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THEMATIC EVALUATION

RAISING THE IMPACT OF EQA

WHY?



The purpose of the thematic evaluation is to **support the changes in the improvement areas** that have been identified in external assessments, studies or risk analyses.

These evaluations allow to have a thematic **overview** of the situation, **share best practices**, **receive independent feedback** and enable **intervention** of relevant institutions.

1



HOW?

Thematic evaluations can be sample-based, but preferably **include all of the HEIs** (and the vocational education institutions, if appropriate).

An **expert panel** is formed, whose task will be to develop a research methodology, to carry out the evaluation and to prepare a report.

Thematic evaluations do not require preparation of a traditional self-evaluation report, but a **survey that involves different parties** may include aspects of self-evaluation.

In parallel with surveys, assessment interviews, focus group interviews etc. are conducted.

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THE PILOT I

The pilot evaluation entitled "**Learning and Teaching of Foreign Students in Estonian HEIs**" was conducted in late 2018. Six HEIs took part in the pilot on a voluntary basis.

4

THE PILOT II

The themes of the assessment were:

- the opening of the study programme and the admission of students;
- tuition fees;
- learning and teaching;
- practical training and employment of international students;
- support systems for students and teaching staff.



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THE RESULTS

- **More comfortable** for the participating HEIs than regular assessments.
- Positive experiences with **national experts**.
- Sharing best practices and **final seminar** were most valued by participating HEIs.
- **Input for preparing a new thematic evaluation regulation** based on the new Higher Education Act.

LESSONS LEARNED AND THE FUTURE



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- **Each topic** needs special methodology.
- Include **more relevant institutions** (e.g. employers, ministries) in the process.
- Most **urgent topics in future evaluations**: learning outcomes meeting the skills needed in the 21st century, academic ethics and workplace learning in HEIs.



ESTONIAN QUALITY AGENCY FOR HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION