

# National Perspectives on Internationalization in Higher Education

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Izglītības un zinātnes  
ministrija

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*Baltic Info Days 2026*

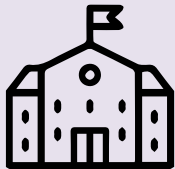
*29.04.2026.*



Ministry of  
Education and Science  
Republic of Latvia

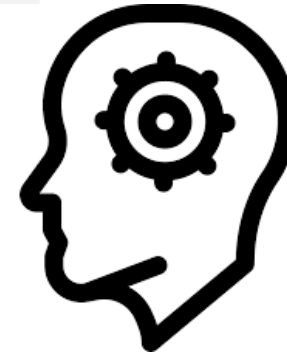
# Key statistics: Higher education in Latvia

## Statistics



### HEIs:

State-established HEIs: **11**  
State-established colleges: **6**  
State university-established colleges: **8**  
Private HEIs: **13**  
Private colleges: **7**  
Branches of foreign HEIs: **2**



### Staff of HEIs (2024):

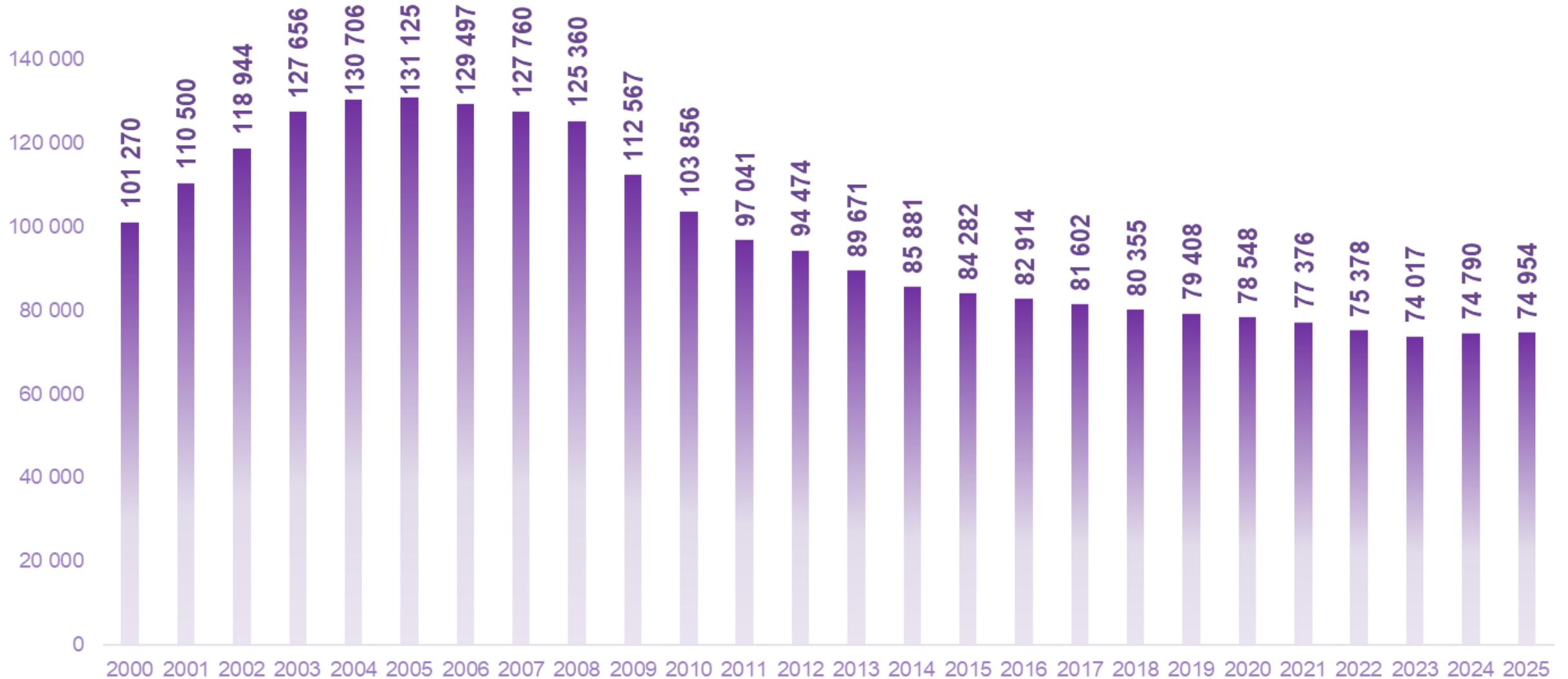
All staff: **10487**  
Academic staff: **5066**  
On average **15** students  
per faculty member  
Main age group: **31 - 50**



### Students (2024):

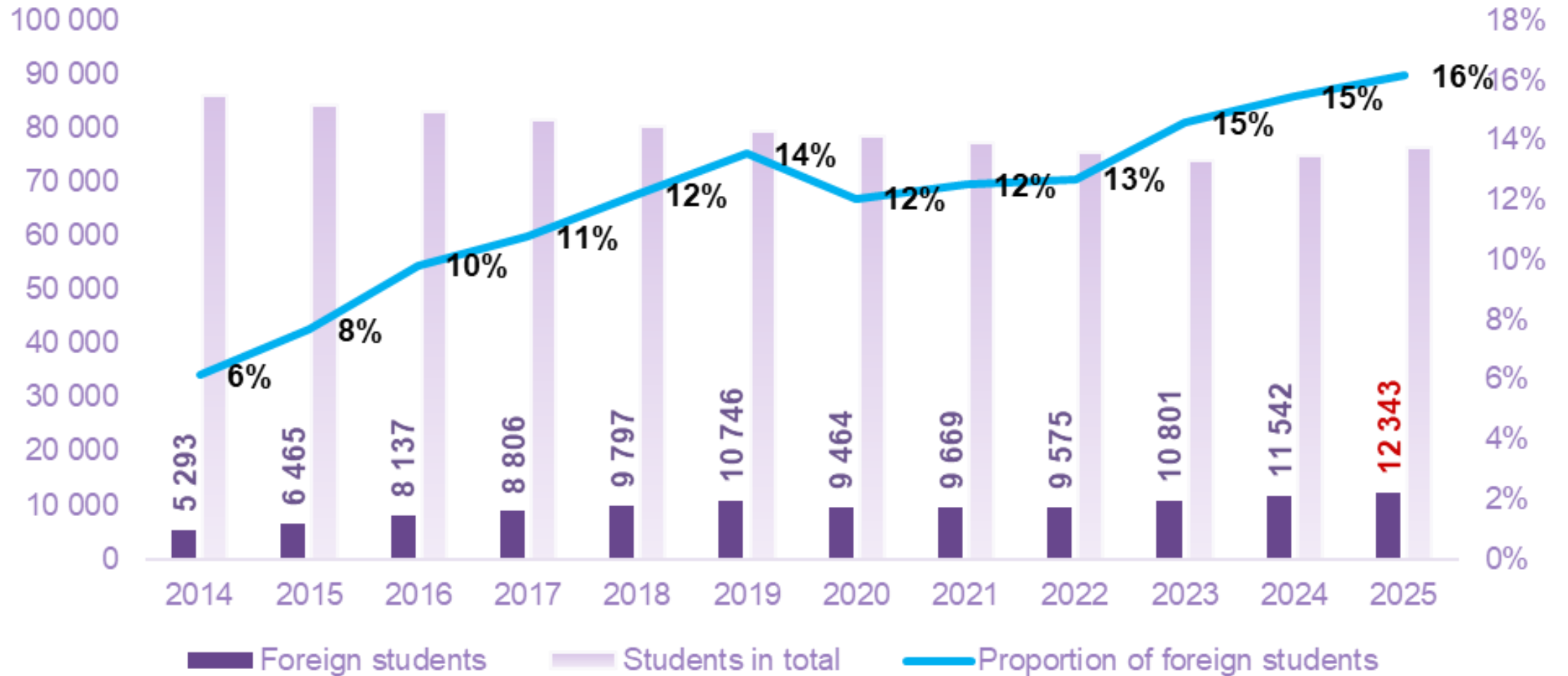
All students: **74790**  
Newly enrolled: **29198**  
Foreign students: **11542**  
(15%)  
Obtained degree: **13481**

# TOTAL STUDENT DYNAMICS



Data taken on 01.10.2025.

# FOREIGN STUDENT DYNAMICS



# AVERAGE FOREIGN STUDENT DROPOUT RATE



**2022/2023 - 31%**

**2023/2024 - 37%**

**2024/2025 - 21%**

# NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONALIZATION GOALS

## **Key national policy documents:**

Education Development Guidelines (2014–2020) (2021-2027) → internationalisation as a horizontal priority

National Development Plan (2014–2020) (2021-2027) → HE as an export sector

Sustainable Development Strategy “Latvia 2030” → target for foreign students (>10%)

Guidelines for Science, Technology Development and Innovation 2021–2027 → target to stimulate the renewal of academic staff and the involvement of young scientists in research and innovation, ensuring the participation of students, doctoral candidates, and young scientists, including those from abroad

## **Study on balanced and inclusive learning mobility in the context of the European Education Area and the new higher education mobility target**



Primary objective of this study is to support the strategic debate and develop policy recommendations aimed at promoting balanced and inclusive learning mobility in higher education (ISCED 6-8).

# CONCLUSIONS FROM THE REPORT

1

Latvia is a **net receiver of degree students** (above EU average)

2

Growth driven by **HEIs, not national strategy**

3

**Low retention after graduation limits long-term impact**

4

Latvia is a **net exporter of credit mobility (Erasmus+) students** (imbalance)

## The necessity for internationalization strategy



- No **national mobility strategy, targets or definitions** → fragmented system
- Internationalisation is **institution-driven, not policy-driven**
- **Low retention of international graduates** limits long-term benefits
- **Imbalance in mobility:**
  - net importer of degree students
  - net exporter of Erasmus+ students
- Lack of targets in **mobility system (monitoring, or support tools)**

# INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY

1

Develop new data and evidence monitoring for internationalisation

2

**Define priority regions for targeted internationalisation policy (EU/NATO/3rd world)**

3

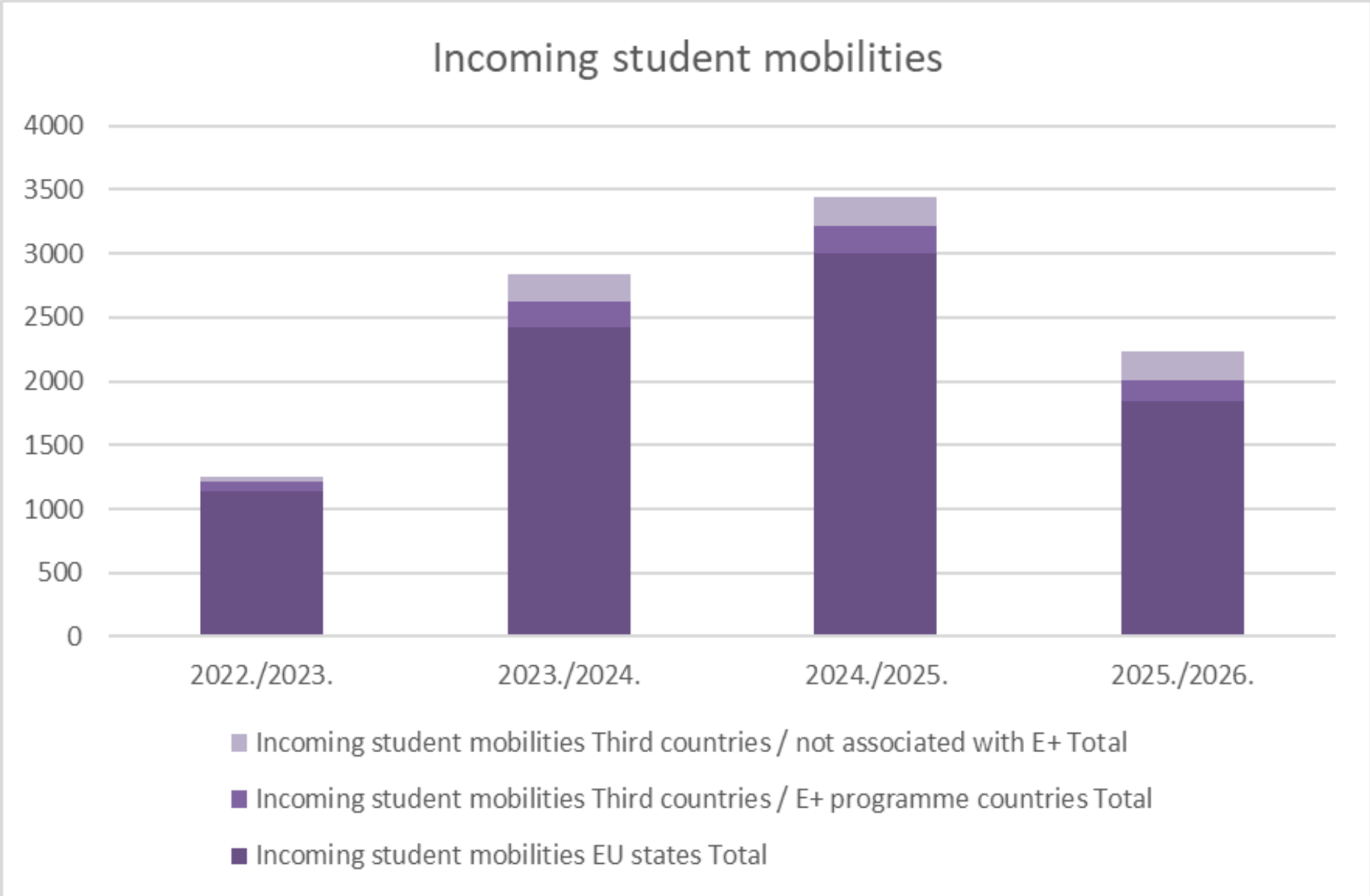
**Improve coordinated approach in internationalization** to strengthen balanced mobility

4

Improve **attraction of new talents and retention** on a systemic level

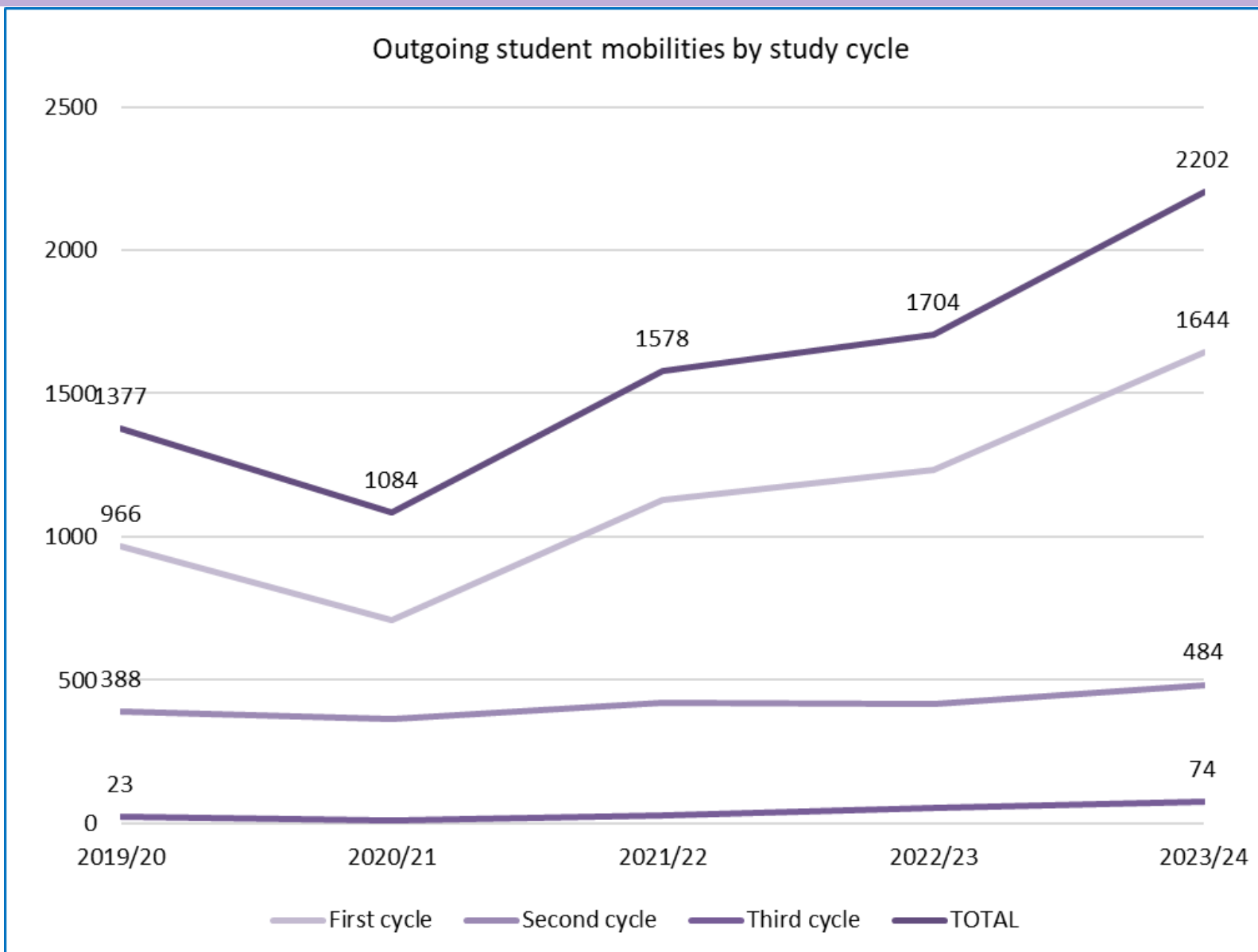
\*Strategy content is subject to change

# ERASMUS+ AS A TOOL TO REACH THE GOAL



Data taken on  
01.02.2025.

# ERASMUS+ AS A TOOL TO REACH THE GOAL



Data taken on  
01.02.2025.

# MICROCREDENTIALS Pilot Project in Latvia (2024–2027)

**Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 502 (18 June 2024)** approved the development of a **microcredentials pilot project** in Latvia.

The pilot project will run from **2024 to 2027** to define and test **microqualifications within the Latvian higher education system**.

**Coordinated by:** Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia.

**Participants:** State universities of applied sciences, universities of arts and culture, and state or state-founded colleges.

**Objective:** Develop a **support programme** and create the **first microqualifications in Latvia**.

**Outcome:** Evaluation of created microqualifications, **number of trained specialists**, and their **labour market outcomes**.

# MICROCREDENTIALS Pilot Project: Objectives

- Supports the **development of workforce skills and competencies**, promoting **lifelong learning**.
- Important for **professional specialisation**, including the acquisition of **medical specialities and therapeutic or diagnostic methods**, and the expansion of professional knowledge.
- **Objective:** Develop the **first microqualifications / microcredentials in higher education in Latvia**.
- Conduct **analysis of the regulatory framework** and provide **recommendations for legislative amendments** and a **definition of microcredentials**.
- Ensure **cooperation with employers** so that developed microcredentials respond to **labour market needs**.

# Pilot Project: Expected Outcomes and Current Progress

- **Two application rounds completed**, with a **third round launched in 2026** through the **STARS platform**.
- So far, **10 higher education institutions** have participated, implementing **20 programmes** and issuing **377 microcredential certificates**.
- Microqualifications are being developed in several fields: **healthcare, arts and culture, education and pedagogy, social welfare, business, internal security, agriculture, engineering, and energy**.
- The project is supported by the **STARS digital platform** in cooperation with the State Education Development Agency, enabling monitoring, reporting, and feedback collection.
- **Employers show strong interest**, highlighting that microcredentials help address **labour market needs and support professional upskilling**.
- The pilot project demonstrates that **flexible microqualification formats are valuable for working professionals and different sectors**.

# JOINT EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL

- European Degree Label is a **quality** label for joint study programmes delivered by at least **two** higher education institutions from **different** EU countries.
- It is awarded to programmes that meet common European quality criteria and follow the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).
- The label highlights the European dimension of the programme, including mobility, multilingualism, cooperation between institutions, and alignment with European values.
- It aims to strengthen transnational cooperation, improve the recognition of qualifications, and increase the international attractiveness of European higher education.

# JOINT EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL

## What Has Already Been Achieved:

- Significant progress has been made towards the rollout of the Joint European Degree Label.
- The European Commission, together with Member States and stakeholders, has conducted a series of technical Policy Lab workshops to develop and refine the draft operational guide for implementing the label.
- A draft operational guide is being prepared to serve as the main practical framework for awarding the European Degree Label.
- The guide explains:
  - who is eligible,
  - how assessment works,
  - which criteria apply,
  - and how the label is awarded in practice.

# JOINT EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL

## What the European Degree Label Will Look Like

The European Degree Label will not replace national degrees.

Instead, it will function as a European-level quality label awarded to joint programmes that meet agreed criteria.

In practice, this includes:

- a certificate or label attached to the joint degree,
- institutional- and student-facing templates developed at European level,
- compatibility with Europass and digital credentials to ensure transparency and recognition across countries.

The label is designed to be:

- visible,
- trustworthy,
- and easily understandable by students, employers and institutions across Europe.

# JOINT EUROPEAN DEGREE LABEL

## What Is Planned Next

The work is entering its final preparation phase.

- By spring 2026 (may-june): the final version of the operational guide will be completed and presented to the Council (EDUC).
- From mid-2026 onwards: selected quality assurance agencies will receive technical support to award the first European Degree Labels, evaluations of the rollout phase will begin, and a broader feasibility study for a possible joint European degree will be launched.

The Policy Lab will continue to serve as a platform for:

- exchange between Member States,
- monitoring progress,
- and supporting further policy development.

# EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCES

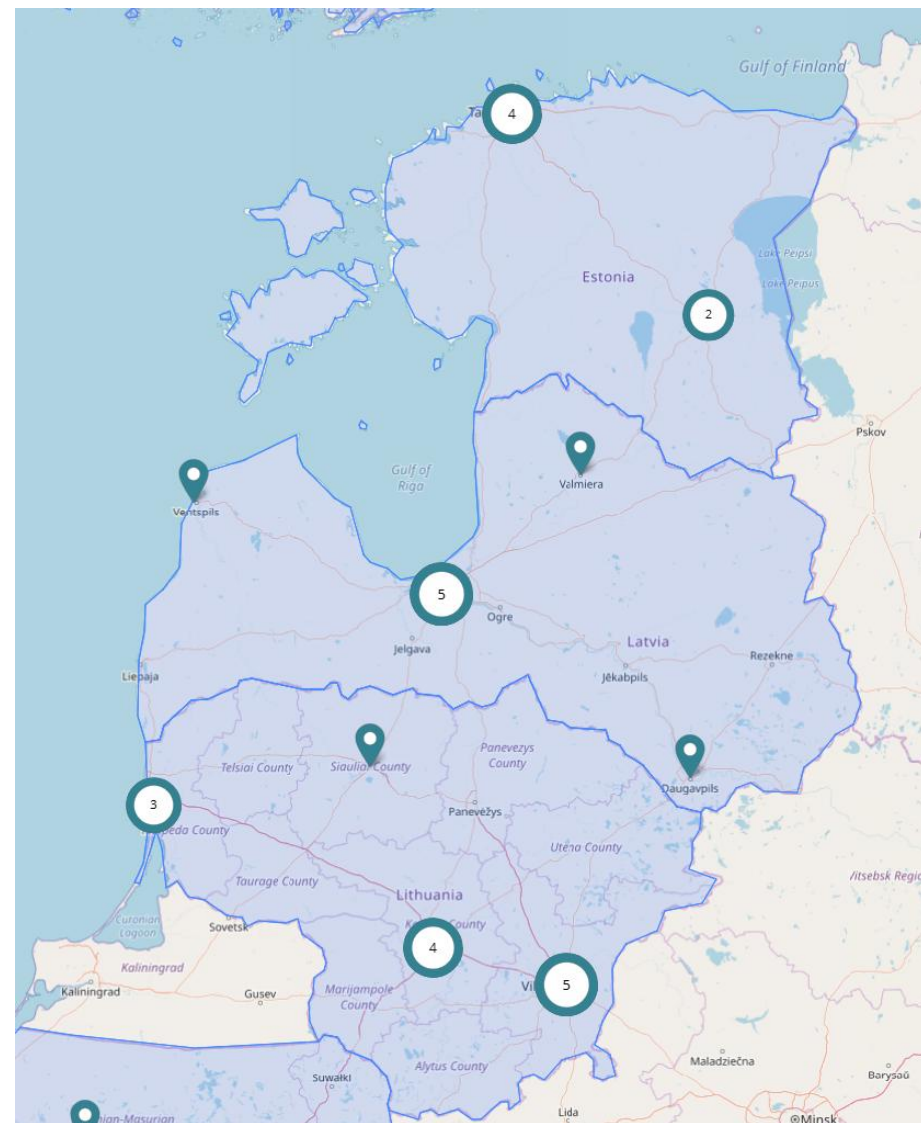
**26 different Alliances across Baltic States**

**Estonia – 6 higher education institutions**

**Latvia – 8 higher education institutions**

**Lithuania – 15 higher education institutions**

- Increased international visibility and **attractiveness**
- Opportunity to **pool resources across small systems**
- Stronger positioning in **EU policy and funding landscape**
- Platform for **joint programmes and innovation ecosystems**





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Valsts izglītības  
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# Thank you!



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