criterion. These results indicate that a significant level of maturity has been reached in stakeholder involvement processes; however, these processes need to be continuously monitored and improved.

4.4.2.1.5. Internationalization

Under the "Internationalization" criterion, 44% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 56% are in the doing phase. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for this criterion. These data emphasise that institutions have reached a certain level of maturity in their internationalization processes; however, the processes need to be monitored more effectively and continuously improved.

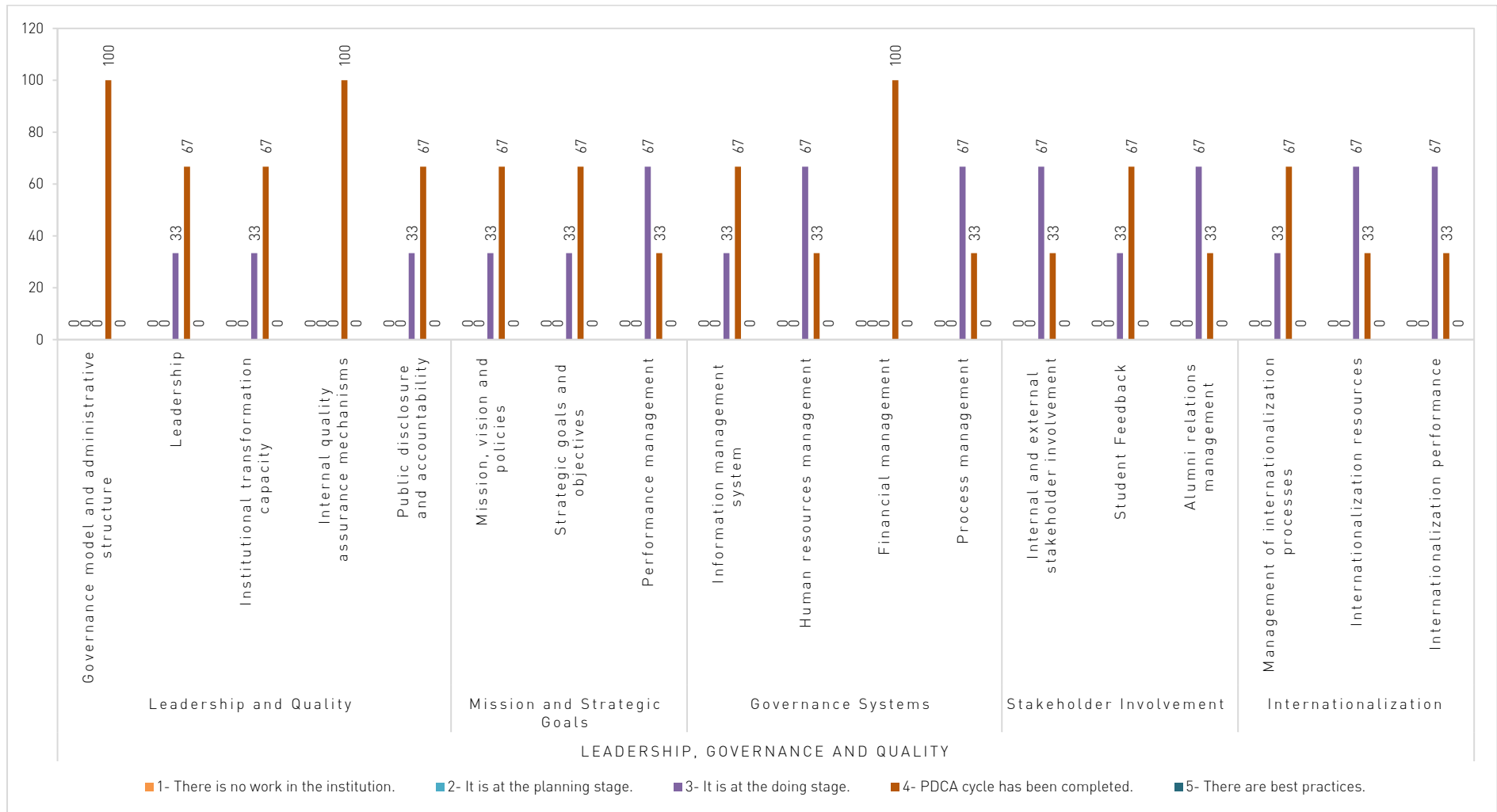


Diagram 19. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading

4.4.2.2. Learning and Teaching

For the Learning and Teaching heading, institutions included in the MtEP were evaluated using 18 sub-criteria under Program Design, Evaluation and Update, Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation), Learning Resources and Academic Support Services, and Teaching Staff criteria. The evaluation findings are presented in Diagram 20.

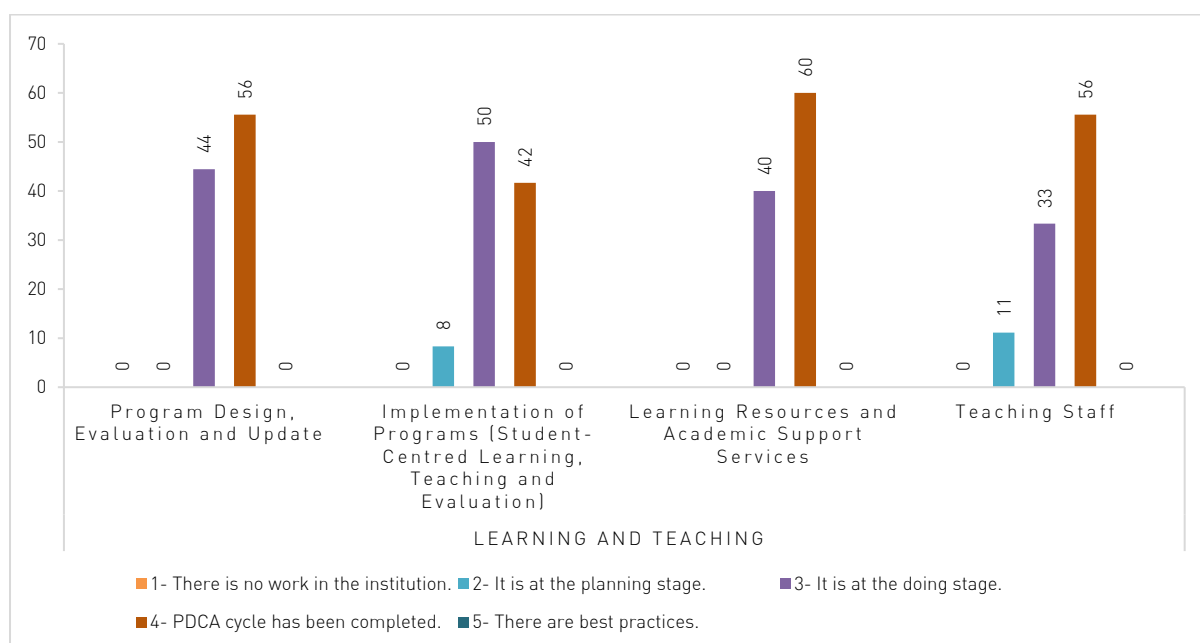


Diagram 20. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading

4.4.2.2.1. Program Design, Evaluation and Update

Institutions are required to align their curricula with the NQF-HETR and periodically evaluate and update them. Diagram 20 shows that 56% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 44% are in the doing phase. No institution is in the planning phase, and all of them have implemented some work for this criterion. These results show that institutions have made significant progress in the design and update of programs; however, follow-up and improvement processes need to be further strengthened.

4.4.2.2.2. Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation)

Institutions should aim to produce qualified graduates by applying student-centred and competency-based teaching methods. Under this criterion, 50% of institutions are in the



doing phase, while 42% completed the PDCA cycle. The ratio of institutions in the planning phase is 8%. There are no institutions where no work has been carried out or where there is a best practice. These data point to the need to develop follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms in the field of implementation of programs.

4.4.2.2.3. Learning Resources and Academic Support Services

Institutions need to have sufficient learning resources and academic support services to achieve their objectives. The data show that 60% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 40% are in the doing phase. All institutions completed the planning phase for this criterion. There are no institutions where no work has been carried out or where there is a best practice. These results suggest that follow-up and improvement mechanisms in the field of learning resources and academic support services should be expanded.

4.4.2.2.4. Teaching Staff

The institutions should be fair and transparent in all the processes pertaining to the recruitment, appointment, promotion and teaching assignments of the teaching staff. Diagram 21 shows that 56% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. The ratio of institutions in the planning phase is 11%. There is also no best practice example from any institution for this criterion. This situation points to the need to improve processes in the field of teaching staff.

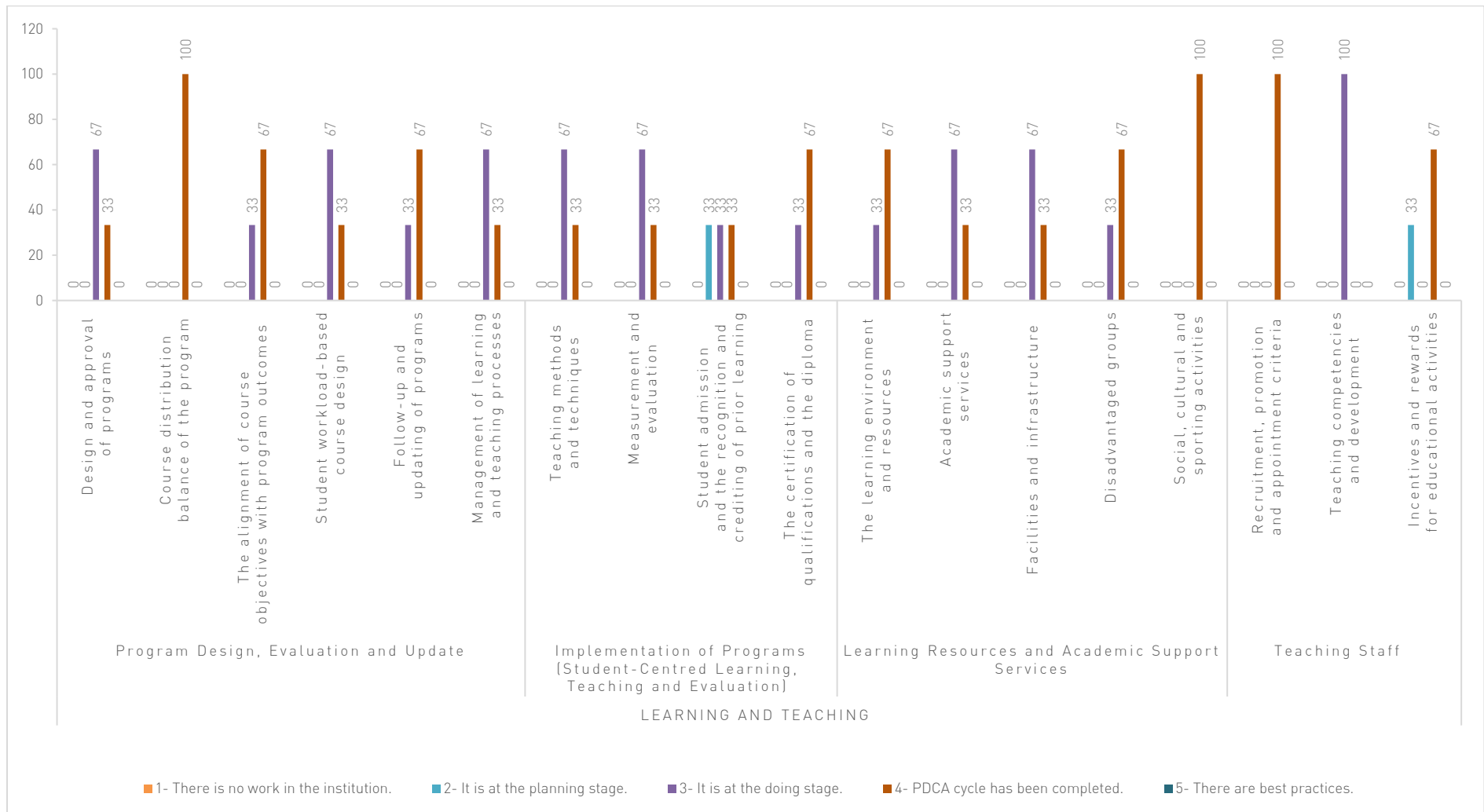


Diagram 21. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading.

4.4.2.3. Research and Development

Under the Research and Development heading, there are three criteria, namely the Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources, Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports, and Research Performance, and seven sub-criteria. The institution's research methods and resources, competence, collaborations with other institutions, support received and research performances are evaluated through the sub-criteria. The status of the institutions in terms of relevant criteria is seen in Diagram 22.



Diagram 22. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Research and Development heading

4.4.2.3.1. Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources

The institutions should manage their research activities in a way that is aligned with their academic priorities determined within the framework of their strategic plan, as well as the local, regional and national development objectives. They should provide the required physical infrastructure and financial resources for research activities and enable their effective use. Diagram 22 shows that 67% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. There is no institution in the planning phase. This shows that a



significant level of maturity has been reached in the management of research process and the research resources.

4.4.2.3.2. Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports

The institutions should give opportunities (training, collaborations, support, etc.) to teaching staff and researchers to maintain and improve their scientific research competence . Diagram 22 shows that 33% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 67% are in the doing phase. There is no institution in the planning phase. These results show that institutions have made significant progress in research competence and collaborations.

4.4.2.3.3. Research Performance

Research performance is a critical indicator to measure the academic achievements and scientific contributions of institutions. Diagram 23 shows that 67% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. There is no institution in the planning phase. This reveals that institutions successfully carry out follow-up and evaluation processes and effectively implement improvement mechanisms for research performance.



Diagram 23. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Research and Development heading

4.4.2.4. Service to Society

The Service to Society heading is evaluated through three sub-criteria under two criteria, namely the Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources, and the Service to Society Performance. Within the scope of these criteria, the service to society activities of institutions were evaluated and the fulfilment of these criteria is shown in Diagram 24.

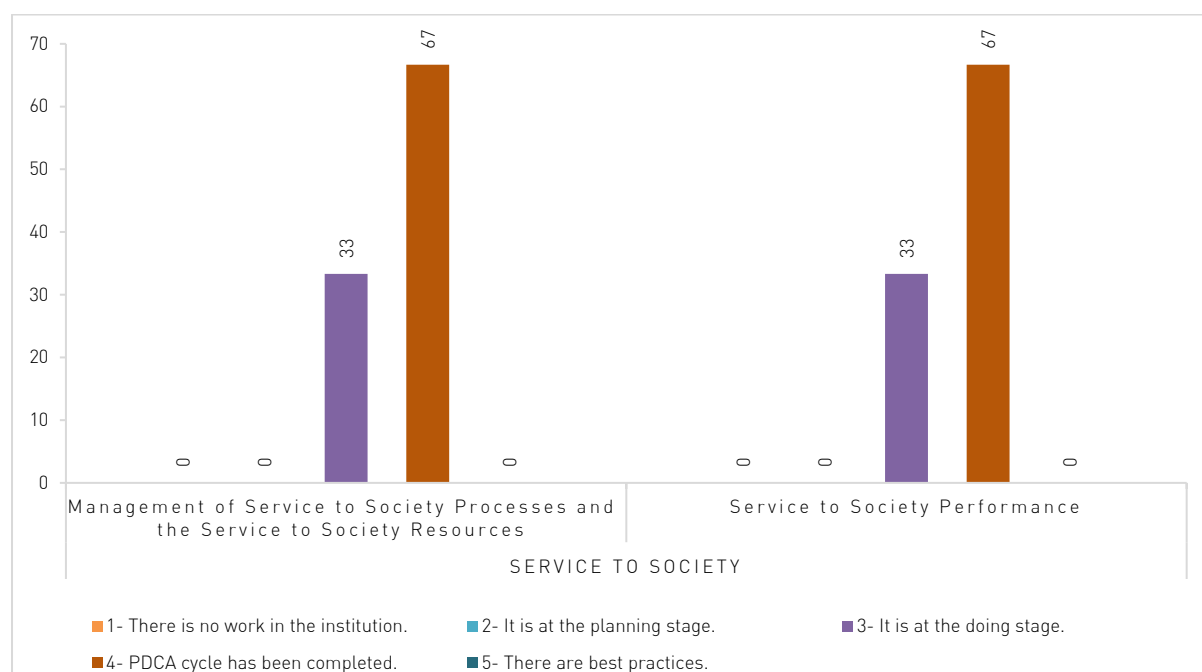


Diagram 24. Maturity levels of the criteria under the Service to Society heading

4.4.2.4.1. Management of Service to Society Processes

In the scope of service to society strategy, the institutions should carry out their service to society activities in accordance with their objectives and strategies and in line with the local, regional and national development goals. In addition, a sound organisational structure must be in place to effectively implement these strategies. Diagram 24 shows that 67% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. The fact that there is no institution in the planning phase or where no work is underway indicates that a general level of maturity has been reached in this area. However, more effort is needed to monitor and improve the processes under implementation.



4.4.2.4.2. Resources

The institutions should have the required physical, technical and financial resources of suitable quality and quantity and enable their effective use to maintain their service to society activities. Diagram 25 shows that 67% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. The fact that there is no institution in the planning phase or where no work is underway indicates that a general level of maturity was reached in the use of these resources. However, continuous improvement efforts need to be maintained to ensure effective follow-up of processes and sustainability.

4.4.2.4.3. Follow-up and Improvement of Service to Society Performance

Service to society performance is evaluated by periodic follow-up and continuous improvement of the activities carried out by institutions in line with the strategies and objectives they set. Diagram 25 shows that 67% of institutions completed the PDCA cycle, while 33% are in the doing phase. These data reveal that a general level of maturity was reached in follow-up and improvement of service to society performance; however, the processes in the doing phase need to be taken further.

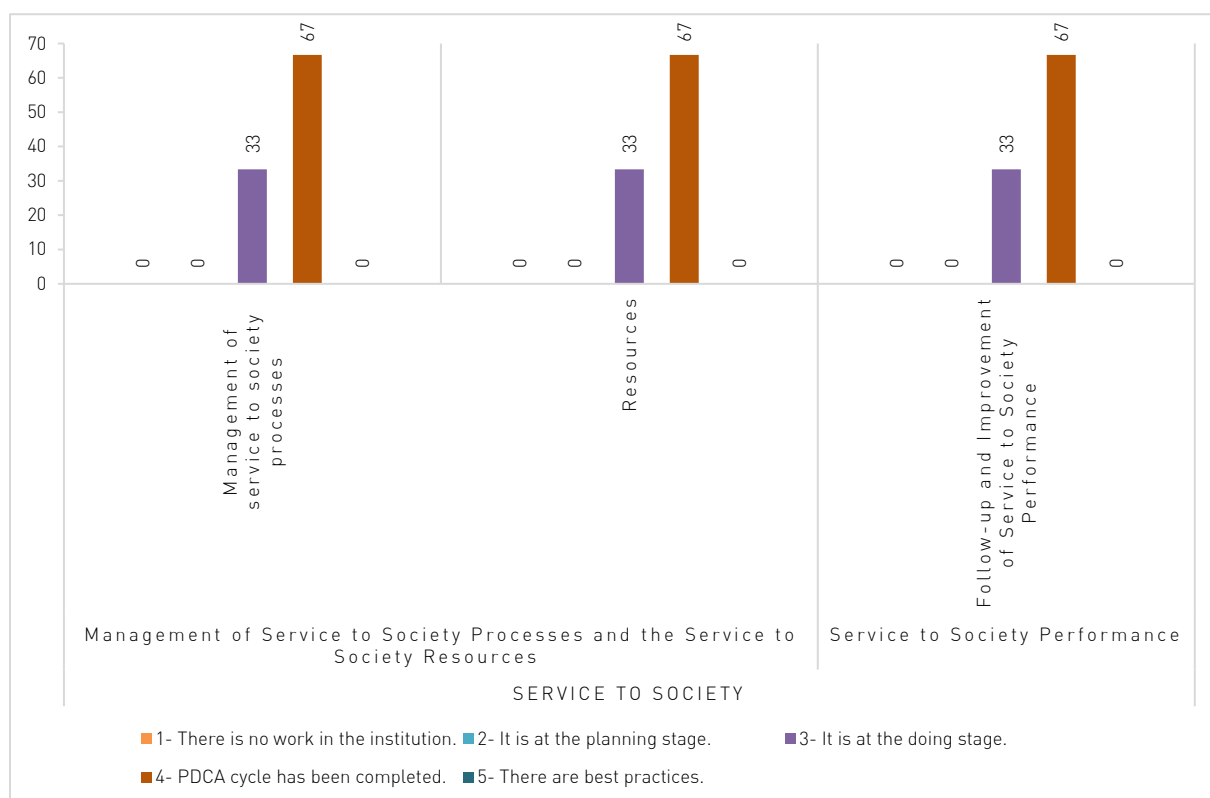


Diagram 25. Maturity levels of the sub-criteria under the Service to Society heading



5. AUTHORISED AND RECOGNISED ACCREDITATION AGENCIES

5.1. General Information

National and international independent accreditation agencies carry out program accreditation activities of HEIs on a voluntary basis in Türkiye. The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council carries out the accreditation processes and the authorisation processes of independent external evaluation institutions under Article 35 added to the Law numbered 2547 on Higher Education with the 7033 numbered Law on Amendment of Certain Laws and Decree Laws for the Development of Industry and Subsidisation of Production, published in the Official Gazette dated 1 July 2017 and numbered 30111.

THEQC authorises national accreditation agencies for 2 years or 5 years based on 7 criteria in line with ESG 2015. It recognises international accreditation agencies for 5 years, taking into account 5 criteria in line with the ESG. These processes are carried out by following the principles and criteria specified in the Guide on the Authorisation, Recognition, and Follow-up of External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies (Version 2.1).

Accreditation information of programs accredited by accreditation agencies authorized or recognized by THEQC is presented in the Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide used for student placements after the Higher Education Institutions Exam (YKS-HEIE). In addition, within the scope of the efforts for harmonization with the EHEA, the primary condition for higher education programs to be granted the right to use the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) logo on their graduation certificates is that the relevant program is accredited by accreditation agencies authorised or recognised by THEQC, as of 23 December 2021.

5.2 Authorised Accreditation Agencies

As of the end of 2023, 24 national accreditation agencies are holding the Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificate. The names, registration periods, and registration date ranges of these agencies are shown in Table 15.

Table 15. National Accreditation Agencies with Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificate

	National Accreditation Agencies	Registration Period (Year)	Registration Date Range
1	The Association for Language Education, Evaluation and Accreditation (DEDAK)	2	15.09.2023-15.09.2025
		2	15.09.2021-15.09.2023
2	The Association for Accreditation of Dentistry Education Programs (DEPAD)	2	11.03.2022-11.03.2024
		2	11.03.2020-11.03.2022
3	The National Society of Assessment and Accreditation of Pharmacy Education (ECZAKDER)	5	26.12.2020-26.12.2025
		2	26.12.2018-26.12.2020
		2	25.12.2014-25.12.2016
4	Industrial Designers' Society of Turkey (ETMK)	2	21.12.2022-21.12.2024
5	The Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of University Programs in Mathematical, Natural and Social Sciences (FEDEK)	5	09.04.2023-09.04.2028
		5	09.04.2018-09.04.2023
		3	09.04.2015-09.04.2018
		2	01.02.2013-01.02.2015
		2	26.08.2010-26.08.2012
6	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Nursing Education Programs (HEPDAK)	5	25.12.2023-25.12.2028
		5	25.12.2018-25.12.2023
		2	25.12.2016-25.12.2018
		2	25.12.2014-25.12.2016
7	Islamic Sciences Accreditation Agency (IAA)	2	15.09.2023-15.09.2025
		2	15.09.2021-15.09.2023
		2	11.09.2019-11.09.2021
8	The Communication Research Association (ILAD)	2	19.01.2022-19.01.2027
		2	31.01.2020-31.01.2022
		2	31.01.2018-31.01.2020
9	Association for Accreditation of Architectural Education (MIAK)	2	17.11.2023-17.11.2025
		2	17.11.2021-17.11.2023
10	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Engineering Programs (MUDEK)	5	01.02.2023-01.02.2028
		5	01.02.2018-01.02.2023
		5	01.02.2013-01.02.2018
		5	16.11.2007-16.11.2012
11	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (EPDAD)	5	30.03.2022-30.03.2027
		2	31.01.2020-31.01.2022
		2	31.01.2018-31.01.2020
		2	15.10.2014-15.10.2016



12	Association for Landscape Architecture Education and Science (PEMDER)	2	08.04.2022-08.04.2024
		2	08.04.2020-08.04.2022
13	Association of Evaluation and Accreditation of Health Sciences Programs (SABAK)	5	31.01.2020-31.01.2025
		2	31.01.2018-31.01.2020
14	Social Sciences, Humanities, and Basic Sciences Accreditation and Rating Association (STAR)	2	08.07.2022 - 08.07.2024
		2	08.07.2020 - 08.07.2022
15	Sport Sciences Association (SPORAK)	2	19.01.2022-19.01.2024
		2	08.01.2020 -08.01.2022
16	Design and Planning Accrediting Association (TAPLAK)	2	25.05.2022-25.05.2024
17	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Medical Education Programs (TEPDAD)	5	28.03.2022-28.03.2027
		5	28.03.2017-28.03.2022
		2	28.03.2015-28.03.2017
		2	28.03.2013-28.03.2015
		1	30.11.2011-30.11.2012
18	Tourism Academicians Association (Tourism Education Evaluation and Accreditation Board) (TUADER)	2	19.01.2022-19.01.2024
		2	31.01.2020-31.01.2022
		2	31.01.2018-31.01.2020
19	Turkish Psychologists Association (TPD)	5	23.06.2021-23.06.2026
		2	06.02.2019-06.02.2021
		2	26.08.2012-26.08.2014
		2	26.08.2010-26.08.2012
20	Turkish Psychological Counselling and Guidance Association (TürkPDR)	2	21.12.2022-21.12.2024
21	The Association for the Evaluation and Accreditation of Veterinary Institutes and Programs (VEDEK)	2	19.12.2022-19.12.2024
		5	19.12.2017-19.12.2022
		2	19.12.2015-19.12.2017
		2	19.12.2013-19.12.2015
		2	02.02.2012-02.02.2014
22	The Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs (ZIDEK)	2	08.07.2022 - 08.07.2024
		2	08.07.2020 - 08.07.2022
23	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Vocational Education Programs (MEDEK)	2	21.08.2023-21.08.2025
24	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Education Programs (FTR-AD)	2	18.09.2023-18.09.2025



Among the national agencies, DEDAK, FEDEK, IAA, MIAK, HEPDAK, and MUDEK applied for re-registration and their Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificates were extended as of 2023. Additionally, MEDEK and FTR-AD made their first applications in 2023 and received the Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificate.

Table 15 shows that out of 24 national accreditation agencies with Quality Evaluation Authorisation Certificates, 15 accreditation agencies constituting 62.5% of these agencies are authorised for two years and the remaining 9 agencies for five years.

5.3. Recognised Accreditation Agencies

For the accreditation decisions made by international accreditation agencies to be included in the Higher Education Institutions Examination (YKS) Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide by CoHE, these agencies must be recognised by THEQC. As of the end of 2023, a total of 13 international accreditation agencies were recognised by THEQC. The names, recognition periods, and recognition date ranges of these agencies are shown in Table 16.

Table 16. International Accreditation Agencies Recognised by THEQC

	International Accreditation Agencies	Recognition Period (Year)	Recognition Date Range
1	Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics (ASIIN)	5	19.08.2020-19.08.2025
2	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)	5	11.11.2020-11.11.2025
3	Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI)	5	27.01.2021-27.01.2026
4	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)	5	18.08.2021-18.08.2026
5	Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR)	5	20.10.2021-20.10.2026
6	The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS)	5	08.07.2020 - 08.07.2025
7	Agency for Quality Assurance (AQAS)	5	03.04.2019-03.04.2024
8	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	5	03.04.2019-03.04.2024
9	Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA)	5	03.04.2019-03.04.2024



10	International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE)	5	08.01.2020 -08.01.2025
11	The Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN)	5	21.12.2022-21.12.2027
12	The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)	5	26.04.2023-26.04.2028
13	Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services (EAQUALS)	5	26.04.2023-26.04.2028

5.4. Evaluation of Accreditation Agencies' Follow-up Reports

The follow-up process for the agencies authorised by the Council is carried out annually based on the calendar year. The Council appoints a follow-up official to each agency within one month from the date of authorisation. For the authorised agencies, by the end of February of each calendar year, a follow-up report on accreditation agencies is written by the follow-up official, taking into account the site visits and activity report, and submitted to the Council.

The prominent themes in the 2023 follow-up reports can be listed as follows:

- The reports state that the processes related to ethical rules in agencies are carried out with pre-defined and declared rules. Reports state that the persons who will take charge within the scope of the activities of the agencies sign the Statement of Confidentiality and Code of Ethics, and that in many agencies, written statements are received for the conflict and/or coincidence of interest for the members of the evaluation team before the evaluations.
- Agencies need to expand their evaluator pool, especially by increasing the number of administrative and student evaluators.
- The reports state that the agencies carried out their legislative and administrative structures for consistency work and they also implement consistency work. However, it is maintained that the results of the agencies' consistency works should be reported in a more concrete way.
- It is observed that the evaluation reports prepared by the registered agency at the end of the accreditation activity are mostly not shared with the public.
- The 2023 follow-up reports recommend expanding the scope of appeals to the decisions of some agencies to cover all decisions and to establish a mechanism for



complaint processes for agencies that have not established a complaints mechanism.

- The follow-up reports include the information that some agencies did not write thematic reports or develop strategic plans.
- The fact that the websites of some agencies cannot be displayed in different languages and that digitalization is not at the expected level can be listed as common areas for improvement by the agencies.

5.5. Statistics on Accredited Programs

Diagram 26 presents the data on accredited programs at the undergraduate level in Türkiye for 2017-2023.²

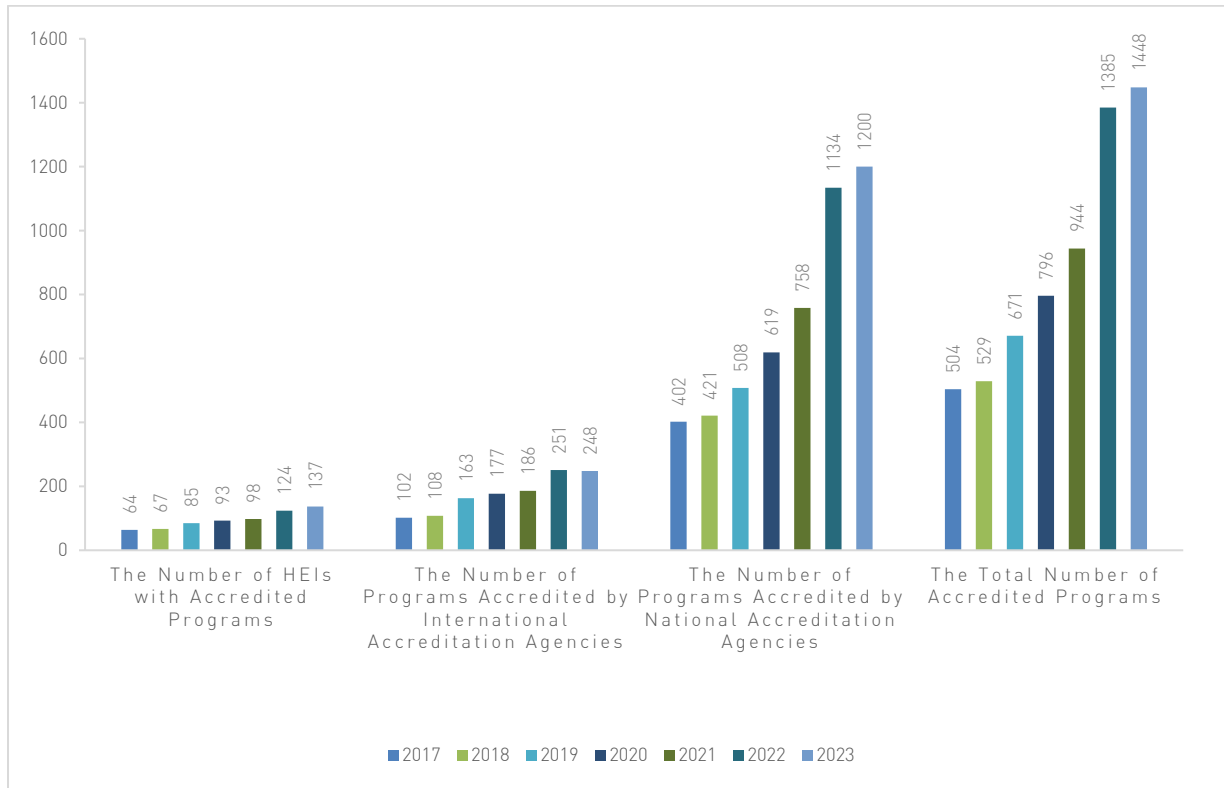


Diagram 26. The Number of Accredited Programs (2017-2023)

Diagram 26 shows a steady increase in the number of accredited programs and institutions with accredited programs over the years. The ratio of accredited bachelor's

² The data were compiled from the 2024 Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide published by ÖSYM.

degree programs to the total number of bachelor's degree programs is 15.71% in 2023. In addition, compared to 2017 and 2022, the number of institutions with accredited programs in 2023 increased by 91.42% and 8.06% respectively, and the number of accredited programs increased by 220.43% and 16.60% respectively. The experience gained from the institutional external evaluation programs carried out by THEQC shows that institutions that increased the number of accredited programs have developed quality assurance systems, internalized quality processes, and succeeded in spreading this culture throughout their institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to expand accreditation activities in higher education institutions and to encourage accreditation agencies that will operate in different fields. According to the field-based accreditation numbers, the total number of accredited programs increased by 2.13% in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching 1,198. The ratio of the Engineering field in the total number of field-based accreditations is 28.46%; Science and Literature 19.53%; Social Sciences 18.36%; Educational Sciences 20.03%; Health Sciences 4.84%; Communication 6.51%, and Tourism Education 3.08%.

While Table 17 shows accreditation agencies that carry out accreditation activities in different programs, Table 18 shows accreditation agencies that carry out accreditation activities in a single program.

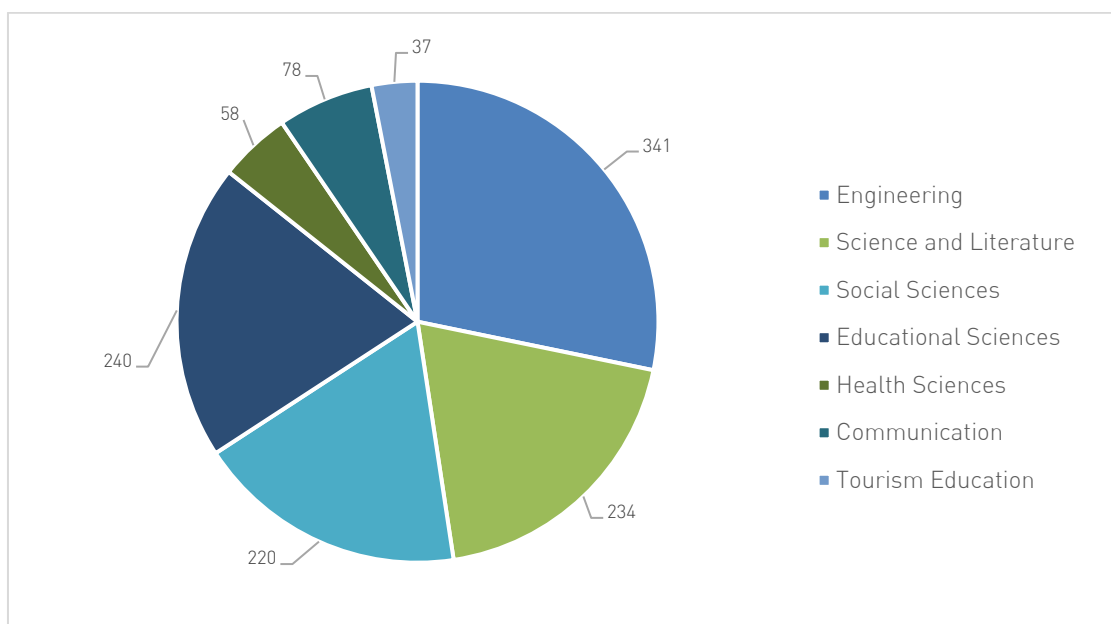


Diagram 27. Field-Based Program Accreditations in 2023

Considering the field-based accreditation numbers, the total number of accredited programs reached 1,198 in 2023 with an increase of 2.13% compared to 2022. Regarding the



total number of accreditations by field, the ratio of Engineering reached 28.46%; Science and Literature 19.53%; Social Sciences 18.36%; Educational Sciences 20.03%; Health Sciences 4.84%; Communication 6.51%, and Tourism Education 3.08%.

Table 17. The Number of Field-based Accredited Programs Between 2017 and 2023

Field Name	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Engineering	342	323	340	347	380	375	341
Science and Literature	70	84	115	130	150	225	234
Social Sciences	29	36	69	70	79	138	220
Educational Sciences	0	4	33	75	120	228	240
Health Sciences	4	6	17	36	52	94	58
Communication	0	0	11	31	48	73	78
Tourism Education	0	0	0	11	15	40	37
Total	445	453	585	700	844	1173	1198

It is understood that the number of program accreditations increased by 4% in science and literature, 5.26% in educational sciences, 59.42% in social sciences, and 6.84% in communication in 2023 compared to the previous year.

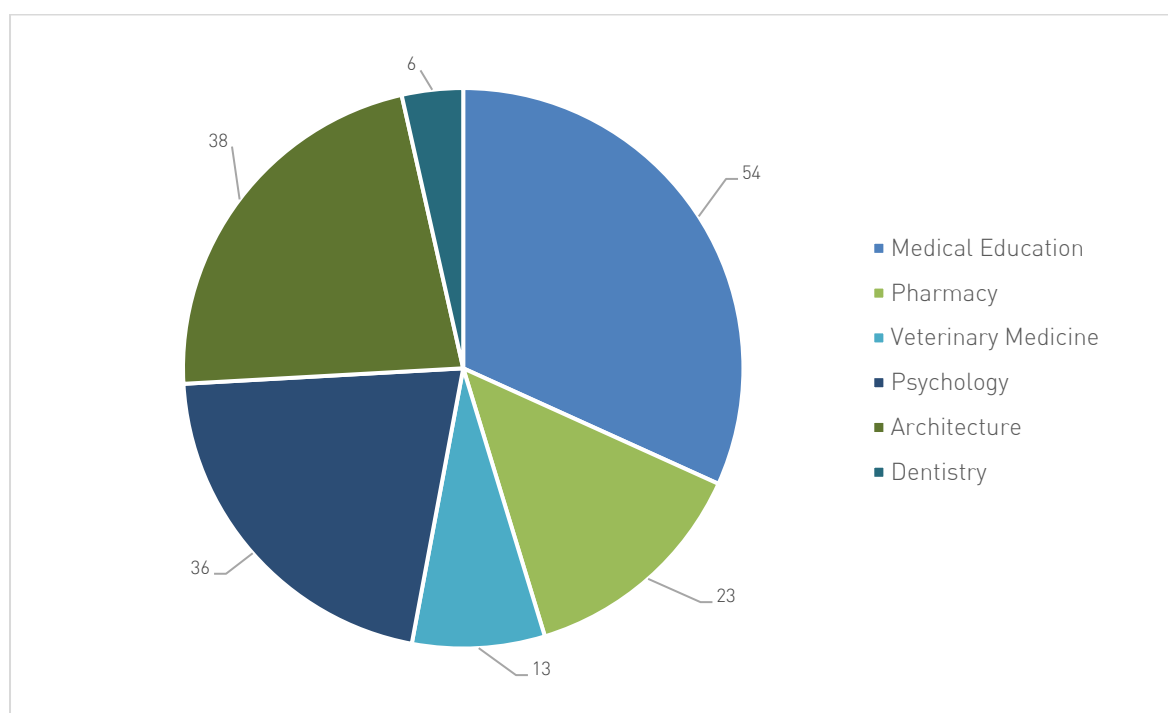


Diagram 28. Program-Based Program Accreditations in 2023



Table 18. The Number of Program-Based Accreditations Between 2017 and 2023

Program Name	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Medical Education	28	29	31	41	41	45	54
Pharmacy	10	10	12	14	14	20	23
Veterinary Medicine	5	6	9	10	10	14	13
Psychology	7	14	24	25	26	28	36
Architecture	8	8	7	6	9	24	38
Dentistry	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
Total	58	67	83	96	100	134	170

Program-based accreditation numbers in Table 18 show that the number of accreditations in medical education, pharmacy, psychology, architecture, and veterinary programs increased in 2023 compared to the previous year, with the numbers 9, 3, 8, 14 and 3 respectively.

Table 19 shows that the number of HEIs with 15 or more accredited programs in 2023 is 29. 21 of them are state universities, and eight are foundation universities.

Table 19. Institutions with 15 or More Accredited Programs

	Institution	Foundation/State	Number of Accredited Programs
1	Atatürk University	State	52
2	Ege University	State	50
3	İstanbul Gelişim University	Foundation	44
4	Sakarya University	State	43
5	Başkent University	Foundation	36
6	Erciyes University	State	35
7	Maltepe University	Foundation	35
8	Gazi University	State	33
9	Hacettepe University	State	32
10	İstanbul Medipol University	Foundation	32
11	İstanbul Technical University	State	30
12	Yeditepe University	Foundation	30
13	İstanbul University	State	29
14	Yıldız Technical University	State	28
15	Ankara University	State	27



16	İstanbul Aydın University	Foundation	25
17	Ondokuz Mayıs University	State	24
18	Trakya University	State	24
19	Çukurova University	State	23
20	Karadeniz Technical University	State	22
21	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	State	21
22	Dokuz Eylül University	State	21
23	Atilim University	Foundation	21
24	Middle East Technical University	State	20
25	Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University	State	19
26	Bursa Uludağ University	State	18
27	İstanbul University - Cerrahpaşa	State	18
28	Özyeğin University	Foundation	17
29	Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University	State	16

Table 20 shows that there are 38 HEIs whose ratio of the number of accredited programs to the total number of bachelor's degree programs is 30% and above in 2023. 16 of them are state universities, and 22 are foundation universities.

Table 20. Institutions Where the Ratio of the Number of Accredited Programs to the Total Number of Bachelor's Degree Programs is 30% and Above

	Institution	Foundation/State	Accreditation Rate (%)
1	Ibn Haldun University	Foundation	100
2	Sanko University	Foundation	75
3	Özyeğin University	Foundation	68
4	Sakarya University	State	67
5	Sabancı University	Foundation	66
6	Maltepe University	Foundation	65
7	Bezmialem Vakıf University	Foundation	62
8	Ege University	State	61
9	Başkent University	Foundation	60
10	İstanbul Gelişim University	Foundation	58
11	Acıbadem Mehmet Ali Aydınlar University	Foundation	52
12	Çağ University	Foundation	50
13	Atilim University	Foundation	48
14	Yıldız Technical University	State	46
15	İstanbul Medipol University	Foundation	46



16	Koç University	Foundation	45
17	Eskisehir Technical University	State	44
18	Yeditepe University	Foundation	43
19	Gazi University	State	42
20	Atatürk University	State	41
21	Erciyes University	State	41
22	TED University	Foundation	41
23	Işık University	Foundation	40
24	Altınbaş University	Foundation	40
25	İstanbul Aydın University	Foundation	39
26	İstanbul University - Cerrahpaşa	State	38
27	TOBB ETU University of Economics and Technology	Foundation	38
28	Trakya University	State	36
29	Hacettepe University	State	36
30	İzmir University of Economics	Foundation	36
31	Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University	State	34
32	Karadeniz Technical University	State	33
33	Middle East Technical University	State	32
34	İstanbul Technical University	State	31
35	Haliç University	Foundation	31
36	MEF University	Foundation	31
37	Amasya University	State	31
38	Çukurova University	State	30



6. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

As in previous years, the THEQC Students Commission implemented a comprehensive set of practices and action plans in 2023 to increase student involvement in quality assurance processes in the Turkish higher education system and to guide these processes more effectively. The activities carried out by the Commission this year comprehensively address the important contributions and results achieved in promoting student involvement, disseminating the quality culture and developing a sustainable quality understanding in HEIs. The details are also included in the activity report for 2023.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, new Commission members were selected among the students in various study programs. In January 2023, when the term of office of one member expired, a Students Commission member was selected by THEQC as the student member of the Council and Chair of the Students Commission for a one-year term. In addition, to fill the vacancy created due to the completion of the term of office, a student who ranked first in the list of substitute members as a result of the interviews previously conducted for the selection of commission members and by the decision of the Council, was included in the Commission as a new member in February 2023. As a result of the graduation of one member in July 2023, following the relevant directive, a student who was on the list of substitute members and who was not a graduate was included in the Commission to complete the remaining term of office. On 19 January 2023, as a result of a vote by secret ballot held under the relevant directive, one member was elected as the Vice-Chair of the Students Commission.

6.1. Commission Activities

In 2023, the Students Commission wrote its annual activity report including various trainings, workshops, seminars and stakeholder meetings with student involvement and effectively fulfilled its duty to help students internalise and disseminate the quality culture determined by the Council.

6.1.1. Trainings

The Students Commission carried out the Quality Ambassador Training Program (QAP), which was held for the first time in 2021, with wide participation in 2023. This training



program is a series of online interactive training organised to encourage student involvement in the quality assurance system, increase the visibility of students in the higher education system, and disseminate the quality culture.

The first training program was held on 09-10 May 2023, the second on 15-16 May 2023, the third on 17-18 May 2023, and the last on 22-23 May 2023. The trainings were organised under the coordination of the Academic Coordinator of the Students Commission and the moderator duties in the classes were undertaken by the members of the Commission. Before the training, moderator training was given to the members by the academic coordinator of the Commission. 2,007 applications were received from various institutions for the training given four times in total. As a result of the assessment of the applications, 817 students were invited for training. Of these invitees, 386 participated in the training. Thus, it was ensured that students from 99 out of 208 different HEIs in Türkiye participated.

Upon successful completion of the training, 364 participants received certificates of participation; 83% of them were bachelor's, 7% associate, 6% master's, and 4% doctoral students. The training, each of which was carried out in virtual classes, lasted two days and took nine hours, included information about the duties and processes of THEQC and THEQC Students Commission, the introduction of the THEQC Rubric, institutional evaluation processes and experience sharing, and an assignment and achievement exam.

6.1.2. Workshops

The Students Commission organised the online and interactive "Quality Ambassador Workshop (QAW'23)" on 1 June 2023 to prepare students, who successfully completed the QAP, for the THEQC 2023 Evaluator Training. As a result of the assessments made by the Commission, it was decided to invite 94 students to the workshop among 364 students who successfully completed QAW'23 and were entitled to receive a certificate. Of the 94 students invited to the workshop, 78 participated in the event. The workshop content consisted of seven modules and was conducted in five virtual classrooms for seven hours. Training for peer trainers was also organised to prepare the Commission members for the workshop. Seventy-eight students from 49 different HEIs, who became successful in the workshop, were awarded certificates of participation with the decision of the Commission.



According to the results of the feedback questionnaire, all participants found the online platform through which the workshop was conducted useful, 99% considered the workshop useful, and 94% commented that the peer trainers' sessions were clear and easy to understand. Furthermore, 96% of the participants found the information presented in the workshop clear and understandable, while 88% stated that they felt more competent as evaluators after the workshop.

To increase the knowledge, skills and experience that a THEQC Evaluator should have in the THEQC institutional external evaluation programs, "Entry-Level Training for Higher Education Students" was organised for students who successfully completed the QAW'23 held by the Commission and received a certificate of participation. Entry-level evaluator training is organized by THEQC every year; however, it was not organised in 2023 due to the sufficient number of evaluators in the existing evaluator pool. On the other hand, as the number of student evaluators in the pool decreased due to reasons such as graduation and suspension of enrolment and the need for new student evaluators arose, the Commission organised entry-level training only for students for the first time this year.

The training, which took place on 7-8 June 2023, consisted of sessions, each consisting of five modules and held in virtual classrooms with the peer trainers of the Commission. During the training, information was provided on the THEQC Code of Ethics, the activities before, during and after the site visit of the evaluation team, and how the decision and appeal processes are operated in the Institutional Accreditation Program. As a result of the assessments made by the Commission, 53 students from 43 different HEIs were invited to the training among the 78 participants who successfully completed the QAW'23 training. 28 students on 7 June 2023 and 25 students on 8 June 2023 participated in the entry-level training program and a total of 42 students were entitled to receive certificates of participation.

Workshops were organised upon requests from various HEIs to encourage student involvement in the quality assurance system in higher education. The workshops, which were conducted with the content prepared by the THEQC academic expert and the Academic Coordinator of the Students Commission, consisted of two sessions and lasted all day.

In 2023, the first of the workshops organised under the title "Active Stakeholder of the Internal Quality Assurance System: Students" was held on 3 November 2023 at Bursa Uludağ University with the participation of 54 students. Subsequently, 13 and 32 students participated



in the workshops held at Koç University on 9 November 2023 and Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University on 14 November 2023, respectively. The last of the workshop series was held on 21 November 2023 at Kocaeli University with the participation of 16 students.

In these workshops, students had the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge of quality assurance in higher education by working in groups in line with the guidelines provided to them. It was aimed that students, an important stakeholder of higher education quality assurance, realise their role as a driving force in these processes. These activities aimed to raise students' awareness about the responsibilities they have in their institutions and to develop skills on how they can actively participate in higher education quality assurance processes. The workshops, which increased the competencies of students to play an active role in the development of these processes, were an important tool in achieving the Commission's goals of expanding student involvement and students' internalising a quality culture.

6.1.3. Seminars

The Commission has been organising seminars since 2021 to spread the quality culture in higher education and increase student involvement in the quality assurance system. In this context, an online seminar hosted by Demiroğlu Bilim University was conducted on 4 May 2023, with 182 participants. Then, 362 students took part in the online seminar of Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University on 5 May 2023. The same seminar series was continued on 2 November 2023 at Bursa Uludağ University with 87 participants. On the same day, 142 participants were present at the seminar held at Bursa Technical University. 39 participants attended the seminar held at Koç University on 8 November 2023. On 13 November 2023, 200 participants were present at the seminar held at Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, while the last seminar of the year was held on 20 November 2023 at Kocaeli University with 595 participants. During the seminars, students, academic and administrative staff, as well as rectors, vice-rectors and advisors to the rectors were present as audience members, and the Commission members made presentations emphasising the importance of student involvement in quality assurance processes.

In 2023, 1,607 students, and academic and administrative staff from seven HEIs took part in seminars organised under the title "The Role of Higher Education Students in the Construction of a Quality Assurance Culture." The seminars aimed to emphasise the



importance of students in disseminating quality culture in the quality assurance system in higher education, raise students' awareness on this issue and provide information on how they can participate in quality assurance activities.

6.1.4. Publications

The Commission prepared a handbook for the first time in 2022 to inform higher education students about the quality assurance system and quality efforts in Türkiye. In 2023, this handbook, "Quality Ambassador Handbook (for Higher Education Students)" was updated and published as version 2.0 on the THEQC website. Version 2.0 of the handbook includes basic information about the evaluation programs conducted by THEQC and their contents, the Commission and its works, and umbrella organisations in the international quality assurance system. This version also includes information that answers common questions that students frequently ask.

In addition, a section of the 2023 Activity Report for Student Involvement in the Quality Assurance System in Higher Education was written within the scope of the Students Commission's duty to "write an activity report on the work carried out by the Commission during the relevant year and present it to the Council at the end of the year."

6.1.5. Stakeholder Meetings

The Students Commission took part in various stakeholder meetings and undertook tasks throughout 2023. In this context, the Commission organised an online event titled, "THEQC Student Evaluator Meeting", which brought together higher education students who took part in THEQC's IAP and Follow-up Program evaluation teams in 2023. 36 student evaluators took part in the event held on 16 March 2023. The event was moderated by the Commission members and training was provided in four virtual classrooms.

To answer the questions about the application and pool membership to the 2023-2024 Quality Assurance Student Experts' Pool, for which ESU opened applications on 3 May 2023, the Commission broadcast "How can you apply to the ESU 2023 Quality Assurance Student Experts' Pool?" through the Commission's official Instagram account. The live broadcast was moderated by a Commission member and the guests were the Commission Chair and another Commission member who are members of the ESU Quality Assurance Student Experts' Pool. In the live broadcast, first of all, information about how to apply to the pool and the importance



and contributions of being a pool member individually and for our country were shared. At the end of the live broadcast, which lasted 65 minutes in total and reached 53 participants, the questions of the participants were answered.

On 11 July 2023, the Commission organised a live broadcast on "Student Evaluators' Experience with THEQC's Follow-up Program" through the Commission's official Instagram account to share experience and information about external evaluation programs and the Follow-up Program. The live broadcast was moderated by a Commission member and the speakers were other Commission members with student evaluator experience. Speakers talked about their experience in the Follow-up Program and addressed issues such as the points to be considered by student evaluators assigned to teams by THEQC, the duties of the evaluation teams, how the process is run, and the processes before and after the site visit. At the end of the live broadcast, which lasted 40 minutes in total and reached 51 participants, the questions of the participants were answered, the importance of the THEQC Code of Ethics was emphasised, and it was aimed to approach the student evaluators from the student perspective throughout the process.

In addition, the Commission followed the work on quality in higher education throughout the year and participated in a number of events: INQAAHE's online event on the continuity of quality assurance and the importance of digitalisation in the European Higher Education Area on January 24; EAIE's seminar on student livelihood challenges in Europe on February 10; EUA's online event on digital higher education and digitalisation during the pandemic on February 14; the impact of digitalisation on working life and the use of technologies at TUBITAK's training on February 20-22; integration and inclusion in vocational higher education at ESU's panel discussion on March 24; the importance of quality assurance in vocational education at ENQA and CHAIN5's seminar on April 6; the use of microdata and research issues at EUROSTUDENT's seminar on April 13; ESU seminar on the responsibilities of QA pool members on May 4; Hacettepe University seminar on ESU Quality Assurance on May 7; INQAAHE seminar on the importance of student interaction on May 8; ESU seminar on the activity report of the QA pool on May 26; STAR event on the role of student evaluators in program accreditation on June 14; Quality assurance themed activity of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority on September 13; STAR's conference on quality assurance standards in European higher education on October 4, and ILAD's workshop to inform about accreditation processes and the roles of student evaluators on October 17. Throughout the



year, the Commission encouraged student involvement by sharing informative posts about the processes of national program accreditation agencies via its official Instagram account.



7. EVALUATION OF THEQC'S ACTIVITIES BY STAKEHOLDERS

7.1. Media and Online Visibility

According to the information compiled from Interpress reports about the Council's media visibility, it is seen that 1,336 news items were published in the print media in 2023, of which 96 in national, 83 in regional, 1,127 in local and 30 in the TRNC press. 6,389 news stories were published on digital news channels, and 175 news on THEQC activities were published on television channels.

THEQC's social media accounts were used as an effective instrument for communication with the public and stakeholders. As of the end of 2023, the number of followers on Twitter reached 27,355 (with an increase of 57.04% compared to the previous year). THEQC's English Twitter account, which broadcasts in English simultaneously with the Turkish account and was launched in 2020 to increase international visibility, has 732 followers. In addition, a grey checkmark, meaning verified account, was received for the Twitter account in 2023. There was an 11.53% increase compared to the previous year with 2,330 followers on the LinkedIn account, which also offers Turkish and English content. On the YouTube platform, the number of subscribers was 601 as of the end of 2023. As of the end of 2021, an official account was created on Instagram to increase access to the young target audience. By the end of 2023, the number of Instagram followers reached 4,199, representing an increase of 100.23% compared to the previous year. In addition to this, a blue checkmark was also received for the Instagram account in 2023.

As for the visibility of student involvement in THEQC's works, 4,697 Instagram and 1,808 Twitter followers in the Quality Ambassador accounts were reached in the same year.

7.2. Evaluation of the Evaluation Teams

To ensure the continuous improvement and development of IEEP, FuP, IAP and MtEP, THEQC takes the opinions of its stakeholders who are actively involved in these processes. In this context, it is ensured that the evaluations of the evaluators having participated in site visits and the managers/directors of the institutions, which went under evaluation, regarding the process are monitored from the point of view of both the evaluator and the evaluated with



the 360-degree evaluation approach. In this approach, all team members evaluate each other, and the managers/directors of the institution evaluate the whole team with a Likert-type measurement tool. They are also expected to provide comments on the process and suggestions and explanations for improvements, as well as evaluating THEQC for process management.

The feedback collected in the 360-degree evaluations in 2023 was analysed according to the roles of the respondents in the process. According to the data obtained, the completion rate of the surveys for evaluators by team leaders is 71%. It is seen that evaluators generally worked in alignment with their team leaders' recommendations, had effective communication skills, impartiality and fairness, and asked questions directly related to the process. In addition, the number of positive answers to the question "worked in harmony with team members in online and face-to-face processes" is quite high (Strongly agree: 80%). This is an indication that the evaluators also carried out teamwork well. On the other hand, according to the results of this survey, the issue of evaluators having sufficient prior knowledge about the institutions evaluated was determined as an area for improvement. In the feedback received from the team leaders, positive opinions were also expressed in writing regarding the evaluators' contributions and active involvement in the processes. However, the limited contribution of some team members (3%), especially to the report writing process, was considered as an area for improvement.

The completion rate of the surveys in which evaluators evaluate each other is 69%. According to the findings obtained from these surveys, it is observed that the evaluators generally worked in harmony within the team and in line with the recommendations of the team leaders, and their attitudes during the evaluation process were constructive. However, negative feedback (6%) regarding the evaluators' comparing higher education institutions was found to be higher than other survey questions. Since this behaviour is not preferred in the quality assurance external evaluation approach, it has emerged as an aspect that should be emphasised in the evaluator trainings.

70% of evaluators completed the survey for the evaluation of the team leaders. Evaluators think that the team leaders acted impartially and fairly and had a constructive attitude throughout the process. However, the negative feedback rate (10%) regarding the effective leadership characteristics of team leaders was found to be higher than other survey questions.



53% of the managers/directors of the institutions completed the surveys about the evaluators and 54% about the team leaders. According to the findings obtained from these surveys, the most positive aspects found by the institution managers/directors were the constructive attitude of the team leaders and the fact that the evaluators worked in harmony with the institution throughout the process. The fact that the evaluators had sufficient prior knowledge about the institution was seen as an aspect for improvement, according to the survey results.

A satisfaction survey, in which institution managers/directors, team leaders and evaluators are expected to evaluate THEQC, has also been added to the 2023 surveys. According to these surveys, it was seen that both team leaders and evaluators were satisfied with the support provided by THEQC in the evaluation processes. According to the opinion of the team leaders, it was deemed necessary to update the THEQC Information Portal in terms of its compatibility with the processes, and in this context, it became necessary to carry out studies to update the THEQC Information Portal in the next evaluation process. In addition, a small number of evaluators have made evaluations to improve the understandability, functionality and adequacy of the materials used in the evaluation processes. For this purpose, THEQC has initiated works on the clarity of the guide and especially the Rubric. When the opinions of institution managers/directors about the THEQC processes are examined, it is seen that they find the THEQC evaluation programs useful in terms of institutional process planning, institutional quality awareness and contributing to the improvements and activities of their institutions. On the other hand, there were suggestions for improvements to be made in the duration of the site visit in the evaluation processes. They also pointed out that it would be more practical to provide additional evidence requested by the team through the THEQC information management system.

7.3. Requests, Suggestions and Complaints

The appeals and complaints process includes objections regarding external evaluation activities and the recognition and authorisation of accreditation agencies carried out by THEQC and complaints about its services. In this regard, the Appeals and Complaints Directive was developed, and the Commission on Appeals and Complaints was established under that directive.

The main purpose of the process is to provide services in an open and accountable manner, to be fair in decision-making and to secure the rights of stakeholders in line with THEQC institutional goals and values. Upon notification of the appeal or complaint to the Council, the process is managed through the Quality Management Information System and the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Communications Centre (CİMER). A total of 309 applications were received through the system and CİMER and the details are shown in Diagram 29:

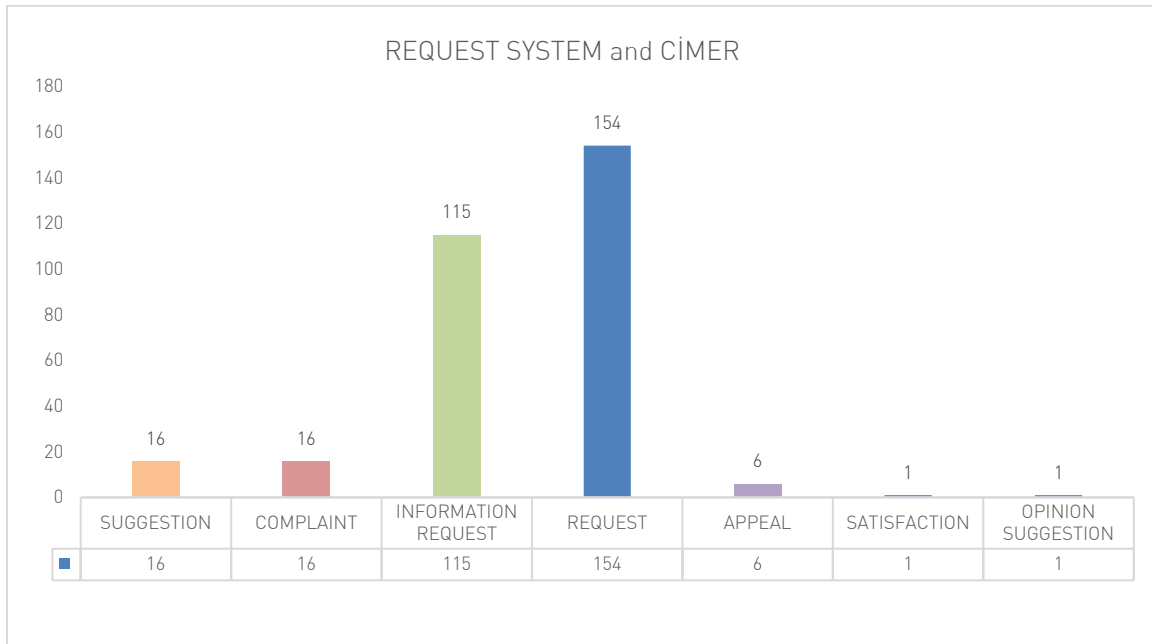


Diagram 29. Requests, Suggestions and Complaints

Accordingly, among 309 applications, there were 154 requests, 115 information requests, 16 suggestions, 16 complaints, 6 appeals, 1 satisfaction declaration and 1 opinion proposal.



8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Result

The Status Report, prepared as required by the regulation, is an analysis report based on all the data collected from THEQC's external evaluations. It provides recommendations for improving quality and informs its stakeholders about THEQC's activities. The Status Report serves as the primary, systemic and reliable statistical and analytical source of information on the status of quality assurance activities in Turkish higher education, providing an updated overview of the key data. Annually prepared Status Report allows THEQC to periodically analyse its EQA processes at the end of each cycle. This analysis contributes to the improvement and refinement of current procedures and helps THEQC understand its position and progress in quality assurance. The Status Report is published on THEQC's website and shared with stakeholders and the public to ensure wide dissemination and accessibility of this critical information.

External evaluation programs conducted by THEQC are IEEP, FuP, IAP and MtEP respectively. With the addition of three institutions in 2023, the number of institutions evaluated in the external evaluation has reached 191, and the ratio of all HEIs evaluated in the IEEP has reached 92% of all institutions. In 2023, 24 more HEIs underwent the follow-up process, bringing the total number to 170 HEIs. The ratio of HEIs evaluated in the FuP reached 82% of all HEIs. In 2023, 21 HEIs were included and evaluated in the IAP. Thus, the number of HEIs included in the IAP reached 74, and the ratio of accredited institutions among 208 HEIs reached 35%. Of these, 52 were granted conditional accreditation, 21 full accreditation, and 1 refusal of accreditation. In 2023, the number of HEIs included in the mid-term evaluation program was nine. While it was decided to continue the accreditation of six of these institutions with full accreditation, one of the three institutions with conditional accreditation was upgraded to full accreditation, and it was decided for two of them to maintain conditional (2+2) accreditation again following the Institutional External Evaluation, Institutional Accreditation, and Follow-up Programs Guide Version 2.1, with the proposal of the Commission and the approval of the Council.

In 2023, it was observed that there was an increase in the involvement of students in quality assurance processes and decision-making mechanisms in HEIs. The visibility and



impact of student representatives and students' quality societies strengthened, enabling students' voices to be heard more effectively. THEQC evaluators achieved positive results in raising awareness of and contributing to quality assurance processes both within their institutions and at national and international levels. These processes increased students' knowledge and commitment to quality assurance. The THEQC Students Commission and the students' quality societies at HEIs started to follow the works of national and international quality assurance agencies more closely, contributing to the dissemination of this quality culture among students and strengthening compliance with international standards. Through training seminars and information events, the level of knowledge and awareness of student evaluators and students' quality societies increased, positively impacting the effectiveness of quality assurance systems and the quality of student contributions.

In this report, starting with the executive summary, general information on the institutions, the interpretation of the internal and external evaluation processes of the institutions, and information on authorised and recognised accreditation agencies are presented. Following the section on student involvement, one of the most important stakeholders of the system, stakeholder evaluations are presented and conclusions and recommendations are listed.

The findings regarding the external evaluations of HEIs under four main headings can be listed as follows:

8.1.1. Leadership, Governance and Quality

When the IFRs of the three HEIs included in IEEP in 2023 are evaluated, it is seen that the institutions were generally at the planning stage in the sub-criteria of the Leadership, Governance and Quality heading, and they were expected to complete their PDCA cycles by establishing implementation and follow-up mechanisms.

Considering 24 HEIs included in the Follow-up Program in 2023, it is determined that they could not establish an effective and integrated information management system, a quality culture spread throughout the institutions could not be created, and stakeholder involvement could not be carried out effectively, and the follow-up and improvement processes are expected to be completed in these areas.



When we look generally at the processes under the title of Leadership, Governance and Quality in the 21 HEIs included in the IAP in 2023, it is seen that the planning phase moved to the doing phase; however, it is understood that follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms were not established yet. It has been determined that PDCA cycles have been completed in only 25% of institutions. However, there are few best practices in institutions. As an overall evaluation of 2023, it is understood that HEIs included in the IAP need to structure their leadership, governance and quality systems and establish follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms.

8.1.2. Learning and Teaching

For 2023, it is seen that a great deal of planning was made and the doing phase began in the Learning Resources and Academic Support criterion of the Learning and Teaching heading in the IFRs, and it is understood that the PDCA cycle was completed in a small number of sub-criteria. On the other hand, in the Program Design, Evaluation and Update, Implementation of Programs (Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation), and Teaching Staff criteria, it is noteworthy that the number of sub-criteria for which there is no planning in the institutions is high and many criteria are at the doing stage.

It is understood that it is not systematically monitored whether the program competencies have been achieved, that there are no defined processes for the use of active student-centred active learning methods in the majority of institutions, that there is no training of trainers program or that they do not operate effectively throughout the institution. Institutions need to develop the issues reported as areas for improvement in IFRs by establishing follow-up and improvement mechanisms in the processes they are in the Follow-up Program and completing their PDCA cycles.

Considering 21 HEIs included and evaluated in the IAP in 2023, it is seen that the planning phase moved to the doing phase for the Learning and Teaching heading; however, it is understood that follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms were not established yet. In addition, it should be noted that there are very few examples of best practices in institutions. In general, it is understood that higher education institutions need to structure their learning and teaching systems and establish follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms.



8.1.3. Research and Development

When the criteria under the Research and Development heading are analysed based on sub-criteria in the IFRs, it is seen that institutions are mostly at the planning and doing stages. It is seen that there is no work for a small number of criteria and that the PDCA cycle has not yet been completed in the sub-criteria of Management of Research Processes and the Research Resources, Research Competence, Collaborations and Supports, and Research Performance criteria.

It is understood that in the 24 HEIs whose follow-up process has been completed, the research and development activities specified as areas for improvement in the IFRs are not monitored and improved based on performance indicators. In addition, it is seen that some institutions do not have a performance evaluation and incentive system for academic staff.

Regarding practices under the Research and Development heading of 22 institutions in the IAP in 2023, 25% of institutions failed to complete the PDCA cycle, and it is concluded that the follow-up and improvement works regarding research and development processes were not mature enough at 65%. There are no institutions without planning in this field, and it has been understood that there are very few best practices. It should be stated that institutions should complete PDCA cycles by establishing the necessary follow-up and improvement mechanisms in the field of research and development.

8.1.4. Service to Society

It is understood that under the Service to Society heading, the sub-criteria of Management of Service to Society Processes and the Service to Society Resources criterion are in the planning and doing stages and the sub-criterion of the Service to Society Performance criterion lacks works or is at the doing stage.

In the institutions included in the IAP in 2023, the Service to Society heading is seen as the area that needs to be developed the most compared to other headings in terms of the maturity level of the quality assurance system. Institutions are expected to implement the necessary works and make arrangements for the service to society, move from the doing stage to the follow-up and continuous improvement process, and complete their PDCA cycles.



8.2. Suggestions

8.2.1. Policy Developers and Decision-makers

The activities, trainings, evaluations and decisions taken by THEQC on the quality assurance system should be recognised and valued by the relevant institutions for the development of the higher education system. HEIs are expected to improve their areas for improvement, as stated in the IFRs, follow-up and accreditation reports, and decision letters, and to complete the PDCA cycles by establishing follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms.

To create competent human resources within the scope of quality assurance works, legislative arrangements have been made for the employment of experts and assistant experts within the body of THEQC. The Regulation on THEQC Experts prepared on the basis of the arrangements was published and the recruitment process was initiated accordingly. In addition to the important decisions taken to meet staffing needs, steps need to be taken to overcome the inadequacy of the physical capacity of THEQC.

It is important to make maximum use of the developing information technology in the establishment and development of quality assurance systems. In this context, it is important to utilise AI to maintain quality processes, make healthy evaluations, and facilitate the reading of the reports. In this regard, it is also important to meet the infrastructure and IT personnel needs of THEQC.

It is important to conduct a primary study and share it with the public to systematically and comprehensively collect employment information such as HEI graduates' employment, continuing education, salary satisfaction, and employer/alumni satisfaction.

THEQC recommends the improvement of incentive mechanisms for the budgets and human resources of state HEIs that receive full accreditation within the scope of the IAP. In addition, academic staff of fully accredited state and foundation universities may be given priority in scientific research projects. It is also recommended to provide financial support to cover the program accreditation expenses of HEIs applying for program accreditation.



Although significant steps are taken for CoHE, THEQC and VQA to cooperate more effectively to place higher education qualifications with program accreditation in the TQF and to simplify the process, the necessary work should continue to complete the process.

To internalize quality processes in higher education institutions, disseminate the quality culture and ensure sustainability, the personnel working in the institutions' quality coordinator's offices must be experienced, or their experience must be transferred to the newcomers.

8.2.2. Higher Education Institutions

The governing bodies of the HEIs should lead the practices of strengthening internal quality assurance systems and disseminating quality culture. Follow-up and continuous improvement mechanisms should be established in HEIs to complete the checking and acting stages of the PDCA cycle, which emerged as a result of THEQC evaluations. These mechanisms should be supported by an integrated information management system that works with all information systems in the institution. HEIs should make more effective use of academic staff, administrative staff and students who have passed the training processes of THEQC in their internal quality assurance processes. The participation of these staff and students in quality commissions should be prioritised. Quality assurance work owned only by a certain person or group constitutes an important obstacle to the development of a quality culture in HEIs. In this context, it should be ensured that quality assurance works are extended to all staff in HEIs. To prevent the changes in the governing body from negatively affecting the quality culture, processes should be defined and scheduled. HEIs need to continuously monitor and improve their internal quality assurance system, not only when they are involved in external evaluation processes. HEIs should be ready to undergo an external evaluation at any time.

Stakeholders, who have an important place in the quality assurance system, should participate at every stage in the establishment of the quality assurance system, as they have direct and indirect effects on inputs, processes and outputs within the scope of learning and teaching, research-development, service to society and other activities, especially governance and quality assurance works. For this reason, the perception of stakeholder involvement should not be limited to only surveys. Practices should be developed to ensure and increase student involvement in the quality assurance system. The fact that students' quality societies



formed within HEIs are established on a voluntary basis and their number is increasing rapidly is a positive development. The representation of these societies in decision-making mechanisms should be strengthened and expert academic advisor support should be provided for quality assurance works.

Events such as conferences, seminars, workshops, congresses, panels, etc., to ensure that students at all program levels learn about quality assurance processes should be organised; the work of the THEQC Students Commission should be followed, and cooperative activities should be carried out with THEQC to ensure student involvement in the processes. ISERs written annually by HEIs should be written with a participatory and inclusive approach. It should be ensured that the self-evaluation works carried out within the scope of ISERs are objective. Evidence for follow-up and improvement in ISERs, in particular, should be strengthened. In the design of higher education programs, the implementation of student-centred learning and performance-based evaluation approaches that are based on learning outcomes should be increased. Follow-up and improvement mechanisms of programs should be strengthened, stakeholder involvement should be ensured more effectively in the design, follow-up and updating processes. In light of program updates, the educational competencies of teaching staff should be continuously improved, teaching excellence centres should be established for this purpose, and support processes and mechanisms should be developed.

Senior managers/directors of HEIs should support and encourage departments and programs to increase the number of program accreditations and program diversity. Experience gained and best practices encountered in the accreditation processes should be disseminated throughout the institution. In non-accredited programs, self/peer evaluation works should be carried out. Integration of micro-credential programs into the institution's programs should be ensured, and opportunities to produce and operate such programs on an institutional basis should be increased. Recognition processes of prior learning acquired by students through non-formal education, formal education, or informal learning should be strengthened. Performance indicators related to learning and teaching processes should be monitored with reliable and objective methods, compared with peer institutions, and improvement suggestions should be practised. To increase the efficiency of learning and teaching processes, a traceable relationship should be established between research and development processes and learning and teaching processes. Intra-institutional and inter-institutional cooperation and experience-sharing processes should be strengthened.



Increasing the involvement of academic staff in decision-making processes is essential in terms of strengthening academic freedom and increasing institutional efficiency. This requires structural, cultural and administrative changes. Particularly in faculties/units, emphasis should be placed on developing an academic culture that encourages participation instead of continuing to manage with undemocratic old habits, and the distribution of academic duties should be carried out in a balanced manner. Innovative training activities of teaching staff should be encouraged and rewarded. It should be ensured that creative/innovative training activities are included in the assignment and promotion criteria. Distance education systems should be implemented holistically, considering all their components and stakeholders. Courses or programs to be carried out by distance or blended means should be redesigned in a way specific to distance education. In addition to the teaching methods, regulations regarding measurement and evaluation methods should also be amended, and institutions should be able to monitor and manage this change within a distance measurement and evaluation system. Distance education competencies of faculty members should be developed in learning and teaching processes beyond digital literacy skills. In this process, the use of learning management systems, digital content production, student-centred distance education methods, alternative assessment approaches, copyright and ethics in digital learning tools and products should be emphasized.

Although there are strong mechanisms for follow-up of research performance in HEIs, it is necessary that they evaluate the follow-up results and strengthen the implementation of the improvement work. Research budgets of HEIs are expected to be monitored and improved over the years according to priority areas. Mechanisms should be put into practice to increase the competencies of teaching staff for research and development. Student involvement in research and development activities should be increased. Organic links should be established between research and development activities and the institution's leadership, governance and quality, learning and teaching, service to society systems, and works in these areas should be particularly encouraged. Encouraging R&D activities is important for increasing scientific productivity and innovations that contribute to society. Therefore, financial support and incentive programs can be developed, research infrastructures can be strengthened, academic performance criteria can be adjusted for R&D, internationalization and cooperation with university-industry collaborations can be encouraged, and motivations can be developed to establish a research culture.



HEIs should determine their service to society policies and objectives and create a budget and establish appropriate organisational structures in line with them. Mechanisms should be established to monitor and improve service to society activities. Managers/directors of HEIs should continue their development towards improving leadership qualities such as strategic management, change management, and agile management. Practices related to the Leadership, Governance and Quality system should be systematically monitored and improved, and follow-up mechanisms should be supported by integrated information management systems. HEIs should strengthen financial management and human resources management. Planning, use and monitoring of financial resources should be related to the goals and objectives of the institution. Senior administrators of HEIs are expected to implement practices that will strengthen the institutional belonging of academic and administrative staff and students. In addition, incentive and rewarding mechanisms for administrative staff need to be implemented.

8.2.3. Accreditation Agencies

Accreditation agencies should develop and share their strategic plans, which include goals, objectives and performance indicators, with the public. The realisation levels of performance indicators should be monitored periodically and action plans should be developed to eliminate the problems that arise in this context. In order to operate this process effectively, internal quality assurance systems should be developed. Accreditation agencies should continuously improve their evaluator competencies in order to strengthen their objective evaluation practices and establish mechanisms to ensure the consistency of evaluation results. While accreditation agencies announce their evaluation decisions, they should also publish their accreditation evaluation reports immediately for transparency. Particular attention should be paid to consistency in accreditation decisions. Within the internationalization works, accreditation agencies should carry out works such as membership, cooperation, and international accreditation of programs.

Accreditation agencies should have sufficient human resources to ensure the effectiveness of accreditation processes and the competencies of evaluators should be increased. In this context, they need to conduct evaluator training, increase the number of evaluators in their pool and keep them updated. It should be ensured that the sub-units of accreditation agencies are composed of different people.



The use of digital information management systems should be expanded in order to reduce bureaucratic approaches and benefit from digital archiving in program accreditation activities.

Accreditation agencies should improve their physical facilities, and employ insured employees and staff to carry out translation activities.

Newly-established or soon-to-be-established accreditation agencies are expected to carry out their application processes by paying attention to THEQC procedures and mature their processes by sharing experiences with experienced agencies in this regard.

8.2.4. Business World and the Graduates

The business world, which is one of the essential external stakeholders of HEIs, should develop cooperation with HEIs and the supreme institutions for higher education with regard to graduate expectations. Work should be carried out on the need, interest and acceptance of micro-credentials in the business world and whether the certificates cater to the needs of the business world. The business world should conduct studies on the qualified staff they need and share their reports and feedback with HEIs. The reports written as a result of the works carried out should be forwarded to the relevant institutions.

Encouraging practices should be implemented by the business world in the employment of graduates of accredited institutions or programs. Additionally, both the power of the university to contribute to the business world and the business-university cooperation opportunities in social processes should be increased within the service to society context.

Mechanisms should be developed so that graduates can be in constant contact with the institutions they graduated from, an institutional sense of belonging should be built and they should be encouraged to give feedback. Institutions should encourage their students to be in communication with their graduates, establishing alumni associations and supporting them with such platforms, etc. Alumni should organise their alumni reunions at the institution if possible. Meetings should be held with alumni and active students to share experiences. Graduates should also be invited to career days to be held at the institution and their participation should be ensured.



8.2.5. Students

To ensure more effective student involvement in decision-making mechanisms in higher education institutions, it is recommended that the role and authority of student representative bodies be strengthened. In this context, it may be useful to develop policies that encourage greater involvement of student representatives and students' quality societies in decision-making processes. It may also be considered to increase the transparency of student feedback mechanisms and ensure that student input leads to concrete outcomes in decision-making processes.

Institutional support and incentives should be provided and enhanced to increase the visibility and impact of students' quality societies. This support can encourage students' quality societies to carry out independent projects and contribute to quality assurance systems. It may also be useful to promote peer learning and knowledge-sharing activities, thus enabling effective collaborations and information flow between the societies.

It is recommended that various incentive mechanisms be developed to increase student involvement in research and development activities. Institutions can establish awards, scholarships and support programs that encourage student involvement in these activities. In addition, collaborations and mentoring programs can be considered to increase student involvement in research projects. However, research-oriented graduate programs can also be encouraged.

It is recommended that HEIs strengthen their cooperation with national and international program accreditation agencies and encourage more student-level involvement in their projects. Increasing student involvement in international quality assurance projects can provide students with the opportunity to learn about global quality standards and gain international experience. It may also be useful to establish regular joint projects and working groups to increase the effectiveness of these collaborations.

To ensure more active student involvement in quality assurance processes, it is recommended that feedback systems be made more accessible and user-friendly. Regular feedback collection through surveys, focus groups and online platforms would be useful.

