

INQAAHE 18th Biennial Conference 2025, Tokyo, Japan

Empowering Higher Education for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future

Kyosuke Nagata

President of University of Tsukuba,

President of the Association of National University

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INQAAHE Conference 2025 in TOKYO

Proposal by JUAJ-Japan



Introduction

Why Quality Assurance (QA) Matters Now?

- From compliance to continuous improvement
- QA as a tools for innovation and transformation
- Connecting QA with sustainability and inclusion

Global and Societal Challenges

A World in Flux

- Climate, demographic change, inequality, digital shift
- Higher education must be proactive, but not reactive
- QA must keep pace with society's evolving needs



QA for Social Impact and the SDGs

Driving Social and Educational Change

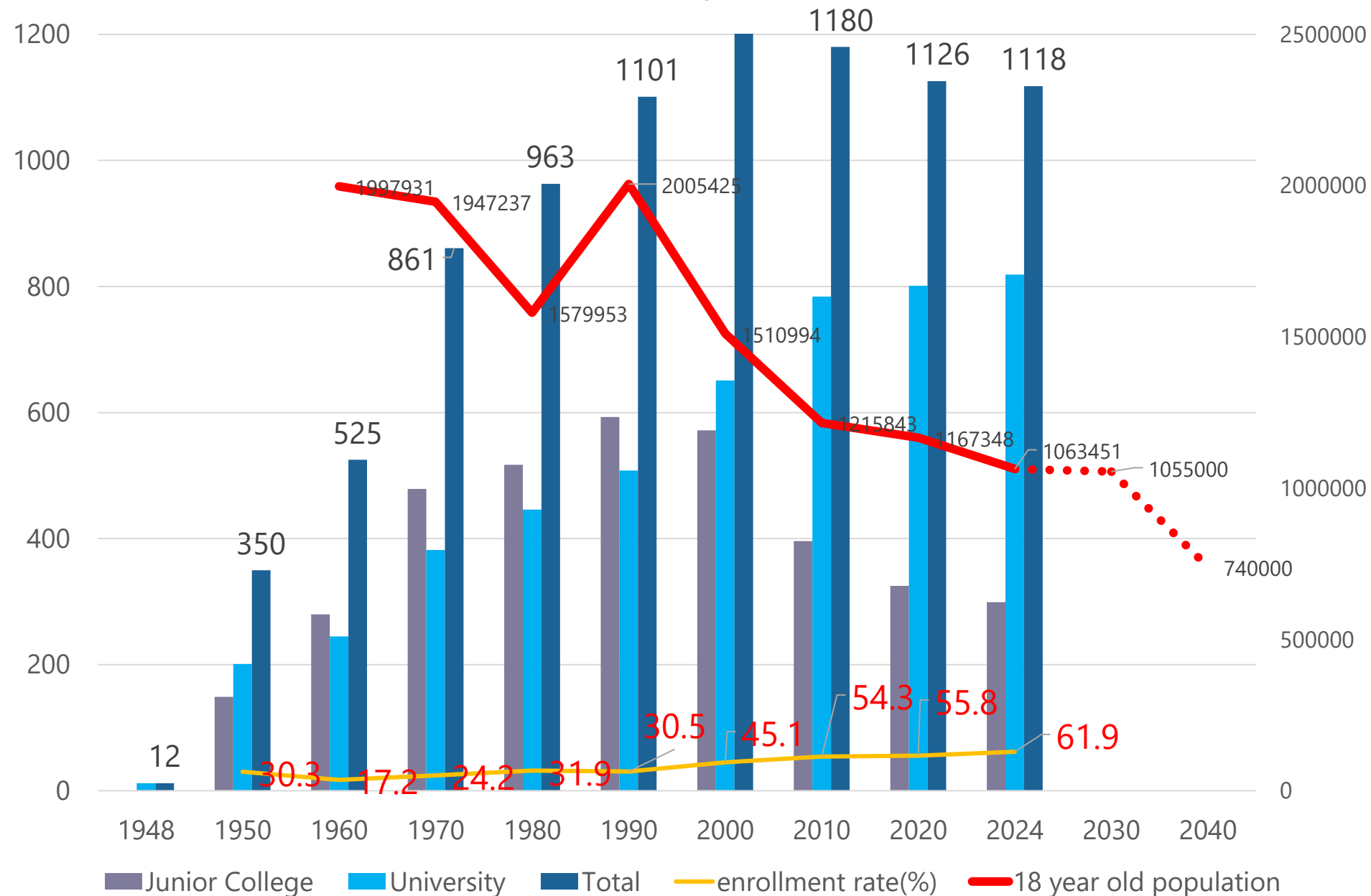
- QA promotes education and social responsibility
- Linked to SDG 4 and broader sustainability
- Integral to universities' long-term vision



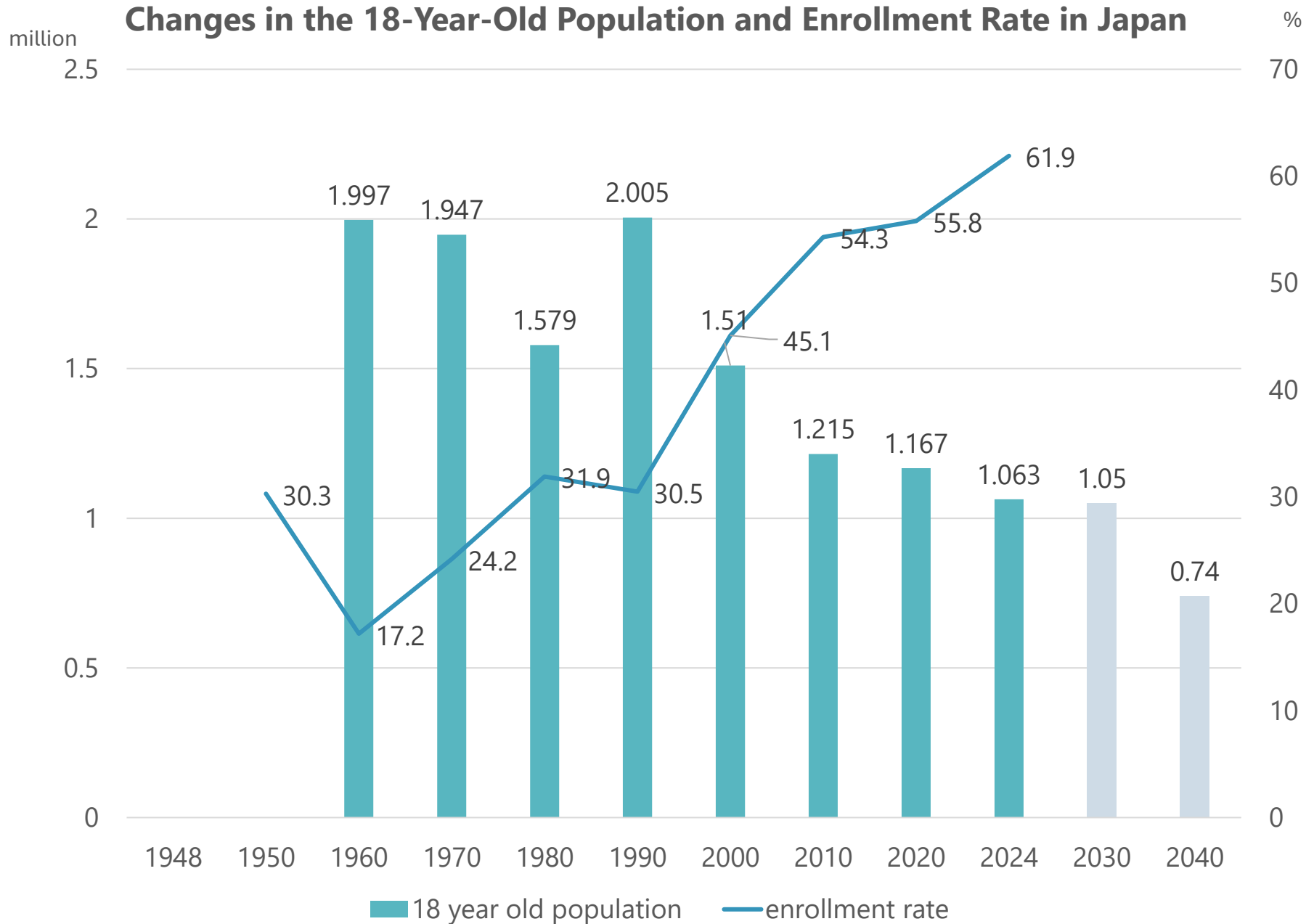
Where We Stand: Japan



Fewer 18-Year -Olds, More Universities



Source: Created by the author based on the *School Basic Survey* (MEXT, Japan)



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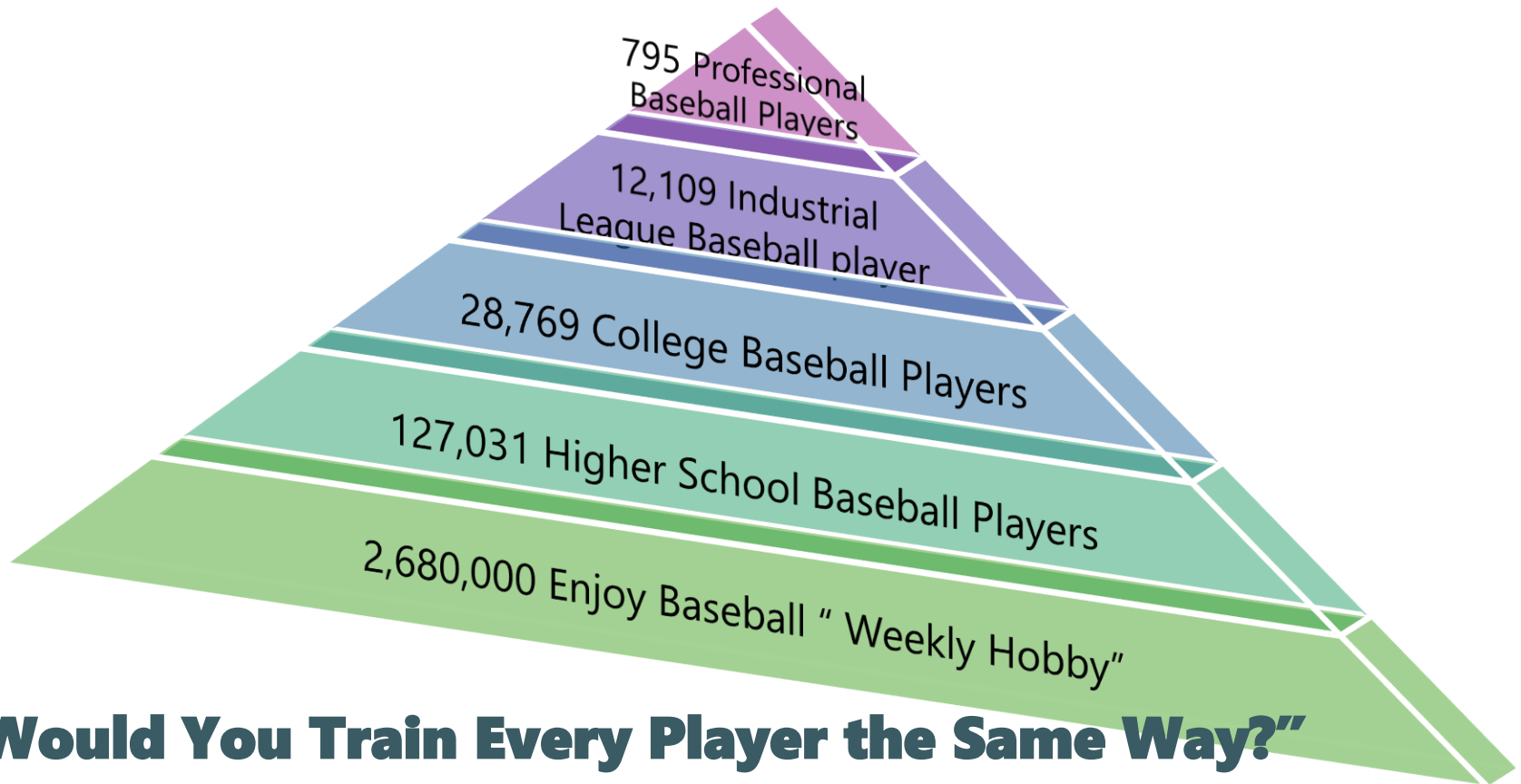
Structural Challenges in Japanese HE

Structural rigidity limits innovation and global relevance

- Rigid curricula, slow reform
- Limited use of online/flexible programs
- Lag in internationalization



Filling Seats vs. Maintaining Quality: The Baseball Analogy



“Would You Train Every Player the Same Way?”

Learners need flexible, personalized

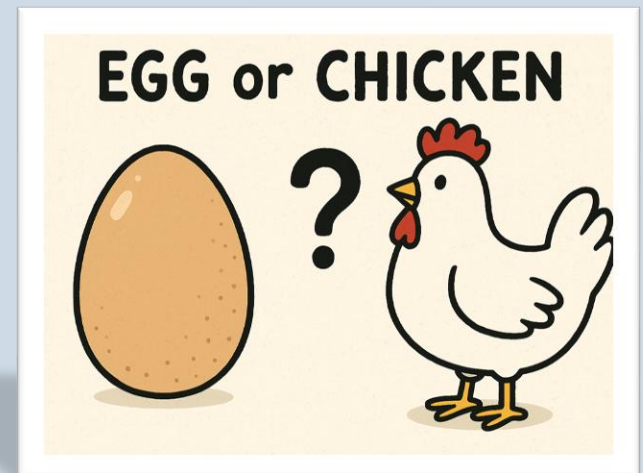
Source: Sasakawa Sports Foundation, Japan High School Baseball Federation, Nippon Professional Baseball

Funding and Research

– Egg or Chicken?

Sustaining Knowledge for the Long Term

- Decreasing public investment
- Risks to long-term research quality
- QA must address institutional sustainability



A close-up, artistic photograph of a camera lens. The lens is dark, with several concentric rings visible. Technical markings are engraved on the lens barrel, including 'ZOOM LENS', 'EP-12', '1:2.8', and 'F=100CM'. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and green. The title text is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the lens.

A Regional Lens: Asia

Shared Challenges in Asia

Growth and Pressure in Asian HE Systems

- Rising access, uneven quality
- Skills mismatch and inequality
- QA fragmentation and trust gaps

Regional QA Collaboration

Networks for Shared Standards and Mobility

- Cross-border frameworks enable joint improvement

Connecting Standards, Sharing Trust: JUAA's Global Links

Network



MOU



高等教育評鑑中心
Higher Education Evaluation and
Accreditation Council of Taiwan



Rethinking Quality Assurance

Toward Innovation,
Flexibility, and Trust

Reframing QA

QA must evolve to support innovation, flexibility, and trust

- From inspection to innovation
- Embrace flexible, adaptive QA frameworks
- Build trust through partnership

The Role of QA Agencies

Build Trust, Not Just Compliance

- Give actionable feedback
- Support continuous improvement
- Promote international cooperation

The Role of HEIs in QA

Universities must lead quality from within

- Internalizing quality culture
- Autonomy and responsibility
- Alignment with innovation and engagement

Internal Quality Assurance System of University of Tsukuba

Academic Management Office

Divisions and Roles

●Degree Program Support

Guidelines (internal review, syllabus, grading *etc.*)

Annual Monitoring: Rubric-based reports from programs and feedback

Program reviews with in-depth dialogue with program leaders (once in 6 years)

Three review teams including retired professors and student reviewers

●Improving Educational Skills

FD/SD training sessions: topics from common issues picked up by reviews

On-line journal “FD COMPASS”

●Educational IR

IR Newsletters

IR or student survey-based seminars and workshops

●Higher Education Research

Academic journal “University Research”



Rubric for Monitoring and Program Reviews

(2020-2024)

No.	Self-evaluation Items
1	Human Development Objectives and 3 Policies
2	Curriculum Systematics
3	Integrated Wisdom Education Initiatives
4	Syllabus improvement
5	Grade evaluation
6	Visualization of academic achievement
7	Research Guidance and Dissertation Evaluation (Only Graduate Schools)
8	Improving Foreign Language Proficiency
9	Admission Selection and Student Recruitment
10	Securing Teachers
11	Faculty Development
12	Surveys of Students and companies

5 Point rating:

Defect, Weak, Minimal, Satisfactory, and Excellent

Documentary Evidence
-based Evaluation

Minimal or better is
required on all items.

In-depth dialogue on the
perceived differences
between the program's
self-assessment and the
review team's assessment

Digital and Data-Drive QA

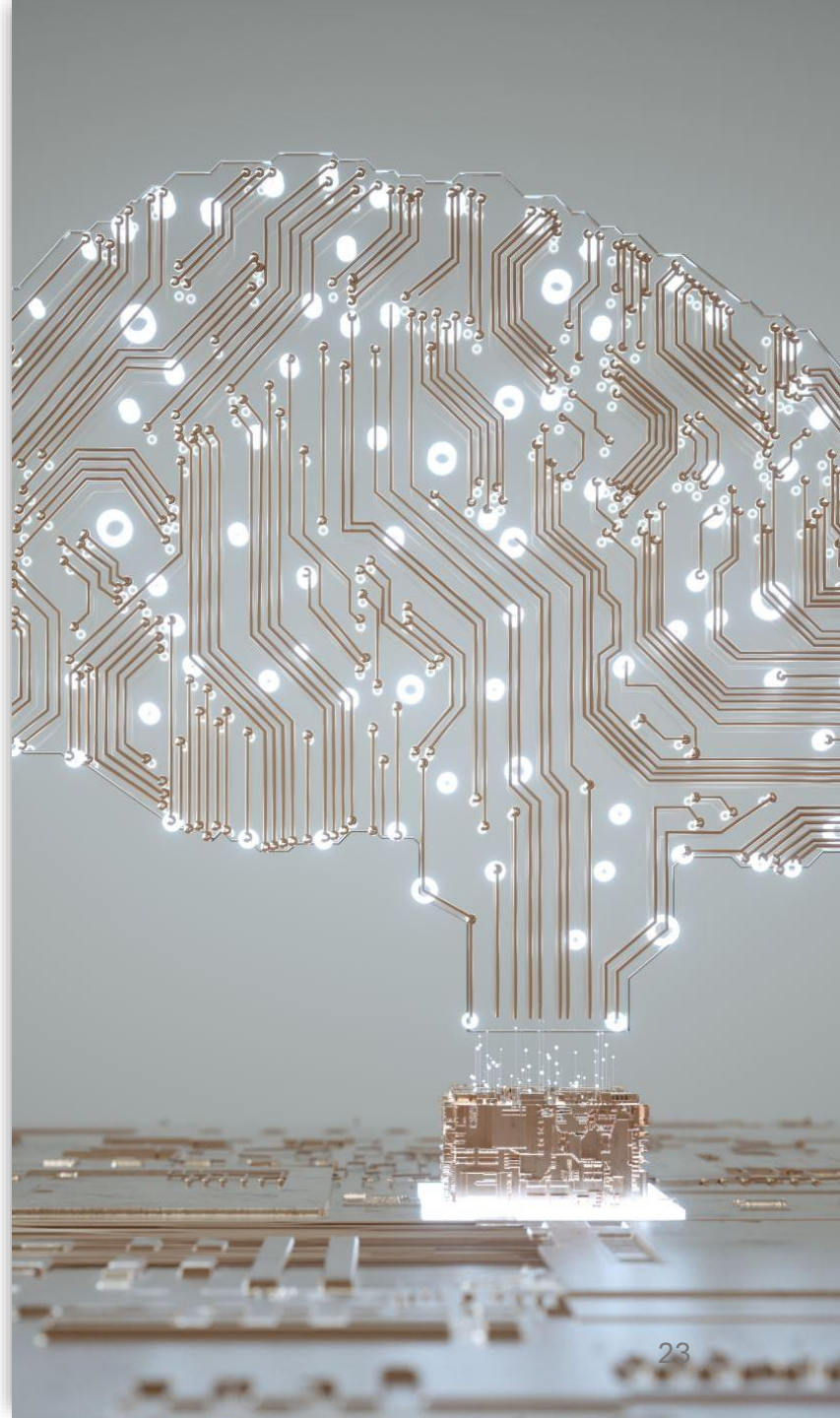
Data-Driven, Transparent Evaluation

- Transparent peer review
- Tech-enhanced self-assessment
- Use learning data for improvement

Facing AI in Higher Education

Opportunities and Risks in QA

- AI for monitoring and personalization
- Risks: bias, ethics, reduction
- QA must evolve with technology



Students in the AI Era

Tomorrow's learners need future-ready QA

- Learners as AI-natives
- Need for flexible, lifelong learning
- QA to validate non-traditional learning

Universities as Drivers of Sustainability

Agents of Local and Global Change

- Collaboration with society and industry
- HEIs as innovation incubators
- QA should reflect social impact

Strengthening Global QA Ecosystems

Global quality demands shared responsibility

- Shared standards + local diversity
- Global cooperation and capacity-building
- QA as global knowledge infrastructure

The Future of QA

Reimagining QA for a changing world

- Adaptive, inclusive, resilient systems
- Stakeholder-driven and tech-enabled
- QA shaping the next decade

Key Takeaways

- QA enables – not blocks – change
- Collaboration and flexibility are essential
- QA must support sustainable and inclusive HE

Shaping a Collaborative Future in Higher Education



Thank you!