



CEENQA

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK
OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Newsletter

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Skenderbeg Statue, Pristina



Photo: maykal

CEENQA News

CEENQA Planning General Assembly and Workshop in Prishtina

The annual **workshop and General Assembly** will be held in **Prishtina on 23-24 May 2014**. The host is member agency KAA, the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. The workshop, titled **Practices in Quality Assurance: Survey Results**, will summarize the findings of an extensive survey sent to all CEENQA members. The survey was composed by INQAAHE on request by UNESCO to conduct a scoping study in the three sub-regions Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia on Practices of External Quality Assurance.

At the General Assembly, **four new CEENQA Board members** will be elected, since **Hasan Bicak, Alexander Kohler, Adrian Miriou, and Mieczyslaw Socha** have left their agencies. Three Board members continue their terms until 2015.

TEMPUS Events

Mila Zarkh has participated in the kick-off meeting of the **ALIGN** (Achieving and Checking the Alignment Between Academic Programs and Qualification Frameworks) project in Yerevan and a **BIHTEK** (Benchmarking as a tool for improvement of higher education performance) training in Tuzla with **Nora Skaburskiene**. They will report on the events and projects at the General Assembly.



Message from the President

Dear Members of CEENQA,

Dear Colleagues,

In a few weeks' time we all will meet on the occasion of our traditional CEENQA **annual workshop**, hosted by the **Kosovo Accreditation Agency in Prishtina**, as well as for the CEENQA **General Assembly Meeting**. It is a very good time for teaming up due to manifold reasons in the current time of transition:

Many of existing quality assurance agencies in our region have meanwhile reached a good stage of maturation while at the same time being involved in an ongoing process of adapting their respective quality assurance procedures, in many instances stimulated by changes in higher education systems and educational laws. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the last remaining "blank spots" in the European Higher Area in countries like Moldavia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia are disappearing, as projects have started/are about to commence to introduce own quality assurance schemes even in phase of current political turmoil.

On the European level, new stimuli for the reform of both external and internal quality assurance are evident: on the one hand, the **Second European Report from the European Commission on "Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education"** has been published at the beginning of 2014, while on the other hand the E4 group (ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE) in cooperation with EI, Business Europe and EQAR and input by CEENQA members has handed over its proposal for the **revised European Standards and Guidelines** to the Bologna follow Group.

Furthermore it is important to note that **CEENQA has also associated itself with a Work Bank/INQAAHE project designed to execute a survey on Good Practices in External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe**, and I express my gratitude for those CEENQA members who filled out the survey, the information of which will serve as an input to the CEENQA annual assembly when we ask "**What makes a successful agency nationally and internationally**".

Last but not least we will continue to jointly discuss two current topics of high interest to CEENQA members and beyond and which are also reflected in ongoing EU projects to which CEENQA is a partner: one topic deals with **European experiences in benchmarking**, the other one revolves around the question of quality assurance of **learning outcomes** and the development of **national qualification frameworks**.

I am very much looking forward to the chance of convening again the big CEENQA family of quality assurance agencies, hopefully in the presence of many representatives of **partnering regional networks and international guests** to discuss these and other topics of interest. See you all in **Prishtina on the 23-24th of May!**

Iring Wasser



Upcoming Events

March 15 Submission deadline for QAR (see issue 12/2013)

April 12-13

TEPDAD - World Federation of Medical Education meeting

April 24-25 ENQA Members' Forum

May 1 Holiday

Friday, May 23-Saturday May 24

CEENQA workshop and general assembly*

May 26-28 INQA/AHE Forum in Tallinn, Estonia

* Registrations open end of March – check www.ceenqa.net

Calendar

March 2014

MO	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2014

MO	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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28	29	30				

May 2014

MO	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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News from Members and Partners

AKKOPK

Агентство по общественному контролю
качества образования и развитию карьеры

New State project and new model for reviewers training in AKKORK

In December 2013 **AKKORK** held a final conference where were discussed the final results of the State Projects in the framework of Federal State Programme for Education Development carried by AKKORK in 2011-2013. These **projects** were:

- "Development and approbation of the models of professional quality assessment of professional education programs";
- "Development and approbation of the models of public - professional accreditation of professional education programs";
- "Development of the model of All Russian Quality Assurance Agencies Register";
- "Development and Approbation of the Models of Public Quality Assessment of Professional Education Programmes";
- "Development and Approbation of the Models of Independent Quality Assessment of Systems of Internal Monitoring and Quality Assessment of Professional Education";
- "Expert-methodological support and monitoring of implementation of measures



for development of state and public evaluation of educational institutions, public accreditation of educational programs";

- "Improvement and Approbation of the Models Internal Monitoring and Quality Assessment of Professional Education of HEIs specialized in Law".

At the conference were present representatives of the **RF Ministry of Education and Science, employers associations, students association, academic community**.

In the framework of one of those projects AKKORK has developed a new model of reviewers training. This model was discussed in the mentioned conference and the participants agreed that AKKORK should start implementing it. So, **from January 2014 AKKORK uses two models for reviewer trainings and certification**. First one is the following: several times a year AKKORK conducts general seminars for reviewers where updates on the news in methodology, in the sphere of QA in general, etc. The second one now will be the following: once AKKORK is carrying out any assessment in the HEI, it conducts special seminar only for those reviewers who will participate in this assessment. This is more individualized approach to the reviewers training and helps them to better understand the methodology and criteria of AKKORK. In the framework of this second model reviewers, for instance are asked to work with the self-assessment report of the HEI.

Also in February 2014 was announced that AKKORK will be dealing with new State project called «**Improvement of the model for consideration of qualifications certification results in the procedures of quality assurance**».

News from ASHE



ENQA Board adopts ASHE's Progress Report

The Board of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (**ENQA**), on its session held on 28th October 2013, **adopted ASHE's follow-up report** based on recommendations for improvement arising from the external review of ASHE in 2011.

In this manner, the Board formally confirmed that ASHE implemented the received recommendations and justified its ENQA membership – one of the bases of Croatian higher education qualifications' recognisability within the European Higher Education Area. Of course, after the adoption of the progress report, ASHE continues with reflecting on its procedures and improving the quality of its work.

Delegation of the European Commission visits ASHE

In January 2014 **ASHE received the European Commission delegation** collecting information for the next "European Semester" – the annual cycle of economic policy coordination implemented in the scope of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The topics discussed were the outlook and the efficiency of the Croatian higher education system, and the ASHE quality assurance activities within the system. The Commission representatives expressed their satisfaction with the ASHE activities and intentions for further cooperation.

ASHE cooperation with Japan

ASHE is dedicated to **exchange of good practices** with colleagues from all over the world, and fostering the recognisability of Croatian higher education. In March 2014 it is organising a visit by professors from the **Japanese Meiji Gakuin University**, aimed at fostering cooperation with Croatian institutions.



ASHE to host ENQA General Assembly

On the ENQA 2013 General Assembly, held in Vilnius on November 30, ASHE was elected to **host the October 2014 General Assembly**. The meeting, to be held in Zagreb in mid-October, will provide an opportunity to further strengthen ASHE's international positioning and promote Croatian higher education to the professional community of quality assurance in higher education.



FIBAA in Moscow – The Exchange of Experience pays off

On the 23rd October, **Dr Heinz-Ulrich Schmidt**, FIBAA Special Representative, attended the '**International Forum**' held by the Russian Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development (**AKKORK**) as a speaker. Approximately fifty representatives of renowned higher education institutions throughout Russia participated in this forum. Dr Schmidt focused in his contribution on FIBAA's practice and methods of accreditation. "It certainly drew interest as the participants had frequent questions and comments", reported Dr Schmidt. Especially two topics took the centre stage: fitness of purpose, which justifies the development of a study programme, and learning outcomes and the way their achievement can be ascertained.

Mrs **Tove Blytt Holmen**, ENQA board member and Deputy Director General of the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), reported both on the revision of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG) and the current practice of NOKUT.

The major goal of AKKORK is to support Russian state and non-state Higher Education Institutions in approving the quality of their study programmes at an international level. In order to strengthen and embed their expertise in the Russian Higher Education Area, FIBAA has signed a cooperation agreement with AKKORK in 2009. Alongside with the constant exchange of expertise, AKKORK and FIBAA conduct joint accreditation procedures.

For further information:

<http://www.fibaa.org/en/welcome-page.html>

<http://www.akkork.ru/e/>



News from NCPA

On 15 November 2013 the representatives of three public accreditation agencies: the Association for Engineering Education of Russia (**AEER**), the Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Career Development (**AKKORK**) and the National Centre for Public Accreditation (**NCPA**) signed an Agreement establishing the **association "National Public Register of Accrediting Organizations in Education"**. The establishment of the Register of Accrediting Organizations meets the requirements of the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" and will contribute to the international recognition of the Russian national system of public accreditation in the sphere of education.

In January 2014 a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the **Russian Student Union** and NCPA. This agreement will enhance cooperation between NCPA and stakeholders from the student community. Another Agreement was concluded with the National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance - **ANQA (Armenia)**.

On January 17-18, 2014 the project **Tempus IV** "Achieving and checking the alignment between academic programmes and qualification framework" was launched. Representatives from NCPA attended the kick off meeting, which was held on the basis



of Yerevan State Linguistic University.

During the first day each of 26 partners participating in the project made a brief presentation about their organizations and their role and involvement in the project. The structure of the project management was set and **coordinators from Armenia, Russia, Ukraine** as well as contact partners and working groups were determined.

During the second day the work was carried out to identify the strategic and operational challenges for the next 6 months (December, 2013 - June, 2014).

In the three-year project the National Centre for Public Accreditation plays one of the key roles: NCPA leads workgroups 6 and 7 and is the coordinator of the project for Russia.

In January - February 2014 NCPA conducted external reviews of several clusters of study programs in Stavropol State Agrarian University, in the Gnesins Russian Academy of Music in Moscow, and in the National Research University of Electronic Technology (MIET), Zelenograd. The **international experts** involved in the external panels were nominated by the quality assurance agencies, members of CEENQA: ACQUIN, PKA, EKA and ACCR.

A regular meeting of the working group on excellence of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (**ENQA**) was held in Paris **on January 23, 2014**.

The meeting was hosted by the Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education, **AERES (France)**. The working group was composed of nine representatives from eight countries: UK, Portugal, Romania, Lithuania, France, Russia, Belgium and Turkey

The Working Group meeting was devoted to the discussion of the paper "The Concept of Excellence in Higher Education", which is scheduled to be completed in April this year.

The meeting allowed all the participants to consider and discuss a wide range of issues relating to the criteria of academic excellence in higher education, exchange of practical experience in its application and outline the next prospects.

The National Centre for Public Accreditation was presented by **Oxana Matveeva**, Deputy Head of Accreditation Office.

HEA - Steps Towards a Functioning Higher Education Accreditation System in BiH Urgently Needed

Sarajevo, 26 February 2014 – Sarajevo, 26 February 2014 – European and international higher education experts acknowledged the commitment of BiH to implement the Bologna Reforms, in particular to be in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) with a view to joining the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

This was, *inter alia*, stressed in the course of the presentation of the recommendations delivered by European experts at the head office of the Delegation of the European Union in Sarajevo.

The recommendations are the result of the first component of the **Twinning Project "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Quality Assurance"**. The first component comprised an **Analysis of the Legal Provisions** Relating to Quality Assurance in BiH, in particular with regard to their compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The ongoing **Twinning Partnership between BiH and Austria** is funded by the European Union under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA 2011) with 1 million Euro.



The following prominent higher education experts worked on the recommendations and presented them: **Achim Hopbach**, Managing Director of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Austria (AQ Austria) and former President of ENQA, **Peter Findlay**, Assistant Director of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education of the United Kingdom (QAA) and ENQA International Reviewer, **Adi Kovačević**, AQ Austria Consultant for Southeast Europe, Bastian Baumann, Independent Higher Education Consultant and ENQA International Reviewer, and **Alexander Kohler** of the Ministry for Science and Research of Austria, who is also the Twinning Project Leader from the EU Member State, Austria.

Managing Director of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Austria, Achim Hopbach, pointed out that although the Framework Law for Higher Education in BiH was in line with the Bologna Reforms, there were still some shortcomings and inconsistencies in the implementation of the Law in practice, for which reason the European experts issued the recommendations for further development of external quality assurance in BiH.

The experts believe that it would be useful to explain further steps relating to the implementation of the Framework Law and their consistent translation into other relevant regulations in BiH.

"I would like to emphasise that we do not suggest transferring any competencies, but instead we recommend **harmonising regulations** at all levels and harmonising their respective implementation," added Hopbach.

He expressed the conviction that this Twinning Project was an excellent opportunity to add the European dimension to quality assurance in higher education in BiH.

"If all the stakeholders agree on the consistent implementation of accreditation in line with the Framework Law and in line with European standards, we are convinced that BiH will make a big step towards the integration into the European higher education system," stressed Hopbach.

He pointed that would mean recognising universities from BiH in the European Higher Education Area and supporting the recognition of the degrees awarded by higher education institutions.

Director of the Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (HEA) and Twinning Project **Leader from the Beneficiary Country**, BiH, **Husein Nanić**, stressed that the objectives from the Bologna Declaration would be the priority in higher education.

Mr. Nanić stressed that BiH had a choice, either to align its higher education with European standards by applying and implementing the experts' recommendations through the accreditation process and to become a part of the European area of competence and knowledge, or to keep the higher education in BiH completely isolated from the rest of the world, along with all the resulting consequences.

Alexander Kohler, Twinning Project Leader from the EU Member State, Austria, said that BiH still had a long way to go in terms of achieving the European standards and guidelines in practice. He promised further support through the twinning partnership, stressing that the responsibility for implementing reforms lies with HEA, the authorities, universities and other relevant stakeholders.

The Twinning Project "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Quality Assurance in Higher Education" is comprised of four components. Its implementation started in September last year and it will last until September 2015. The objective is to increase mobility and employability of the labour force through improvement of the quality of higher education institutions in line with the Bologna Process.



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TEPDAD event

on accreditation of medical education is organized by **World Federation of Medical Education**, TEPDAD and Istanbul University, to be held on **April 12-13 in Istanbul**. The information could be obtained from <http://wfme-tepdadturkey.org/>

International Events

EQAF – the 9th European Quality Assurance Forum



The 9th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) will take place at the **University of Barcelona**, Spain, from **13 to 15 November 2014**.



Through a mix of plenary and parallel sessions, the 2014 EQAF, entitled “**Changing education – QA and the shift from teaching to learning**”, will combine practice-oriented or research-based discussions that will take place in the paper sessions and workshops with presentations of current developments in quality assurance. This year, the Forum will explore whether and how current QA approaches are keeping up with and supporting developments in learning and teaching.



The Forum organisers, ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE, have now opened a call for contributions from QA practitioners in higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies, students, academic staff, institutional leaders and researchers in the field. Two types of contributions are sought: papers and workshops.



The **deadline to submit contributions is 25 July 2014**.

The call for contributions and proposal submission forms are available here: <http://www.eua.be/eqaf-barcelona.aspx>

INQAAHE Forum 2014

Partnerships in Quality Assurance in Higher Education

26 - 28 May 2014, Tallinn, ESTONIA

Partnerships in Quality Assurance in Higher Education

26 – 28 May 2014, Tallinn, Estonia

INQAAHE (*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education*) **Forum 2014 will be held on 26 – 28 May in Tallinn, Estonia**, and the Forum host is the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (**EKKA**).

Some of the questions that will be discussed by speakers, panelists and participant are as follows:

- How QA processes might benefit from engaging different groups of external stakeholders, such as employers and students?
- Why it might be important to include a variety of stakeholders with differing perspectives and how it might be done?



- What internationalization or globalization in quality assurance means?
- How quality assurance processes might need to change with the increasing use of MOOCs and RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning)?

A special **pre-conference workshop** will be offered on Monday, May 26 for those members who can arrive a day early. This workshop will examine **how to implement and meet the INQAAHE Guidelines for Good Practice (GGP)** and will be offered free of charge for all registered forum participants.

As always, attendance at the INQAAHE Members Forum will not only provide professional development on relevant topics of interest to QA organizations, but there will be ample time to network with old and new colleagues, including a social program to be held in an inspiring environment with music and dance. The INQAAHE Forum 2014 website is available at <http://www.archimedes.ee/inqaahe/> with all the details about the program and registration. Registration to the Forum is open for INQAAHE members.

Please note, that **Early Bird registration is open until March 28th**. The final deadline for registration is **5th of May**.

Welcome to the INQAAHE Forum 2014 – Partnerships in Quality Assurance in Higher Education!

20 years of EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)



The Institutional Evaluation Programme has successfully carried out institutional evaluations of higher education institutions since 1994. To celebrate the milestone of 20 years of IEP activities, there will be **a public event organised in Brussels on 18 September 2014**, extending an opportunity to explore IEP's contribution to changing HE landscape in Europe and future developments of the Programme.

IEP is characterised by a unique combination of an institutional approach, a European perspective through its experienced European teams and its philosophy as a supportive, peer-review based procedure. The IEP methodology has been tested in over 300 higher education institutions in 45 countries. IEP is a full member of ENQA and is listed in EQAR. Apart from performing evaluations of individual institutions, the Programme offers its expertise by conducting **coordinated evaluations at national or regional level** on request of local stakeholders in higher education (ministries, national rector's conferences, NGOs). As a result of a coordinated exercise, each institution receives its own evaluation report and, whenever it is appropriate, IEP produces a sector report that highlights shared issues and challenges and facilitates a fruitful dialogue among all key actors and stakeholders, including governments. Thus far, IEP has concluded coordinated evaluations in Ireland, Catalonia, Slovakia, Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Turkey and Portugal.

At the moment the programme is engaged in the coordinated evaluation of universities in Romania and Montenegro. In **Romania**, the evaluation is part of framework projects that started in 2011 and are contracted by the Romanian government and includes institutional evaluations of accredited Romanian universities. The coordinated evaluation will be concluded by a system review report with policy recommendations, produced by IEP in November 2014. In 2013-2014 IEP is also carrying out coordinated evaluations of higher education institutions in **Montenegro**, commissioned by the Montenegrin Ministry of Education. These evaluations are funded by a broader project supported by the World Bank with the overall objective to strengthen the quality and relevance of higher education and research in Montenegro. As in Romania, IEP will produce a system review report by the end of 2014.

For further information please visit our website: <http://www.eua.be/iep>.



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INQAAHE-EASPA Global Platform for Subject-Specific and Specialized Accreditation – Opportunities for Cooperation and Cross-Country Accreditation

Under the umbrella of and in connection with the upcoming INQAAHE Biannual Forum, the **European Alliance for Subject Specific and Professional Accreditation and Quality Assurance (EASPA)** is organizing a **global networking conference** to discuss new ways of collaboration among accreditation agencies.

EASPA was founded in 2011 as a meta-network of European **subject-specific and professional networks**, bringing together the fields of engineering, informatics, physics chemistry, geology, biology, food science, music, public administration and tourism with the aim of fostering the development and **harmonisation of activities in the field of quality assurance and quality improvement in higher education**. It invites members of external quality assurance, evaluation and accreditation agencies, professional associations, societies and federations, disciplinary networks and all other entities dealing with quality assurance and certification of higher education study programmes, schools or professional individuals from around the globe to participate in this event.

The conference will be a discussion and exchange platform enabling participants to **find innovative means of cooperation** and discussing the role of subject-specific and professional aspects in quality assurance. EASPA has invited key note speakers from all world regions to bring you up to date about the developments in their respective part over the world. Subject areas not yet included in EASPA will also present the state of the art in their spheres to determine means of including their expectations into external quality assurance.

At the conference, new modes of collaboration – demonstrated by the example of the **memorandum of understanding between EASPA and its US-counterpart ASPA** – will be elaborated and questions of mutual recognition will be debated. One of the main themes also linked to the INQAAHE Forum, namely the potential of cooperation in **cross-national accreditation** and the **activities of international accreditation agencies**, will be discussed with the speakers and participants in order to provide opportunities for learning and exchanging good practice and establishing new links with colleagues from all over the world.

The pre-INQAAHE meeting, which will be formally opened by **INQAAHE president Carol Bobby**, will take place on **Monday, 26 May 2014, 09 – 13.00h in Tallinn, Estonia**, at the Radisson Blu Hotel Olümpia. After the meeting, you will be able to participate in the INQAAHE Biannual Forum events.

Registration should be done on the EASPA Website www.easpa.eu.

Participation in the event is free of charge. For any questions, you may **contact Dr. Iring Wasser, President of EASPA**, member of the INQAAHE Board of Directors and President of CEENQA.