

**Digital pathways in quality assurance:
Romanian experience and
perspectives from the IMINQA study**

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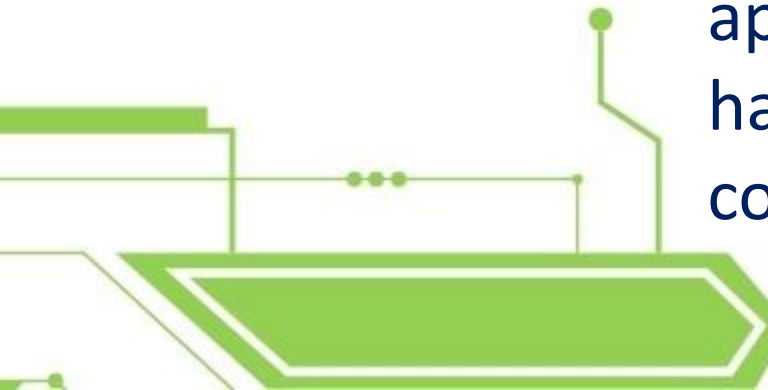
ESG requirements linked to digitalisation

Part II – External QA

II.1 Consideration of internal QA - External QA takes into account the effectiveness of the internal QA processes.

II.6 Reporting - Reports should be published, clear, accessible to the public and include the formal decisions.

II.7 Complaints and appeals – Agencies should have processes to handle complaints and appeals.



Part III – QA Agencies

III.5 Resources – Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

III.6 Internal QA and professional conduct – Agencies should have internal quality assurance systems that are effective and publicly available.

Informatic system dedicated to managing external assessment

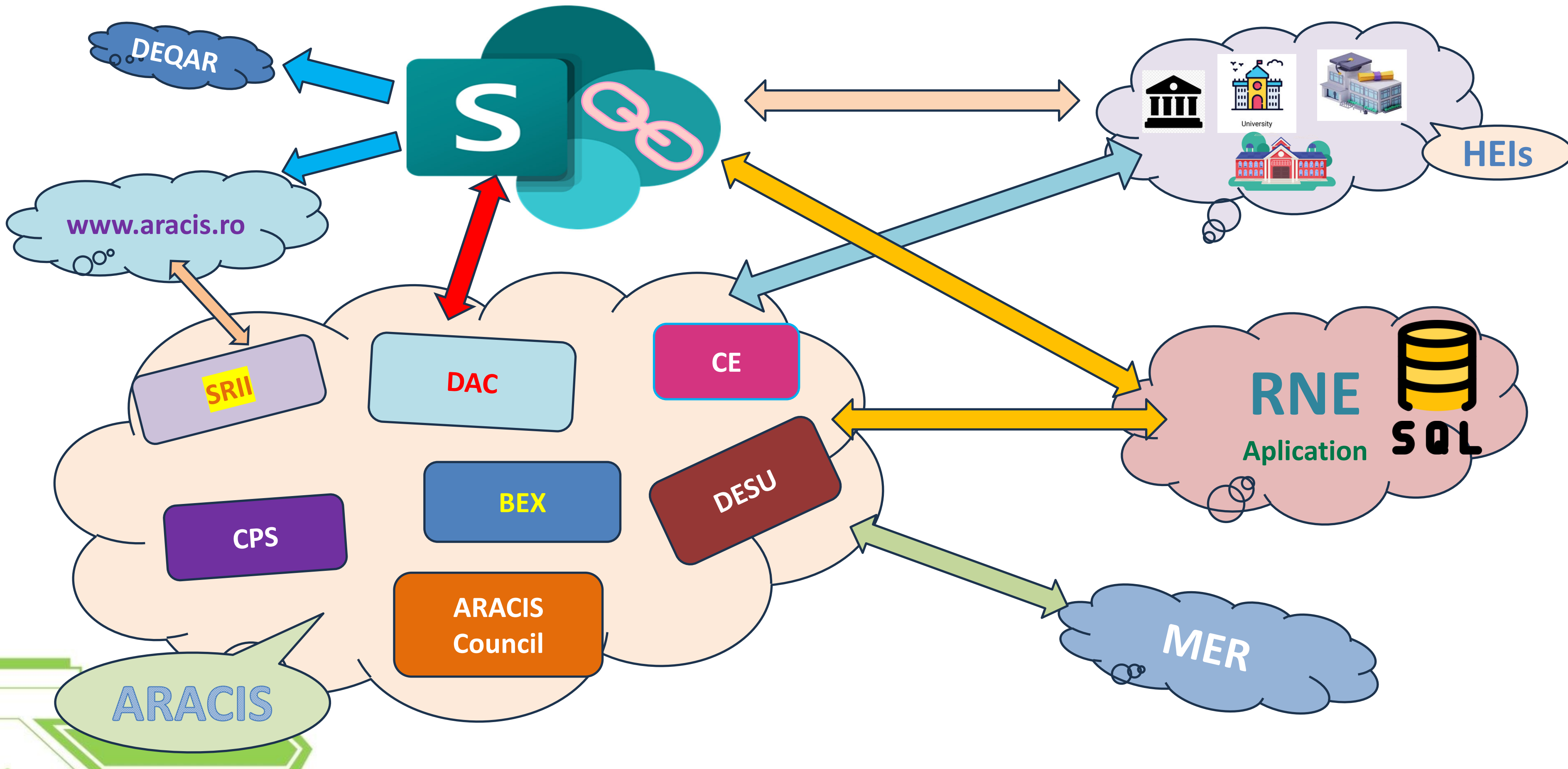
- **Standardization of evaluation tools:** The system should include standardized evaluation tools (templates, forms, guides) that ensure uniformity and objectivity of the evaluation process and collaborative work.
- **Workflow automation:** The system should allow for the digital management of all stages of the evaluation process, from the submission of self-evaluation documents by the HEI to the drafting of external evaluation reports.
- **Transparent data management:** The system should allow for the secure storage and management of data collected during assessments, ensuring transparency and traceability of the assessment process.
- **Online accessibility:** The system should be accessible online, from any device with an internet connection, for both educational institutions and evaluators, as well as for the interested public.
- **Publication of evaluation reports:** The system should allow the publication of external assessment reports, ensuring transparency of the process and providing relevant information for students, employers and other stakeholders. Automatic transfer to external master data (DEQAR).

Informatic system dedicated to managing external assessment

Why did ARACIS choose a solution created by Microsoft?

- **Easy to use:** The platform interface should be intuitive and easy to navigate, to facilitate use by all parties involved
- **Security:** The platform should ensure the protection of personal data and sensitive information by implementing appropriate security measures
- **Scalable:** The platform should be designed to handle a large volume of data and a large number of users as the assessment system grows.

Who are the actors involved in the external assessment?



Portal of an assessment

It is automatically generated based on the data in the application to start the external assessment.

HEIs access to ARACIS's SP is based on credentials and a link

Portal Evaluare
.....

IIS – Doc.
Suplimentare

IIS – PSU

Documente
Administrative

Comisia de
evaluare (CE)

Comisia Permanentă
de Specialitate(CPS)

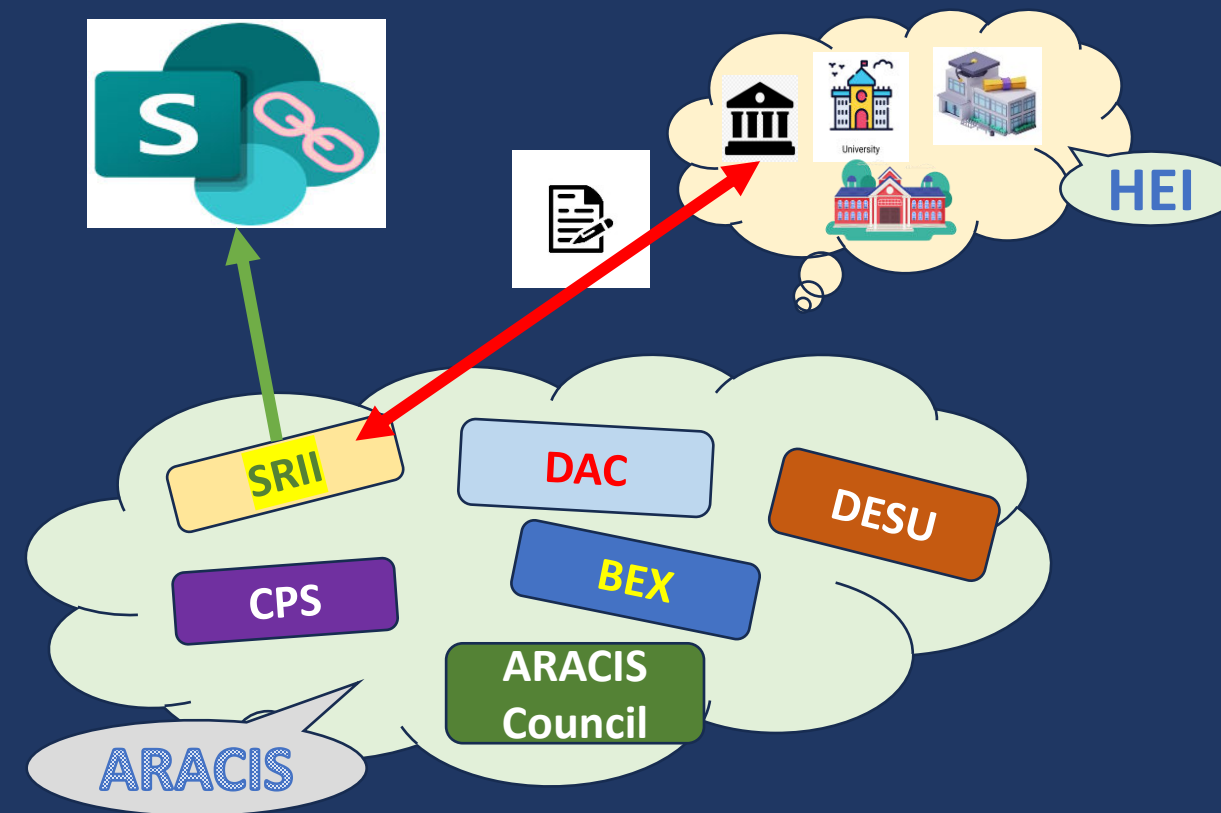
DESU

Consiliul ARACIS



Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

- **Step 1.** The requesting HEIs submits to ARACIS an application to initiate the external quality assessment procedure.
- **Step 2.** The Institutional Relations and Informatization Service (SRII) verifies, together with Department for Quality Assurance (DAC), the eligibility of the request and registers it with ARACIS.

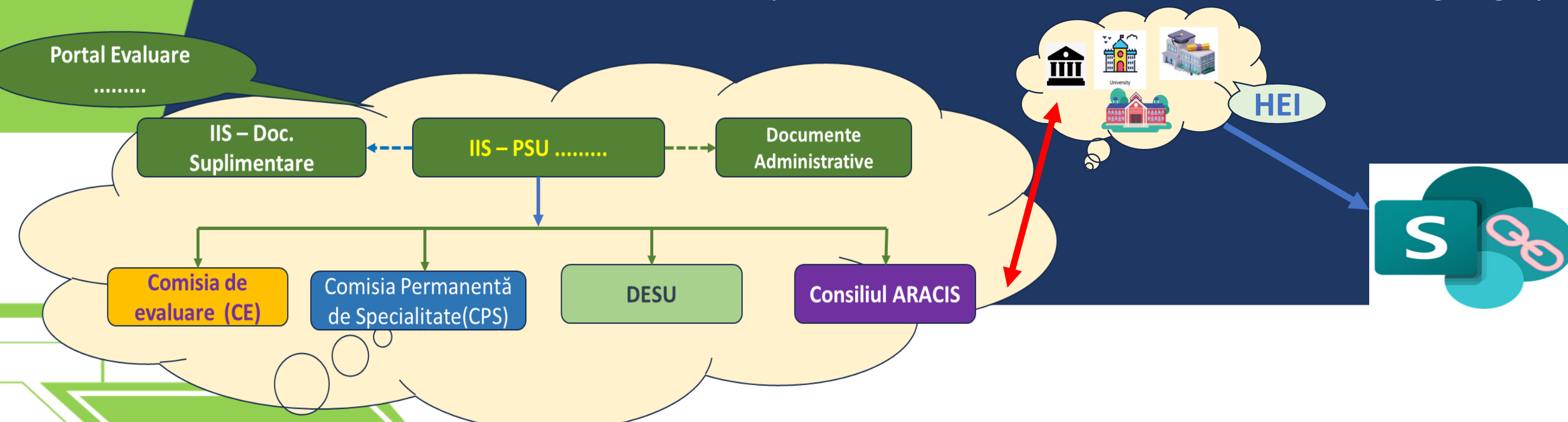


Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

Step 3. SRII generates in the SharePoint platform (SP) the group of folders intended for external assessment based on the data presented in the application. Each application will have in SP a group of folders grouped in a site.

Step 4. SRII informs the HEI contact person by e-mail of the acceptance of the application and sends them:

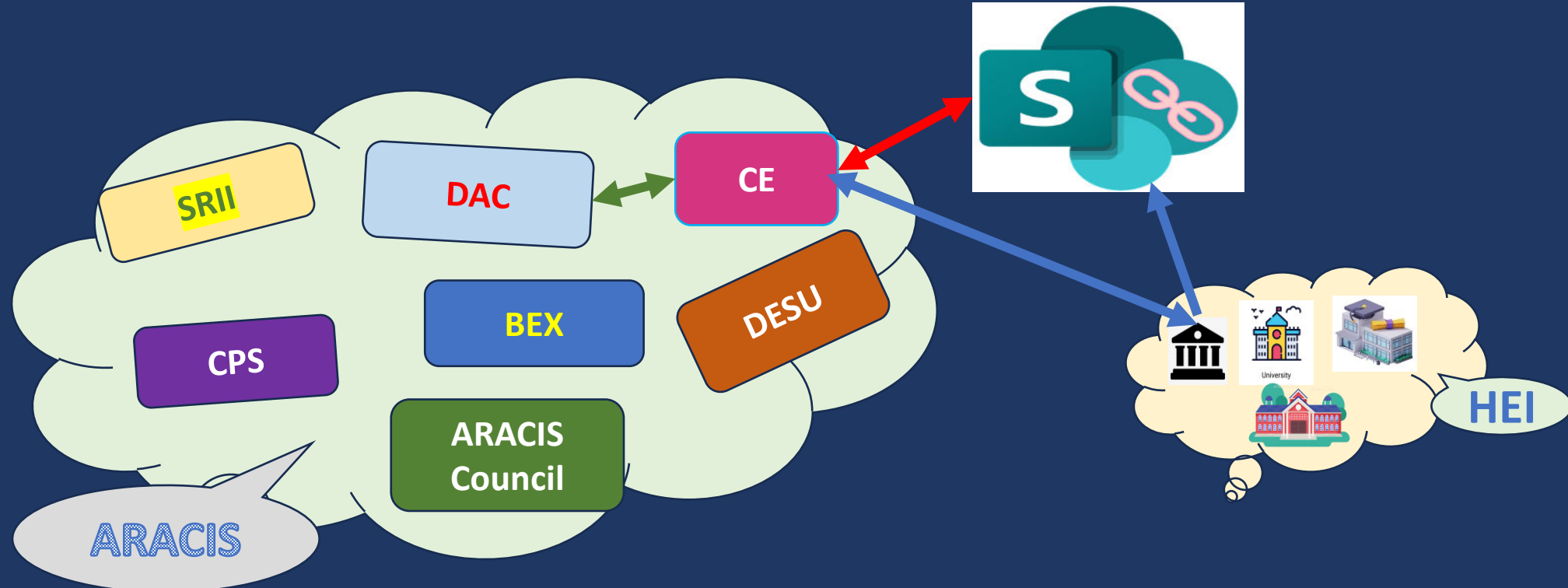
- the institutional access credentials of HEI in SP – ARACIS - only once, at the first request – OK
- the access link to the folder where the Self assessment report (SAR) will be uploaded, prepared according to the template
- requests HEI that the SAR be uploaded to the HEI Folder – evaluated program upon acceptance of the application.
- the HEI contact person will inform SRII by e-mail about the upload of all evaluation documents
- the civil contract for the provision of external evaluation services - for signing by university officials



Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

Step 5. ARACIS permanent employees evaluate the SAR form within 15 days. If it does not comply with ARACIS requirements, the HEI has 5 days to re-execute the SAR form.

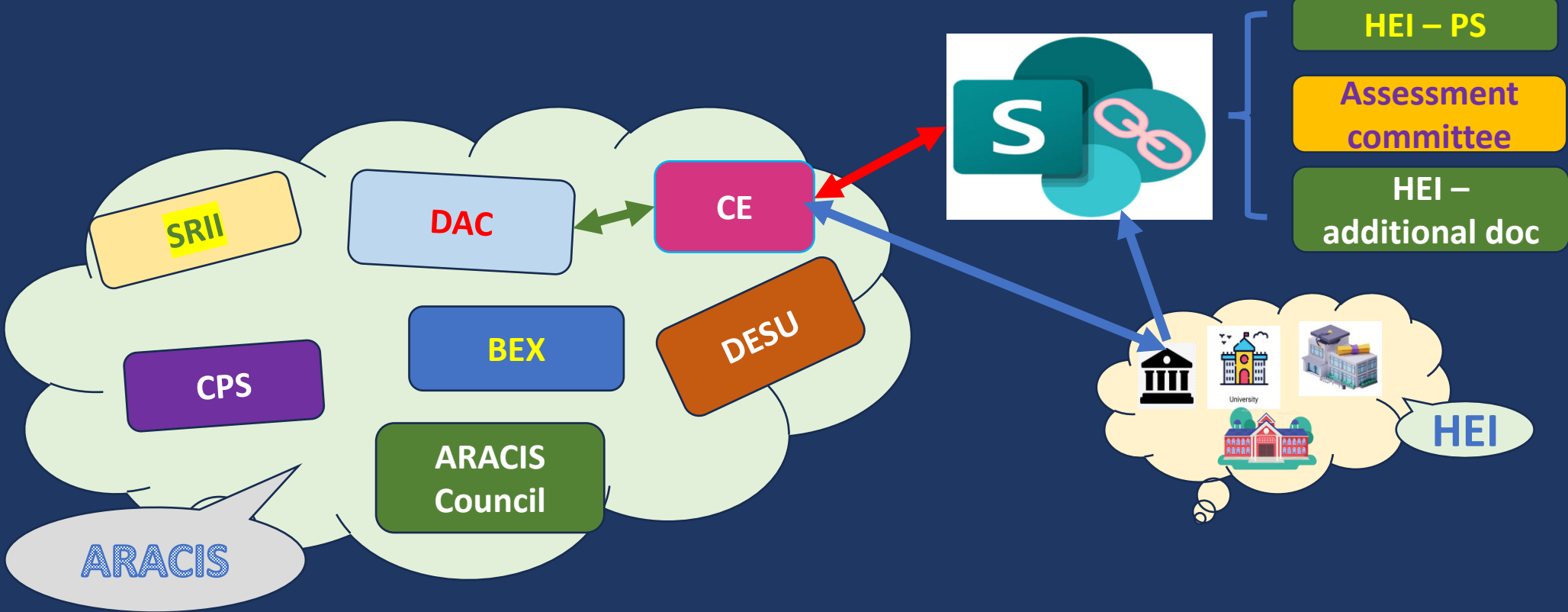
Step 6. If the SAR is in order, the HEI must send the contract within 7 days.



Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

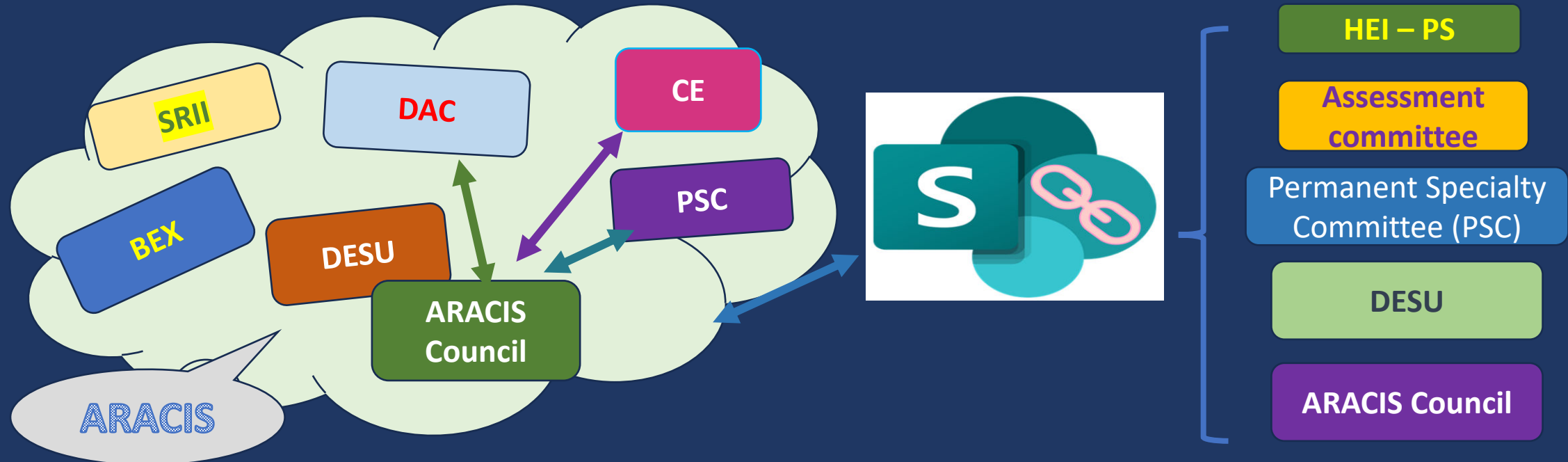
Step 7. An assessment committee is appointed and receives access to the SAR and may request additional information from the HEI. If he does not need additional documents, he sets up an on-site visit and does it.

Step 8. After the visit, the assessment committee drafts the external assessment report (EAR) and informs HEI that the draft EAR is posted on the platform.



Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

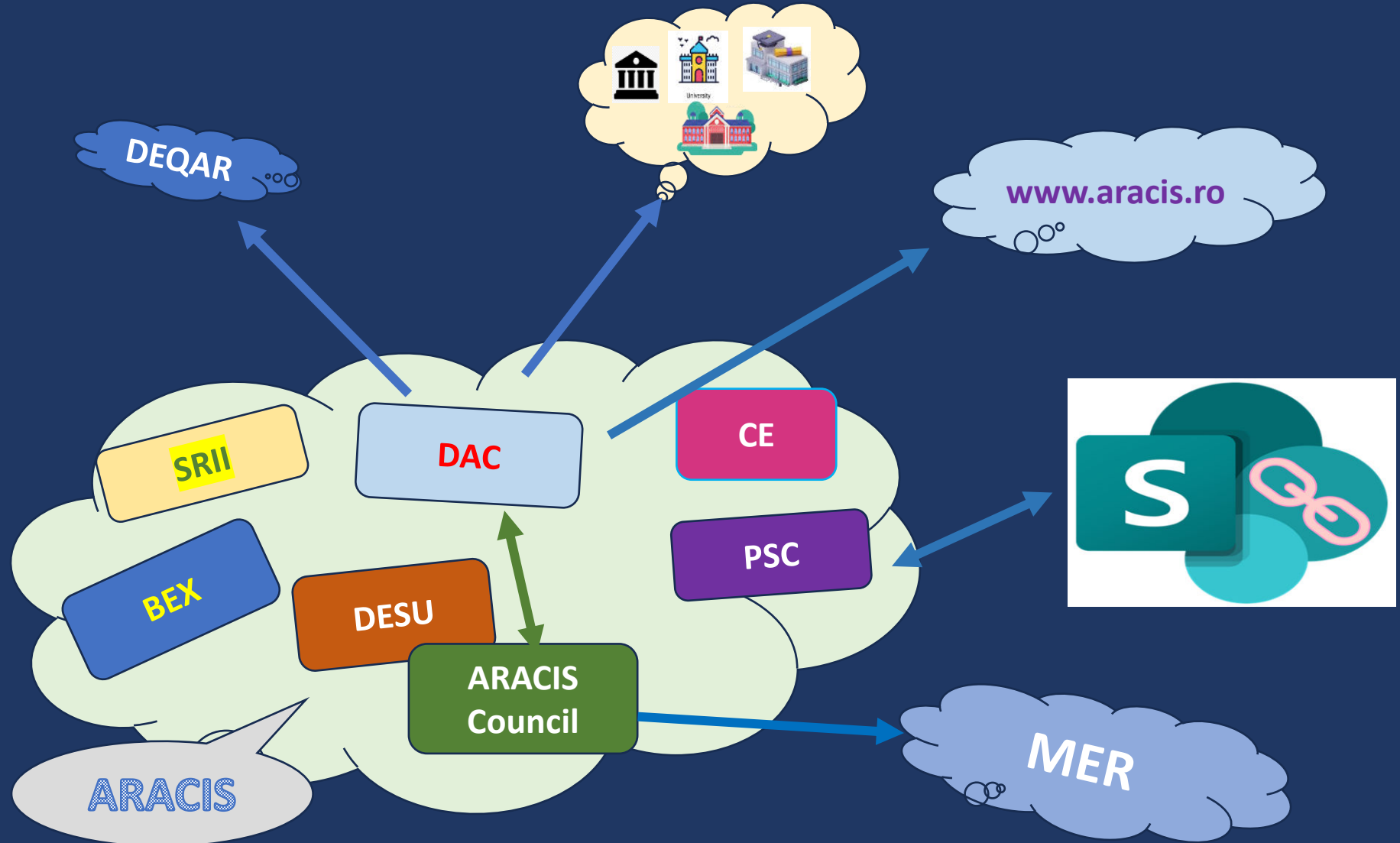
Step 9. The EAR is presented to the internal structures of ARACIS by one of the members of the external assessment committee, until it reaches the ARACIS Council



Steps of the external quality assessment procedure

Step 10. The Council decision is communicated to the HEIs and the Ministry of Education and Research

Publication: on the ARACIS webiste and DEQAR



What's next?

- By the end of this year, a new UI will be developed, and its implementation will take place in the first part of next year;
- A team of external experts is working on creating an AI agent to support permanent employees for the first SER verification.



What was the IMINQA project?

Implementation and Innovation in QA through peer learning (IMINQA)

IMINQA was an umbrella project, developed to support the work of the Thematic Peer Group C on Quality Assurance (TPG C on QA) created by the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) in the period 2021-2024.

TPG-C (2021 – 2024) had 3 co-chairs: Belgium/Flemish Community, Romania and Kazakhstan

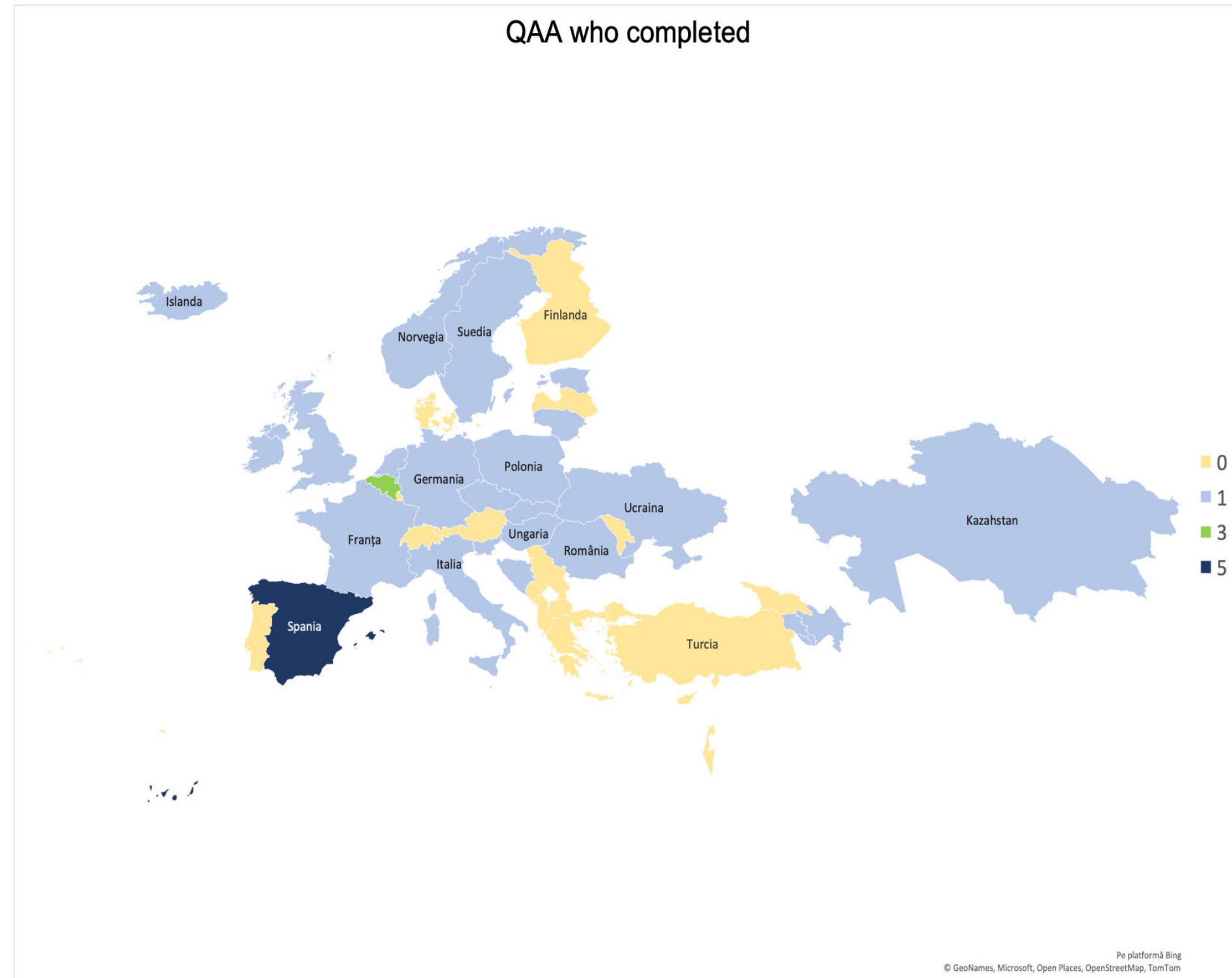
IMINQA was coordinated by Ministry of Education and Training (BE/FL)

Partners: ARACIS (RO), ENQA, EQAR

Experts: Third co-chair (KZ) involved as expert

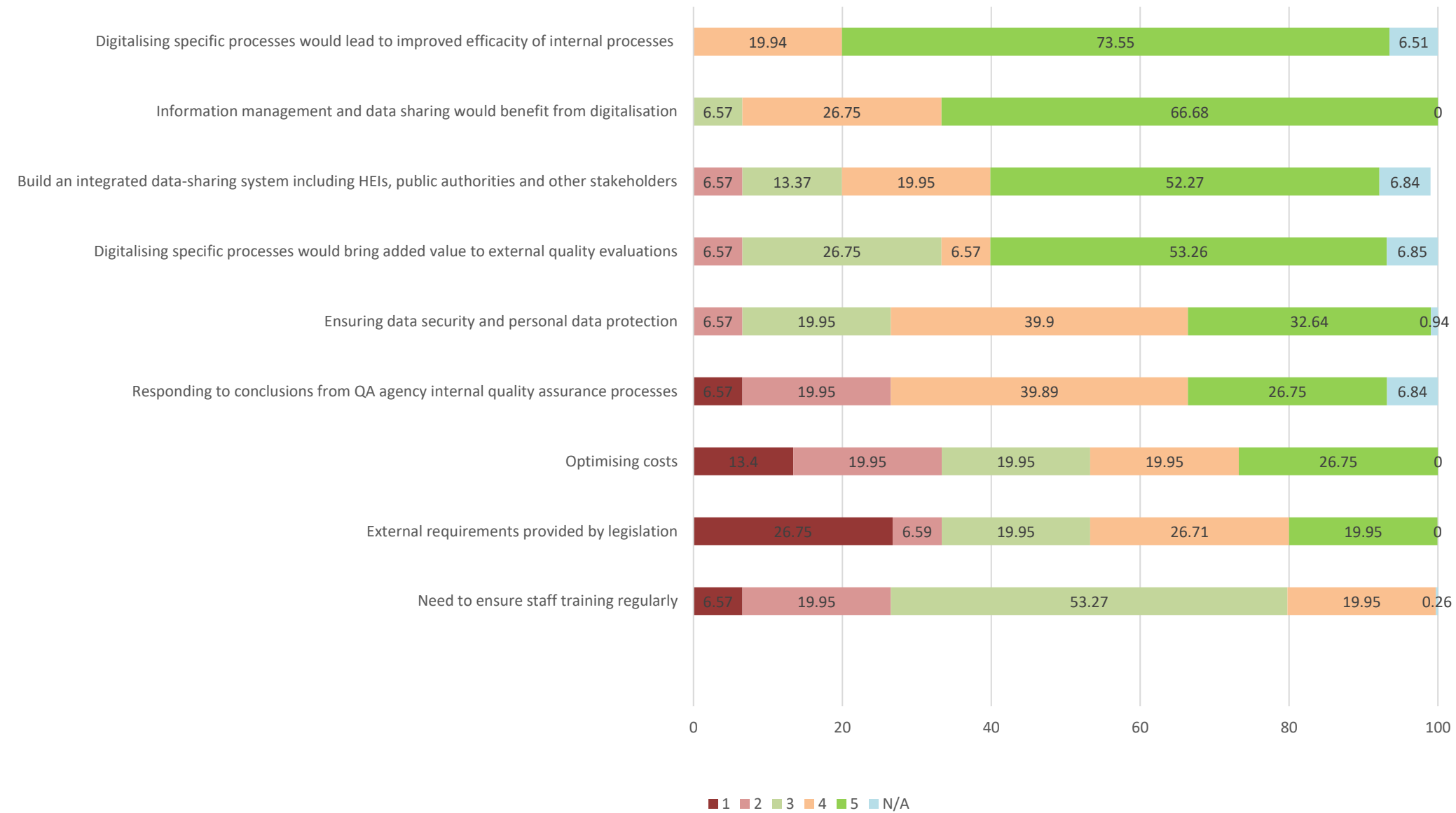
Has QAA implemented a strategic plan regarding digitalisation?

- 43.75% of the responding QAAs have adopted a strategic plan on digitalisation
 - 2 have a strategic plan for Agency's internal processes
 - 1 for Agency's internal processes EQA procedures also targeted but not yet implemented
 - 11 have for both internal and EQA processes
- 18 QAAs have no strategic plan



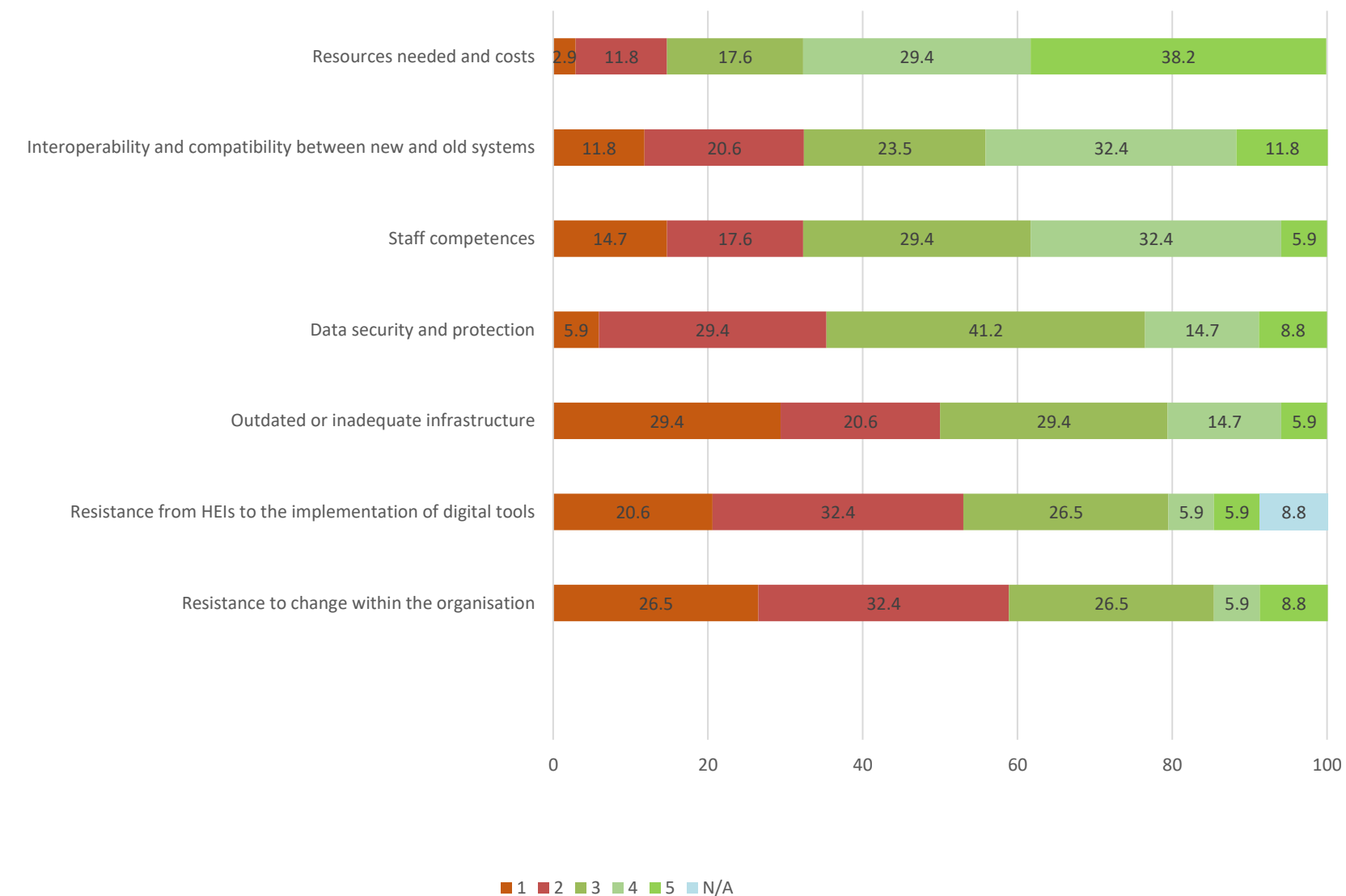
Factors in the development of strategic digital transformation plans

- Digitalising specific processes to improve internal efficiency was considered highly important
- Information management and data sharing were also prioritized
- Cost optimisation and compliance with legislative requirements were important but not central factors



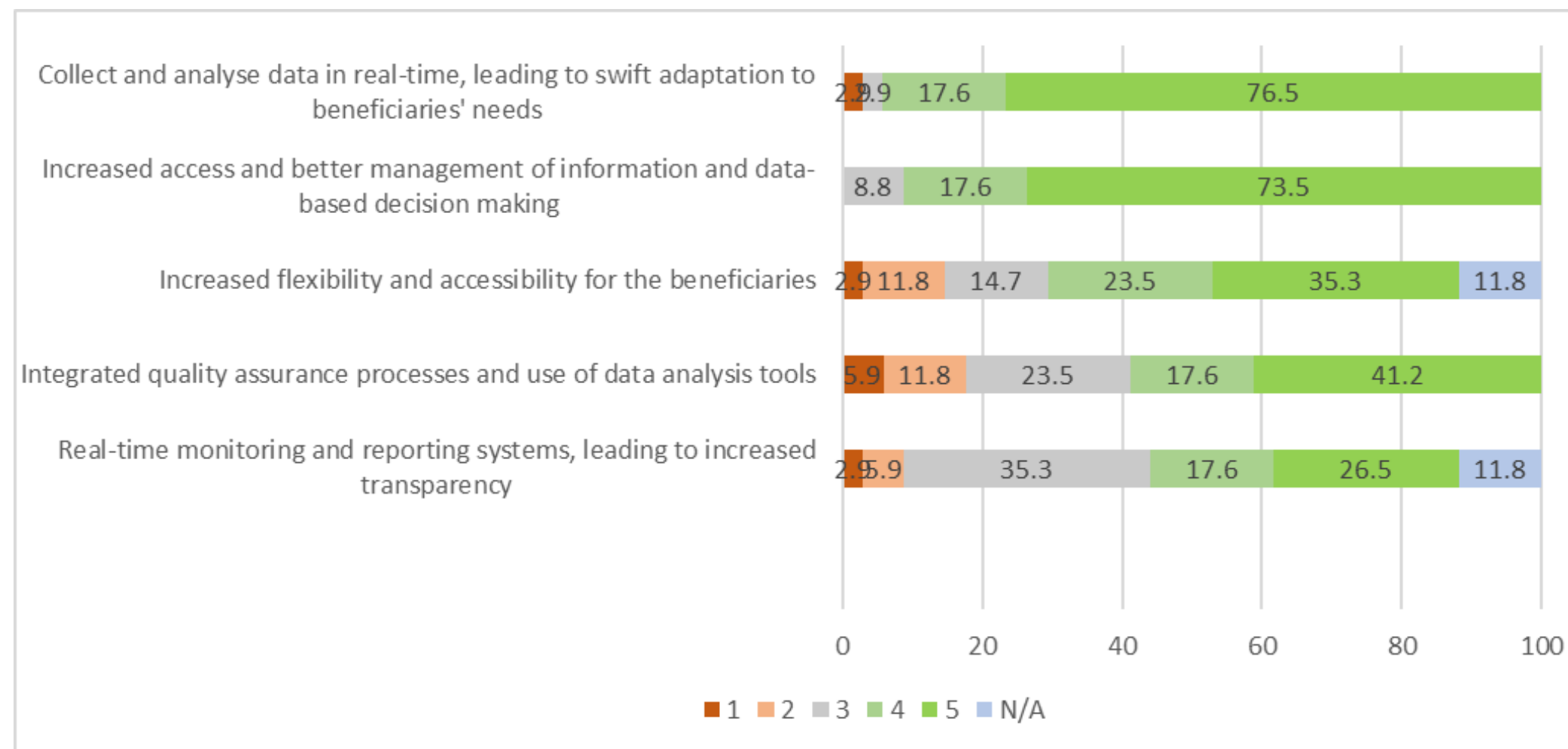
Challenges in designing and implementing the digital tool

- The resources required and associated costs were considered the biggest challenge;
- Staff competences were also seen as a significant obstacle;
- Outdated or inadequate infrastructure was not seen as a major impediment.



Main benefits of using digital tools in external quality assurance processes

- Real-time data collection and analysis were recognised as crucial;
- Better management of information along with data-based decision making, were identified as significant advantages;
- Real-time monitoring and reporting, leading to increased transparency, were also seen as important advantages



For more details





**Thank
You**

