

ENQA report to the BFUG, 4-5 March 2020, Kiev

Highlights of ENQA's activities since March 2019

1. ENQA Board and Membership

The ENQA 2019 General Assembly meeting took place on 17-18 October in Yerevan, Armenia. On this occasion, the Assembly elected three Board members: Ruben Topchyan (ANQA, Armenia), Antonio Serrano Gonzales (ACPUA, Spain) and Douglas Blackstock (QAA, the UK), all for the first 3-year term. Daniela Cristina Ghitulica and Francois Pernot (HCERES, France) were elected as Vice Presidents, and Anne Flierman was reappointed as Treasurer.

The General Assembly endorsed the Board's earlier decisions to grant membership to ANVUR – National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes, Italy and NCEQE – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, Georgia. The preceding GA meeting, on 25th April 2019 in Tallinn, Estonia, endorsed the decisions on membership of CYQAA – Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, Cyprus and the RCVS – Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, United Kingdom. The reports and other materials relating to the reviews are available on the Review Reports and Decisions page of the ENQA website. Currently, ENQA has 55 members (verified against the ESG) in 31 countries of the EHEA, as well as 57 affiliates. In total ENQA represents 45 countries of the EHEA. ENQA completed 18 agency review processes in the current reporting period.

2. Key outcomes of recent ENQA projects

In the reporting period ENQA has worked on a number of smaller and larger projects, both within the EHEA as well as to support the development of quality assurance in other parts of the world.

Outside of Europe ENQA has supported QA development in Africa (through the HAQAA Initiative), in the ASEAN region (through the SHARE project), as well as in Morocco, India, and China specifically. Work on SHARE in the ASEAN and the HAQAA Initiative in Africa will continue also in the coming

years with new phases of the two projects, and ENQA is partnering in a new project to support QA development in Latin America (starting from March 2020).

During this reporting period, ENQA has also started to work on a number of new projects, as partner, such as the EUniQ project on QA of the European University Alliances; the ESQA project on enhanced stakeholder engagement in external QA; and the Microbol project on a European framework for microcredentials. ENQA is also leading a new project, to start in March 2020, to support six EHEA countries (Albania, Czech Republic, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, and Slovakia), and their agencies to develop an ESG compliant external QA system through a series of national and international peer learning and peer consulting activities to take place in the next couple of years.

We will be happy to report on the key outcomes of the projects as they become available during the coming year. For the moment, two specific concrete outcomes are worthy to be specifically mentioned:

1) Linking Academic Recognition and Quality Assurance (LIREQA) recommendations

This Erasmus+ project, in which ENQA was a partner, contributed to fair recognition of qualifications by developing and publishing recommendations to better relate academic recognition with both internal and external quality assurance, an objective in line with the ESG 2015's expectation to align institutional recognition with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and to foster cooperation with HEIs, QA agencies, and ENIC-NARIC centres. The main outcome of the project is a set of [recommendations](#) on how recognition of final qualifications, study periods and prior learning could be improved, and how cooperation between the three target audiences (institutions, agencies and ENIC-NARIC centres) could be enhanced in the spirit of the expectations under ESG 1.4 – Student admission, progression, recognition and certification. More information on the project is available [here](#).

2) Framework for quality assurance of e-assessment developed within the TeSLA project

In 2016-2019 ENQA was involved in the Horizon 2020 project [“An Adaptive Trust-based e-assessment System for Learning” \(TeSLA\)](#) which aimed to develop **a system that facilitates online examination** in such a way that it **guarantees learners' authentication and authorship**.

The consortium is composed of 18 partners: 8 universities, 3 quality assurance organisations, 4 research centers and 3 companies. After three years developing, recently more **than 23,000 students and 500 teachers from 7 different universities** have tested the TeSLA system. Pilots covered elements like **communication protocols, educational and e-assessment frameworks, data privacy mechanisms**, and the TeSLA instruments such as **voice, face or keystroke recognition** already integrated in the universities virtual learning environments (VLEs).

In the context of this project, and the other QA partners developed a [framework for the quality assurance of e-assessment](#). The framework is designed to accommodate the specific characteristics of e-learning and e-assessment in particular, with the main objective of improving and enhancing educational standards in the various different forms of e-assessment, thus better responding to the appropriate QA for the digitalised forms of education provision. More information on the project is available [here](#).

3. External review of ENQA's agency review process

ENQA has carried out reviews of its member agencies and agencies applying for registration in EQAR systematically since 2011, and since 2015 with a revised review methodology. ENQA's reviews are geared towards assessing a quality assurance agency's compliance with the ESG. In spring 2018 ENQA's members decided that ENQA Agency Review process should also undergo, in its turn, an external evaluation to assess the system's compliance with the ESG and its fitness for purpose in supporting agencies in enhancing the quality of their work. ENQA commenced this process in autumn 2018 when an independent stakeholders steering committee selected the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) – after an open call for tender - to be the coordinator of the review of ENQA. The preparation of the self-assessment report by ENQA took place in spring 2019, including consultation of ENQA's key stakeholders. The self-assessment was followed by a site-visit in September 2019, and the preparation and publication of an external review report by NIFU, to be published in February 2020. As in all external quality assurance processes, the follow-up on the recommendations is key. Indeed, ENQA has already set up a review process revision team, which will be working on a revised and improved methodology in line with the outcomes of the self-assessment and external review, to be completed by the end of 2020.

4. Upcoming events

ENQA's Members' Forum will take place on 28-30 April in Istanbul, Turkey. The event will focus on the future of European higher education and the role of quality assurance, and will also discuss the outcomes of the ENQA Agency Reviews external review.

ENQA's General Assembly meeting, together with ENQA's 20th anniversary celebrations, will take place on 21-23 October in Brussels, Belgium.