

# CBQA – REFLECTIONS FROM ENQA

**ANNA GOVER, ENQA DIRECTOR**

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**enqa.**

## WHAT IS CBQA?

- EQA of HEI/programme in country A by agency from country B
- EQA of programme delivered jointly by HEIs from countries A, B and C by agency from country A (or B, or C, or D...)
- EQA of HEI/programme in country A jointly by agencies from countries A and B
- EQA of education by HEI from country A, delivered in country B, by agency from country A (or C...)

**Key differentiation: external QA as a voluntary/additional activity, or as part of the obligatory national external QA process**

# **EHEA COMMITMENTS**

## **2012 Bucharest Communiqué**

We will allow EQAR-registered agencies to perform their activities across the EHEA, while complying with national requirements.

## **2015 Yerevan Communiqué**

... to enable our higher education institutions to use a suitable EQAR registered agency for their external quality assurance process, respecting the national arrangements for the decision making on QA outcomes.

# **EHEA COMMITMENTS**

## **2020 Rome Communiqué**

We acknowledge the progress made in the development of quality assurance systems aligned with the ESG, and we commit to removing the remaining obstacles, including those related to the cross-border operation of EQAR registered agencies and the application of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

## WHY CBQA?

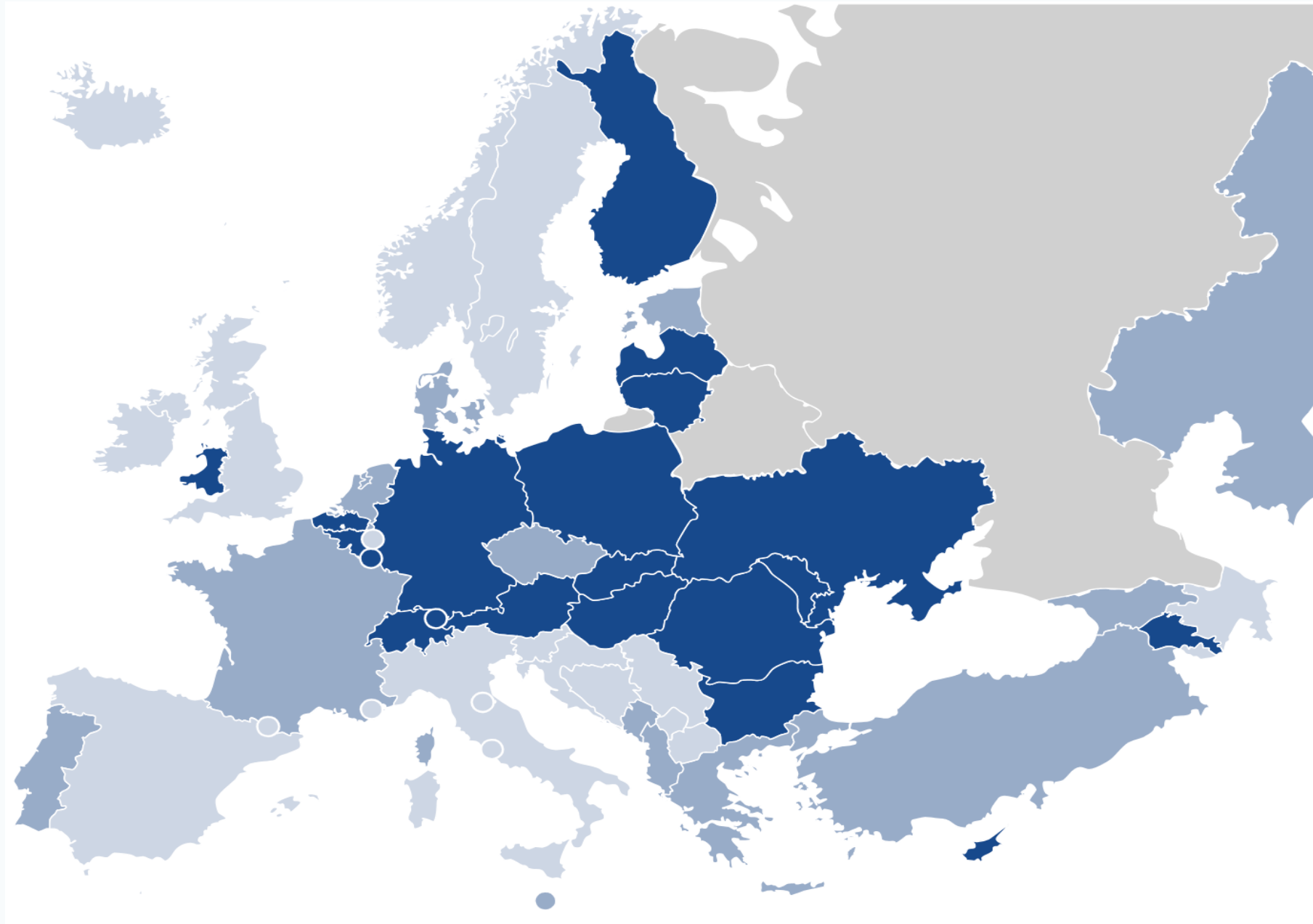
- Facilitating the accreditation and recognition of joint programmes
- Allowing higher education institutions to obtain external quality assurance from an agency that is best suited to their needs
- Facilitating the activities of agencies whose primary mission is to work internationally

# STATE OF PLAY

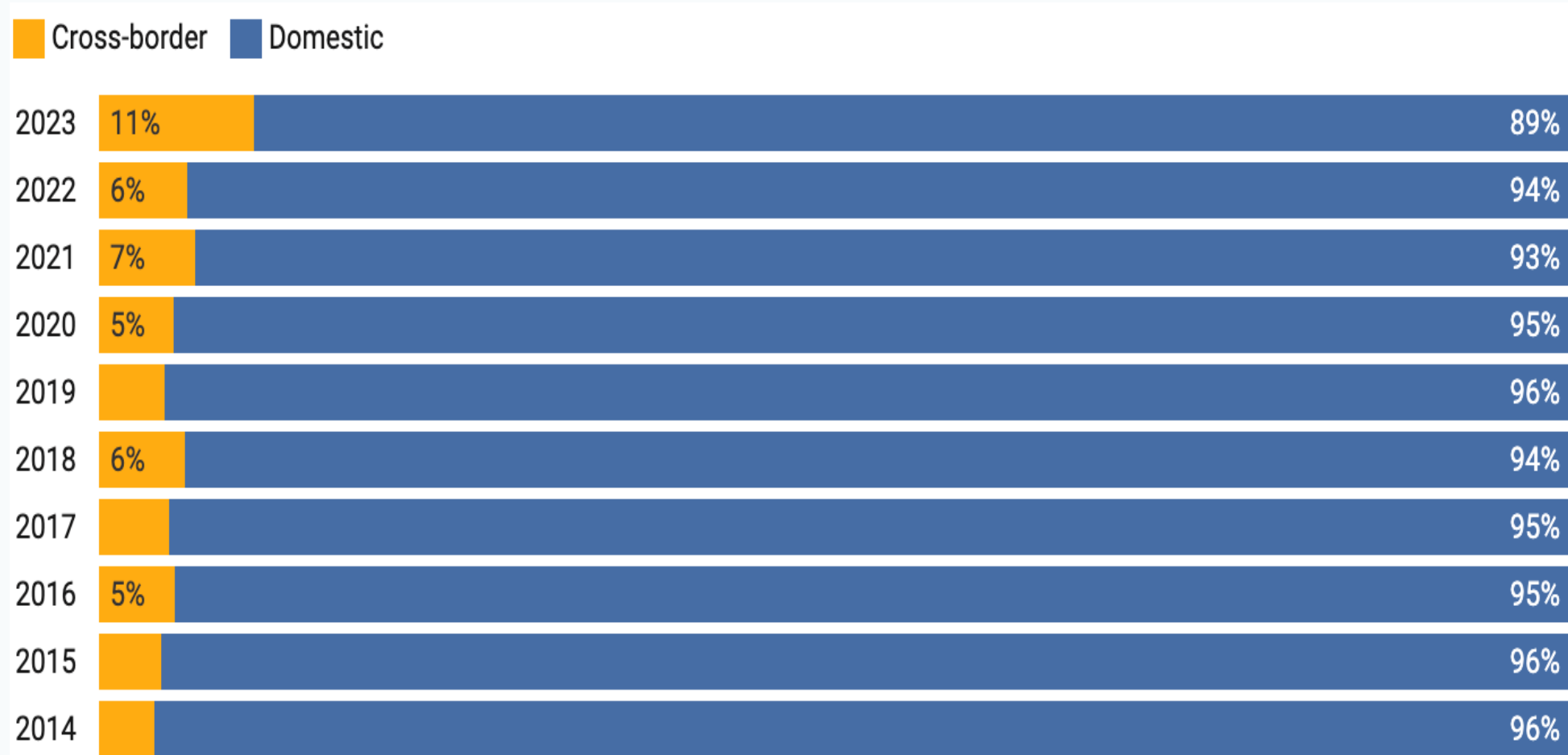
Dark blue: CBQA permitted

Mid-blue: CBQA permitted with conditions

Light blue: CBQA not permitted



# STATE OF PLAY



Data from  
DEQAR  
(Sept. 2023)

## **BARRIERS TO CBQA**

- Not permitted under national legislation
- Permitted in theory but significant practical burdens for agencies and institutions
- Permitted only for certain types of HEIs or programmes
- Permitted but lack of transparent information on how outcomes are recognised



## RISKS OF CBQA

- Lack of communication from HEI and/or foreign agency towards local agency
- Agency working with HEIs that are not recognised in the local national framework
- HEIs seeking external QA for programmes have been denied accreditation by the local agency
- Lack of transparency over QA of transnational education
- Creation of a quality assurance 'market' where financial aspects take precedence over quality aspects

## TWO SIDES OF THE STORY

### We have to...

- Facilitate accreditation of joint programmes, TNE etc
- Avoid duplication of external QA activities
- Allow HEIs to benefit from fit-for-purpose external QA
- Ease work of international QA agencies

### But...

- Recognise legitimate national level requirements
- Protect against unethical activities by agencies
- Avoid negative consequences of marketisation that undermine core aims of QA

## LOOKING AHEAD

- ? Renewed focus on QA underpinning international cooperation
- ? External QA of multi-institutional cooperation for education provision
- ? Reality of increased market-led approach
- ? External QA by non-EHEA agencies

## WORK TO BE DONE

- Engagement with stakeholders regarding barriers and risks
- Promotion of ethical practice and guidelines (including the Key Considerations for Cross-border QA by E4+EQAR)
- Highlighting positive (and negative) case examples



THANK  
YOU

enqa.