QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS, CENTRAL ASIA AND MONGOLIA:

Engagement of Stakeholders in QA Processes

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This Scoping Study is INQAAHE’s contribution to the development of EQA in the regions of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia.

This Scoping Study is the result of strong and continuous collaboration between UNESCO and INQAAHE.
Outline

☞ Objectives of the study
☞ Methodology
☞ Major findings
☞ Good practices
☞ Recommendations
Objectives of the study

- To assess the situation of quality assurance organizations in Eastern Europe (South Eastern Europe), Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia;
- To identify gaps in areas in the deployment of QA systems in the target countries;
- To assess the impact of QA in the sub-regions with a focus on the landscape of QA in the region(s);
- To provide recommendations for future improvement and enhancement.
The INQAAHE Board set up a team of experts to conduct the Scoping Study. The team composition is as follows:

- Team leader: Susanna Karakhanyan, PhD, INQAAHE Vice-President
- Iring Wasser, INQAAHE Board Member, CEENQA President
- Ganesh Hegde, INQAAHE Board Member
- Mila Zarkh, CEENQA Secretariat
Methodology

**Target population:**
Both countries with established QA entities as well as countries with no such entities. In the absence of a formal entity for QA, the study targeted QA activities in the country.

**Tools:**
- A survey addressed to the bodies that are carrying out functions of quality assurance in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (Mongolia is also included in the sample);
- Analysis of the data obtained from websites of the respective bodies and international networks.
# Response rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of countries in target</th>
<th>Agencies/ministries approached</th>
<th>Response rate (countries)</th>
<th>Response rate in % (countries)</th>
<th>Response rate (agencies)</th>
<th>Response rate in % (agencies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67.64 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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General overview of QA systems

Out of 29 countries in the target 8 (27.5%) did not have QA agencies and the ministries of education and science performed the quality assurance functions.
EQAAs: maturity extent

However, with regards to maturity some systems, albeit the history of over 15 years, are still being challenged and explicitly state the need of a major revision of the approaches.
EQAAs: characteristic features

- 7 countries out of 19 have more than one agency in place
- 61 EQAAs in the 19 countries out of which 28 are subject specific and 33 generally operating ones
- 91.3 % of the respondents are operating in a single country and only 13% are operating internationally as well
- Predominantly the agencies target both public and private providers
- 7 agencies have undergone external review against ESGs and are ENQA full members (the term for 1 has expired in 2011).
Involvement in networks
Involvement in networks: nature

- Involvement in the Board
- Organizing a workshop
- Contribution to the newsletters
- Development of common rules and policies
- Passive participation in annual events
- Active participation in annual events

0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00% 60.00% 70.00% 80.00% 90.00%
Defining stakeholder groups

- Government
- Industry and labor market representatives
- Students
- HEIs
- Other QA agencies
- International experts
- Professional associations
Scope and nature of involvement

- None: 19%
- Workshops: 66.70%
- Conferences: 61.90%
- Implementation of procedures: 95.65%
- Development of criteria and procedures: 66.70%
- Decision-making: 91.30%
Involvement of stakeholders in the revision of procedures and criteria

- Students: 86.40%
- Government: 68.20%
- Professional associations: 63.60%
- Labor market: 77.30%
- International and local experts: 19%
Stakeholder involvement: good practices

- Stakeholder inclusion in various quality assurance activities has been observed as a major trend.
- Inclusion of international experts in the Governing Boards of the external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs), which contributes to diversity and impartiality in decision-taking to a considerable extent while at the same time reducing conflict of interests;
- The external reviewers’ panels include the key stakeholders — faculty members, students, and employers — in most of the cases;
- In some cases, there is representation of international peers on the external reviewers’ panels and conduct of the procedures in two languages for increased recognition at the international level
Stakeholder involvement: challenges and recommendations

- Revision of the existing legal frameworks to encourage such an involvement; overall revision of HE strategy to underpin the role of stakeholder involvement in it;
- Increase in funding allowing for more interaction with the stakeholders through mass media, better PR activities, in-depth research into the system-wide needs, delivery of more workshops and organization of round table discussions;
- Frequent organization of capacity building and dissemination events;
- Making the QAA more proactive in their activities with the HEIs and other stakeholders;
- Conveying the values and set of incentives of quality assurance to the key stakeholders;
- Including the stakeholders in the decision-making.
Stakeholder involvement: recommendation

- Devise and implement consistently policies and approaches in regard to stakeholder involvement in external quality assurance by conveying the values and benefits of the exercise to the stakeholders
Acknowledgement

The research team extends its gratitude to all those, who have contributed to the production of this report: the external quality assurance agencies in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia.

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THANK YOU!!

Questions and discussion