



Latvia

This report describes the structure of the national higher education system in Latvia, focusing on the institutional types as defined by national categories. It builds on the Eurydice report on the national higher education system but complements it with quantitative information on the role of higher education institution (HEI) types in national systems, based on data derived from the European Tertiary Education Register (<http://www.eter-project.eu>) for the period 2011-2019.

Types of Higher Education Institutions

According to Eurydice¹, in Latvia, tertiary education programmes are provided by:

- University type institutions of Higher education (augstskola),
- Non-university type institutions of augstskola (includes State institution of higher education and juridical persons established institution of higher education)
- Koledža (College)

The Law on Higher Education Institutions makes distinction between university-type and non-university-type institutions. While non-university-type institutions run professional programmes, universities often offer both academic and professional programmes. The law defines four determining criteria for a university status:

- implementation of bachelor, master and doctor study programmes; assertion of doctoral thesis occurs annually,
- at least half of persons elected in academic posts hold a doctor's degree,
- institution issues scientific publications and
- establishes scientific institutions or units in the main scientific disciplines corresponding to the implemented study programmes.

Koledža may function under higher educational institution and also as an independent institution. State Colleges provide first-level higher professional education considered as the first phase of the second-level professional higher education programmes offered by a higher education institution. There are public and private (i.e. established by legal persons as defined by the legislation) higher education institutions.

¹ <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/latvia/higher-education>

Main institutional characteristics. Legal status and the right to award a PhD

Table 1 below provides a quantitative overview of the main institutional characteristics by HEI type. State universities (*Valsts universitates tipa augstskola*) are all public institutions and have the right to award PhDs. In total, about 15% of all Latvian HEIs are State Universities and equivalent institutions. State colleges (*Valsts koledža*) account for the majority of all HEIs in Latvia but do not award PhDs. While out of the ten Public non-university type HEIs (*Valsts neuniversitates tipa augstskola*) eight are PhD-awarding, only seven of the ten Private non-university type HEIs (*Juriskas personas dibinata neuniversitates tipa augstskola*) have the right to award PhDs. The four Private colleges (*Juriskas personas dibinata koledža*) are all non PhD awarding.

Table 1. Institutional type and legal status by HEI type, 2019

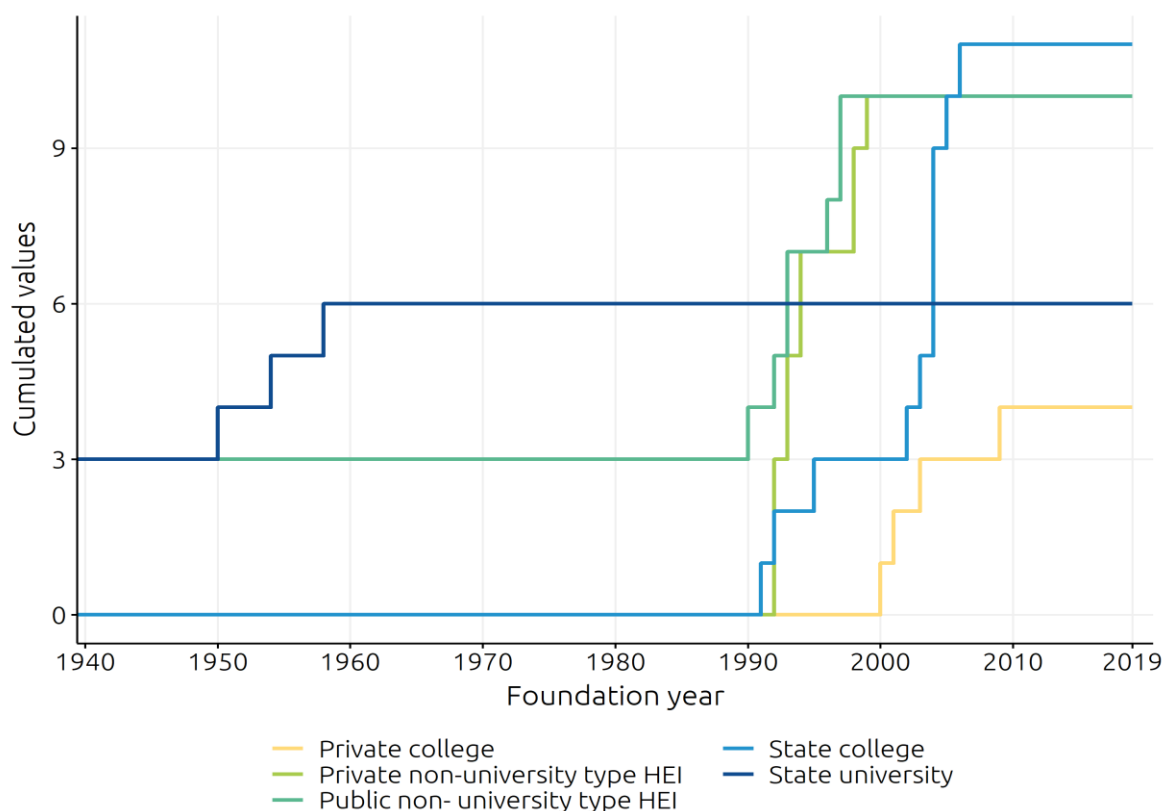
Category		N	Public	Private	PhD awarding
State university	Valsts universitates tipa augstskola	6	6	0	6
State college	Valsts koledža	11	11	0	0
Private college	Juriskas personas dibinata koledža	4	0	4	0
Private non-university type HEI	Juriskas personas dibinata neuniversitates tipa augstskola	10	0	10	7
Public non- university type HEI	Valsts neuniversitates tipa augstskola	10	10	0	8
Total		41	27	14	21

Institutional history. Older and younger institutional types

Data on the HEI foundation year provide information on the history of Latvia's higher education and its evolution over time. Figure 1 overleaf shows that the oldest Latvian HEIs were State universities and Public non-university type HEIs. In more detail, they date back to 1919 when the University of Latvia, the Art Academy of Latvia and the Jazeps Vitols Latvian Academy of Music were founded. In the 1940s there was an equal share of these two types of HEI. However, State universities experienced an increase from three to a total of six institutions in the 1950s. The number of Public non-university type HEIs only increased in the 1990s, when Latvia experienced a large period of expansion. In addition to State

universities and Public non-university type HEIs, State colleges and Private non-university type HEIs were founded in that period of time. Moreover, Private colleges were established starting in 2000. Until 2010, the number of these newly founded HEIs increased steadily. Since then the number of HEIs in Latvia has been stable.

Figure 1. Foundation year of HEIs by type

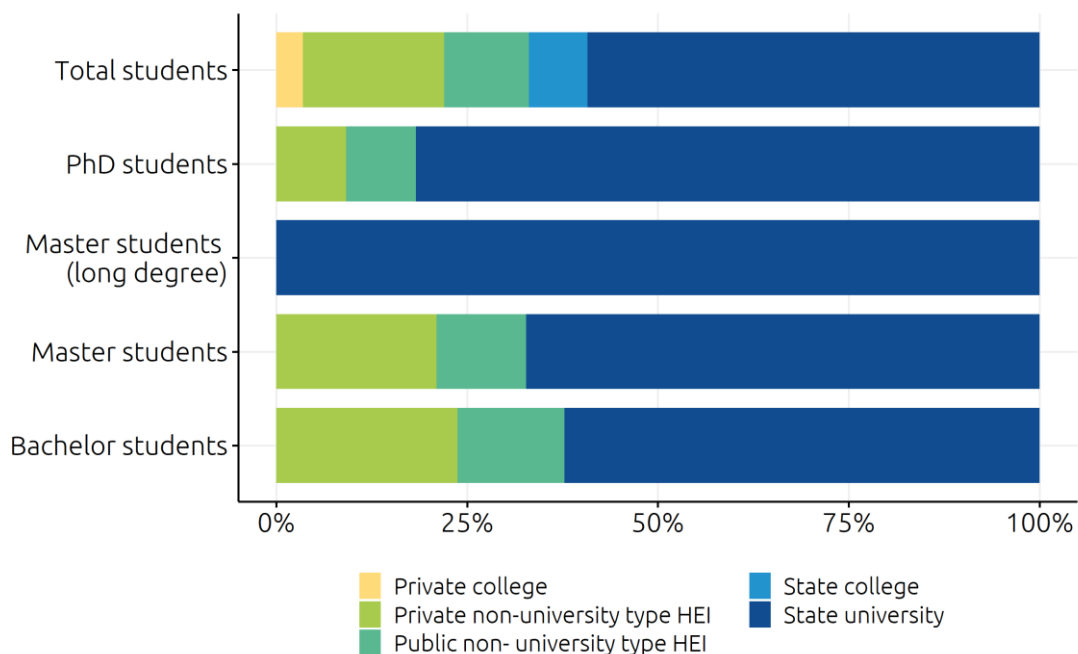


How are students distributed?

In contrast to the number of institutions, State universities account with almost 60% for the majority of all students, followed by Private non-university type HEIs with a share of around 19% and Public non-university type HEIs with 11% (see Figure 2). The two remaining categories combined account for about 10% of total students. According to different institutional mandates, we also observe systematic differences between educational levels. Overall, State universities account for the majority of Bachelor, Master and PhD students. Furthermore, they are the only HEI offering long Master's degrees (without an intermediate Bachelor's degree). In general, the higher the degree, the more important State universities become. Private non-university type HEIs are the second most important institutions in terms of the number of Bachelor and Master students enrolled accounting for around 24% or 21% respectively. While around 14% of all Bachelor students are enrolled in Public non-university type HEIs, the number decreases to 12% for Master students attending this type of institution. While more than 80% of all PhD

students attend State universities, the rest is distributed equally between Private and Public non-university type HEIs. Data by educational level for State and Private Colleges is missing.

Figure 2. Students by level and type of HEI, 2019



Note: Total students include ISCED 5-7, Data by educational level for Private and State colleges is missing

Academic personnel and financial resources

As illustrated by Figure 3, in the year 2019, State Universities account for more than 75% of financial revenues i.e., substantially more than their share of students. In contrast, the share of financial revenues for State colleges and Public non-university type HEI largely corresponds to their share of students enrolled. Figure 4 shows the composition of resources for State universities and Public non-university type HEIs. Overall, state allocation is dominant for these two institutional types in Latvia. While for State universities student fees play a more important role than third-party funding, Public non-university type HEIs do not receive any third-party funding and only a minor share is received from student fees.

Figure 3. Resources, academic personnel and total students enrolled by type of HEI, 2019

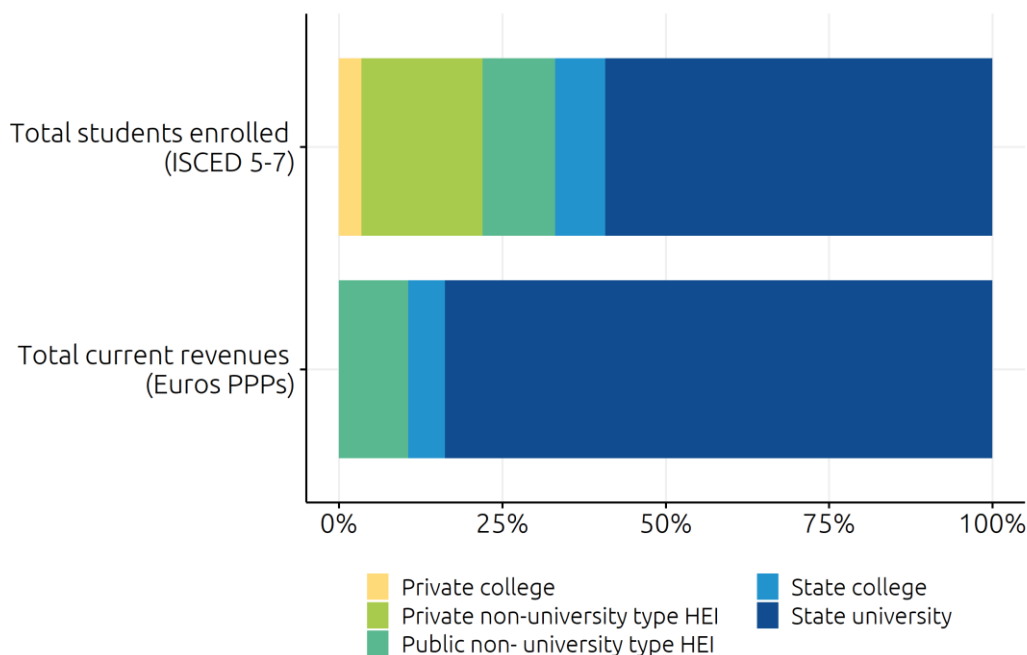
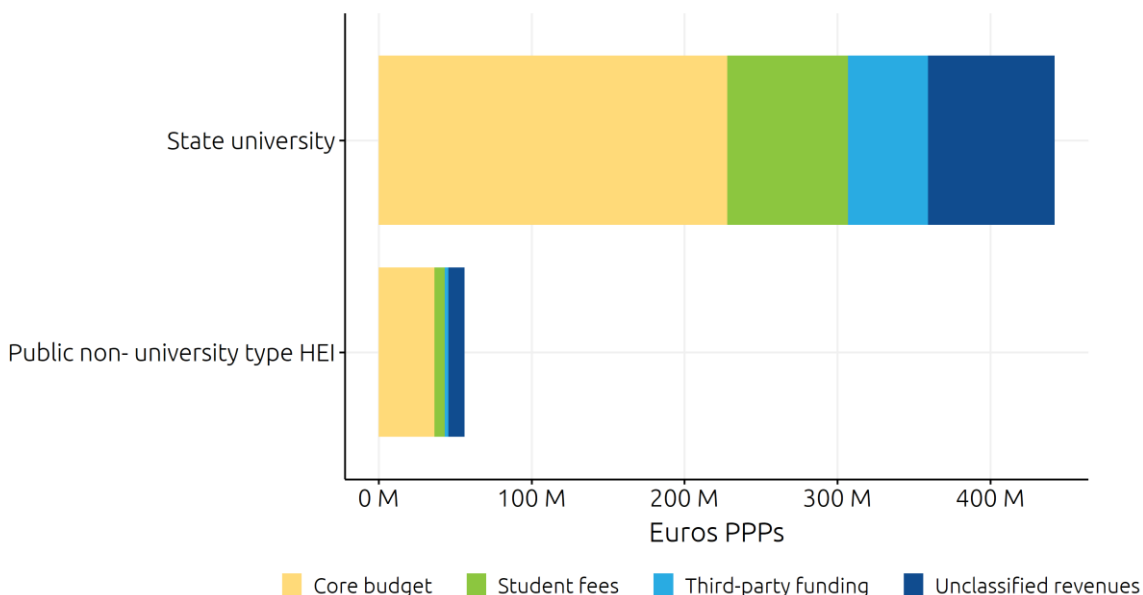


Figure 4. Composition of resources. State Universities (Valsts universitates tipa augstskola) and Public non-university type HEI (Valsts neuniversitates tipa augstskola)

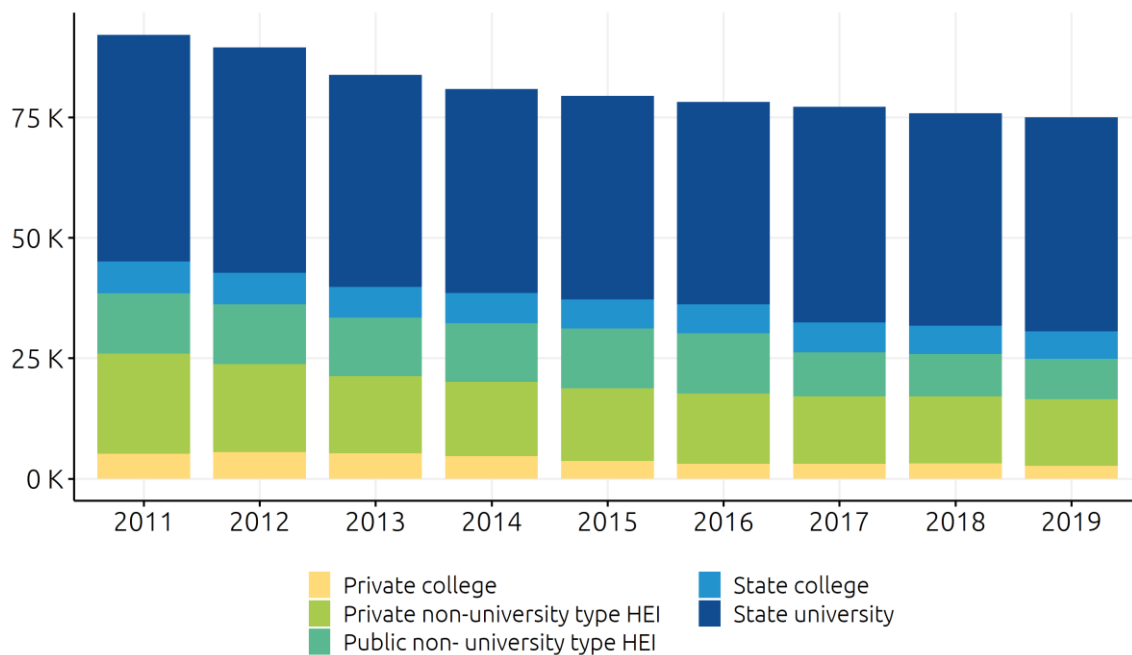


Changing roles over time

When observed through the lens of the number of students, data show a pattern of decrease with the number of enrolled students decreasing by around 16% from 2011 to 2019. This decline in the number

of students was largest for Private Colleges falling by almost 53% and smallest for State universities decreasing only by around 5%.

Figure 5. Share of students enrolled by institutional type





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www.eter-project.eu



eter@eter-project.eu



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