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Newsletter

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CEENQA News

CEENQA General Assembly and Workshop in Ljubljana

The 27-member Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education held its annual meeting on **22-23 May 2015 in Ljubljana, Slovenia**. The workshop and general assembly were hosted by the **Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (SQAA/NAKVIS)**, a CEENQA member.

The annual CEENQA meeting opened with welcoming words from **Iring Wasser**, CEENQA President. He was followed by the just appointed **Slovenian Minister of Education, Science and Sport, Maja Makovec Brenčič**, herself a Full Professor of International Business at Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana and a former president of the Council of Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education of Slovenia. **Ivan Leban**, host of the meeting, also welcomed the participants with a few words on his agency, SQAA.

The workshop theme was **Impact of Quality Assurance and Accreditation**, a topic widely acknowledged as timely, given that hardly any research into the topic exists. Professor **Theodor Leiber** from the German CEENQA member agency **evalag** presented the background and results of the **Impact Analysis of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (IMPALA)** project. **Heli Mattisen**, head of the **Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (EKKA)** described a recent national project surveying the impact of quality assurance at higher education institutions. **Blazhe Todorovski**, representing the **European Students' Union (ESU)** presented this organisation and projects dealing with quality assurance and its impact. **Professor Ivan Leban**, director of **SQAA**, as host of the event, introduced his presentation with some information on Slovenian higher education and went on to present ideas on quality



assurance in relation to business and industry. **Josep Grifoll** from **AQU Catalunya** and a member of **the ENQA working group on the impact of quality assurance** presented the first results of the project.

The General Assembly of CEENQA was a business meeting of the network. Three Board member positions, including that of the president and the vice-president, were up for **election**. **President Iring Wasser** from **ASIIN, Germany**, was re-elected as Board member and **President** for a third and final two-year term. **Vice-President Ivan Leban** from **SQAA, Slovenia**, was also reconfirmed in his position, for a second two-year term. **Martina Vidlakova** from the **Accreditation Commission of the Czech Republic** was elected as a new Board member.



The running international projects where CEENQA is a partner - **BIHTEK, ALIGN, BHFHE** with multiple partners in the Central and Eastern European region, and **QUALITAS** involving the **Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)** – were discussed.

The **2016 general assembly and workshop** will celebrate the **15th anniversary** of CEENQA, and return to **Krakow, Poland**, the location of its founding. The meetings will **be hosted by the University Accreditation Commission of Poland (UAC)** together with **the Polish Accreditation Commission (PKA)**. The meetings will take place at Jagiellonian University on **May 13-14, 2016** in the historical building Collegium Maius.

The presentations of the workshop can be accessed here: [Leban final](#), [Heli Mattisen](#), [J Grifoll](#), [T Leiber](#), [Todorovski](#).

Message from the President

**Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends of CEENQA,**

It is with great satisfaction and gratitude that we jointly can look back on the CEENQA meetings in Ljubljana at the end of May. Our sincere **thanks go to SQAA** under the leadership of **Vice-President Ivan Leban and his staff**, who did a marvelous job in hosting the CEENQA board meetings/General assembly as well as our traditional workshop, a short summary of which can be found in this newsletter. Special recognition also goes to **Slovenian minister of education, Prof. Dr. Maja Brencic**, who graced the event with her presence and opening remarks.

After the CEENQA assembly and workshop is before the next CEENQA assembly and workshop: **on invitation of Polish CEENQA members UAC and PKA**, CEENQA is returning to **Krakow on the 13th /14th of May 2016**, the meeting venue being chosen in remembrance of the fact, that the **CEENQA founding meeting took place 15 years ago in this beautiful Polish city**.

As regards **CEENQA priorities for the next two years**, CEENQA will further focus on **integrating those countries and agencies in its regions** which so far have not joined our ranks and at the same time assist in the further build-up of quality assurance resources in the region. We will carry on in our quest to establish a **CEENQA data base of QA experts** to be used in external quality assurance exercises within our member organizations, as has successfully been done in the past couple of months in **cooperation in CEENQA member ARACIS** in Romania. A further capacity building measure will consist in the establishment of **a viable staff exchange program** among CEENQA members in the near future so that its respective staff can learn about different practices in QA in daily operations within our member



organizations.

As an update of our continuing Joint European Projects in the **EU PLUS program**, further progress has been made in these last weeks: In as far as the **ALIGN** (Alignment and Checking the Alignment of a Higher Education Study Program's Learning Outcomes with National Qualification Frameworks) project is concerned, the ALGIN General Board meeting hosted by our friend **Zbigniew Palka in beautiful Poznan in early June** not only allowed for an impression of what can be expected for next year's CEENQA GA meeting, but also gave opportunity for the ALIGN partners to share their developments regarding the project's overall mission. We are currently in the process of finalizing the individual agendas for the up-coming **In-House trainings in Armenia, Russia, and Ukraine**. The three-day-trainings will give opportunity to support the participating quality agencies in their effort of defining mechanisms and tools to check the desired alignment and will bring together different stakeholders involved in the alignment process such as HEIs, QA agencies, student bodies, representatives from ministries and the industry. We look forward to our **first training in Armenia in mid-August**.

CEENQA also further stays on schedule with regards to **the final round of site visits to all eight Bosnian partner universities** as part of our involvement in the **BIHTEK project**. The Bosnian trip is planned for fall 2015.

Let me finish my wishing you all a revitalizing and happy summer vacation, wherever you might go or be.

Iring Wasser



Upcoming Events

Summer recess: No events planned

Future dates: **22-23 October**, Dublin **ENQA** seminar and general assembly
5-6 November, Paris **QACHE** (Conference on QA of cross-border HE)
19-21 November, London **EQAF** (European Quality Assurance Forum)
13-14 May 2016 **CEENQA workshop and general assembly** at
the historical building Collegium Maius of Jagiellonian University

Calendar

July 2015

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		

August 2015

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						

September 2015

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				

CEENQA Affiliate ENQA Celebrates 15 Years



CEENQA is sending sincere greetings to ENQA as the sister organization in the field of international quality assurance on the occasion of **15-years of ENQA operations**, marked in mid-June this year. Taking this opportunity we would like to underscore the importance of the value of **cooperation between the two networks** and express our wishes for continuous fruitful engagement. At the gathering of ENQA stakeholders and Board members in Brussels, formal presentations were made by **Dr. Pdraig Walsh (QQI), ENQA President**, and Ms. **Aurelija Valeikiene (SKVC), former President of CEENQA**.

Mr. Walsh reminded of **ENQA's mission** being to drive the development of quality assurance by representing agencies internationally, supporting them nationally, and providing them with comprehensive services and networking opportunities. ENQA **promotes the enhancement** of quality and the **development of a quality culture** in higher education. Notably, ENQA works to contribute to a European Higher Education Area in which students have access to high quality education and can achieve qualifications that are respected world-wide. The implementation of this mission was further detailed by achievements over 15 years of work, and the growth of the organization as well.

Ms. Valeikiene in her presentation elaborated on how ENQA serves for quality via internationalization activities, focusing her attention on **ESG being at core of**



internationalization, also covering **relations between ENQA and EQAR**, quality assurance of **cross-border higher education**, and lastly, the phenomenon of **internationalisation** of quality assurance through the eyes of ENQA members.

News from Members and Partners

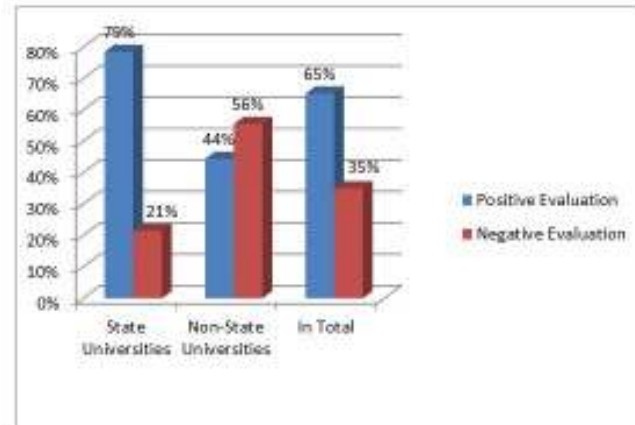


The End of the First Cycle of External Review of Higher Education Institutions in Lithuania

During the **first cycle** of institutional reviews which was conducted in **2011-2015**, The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (**SKVC**) has organized 44 reviews: **23 colleges of higher education** (13 state and 10 non-state) and **21 universities** (14 state and 7 non-state). According to Procedures for the external review of higher education institution, the external reviews of **Telšiai Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius Priest Seminary** and **Vilnius St. Joseph's Priest Seminary** were conducted by Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (**AVEPRO**) in its established areas.

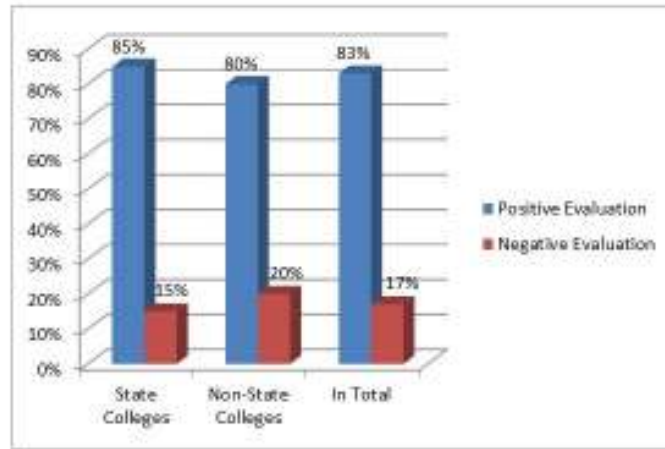
As a result of peers' review **34 HEIs were given positive evaluation**, 12 – negative evaluation.

During the review process of the universities' activities, 15 universities (13 state and 2 non-state) were given positive evaluations, 8 – negative evaluation.



The results of universities' review, %.

During the review process of the colleges' of higher education activities, 19 colleges of higher education (11 state and 8 non-state) were given positive evaluation, 4 – negative evaluation (2 state and 2 non-state).



The results of colleges' of higher education review, %.

During the institutional review, activities of the higher education institution are **assessed in the following areas:**

- strategic management;
- academic studies and life-long learning;
- research and/or art activities;
- impact on regional and national development.

The activities of HEI are given positive evaluation if all the areas are evaluated positively. The areas of **„Strategic management“ and „Research and/or art activities“ were most often given negative evaluation** (in 9 HEIs the area of „Strategic management“ was given negative evaluation and in 4 HEI's the area of „Research and/or art activities“ was given negative evaluation).

The **second cycle of the review activities has already started** by external evaluation of Lithuanian Sports University (LSU). During this repeated review of LSU, experts found tremendous improvements in the university, thus, the institution has been awarded the maximum 6-year term of accreditation.

All the institutions that were granted accreditation for 3 years will be reviewed repeatedly during 2015-2017. The second evaluation could lead either to full accreditation or to losing the license for conducting studies.



NCPA Initiates First Federal-Level Internet-Exam for Bachelor Students

The **National Centre for Public Accreditation** initiated a new experiment in the sphere of education, which is based on **using IT in the assessment of students' learning outcomes** - Federal Internet-Exam for Bachelor Students. It was held in Russia on April 20-30, 2015. The Exam was carried out at **70 testing centres in 42 regions** of the Russian Federation. 4281 students from 106 HEIs participated in the experiment.

Federal Internet-Exam of Bachelor Students was conducted in **10 areas of training:** Law,



Social Science, Psychological and Pedagogical Education, Economics, Management, Public Administration, Heat Power Engineering, Electrical Energy Industry and Engineering, Informatics and Computer Engineering and Construction. The case-studies in these areas were developed by the teachers of the leading Russian HEIs.

A special feature of the experiment is the **voluntary participation of HEIs and graduates**. The Exam was popular with the graduates in Economics (1093 students), Law (750 students) and Management (655 students). Upon completion of the Exam, each student obtained an electronic "gold", "silver" or "bronze" certificate, a personal certificate or a certificate of participation depending on the results of the Exam.

The **results of the experiment** are available on personal students' accounts and are generally presented for all HEIs that hosted the event. By the decision of the Academic Council of a HEI, the results of Federal Internet-Exam for Bachelor Students are **taken into account by the Major Department as a part of the Graduate State Exam** as well as for **admission to Master's degree** programmes. Besides, a graduate may include the Certificate of Federal Internet-Exam for Bachelor Students in his/her portfolio as an annex to a CV for employers. This year almost 1.5 million students graduate from Russian HEIs. This number is enormous due to the fact that it is the first mass cohort of Bachelors and the last one of Specialists. A certificate obtained following the results of Federal Internet-Exam may become an **additional competitive advantage of a Bachelor for employment**.

The main result of Federal Internet-Exam for Bachelor Students is the fact that the experiment on the direct method of assessment of the quality of learning outcomes was **carried out at the federal level for the first time**. This data will be taken into account in public accreditation of educational programmes, which is supported by the decision made at the meeting on June, 25 by the National Accreditation Board of the National Centre for Public Accreditation.



HAC Full Member of ENQA

At its 16 April 2015 meeting, the **ENQA Board renewed the HAC's full membership** status. The HAC has been a member of ENQA since 2002. Following its second five-year membership evaluation in 2013, the HAC was a **"full member under review"** since it did not comply with two of the European Standards and Guidelines, which are part of the ENQA requirements. In the review panel's 2015 report, the two standards, relating to **resources and independence**, were judged as fully and substantially compliant, respectively, which the ENQA Board confirmed.



ASHE surveys alumni's satisfaction with programme quality and employment opportunities

The Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education (**ASHE**) presented the results of its **survey of a generation of alumni of Croatian institutions and their satisfaction with programme quality and employment opportunities**. The need for conducting such a survey was signalled by the results of ASHE's external QA procedures, which indicated a lack of monitoring alumni's opinions on the competences they gained through study programmes and employment opportunities. ASHE thus decided to implement a pilot survey in May 2014 which should result in guidelines and recommendations for quality improvements and better connecting higher education with the labour market. At the same time, this was the first survey of this type implemented by ASHE at the national level, thus **servicing also as pilot of ASHE's methodology** and a test of its capacities for similar surveys in the future.



FIBAA contributes to successful completion of the project CeQInt

The EU-funded project “**Certificate for Quality of Internationalisation**”, short CeQInt, ended in March 2015. CeQInt is intended to promote internationalisation in higher education by awarding a seal and **FIBAA significantly contributed to the development of the assessment frameworks by bringing in its own experience** of over twenty years in quality assurance and quality development in higher education not only in Germany, but also at other European and non-European institutions for higher education. Through the participation in CeQInt, FIBAA was able to further sharpen and strengthen its international orientation.

Find additional information on CeQInt [here](#).

FIBAA awards Quality Seals to Beirut Arab University

Institutional Accreditation

FIBAA, on 13 April 2015, decided to award the **FIBAA Quality Seal for 'Institutional Accreditation' to Beirut Arab University in Lebanon**, the largest among Lebanon's private universities. The accreditation is valid for six years and the ceremonial awarding of the certificate took place on 30 May 2015 in Beirut. **Dr. Heinz-Ulrich Schmidt**, former Director General of Higher Education and Research and Special Representative of FIBAA, was particularly impressed by the **dynamic and achievement-oriented functioning of BAU** as well as by the short time – only two years – in which BAU managed to successfully undergo the accreditation process.



Programme Accreditation

In its meeting on 19 June 2015, FIBAA decided to award their **Quality Seal to the study programmes Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA)** with only one condition regarding the necessary postgraduate work experience for an MBA. By means of exceptional Administrative Support for Students and Teaching Staff and a good process organisation BAU proves again its dynamic functioning. The panel also stated that, due to the close relation of the Faculty of Business Administration to its Advisory Committee and the resulting influence of the Committee members in the development process of the curriculum, **both programmes are systematically aligned to the anticipated requirements of the job market** and adapts to changes on the job market to a large extent. The accreditation is valid for five years until August 31st, 2020. A more detailed report of the accreditation process will soon be published on FIBAA's homepage.



Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University receives FIBAA Quality Seal

In its meeting on 19 June 2015, FIBAA decided to award their **Quality Seal to the Master's programme 'Public Administration'** at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University in Tbilisi, Georgia, in cooperation with the **German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer** (Deutsche Universität für

Verwaltungswissenschaften Speyer). The programme is held predominantly in English and it aims at providing selected Georgian students holding an undergraduate degree with the necessary administrative skills to qualify them for a responsible function in Georgia's public sector. The expert panel was particularly impressed by the formation and by the actual implementation of the cooperation. **The leadership of both universities, but also teaching staff, students and all others involved, demonstrate extraordinarily large commitment to the programme**, which is based on the fact that everyone strongly identifies with its objectives. Thanks to the close-knit cooperation and the lively exchange between the two universities, good collegial and personal contact networks have developed. They allow for a lasting and productive cooperation, thereby promoting the students' development of qualifications and competencies. A noteworthy aspect of the cooperation is the method of **'tandem-teaching'**, meaning that certain courses are held by **both a Georgian and a German instructor**. The method enables students as well as instructors to be familiarised with different subject- and country-specific perceptions and thus enhances their development of intercultural competencies.



The ceremonial awarding of the certificate took place on 30 June 2015 at FIBAA in Bonn, Germany, through **FIBAA's Managing Director Daisuke Motoki**. The accreditation is valid for five years until 31 March 2021. A more detailed report of the accreditation process will soon be published on FIBAA's homepage.



HEARS Conducts Training for Creating Study Programmes Focusing on Learning Outcomes

Bearing in mind the adoption of the revised European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the **Higher Education Accreditation Agency of Republic of Srpska organized the first in a series of training** provided to representatives of all stakeholders in higher education system of Srpska. The workshop entitled **Creating student oriented study programs on the basis of learning outcomes and competencies** - case studies was held in Banja Luka on 10 June.

The workshop is presented five case studies of student oriented study programs at higher education institutions of the Republic of Srpska. The programs were selected from different scientific fields in order to see how to create study programs to learning outcomes in function depending on the specific areas to which it belongs.

Find out the following study programs - Economics Faculty of Economics, Computer Science and Informatics Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Biology from the Faculty of



Sciences (all from the University of Banja Luka), Communication with Kappa Fi College and the Medical Faculty of Medicine, University of East Sarajevo.

Participants talked about the development of their study programs and experiences related to changes in the way of creating and monitoring programs of study. The conclusions of the discussion of all the participants of the workshop served as a **prelude to the Fifth Accreditation Forum**, which was dedicated to the accreditation of study programs.



New EQAR policy on Use and Interpretation of the ESG - four agencies newly registered

Following the adoption of the **revised European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)**, the EQAR Register Committee adopted a new policy document providing an ex ante transparency of the **official EQAR interpretation of the ESG**. The policy on the [Use and Interpretations of the ESG](#) aims to increase transparency, understanding and consistency within the decision-making process of the Register Committee. The main target groups of the policy on the Use and Interpretation of the ESG are quality assurance agencies, external review coordinators and external review panels. EQAR also updated its [Procedures for Applications](#) to introduce some **important changes and updates to the application process**. These include that applications now have to be made before an agency undergoes an external review against the ESG. The publication of decisions will be more comprehensive in the future. Additional information can be found in EQAR's [letter to agencies and coordinators](#). EQAR is currently **updating the Guide for Applicants** and all relevant application forms. In June 2015, the EQAR Register Committee admitted [four agencies to the Register](#):

- **BAC** - British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education
- **fmdi** - Fundación para el Conocimiento Madridmasd
- **KAA** - Kosovo Accreditation Agency
- **QQI** - Quality and Qualifications Ireland.

The registrations of **ACSUCYL, AHPGS and evalag were renewed**. Those agencies applied for inclusion or renewal before adoption of the revised ESG. Applications are no longer possible based on the 2005 version of the ESG now, but the first agencies have already prepared for a review against the revised, 2015 version of the ESG.

International Events

Registration and call for contributions open for EQAF 2015



ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE are pleased to announce that registration is now open for the 10th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF), which will take place in **London, UK, on 19-21 November 2015, hosted by the Quality Assurance Agency/UCL Institute of Education**.

EQAF is the main European event for quality assurance (QA) in higher education. Through a mix of plenary and parallel sessions, the 2015 Forum, entitled "**Taking stock and looking forward**", will combine presentations of current developments in QA with discussions on research, policy and practice that will take place in paper sessions and workshops.

2015 marks not only the 10th anniversary of EQAF, but also 10 years since the introduction of the ESG and five years since the formal launch of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). With the recent adoption of the revised ESG, this year presents an ideal moment to take stock of the status of European QA policies and assess their impact on all stakeholders. The Forum will examine QA in the EHEA from a variety of



perspectives and explore the ways in which concrete practices in institutions and agencies reflect European level policies.

The **deadline for the early-bird registration fee is 5 October 2015**. After this date, late registration fees will apply. However, we encourage you to register as soon as possible as capacity is limited and registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration information and further details about the Forum, including a preliminary programme are available on the [EQAF website](#).

A call for contributions for paper and workshop sessions during the Forum is also still open. The deadline for submissions is 3 August 2015. Full details can be found [here](#).



QACHE Conference Registration

Registration for the much-anticipated **Conference on quality assurance of cross-border higher education on 5-6 November 2015** is now open. The conference, hosted by [HCERES](#) (the **High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education, France**), will bring together colleagues working in the field of higher education from Europe, the Gulf, and Asia-Pacific region to discuss the most prominent issues relating to the growing phenomenon of cross-border higher education.

Through a wide range of research activities, the [QACHE project](#), supported by the Erasmus Mundus programme of the European Union, **has identified varying and unsystematic approaches to cross-border higher education provision and widespread lack of information** about its quality assurance.

To facilitate the quality assurance of higher education provided across borders, the project team has identified ways to encourage the shared responsibility of higher education between sending and receiving countries. Thus, the conference will describe different regional views and **present the major outcome of the project, the QACHE Toolkit**. The Toolkit offers practical advice to quality assurance agencies on how to best cooperate in cross-border higher education.

Space is limited, so participants are strongly encouraged to [register](#) as soon as possible. More information is available on the [event webpage](#). A €200 participation fee is payable following registration.
