



Co-funded by
the European Union

ROQA TNE

Robust Quality Assurance of Transnational Education

Findings of ROQA- TNE survey

5th TPG B on LRC meeting

Online – 7 October 2026

Elena Cirlan, Senior Policy and Project Coordinator, ENQA

ROQA-TNE project

Introduction

Robust Quality Assurance of Transnational Education (ROQA-TNE)

- Funding: ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EHEA-NARIC - transnational cooperation projects
- Period: 1 October 2025 – 30 September 2028 (36 months)
- Consortium: ENQA – the project coordinator, QAA (the UK), ANVUR (Italy), ACQUIN (Germany)



ROQA-TNE project

Main aims

Promote more robust and transparent quality assurance of transnational education delivered worldwide, in line with the ESG, to protect the interests of students.

Focus on TNE delivered by sending institutions in the EHEA to receiving countries outside the EHEA

The project will:

- explore the use and applicability of the ESG in this specific context
- enhance the transparent quality assurance (QA) of TNE
 - creating a better understanding of the state of play
 - supporting national authorities and quality assurance agencies in improving their policies and practices

Introduction

Defining TNE

Survey definition of TNE

Transnational education is any learning activity in which the students are mainly based in a country different from that in which the institution providing the education is located

Online/distance education (?)

Education is moving

Scope of the project →
**outgoing TNE outside
of the EHEA**

Learning mobility

Learning mobility refers to the physical movement of the student to a country other than the country of residence for part or all of a programme of study. It may also take the form of traineeships, apprenticeships or youth exchanges as long as they are embedded in higher education programmes. [...] (WG I&M draft 2025)

Student is moving

**Not automatically
TNE**

Cross-border QA

CBQA is the external QA activities of a QA agency carried out in a country other than the one in which it is based or primarily operates. For higher education institutions, this may be a voluntary process or part of the national mandatory external QA (ENQA, 2017).

QA activities
are moving

Not TNE

Introduction

Policy context

Globally

- UNESCO/OECD Guidelines 2005
- Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001, 2007, 2025)

EHEA

- Ministerial Communiqués: London, Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Rome, Tirana
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)

- Lisbon Recognition Convention & UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education

- UNESCO/ Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Toolkit: Regulating the Quality of Cross-Border Education

- Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education (QACHE) toolkit

Introduction

Methodology

- **Two surveys addressed to:**

- National authorities responsible for higher Education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- Quality assurance agencies

The survey to ministries received 40 valid responses, covering 40 EHEA members (80%), while the survey to quality assurance agencies yielded 38 responses covering 32 EHEA members (65%)

- **Two PLAs:**

- 32 participants representing 21 QA agencies and 11 ministries

- **International stakeholders' perspective**

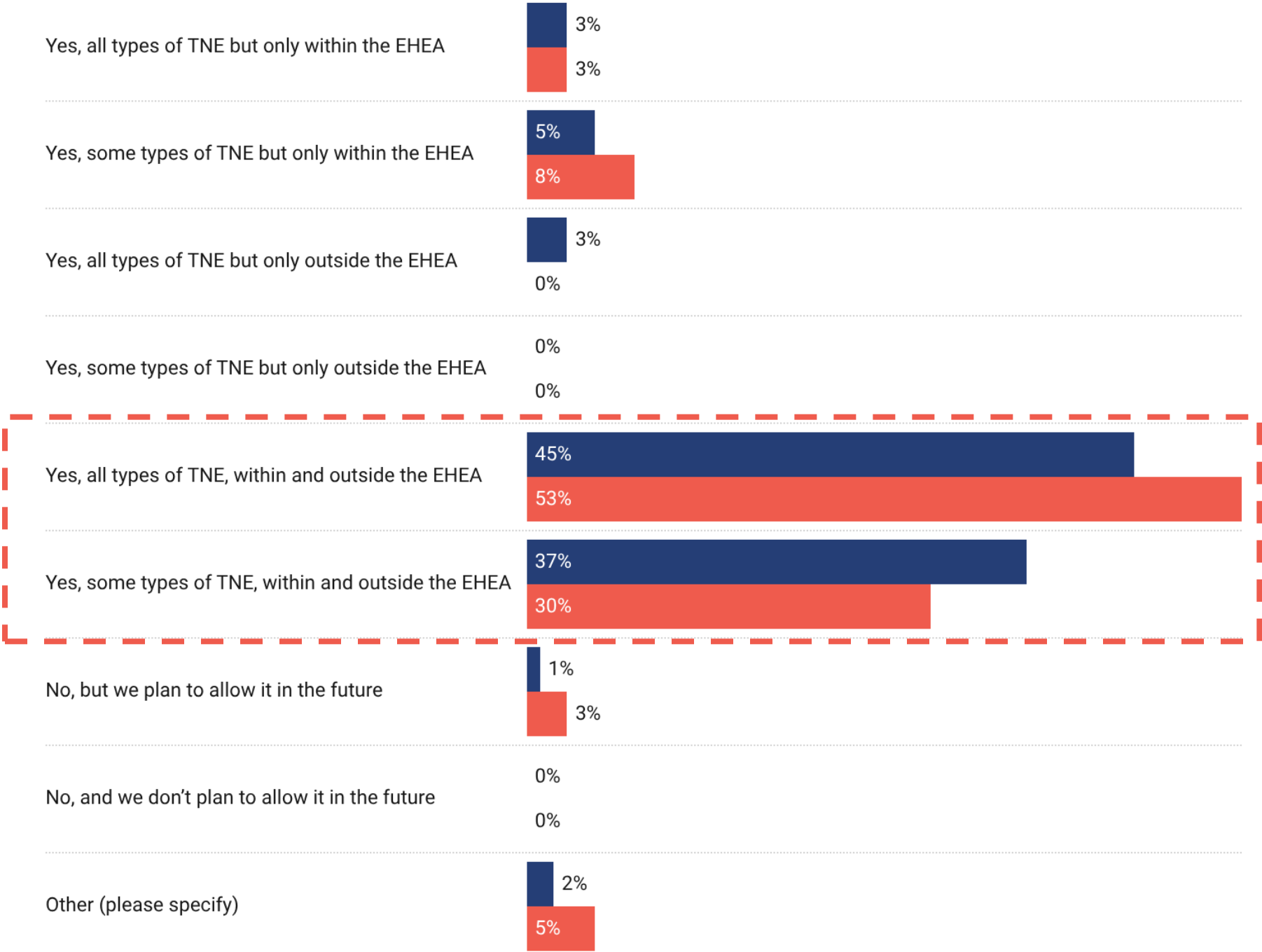
- **Four case examples**

Current situation

Status of provision

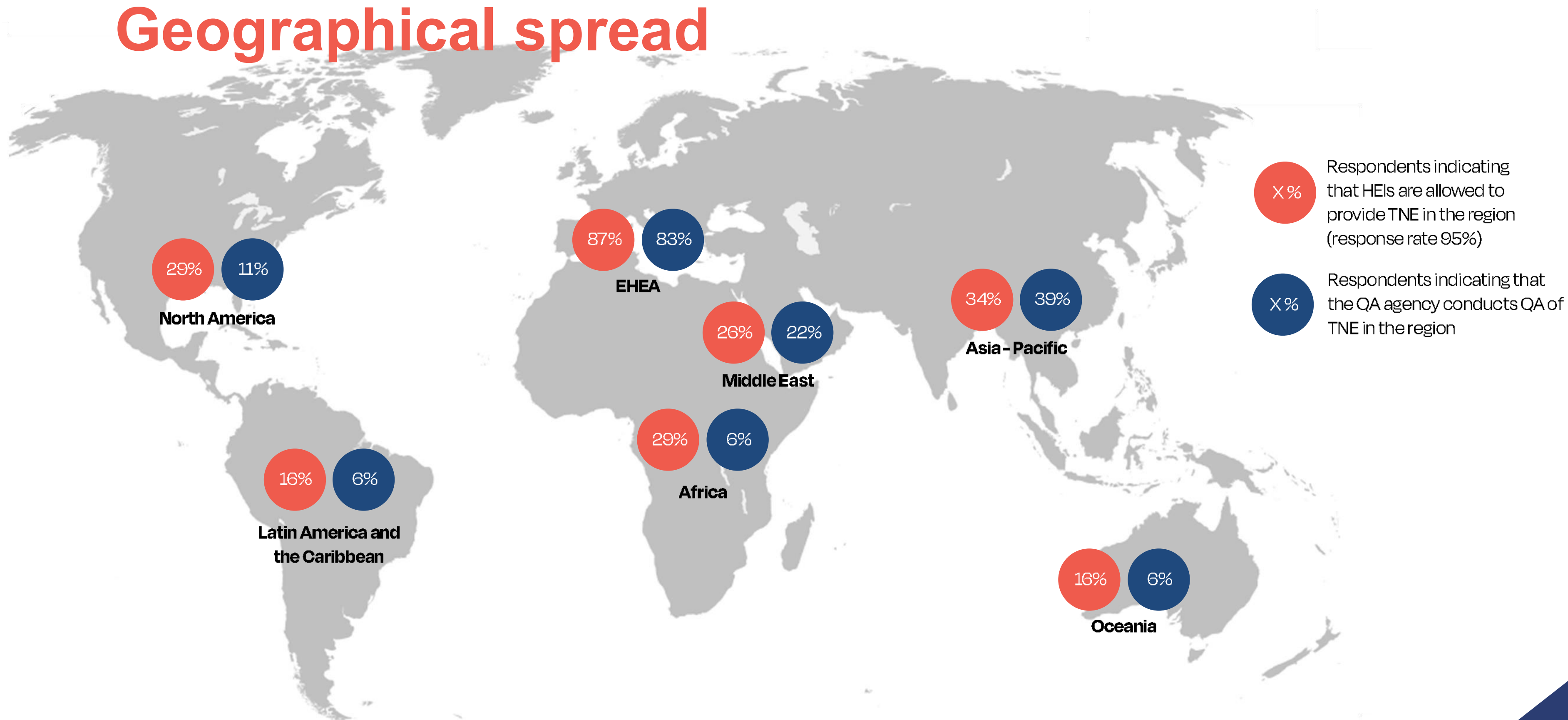
Are HEIs in your system allowed to provide TNE?

■ QA Agencies ■ Ministries



Current situation

Geographical spread

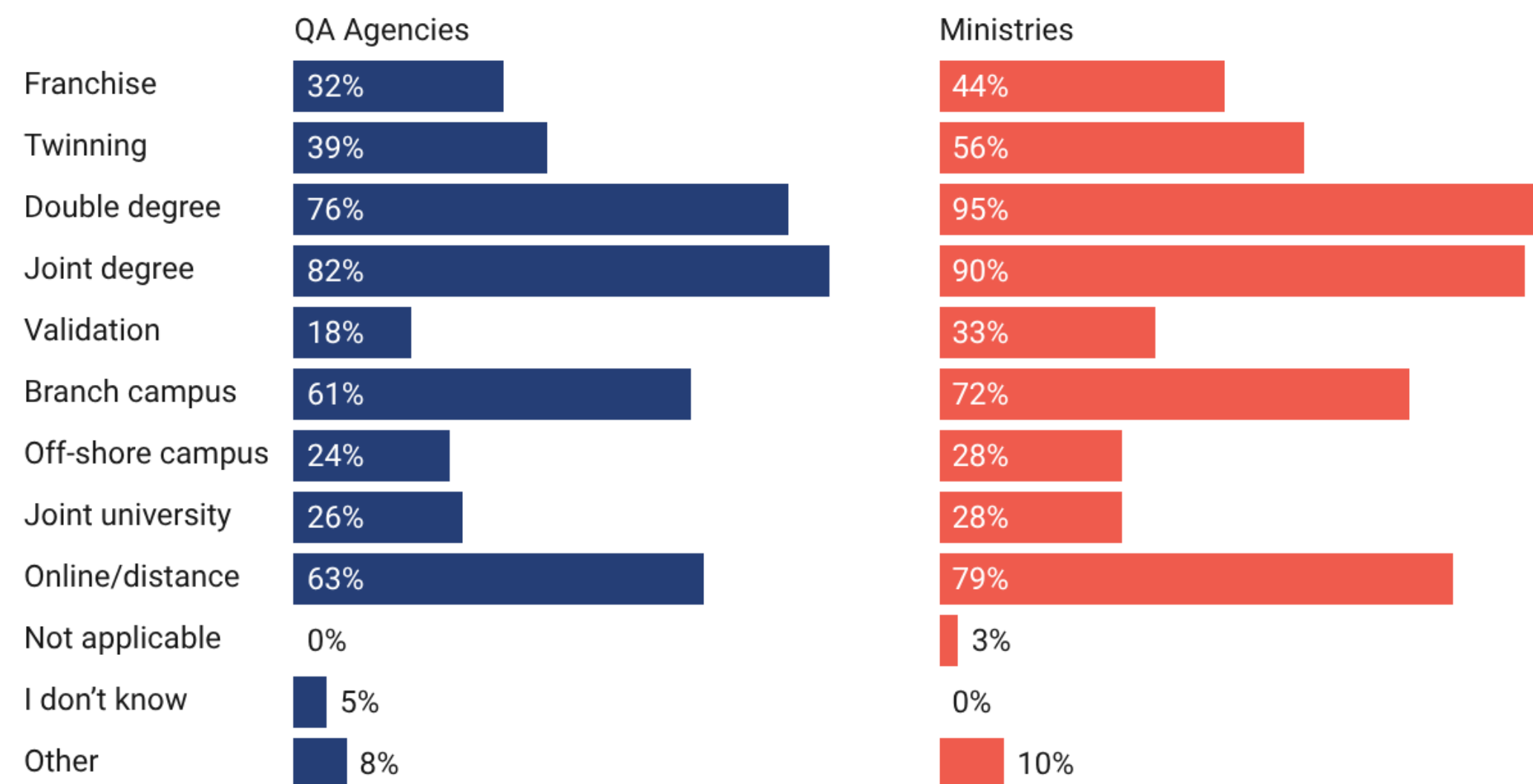


Current situation

Types of TNE allowed

Which types of TNE are HEIs in your system allowed to provide?

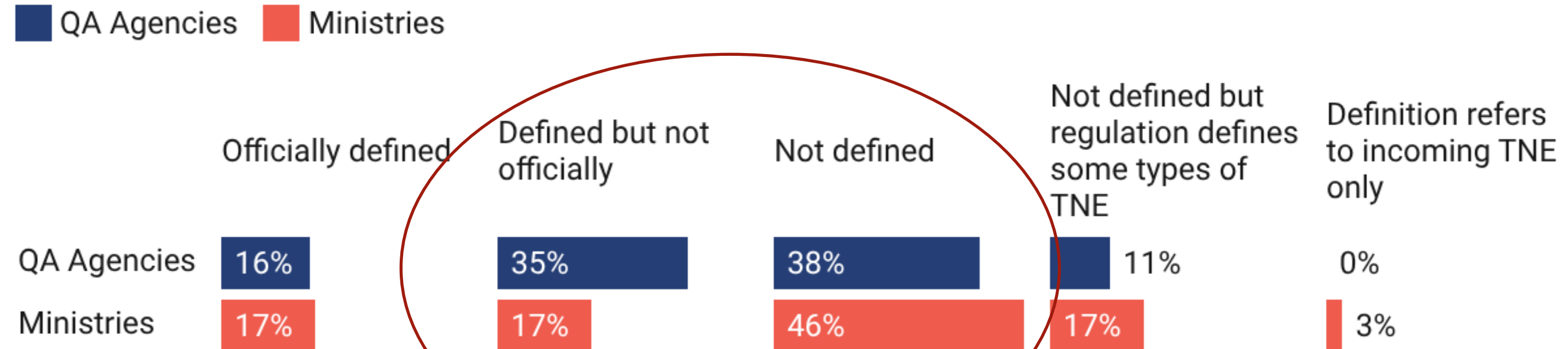
■ QA Agencies ■ Ministries



Current situation

Definitions of TNE

How is TNE defined in your national context?

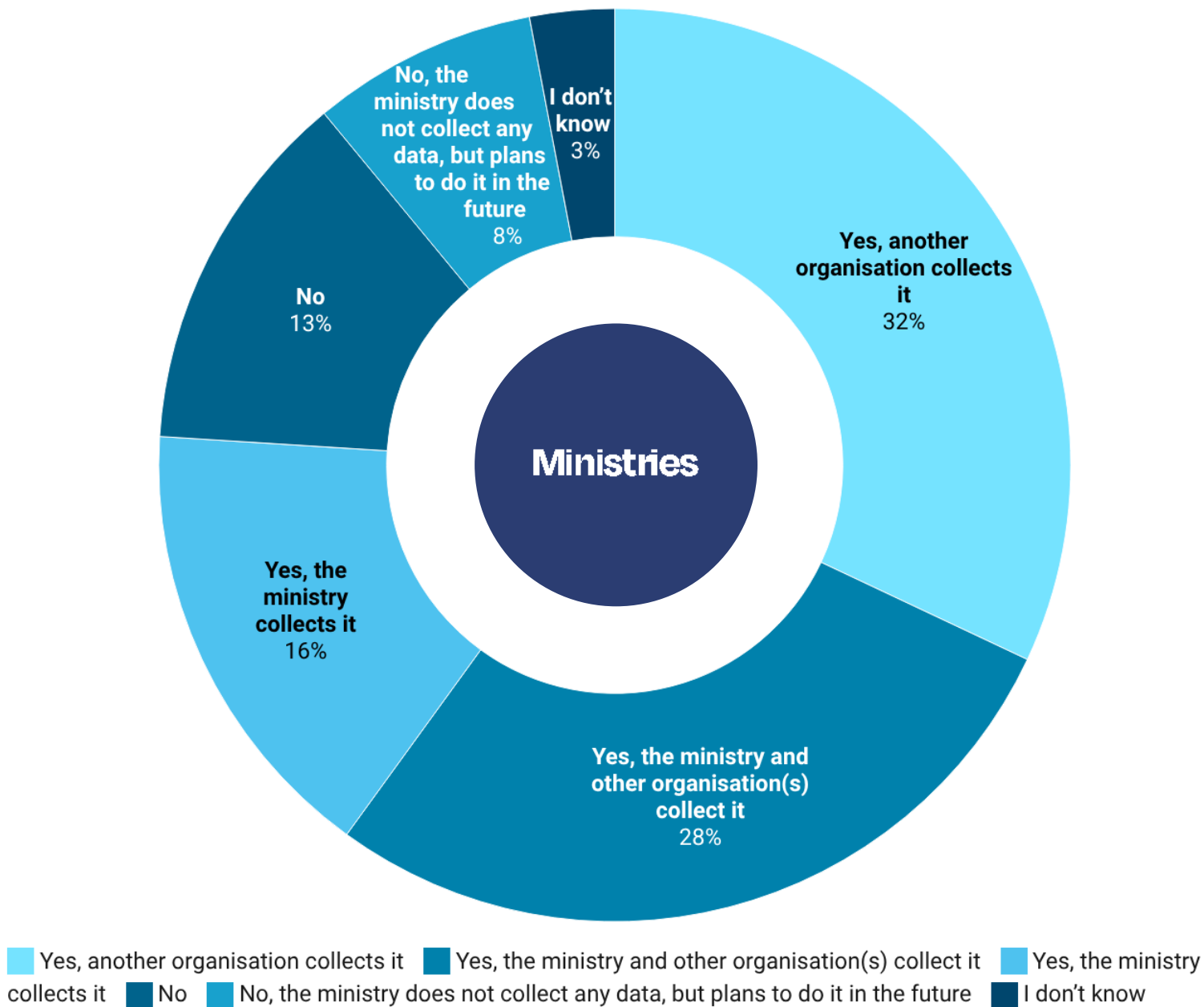


Created with Datawrapper

Current situation

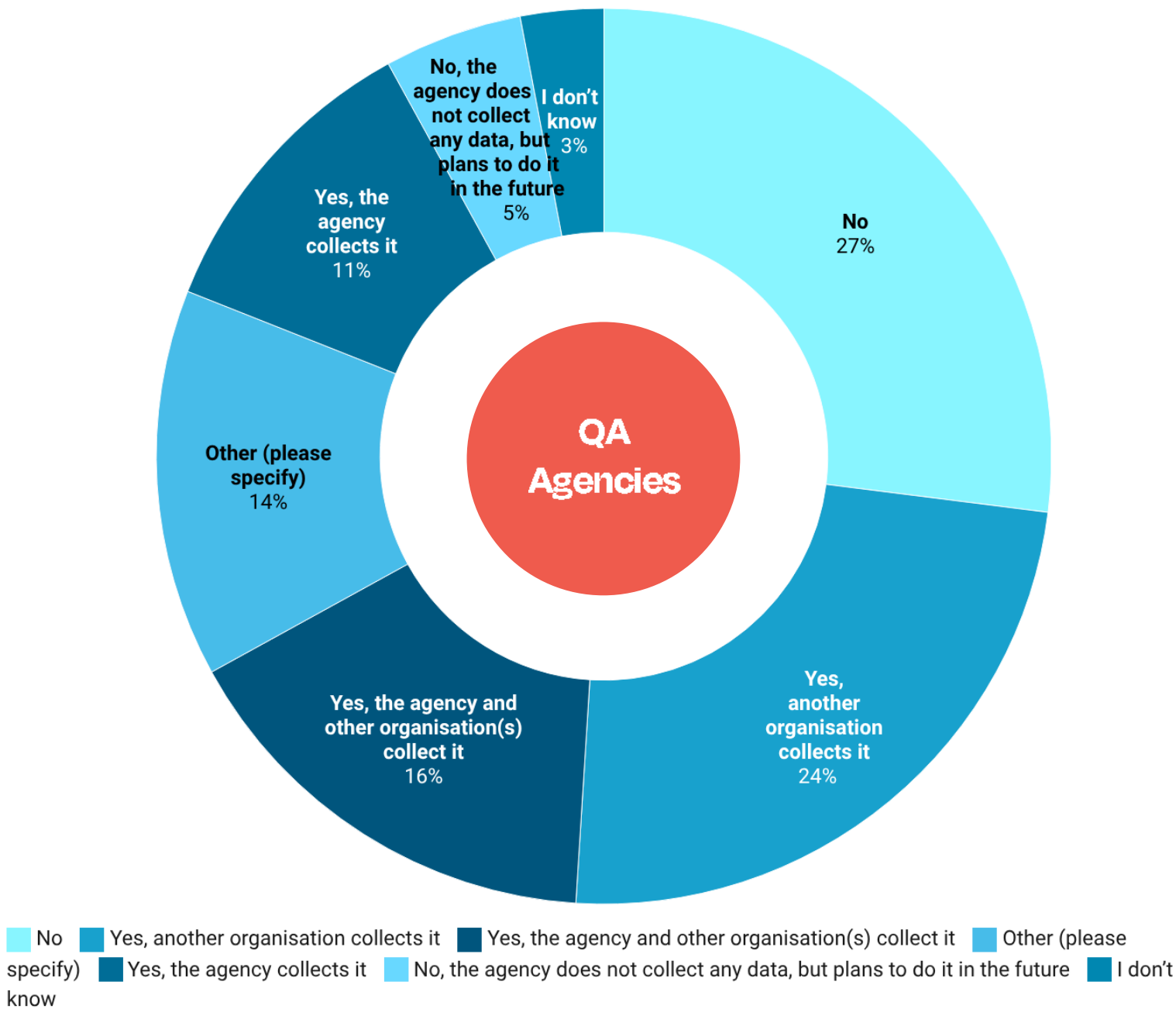
Data collection

Does your ministry or any other organisation in your system collect data regarding TNE?



Created with Datawrapper

Does your agency or any other organisation in your system collect data regarding TNE?



Created with Datawrapper

Policy framework

Approaches to regulation of outgoing TNE

How is outgoing TNE regulated in your national legal framework?

■ QA Agencies ■ Ministries



Created with Datawrapper

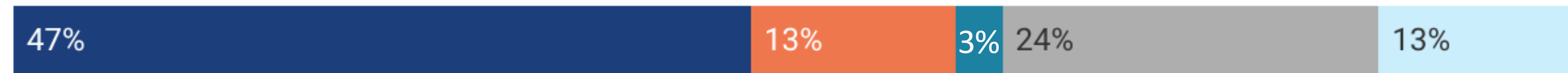
Policy framework

Use of UNESCO/OECD guidelines on cross-border HE

Has your Ministry/Agency used the UNESCO/OECD guidelines on cross-border higher education?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not aware of ■ I don't know ■ Other

Ministries



QA Agencies



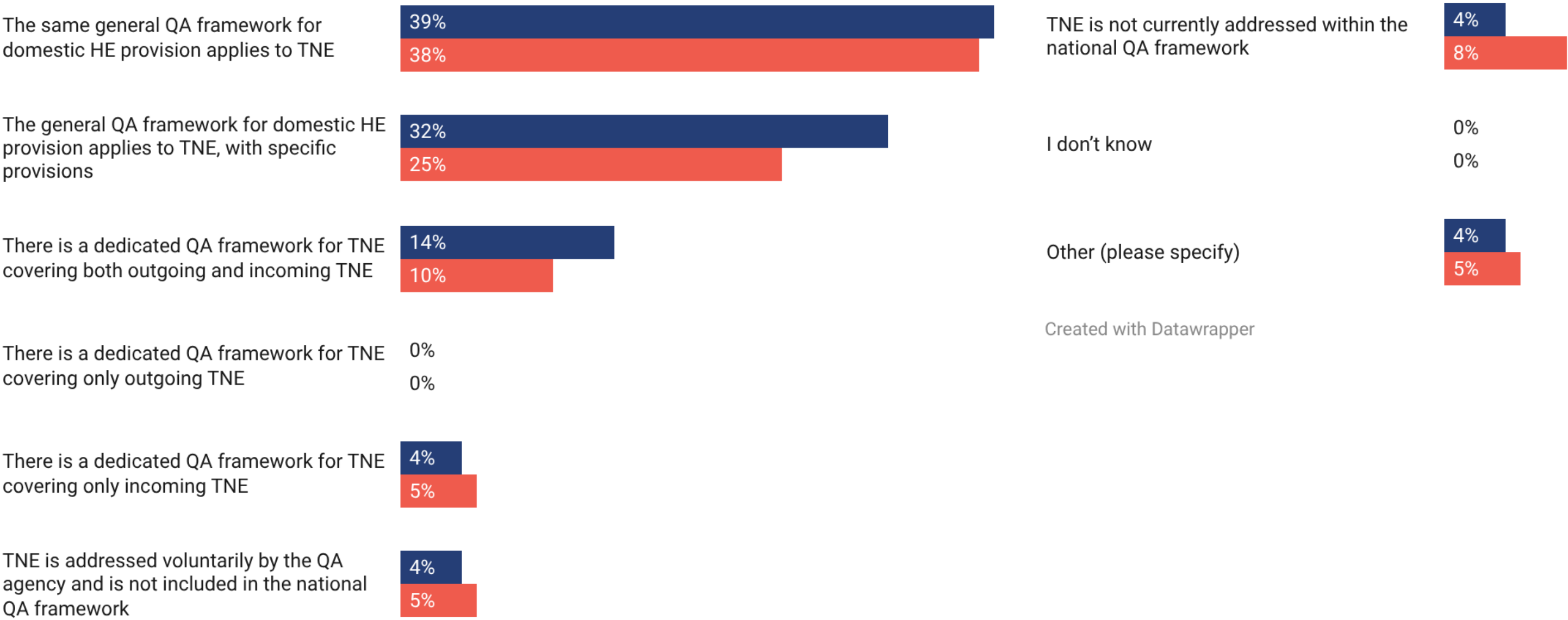
Created with Datawrapper

Policy framework

Inclusion of TNE in the QA framework

How is QA of TNE addressed in your QA framework at national and/or agency levels?

■ QA Agencies ■ Ministries



Created with Datawrapper

Implementation of QA of TNE

Standards and methodologies

Standards

- 91% of respondents use the **same standards/criteria for evaluation of TNE** as for domestic higher education.
- 55% have introduced **specific adjustments** for outgoing TNE

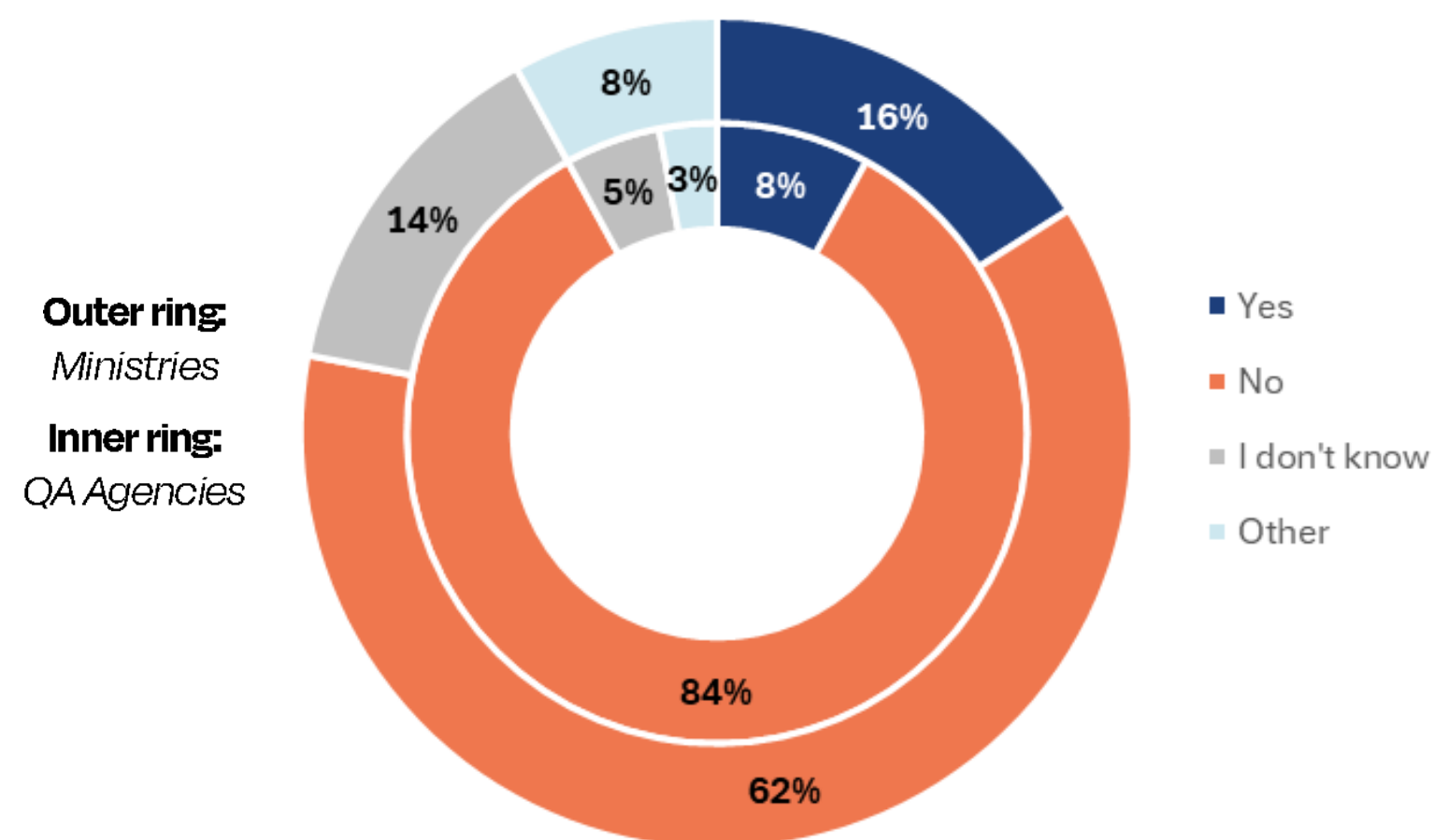
Methodologies

- 59% of respondents flagged that there are **no major differences** in the methodologies
- For those cases in which there are differences these concern:
 - Panel composition
 - Review experts' training
 - Selection/recruitment of review experts
 - Site visit

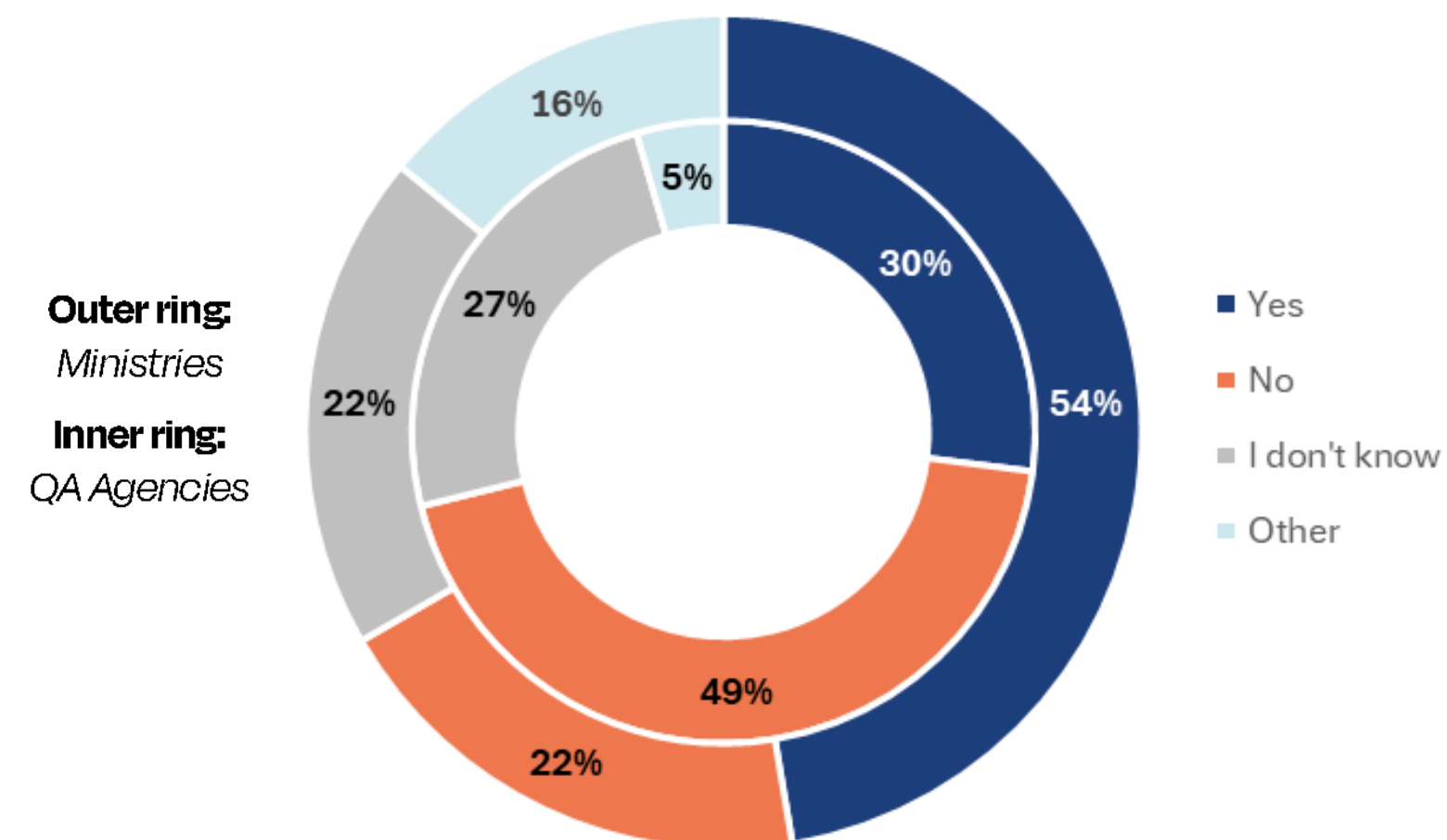
Cooperation

Agreements with parties based outside the EHEA

Cooperation agreements (MoU, bilateral cooperation agreements)



Recognition agreements



Implementation of QA of TNE

Challenges in implementing external QA of TNE

- 1 Differences in regulatory frameworks between countries
- 2 Difficulty of gathering reliable information about the local higher education context
- 3 Difficulty of ensuring consistent application of standards across borders
- 4 Legal or contractual constraints
- 5 Limited staff capacity

Conclusions

1

Development of TNE across the EHEA is uneven and, in several countries, still at an early stage

2

Lack of definition of TNE might impact data collection, policy and regulations and subsequent quality assurance arrangements

3

TNE is generally subject to the same legal framework as domestic higher education, with most systems addressing TNE indirectly through broader internationalisation provisions

4

Agencies generally employ the same standards and methodologies for transnational education (TNE) as those used for domestic higher education

5

No single model for allocation of tasks and responsibilities when conducting QA of TNE. Cooperation follows an ad-hoc approach

6

Support for opportunities for peer-learning and sharing of good practices

Thank you!



Co-funded by
the European Union