

Internationalization of Higher Education in Armenia: External Survey

Research conducted as part of the framework of HARMONY
project, KA2 Erasmus + Programme (Capacity Building)

REPORT

Introduction

This report relates to the analysis carried out via the questionnaire drawn up under the Harmony Project No. 561561-EPP-1-2015-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP (KA2 Erasmus + Programme – Capacity Building).

The questionnaire was prepared with the purpose of analysing the level of internationalization of higher education, research and innovation in Partner countries participating in the project.

The questionnaire development was achieved through methodological workshop on questionnaire drafting. The questionnaire drafting was produced by partners for each Partner country: Armenia, Belarus and Russia as well for EU countries in order to address the peculiarities of each side.

This report analyzes the current state of higher education internationalization in Armenia based on the study outcomes.

The questionnaire was sent to all public and private universities in Armenia, except for 5 specialized universities (National Defence Research University, Military Aviation University, Military University After Vazgen Sargsyan, Educational Complex of the Police of RA, Crises Management State Academy of the Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia). The lists of universities according to the category (public, private, intergovernmental) are available at:

<http://edu.am/index.php/am/documents/view/552>

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The questionnaire was sent by the RA Ministry of Education and Science on 22 November 22, 2016 and the deadline for replies was extended until December 12, 2016.

The following universities from Armenia filled in the provided questionnaire:

University name	Acronym
Russian Armenian University	RAU
Armenian National Agrarian University	ANAU
Khachatur Abovian Armenian State Pedagogical University	ASPU
Armenian State University of Economics	ASUE
American University of Armenia	AUA
French University in Armenia	FUA
Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan	GSPI /Nalbandyan/
Gavar State University	GSU /Gavar/
Goris State University	GSU /Goris/
Humanitarian Institute of Hrazdan	HIH

"International Accountancy Training Centre" Educational Fund	IATC
Medical University named after St. Theresa	St. Theresa
National Polytechnic University of Armenia	NPUA
Northern University	Northern
National University of Architecture And Construction of Armenia	NUACA
"Progress" University	"Progress"
USEL University	USEL University
"Vanadzor State University after H. Toumanyanyan" Foundation	VSU
Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts	YSAFA
Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography	YSC
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences	YSITC
Yerevan State Medical University	V. Brusov
Yerevan State University	YSMU
Euasia International University	YSU
Russian Armenian University	EIU

General information

- The data is provided for 2015-2016 academic year.
- The questionnaire was completed by 25 universities out of the total of 60 universities in Armenia (22 state and international, 31 private, 5 international branch campuses of state universities and 2 international branch campuses of private universities, as of October 3, 2017).
- Distribution of respondents is as follows: 3 international universities, 15 state universities, 7 private universities.

Questionnaire to evaluate the internationalization of HEIs: breakdown and questions

General Information and internationalization of management

- 1.1. Number of enrolled full-time (all levels)
- 1.2. Number of academic staff
- 1.3. Number of staff in international office
- 1.4 Do you have strategic internationalization plan?
- 1.5. Do you have legal frameworks to manage international activity?

International Mobility

- 2.1. Number of students (all levels) sent abroad
- 2.2. Top 5 host countries for students
- 2.3. Number of international students (all levels, both degree-seeking and exchange)
- 2.4. Top 5 countries of origin of international students
- 2.5. Do you assist your staff and students in participation in mobility programs?

Internationalization of teaching and academic programs

- 3.1. Number of international teaching staff (both temporary and permanent)
- 3.2. Number of staff (all categories) sent abroad
- 3.3. Number of international joint/double/multiple degrees programs (All levels)
- 3.4. Do you offer programs in English or other foreign languages?
- 3.5. Do you offer financial incentives for staff to learn foreign languages and to carry out teaching activities in foreign languages?
- 3.6. Do you have strategy and special funding to support international staff recruitment?
- 3.7. Do you have study programs where mobility windows are incorporated into the curriculum?

International Impact and Visibility

- 4.1. Do you have web-site in English
- 4.2. Number of international fairs (education, research, R&D, etc.) where institution has been presented
- 4.3. Number of international partnerships
- 4.4. Number of memberships in international associations and networks
- 4.5. Do you have internal unit / working group to deal with international rankings?

Research and Education projects

- 5.1. Number of international research projects
- 5.2. Number of international educational projects
- 5.3. Do you assist your staff in participation in international programs and projects

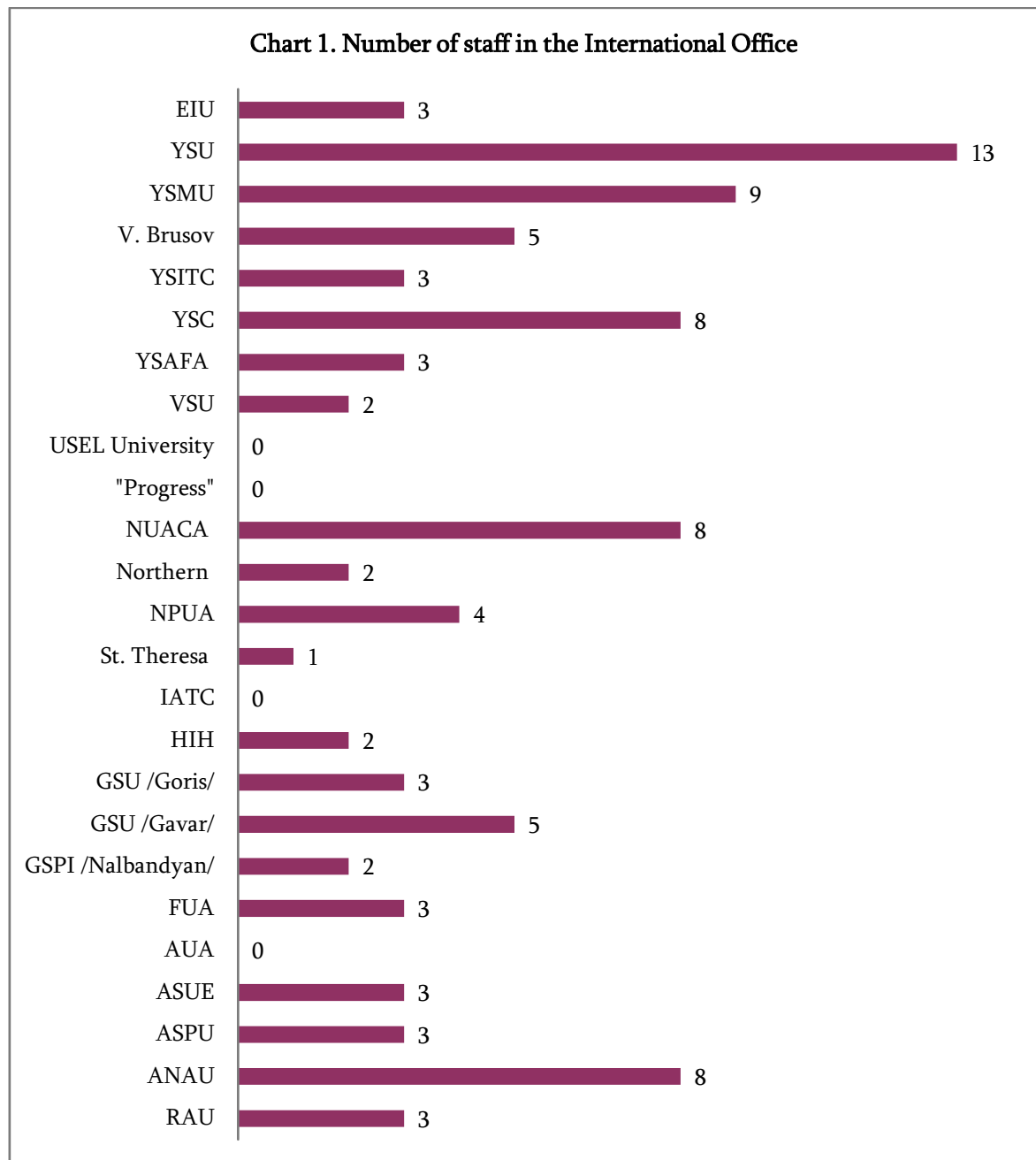
Based on the data, the largest university in Armenia with the highest number of students is Yerevan State University (YSU) with 18 055 full time students and 1552 academic staff (Table 1). USEL University provided no data on student numbers and this case requires further investigation.

Among the responding seven private universities in the list below only two (including Eurasia International University and Northern University) have undergone Institutional external accreditation by the National Centre for Professional Quality Assurance Foundation (ANQA) and are listed in the Institutional Accreditation State Register. As of September 2017, only 4 private universities in Armenia (out of 31) and 17 state universities (out of 22) have undergone institutional accreditation based on the new national and European requirements.

Table 1. General Information

Name of your Institution	Number of enrolled full-time students (of all academic cycles)	Number of academic staff	Number of staff in the International Office	Student and academic staff ratio
Russian Armenian University	2,884	533	3	5
Armenian National Agrarian University	3,081	626	8	5
Khachatur Abovian Armenian State Pedagogical University	4,678	778	3	6
Armenian State University of Economics	4,791	369	3	13
American University of Armenia	1,371	200	0	7
French University in Armenia	1,154	145	3	8
Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan	2,692	197	2	14
Gavar State University	2,800	144	5	19
Goris State University	543	91	3	6
Humanitarian Institute of Hrazdan	42	32	2	1
"International Accountancy Training Centre" Educational Fund	34	16	0	2
Medical University named after St. Theresa	226	52	1	4
National Polytechnic University of Armenia	6,743	702	4	10
Northern University	663	68	2	10
National University of Architecture And Construction of Armenia	2,176	517	8	4
"Progress" University	138	55	0	3
USEL University	0	24	0	0
"Vanadzor State University after H. Toumanyanyan" Foundation	1,495	263	2	6
Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts	709	82	3	9
Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas	786	513	8	2
Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography	810	216	3	4
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences	3,325	216	5	15
Yerevan State Medical University	7,708	1,366	9	6
Yerevan State University	18,055	1,552	13	12
Eurasia International University	393	34	3	12

Yerevan State University has the largest International office and reported 13 employees. In some universities (e.g. Russian Armenian University), the tasks are decentralized, and several employees are directly engaged in internationalization and international student recruitment, for instance in admissions office, but are not reported as the international office staff.



Availability of Internationalization Strategic Plan

Out of 25 respondents, 19 universities reported that they have internationalization strategy available (see Chart 2). Only 12 universities attached an internationalization strategy, which is in most cases incorporated in the University Strategic Master Plan, as a separate section.

The most comprehensive internationalization strategy was submitted by KAASPU as it contained goals and objectives, actions, timeframe and resource planning, targets and measurable indicators. However, it lacked an institutional analysis.

Several Universities mentioned indicators of internationalization (including YSU, EIU, ASUE etc.), but the indicators provided were vague and generic, not measurable and not time specific.

In general, most of the provided strategies are lacking concrete key performance indicators (process, outcome and/or impact indicators) and targets, which makes the monitoring and quality assurance, as well as improvements unrealistic (see Table 2 the details).

The Strategic Plans are also lacking the analysis of strengths and weaknesses, as well as risks and assumptions, timeframe, resource planning, policies etc. Most of the submitted strategies on internationalization are limited to information and general statements on international student cohort and mobility opportunities: the strategies are lacking concrete statements on internationalization of management, curricula, teaching and learning, research, innovation etc.

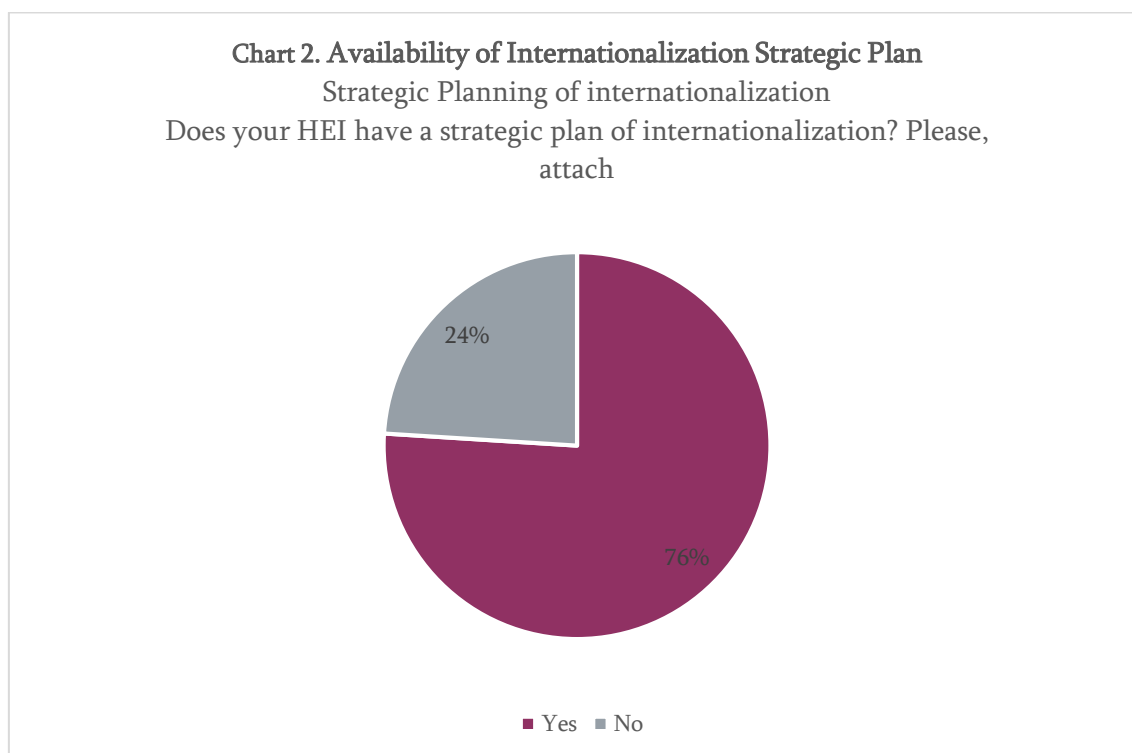
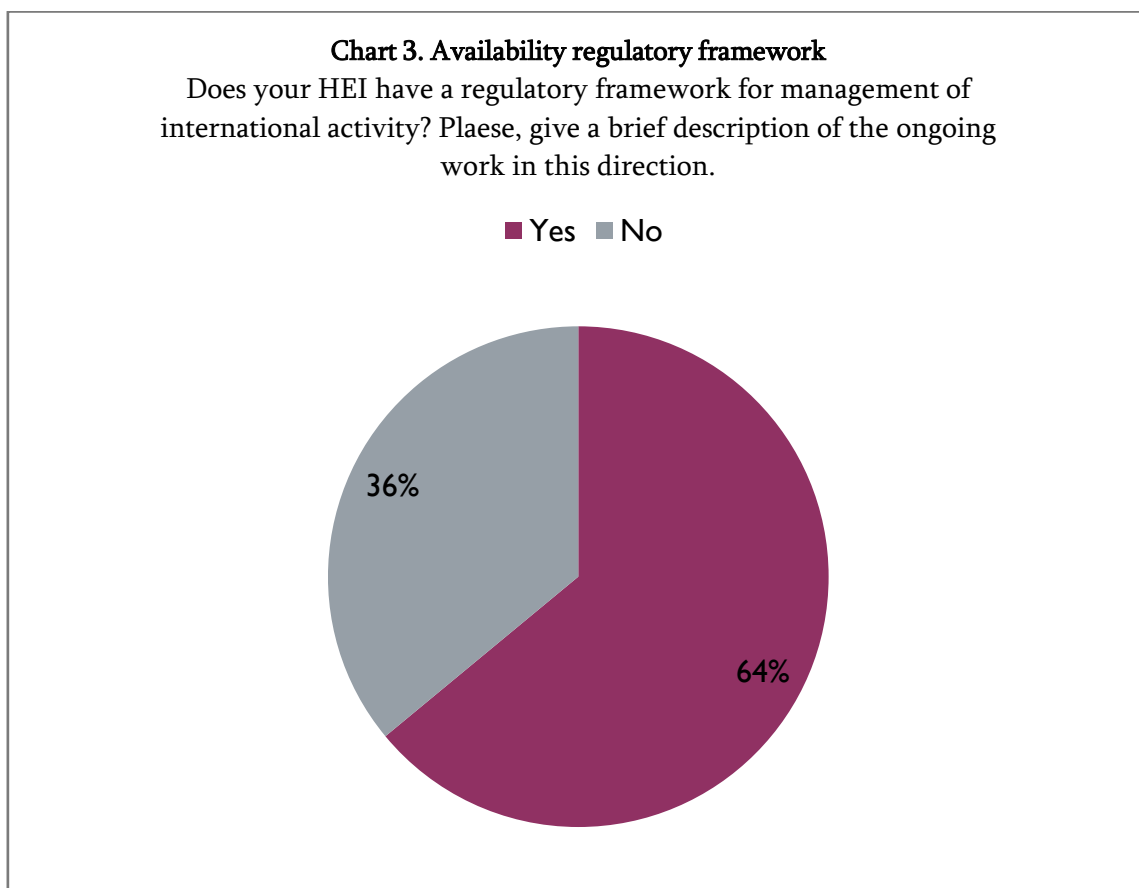


Table 2. Availability of Strategic plans and content evaluation

Name of your Institution	Availability of SWOT analysis	Goals and objectives	Availability of Concrete Actions	Resource Planning	Availability of Timeframe	Availability of targets	Availability of Indicators
Russian Armenian University	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
Armenian National Agrarian University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Khachatur Abovian Armenian State Pedagogical University	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Armenian State University of Economics	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
American University of Armenia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
French University in Armenia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gavar State University	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Goris State University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Humanitarian Institute of Hrazdan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
"International Accountancy Training Centre" Educational Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Medical University named after St. Theresa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Polytechnic University of Armenia	-	+	+	-	-	+	-
Northern University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National University of Architecture And Construction of Armenia	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
"Progress" University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
USEL University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
"Vanadzor State University after H. Toumanyan" Foundation	+	-	+	-	+	-	-
Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences	-	+	+	+	+	-	-
Yerevan State Medical University	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Yerevan State University	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
Eurasia International University	+	+	+	+	+	-	-

Availability of Internal Procedures and Regulations on Management of International Activity

Although 16 universities responded affirmatively to the availability of regulatory framework (Chart 3) for managing international activity and procedures, the majority did not provide concrete examples. Some universities have mentioned the availability of learning agreements, three party mobility plans as regulatory frameworks. One university has referenced the RA legislation (Law of RA on Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education, Admission Procedure of International Students into Higher Educational Institutions, Academic Mobility Procedure of Students at Higher Educational Institutions, the Bologna Declaration, etc.), as well as agreements with foreign partners as the major regulatory framework.



In general, there is a lack of well-coordinated set of formal policies, procedures and guidelines for guiding the management of international activities institution-wide and concrete regulations, procedures and guidelines on managing international projects, incoming and outgoing mobility and other programs, benchmarking, research, innovation, dissemination etc.).

Outgoing and incoming student mobility

Chart 4 illustrates the absolute numbers of incoming and outgoing students in the responding universities. Big differences and imbalances are observed among universities, as well as between the number of incoming and outgoing students. There are several universities (including YSU, YSMU and RAU), which appear to be top sending when factoring absolute numbers, but the overall picture is different when the ratio of total student body and mobility is taken into consideration (See Chart 5).

Whereas 22 % of the overall student body at Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) and 25 % at Russian Armenian University (RAU) are incoming international students, Yerevan State University has only 1% outbound and 2% inbound student mobility respectively.

At YSMU the top sending country is India, while in the case of RAU it is Russia (predominantly Armenians with Russian citizenship). In both universities however, the level of outgoing mobility is quite low and is comparable with other universities in the country.

A small private university (“Progress”) reported 35% incoming mobility. In their case, all incoming students are from Georgia, mostly Armenians with Georgian citizenship.

Detailed information on the top hosting countries, as well as top countries of origin of international students is provided in the table 3 and 4 respectively.

Chart 4. Student mobility

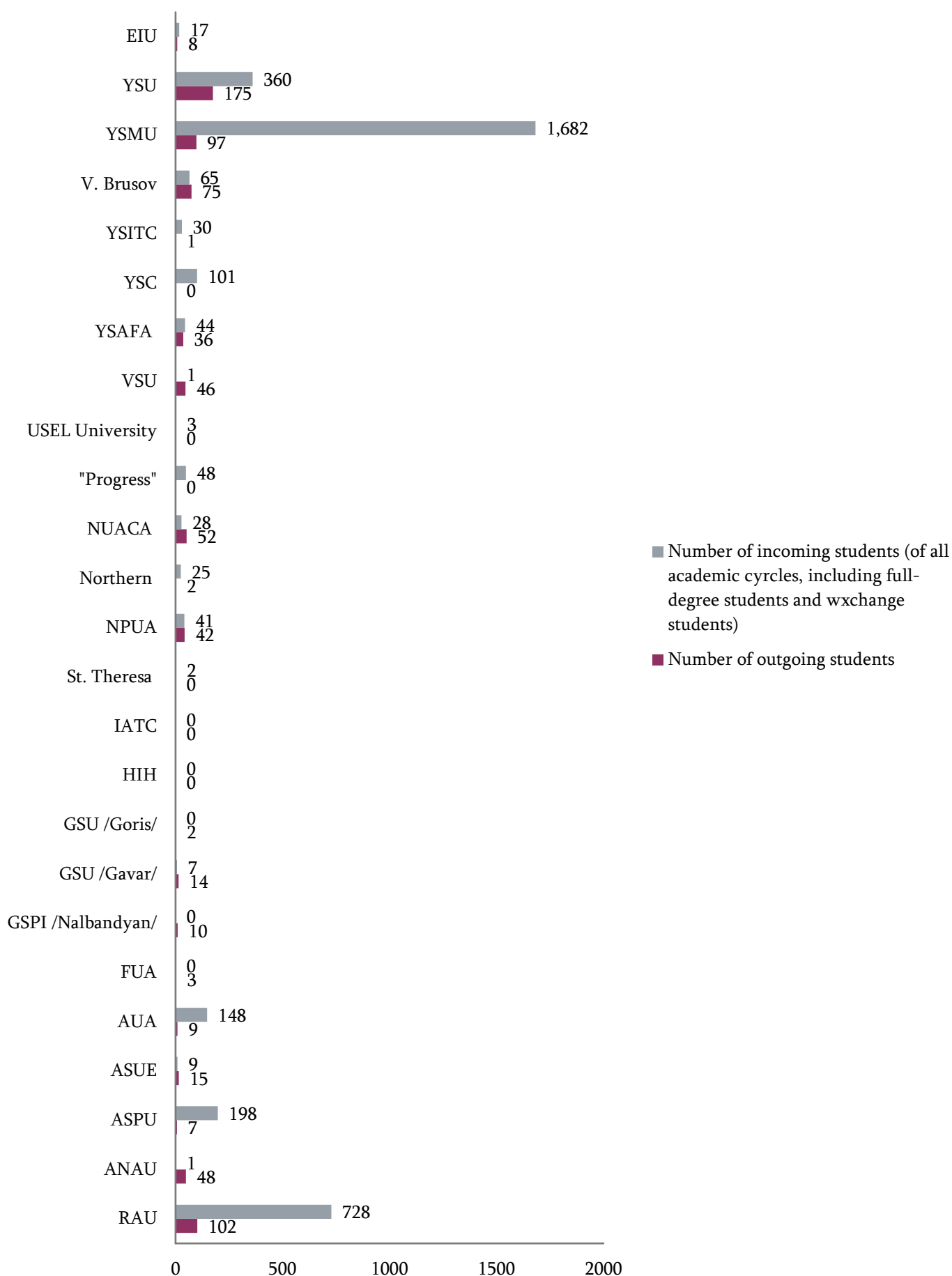


Chart 5. percentage of international students in the total student number/%/

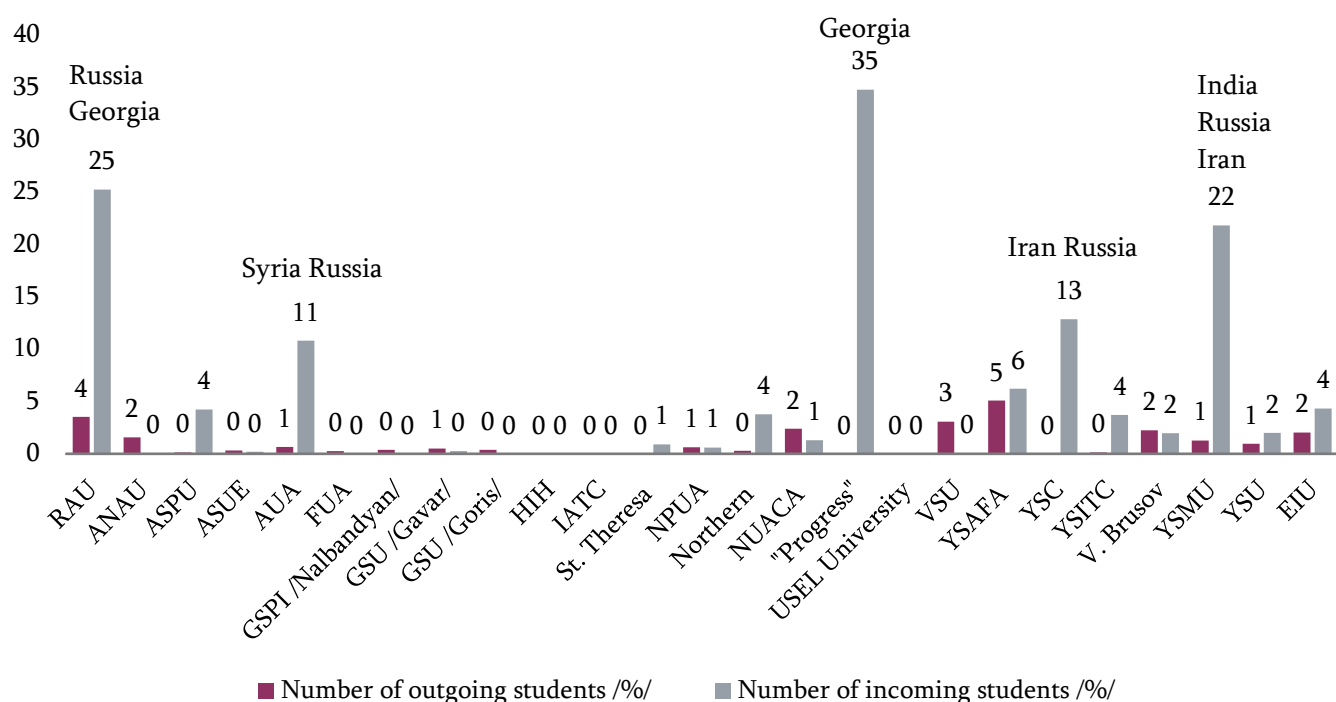


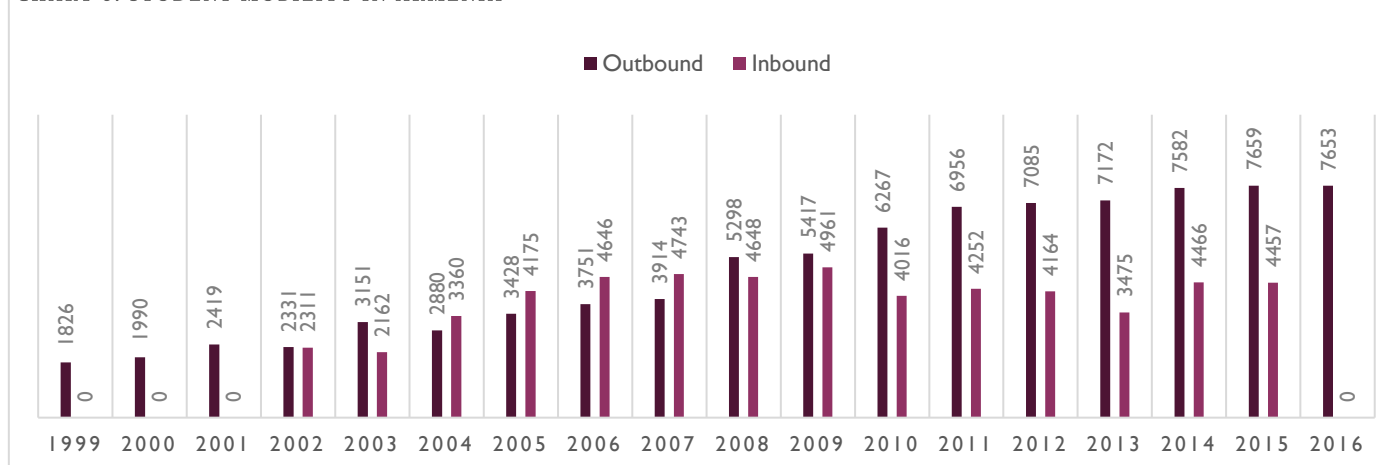
Table 3. Top five host countries by universities

Name of your Institution	1 country	2 country	3 country	4 country	5 country
Russian Armenian University	Russia	China	Italy	Bulgaria	Japan/Germany
Armenian National Agrarian University	Germany	Poland	Czech Republic	Bulgaria	Portugal
Khachatur Abovian Armenian State Pedagogical University	Finland	Bulgaria	Hungary	France	Romania
Armenian State University of Economics	Poland	Greece	Bulgaria	Romania	Hungary
American University of Armenia	USA	Norway	Austria	Belgium	Spain
French University in Armenia	France	USA	Russia	0	0
Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan	Slovenia	Portugal	Romania	0	0
Gavar State University	Italy	Spain	Bulgaria	Poland	Germany
Goris State University	Czech Republic	0	0	0	0
Humanitarian Institute of Hrazdan	0	0	0	0	0
"International Accountancy Training Centre" Educational Fund	0	0	0	0	0
Medical University named after St. Theresa	0	0	0	0	0
National Polytechnic University of Armenia	Russia	Portugal	Spain	Italy	Czech Republic
Northern University	Poland	Romania	Sweden	Russian Federation	0
National University of Architecture And Construction of Armenia	Italy	France	Portugal	Romania	0
"Progress" University	0	0	0	0	0
USEL University	0	0	0	0	0
"Vanadzor State University after H. Toumanyan" Foundation	Poland	Romania	Portugal	Spain	Sweden
Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts	Russian Federation	Italy	France	0	0
Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography	Russia	China	Italy	Bulgaria	Japan/Germany
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences	Germany	Poland	Czech Republic	Bulgaria	Portugal
Yerevan State Medical University	Finland	Bulgaria	Hungary	France	Romania
Yerevan State University	Poland	Greece	Bulgaria	Romania	Hungary
Euasias International University	USA	Norway	Austria	Belgium	Spain

Table 4. Top sending countries by university

Name of your Institution	1 country	2 country	3 country	4 country	5 country
Russian Armenian University	Russia	China	Italy	Bulgaria	Japan/Germany
Armenian National Agrarian University	Germany	Poland	Czech Republic	Bulgaria	Portugal
Khachatur Abovian Armenian State Pedagogical University	Finland	Bulgaria	Hungary	France	Romania
Armenian State University of Economics	Poland	Greece	Bulgaria	Romania	Hungary
American University of Armenia	USA	Norway	Austria	Belgium	Spain
French University in Armenia	France	USA	Russia	0	0
Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute after M. Nalbandyan	Slovenia	Portugal	Romania	0	0
Gavar State University	Italy	Spain	Bulgaria	Poland	Germany
Goris State University	Czech Republic	0	0	0	0
Humanitarian Institute of Hrazdan	0	0	0	0	0
"International Accountancy Training Centre" Educational Fund	0	0	0	0	0
Medical University named after St. Theresa	0	0	0	0	0
National Polytechnic University of Armenia	Russia	Portugal	Spain	Italy	Czech Republic
Northern University	Poland	Romania	Sweden	Russian Federation	0
National University of Architecture And Construction of Armenia	Italy	France	Portugal	Romania	0
"Progress" University	0	0	0	0	0
USEL University	0	0	0	0	0
"Vanadzor State University after H. Toumanyan" Foundation	Poland	Romania	Portugal	Spain	Sweden
Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts	Russian Federation	Italy	France	0	0
Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography	0	0	0	0	0
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences	Russia	0	0	0	0
Yerevan State Medical University	China	Italy	France	Germany	Poland
Yerevan State University	Russia	Greece	Italy	Germany	France
Euasia International University	Germany	Russia	Georgia	Italy	Jordan

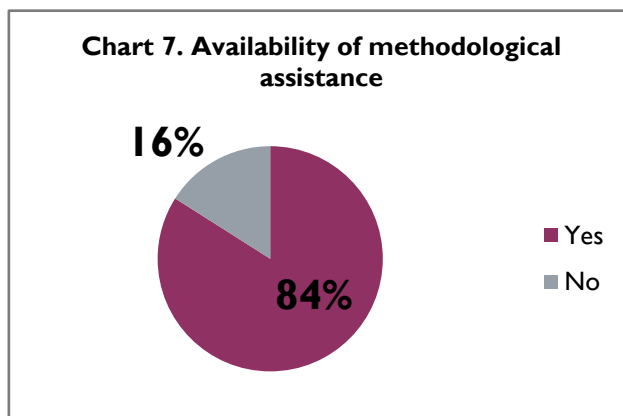
As presented in chart 6 below, there is a considerable increase in both incoming and outgoing student mobility¹ and the numbers of mobile students are comparatively stable since 2014. Based on the data of the National Statistical Service of RA the majority of international students in Armenia in recent years come from the Russian

CHART 6. STUDENT MOBILITY IN ARMENIA


¹ Source. UIS.Stat, rethrieved from <http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?queryid=172>, 05.10.2017

Federation (1165 students in 2015), Georgia (840), India (748) and Iran (393). The number of inbound mobility students from European countries is limited to the maximum of 5.

Methodological assistance to the students and employees



The vast majority of universities polled (21 out of 25) provide methodological assistance to the students and employees to participate in academic mobility programs. The universities clearly mentioned number of services and types of support activities during the mobility, including, but not limited to, assistance during the application

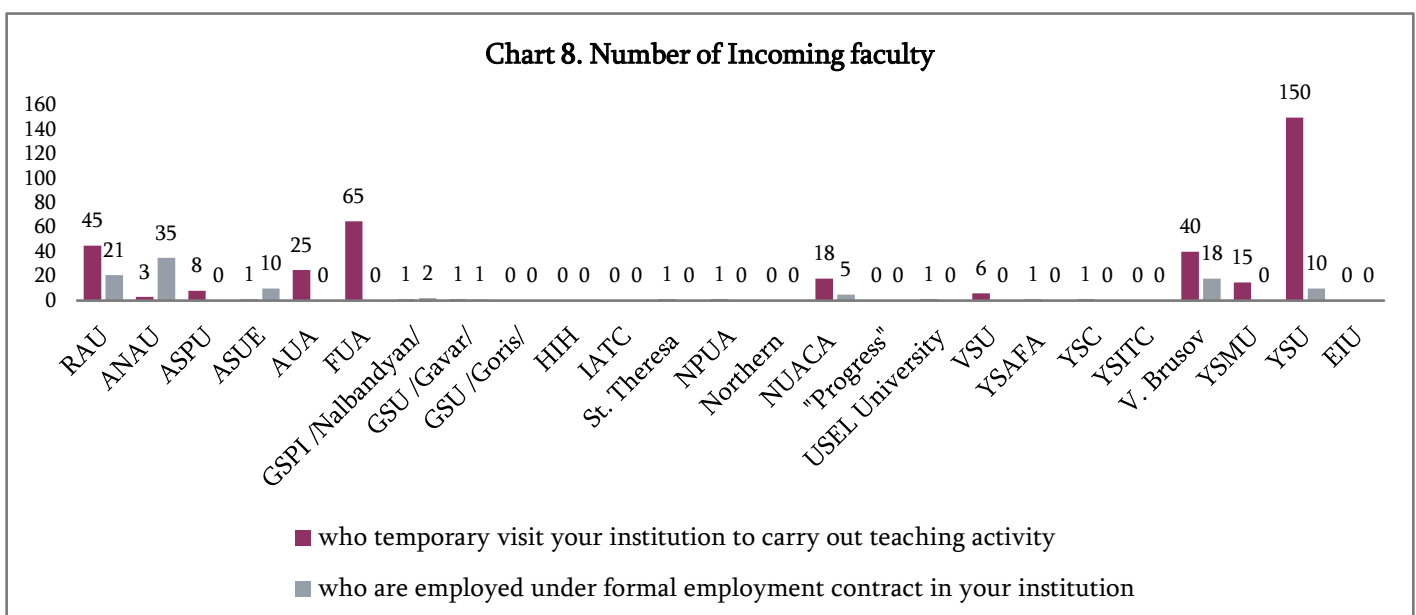
procedure, visa, orientation meetings, credit transfer etc.

However, the universities are lacking public information on the support activities and services provided to both incoming and outgoing students. With few exceptions, there were no procedures or information available on the official web pages of the universities.

Analysis section 3. Internationalization of teaching and academic programs

Incoming academic staff

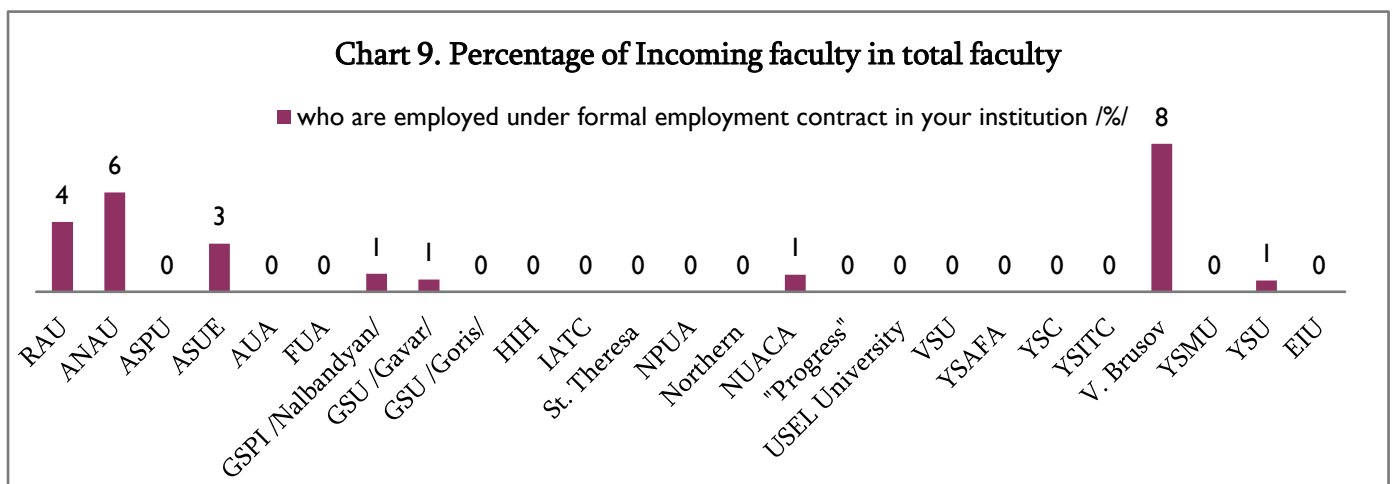
The number of academic staff on temporary visits is highest in YSU (150 academic visits) followed by the FUA (65 academic visits). ANAU is the leading institution with the largest number of international academic staff in formal employment (35), most



of whom are employed within an international program implemented at the university in the field of agribusiness (ICARE Foundation).

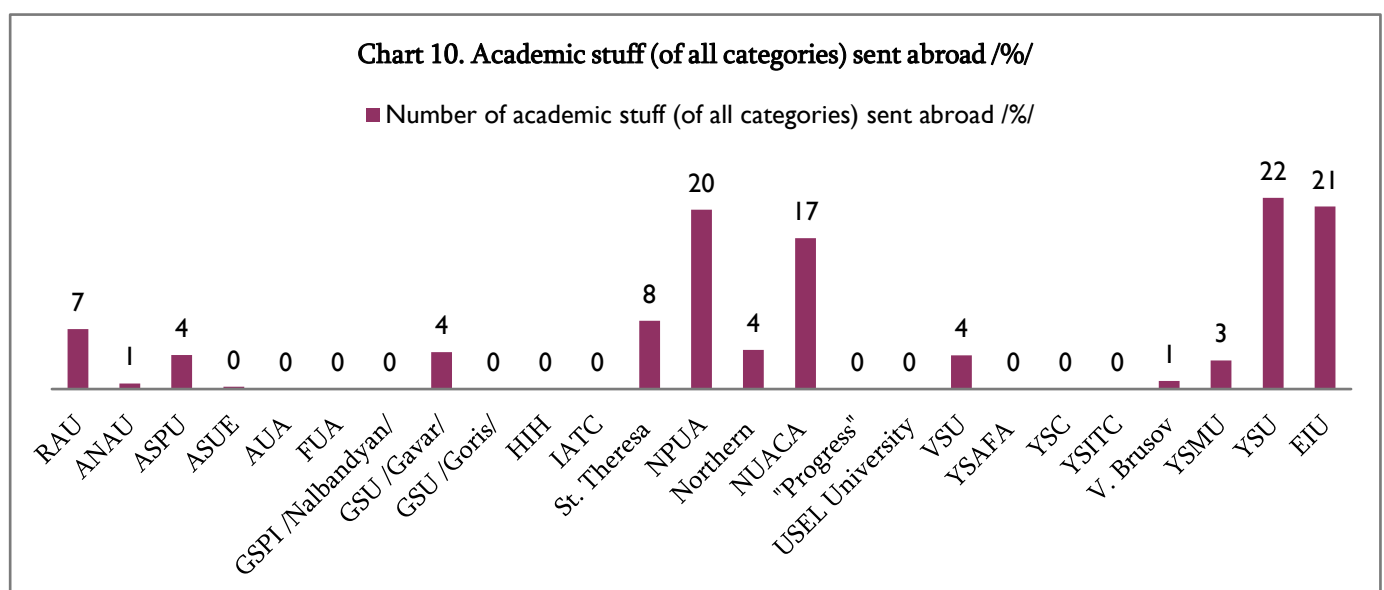
Most of the universities do not have any international faculty both on a temporary visit, and in formal employment. The chart 8 depicts the current state in this field, where most of the universities have reported zero statistics.

The overall image and reality changes in this case also, when the absolute numbers are benchmarked to the total faculty number. In this case the highest percentage of academic staff with formal employment gains YSLU (Bryusov), followed by ANAU. Chart 9 illustrates the current state of internationalizing the administrative faculty at the universities; as it is evident from the chart below, most of the universities have no international faculty or the number is limited to 1 %.



Academic staff sent abroad

The universities that reported the highest percentage of academic staff sent abroad were Yerevan State University (22%), Eurasia International University (21%) and



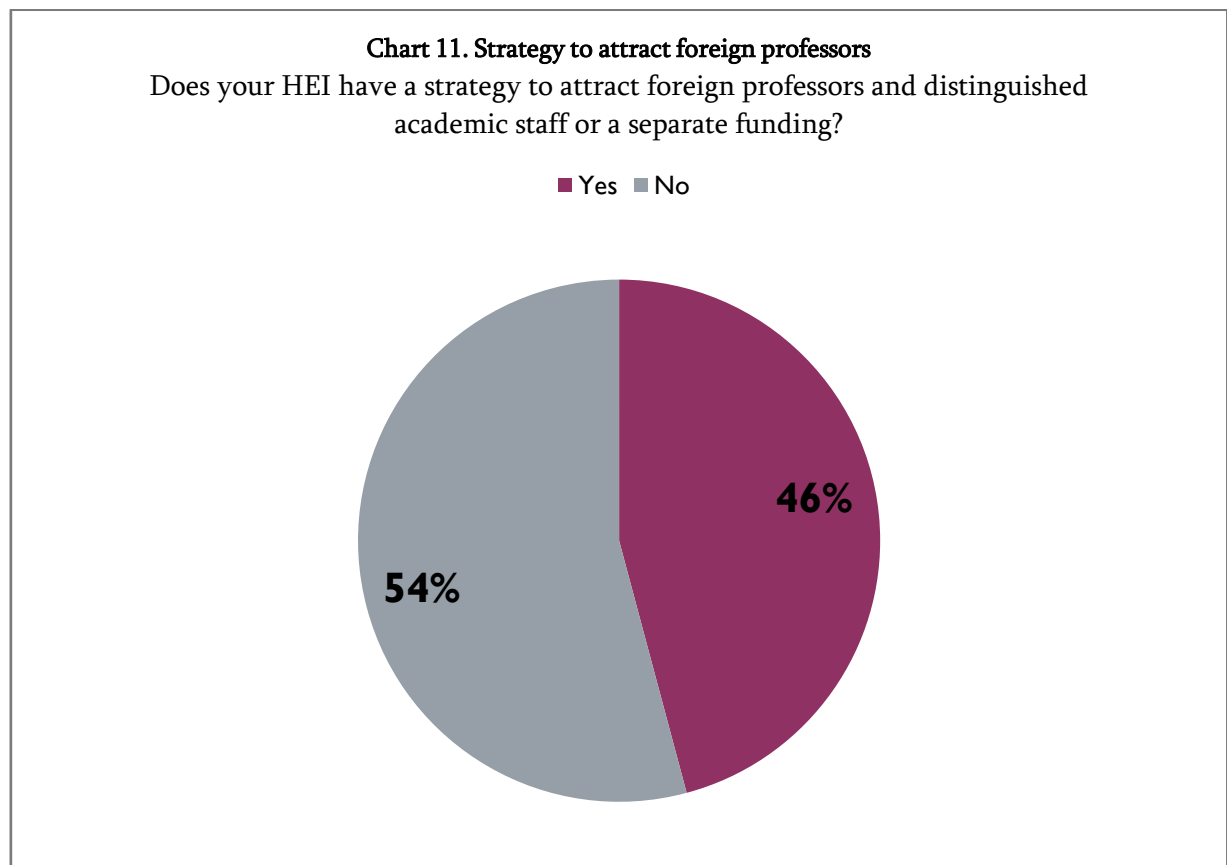
National Polytechnic University of Armenia (20%) (See chart 10). Twelve universities have either no or very small number of outgoing academic staff.

Strategy to attract foreign professors

Based on the data provided, 46 percent of responding universities declared the existence of strategy to attract foreign professors and distinguished academic staff, or had separate funding.

There is heavy dependence on international and intergovernmental funds. Universities reported reliance on external funds and sources such as Visegrad Fund, Jean Monnet, Erasmus+, DAAD, Fulbright, Confucius Institute, etc.

This clearly demonstrates the absence of clear strategy and efforts, as well as lack of concrete policies to attract international faculty, and can be seen in Chart 9, where the number of incoming faculty is mostly limited to 0-1 percent, with only few exceptions.



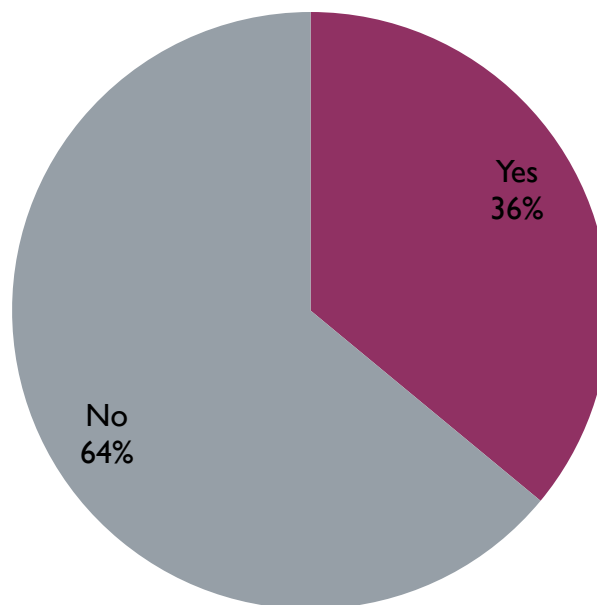
System of rewards for teaching in English

Several universities reported they had a financial rewards scheme for employees who study or teach foreign languages and highlighted the following rewards:

1. ANAU - 2 fold increase in wages,
2. FAU - Additional payment,
3. IATC - 30% more payment,
4. NPUA - increased hourly payment,
5. NUACA - 50% salary increase,
6. YSU- financial reward.

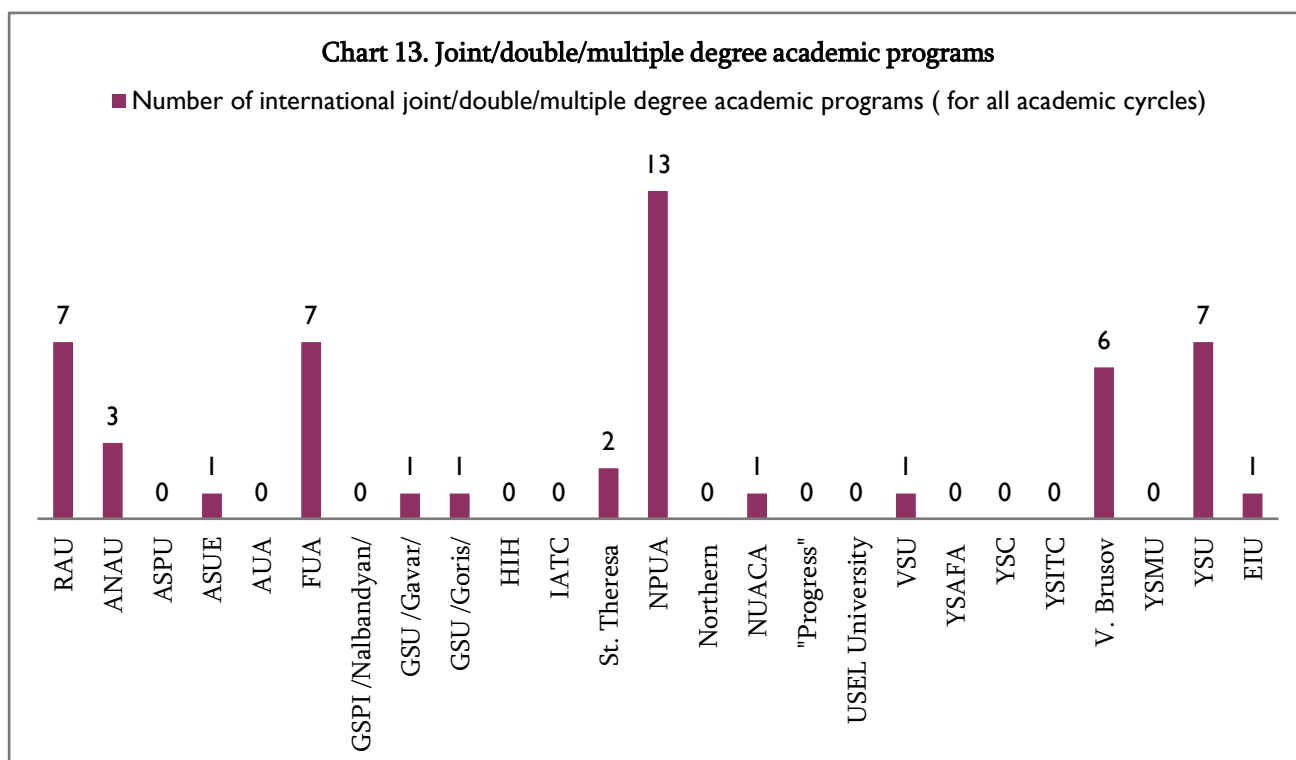
The rest of the universities provided no information on the reward system or any mechanism to encourage the faculty teaching in foreign languages.

Chart 12. The availability of system of rewards for teaching in English
Does your HEI have a system of financial rewards for employees who study foreign languages and teaching in foreign languages?



Internationalization of academic programs

The NPUA is leading with the number of joint/double/multiple degrees and academic programs (13 degrees). Four universities, RAU, FUA, YSLU (after V. Bryusov), and YSU have almost identical number of dual degrees (7) and two universities reported having 2 or 3 programs respectively while six universities have only 1 program each. The remaining twelve universities have no collaborative initiatives or programs. (Chart 13). The small number of joint/double/multiple degrees is partially explained by existing national limitations and law on Higher and postgraduate education, which is soon to be amended and is on the agenda of Ministry of Education and Science.

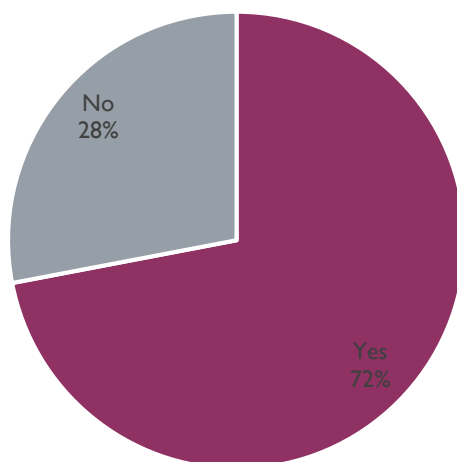


Seventy-two percent of universities (eighteen in twenty five) have academic courses/programs in English or in other foreign languages (see Chart 14). Many universities have provided a list of the offered courses and some of them have the information available on their websites. The list of all courses and programs in foreign languages is also available on the official web site of the Erasmus + Office in Armenia, which is a major gateway for international students:

<https://erasmusplus.am/programs-taught-in-english/>

Chart 14. Availability of courses and programs in foreign languages

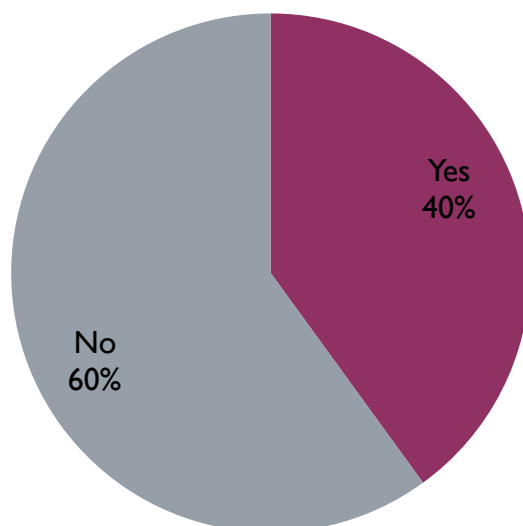
Does your HEI offer academic courses/programs in English or in other foreign languages? Please, attach a list of the courses/programs and give a brief description of the ongoing work in t



Sixty percent of the responding universities (15 universities) reported no training program available at the university within any mobility window (Chart 15). Ten universities claimed the availability of international training programs, but there was no qualitative information available (major sources of financing, etc.).

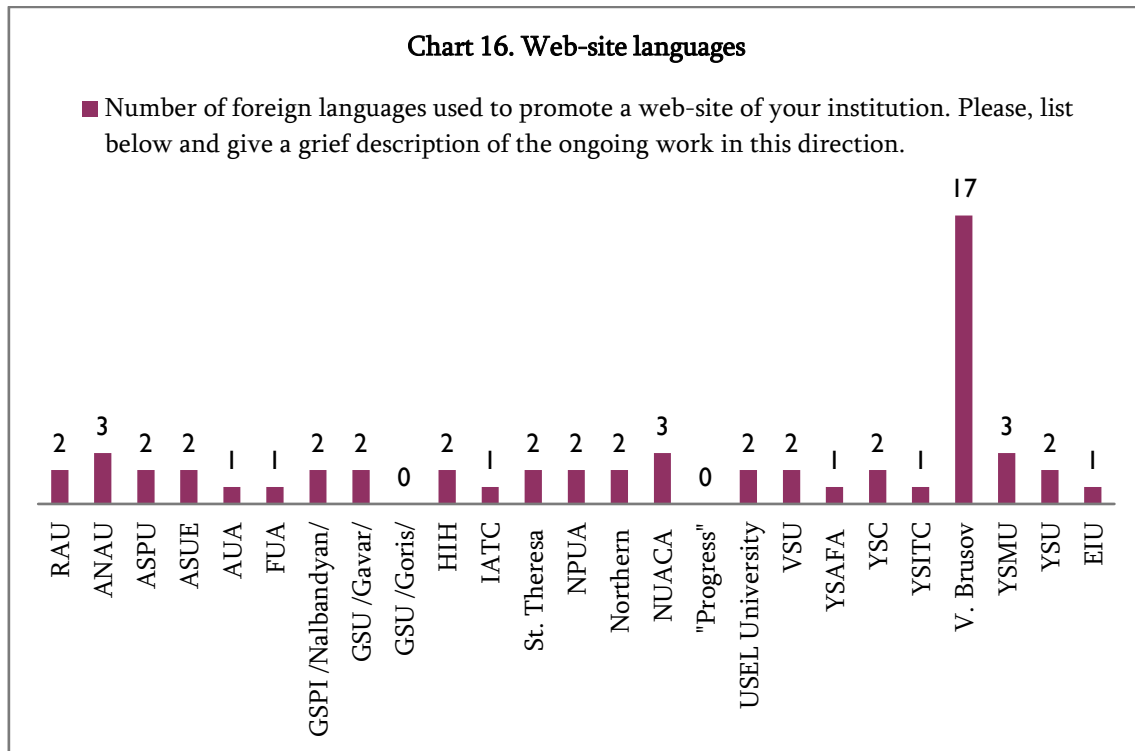
Chart 15. International training through mobility window

Does your HEI offer training programs that include training abroad on an exchange (mobility window)?

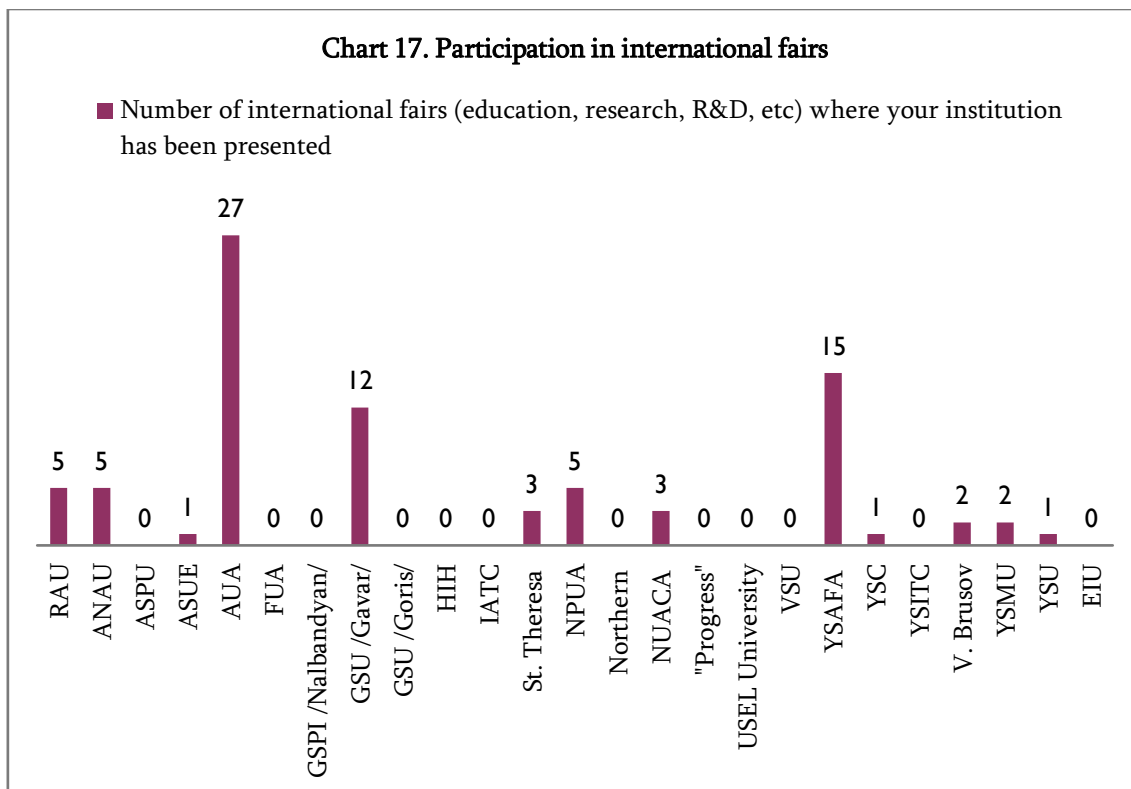


The most common number presented by the universities to promote the university website, was two, and the languages mentioned were Russian and English.

Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov reported the highest number (17) of languages to promote the website worldwide. Apart from Russian and English, the University has online information available in other languages taught at the University (Chart 16).



The highest participation number in international fairs was reported by the American University of Armenia (27) followed by the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts (15) and Gavar State University (12), which is a regional university. Whilst 12 universities did not participate in international fairs at all, the remaining universities reported very limited experience in this domain (see Chart 17 for further details).



The highest number of international agreements among the state universities was reported by YSU and followed by NPUA. Among the international universities the highest number of international agreements was reported by RAU and among the private universities by EIU (Chart 18). The study was limited to only quantitative data, and there was no information on the number of active agreements and other qualitative data (Chart 18).



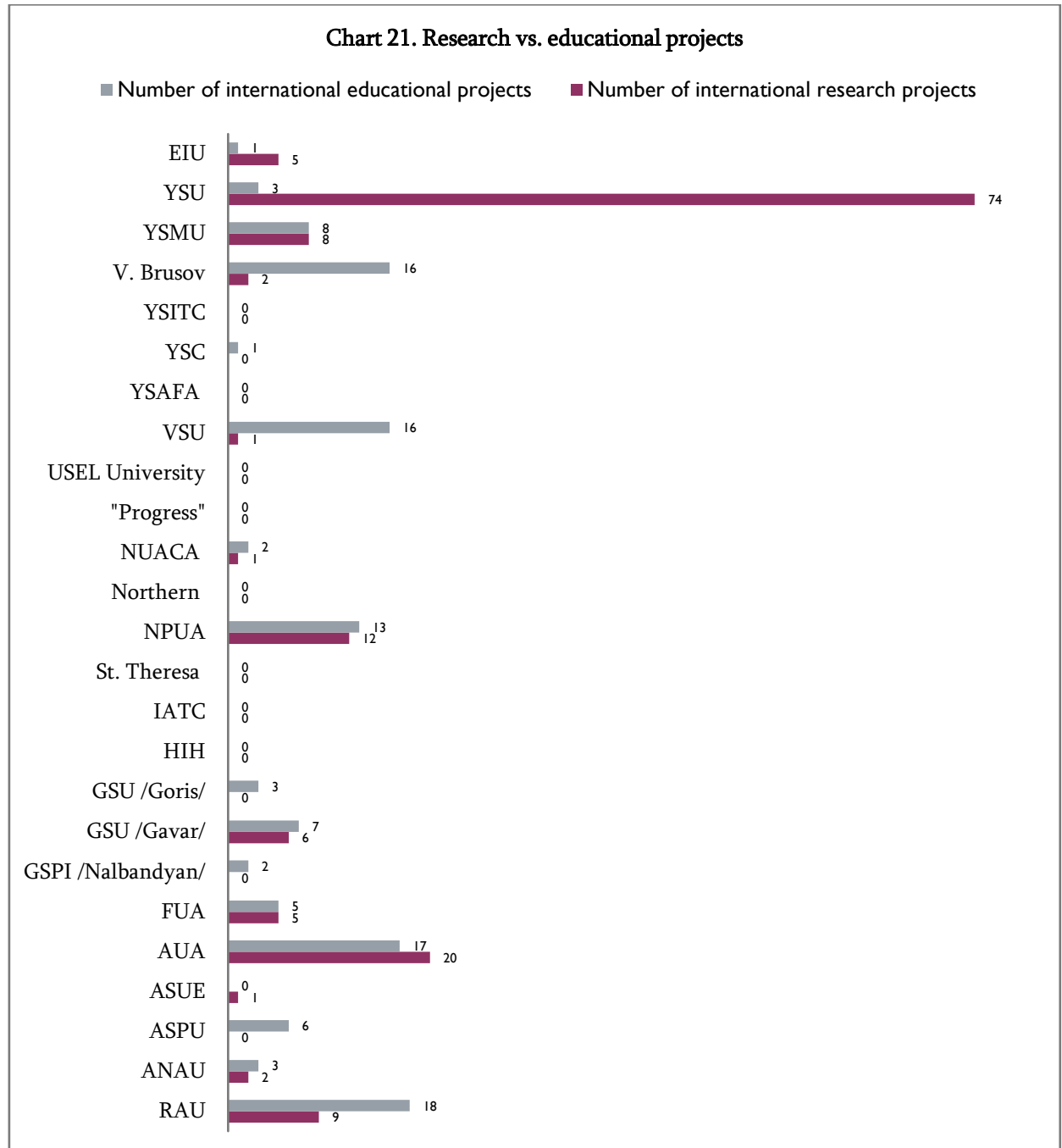
NPUA is in a leading position with the number of international associations and networks followed by the NUACA (Chart 19).



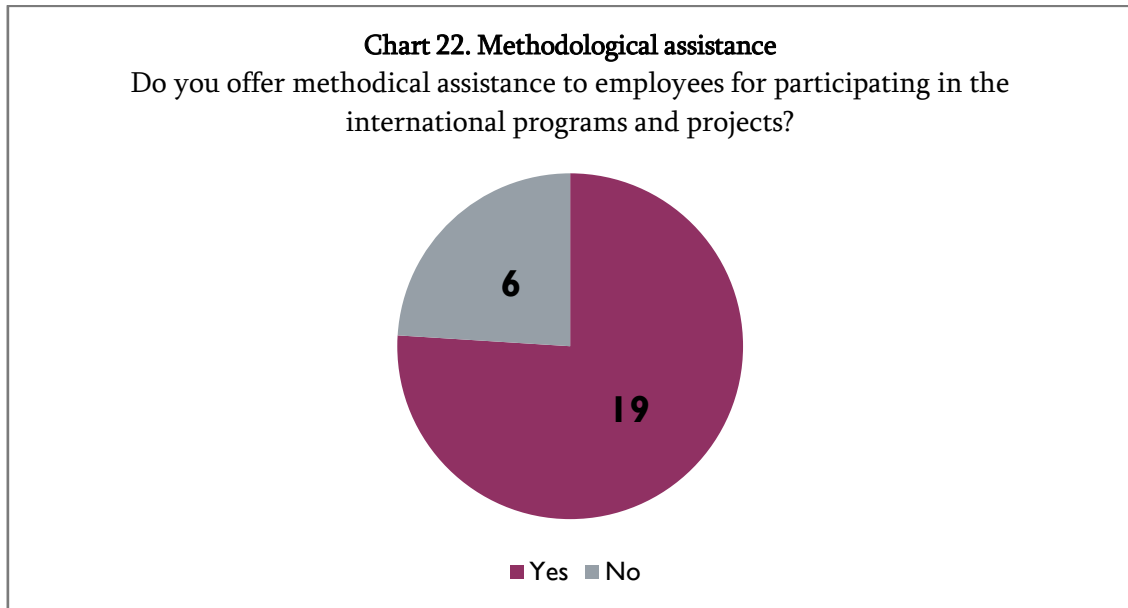
Only 8 universities (YSU, RAU, ASPU, ASUE, AUA, GSU (Gavar), YSC and St. Theresa) reported the existence of a separate division/working group responsible for participation in the international rankings (Chart 20). It is worth mentioning, that, compared to other universities in Armenia, YSU, RAU, ASPU, ASUE and AUA have relatively high ranking and presence in international ranking systems.



Twelve universities out of 25 reported having no research projects in 2015-2016 academic year, while at the other end of the scale two universities stand out with the highest numbers, namely, Yerevan State University (major research university) and American University of Armenia. As Chart 21 illustrates, there is immense imbalance between research and educational projects. In the case of YSU the imbalance is even larger.



The last question concerning methodological assistance to employees for participating in the international programs and projects received mostly positive responses (Chart 22) and the universities provided concrete examples of support.



Some examples of the methodological assistance given by the universities are as follows:

- info sessions on different grant opportunities,
- invitations of different experts on regular basis,
- internal guidelines on running and monitoring the projects,
- support for filling in program applications and for preparation of the supporting documents,
- organization of seminars, trainings, etc.

References

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